

Boone Chamber Steps into Town, County Dispute

Written by Steve Frank
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The Boone Area Chamber of Commerce is attempting to inject some calm and reason in the dispute between the Boone Town Council and Watauga County Commission, a fight that now means millions of dollars to both sides. The two are feuding over Boone's Affordable Housing Standards recently enacted, new rules that county leaders see as carried out to stop Phil Templeton's \$19 million bid on the old Watauga High property. In retribution for the town's action, the county board voted to change sales tax distribution, costing Boone \$2 million a year, starting in July. Stepping into the dispute, a letter from the chamber asks for the two boards to put aside the rhetoric and sit down to work out a solution. The letter, signed by Susan Jones of the Business Development committee, Chairman Daniel Minton, and chamber exec Dr. Dan Meyer, says, in part, "Conflicts typically end in a win/lose outcome, but we cannot afford that result!" The letter goes on to say, "Our local business economy is struggling to recover from a severe recession. These additional concerns over the current back-and-forth attacks is demoralizing. This rhetoric has turned from "principle" to "political" to "personal" – this cannot continue without irreparable damage being done." The letter says the chamber is not looking for a specific course of action but to focus "on what is good for all." The entire letter is posted below.



BOONE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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Serving the Heart of the High Country

April 26, 2013

Watauga County Board of Commissioners
814 West King Street
Boone, NC 28607

Town of Boone Council Members
567 West King Street – Town Hall
Boone, NC 28607

Dear Commissioners and Council Members,

The greater High Country in general, and the Boone/Watauga Business community specifically, are extremely concerned about the current conflict between our two governmental bodies. Conflicts typically end in a win/lose outcome, but we cannot afford that result! We all practice moderation and work out compromises in our work and daily lives. Your Boone/Watauga County businesses need a win-win! Any other outcome will simply extend discussion into the future.

Our local business economy is struggling to recover from a severe recession. These additional concerns over the current back-and-forth attacks is demoralizing. This rhetoric has turned from "principle" to "political" to "personal" – this cannot continue without irreparable damage being done.

Please find a way to sit down together and bring about resolution! We are not asking for a particular course of action, but as our elected representatives, we ask you to focus on community betterment – what is good for all. Lead us into a prosperous future.

Respectfully,

Susan Jones Susan Jones Chair Business Development	Daniel Minton Daniel Minton Board Chairman	Dan Meyer Dr. Dan Meyer President/CEO
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Cc: Derron Goussique, Watauga County Manager
Greg Young, Boone Town Manager
High Country media outlets