

SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
TOWN OF WAYNESVILLE
SEPTEMBER 12, 2008
FRIDAY – 2:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL/WATERPLANT

The Board of Aldermen held a special meeting on Friday, September 12, 2008. Members present were Mayor Gavin Brown, Aldermen Gary Caldwell and Libba Feichter. Also present were Town Manager A. Lee Galloway, Assistant Town Manager Alison Melnikova and three members of the Watershed Advisory Committee, Dave Dudek, Gordon Small and Pat Maier, though Ms. Maier advised that she would not be able to accompany the group on their tour. Mayor Brown noted that there were two purposes for the meeting, with the first being a visit to the Town's Water Treatment Plant at the end of Allens Creek Road to see the recently completed expansion and various renovations to that facility. The second purpose was for the Town Board to meet with the Watershed Advisory Committee and Dr. Peter Bates and Rob Lamb, representatives of Western Carolina University, to discuss the Watershed Management Plan which has been prepared as a requirement of the Conservation Easement which the Town Board approved for the watershed.

With that introduction, the group was transported to the Water Plant in the Town's passenger van, and at that facility, the group was joined by Public Works Director Fred Baker, Water Plant Superintendent Kyle Cook, Watershed Attendant Hugh Parrott, Watershed Advisory Committee member Karen Kaufman along with Dr. Peter Bates and Rob Lamb.

WATER PLANT TOUR

Public Works Director Fred Baker and Water Plant Superintendent Kyle Cook led the group on a tour of the water plant. They pointed out the addition which was completed during the past year, noting the greatly increased space for the laboratory, for an employee break area and for an office for the superintendent. The work had also involved the installation of storefront glass panels between the public area and the water filtration basins. The new space allowed personnel a much larger area to complete the increased number of tests which must be run on water prior to its release into the distribution system.

While work was underway on these renovations and the expansion, there were some problems discovered with the concrete panel roof on the water plant. Portions of the building were constructed in 1954 while other parts were added in the late 1970s. Mr. Baker noted that the concrete roof panels had deteriorated over time, possibly from the effects of the chlorine and other chemicals in the air. These panels will have to be replaced in the current fiscal year, and Mr. Cook advised that an engineer is presently preparing the specifications for this work. It is estimated that construction will be completed in the first quarter of 2009.

Board members were impressed and pleased with the results of the construction project and the additional space provided to employees in which to carry out their jobs.

WATERSHED VISIT

The group left the water plant and proceeded in vehicles into the watershed area for a tour of the property and an explanation of the Forestry Management Plan by Dr. Peter Bates and Rob Lamb, representatives of the Geosciences and Natural Resources Department of Western Carolina University. Under the terms of the Conservation Easement which the Town Board approved in 2005, there was a requirement that a Forestry Management Plan be prepared to administer the Town-owned land in the watershed. The Town entered a contract with Western Carolina University for the preparation of this plan, and Dr. Bates and Mr. Lamb have been developing the draft of this plan over the past three years.

The group drove to the Shiny Creek Crossing where Dr. Bates explained the water quality sampling that had been underway in the watershed for the past two years. This included a solar powered monitor on Shiny Creek approximately ¼ mile below the road crossing. He noted that the data collected is checked regularly to determine the changes in water quality and the presence of silt and sediment during a storm event.

The group moved to the second tour stop where Dr. Bates and Mr. Lamb noted the white pine forest that had been planted in the 1970s and located between the road and the reservoir. They drew attention to the white pines' trunks which were almost equal in size, but emphasized that because of crowding, most of the limbs in the bottom 75% of the tree were dead, leaving only a plume at the top. This configuration of trees left the forest floor nearly bare, with very few trees growing to replace the white pines. If the pine bark beetle hit this pine forest, the death of these white pines and the lack of any trees growing up from the forest floor could be devastating.

At the third tour stop, the group saw the battery powered monitors which were installed in the spring of 2008 with funding provided from the Water Fund by the Town Board. These battery monitors are on several of the other creeks in the watershed and help identify turbidity problems and measure the flow during storms.

At the fourth stop, Dr. Bates pointed out some white pines that were much larger and more mature than the first group seen. He noted that other than some rhododendron, there was very little growing on the forest floor. By selectively removing a portion of these white pines, it would likely encourage the growth of some yellow poplar trees and some hardwoods. Only through increasing the light to the forest floor can new trees be encouraged to grow and improve the health of the forest. In response to a question from Mayor Brown, Dr. Bates indicated that in these areas with large white pines, it may be necessary to remove 50% to achieve the desired result of new tree growth.

The final stop was at the reservoir dam and there was a discussion about the level of the lake during a period of drought. At the present time, the lake level is just over a full pond due to some late afternoon rains the past few days. This keeps the lake level up from the very productive water sources feeding into the lake.

This concluded the tour of the water plant and watershed area. Dr. Bates indicated that he had received comments on the draft of the Forestry Management Plan and would like to insert many of those comments into the final draft to be presented to the Town Board. It was agreed that the final draft might be considered at the Town Board meetings of late October or in November.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

A. Lee Galloway, Town Manager

Gavin A. Brown, Mayor