

Consensus Sought on Sound Ordinance

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Defining what is meant by “reasonable” was the most audible issue heard during a Town Council work session Thursday evening. The Town’s current noise ordinance, which is under moratorium until November 1st while improvements are being sought, indicates noise levels should not exceed

what would be considered reasonable instead of settling a decibel level limit. Town Council scheduled a work session to see if common ground could be found among all the stakeholders affected by the new noise ordinance. Seated around the conference tables with the commissioners were citizens affected by downtown’s businesses that generate loud noise late at night, the owners of those businesses, and Boone police officers who enforce the ordinance that affects both parties.

The session began with Mayor Clawson stating the purpose of the meeting and asking all parties to remain respectful with each other as they worked together to improve the ordinance. Following that she called for all the representatives to state what they hoped to accomplish during the session. Captain Jim Wilson, of the Boone Police Department, began the comments by stating they needed guidance from the council on enforcement of the ordinance so the officers could effectively implement controls all parties wanted. Following his comments Mayor Clawson asked each of the Council members what they felt needed to be accomplished. Themes that arose as the Council members spoke [and from others during the evening] were; fostering cooperation, finding common ground, taking the middle of the road, and striking a balance. Council member Brantz called for preserving the unique qualities of our community and respecting each of its members. After Council members expressed their hopes for the session Mayor Clawson called on the citizens and business owners present to express what they wanted the session to accomplish. Judy Humphrey and Terry Taylor, residents of Grand Boulevard, shared how they were kept awake by the loud bands till two o’clock am some nights and asked that the ordinance prohibit any loud noise after ten or eleven pm. Matt Johnson, with Boone Saloon, was very conciliatory with his comments stating they did not want to disturb residents, but did want to be able to make a living.

After much discussion among those present and Town attorney Furgiuele, who is charged with drafting the ordinance, Council directed him to revise the sections causing the most concerns using suggestions from the work session. Another work session will be scheduled to review the revisions with the date for the review to be set at next week’s regularly scheduled Council meeting.