

The Rural Retreat Town Council held a regular meeting on December 14, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in the Rural Retreat Town Hall Council Chambers.

PRESENT RURAL RETREAT TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Timothy Litz
Vice-Mayor Keith Crigger
Ed Schaack

Scott Mecimore
Dale Yontz
Peggy Hash

ABSENT

Jerrell Hall

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Raymond Matney, Town Manager
Lori Guynn, Clerk/Treasurer
Scott Mitchell, Police Chief

OTHERS PRESENT

Lindy White, CEO – Smyth County Community Hospital; Eric Sacknof, Dawn Archer and Samantha Archer – Smyth County Community Hospital Board; Chuck Sullins; Charles Slagle; Bob Lewis

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mayor Litz called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Rev. Ed Schaack.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Litz.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Yontz, seconded by Councilmember Mecimore to approve the minutes of the November 23, 2010 regular meeting as written. The motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Crigger, Hash, Mecimore, Schaack, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) absent: Hall.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 14, 2010 – PAGE 2

CITIZEN'S TIME

Ms. Lindy White, CEO of Smyth County Community Hospital addressed the Council concerning the newly constructed medical facility in Rural Retreat. She explained the new facility will be offering primary care physicians, pediatric providers and a diagnostic imaging center. Currently one office is not in use but will be used in the future as a specialty clinic with specialist rotating through the clinic to offer their services. Ms. White thanked the town and the community for their continued support of the medical facility. She stated the main reason she is in attendance is to talk about a new venture the hospital has established, the Smyth County Hospital Health Trust. The main goal of this Health Trust is to reach out to communities in a variety of ways other than through the medical clinics. Ms. White provided a handout and gave a presentation on the Smyth County Hospital Health Trust. Following Ms. White's presentation Councilmember Mecimore explained he had recently visited the local medical office in which the personnel were great however; he expressed his concerns about certain medical services being moved to Abingdon. He added he felt the community thinks all services are being moved. Ms. White explained the birthing unit will be closed at Smyth County Community Hospital and moved to the hospital in Abingdon. She added they are aware of the rumors in the community. The birthing services are being moved due to a low number of deliveries and the need for other specialty services she explained. Ms. White stated they are visiting the communities and conducting various events in an effort to eliminate the rumors. Mr. Matney commended Ms. White and the Smyth County Board of Directors on the newly constructed facility in Rural Retreat. Ms. White added a grand opening will be held January 12. Mayor Litz commented the town is appreciative of Smyth County's interest in the Rural Retreat community.

Charles Slagle stated he wanted to thank the town crew for their work they have done over the past few day on snow removal. Mayor Litz told Mr. Slagle he appreciated his comments. He added Mr. Matney and he had previously discussed more snow came than they anticipated.

Bob Lewis addressed the Council and stated it was ironic that representatives from Smyth County Hospital were in attendance at the meeting because he wanted to bring to the Council's attention the need for a helipad due to the increased number of medical helicopter landings. Discussion was held on various options such as trying to obtain grant money, asking the two community hospitals to contribute or address the matter with Wythe County Emergency Services Coordinator, Ikey Davidson. Mr. Lewis added consideration should be given to the installation of markers on the power lines due to the location of the lines and the majority of the landings are being made behind the rescue squad building. Mr. Lewis continued by stating he was happy to receive a copy of the meeting agenda and the minutes from the previous meeting. He stated he had noticed a technological committee had been formed to oversee technological updates for the town. He asked why a monitor was needed to view the meeting. He continued by adding with the exception of Mr. Matney he had attended more meetings than any councilmember. While attending the meetings, he never needed a monitor to tell him what was happening or a copy of the agenda. He questioned why there is a need to spend the money for this need. Mr. Lewis also questioned the need to record the meetings. Mr. Matney responded this is an effort to show the

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 14, 2010 – PAGE 3

meetings on local cable. Mr. Lewis explained he had spoken to Porter Sage and he is hoping to sell Rural Retreat Cable T.V., Inc. after January 1 regardless of the offer if one is made.

Chuck Sullins addressed the Council and stated he is co-chairing with Councilmember Yontz on forming the Heritage Day Festival. He explained he has compiled a working budget for the 2011 festival with is the only opportunity to celebrate the town's 100th anniversary. The event is being increased to two days and includes quality entertainment which will come at a higher price, Mr. Sullins explained. Previously, he added, the budget was \$14,000 however he would like to increase the budget to \$24,000. Mr. Sullins proposed a more aggressive sponsorship drive and conducting fundraisers to fund most of the cost of the festival in which the entertainment will be the most expensive due to attempting to bring three main acts. He also suggested offering other activities the day of the event. Councilmember Mecimore expressed his concerns with spending the increased amount of money with the possibility of having rainy weather again this year and no indoor activities planned. Vice-Mayor Crigger commented Heritage Day is not an indoor event. Mayor Litz added the worst thing that could happen did occur this past year, but the festival can't be cancelled. Mr. Sullins stated he is asking the town to fund \$10,000 with the balance to be raised through sponsorships and fundraising that he previously referred too therefore the town won't be footing the entire bill. Vice-Mayor Crigger stated his biggest concern is the vending and entertainment areas need to be designated and have organization to it. And consideration should be given to installing permanent electrical service. He continued by explaining the initial cost will be high but the Council should look at the future return on investment in relation to tourism and other things. Councilmember Mecimore commented tourism is nonexistent because people only attend the Heritage Day activities. He added he didn't want to sound negative but this is what happens. Mr. Sullins replied he wasn't sounding negative because it was telling him that as a co-chair he needs to look into more areas to have activities. He then asked if he should emphasize the advertising and not tourism. Mr. Matney intervened and asked if the Council is interested in allowing the committee to pursue the proposed the budget. Councilmember Yontz added the goal is make Heritage Day self sufficient. Mr. Matney commented he also hopes more support will be received from Dr. Pepper. Mayor Litz stated Councilmember Mecimore's concerns haven't fallen on deaf ears but this is an event for the people of the town. He then asked for a motion from Council due to the discussion being conducted before a motion was on the floor. Councilmember Yontz made a motion to accept the proposed budget as presented. Vice-Mayor Crigger seconded the motion. At this time, Councilmember Mecimore departed from the meeting. Mayor Litz declared a five minute recess at 8:05 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 8:10 p.m. Councilmember Schaack offered additional discussion by stating this was the town's one and only chance at hosting a 100th anniversary. He then made a motion to increase the town's contribution for Heritage Day to \$12,000. Councilmember Hash seconded the motion. Following additional discussion, Councilmember's Schaack and Hash rescinded their motion. A vote was taken on the motion made by Councilmember Yontz and seconded by Vice-Mayor Crigger to accept the proposed Heritage Day budget. The motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Crigger, Hash, Schaack, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent during the vote: Hall, Mecimore.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 14, 2010 – PAGE 4

Mayor Litz thanked Mr. Sullins for his presentation. Bob Lewis asked Mr. Sullins what activities were being planned other than entertainment. Mr. Sullins responded he would like to ask the people to offer their suggestions regarding this.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Matney read a letter he received via email from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks stating Lori Guynn has earned the designation of Certified Municipal Clerk by completing the educational requirements. He congratulated Mrs. Guynn on her accomplishment. The council member's also offered their congratulations. Mrs. Guynn thanked the Council for allowing her to pursue this educational experience and for their support.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell reported the Wythe County Sheriff's Office did not request his assistance during the month on November which he attributed reduced activity due to the colder weather. He added the Thomas Musser 5K event went well other than the snowy weather. Chief Mitchell brought to the Council's attention that he had received a grant from the Department of Motor Vehicles in October in which a portion of the grant is to be used toward 40 hours overtime pay over the next year. He stated he had spoken to Mrs. Guynn and was told he is one of the town employees not eligible for overtime pay. The grant requirements state the town must pay overtime upfront and will be reimbursed on a quarterly basis. Mr. Matney asked for the amount of the grant what it is for. Chief Mitchell replied the grant is for \$2,000 with \$1,000 to be used for overtime pay. Mr. Matney asked what the balance of the grant is to be used for. Chief Mitchell responded \$400 is town matched funds, \$500 is allotted for travel expense to attend one certified conference and \$500 to purchase a breathalyzer test. Mayor Litz suggested a decision be made by the town manager's office.

Mr. Matney questioned Chief Mitchell about dog complaints in his monthly activity report which showed a zero. Mr. Matney added there is an ongoing problem with dogs getting into residents trash in the Valley View Avenue area. Chief Mitchell replied the complaint is ongoing therefore he didn't carry it over into November. Mr. Matney asked Chief Mitchell if he had spoken to the complainant. Not recently, Chief Mitchell responded. He added the issues haven't been resolved but are improving. Mr. Matney encouraged Chief Mitchell to maintain a line of communication with dog complainants and Wythe County Animal Control.

Councilmember Hash informed Chief Mitchell she is continuing to notice an untagged car at a residence on Chinquapin Avenue. Chief Mitchell explained he had spoken to the owner and he keeps the car in his garage except at night when he is working on another vehicle.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

PROPOSED TOWN NEWSLETTER – Councilmember Yontz reported he and Chuck Sullins are still working on ideas. Mr. Sullins explained they would like to include a section for Mayor

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 14, 2010 – PAGE 5

Litz and Mr. Matney in order to give the newsletter a voice. He added in an effort to help with recognizing a citizen of the year for Heritage Day, he would like to include a ballot for nominations and voting.

COMMUNITY WARNING SYSTEM – Mr. Matney reported monetary figures are being compiled for the budget preparation.

RECORDING OF MEETINGS AND INSTALLATION OF MONITOR – No discussion was conducted on this item.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no items offered for discussion.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAY – This item was previously discussed.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Mrs. Guynn reported the SAS-112 requirements for the 2009/2010 fiscal year audit have been completed by Hicok, Fern, Brown & Garcia. She is waiting to receive dates from Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates that they will be in the office to complete the audit.

PERSONNEL – Chairman Schaack reported he distributed a 2011 timeline for the town manager search and work is continuing on a brochure.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

The Town Manager's report is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

VIRGINIA TOWN & CITY ARTICLE – Ms. Kelly Ratcliffe with Anderson & Associates, Inc. contacted Mr. Matney to inquire if the town would be interested in their firm sponsoring an article on Rural Retreat in the Virginia Town & City magazine. Mr. Matney stated he thought this was a nice gesture and agreed. Ms. Ratcliffe's draft article was distributed for review. He asked the council member's to offer suggestions or changes if they have them.

TOWN SEAL REGISTRATION – Town Attorney Michael Sobey has received the registration number for the town seal which is now registered as a trademark effective May 24, 2010. Mr. Matney added the use of the seal for uses other than official town business will need to be approved by the town council.

NPDES PERMIT WATER TREATMENT PLANT – The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality requires a series of four toxicity tests to be conducted with each being taken one month apart in order to renew a water discharge permit at a reduced cost. The town

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 14, 2010 – PAGE 6

successfully passed three of the four tests. The one sample that failed testing was taken the same day the chlorine leak was discovered at the water treatment plant. Upon speaking with a person at DEQ, Mr. Matney reported he was informed 75% of the tests must be passed to be eligible for the lower renewal discharge fee. Mr. Matney added this will reduce the cost from \$1,800 annually to \$600 every five years.

SPONSORSHIPS FOR CHRISTMAS RADIO SPOTS - A representative from Three Rivers Media approached Mr. Matney and asked the town consider purchasing 25 minutes of Christmas radio spots on WYVE and WXBX for \$100. The consensus of the Council was to not pursue this.

MILLER STREET RAILROAD CROSSING – This crossing has been temporarily closed after being informed by the Norfolk Southern road master to do so. Mr. Matney will be meeting with the road master later this week to further discuss this.

OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT – The Virginia Department of Health has concurred with the Myrtle Lane, Rural Retreat Lake Road and Cedar Springs Road lines. The taps will be made as weather permits. Mr. Matney added the contractor was working earlier in the day considering the cold weather.

IN-TOWN WATER PROJECT – The contractor on this project has not been working due to the weather.

TEA-21 SIDEWALK PROJECT – The contractor will be back on site tomorrow to install drain pipe on East Railroad Avenue.

VML LEGISLATIVE BULLETINS – The Virginia General Assembly will be going back into session soon. If there are no objections, Mr. Matney reported he would like to submit the council member's town email addresses to VML so they can receive the updates. Councilmember Schaack requested his personal email address be submitted also.

REQUEST TO VACATE 30 FOOT RIGHT-OF-WAY – The Planning Commission met with less than a quorum the previous evening to consider a request made by Nancy Barrow to vacate a 30 foot right-of-way that impacts her property and adjoining property owner Betty Guynn. The consensus of the two Commissioners present was the vacation would not affect the public therefore if both property owners were in agreement a public hearing would not be needed.

CHRISTMAS CHEER PROGRAM – Mr. Matney explained the office staff purchased clothes and toys for the two children the town council and employees are sponsoring this year. However, the family is also in need of food. He asked if anyone has not contributed to this cause to consider doing so because the money will now be applied toward the purchase of food items.

DISPENSE WITH DECEMBER 28, 2010, MEETING – Mr. Matney asked the Council to consider dispensing with the next regular meeting scheduled for December 28th due to the

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 14, 2010 – PAGE 7

Christmas and New Year’s holidays. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Crigger to dispense of the meeting on December 28, 2010 due to the Christmas and New Year’s holidays and to authorize the treasurer to pay bills. Councilmember Yontz seconded the motion and it passed by a vote of four (4) for: Crigger, Hash, Schaack, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hall, Mecimore.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The bills for December 14, 2010 were read and approved.

TALK OF THE TOWN

Neither the councilmember’s nor Mr. Matney was available to attend the *Talk of the Town* radio program at the WYVE/WXBX radio station on Wednesday morning.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Councilmember Schaack and was duly seconded and approved.

Mayor

Clerk