

Boone Denies ETJ Picks, Suit Threatened

Written by Steve Frank

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There's another battle brewing between the Watauga County Commission and the Town of Boone, and again, it is over appointments to the Boone Planning Board from the extraterritorial jurisdiction district just outside the town limits. In a letter dated Monday, Town Manager Greg Young informed the county of the appointments of Dale Greene and Frank Bolick would not be seated on the board, and that the appointment made before the last two, Jon Tate, may be voided, saying he was "inadvertently" sworn in. Young's letter mentions 2011 amendments to the code, but does not specify what is causing the town to again take this action. County Commission chair Nathan Miller this morning said that Greene and Bolick were suggested by the town, and that the town is in violation of its own ordinance, "The town of Boone, once again, fails to follow their own ordinances, not only have they failed to follow their own ordinance, but their action oversteps the statutory authority granted them by the North Carolina Legislature. Their failure to seat these ETJ members hurts all the members of the ETJ, and the county will defend our ETJ appointments. The people who live in the ETJ, the only voice they have is through the county commissioners and their appointments. And the town, once again denying appointments, is not only illegal but the county is not going to stand by and let that happen." Miller said that their three options are to hold a public hear, which could take a month, meet with the Town, which could take 3 to 4 months, or take legal action, "The other option is to file a lawsuit and get an injunction seating those members." Miller said the town had six openings on the board, and the county's effort to fill half is now back to the drawing board—or the courtroom.