

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2012, 7:00 P.M.**

Council Members Present: Mayor Timothy Litz; Ed Schaack; Dale Yontz; Jerrell Hall; Peggy Hash; James P. "Sean" Viars

Council Members Absent: Vice-Mayor A. Keith Crigger

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: Jim Hall; 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 Hash to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2012 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Hall, Hash, Schaack, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) absent: Crigger.

CITIZEN'S TIME

Bob Lewis addressed the Council. He referred to the town giving the depot money stated there is a town employee that between last year and the first of October his net pay has been \$13,000. Mr. Lewis stated the employee could have gotten a raise. He added he didn't know what step or pay grade the employee was at but the net pay is below the poverty level of \$23,050. If the employee continues to make the same pay his net earnings will be \$17,320, he explained. Mr. Lewis stated the Council needs to think about the people and they wonder why the employees aren't dedicated. He added he can understand why if the employees are making that kind of money. Mr. Lewis commented none of this had to do with the depot but the next thing he wanted to talk about was the employment advertisement in the paper for a General Services

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Director. He explained he got a copy of the job description off the town's website and he requested a copy of the town manager's job description and they correspond closely and it looks to him as if the Council is not looking for a general services director but an assistant town manager which he feels isn't needed. Mr. Lewis commented a working foreman is needed, not the foreman the town has and the assistant foreman position should be eliminated because the person is causing turmoil with the other employees. He further added a new person isn't needed to be over the three or four guys at the shop and the water and wastewater plants because that is creating a department and the town is not big enough for departments. Mr. Lewis referred to his earlier comment on spending money and stated he left out a couple of things. He pointed out new town shop doors were needed that don't have to be put up manually because the motors are burnt out in them. He stated another item the town could have saved money on was buying a new trash truck because picking up trash is all he sees the one ton dump bed truck being used for. He added he agrees there are some streets that do need to be picked up in a pickup truck but the trash is being handled two to three times more to get it into the trash truck. This is another reason a working foreman is needed not a general services director. The next item Mr. Lewis pointed out he has observed not being done is the weeds along the streets have not been mowed. The reason for this is because a tractor was bought for \$14,000 and a mower to go behind it for \$6,000 that won't mow street right-of-ways because it can't get into the ditch and there is no sickle bar to use. Mr. Lewis pointed out there has been brush lying around town for over six weeks and there have been dead animal carcasses in the road for at least nine days. There is at least one town truck that drives by it at least three times a day he added. Mayor Litz told Mr. Lewis that as always the Council appreciates his comments and he hopes someone took some notes. Mr. Lewis added this is not Town Manager James's fault because the town has a foreman that only has 60 days left. Councilmember Yontz stated he appreciates Mr. Lewis's comments because he wasn't aware the doors at the town shop didn't work. Jim Hall asked if any of the councilmembers go to the town shop. The councilmembers stated it is after hours when they have the opportunity. Councilmember Hash added she had no idea what the town employees are paid and further stated the councilmember's need to ride around town more and see what is going on. Mr. Lewis commented it is a matter of being observant. Councilmember Viars stated he wanted to be aware but doesn't want to be micromanaging anyone but he does appreciate Mr. Lewis's comments. Mayor Litz thanked Mr. Lewis again for his comments.

CORRESPONDENCE

REQUEST TO USE THE PEPPER STAGE – Town Manager James explained a request had been received from Zack Blessing to use the Pepper Stage on November 10th but the request doesn't contain enough information. He stated he will contact Mr. Blessing and report back to the Council. Town Manager James was directed to follow up on the request and make a decision.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell explained his monthly activity report for September. He noted his hours were reduced because he had been off due to personal issues. The report reflects a summons issued

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and should also show one traffic accident, Chief Mitchell pointed out. He explained while he was off the Wythe County Sheriff's office kept him up to date on issues in town. This Sunday, he and one deputy will be conducting traffic control for the 5K run that begins at 2:00 p.m. Chief Mitchell added he is working on animal issues on Chinquapin Avenue that Vice-Mayor Crigger reported. Mayor Litz asked Town Manager James if Chief Mitchell could record the number of times he is dispatched outside of the town limits to answer calls for Wythe County. Town Manager James stated he and Chief Mitchell will discuss his request.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTIONS – Town Manager James reported he and Clerk/Treasurer Guynn are working on the delinquent tax issue that was discussed at the last meeting. He added he hoped to bring a proposal to the Council at the next meeting on the best way to pursue the collections. Initially a letter will be sent from the office to attempt to collect the taxes and will be followed by a having a plan in place if unpaid for the Council to review.

NEW BUSINESS

NONE

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Town Manager James reported Gary Wolfe is to contact the sound guy with the main act to resolve sound equipment concerns. Chairman Yontz stated he has been in contact with previous sponsors and they are interested in participating again.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Clerk/Treasurer Guynn stated the audit report will be issued in the next few weeks.

PERSONNEL – Mayor Litz asked Chairman Schaack if he had received the paperwork he was looking for. Chairman Schaack responded no but it will probably be another two weeks and it will be presented upon being received.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT DIVISION IV (WATER PLANT ELECTRICAL IMPROVEMENTS) – We are still working out some kinks with the VFD technology. The electrical engineer will be at the WTP this Friday to discuss the issues we are having. Hopefully our concerns will be addressed and we can place the other motor and pump on the VFD system.

OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT DIVISION III (Chinquapin & Lee Highway) – Reconnect work is ongoing. There are still two homes on Sunset View Road to be connected to the new line.

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TEA-21 PHASE VII SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – We have received VDOT's written response for Phase 7. We are working with Anderson & Associates on addressing their concerns. As I mentioned in the weekly report the majority of their concerns have been addressed previously and I believe during the transition in VDOT personnel this information was not properly relayed to the new director.

911 CONSOLIDATED DISPATCH CENTER – The town has not received final budget information on the O & M for the center. When that information becomes available Council will be made aware of Wythe County's proposal to the Town for a yearly allocated cost structure. Councilmember Schaack asked if the 911 Dispatch Center will be discussed at the joint meeting. Town Manager James responded he feels sure it will be. Mr. Lewis inquired about what is happening with 911 tax money that is being paid with the telephone bills. Town Manager James explained that Wythe County's stance is the town should be paying for them to dispatch our police officer. He added he has had many conversations about this and feels that we should only be paying for calls within Rural Retreat.

DHCD PLANNING GRANT – RURAL RETREAT DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT – We are still collecting the last of the business/physical inventory surveys. When those are received we will formally provide this information to DHCD.

STALEY SPRING – This project is moving forward. After our meeting last week the proposed contract was discussed as well as changes that need to be discussed. Council will be provided a copy of the agreement when preliminary terms are agreed upon as presentable to all boards/councils.

RICHFIELD AVENUE – In speaking further with VDOT and researching state regulations it seems that Richfield Avenue does not meet the requirements for rural addition or revenue sharing funding. It can only be brought into the system under Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements. I believe the true goal of this project is to bring this street into the state system. It is my suggestion to council that we bring up to date the portion of Richfield from Sherwood Avenue down to the cul-de-sac. Staff will have further discussions with VDOT, since it was my impression the cul-de-sac was put in place so the state would accept the roadway. If the town was to pursue the continuation of the street down to Richmond Avenue we would be required to provide storm water management and water quality evaluations which tend to add a large expense to the project. If the non-road frontage property was to subdivide the property owner would be responsible for bringing the roadway into state compliance.

DEQ REVOLVING LOAN FUND – Staff met this morning with representatives from DEQ. As mentioned at our last council meeting the Town of Rural Retreat has been allocated a \$107,000 loan for the WWTP disinfection improvements. We discussed the interest on the loan and information that DEQ and the Virginia Resources Authority will need.

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DEQ Revolving Fund Loan - \$107,000 at 2%–2.5% over 20 years (term of the loan is negotiable). The estimated debt service payment is approximately \$6,000/year and the annual budget impact is estimated at \$2,200.

Staff is still in discussion with other funding agencies. More information will be available at our November 13th meeting.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Clerk/Treasurer Guynn reminded the Council that a Joint Governing Bodies meeting with the Town of Wytheville and Wythe County will be held Monday night at the Wytheville Meeting Center.

The bills for October 23, 2012 were read and approved.

TALK OF THE TOWN

No one 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 to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Councilmember Hall. The motion was duly seconded and approved.

Mayor

Clerk