

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING of September 29, 1999, with Mayor Buck Trott and Commissioners Mike McCall, Ron Sanders, Amy Patterson, and Zeke Sossomon present. Comm. James was out of Town.

Also present were Richard Betz, Bill Coward, Kathleen Snyder, Kim LeWicki, Susan Rabold, Morris Williams, Clem Patton, Alan Marsh, Gary Pennington, and Angie Beach.

I. Call to Order.

Mayor Trott called the Special Board Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Business.

The Mayor stated that the purpose of this work session was to review with Susan Rabold, from MetroSite Management LLC, a proposed amendment of the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate a Wireless Communications Ordinance and to hear a report on recommended sites for wireless communications facilities.

Copies of a first draft of the Ordinance had been distributed to all Board members. Ms. Rabold reviewed again the basic facts of the Telecommunications Act. She explained that communities cannot prohibit wireless communications facilities by creating "barriers to entry" in the market or by eliminating opportunities for coverage, but at the same time they may regulate towers through zoning regulations. She then briefly reviewed typical zoning issues related to wireless communications as a land use, and explained how they had been incorporated into the text drafted by MetroSite. She reported that nine carriers had licenses in the Highlands area.

Ms. Rabold then proceeded to review the draft in some detail with the Board; several small corrections and changes were made. She also presented and reviewed with the Board in some detail MetroSite's recommendation, based on a survey conducted some time ago, for sites which the Town might be able to market; the recommendations were tabulated in a "Table A" and incorporated into Section 903(A)(2) of the draft. It was agreed that the restrictions for two of the sites needed to be reviewed before including them in the table: the water tank site on Upper Brushy Face, which had been deeded to the Town by Highlands Country Club; and the Recreation Park site, which had been funded through the Land & Water Conservation Fund.

Two of the sites were located outside the Town limits and were therefore removed from Table A, but the Board agreed to retain them in the inventory as marketable sites: the water tank site on Dog Mountain, and the sewer plant site on Arnold Road.

After considerable discussion, the Board agreed to revise the first draft and consider it again, together with the sites identified in Table A, at the October 20 Board meeting. At the same time, the Clerk reported that the moratorium on wireless facilities would expire on that date and would need to be extended. The Clerk also reported that several requests had been received for permission to install or replace wireless communication facilities on existing sites, including a recent request from Highlands-Cashiers Hospital involving a paging company. It was agreed that these requests would also be considered at the October 20 meeting.

III. There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was declared adjourned by the Mayor at 9:30 p.m.

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Richard Betz, Town Clerk