

The Board of Zoning Appeals regular meeting of the Town of Front Royal, Virginia was held on March 15, 2022, at 7 pm.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Sealock called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ROLL CALL – DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Present: Wayne Sealock, Chairman
Cody Taylor
Michael Sean Williams
Christine Erin
Amanda McCarthy

Staff: Lauren Kopishke, Director of Planning / Zoning Administrator
Connie L. Potter, Executive Assistant

Chairman Sealock welcomed the new BZA members.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A discussion was held clarifying the terms for BZA members is five (5) years. It was noted Wayne Sealock's term was expiring May 2022. Connie Potter remains the Board Secretary.

Mr. Williams moved, seconded by Ms. Erin to elect Wayne Sealock as Chairman.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: Yes – Taylor, Williams, Erin, McCarthy, Sealock
No – N/A
Absent – N/A
Abstain – N/A

VOICE VOTE

Mr. Williams moved, seconded by Ms. Erin to elect Michael Williams as Vice Chairman.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: Yes – Taylor, Williams, Erin, McCarthy, Sealock
No – N/A
Absent – N/A
Abstain – N/A

VOICE VOTE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- September 21, 2021

Mr. Williams moved, seconded by Ms. Erin to approve the minutes as written.

There was no discussion.

VOTE: Yes – Erin, Sealock, Taylor, Williams

No – N/A

Absent – N/A

Abstain – McCarthy

VOICE VOTE

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Review of By-Laws**

Chairman Sealock said for Board members to look over the by-laws and he would try to answer any questions they may have.

The by-laws were last updated June 17, 2014 and noted they may need to incorporate state code changes in the by-laws.

Mr. Williams has questions regarding the Zoning Administrator as mentioned in the by-laws.

Ms. Kopishke responded by explaining that a one-point Mr. Hicks, Town Manager and Town Council were mulling over taking Zoning Administrator away from the Planning Director and making Mr. Hicks the Zoning Administrator for the Town and have the Planning Director be the Deputy Zoning Administrator. That is not in line with state code because the appeal process for the Zoning Administrator is the BZA. You cannot have a Deputy Zoning Administrator make a decision and then appeal that decision to the Zoning Administrator.

Ms. Kopishke said she could have the Assistant Town Attorney, George Sonnett review the BZA By-Laws and confirm whether or not there are any conflicts within the by-laws and confirm if state code references are still active.

- **Certified BZA Training**

Meeting dates for the Certified Board of Zoning Appeals Program were discussed. Ms. Potter reviewed who was currently signed up for the program. It is a 2-day course in Richmond for the opening session and then go back for a 1-day course for the closing session.

Ms. Potter reminded Board members to discuss only items on the agenda and wait until after the meeting to discuss items not on the agenda.

Chairman Sealock explained meeting processes. He stressed that in order to grant a variance the applicant must prove there is a hardship.

Ms. Kopishke talked about a variance application that might be coming to the BZA requiring a variance for setback requirements.

Mr. Williams asked if BZA members could visit the property related to the application. Staff answered yes.

Ms. Kopishke explained that she makes a zoning determination. The applicant has thirty (30) days to submit an appeal to that determination. That application will then go to the BZA for review. A staff report is written citing sections of the code and why the determination was made. Once that is complete the meeting packets are delivered to BZA members. BZA members will review the staff report and application to determine whether or not to uphold the Zoning Administrator's decision or offer a variance.

Mr. Williams asked if he could talk to staff directly if he has questions concerning the zoning determination and application.

Ms. Kopishke stated she has an open door and BZA members can speak with her at any time.

Some discussion was held regarding high grass violations.

Chairman Sealock noted that if you see violations in town talk to the Planning & Zoning office staff.

Ms. Kopishke shared that there is an online portal where you can submit a complaint and it goes directly to her and the Code Enforcement Officer.

Ms. Kopishke asked that each BZA member read the BZA By-Laws before the next regular meeting. She stated she would email the members Chapter 175-140 of the Zoning Ordinance. Anytime something comes to the BZA for review you will measure your decision by what is in the ordinance.

A brief discussion was held regarding BZA terms.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Williams moved, seconded by Ms. Erin to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Yes – Erin, Williams, Taylor, Sealock, McCarthy
 No – N/A
 Absent – N/A
 Abstain – N/A

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 pm

Approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals
Date: June 21, 2022