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**Subject: Vicki Hyatt on a tear against Frankie Wood. Response by Linda Taylor.**

As you may be aware, **Vicki Hyatt**, Liberal Hack News Editor of the Mountaineer, has been on a vendetta against Frankie Wood, writing a series of articles. I have been following her hack job for a little while, observing that **Vicki Hyatt** doing everything she can to disparage Frankie Wood. Why is this?

Knowing **Vicki Hyatt** patterns of writing character assassinations, the final straw for me to jump in and get involved was an editorial (not signed, but obviously written by **Vicki Hyatt**) entitled: “Who will control of Maggie Valley's future?”, in today’s online version of the Mountaineer.

Here is the “Letter to the Editor”, by **Vicki Hyatt**, 3/2/2022 which blew my circuit breaker:

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*Most assuredly, Ghost Town in the Sky, a western-themed amusement park on the top of Buck Mountain that started in the 1960s, transformed Maggie Valley from a sleepy farming community into a destination. The question now is whether the promise of its revival will shape its future. Old-timers talk about how business after business started up along both sides of Soco Road to serve the thousands of people who came to enjoy a wild-west experience. There were hourly gunfights, can-can girls and lively dancing music in an old-timey saloon, along with dozens of other attractions, including carnival rides.*

*Appearances by television stars and musicians increased the allure and put Maggie Valley on the map within just a few years. Four decades later, the amusement park closed between 2002-2006. Attempts to reopen the park since then have been met with challenges that, so far, have been impossible to overcome. Each attempt left a trail of unpaid bills and disappointed individuals, both visitors and those who longed to see the park become a vibrant tourist attraction once again. The most recent talk of resurrecting Ghost Town started in 2019 when Frankie Wood came to town and negotiated a deal with the property owner, Alaska Presley. A new limited liability corporation, Ghost Town in the Sky, was formed, and Wood signed the property transaction documents as “managing member,” though documents indicate no money changed hands. That’s not to say Wood isn’t making his mark on Maggie Valley in other ways. He’s appeared before town planning, zoning and governing boards dozens of times asking for — and receiving — various land-use designations consistent with high-density development, including high-end RV parks.*

*Whether the amusement park portion of Wood’s plans will ever materialize is an unanswered question. For now, it doesn’t appear the developer has his own funds invested in the endeavor, and the 2019 foreclosure on his personal home raises the question of whether he has any personal funds to invest. Wood’s trail of bad debts and court cases over the past 30 years could*

*raise a red flag for those who may consider extending credit or partnering with him. The larger issue, however, is to whether the future of the community will be controlled by someone dangling a carrot that many want to catch. That carrot is the hope of returning the town to its past glory days in exchange for favorable consideration when it comes to the guardrails set by the town's ordinances and regulations. The beauty of local government is that the people who live in a community are the ones who call the shots. They decide through participation in town meetings and they decide by who they elect. Now, however, many fear Wood — and his promise of reviving Ghost Town — has put him in the driver's seat, especially now that a state legislator is making threats to impose state control unless local leaders move quickly. An election held three months ago changed the dynamics on the town's governing board. In January, the board enacted a six-month moratorium on approving any new campgrounds or recreational vehicle parks. This was to give the community time to fully consider an updated land-use plan and the Unified Development Ordinance that is near completion. The threat of using the force of state government to reverse a local decision shouldn't sit any better with community members than allowing someone from out-of-state with a dubious track record to dictate the future of a community.*

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**Vicki Hyatt** wrote the following article on 2/28/2022, part of her series of hack jobs.

[“Developer finds an ally to open doors, perhaps lift moratorium”](#), By **Vicki Hyatt**  
[vhyatt@themountaineer.com](mailto:vhyatt@themountaineer.com) Feb 28, 2022

This is the fourth in a series about a developer's efforts to resurrect Ghost Town.

*MAGGIE VALLEY—Following this month's planning board meeting, South Carolina developer Frankie Wood was upbeat. He had just secured three favorable recommendations from the board regarding plans he has for the valley — ones he said were aimed at providing housing for those who would be working at Ghost Town, an amusement park Wood is hoping to revive.*

*Even after a setback when a newly seated town governing board imposed a moratorium on new campgrounds and recreational vehicle parks in town, Wood found an ally in N.C. Rep. Mark Pless, who stands ready to use state legislation to reverse the moratorium. Pless has recently attended both planning and governing board meetings. “I need housing for people for the 200 jobs Ghost Town will create,” Wood said. So far, Wood has not shared details for Ghost Town redevelopment, including when workers would begin to be hired. According to Wood's calculations, the property he has gotten zoned in Maggie Valley would put him within reach of the 160 units he says he needs, all in the \$210,000 to \$250,000 range. He acknowledged earlier that not all future employees would be able to afford houses in that price range but said those in middle management could. Additionally, he said he has property in Waynesville where the affordable housing will be built. A question that frequently comes up is why it is taking Wood so long to get to the amusement park part of his plans. The developer has a ready answer. “I literally just got all this annexed and zoned. It's been a process,” he said. Affordable housing?*

*While Wood has indeed been promoting housing developments before the town's governing, zoning and planning boards. But in a review of the meeting minutes, there's no indication his focus has been on affordable or Ghost Town employee housing. The developer acknowledged there have been questions about his focus on housing and about the reason he is mostly developing properties owned by others. Wood said in a recent interview, "I don't own the properties myself. I'm a developer and take the lead in development. I put deals together using 1031 exchanges." Wood, who is the managing partner of Ghost Town in the Sky LLC, and said he has an operating agreement where he said he is a 50-50 partner with property owner Alaska Presley, believes he is the target of the moratorium. He rallied members of the business community at a December meeting, asking them to speak out on his behalf. He said if support is lacking, he would walk away, even though he said he has invested millions in the community so far. Wood added, "People not from here don't want tourism and lined up people against us." While large crowds showed up at December and January meetings where the moratorium was discussed, few spoke out.*

*In the past two years, Wood generally passed his proposals through the town governing board on 4-1 votes, but the November election changed the dynamics. Voters overwhelmingly selected John Hinton and Jim Owens as their new alderman in an election marked by the highest voter turnout in the town's history. Both campaigned on a "smart growth" platform. One of the first actions of the newly seated board was to pass a six-month moratorium on locating campgrounds, RV parks and RV planned unit developments within the town's zoning jurisdiction. The moratorium passed on a 3-2 vote, with the new aldermen and Mayor Mike Eveland in favor, and Phillip and Tammy Wight opposing. It was an action Wood viewed as singling him out, and one that drew the attention of N.C. Rep. Mark Pless, who has plans to get the moratorium reversed, if necessary. In an interview Monday, Pless explained the process of adding a new provision to an existing stalled bill in the N.C. General Assembly, a process that circumvents the bill introduction deadline. A second option is to wait until the short session begins, generally in May, and craft a specific bill to overturn the moratorium. "It sends the wrong message about Haywood County, that we are closed for business," Pless said about the moratorium. "That's the thing that bothers me. Then there's telling people what they can and can't do with their property." Pless said he also objected to the new board members who are still "wet behind the ears" acting so quickly. "There was no real threat of what they did the moratorium for," Pless said. The legislator said he is giving the Maggie Valley board a chance to quickly get their development ordinance in place before he pulls the trigger on state legislation. "I'm waiting to see what they do," Pless said. "I could do it at any time. I just haven't. I'm giving them the benefit of the doubt and I hear they are making great progress." A local bill doesn't require the governor's signature but must pass both the house and the senate. Typically, legislators beyond the area of the local bill bow to the wishes of their colleagues. In this case, N.C. Sen. Kevin Corbin said he hasn't heard anything about the issue. "My overall feeling is I would be hesitant to do anything to interfere with local government," he said. "I've never done that." Pless, a former county commissioner, said he has no problem with state government overriding the actions of a county or municipal governing bodies because he believes individuals should have every right to do what they want to with their property and*

*because “the state of North Carolina allows it.” Pless has been working with Wood since he came to Maggie Valley with visions of reopening Ghost Town. He said he will continue to do so as “that’s my job. I’ll connect him with [state] services, but I don’t make those decisions. The people at the state check everything and make the decision. That’s their job.”*

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Some of these articles appear on the Mountaineer facebook page, where people have an opportunity to respond. One person who responded to this article elicited an actual exchange between Linda Taylor and the “plain 'ole grandma from Bethel”, **Vicki Hyatt**, a.k.a., Liberal Hack News Editor. This was a stupid bear trap that **Vicki Hyatt** just jumped right into, for whatever reason.

Here is the facebook exchange.

Linda Grice Taylor

There is a reason Vicki Hyatt has done all these hit pieces prior to zoning and annexation hearing on Tuesday March 8th. She even put my name associated with information that is flat out false but never called me when I have documentation in writing. But she accomplished her goal of getting you to buy newspapers and a subscription to her paper. Believe me that she does NOT have Maggie Valley’s best interest. Did it occur to any of you that maybe Mark Pless did his homework and knows more than any of you? The USA was embroiled in controversy and wasted money for several years with the Russia Collusion prompted by Hillary Clinton’s paid for Dossier on Trump. Way to go Vicki Hyatt, you are in great company.

Author

The Mountaineer

Linda Grice Taylor I know this was meant to be an insult, but I'm just a plain 'ole grandma from Bethel. Being compared to a national figure who is the former U.S. Secretary of State and former First Lady, whether admired or reviled, seems like a big deal.

Linda Grice Taylor

The Mountaineer I know she is your hero. Property rights and having something in our town for your (and mine) grandchildren to do is not your priority. Selling papers is your priority. Why would you print a dossier making claims from 30+ years ago? If a filing has been satisfied or dismissed, why is it important to report. I had to fight the town board, the county commissioners and the entire State of NC, to get US 19 improved from Maggie Valley to Cherokee 25 years ago. You vilified then Congressman Charles Taylor for helping me. That’s what you do.

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This is just getting started.

There will be an Aldermen meeting in Maggie Valley, next Tuesday. Contact Maggie Valley for time, location and agenda. This should be an interesting meeting to attend.

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.

Haywood County Taxpayer.