

Mayor Patrick Taylor: A Case for Re-Election

As I embark on my campaign for a fourth term, my decision to seek re-election stems from a profound commitment to the community I serve and a desire to build on the progress made during my previous terms. A dedication to public service, effective governance, and a vision for a vibrant, inclusive town have characterized my leadership.

**** Proven Leadership and Experience ****

My tenure has been marked by significant achievements that have had a profoundly positive impact on the lives of residents. My approach has been grounded in transparency, accountability, and collaboration, as well as the very difficult balance between business growth, enhancing our natural environment, and maintaining the character of our mountain community. Over the years, I have developed a deep understanding of local issues, such as:

- Enhancing the power grid
- Mirror Lake dredging
- Water quality and supply upgrades
- Short-Term Rentals Policies
- Securing state funds
- Building a fiber optic network throughout the town
- Creating a robust road paving initiative

All of which enables me to navigate complex challenges with insight and pragmatism. Seeking a fourth term allows me to leverage this experience, ensuring continuity in leadership and the ability to address ongoing concerns with informed strategies.

**** Achievements ****

Through cooperation, consultation, and partnership with the community, Town Board members, town support staff, our elected state representatives, and local businesses and contractors, we have accomplished so much more than just maintaining—we have:

- Improved the quality of life in our fair town
- Acquired funds for the town water system
- Supported the Gorge Road tractor bill which passed
- Upgraded the sewer system

- Built the new fire station and new ABC store
- Secured funds for the town's Pre-Clarifier water system
- Implemented the Bearwise program
- Had ADA upgrades to sidewalks and town buildings
- Added new town lighting
- Implemented a downtown WIFI
- Provided street paving to Poplar Street, Gibson Road, Big Bear Pen, Little Bear Pen, and others
- The recent commencement of the Boys and Girls Club project for Highlands
- Successfully pushed (along with Franklin's mayor) for a 10-year commitment from the Hospital Corp. of America (HCA) to ensure our small rural hospitals would remain open instead of HCA's initial 5-year proposal. Other important access to service stipulations were also included.

**** Unfinished Business ****

One of the primary motivations behind my re-election bid is the recognition that many projects and initiatives remain in progress. My administration has launched a range of programs aimed at enhancing infrastructure, improving public safety, and guiding economic sustainability. By seeking another term, I am demonstrating my commitment to seeing these initiatives through to completion, ensuring that the community can reap the full benefits of these investments, some of which include:

- The completion of the water system enhancement (a new \$5 million pre-clarifier and filter train)
- Establishing a Boys and Girls Club building at the recreation center
- Completing the power-grid enhancement by adding two additional power line circuits that feed the town
- Building better communication avenues for residents, such as the town app and new website

**** Focus on Community Engagement and Communication ****

Under my leadership, community engagement has become a cornerstone of governance. I have prioritized open dialogue with residents, listening to their concerns, and incorporating their feedback into policy decisions. I have:

- I generate a weekly email newsletter that provides updates on current and upcoming projects and events.

- I have produced over 200 videos that have provided visual evidence of the work being accomplished in town, along with discussions of the issues, announcements of local events, and, more importantly, emergency weather and power updates.
- I do a weekly radio show called “Ask the Mayor”.
- I hold a monthly community coffee where pertinent community issues are discussed.
- During Hurricane Helene, my filming crew and I provided on-site, real-time coverage of the storm events, damage, as well as provided safe locations and services.
- Each month, after every Town Board Meeting, I conduct a “Coffee with the Mayor”, where I present the “hot topics” from the meeting and enable our citizens to voice their opinions, concerns, and support.

Seeking re-election offers me the opportunity to deepen these connections, fostering an even stronger bond between the town government and its citizens. My vision includes empowering residents to participate actively in local decision-making, building a more inclusive and responsive administration.

**** Addressing Community Development Challenges ****

As towns continue to recover from the economic impacts of recent global events, I have focused on supporting sound economic growth and local businesses. By running for a fourth term, I aim to build on these efforts, ensuring that the town remains resilient and competitive in a rapidly changing economy. I envision a town where job opportunities are abundant and local entrepreneurs can thrive.

I am also committed to fair and consistent enforcement of town zoning ordinances and board policies. Land use policies and good planning are essential to maintaining and creating an attractive and livable town.

**** Commitment to Sustainability and Resilience ****

In today's world, the importance of environmental sustainability cannot be overstated. I have championed initiatives aimed at keeping a green community, from supporting the development of renewable energy sources to increasing the power, water, and sewer systems. My re-election campaign emphasizes a commitment to sustainability, promotes clean energy, and implements sustainable town planning practices. This vision aligns with the growing demand for environmentally conscious leadership.

**** Safe and Inclusive Communities ****

Safety and inclusivity are foundational to a thriving community. My commitment to public safety has involved strengthening community policing initiatives and enhancing emergency services, as demonstrated by the new fire station, adding full-time firefighters which reduces response time, creating a town alert app, and adding ADA-compliant sidewalks. Moreover, I have worked tirelessly to create an inclusive environment where all residents feel valued. In seeking re-election, I reaffirm MY dedication to ensuring that every voice is heard and that the town remains a welcoming place for everyone, regardless of their background.

**** Additional Mayoral Undertakings ****

Beyond my official duties as Mayor, I have several other duties and committees in which I participate, including:

- Executive Board of the Southwestern Regional Planning Commission
- Chair of the Transportation and Advisory Committee for the Southwestern Regional Commission
- Member of the North Carolina Mayors Association
- Active member of the North Carolina League of Municipalities

**** Campaign Purpose ****

My decision to run for a fourth term is driven by a steadfast commitment to continue the progress the town staff, residents, business leaders, and I have initiated in the community. With a focus on experienced leadership, unfinished initiatives, community engagement, economic growth, sustainability, and public safety, I believe I present a compelling case for re-election. As I embark on this journey, my vision for the future reflects not just the aspirations of a leader but the hopes and dreams of the citizens I diligently serve. I am not just seeking another term; I am seeking to finish what I have started, ensuring a brighter future for all.

Mayor Patrick Taylor