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Thursday, January 5, 1978, Vol. 24, No. 12

Town aldermen appointed to posts

by Dan Ward

In a special meeting December 28, Black Mountain Town Board members were assigned specializations of town services and five members were confirmed as a special Citizens' Participation Committee.

All board members agreed on a proposal by Mayor Tom Sobol to assign two aldermen rather than one, to water affairs and eliminate specializations in ABC and cemetery. All apparently agreed to reassigning Ald. Ruth Brandon to Public Safety, Ald. A.F. Tyson to Streets, and assigning Ald. Jim Norton to Recreation and Ald. John Klutz and Michael Begley to water.

During discussion of the appointments, Mayor Sobol suggested that since Tyson had already become involved in water negotiations with Asheville, it might be best that he specialize in water affairs. Tyson responded that he would like to continue in talks with Asheville, but called them a "one-shot thing" and asked that he remain an advisor on street improvements.

Mayor Sobol and Ald. Begley stressed that the appointments be regarded as advisory and as liaison — not administrative. Begley requested that he be appointed to water affairs.

Sobol asked that Norton be appointed to Recreation because he was already involved in the Black Mountain Committee for Better Sports. The mayor said that he hoped

the appointment would patch up "a lack of communication between Recreation and the Committee for Better Sports." Sobol noted that there is overlap between the two programs that could be eliminated.

Mayor Sobol offered to continue in his role as advisor to the board on budget matters.

The board also held a third reading of an ordinance requiring insulation contractors to be licensed by the town. Provision was made at the meeting that the town building inspector approve all insulation work done by the contractors.

Sobol said that a representative of the Land of Sky Regional Council recommended that the town building inspector receive training and do the inspections rather than the county inspector. Sobol also noted that from past experience in construction, he knew that it was easier to get the town inspector to come to a job site on short notice than a county inspector.

The board approved the appointment of Phyllis Byrns, Ruth Smith and Joe Williams to a committee already including Jean Standley and Bill Hickey. The purpose of the committee will be to organize public meetings to get input into town needs that can be satisfied through state and federal funding.

Three items were brought

up to be discussed at the next regular meeting of the board January 9. Ald. Tyson asked that guidelines be set for the amount of revenue sharing funds that may be spent by the town manager without board approval. In most cases, the town manager may not spend more than \$2500 without board approval.

When former Town Manager Jon Creighton spent \$7000 of \$20,000 he was authorized by the board to spend in revenue sharing funds on downtown sidewalk improvements last year, there were some complaints, Tyson said.

Tyson said he did not care whether each line item had to be approved under a spending authorization, but wanted the board policy clarified.

After most of the audience had left, Mayor Sobol asked board members to think about determining what salary Mack Kirkpatrick will start at as town manager, and said the issue will be on the January agenda.

He noted that Kirkpatrick is presently earning \$11,991 as fire chief, that Jon Creighton was earning \$14,874 at the time he left the town manager position and made \$13,374 before his merit raise seven months ago.

Sobol also noted that any persons who would like to serve on the Recreation or Town Beautification Committees should notify the town manager before the January meeting, when those committees will be reappointed.



Snow on a sunny day makes the road to North Fork Reservoir an image of tranquility. (Charlie Taylor)

Road fixups supported

by Dan Ward

The Land of Sky Regional Council has agreed to send recommendations to the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners to approve road improvements in Swannanoa suggested by area residents through a DOT survey.

The council approved committee recommendations to support various improvements, including widening and improving the intersection of US 70 and SR 2412, closing SR 2416 between SR 2436 and SR 2435, improvement of the intersection of SR 2435 and US 70 and classifying SR 2412 as an industrial access road.

J.M. Greenhill, special transportation planning engineer for the DOT, said the projects recommended by the council "are just suggestions", but said the recommendations "carry a lot of weight" in having the projects included within the Highway Improvement Program.

Recommendations were made by area residents when discussions were held through the regional council on the 190 bridge replacement last spring, Greenhill said. After hearing recommendations, DOT personnel made field inspections and did cost estimates before listing improvement priorities, he said.

Also supported at the Land of Sky Regional Council meeting was an application for a Farmers' Home Administration (FHA) grant by Mary Kirby and her son, Graham, of Black Mountain to build an eight-unit apartment building for senior citizens on Montreat Road. Also in support of the council was a grant application for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds made by the Kirbys to install solar heating in the building.

Neither Mary nor Graham Kirby could be contacted by press time to supply more details on the project.

Minimum wage raised

January 1 was a red-letter day for many employees of small retail and service businesses in North Carolina. That's the day on which the Tar Heel State's required minimum wage moved up from \$2.30 an hour to \$2.50 an hour.

On the basis of a 40-hour workweek, the increase will bring an extra \$8.00 a week for thousands of North Carolina's lowest paid workers who make no more than the minimum wage at their jobs.

It will be their second "raise" in six months. By action of the 1977 General Assembly, the required State minimum wage was raised from \$2.00 an hour to \$2.30 an hour on July 1, 1977. That increase, plus the additional 20-cent rise slated for January 1, add up to a 25 percent increase over the old \$2.00 minimum.

"The \$2.50 statutory minimum wage will apply to all non-exempt employees in establishments having four or more employees who are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (Federal Wage-Hour Law)," explained N.C. Commissioner of Labor John C. Brooks. "Many North Carolina employees are covered by the federal minimum, which will advance from the present \$2.30 an hour to \$2.50 an hour on January 1, 1978, in those businesses having a gross annual income of \$250,000 or more. However, there are thousands of other North Carolina workers in small establishments to whom the federal law does not apply.

These workers are often employed in small retail, wholesale, food service and service industry establishments. These people are indebted to the foresight of our General Assembly which built in the additional increase in the State minimum wage in anticipation of the increased federal minimum."

"Without making a comprehensive Statewide survey, for which there is neither budget nor personnel, we have no reliable way of estimating either how many workers are

covered by the State minimum wage at present, or how many of those who are covered are currently being paid less than \$2.50 an hour," Commissioner Brooks stated.

"I believe that the new minimum wage will have a substantial impact upon the earnings of many North Carolina workers who are covered by the State law."

Swannanoa Fire

In the last calendar year, the Swannanoa Volunteer Fire Department fought 97 fires, including 27 structure fires, according to Barry Roberts of the department.

The department also responded to 13 false alarms, 13 rescues and held 36 drills, he said. Other fires included 32 brush fires and 17 car fires, he said.

The work tally for the department for 1977 added up to 97 fires — 1142 man-hours, 13 rescue calls — 355 man-hours, 80 work details — 1649

man-hours, 24 meetings — 789 man-hours and seven schools — 454 man-hours.

Last week, the department made two runs. On December 27, two trucks and 14 men answered a smoke report at the Paul Peterson residence on Riddle Road. \$100 damage was done by the smoke, caused by a faulty furnace motor.

Fireman of the Month is Ricky Bradley, son of Mr. and Mrs. J.R. Bradley of 315 Fountainway. Bradley is a student bus driver at Owen High School.

Bord minets

by Dan Ward

Straightening out old town records may not be entirely dull, as secretaries at Black Mountain Town Hall discovered recently. Between some old-timey controversy and very lax records keeping, the records of our former city fathers are often hilarious.

The following passage is taken from the minutes of the May 13, 1918 meeting of the Town Board. Misspellings are in the minutes.

"3d. Mr Gettis elected by town to fill the office as police until otherwise notified. Mr L. W. Morgan nominated, seconded and elected Chief Of Police, until otherwise notified.

"4th Mr F.C. Watkins made complaint of the town emptying her sewerage into flat

creek on account of having a Mill race on same creek and all sewerage passing through mill dam — making it disagreeable odor for his home — inconvenient for water in case of washing — killing hogs — watering his animals and danger of sickness — He Mr Watkins proposed that a well be dug for the purpose of getting water for use in and around home, and so that his dam be fixed so that he or his wife or any member of the family may flush same at any time. This proposal is claim that Mr F.C. Watkins holds town indebted to him for present damages. Mr Brown suggest that an antiseptic tank be placed at mouth of sewerage. No definite actions taken

"5th The rate for taping water line brought up and decided that the charge shall be \$10.00 for each and every tap until definitely decide."

And another, taken from the minutes of June 6, 1910.

"Bord met in regler session and minets of last meeting wear read and approved.

Moved and second that Real Estat and percnly property be taxed 35 On the one Hundred Dollars Valuation carried.

That the pole tax for Street be \$1.50 (one & Fifty Cents) All dogs tax stands at \$1.00 for each Mael. And \$2.00 for each Female.

Moved second, that all Lumber Dealers pay \$10.00 privleg tax. Carried. Priviledg Tax on all Merchants Stands at \$10.00 Per year. With privilage of selling soft drinks.

Moved and second that Privilege tax on all persons selling fresh meats and produce with privilage of selling soft drinks be \$10.00 pur year.

Privilege tax on all peddlers of cuntry produce de \$2.00 pr year.

On all Bordng Houses & Hotels Under six rooms used for guest Two Dollars and fifty cts. \$2.50 Pr, year Over six rooms and under ten rooms four Dollars & Fifty Cts. \$4.50 Pr, year. Over ten rooms & under Fifteen rooms Ten Dollars \$10.00 Pr, year. Over Fifteen rooms Twenty Dollars \$20.00 Pr, year. This applies to all annex; — Galleries Three Dollars \$3.00 Pr, year; On all Barbar Shops Two Dollars \$2.00 for each chear; On all Cleanig & Pressing establishments Two Dollar \$2.00 PR. Year; —"

Charges dropped in shooting

Charges against two Black Mountain men were dismissed December 27 due to the nature of their dispute, a Sheriff's Department investigator said.

James Nanney of Blue Ridge Road had been charged with first degree burglary December 4 after he was shot in the chest while gaining entry to a house at 95-C Blue Ridge Rd. that he rented to Michael Respass.

Charges were dismissed

against Nanney because he had shown that he entered the house only to collect rent owed him by Respass, the investigator said.

Respass, who was charged with assault with a deadly weapon shortly after the incident, has also had charges against him dropped. The two men would not testify against each other, the investigator said.

Nanney was found guilty,

however, of earlier charges of communicating a threat against Respass.

Meet the board

We are sorry that we were unable to interview Ivan Stafford, the final Montreat councilman in our Meet

the Board series, before he left this week on a trip. We hope to bring our readers an article on Mr. Stafford in a future issue.

Without making a comprehensive Statewide survey, for which there is neither budget nor personnel, we have no reliable way of estimating either how many workers are

Dino Summerlin

Broadcaster returns to Valley

by Dan Ward

When Sheldon (Dino) Summerlin left Black Mountain more than a decade ago to pursue a career in radio

broadcasting, he planned to return one day. Last month he did — as assistant station manager at WWNC in Asheville.

"I never wanted to leave,

actually," Summerlin said. "But I did have an interest in communications and broadcasting and didn't have the opportunity here."

Since Summerlin, a 1956

Owen graduate, completed his schooling at Mars Hill College and Eastern Carolina University, he has acquired an impressive record while working at stations in Eastern North Carolina, Florida, South Carolina, Arkansas and Texas. As general manager of KJCS in Lufkin, Texas, his last position, Summerlin pulled the station from a rating of 14 in the area to the most listened to.

Other awards he has acquired are Best D.J. in Florida — 1969, and 13 awards in Texas including Best Local Newscast, Best Editorial, Best Public Affairs Spot and Best Spot Announcement.

When he learned of an opening at WWNC created by the retirement of present manager Claude Freeman, Summerlin passed up another job opportunity at a Dallas station.

"As a matter of fact, I took less money to come here than if I'd gone to Dallas — cheerfully," he said. "There are no trees in Dallas," he quipped.

Beside trees and "a lot of relatives in this area," Summerlin said there are special people in the Valley who made him want to come home. Two are Mary Freeman Kaiser, a former teacher of his who made it possible for him to attend college, and "Granny" Swan, who housed him when his parents moved to Asheville so that he could continue going to Owen High School.

Summerlin, who now lives near Broad River with his wife, Jeannie and daughters, Kimberly and Shelly, said he is working to get a feel again for the lifestyle of the people of Western North Carolina.

"I'll be doing editorials next year," he said. "We don't want to do editorials to make noise — we want to do issues of interest to the public."

"We just plan to continue to be the dominant radio station in Western North Carolina. As to the habits, likes, change — we'll adjust accordingly," he said.

"Whatever the people want and enjoy is what we will give them," he concluded.



Something to crow about

Foghorn the rooster crows in the New Year from atop a woodpile. (Nancy Ward)