

Award...from Page 1A

impressed with the terminal building that, following the terminal grand opening in August, GDOT decided to nominate the project for the award.

Nominations were considered ahead of the 2017 Georgia Airports Association Annual Conference and Expo in October, and Mayor Conley was proud to have had the terminal in the running for the prestigious airport award.

"It's amazing, to just complete a new terminal and open it, and then be nominated for Project of the Year by GDOT," said Mayor Conley. "It's a tremendous honor to be nominated. It was something that we weren't expecting, just out of the blue, so it was a big surprise."

Mayor Conley said that people have been loving the new terminal, which still gets regular visitors who simply wish to view the building.

"And of course, our air traffic continues to improve," said Mayor Conley. "We just approved a project (in the November council meeting) for a new 12,000-gallon Jet A tank ... and it's going to be right adjacent to the terminal there."

The new tank is expected to be built and installed in the next four months, and



The Blairsville Municipal Airport brings a lot of new people into the area, which is key to economic growth and development. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

it will replace a smaller tank, effectively doubling the airport's fuel storage capacity.

Mayor Conley said that the extra capacity will save the city in transportation costs over time, since a minimum shipping load is set at 10,000 gallons, and lighter loads require an additional fee to freight.

Once the new tank is installed, the city will sell the old tank, and the airport will maintain its ability to fuel planes with its fuel truck also.

"The bid on the Jet A

tank is \$157,600," said Mayor Conley, adding that GDOT is allowing \$100,000 in grant funds previously set aside for the terminal to be used for the tank.

Expanding the capabilities at the airport, first with the new terminal and now with the new tank, highlights the City of Blairsville's commitment to economic development in the region.

"The airport adds a lot to our economy monetarily from all the charter services that come in," said Mayor Conley. "And of course, the car rental place, they average

probably five or six rentals every weekend, sometimes even twice that.

"A lot of people charter flights here and just come to the mountains, and a lot of people have business in the mountains, and they get charter services to bring them in."

According to a 2011 GDOT study, the Blairsville Airport contributed a total of \$3.9 million in economic output for the state, and that's not to mention the untold number of people who have moved to Blairsville because of the airport, bringing their assets and businesses with them.

Alcohol...from Page 1A

the city has been working persistently on ordinances with the intent of mirroring Union County ordinances as much as possible, so as to minimize confusion for both city and county residents.

During this process, the city began reviewing the current alcohol ordinance and has since been working toward several amendments to the ordinance, one of which was addressed during the public hearing regarding the changes.

Blairsville Mayor Jim Conley opened the discussion regarding the alcohol ordinance up to the public, allowing for concerned or confused community members to ask questions and share their opinion.

After several questions regarding what exactly the changes were that are going to take place in the ordinance, Mayor Conley briefly explained these changes.

"The first one is Section 10-76, general regulations for the sale of alcohol beverages," said Mayor Conley. "The fifth page, item three, changed to add language regarding location of business and public access. Page six added language for process of formal review from the city council should an alcoholic beverage permit be denied.

"Page seven, it allows for reciprocity of alcoholic beverage permits from Union County and the City of Blairsville. What that is, if a server has a license in the county and they come and get a job in the city as a server, then we honor the county's license as well. Same goes for the county with us.



Blairsville City Councilmember Buddy Moore. Photo/Lily Avery

"Section 10-77, regulation for the sale of alcohol beverage consumption on the premises. Page eight, change seating regulations from 30 to 16. That's minimum seating. Page nine is language regarding golf courses.

"Section 10-78, regulations of sale malt beverage and wine by the package. Page 10, there has been sign and distance revisions to allow for businesses to apply for a variance. Section 10-80, a temporary special event license."

The due date for license renewal is also being changed from Oct. 15, with a 45-day grace period before late fees are applied. With the amendment, the due date will be Nov. 30 and there will no longer be a grace period for applicants.

The amendment to the ordinance can be found in the

Alcohol Ordinance 2017-04, to amend Alcohol Ordinance 2017-03. Monday was the first reading of the amendment.

Several other minor changes will be made to the alcohol ordinance through the amendment as well. A copy of the ordinance may be obtained per request at City Hall.

Also during the meeting, Downtown Development Authority Program Manager Darren Harper shared the many upcoming events he has planned for Downtown Blairsville during the holiday season, as well as several community events he will be promoting.

Kicking off the holiday season this year will be the annual Christmas on the Square, which will be held on Saturday, Dec. 2.

Unlike last year, in conjunction with the Union County Historical Society, Harper has planned for this year's Christmas Parade to be an evening event, allowing for more lights and holiday cheer.

"I think this is going to be a really good year," said Harper. "We want everyone in the community to come out and have a good time and enjoy the beautiful downtown square."

Anyone in the community who wishes to participate is welcomed and encouraged to do so, and the more lights, the merrier. For more details regarding the holiday festivities in downtown, visit the DDA's Facebook page to stay up to date on events and celebrations.

Meanwhile, the owner of the Uptown Wine Shop explained what happened when an undercover Georgia Department of Revenue agents came to his establishment.

"As you know, I did not personally sell alcohol to a minor, however a lady that was briefly assisting me in my absence did in fact sell a bottle of wine to an underage, undercover Department of Revenue agent. As President Truman said, the buck stops here and as the owner of the Wine Shoppe, I accept full responsibility for this mistake. Despite her unintentional error, she will never be allowed back in my shop.

"I am very aware of the seriousness of selling alcohol to a minor. I would like to assure you, the council and mayor, that every person who has ever sold a bottle of wine in my store knows the law and how serious this offense is and how vigilant they must be when they are behind the counter selling products.

"Sadly, regardless of how much time and energy is spent on training, we will always have unintentional mistakes by human beings.

"Anytime a mistake is made, corrective action must be taken. Therefore, from this day forward, every person that appears to be under the age of 40 years old will be asked for their I.D. when purchasing beer or wine. This policy will be posted on the register as a constant reminder to the cashier to check I.D.s.

"Again, I am truly sorry this violation occurred and will do everything within my power to insure it never happens again. Thank you."

The store was required to pay a \$150 fine, but council reinstated the store's license.

This was the first offense that the Wine Shoppe has had in its six years of business.

Holiday Concert Series for North Georgia Chamber Symphony

Please join us in celebrating the Holiday Season in North Georgia! Bela Bartok's Rumanian Folk Dances is our opener. It's lively, happy music written from his lifelong collection of folk music.

Laurin Smith, our director will solo on *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Violin Concerto No 3 in G major*, a beautiful and spirited selection. We are joined by lyric baritone, Dr. Benjamin Schoening, Chairman of the Music Department of the University of North Georgia, who will sing several American folk songs, as well as *O Holy Night* and *Jesu Bambino*. To

celebrate Christmas, we'll play *The Christmas Waltz*, *I'll Be Home for Christmas* and *Winter Wonderland* and will also play some Chanukah favorites. We will close with our traditional version of *Silent Night* followed by *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*.

Friday, December 1st, 7 p.m., Historic Courthouse on the Square, Blairsville; Saturday, December 2nd, 7:30 p.m., Dahlonega United Methodist Church, Dahlonega; Sunday, December 3rd, 4 p.m., Westminster Presbyterian Church, Gainesville.

All concerts are free and open to the public.