

BLACK MOUNTAIN NEWS

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Town Board passes referendum resolution

by Clint Williams

A muggy July evening and a heated issue combined to make the atmosphere of the July 10 meeting of the Black Mountain Town Board especially hot and sticky. The request that the Board adopt a resolution to ask the Buncombe County Board of Elections to call for a referendum to determine whether the sale of mixed beverages will be allowed within the Black Mountain city limits over-shadowed all the other items on the agenda and was the main drawing card for the over-flow crowd that included representatives from the print and broadcast media of Asheville.

In an unprecedented alteration of procedure, Mayor Tom Sobol introduced the second item on the agenda by saying, "In order that we be completely fair, if there are no objections by the Board, I move to suspend our Roberts Rules of Order for a period not to exceed 10 minutes, to allow anyone who is in the audience a chance to speak."

At the urging of other Board members, Sobol increased the period of discussion to 15 minutes. Before he opened the floor to discussion, Sobol said, "We are not voting on the pros and cons of liquor. That, in no way, should be brought up as discussion. Period."

"This Town Board is going to make a decision on whether to allow the citizens of Black Mountain to decide whether to give them the right, themselves, to decide whether they want mixed drinks or whether they want to continue brown-bagging. It's a matter of control, not a matter of morality," Sobol added. One of the first speakers was Don Taylor of Asheville, President of the Christian Action League.

Taylor said that the man who is against alcohol "has no vote." He went on to say that the state-wide referendum held in 1973 showed that the people were against liquor by the drink by a margin of three to one.

"The Council is completely disregarding the will of the people," Taylor said, "they're

saying 'We know what we want and we're holding you to 15 minutes to discuss it and that's going to be the end of it.'"

Former Alderman, John Monday, another anti-mixed drink representative, pointed out that by calling for this referendum the Town Board may be risking receiving a petition calling for another one.

"Now, I know that you've worked long and hard on your budget, and getting your budget in line," Monday said.

"The ABC store means about \$88,000, \$90,000 a year to you. The wine and beer tax means a whole lot more to you, it means about \$12,000 to \$15,000 a year. You're going to gamble that you're not going to have a referendum against those two by allowing (this) referendum."

Monday said that the governing bodies of Greenboro and Raleigh were delaying action on the mixed drink referendum until the policies governing mixed beverages had been finalized by the state ABC board. He said that he'd like to see the Board postpone action until the state ABC board has a petition from 20 per cent of the voters requesting a referendum to vote on the sale of mixed drinks or find out what the policies of the state ABC board will be.

Monday also said that if a referendum to decide if mixed drinks can be sold in Black Mountain comes up, "we can have a petition within a week saying, 'all right, we're going to vote whether you're going to keep your ABC store around.'" The comment that received the most audible response from the standing-room-only crowd, was made by Chet Prentice.

"I swear, honest to goodness," Prentice said, "I can see where you can be against liquor, you can be against sex, you can be against cards, you can be against anything, but I honestly don't see how you can be against democracy. And that is what this is about. Give us a chance to vote on it."

Prentice's comments were met with applause. Following Prentice, Don

Taylor spoke again. He said at \$1.50 a shot, the amount of profit for the seller of mixed drinks was \$45 per bottle.

"The profits (from the sale of mixed drinks) will be taken out of the pockets of the people of your community," Taylor said.

"New York has liquor by the drink," Taylor continued, "and they're bankrupt. Because they had to keep up with the drunks. They had to support those who couldn't support themselves."

Taylor went on to say that liquor by the drink is part of the reason tax-payers in California enacted Proposition 13. "That (liquor-by-the-drink) is what has created much of the expense of it," Taylor said. "Welfare expenses that are paid is because of liquor by the drink."

Taylor's closing comments signaled the end of discussion from the floor. Less than half the 15 minutes allotted by Sobol was used by the audience.

Before presenting the official reading of the resolution, Sobol again stated that the Board was not voting on the pros and cons of liquor. After the official reading of the resolution, Ald. Jim Norton broke a brief, tense silence by making a motion that the Board accept the resolution. Ald. John Klutz quickly seconded the motion.

In the discussion between the aldermen that followed the motion, Ald. Ruth Brandon asked if a "social establishment" as mentioned in the bill could be a massage parlor. She went on to say that such things were not clear "since no guidelines have been drawn-up."

Mrs. Brandon went on to say that there was "too much urgency" regarding the passing of the resolution and questioned the Town's ability to pay for the election when there were so many other things, such as the water system, that the money could be spent for.

It was then pointed out that an election would cost approximately \$400.

Ald. A.F. Tyson said, "I can't see any moral issue involved here in giving the people the

right to vote. In fact, I think we have the responsibility, when any issue comes that the people can vote on, to give the people the right to vote on it."

Ald. Brandon then offered an amendment, "I'd like to amend this motion to have put on the same ballot, the question whether the town citizens want the local ABC store around."

After some discussion and confusion, the motion for the amendment dies for want of a second.

The resolution to ask for a referendum to decide the issue of the sale of mixed drinks in Black Mountain then passed by a four to one margin, with Ald. Ruth Brandon the only dissenting vote.

Fire Report

by Dan Ward

Arista, Chiapas, Mexico — Watching the sun set on an almost deserted, cool and breezy beach on the Pacific side of Southern Mexico sounds wonderful — until you consider the amount of driving it takes to get there.

From the endless Stuckey's signs of sterile U.S. highways to the overwhelming heat and barrenness of Texas and Northeast Mexico, the awareness mercifully numbs — leaving only a fraction of the memory of the miles. And then comes the mountains.

I had hoped to write a series on mountain living in Central America as compared to Western North Carolina. After taking mental notes on log houses, wood cutters and Mezcal moonshiners, I realized that the main similarity is not in how people

behave, but in their attitude toward life.

Mountain folks are the hardest working Mexicans — and have the least to show for it, but they make the best of it. An example is a boy I saw pulling a cart load of fire wood up the highway. He let his dog ride on top of the load and talked to it as he toiled along.

Mountain folks know how to laugh and take time for strangers. Trying to figure out through mime what part of the chicken a menu described drew the help and laughter of four people.

The beauty and moods of the mountains here are spectacular. And never were they so beautiful as in Oaxaca, where the cool, green, rolling hills reminded me of home. Next stop, Guatemala.

In-the-Oaks

Mansion reflects innovative luxury

by Priscilla Hopkins

The Dutch Room of In-The-Oaks, is located partially below ground. This room is entered through a double door arrangement: two single, heavy wooden doors are hung on opposite sides of a 26-inch thick masonry wall. The room also had double sets of windows — the inner of leaded glass and the outer of regular glass. These special features were allegedly incorporated into the construction of the room to assure complete privacy here during the Prohibition era. The atmosphere is that of an English pub and it was here that family and friends spent many happy hours playing cards — especially bridge. The fireplace and adjacent wall area are covered with imported Delft tiles decorated with ship and abstracted floral motifs. The paneled walls have inlaid butterfly joints and the floor is genuine wide board planking. A custom crafted bar sink and cupboards fill one corner of the snug and cozy room.

Connecting with this room was the wine cellar which was secreted behind a locked door that opened into a bartender's room whose west wall had two false swing-out doors in front of a solid appearing wall with removable shelves. This then, slid into the wall to reveal at last Mr. Terry's well cared for and completely catalogued cellar. It included not only an extensive assortment of wonderful wines, but also a complete stock of liquors and liquers.

His close attention to detail and appreciation of or-

derliness is reflected in the records of his private stock: each bottle stored there had an index card that gave its kind, brand, price, dates purchased and used, and its location by bin and slot. The temperature was constant year-around because the cellar was underground. All that is left are a few empty jars that once held home-brew and a number of wine bottles, their corks rotten and moldy.

The adjacent offices occupied by Mr. Terry and his secretary and a fire-proof vault used to secure business papers are also in this portion of the house; his will was found in the latter. Today, the offices are used by the manager of In-The-Oaks.

The lower levels of the house contain a labyrinth of service rooms which include laundry and sewing rooms, a vegetable root cellar and several boiler rooms with huge fuse boxes whose interiors are mazes of circuits which are artistically as well as functionally laid out. A covered tunnel connects one of the boiler rooms with a two car garage.

One of the storerooms is especially interesting because it contains a row of barrels full of screws, fixtures, tiles, plumbing supplies etc. ready for use in repair and replacement as needed. These items date from the construction of the house and are still another example of Mr. Terry's thoroughness.

Immediately upon completion of the minor house, a multi-storied wing was added obliquely at the northwestern

corner which emphasized the massive structure of the house and enriched its lines architecturally. Housed in the addition was a gymnasium-ballroom on the upper level. It has a maple floor, decorative structural beams, and french casement windows and doors with fan lights on three walls. On the wall that adjoins the house, a balcony over-looks the room and connects with the Master Suite.

Beneath this was a heated pool whose dimensions are 20 feet X 60 feet and whose depths range from 4 feet to 9 feet. At one end of the pool room stands a huge granite fireplace with near-by benches where swimmers could sit and warm themselves. Large windows fill the

remaining three walls and shower and dressing rooms connect with the pool area. On the level below the pool deck are the boiler rooms for the pool and a complete two lane bowling alley.

An architectural error resulted in an uncompleted space between the addition and the original portion of the structure. This oddly shaped space was tucked away between the floor of the ballroom balcony and the ceiling of the pool area. Imaginative workmen improvised as they worked and turned the space into what is now a fascinating guest suite of two bedrooms with eight and five walls respectively, a sitting room and a private bath. This area has come to

be known as NELA's apartment, NELA being the acronym for Mr. Terry's company, the National Electric Lamp Association.

The house incorporated several innovative ideas. The first was the multi-level interior floor arrangement—it would be called split level today. A second was the installation of the Johnson heating system that had area thermostats—an idea in great demand in our energy conscious times! The third was a battery operated intercom system.

A much older feature of construction—and one that lends color to the house—was the incorporation of secret panels in portions of the

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Ald. Ruth Brandon cast the only "nay" vote on a motion to adopt the resolution calling for a mixed beverage referendum. (Clint Williams)

Wells highlight other Board business

by Clint Williams

The resolution to request a mixed drink referendum dominated the agenda of the July 10 meeting of the Black Mountain Town Board but there were other matters of business covered.

In the communication from the mayor, Tom Sobol notified the Board, and the public, of a letter received from the Planning Board.

The letter informed the mayor that the property owned by W.C. Nichols and recently annexed by the Town of Black Mountain, has been zoned R-20. The letter also said that the Planning Board would meet at 7:30 p.m. on the last Monday of every month and that any request for Planning Board action must be made at the Town Manager's office by the 15th of the month or no action would be taken until the next month.

The letter also said that Wendell Begley had been appointed as a representative to the Committee for Amending Zoning Ordinances. The mayor also called for a special Board meeting at 6 p.m. on July 24 to review bids for the renovation of the Club house.

Mac Kirkpatrick opened his Town Manager's report by commending the Jaycees for their construction of a mini-park at Oakland Drive and South Park Lane.

Kirkpatrick informed the Board that the BOR grant had been verbally approved and asked for permission to execute a contract and advertise for bids when the paper work for the BOR grant is completed.

Kirkpatrick said that the lowest bid for the installation of tennis court lights was \$4,478. A committee meeting to decide whether the lights will be installed at the present

tennis court complex or at the proposed courts that are to be built with the BOR grant money has not been called yet, Kirkpatrick said.

After consultation with officials in Waynesville and Hendersonville, it was determined that it would be more economical for the Town to renovate the sidewalks on Cherry Street rather than advertise for bids and contract the renovation to a private builder.

"With the amount of money we have, we can build in excess of 200 feet, 100 on each side," Kirkpatrick said.

The cost of the seven foot wide brick sidewalk will be \$15 per running foot, Kirkpatrick said.

In response to a request by Mrs. Burgin at the last regular Board meeting, her street has been scraped and named "Rocky Street," Kirkpatrick reported.

Kirkpatrick said that he has spoken to State Highway officials and the light on US 70 through town will be retimed as soon as possible.

Kirkpatrick announced the hiring of a new dog-catcher. Mr. S. B. Griffiths was acquired through CETA.

An eight-inch line burst and was the primary cause for a four foot drop in the reservoir water level, Kirkpatrick said. Because of this, arrangements have been made for the drilling of the wells that were approved at the last regular meeting. The drilling is taking place now, Kirkpatrick said.

A presentation by Martin Nesbitt, an attorney representing the Swannanoa Volunteer Fire Department, was the first item of new business. Nesbitt's presentation ended with a proposal

that the communities involved in the current fire boundary dispute form a committee to "pin down certain facts" and make a decision that is best for all the communities involved.

The third order of business, following the mixed drink referendum resolution (see related story, page one) was the town's adoption of the upkeep of the Black Mountain cemetery. Mrs. Bertha Jones asked the Board to enact some interim measures for the upkeep of the site until a local bill can be passed by the State Legislature permitting the Town to care for the property.

Mayor Sobol moved that the currently dormant committee investigating the matter be activated to gather the facts necessary for Rep. Gordon Greenwood to draw up the local bill to allow the Town to maintain the cemetery. He also asked Town Manager Mac Kirkpatrick to consult with the town attorney to see what measures the Town could take, without incurring any liability, until the local bill is passed.

A letter of resignation by Fire Chief Sterling Poe, an item not on the agenda, was presented by Kirkpatrick. A letter from Gary Robinson, President of the Black Mountain Fire Squadron, recommending Gary Bartlett to replace Poe as fire chief was also presented by Kirkpatrick.

The Board then broke into executive session and later announced that the resignation of Poe had been accepted and that Gary Bartlett had been appointed to replace Poe.

The meeting was then adjourned.



The indoor pool of In-the-Oaks (Dan Ward)