

The Rural Retreat Town Council held a regular meeting on March 27, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. in the Rural Retreat Town Hall Council Chambers.

PRESENT RURAL RETREAT TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Timothy Litz; Vice-Mayor A. Keith Crigger; Ed Schaack; Dale Yontz; Jerrell Hall; Peggy Hash

ABSENT

J. Scott Mecimore

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

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

ADMINISTRATION ABSENT

NONE

OTHERS PRESENT

Sean Viars; Gary Cody – Director, Wythe County Parks, Recreation & Tourism;
Millie Rothrock – Wytheville Enterprise

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 Hash to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2012 regular meeting. The motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Crigger, Hall, Hash, Schaack, Yontz; zero (0) against; one absent: Mecimore.

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CITIZEN'S TIME

Mayor Litz introduced Gary Cody, Director of Wythe County Parks, Recreation and Tourism and stated he had requested time to give a presentation on the lake. Mr. Cody thanked the Council for their time and stated he was in attendance to speak about the Rural Retreat Lake and Campground Park. He then began his PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Cody explained the park is in need of repairs including the campground markers, shelters, restrooms, and bathhouses and gravel on areas of the road. He also stated the campsites are in need of fire rings and lantern holders and the playground equipment needs replacement which Mr. Cody stated he is currently conducting a \$20,000 fundraiser to replace the swing located at the entrance of the campground. To date \$12,000 of the \$20,000 needed has been raised, he reported. Within Wythe County's operating budget for Rural Retreat Lake, Mr. Cody outlined repairs and upgrades that have been made to the facilities. He added the county does plan to connect to the new water line the town installed on Rural Retreat Lake Road. He stated more events will be held at the lake including an event on June 9 with the Rural Retreat Fair Association called the Cabbagehead Family Fest and Flea Market. Mr. Cody stated the reason he is in attendance is to find out if the town is interested in making a donation for the upkeep of the park. He noted Rural Retreat residents frequent the park more than those from the surrounding areas and feels the lake is a selling point for Rural Retreat. Discussion ensued with the Councilmember's on proposed upgrades, additional needs and the rates charged to utilize the campground. Mr. Cody distributed a report outlining the improvements to be done and the associated cost with each that totaled \$32,292. Town Manager James asked Mr. Cody which items were of his highest priority. Mr. Cody responded the camp fire rings, gravel on the road and the playground equipment due to the current equipment being a safety hazard. Vice-Mayor Crigger stated the Council asked for a capital improvement plan three years ago in order to see what was being done at the lake. He also commented the town receives a lot of complaints about the lake and campground because it is in Rural Retreat but he felt the facilities have not been properly maintained over the past 20 years by Wythe County. Vice-Mayor Crigger asked Mr. Cody to submit a written plan and request from Wythe County to Town Manager James outlining the planned upgrades and the amount of funding being sought from Rural Retreat. Mr. Cody explained this year as patrons leave they will be asked to complete a campsite checklist and an evaluation on their campsite and experience which neither has been done in the past. He also pointed out staff improvements will be made. Mayor Litz told Mr. Cody he gave his presentation admirably and reiterated Vice-Mayor Crigger's request by asking Mr. Cody to submit a written request to Mr. James for consideration in the budget. Councilmember Hash addressed Mr. Cody and thanked him for trying to help Rural Retreat Lake. Mr. Cody thanked the Council for their time.

CORRESPONDENCE

Councilmember Yontz reported a citizen on Sherwood Avenue had inquired about eliminating the first cul-de-sac in the Sherwood Estates Subdivision and he had spoken to Mr. James about it. Town Manager James stated he would need to contact VDOT for more information since it is their street. Councilmember Yontz explained to the Council that Adrian "Harpo" Hilton had called him and explained he is having problems with trucks turning around in the cul-de-sac that

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is in front of his house and damaging his yard. Mr. Hilton previously understood that VDOT was going to take the cul-de-sac out. Vice-Mayor Crigger stated the Council had previously voted to remove the cul-de-sac. Councilmember Yontz explained Mick Musser, who developed Sherwood Estates, had requested the cul-de-sac be removed. Town Manager James stated he would research this and contact VDOT. Mayor Litz asked that this item be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell stated during the month of March he has been working more animal complaints and stationary radar. He explained after speaking with Town Manager James he has changed his work schedule and is now working more days which will increase his visibility. Chief Mitchell reminded the Council the warning system will be tested on April 2nd at 6:00 p.m.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

NONE

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Chairman Yontz reported the Committee met at 6:00 p.m. Possible improvements to the Pepper Stage were discussed such as building sound platforms on each side of the stage instead of using scaffold as in previous years to hold the sound system. Mayor Litz elaborated on the discussion and stated the platforms were requested to be two feet from the ground and four feet by six feet. The Committee asked Operations and Maintenance Chairman Hall to evaluate this request and provide a cost estimate. Chairman Yontz explained sponsorship letters will be sent out upon finalizing the letter. He also explained he and Mayor Litz will be recording the Sunday morning radio show at FM94. The show is recorded during the week which would allow for the possibility of Troy Harris with the Dr. Pepper Corporation to attend and participate, Councilmember Yontz explained. He asked Town Manager James for the status of contacting Troy Harris. Town Manager James explained he is allowing Mr. Matney to handle the initial contact with Mr. Harris. Chairman Yontz expressed his concern about Dr. Pepper Corporation possibly not participating this year. He proposed scheduling a meeting with Mr. Harris to discuss their involvement in the festival and the food drive being held. The next scheduled meetings for the Committee will be held April 10th and 24th at 6:00 p.m.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Chairman Crigger stated Mr. James and Mrs. Guynn are continuing to work on the draft budget. Town Manager James stated he will be scheduling Finance Committee meetings soon.

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TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT DIVISION IV (WATER PLANT ELECTRICAL IMPROVEMENTS) – Sun Contracting & Developers, LLC is closer to having their shop drawings approved by Anderson & Associates who is still disagreeing with the drawings. They are looking to have the parts delivered to the water plant soon.

OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT DIVISION V (CHINQUAPIN AVENUE & WEST LEE HIGHWAY) – Wells Construction, Inc. is nearing completion of the project. The pressure and bacteriological tests have been completed. A trencher has been rented to begin making the reconnections. Town staff was planning to begin the work this week but has been delayed due to the wet weather.

IN-TOWN WATER PROJECT – CrossPointe Contractors, Inc. has begun installing the reconnections this week. They will also be seeding and fertilizing the project area. A few complaints have been received about the way the project area looks. Town Manager James stated he has explained to the residents that final restorations will be completed as soon as the contractor is back in the area.

BLEVINS DUPLEX DRAINAGE ISSUE – The project has been completed. Councilmember Schaack inquired about how well the drainage ditch handled the water during the storm the previous Saturday. Town Manager James responded the ditch held up well.

TEA-21 PHASE VII SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - This past week VDOT returned the final plans with comments. Staff is working with some property owners on Evergreen Ave. to secure an agreement stating their acceptance of the excess water drainage and the removal of trees. This document should satisfy VDOT’s concerns. VDOT has requested the town have an agreement with Ms. Painter and Ms. Lester to remove the trees on Evergreen Avenue and to accommodate the increased drainage.

WYTHE COUNTY/RURAL RETREAT WATER SYSTEM INTERCONNECTION – Rural Development has reviewed and made suggestions on the Wythe County/Rural Retreat Emergency Interconnection Agreement. We will review those suggestions and continue to work with the county on this project. Town Manager James reported the agreement has now been approved by Rural Development. The agreement is a specified purchase interconnection. Since a pump station is not being built the purpose of the agreement is still questionable on what it will do for both entities.

WYTHE COUNTY HISTORICAL SURVEY - Mary Ruffin Hanbury conducted an informal public meeting last week. She was very satisfied with the meeting and she spent the following day surveying historical properties within Rural Retreat. We look forward to the finished Wythe County Historical Survey.

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CROSSROADS INTERSECTION TRAFFIC LIGHTS – We have had numerous calls from citizens who have experienced traffic flow issues, especially in the morning, at this intersection. We have spoken with VDOT and it is our understanding that this intersection is the only one in the state to use this certain manufacturer and the issues have been ongoing. This past Friday VDOT was replacing those traffic cameras with the brand they have previously used at 77 other sites throughout the state, we are hopeful this will solve the issue. Mayor Litz commented the light is now working better than before.

BUDGET PREPARATION – Staff is working to prepare a preliminary budget for review and critique by the finance committee and town council. We will schedule committee meetings in the coming weeks. Town Manager James stated he is also working on developing a Capital Improvement Plan that will include capital needs over the next five to ten years.

911 CONSOLIDATED DISPATCH CENTER – The Mayor and I met with Administrator Dalton and Supervisor McDaniel with Wythe County to discuss the proposed consolidated dispatch project. A handout was distributed to the Councilmember’s outlining discussion points during the meeting. Town Manager James pointed out the consolidated center would only take emergency calls and administrative calls would not be taken. He pointed out he anticipates more meetings in the future. Mayor Litz commented Wythe County brought a proposed agreement which was a little premature because there is not enough information to make a decision. He also asked Town Manager James to explain the definition of administrative calls. Town Manager James explained these calls are not true emergency calls and gave examples such as downed trees or noises outside of a resident’s home. These calls would go to a different phone number.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The bills for March 27, 2012 were read and approved.

TALK OF THE TOWN

Councilmember Yontz is 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 Yontz. The motion as duly seconded and approved unanimously.

Mayor

Clerk