BANNER ELK TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
June 17, 2026
Reconvened June 8th Meeting
MINUTES

The Banner Elk Town Council met on Monday, June 17, 2026, at 6:00 p.m for the reconvened June 8th meeting.

Council Members present:, David Lecka, Mike Dunn, Chuck Saunders, and Charles VonCanon.

Staff present: Town Manager Rick Owen

Call Meeting to Order
At 6:00 pm Council Member Dunn called the regular Town Council meeting of June 17, 2026 to order.

Pledge of Allegiance
Council Member Dunn led those in attendance with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation
Council Member VonCanon opened the meeting with prayer.

Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Discussion
Manager Owen stated that the budget is complete at this point. He asked the Council to discuss the Employee COLA. Council Member Dunn recalled past procedures that had balanced that item. Manager Owen recommended that the Council make a decision that sets the COLA number, currently standing at 3.3%.

Council Member Lecka made a motion to raise the COLA from 3.3% to 4% and Council Member Saunders seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Manager Owen stated that the staff has conducted two insurance meetings. He stated that the Town has benefitted from rates for the past ten years with a grandfathered plan after the Affordable Care Act and the staff has benefitted from the ability to maintain the plan. He stated that Blue Cross did away with the grandfathered plan this year and the town has seen about a 40% increase in rates. Manager Owen stated that the town is doing the best that can be done, but the staff is going to feel the difference, and they will appreciate the increase in the COLA.

Adoption of 2026-2027 Budget Ordinance
Manager Owen handed out the budget ordinance and pointed out the increase in the general fund. He overviewed the entire document and explained what would be included in an adoption of this ordinance.

Manager Owen told Council Member Dunn that the last payment for the Historic Banner Elk School would be made in July.

Council Member VonCanon made a motion to adopt the 2026-2027 Budget Ordinance and Council Member Dunn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Adoption of Micro-Purchasing Resolution
Manager Owen stated that if the Council passes the resolution annually it changes the requirements for RFQ's and changes some thresholds for other bid requirements. He stated that it hasn't been utilized as

much as he had thought but that it is good to have available. He stated that the Council has adopted it twice so far.

Council Member Lecka made a motion to adopt the Micro-Purchasing Resolution and Council Member VonCanon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Consider Budget Amendment 2025-2026

Manager Owen reviewed the items that need to be amended. He provided details for the line items within each category.

Manager Owen highlighted the donations and work brought in by BE Blooms and stated that he was interested in starting a fundraising campaign in association with the dog park, maybe called "Friends of the Dog Park. He stated that the dog park fencing is being installed this week and the fundraiser funds could go towards those costs and future improvements.

Manager Owen stated that he had accepted an opportunity to hold onto salt for next winter and that necessitated a line item.

Manager Owen explained that the extra money in the Book Exchange line item is from money raised.

Manager Owen told Council Member Dunn that the fees from Mountain Electric have definitely gone up this past year.

The Council had no further questions for Manager Owen.

Council Member Saunders made a motion to adopt the 2025-2026 Budget Amendment as presented and Council Member Lecka seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

Council Member Lecka brought up a social media posting about the storm recovery progress. He asked Manager Owen if there could be a Town social media posting that updates the general public about the status of recovery and an explanation about the progress of storm recovery.

Council Member Lecka asked Manager Owen about the statement that lights were out somewhere in town and Manager Owen stated that there were a couple of series of street lights that were out and Mountain Electric has been contacted. He stated that Les Broussard was having power issues, too.

Council Member Dunn asked about the status of the construction in town. He stated that there hadn't been any road delays last night and wondered if they were wrapping up. Manager Owen stated that he hadn't received any information on that.

Adjourn

Council Member Lecka made a motion to adjourn and Council Member VonCanon seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:28 pm.

Approved: _____
Board Chair

Attested: _____