

**City of Sky Valley
Maintenance & Public Works Committee**

**Thursday, April 17, 2014
2:00 PM
Sky Valley Club, 568 Sky Valley Way – Lakeside Room**

MINUTES

Chairman Greene called the meeting to order.

Committee members present: Greene, Goodgame, Chitwood, Kleiber, MacNair, Morley, and Maus.

Staff present: City Manager Lapeyrouse, City Clerk Cantrell, Public Works Supervisor Cavalli.

Mayor Goodgame said that during his campaign, he heard from many people that they did not feel they could be as involved with the city as they would like. His goal in creating these committees is to have more involvement from the community. He asked everyone to be open and honest.

Each committee member introduced themselves.

NEW BUSINESS

- Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Chitwood nominated MacNair as Vice-Chairman, 2nd Goodgame, unanimously approved.

- Appointment of Secretary (City Clerk)

City Clerk Cantrell was appointed as secretary to all committees.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- Public Works Department Personnel, Responsibilities, & Current Activities

Public Works Supervisor Cavalli gave an overview of the work done by the public works department including garbage collection, right of way maintenance including mowing, tree trimming, cleaning and repairing ditches. City Manager Lapeyrouse explained how the department is staffed: Cavalli is the public works supervisor and the building inspector. There are three full time employees in the public works department and one full time employee in the water department. Cavalli explained that when it rains, the employees do maintenance work on equipment, clean the shop, and do safety training. Employees also go home if there is no work that needs done.

- Garbage Pick-up & Recycling

MacNair suggested beginning twice a week collection in May instead of waiting until June. Staff concerns and problems with garbage collection include bears and other animals getting into

garbage and scattering it. Some of the underground cans are in disrepair and need replaced. A growing problem is people putting un-bagged garbage in the cans and small individual bags instead of a trash bag. When garbage is put out over the weekend, it will most likely be scattered by Monday pickup. The dumpster at the tractor barn (on the hill behind the post office) is being utilized more and is being emptied a several times a week. The committee discussed recycling, how to educate homeowners about animals and when to put garbage out for collection, and how the collection schedule can be planned so that we pick up from homes at a more consistent time. City Manager Lapeyrouse will get current rates and options for recycling and will do a survey to see how many people are using the dumpster. We need to update the garbage ordinance.

- Drainage Ditches

Cavalli explained ditch maintenance and repair. We have trouble cleaning out the ditches because many of the utility lines are only buried a few inches deep, if at all. Chitwood asked if we have enough employees and how many it would take to keep the city looking pristine. Lapeyrouse said that we used to have part time employees who ran the garbage route, and part time employees who mowed grass during the summer. We are covering all of this with fulltime employees who are split between departments. We do have some funds budgeted this year for part time, seasonal employees if we need it this summer to better keep up with mowing. Trouble areas were pointed out by committee members – W. Sugarbush and Bald Mountain. Cavalli said he will look at W. Sugarbush and that he has contacted the County Road Department regarding Bald Mountain.

- Limbs & Yard Debris

The city chips limbs and collects bagged leaves. We do not have a location conducive to store the mulch. Goodgame said that he is planning to meet with Harrison Merrill and ask if he would donate some property to the city in exchange for us demolishing the old lodge. He said he hopes this will help us with some of the issues: not having a place to store equipment inside, garbage and recycling dumpsters, and a place to store the yard debris.

- Tree Cutting Ordinance

Lapeyrouse explained the current tree ordinance. The committee talked about updating the definition of a tree in the ordinance so that it includes smaller trees. Some lots have been clear-cut because the trees were too small to require permitting to be cut. Discussion followed regarding how the current ordinance is enforced. There is quite a bit of work being done over weekends, and when we find out about it, the homeowners are cited (if the tree cutting would have required a permit), then they must appear in court. At that point, it is the judge that sets the fine. It can be up to \$1,000 per ordinance violation.

- Maintenance Shed

The maintenance shed on Knob Drive has a small dumpster in it and some of the city's equipment. It is too small to hold very much, and most of the city's equipment (back hoe, tractors, mowers) have to sit outside in the weather. Goodgame said that this is partly due to the city not having any property, and that this is one of the reasons he is hoping Merrill will

donate some lots to us. We need to bring up problems and concerns so that we can find solutions.

- Water/Water Rates

Goodgame said that we lose about \$60,000 annually in the water fund due to depreciation. Without accounting for depreciation, we are breaking even on operating but currently have no replacement fund. He said we may need a small rate increase to put toward covering the depreciation so that we can cover future capital expenses. The committee also discussed joining the Rabun County Water and Sewer Authority. If this happens, they will take over our water department, and we will make sure our agreement with them includes an on-site water employee so that our service level remains the same.

- Roads

Our current SPLOST funds are restricted for road improvements. Goodgame said that our roads are in much better condition than most other small cities. Chitwood had a list of gravel roads that he said should be paved. Lapeyrouse will check to see if these gravel roads belong to the city or are private. Some of the people that live on gravel roads do not want their road paved. She also explained that the cost to pave a gravel road is much higher than it is to resurface a paved road.

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