



Town of Mineral Springs

TWENTENTH EDITION

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2015

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Schedule of Events:

- May 4, 2015 - 6:00 p.m.
Special Town Council Meeting
Public Input - 7:00 p.m. (see back page)*
- May 14, 2015 - 7:30 p.m.
Town Council Meeting*
- May 18, 2015 - 7:00 p.m.
Planning Board Meeting*
- May 19, 2015 - 10:00 a.m.
Coffee with the Mayor at the
Mineral Springs Town Hall*
- June 11, 2015 - 7:30 p.m.
Town Council Meeting*
- June 22, 2015 - 7:00 p.m.
Planning Board Meeting*
- July 9, 2015 - 7:30 p.m.
Town Council Meeting*
- July 11, 2015 - 9:00 a.m.
Coffee with the Mayor at the
McNeely Road Parking Area*
- July 27, 2015 - 7:00 p.m.
Planning Board Meeting*
- September 19, 2015
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Mineral Springs 2nd Annual
Festival*

Town Council Retreat

The Mineral Springs Town Council held a retreat on Tuesday, January 20, 2015 at the Rolling Hills Country Club in Monroe, North Carolina. Members of the Mineral Springs Planning Board were also in attendance. The retreat was facilitated by Centralina Council of Governments representatives Nadine Bennett and Emily Parker.

In a team building exercise, the town council and planning board were asked what accomplishments they would like to see in a “Newspaper of the Future” for the town. The group responses included: greenspace preservation, innovative downtown design, annual festival, land use plan in place, maintain low tax rate, sewer—2014 (on Highway 75), investment in human resources, signage downtown, restaurants downtown, new city hall, rural character intact, steeplechase, parks for all/greenway, worship for all, accessible local government, and continuous improvement. The headlines would read: Celebration, Conservation, Great Place to Live and Call Home, Rural Integrity and Quality of Life, and Oasis in a Desert of Suburban Development.

The town council agreed to have a festival again this year on Saturday, September 19th and that planning/coordinating would be done “in-house” by staff. It was agreed by the group that advertising for this festival needs to be improved over what was done in 2014. The discussion led to not hiring a band, but to have local musicians provide entertainment throughout the festival.

The group discussed policies and guidance for town staff and it was agreed that the town needs to have more written policies and procedures in place.

There were discussions about a small downtown park on the town hall property, which would be 50 feet wide and 250 feet deep (approximately 15,000 square feet or 1/3rd acre). The future community center was also discussed and the overall vision is that it would be used for family reunions, small wedding receptions, birthday parties, senior events, Girl and Boy Scout meetings and private events.

For further details please see the minutes from the retreat on the town’s website at www.mineralspringsnc.com or contact the town for a copy.

Long-Time Planning Board and Board of Adjustment Member Passes Away

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of Mr. Robert Neill on February 4, 2015. Mr. Neill provided a great service to the Town of Mineral Springs for over 15 years. Mr. Neill started out on the Planning Committee and was later appointed to the Planning Board when it was formed in 2001 to which he remained committed until the onset of his illness. Mr. Neill served as chairman of the Planning Board for 10 years. Mr. Neill also served on the Board of Adjustment. Our sincerest sympathies go out to his wife Peggy Neill (current town council member).



Pictured left to right—Nadine Bennett, Wanda Moore, Janet Ridings, Lundeen Cureton, Rick Becker, Jerry Countryman, Valerie Coffey, Janet Critz, Peggy Neill, Emily Parker and Vicky Brooks (front center)

VOLUNTEER TO BE A BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEMBER. CONTACT THE TOWN FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

What does the county property revaluation mean to you?

By Rick Becker, Mayor & Finance Officer

Recently, Union County property owners received notice of new tax values. The last countywide tax revaluation took place in 2008, at the height of the real estate “bubble”, and the market values of most properties have not yet regained their 2008 levels. As a result, the total value of all real property in Union County declined approximately 5% in this year’s revaluation.

In Mineral Springs, the average decline in property value was almost 10%, reflecting the fact that our 2008 values were more inflated than the county average. Those of you who bought homes that were built after 2008 were probably surprised to be paying less for your house than its tax value. The total taxable value of all real and personal property in Mineral Springs was estimated by Union County to be \$260,814,298 as of May 6, 2014; that value has dropped to \$235,954,317 as of April 6, 2015. The new values are supposed to more closely approximate the true resale value of your home.

Local governments generally change their property tax *rates* when total property tax *value* changes, in an effort to establish a “revenue-neutral” tax rate: that means a tax rate that theoretically keeps total tax revenues the same as the previous year and results in no change in the actual tax bill for the “average” property owner. The Union County commissioners have not yet decided on a tax rate for 2015 – 16, but they are considering the possibility of raising the tax rate to a “revenue-neutral” level. If they do, the average Mineral Springs property owner would probably have a slightly *lower* county property tax bill, although some property owners in the town might still see a slight increase if their values dropped less than the county average.

As your finance officer, I am currently working on the Mineral Springs 2015 – 2016 budget. While the town council might wish to consider raising our tax rate, currently \$0.025 per \$100 of value, to a revenue-neutral value, I believe that such a tax rate increase may not be necessary. Since proper-

ty taxes make up only approximately 20% of the town’s annual revenues, the roughly 10% drop in property value would result in only an approximate drop in revenues of \$6,500 on a budget of approximately \$300,000 if the town kept its tax rate the same. The town would be able to absorb this slight revenue loss by reducing the funds allocated to future capital expenditures without negatively affecting operating expenditures.

So, for many Mineral Springs property owners, the county revaluation should result in *good* news: a slight drop in your 2015 property tax bill!

Coffee with the Mayor

On Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 10:00 a.m., Mayor Becker will host a “Coffee with the Mayor” at the Mineral Springs Town Hall. Join the mayor for a question and answer period.

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On Saturday, July 11, 2015 at 9:00 a.m., Mayor Becker will host a special hike edition of “Coffee with the Mayor” at the McNeely Road Trailhead (6214 McNeely Road). Put on your hiking boots and join the mayor for a hike on the trail.



Email Notifications

Would you like to receive email notifications from the town, including meeting agendas and announcements of special events? If you are interested, please contact Town Clerk Vicky Brooks at msvickybrooks@aol.com to be added to the list. Note: since virtually all municipal records in North Carolina are considered “public records” under State law, citizens have expressed concern that a town could be compelled to distribute its email list to person’s or entities that might use it for “spam” or other commercial purposes. However, while a town must make this list available for inspection, it is not required to distribute a copy of the list to a third party.

Mineral Springs 2nd Annual Festival

September 19, 2015

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Our 15th Anniversary Festival was such a big success that the town council decided to make it an annual event!

We are currently in the process of looking for sponsors, craft vendors and food vendors to make this festival as successful as our last one!

As shown on this page there are different levels of sponsorship: Festival Sponsors will receive a 3.5" x 7.5" space; Community Leaders will receive a 2.5" x 3.5" space; Community Sponsors will receive a 2" x 3" space; and Community Friends will receive a 1.5" x 2.5" space (as detailed) in the next two newsletters. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor at any one of these levels, please contact Vicky Brooks at 704-289-5331 or msvickybrooks@aol.com.

\$25.00

Community Friend
Your Business Name, Address
and Phone Number

\$50.00

Community Sponsor
Your Business Name, Address,
Phone Number and Logo

\$150.00

Community Leader
Your Business Name, Address,
Phone Number and Logo

10 x 10 Tent Space if requested

\$250.00

Festival Sponsor
Your Business Name, Address, Phone Number and Logo

10 x 10 Tent Space if requested
Business name listed on festival t-shirt and banner
Business link on town website

Join us to discuss the Proposed Downtown Park

Monday Tuesday - May 4, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. (for Public Input)

Mineral Springs Town Hall - 3506 S. Potter Road

The Mineral Springs Town Council is requesting public input from the community on the Proposed Downtown Park. The council will be holding a special meeting, which will begin at 6:00 p.m. on Monday Tuesday, May 4, 2015 at the Mineral Springs Town Hall. The special meeting will have two parts—at 6:00 p.m. the council, staff and Stewart (park designer) will be discussing the park plans and at 7:00 p.m. the council will invite the public for their input (suggestions, comments, observations, etc.)



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