**Town of Lake Santeetlah**

**Organizational Council Meeting Minutes (Zoom)**

**December 9, 2021**

Mayor Jim Hager called the meeting to order at 10:00AM. Councilmembers Connie Gross, Diana Simon, Tina Emerson and Ralph Mitchell were present for the meeting. Town Administrator Matheson and Town Clerk Emily Hooper and Attorney Craig Justus were also present.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Councilmember Simon asked to move item #5 Challenge of Previous Council Members Residency to number #2 and stated that the Item should read: Challenge of New Council Members Residency. Simon also asked to move Item #3 TDA Financial Report to Item #5. Tina Emerson asked to move Item #1 Organization of the Town Council to the first item of business. Simon made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Gross seconded. All others approved. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of the November 18, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes:** Councilmember Simon made a motion to approve the November 18, 2021 Council Meeting Minutes. Councilmember Hager seconded. All others approved. The motion passed unanimously.

**Financial/Tax Report:** Tax collection for December was $60,160.20.

**Request for Public Comment:**

Keith Predmore: Predmore thanked Town Staff for their dedicated work to the Town of Lake Santeetlah during his last four years on the Town Council.

Jack Gross: Gross stated that the Town has a policy in place requiring a contractor to have a minimum of two million dollars general liability insurance to qualify for work for the Town. Gross asked why this contractor was given special privileges and Town Policy wasn’t followed.

Susan Robinson: Encouraged all members present on the Zoom call to work together to make the Town the best it can be. Robinson hopes that the new board will listen to part time residents during public comment and allow them to have a voice within the Town despite their inability to vote.

Mary Roemer: Roemer encouraged the new Council to hear all the voice of all residents. Roemer explained the law for qualifications to participate in the election or hold office within the Town.

Mark DeVerges: DeVerges is a new resident in the Town of Lake Santeetlah and looks forward to getting to know others who live in the Town. He thanked those he had met already for their generosity.

**Organization of the Town Council:** Mayor Hager nominated Diana Simon to be the new Mayor for Lake Santeetlah. Simon seconded. Emerson, Gross and Mitchell opposed. Hager made a motion to nominate Ralph Mitchell. Mitchell declined. Emerson made a motion to nominate Gross as Mayor. Mitchell seconded. Gross approved. Simon and Hager opposed. The motion passed three to two. Gross will be the Mayor of Lake Santeetlah. Simon made a motion to nominate Hager as Finance Officer. Hager seconded. Emerson, Gross and Mitchell opposed. Gross nominated Emerson as Town Finance Officer. Emerson seconded. Mitchell agreed. Simon and Hager opposed. The motion passed three to two. Emerson will be the Town Finance Officer. Emerson made a motion for Gross to be Assistant Finance Officer. Gross seconded. Mitchell approved. Hager and Simon opposed. The motion passed three to two. Gross will be the Assistant Finance Officer. Emerson made a motion to nominate Mitchell as Vice Mayor. Gross seconded. Mitchell agreed. Hager and Simon opposed. The motion passed three to two. Mitchell will be the Vice Mayor for the Town.

**Old Business:**

1. **Developing Strategy for TLS Broadband Upgrade: Follow up from Jim Hager contact to Balsam West Representative:** Hager sent an email to the representative and there are no updates at this time.

**New Business:**

1. **Organization of the Town Council:** Moved to the first item of business.
2. **2022 Meeting Schedule /Dates and Time:** Gross made a motion to set the Council meeting as the second Thursday of each month but change the time to 5:30PM. Emerson seconded. Simon asked about legal counsel and Town Staff being available at that time. Hager suggested sending out an email for preference of meeting times. Hager and Simon opposed. Mitchell agreed. The motion passed three to two.
3. **TDA Financial Report:** Simon provided the financial report for the TDA as of November 2021: Total Assets (Savings and Checking), $36,995.21 Revenue for July 1 through November 21, $14,627.72. The Budget for the year was $22,000.
4. **Initial Offer to Purchase: Thomas & Jane Brickell:** This item will be tabled due to advertising reasons. The ten day time frame has not been met for an upset bid to be placed. This will be on the January agenda.
5. **Challenge of Previous Council Members Residency:** Simon shared her concern with two new Council members not being full time residents of the Town of Lake Santeetlah. Simon referred NC Constitution Article 6 #8 the guidelines of NC to serve as a Town Council Member. Simon also referenced an email from Tina Emerson dated September 26, 2019. Emerson challenged the residency of Council members Patrick O’Donovan and Mary Williams and asked them to resign from the Lake Santeetlah Town Council. Simon shared several exhibits identifying the address for Emerson being Mathews NC. Simon pointed out that Emerson registered in Graham County in September 2021 to vote in the Town of Lake Santeetlah. Emerson commented that her residence had been rescinded in Mathews NC. According to Emerson she gave up her domicile in Mathews. Simon made a motion that according to evidence presented today Emerson should resign immediately from the Lake Santeetlah Town Council. Hager seconded. Emerson, Gross and Mitchell opposed.
6. **State guidelines for Municipalities:** Emerson explained that when the Town was formed, they never went through the proper process to become a Town. The requirements were never met when the Town was established.
7. **Review of Front Entrance Contract:** Emerson asked about the comment Gross made during Public Comment. Does the contractor have the correct amount of general liability as required by the Town? Gross had stated two million was required. The Council is uncertain how much general liability the contractor has. Emerson asked if a survey was completed prior to the project. Emerson also asked if a job schedule was supplied, as well as a list of subcontractors. These are items listed on the contract as required by the Town prior to signature. Emerson made a motion to place the contract on hold until a survey is completed, and the insurance was confirmed to be the standard required by the Town. Gross seconded. Hager and Simon opposed. Emerson, Gross and Mitchell agreed. The motion passed, three to two.

**Announcements:**

* The next regular scheduled Council Meeting will be held January 13, 2022 at 5:30PM. This meeting will be held via Zoom, unless otherwise notified. Information will be sent out at a later date.

**Motion to Adjourn.**

Councilmember Emerson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Gross seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:22AM

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Connie Gross, Mayor Emily Hooper, Town Clerk