

**MINUTES OF THE RETREAT MEETING OF THE LAKE LURE TOWN COUNCIL HELD THURSDAY AND FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 11-12, 2010, 9:00 A.M., HOUSE LOCATED AT BRIGHT'S CREEK CONFERENCE CENTER, 2222 PALMER ROAD, MILLS SPRING, NORTH CAROLINA**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Bob Keith  
Commissioner Mary Ann Dotson  
Commissioner Wayne Hyatt  
Commissioner John W. Moore  
Commissioner Linda Turner  
  
Christopher Braund, Town Manager

**ABSENT:** N/A

**Call to Order**

Mayor Keith called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Approved the Agenda**

Council members approved the agenda as presented.

**Discussion Regarding Short-Term/Long-Term Goals and Objectives for the Town of Lake Lure**

Town Manager Braund reviewed the following objectives for the retreat including: (1) orientation to departments and assets, (2) exploration of issues and challenges, (3) identification of priorities for fiscal year 2010-2011, and open dialogue.

Mr. Braund gave a power point presentation showing a recap of the issues and challenges identified in the Town Council retreat meeting during 2008 and comparing them to a list of issues and challenges for 2010. He reported on the assessment conditions and status of the town's assets/infrastructure. Mr. Braund also reported on the administration regarding finance year and the budget challenge.

Town Council members held discussion on strategic issues and challenges for the town including financial health, economic development, council's role in critical projects (Lake Lure Classical Academy, Professional Park, and YMCA/Recreation Center), residential vacation rentals, bankrupt subdivision developments, private sewer lines, personnel policies, ownership of old bridge number 7, grant pursuit, ordinance review, public works projects pertaining to parks and recreation, town support for athletic events, community center project, knowledge/document management, and the future of the dam. Town Council members heard presentations from town staff members regarding projects and activities pertaining to their departments.

Human Resource Director Anita Taylor answered questions regarding personnel policies. Ms. Taylor also distributed notebooks containing various documents including:

- (1) a report on human resource accomplishments during 2009

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- (2) a report on new hires, eliminated positions, and terminations during 2009
- (3) payroll summaries for 2008-2009
- (4) municipal schedules
- (5) organizational charts
- (6) salary increase and bonus programs
- (7) position classification/pay schedule
- (8) personnel policy

Town Council members held discussion pertaining to personnel policies including:

- (1) length of work day, paid lunch time benefits
- (2) take home vehicle benefits
- (3) affordability, suitability, sustainability of total benefits package (compensation and increases)

After discussion, Council members agreed to authorize the town manager to adjust the hours of operation for town hall to be from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and stagger staff members schedules to cover these hours of operation. Also, continue allowing town employees a 1 hour paid lunch.

Town Manager Braund agreed to write, distribute, and post to the town website an article about the justification of the town's take home vehicle policy. Council members agreed to make no changes to the take home vehicle benefits policy at this time.

Finance Director Sam Karr answered questions regarding the town's financial status and the budget process.

Town Council members held discussion pertaining to issues and challenges of the town's financial health including:

1. fund balances are low
2. deferred maintenance and improvements to town assets
3. needed infrastructure investments
4. recent budgets have not supported any contributions to fund balances
5. recent budgets have not funded needed capital improvements
6. long-term debt position is good (measurement)
7. tax rate – lowest municipality in the county (per \$100 of assessed value)

Community Development Director Shannon Baldwin answered questions regarding issues and challenges of the Community Development Department. Mr. Baldwin also distributed copies of a work plan and comprehensive plan implementation matrix dated February 10, 2010 for town council's review.

Town Manager Braund agreed to follow up on lake structures compliance and enforcement issues.

Town Council members held discussion pertaining to issues and challenges of economic development including:

1. What activity (if any) is needed?
2. What should be the role of Town Council and staff? Leader, facilitator, participant? Funding?

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Town Council members held discussion pertaining to issues and challenges of the Council's role in critical projects as to what is need and appropriate with regards to the following:

1. Lake Lure Classical Academy
2. Professional Park
3. YMCA/Recreation Center

Town Council members held discussion pertaining to issues and challenges of bankrupt subdivision developments including:

1. Blue Heron Point, The Highlands, Lago Vista, and surrounding communities
2. Anticipate requests for dedication of infrastructure to the town (streets, water, and sewer systems)
3. Unmet needs of home and property owners
4. Periodic review of development projects

Town Council members discussed issues and challenges of the residential vacation rentals as to how can the council help with the implementation of the regulatory program, build credibility of staff and Boards, and restore harmony in the community?

Mayor Keith recessed the meeting for a lunch break and then reconvened the meeting.

Public Works Director Tony Hennessee answered questions regarding issues and challenges in the public works department with regards to streets, maintenance, water, solid waste, parks and recreation.

Town Council members held discussion pertaining to issues and challenges of public works, parks, and recreation as to the following:

1. When does the town make it department?
2. Full or part-time dedicated staff?

Town Council members discussed issues and challenges of the town support for athletic events as to what is needed and appropriate?

Hydro Plant Operator Donnie McCraw answered questions regarding issues and challenges of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, the Wastewater Collection System, the Dam and the Hydroelectric Plant.

Bo Williams, Manager of Lake Lure Tours, answered questions regarding issues and challenges of the town beach, marina, and tours. Mr. William explained the rationale for gas prices at the marina.

Town Manager Braund agreed to distribute a memo explaining the rationale about the gas price at the town marina and post an article on the town web.

**RECESS THE MEETING**

Council members agreed to recess the meeting at 4:45 p.m. to be reconvened on Friday,

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February 12, 2010, 8:55 a.m., at Bright's Creek Conference Center, 2222 Palmer Road, Mills Spring, North Carolina.

### RECONVENE THE RECESSED MEETING

Mayor Keith reconvened the recessed meeting from Thursday, February 11, 2010 to Friday, February 12, 2010 at 9:00 a.m.

Police Chief Eric Hester answered questions regarding issues and challenges of the Police Department and the Youth Center including:

1. Review of staff and operations
2. Budget
3. Vehicles
4. Crime Statistics
5. Youth Center - moving to new school site, and planned partnership with YMCA.

Fire and Emergency Coordinator Ron Morgan answered questions regarding issues and challenges of the Fire and Emergency Management. Mr. Morgan showed a power point presentation on the Lake Lure Fire Department including history of this department, explanation for the need of multiple fire departments, contracted fire department with the town, working relationship with other departments, response services, provided, services provided by LLFD, report on responses, report on personnel response, report on various vehicles and equipment, fire boat, report on insurance savings, and budget/operations concerns.

After discussion, Town Manager Braund agreed to explore coordinating fire department vehicle inventories, needs and purchases across all fire departments rather than individually in the four departments.

Lake Operations Director Dean Givens answered questions regarding issues and challenges of the Lake Operations. Mr. Givens showed a power point presentation on lake operations/department summary including operations, areas of responsibility (lake structures, Fishery and Ecosystem, water quality, dam, sewer, and hydroelectric, shoreline stabilization, dredging and watershed stabilization, boating, law enforcement, emergency management team, management of town assets, and priority, priority improvement projects, environmental management) and staff.

Mayor Keith recessed the meeting for a lunch break and then reconvened the meeting.

Town Manager Braund reported on issues regarding legal matters, and attorney fees. Mr. Braund agreed to furnish to Council members a report on attorney fees.

Mr. Braund also reported on issues pertaining to technology including:

1. High marks for Skycatcher (cost and support level)
2. Upgraded server room; fiber optic being installed
3. Camera system for webcasting council meetings
4. Need for an overhaul of town website for easier navigation, keyword searching.
5. Need for content management system for department heads to update their own content.
6. Need to partner with Skycatcher to provide wireless internet to all areas of the lake

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- (for Town use and for residential service)
- 7. Need for ongoing technology improvement
- 8. Need for a new phone system (current one is 15 years old)

Council members agreed to hold one meeting per year at Rumbling Bald Resort.


**ADJOURNED THE MEETING**

Council members agreed to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

ATTEST:



  
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Mary A. Flack, MMC  
Town Clerk

  
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Mayor Bob Keith