

County Offers Meeting Time, Place

Written by Steve Frank
Thursday, 18 April 2013 15:51

Watauga County responded to the Town of Boone by letter this afternoon, offering a meeting to resolve their differences over new Boone housing standards that will kill the \$19 million sale of the old Watauga High property. But Watauga County Manager Deron Geouque's letter to Boone

Town Manager Greg Young still maintains the county's position of an open meeting in front of public and press as opposed to the town's desire for closed mediation. The town had offered four possible dates for meeting, beginning Tuesday, and Geouque's letter indicates that Tuesday at 5:30 would be their choice--the day before the due diligence period ends on the sale of the property. The Boone Town Council holds their second regularly scheduled meeting tonight, and there may be a response to the county at that point. The county voted Tuesday to send a letter to the state to change the sales tax distribution in the county, a move that would cost the town \$2 million annually, county commission chairman Nathan Miller saying that the move was to help the county recover some of their loss from what is anticipated as the cancelled sale of the old high school and the devaluation of the property due to the Boone Town Council action.



WATAUGA COUNTY OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY MANAGER
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April 18, 2013

Greg Young, Manager
Town of Boone
567 West King Street
Boone, NC 28607

Dear Greg:

The County is in receipt of your letter dated April 17, 2013, requesting mediation again with the Board of Commissioners for April 23rd, 24th, 25th, or 26th any time between 12:00 PM through 7:00 PM. The County has and is still committed to meeting with the Town to amicably resolve the issues at hand. However, the Board of Commissioners are unswerving in the necessity of the meeting to include both the full Boards and be open to the public. While the debate over closed session versus open to the public continues, all sides can agree that a meeting is necessary and beneficial to both parties involved in order for a resolution of the issues to be forged.

The County echoes its previous position that the Town may provide a mediator/moderator in which the County will still participate so long as the meeting remains open to the public. As time is of the essence, a meeting including the full Boards is essential for an expedient resolution to the current matter. Any agreement between the Town and County will require approval by both Boards, mediation with less than the full Boards will require additional time and meetings to resolve the matter.

In review of the dates submitted by the Town and in consideration of the Board of Commissioners, April 23, 2013 at 5:30 PM will be suitable for the Commissioners. Please confirm this date so that appropriate arrangements may be made. The County is willing to provide the Board of Commissioners Meeting Room for the location.

Thank you for your assistance and attention to this issue. We look forward to the Town's confirmation of April 23, 2013 at 5:30 PM as the meeting time.

Best Regards,

Handwritten signature of Deron T. Geouque in blue ink.

Deron T. Geouque
County Manager

CC: Mayor and Boone Town Council
Watauga County Board of Commissioners