

Sky Valley Mayoral Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2021

10:00 AM

Committee Members Present: Bill Oliver, Ed Morley, Tim Darrah, Dan McAfee, Martin Greene, David Spears, Hollie Steil

1. Welcome

Bill Oliver, Chairman, welcomed all meeting participants.

2. Mayoral Comments

Hollie Steil thanked all committee members for continuing to serve on the Mayoral Advisory Committee. Hollie Steil told the meeting participants that she saw a bright future for Sky Valley with the help of this committee's efforts.

3. Approval of Minutes

Bill Oliver asked for a motion to approve the November 4, 2020 Meeting Minutes. Dan McAfee reported a correction needed to be made to paragraph 4 – last sentence. A motion to approve the minutes with the change was made by Dan McAfee, seconded by Tim Darrah. The motion was approved. Minutes were approved with correction.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

4. Sky Valley Joint Comprehensive Plan (with Rabun County)

Bill Oliver asked if the committee members had reviewed the Comprehensive Plan that was email to them by Karen Fleming. All replied they had received and read/reviewed the document.

Bill Oliver stated it was important for the committee to discuss this document to help create a concise and comprehensive strategic plan for the city of Sky Valley. He also expressed the need to establish priorities for a short-term action plan moving forward which could be tracked and evaluated.

Topics discussed as related to the 2019 Comprehensive Plan (CP)

- **Attention to economic growth.**
Bill Oliver stated this CP entry of “needs” aligns with the Citizen Survey results conducted in 2020 by the City Council.

- **Improve intergovernmental relationships.**
All Members agreed this to be an important continuing issue.

- **Address limited financial resources.**
Bill Oliver reported the 2021 mileage rate had remained the same as 2020 while expenses were increasing. Bill reminded the members that the City of Sky Valley was still in good financial shape as was reported by the city’s auditor in her presented report where she stated Sky Valley was in a good financial status due to a low debt ratio and a healthy fund balance.

- **Improved Transit Services**
Hollie Steil reported several citizens (who attended a 2019 Council Meeting addressing future needs for Sky Valley) indicated there was a need for transit services for citizens needing transportation to attend doctor appointments, shopping, etc.

Tim Darrah reported the existence of aa private transit service available to Sky Valley residents.

Bennett Shuttle Service,
Contact: Stevelyn Bennett,
(863) 559-1941,
stevelynb@aol.com

- **The City’s Infrastructure needs**
 - **Maintenance/Repair of city infrastructures**
Ed Morley shared information about repairing/replacing the main culvert on Sky Valley Way. A Georgia DOT matching grant for \$50,000 has been obtained by the city to help with this repair. The Council is waiting on engineering reports from two entities to bring this issue up for discussion.

Ed Morley described a culvert issue on Knob Drive. Hollie Steil suggested the city may need to send the Public Works Superintendent to evaluate this issue to see if the city's Public Works employees could mitigate this culvert issue.

- **Poor or no internet service**

Tim Darrah reported internet service in Sky Valley is still poor or non-existent in some areas (Winding Ridge, Red Wolf, sections of Alpine). Tim will contact **the District 2 Georgia Municipal Association representative** to discuss the possibility of accruing grants to help with improving the internet access in Sky Valley.

Tim Darrah will contact **Windstream** representatives to schedule a follow up meeting with council members to discuss Windstream plans for improving their current internet services in Sky Valley.

Tim Darrah and Tony Allred reported they had investigated the future option (forecasted to be available in 2 years or less) provided by the company **SpaceX**. SpaceX announced they received a large grant from the Federal Government and will provide internet service to individual households without having to install a hard infrastructure. Tony Allred told the committee that he felt the SpaceX solution would be available before a network infrastructure could be constructed.

Tim Darrah mentioned the possibility of the **North Georgia Network Broadband** being brought to Sky Valley. He explained the cost would be high but he would pursue costs and the details for the next meeting.

Mr. Morley told the committee he would like to have **AT&T** offering cell phone service in Sky Valley.

A new **city map of internet service areas** is now available at Sky Valley City Hall. A suggestion was made that this map be included on the city website.

- **Need for more accommodations and Senior facilities.**

Bill Oliver reported Sky Valley may need to consider building condos to help increase the city's tax base and solve the accommodations shortage.

Tim Darrah said the city **will need additional sewer services** for any future development.

David Spears stated sewer services and developers could go “hand in hand” because developers could build sewer costs into proposed projects.

It was suggested the city should know present Air B&B and VRBO availabilities in Sky Valley.

- CP listed Strengths of Sky Valley
 - Walking paths
 - Pickleball courts – Ed Morley reported the pickleball courts are being continually used even in the winter months.
 - Hiking Trails – Ed Morely suggested the city have Peggy Post’s book on Sky Valley Hiking available on the city’s website.

5. Questions and Answers

No questions were asked by Zoom meeting participants.

6. Setting of Next Meeting Date and Time – Committee Member Actions needed for next meeting.

Bill Oliver asked the Committee members to develop for the next meeting a list of priorities and actions plans from the Comprehensive Plan and Citizen Survey results that could be used to create a quantifiable strategic plan.

Bill said a “ballpark” estimate would need to be developed for updating and redoing the city-owned Visitor/Community Meeting Building. These estimates would be needed for later in the year.

Bill Oliver also asked the committee to consider ways the city might “staff” the Visitor/Community Meeting Building.

The next Mayoral Advisory Committee Meeting on Zoom is scheduled for February 18th at 10:00 AM.

Adjournment

**Dan McAfee made a motion for adjournment, Tim Darrah seconded the motion.
The motion was approved.**

Minutes submitted by Hollie Steil.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hollie Steil". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H' and 'S'. A horizontal line is drawn underneath the signature.

Hollie Steil