

The Rural Retreat Town Council held a regular meeting on November 8, 2011, 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, Dale Yontz, Jerrell Hall

**ABSENT**

Scott Mecimore, Peggy Hash

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT**

Raymond Matney, Town Manager; Michael James, Interim Town Manager; Lori Guynn, Clerk/Treasurer; Scott Mitchell, Police Chief

**ADMINISTRATION ABSENT**

NONE

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Gary Houseman – Wythe County Board of Supervisors

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

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

**INVOCATION**

The invocation was given by Rev. Gary Houseman.

**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 Hall to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2011 regular meeting/public hearing. The motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Crigger, Hall, Schaack, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hash, Mecimore.

**CITIZEN'S TIME**

Mayor Litz asked Supervisor Houseman if he would like to address the Council. Supervisor Houseman responded no, he was in the area and decided to attend the meeting. Mayor Litz

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extended a warm welcome to Supervisor Houseman and encouraged him to attend meetings anytime.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL “MR. STRONG” FAMILY RUN/WALK REQUEST – Mr. James read the request submitted by Susan Spraker requesting permission to hold the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual “Mr. Strong” Family Run/Walk 5K event in honor of Thomas Musser on Saturday, December 3, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. The starting location for the event is the Rural Retreat Fire Station with the route continuing onto East Railroad Avenue, West Railroad Avenue, Church Street, Sherwood Avenue with participants making a u-turn and proceeding back to Church Street, then to North Main Street, Gienow Road, East Buck Avenue, North Greever Street and ending at the fire station on East Railroad Avenue. Lunch will also be served. Mr. James stated the appropriate permits will be secured from VDOT. Councilmember Yontz made a motion to sanction the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual “Mr. Strong” Family Run/Walk as a town event. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Schaack who also stated 100% of the proceeds from this event will be donated to St. Jude’s Children Hospital. The motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Crigger, Hall, Schaack, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hash, Mecimore.

### **POLICE REPORT**

Chief Mitchell explained his activity report for the month of October. He stated there had been a significant drop in activity which he attributed to cooler weather. He noted the dog complaints had also decreased. Chief Mitchell added the Veterans Day Parade will be held Saturday at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Matney asked Chief Mitchell if he was continuing to run radar in town. Chief Mitchell responded yes. Mr. Matney added the Wythe County Sheriff’s Office is also assisting with radar in town.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

NORFOLK SOUTHERN TRAINS – Mr. James reported Miles Dyer, Roadmaster with Norfolk Southern had been contacted for an explanation on why the train blocked all railroad crossings in town on October 24<sup>th</sup>. He further reported Mr. Dyer is to speak with a higher official for a formal explanation and contact the town. Mr. Matney commented he had received calls about the crossings being blocked. He pointed out after checking all crossings in which all were blocked he walked to the head of the train to speak with the engineer. Mr. Matney stated the engineer told him they had orders to pick up cars. Mr. Matney informed the engineer the train was blocking all crossings and must be moved. After stating, if necessary, he would contact the trainmaster the engineer agreed to move the train. Mr. Matney commented he was not sure if this was retaliation from the complaints about the train being parked in town on a side rail at night and leaving the engine running.

MOUNTAIN EMPIRE NEWSPAPER DISTRIBUTION – Mr. James stated he had spoken with the distributors of the Mountain Empire Newspaper concerning the papers being thrown in

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citizen's yards. The information received contained a phone number that citizens may call and notify them that do not wish to receive the publication. The information will be placed on the bulletin board, the town website and possibly on Rural Retreat Cable TV.

**TOWN HALL SIGN REPLACEMENT** – Mr. James stated the three options to replace the town hall sign were re-presented at the previous meeting. He recommended the Council approve the sign with the least visual restrictions which will cost \$2,800. Mr. James further stated ground lighting will also be installed to illuminate the sign. Councilmember Schaack made a motion to purchase a new sign for the town hall with a cost of \$2,800. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall and passed by a vote of four (4) for: Crigger, Hall, Schaack, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hash, Mecimore.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

NONE

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**HERITAGE DAYS** – Chairman Yontz reported the committee met prior to the meeting. He pointed out other than securing the local acts for the festival, which should be finalized in January, all planning is mostly complete. Chairman Yontz added the contract for the main entertainment act will be signed and returned this week. The activities for Sunday are being planned at this time. The Rural Retreat Baptist Church has expressed interest in assisting with the Sunday activities.

**FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS** – Chairman Crigger asked Mrs. Guynn to report on the 2011/2012 Fiscal Audit. Mrs. Guynn reported Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates was in the office beginning last Monday for a day and a half to complete the audit. Upon their work being completed, we will receive adjusting entries and the final report. Mayor Litz asked if this was a time consuming process. Mrs. Guynn reported this portion is not as much as the portion to prepare the books for audit however, the personnel with Hicok, Fern, Brown & Garcia are very thorough with their work so most of the work done by Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates are testing procedures and verifying information they have received.

**PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS** – Chairman Schaack asked Mr. Matney and Mr. James if there were any personnel matters that the committee should meet to discuss. Mr. Matney stated he would like to address the Council concerning his accumulated time however he will address this later in the meeting.

**OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE** – Chairman Hall reported the salt spreader shed had been completed. As stated in the Town Manager's report the project was completed approximately \$1,000 under budget. Chairman Hall pointed out the shed was designed by an engineer and was not charged to the town.

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### **TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT**

The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

**OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT DIVISION III (RIDGE AVENUE)** – All water taps have been installed, Wells Construction is currently performing some cleanup work along Ridge Avenue to close out the job. We received correspondence from the Department of Health stating the pressure testing and sampling passed and was done properly. The line can now be put into service.

**OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT DIVISION IV (WATER PLANT ELECTRICAL UPGRADES)** – Sun Contractors has corrected the issue with Rural Development. Anderson & Associates sent us the Notice of Award for Sun Contracting & Developers, LLC.

**OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT DIVISION V (CHINQUAPIN AVENUE & WEST LEE HIGHWAY)** – We are working with Rural Development and Anderson & Associates to clarify the remaining funds we have available and will be making project decisions this week. A&A is moving ahead with designing the full plans to get an accurate cost estimate.

**IN-TOWN WATER PROJECT** – The Jefferson Avenue project is currently in the design phase as well. We will also be able to finalize the scope of this project when the remaining funds available are clarified this week. Mr. James added he and Mr. Matney had spoken to Chip Worley with Anderson & Associates earlier today and the numbers are now inline with Rural Development so the project can move forward.

**BLEVINS DUPLEX DRAINAGE ISSUE** – Michael Sobey has been instructed to draw up an agreement between Sam Blevins and the Town of Rural Retreat to hold us and the state harmless if there are any flooding issues from the drainage improvements he requested. Mr. Blevins has indicated he would accept this agreement, which will alleviate the liability concerns with VDOT.

**SPREADER SHED** – The spreader sheds have been constructed. This project came in around \$1,000 dollars under budget at \$5,876.15. We appreciate the hard work of the TopClad team.

**WATER ACCOUNTABILITY** – At the previous meeting, Mayor Litz asked about the town’s water accountability, Mr. James stated. The most recent report reflects 34% for September which is not far from our accountability for the same time period last year. Upon completion of all construction, the numbers should decrease. Additional discussion ensued concerning the water accountability report. Mayor Litz asked how many gallons of water per day are being pumped. Mr. Matney responded between 230,000-240,000 gallons per day which is an increase from prior months which was less than 200,000 gallons per day.

**GAMMONS PROPERTY** – The Council will need to approve the deed to convey the Gammons property to Dr. R. D. Humphrey who will in turn convey the Gammons lot and his property to Dr. Michael Spraker. Mr. Matney explained Dr. Spraker’s attorney recommended the Gammons lot be conveyed to Dr. Humphrey so that all property can be deeded to Dr. Spraker as one

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property. He further stated the Council will need to authorize the Mayor to execute the deed to convey the property to Dr. Humphrey. Councilmember Hall made a motion to authorize Mayor Litz to execute the deed to convey the Gammons property to Dr. R. D. Humphrey. Vice-Mayor Crigger seconded the motion. Vice-Mayor Crigger asked if the town had received money for the purchase of the property. Mr. Matney responded the town will be paid at the time of closing. There being no additional discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Crigger, Hall, Schaack, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hash, Mecimore.

**VETERANS DAY PARADE** – Mr. Matney added to Chief Mitchell's previous comments and reminded the Councilmember's of the Veterans Day Parade on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. He encouraged them to attend. Mr. Matney also reminded the Council of the Veterans Day Ceremony the Town of Wytheville is hosting on Friday at 11:00 a.m. at the Wytheville Meeting Center.

**RURAL RETREAT FOOTBALL** – Mr. Matney reported unfortunately the Rural Retreat High School football team lost to George Wythe this past Friday night; however Rural Retreat is hosting a first round playoff game this Friday night. Due to an agreement made with the Wytheville Town Council the losing team's Council must wear the winning team's jerseys. The Council congratulated the Rural Retreat Football team on their success this season.

**TOWN MANAGER MATNEY'S ACCUMULATED LEAVE** – Mr. Matney addressed the Council concerning his accumulated time off. He stated he would like to continue to receive pay until his accumulated time is depleted. Mr. Matney also stated he plans to work on a limited schedule and use accumulated time on days that he is not working. This is similar to what Council approved for Bob Lewis when he retired, Mr. Matney noted. Mr. Matney explained he is eligible for Medicare and is willing to apply for Medicare Parts A, B and D and to obtain a Medicare supplemental policy. He requested that he be removed from town's medical insurance plan and to consider paying the premiums for his Medicare Parts B and D and the supplemental policy at a cost savings to the town of \$600 per month. Councilmember Schaack made a motion to allow Mr. Matney to deplete his accumulated time with pay, remove him from the town's insurance plan and reimburse him for his Medicare insurance premiums. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall. Mr. Matney further commented he wants to expedite using his accumulated leave as much as possible. The motion was approved by a vote of four (4) for: Crigger, Hall, Schaack, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hash, Mecimore.

**MICHAEL JAMES** – Councilmember Schaack asked when Michael James will become the Town Manager. Mrs. Guynn responded in February and stated Mr. James was hired and placed on six months probation which at the end of this time he would be named the Town Manager. Mr. Matney recommended appointing Mr. James the Town Manager as of January 1. He further expressed his confidence in Mr. James and his ability to manage the town. Vice-Mayor Crigger pointed out the agreement made was to review Mr. James' employment at the end of three months then again at six months. Mayor Litz encouraged the Council to make a decision at the first meeting in January.

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**TREASURER’S REPORT**

Mrs. Guynn informed the Councilmember’s the town Christmas Dinner will possibly be held on Wednesday, December 7 and will be catered by Joey’s Country Kitchen. She stated she will notify each member after a definite date is set.

Mrs. Guynn asked the Councilmember’s to consider contributing to the United Way of Wythe County as part of the town’s contribution efforts. Contributions must be received by Thursday.

The bills for November 8, 2011 were read and approved.

**TALK OF THE TOWN**

No Councilmember 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 Hall and was duly seconded and approved.

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Mayor

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Clerk