

SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING

Town of Sylva Board of Commissioners

February 22, 2016

The Town of Sylva Board of Commissioners held a special called board meeting on February 22, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room of Municipal Hall, 83 Allen Street, Sylva, N.C. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of filming a movie in downtown Sylva.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Lynda Sossamon and Commissioners, Barbara Hamilton, Harold Hensley, Mary Gelbaugh, Greg McPherson, and David Nestler.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Amanda Murajda (Town Clerk), Davis Woodard (Police Chief), Dan Schaeffer (Public Works Director), and Eric Ridenour (Town Attorney).

VISITORS PRESENT: Nick Breedlove, Guy Gaster, Robert Foulkes, Martin McDonagh Inbal Veinberg, Bercien Swanson, Ryan Burns, Julie Spiro, Jeannette Evans, Boyd Sossamon, Quintin Ellison, Frank Kracher, Kathy Roberson, Lisa Hoyle, Erik Enberg, Kelly Donaldson, Rich Price, Greg Hall, Sue Lipton, Irene Ball, Holly Kays, Sean Bridgers, Rebecca Miller, Khai Cova, Jeff Mathis, Beth Baxley, Terri Clark, Joni Newell, John Bubacz, Livingston Kelley, Tammy Fumer, Tracy Fitzmaurice, Howard Allman, Faustine Wilson, Melissa Wilcox.

Presentation from Film Production Crew: Robert Foulkes from the film production crew addressed the Board and citizens attending the meeting and explained the movie set that the crew is requesting permission to film in downtown Sylva. He explained that Sylva was chosen because of the quaint atmosphere and the look of the buildings in the downtown area. He noted that filming would be 34 days but only 12 days of that would be in Sylva. The filming crew would employ security while on scene in Sylva. They would also be reconstructing the store fronts of Sassyfras and a few other buildings. The movie is set to look like the town of Ebbing, Missouri. Martin McDonagh also noted that Sylva was picturesque and did not look like a corporate town, therefore making it very attractive.

Presentation from Jackson County TDA: Nick Breedlove addressed the potential to increase occupancy tax, revenue for restaurants and other businesses in Sylva, and other tourism related attractions if the movie were to be filmed in Sylva. He noted that WCU would be holding graduation on May 6th and wanted the film crew to be aware of that for planning purposes. Breedlove introduced Guy Gaster with the NC Film Office.

Presentation from NC Film Office: Guy Gaster explained that filming this movie in Sylva would provide jobs for residents of this area and it would infuse dollars into the local economy. He noted that tax credits had been re-introduced in NC, thus making film production in the state more attractive. He expects a \$125 million commitment to NC with approximately \$30 million of that allocated to Western North Carolina for hopefully three major productions. They will be working with NCDOT on road closures and detours during the filming process.

Comments from Board: Commissioner Nestler asked if traffic would be rerouted or detoured for the entire 12 days. Robert Foulkes answered that it would not be a continuous detour of traffic. The production crew will work on intermittent traffic delays. Commissioner Gelbaugh asked if businesses would need to be closed during filming. Foulkes said they would try to avoid that but if necessary, businesses would be compensated. Commissioner Hensley said, "Let the

big wheel roll.” Commissioner Hamilton is happy that Sylva will be portrayed in a good light and the tourism it will bring to the Town. Commissioner McPherson thanked the film crew for the kind comments about the Town of Sylva. Mayor Sossamon noted it was a great opportunity for Sylva and Jackson County.

Comments from Downtown Business Owners: Business owners addressing the film crew and board members were:

- Irene Ball—welcome to Sylva
- Joni Newell—Cullowhee River Club (constructing the Joan Sterns building) will supply delivery and contractors coming to town—will they need to be aware of detours?
- Jeff Mathis—Pastor of First Baptist Church, Sylva—the church offers their facilities to the crew members—kitchen, bathrooms, meeting rooms
- Nicole and Chip Owen—asked how they could be extras?
 - Foulkes asked them to give contact information to the crew after the meeting
- Tracy Fitzmaurice—County Librarian—offered the balcony of the Library with its incredible views for the movie
- Sean Bridgers—told the Board that if the prior movies of McDonagh were any indication of success, Sylva will look great
- Valerie Tissue—offered Triple Threat Performing Arts Academy for tap dances
- Tammy Fumer—Sassy Fras—told the Board that the crew had been wonderful to work with while trying to figure out the logistics for using her building.

Mayor Sossamon thanked the Film Production Crew for attending the meeting and reassuring the citizens and board that Sylva would be pictured as a great town.

ADJOURNMENT: *Commissioner Hamilton made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 p.m. The motion carries with a unanimous vote.*

Lynda Sossamon
Mayor

Amanda W. Murajda
Town Clerk