

## MINUTES OF THE POA GENERAL MEETING – JUNE 22, 2017

President Doug Palmer called the general meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

### **Dan McAfee introduced Mountain Lakes Medical Center CEO Dr. Joseph Forese**

- The new hospital is on schedule to open this fall, with a target date of September 1 to receive patients
- It is 70,000sf on three floors, compared to 60,000sf on one floor at the current facility
- The third floor has 25 patient beds, each with floor-to-ceiling windows for a view and black-out shades for privacy
- The emergency room has 16 private rooms that include a bathroom. These rooms can be used for short-term observation in addition to emergency treatment
- The new facility will have a customer-centric focus, using “navigators” who will greet patients at the door and guide them to the appropriate location for outpatient services or surgery. Navigators will be on duty 24/7 to facilitate patient registration, contacting referring physicians before a scheduled procedure to process admissions information before the patient arrives. They will also have computers for bedside registration if needed.
- The hospital accepts patients from Franklin as well as Rabun County
- After the new hospital opens, administration will begin the process to convert the current building into an assisted living/nursing facility

### **Dan McAfee introduced Sky Valley Mayor Hughel Goodgame**

- The 2015 and 2016 fiscal year budgets each generated reserve funds
- A depreciation fund was created to repair or replace old equipment
- The Visitor Center now has a video monitor to display videos, still images and the City website. In 2016, the first full year of operation, more than 2,200 visitors came to the center. Billboard advertising on Hwy 441 prompted many of the visits.
- Two new employees joined the city in the past year: police chief Vaughn Estes and city clerk Ella Fast.
- In the June 21 meeting, City Council:
  - Authorized city employees to remove trees at the Sky Valley/Scaly Mountain fire station
  - Authorized the city manager and police chief to collect information on Hwy 246 traffic and bring a proposal on liability issues and speed control options to the council
  - Accepted a bid of \$510,000 for 2017-18 road maintenance. The city manager, public works director and contracting engineer will review needs and costs, and set priorities for the work
  - Heard a report that progress on the city park has been slowed due to rain. The pickleball court is scheduled to open in early July. Work has just begun on the half-mile walking path. Additional parking spaces will be created just past the park by installing culverts in the existing ditches. A soil test and Health Department inspection have been conducted to authorize construction of toilets, but the city has not yet received their report.
  - Heard a request from resident Myrna Warner for the city to remove silt deposits from the pond in front of the Post Office. The pond is on private property but the city will begin feasibility discussions with the property owner and the Army Corps of Engineers. If granted permission to proceed, the city will seek grants to offset restoration costs.

- Heard a second request from Ms. Warner for the city to restore the covered bridge and connect it to the waterfall trail. The bridge is also on private property but the city will begin discussions with the property owner and, if granted permission to proceed, will seek grants to offset restoration costs.
- Heard an update on the city's request to through the Rabun County Water and Sewer Authority for a feasibility study to bring a sewer line to the valley. The authority is in favor of providing sewer since Sky Valley is the only municipality in the county without a sewer system. Having sewer service could help future development; however, there are construction and cost challenges due to the mountainous terrain.

**Doug Palmer introduced Debbie Curtis to discuss membership and upcoming events**

- Debbie reviewed plans for the upcoming July 4 weekend and Habitat Hoedown July 13
- The POA is moving to online membership management. Renewals for current members must be received by December 1 for members to be included in the 2018-19 directory.
- New member dues received by October 1 will apply to 2017 membership. Renewals for 2018 must be received by December 1 for members to be included in the 2018-19 directory.
- New member dues received between October 2 and December 1 will apply to 2018 and members will be included in the 2018-19 directory.

**Adjourn** at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debbie Curtis, secretary