

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN  
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2013, 7:00 P.M.**

Council Members Present: Vice-Mayor A. Keith Crigger; Ed Schaack; Dale Yontz; Jerrell Hall; Peggy Hash; James P. "Sean" Viars

Council Members Absent: Mayor Timothy Litz

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: James "Jim" Hall

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

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

**INVOCATION**

Prior to the giving the invocation, Ed Schaack reported Mayor Litz had returned home but was weak. He asked that Mayor Litz be kept in everyone's prayers. Councilmember Schaack then gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice-Mayor Crigger.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Councilmember Yontz, seconded by Councilmember Viars to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2013 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of six (6) for: Crigger, Hall; Hash; Schaack, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against.

**CITIZEN'S TIME**

Vice-Mayor Crigger thanked James "Jim" Hall for attending the meeting and asked if he would like to address the Council. Mr. Hall replied he was in attendance to listen.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Town Manager James read a request from the Rural Retreat High School After-Prom Committee for a donation toward their 2013 event. He added the Council supported this last year by contributing \$100. Councilmember Hash made a motion to contribute \$100 to the Rural Retreat

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High School After-Prom Committee. Councilmember Hall seconded the motion and it passed by a vote of six (6) for: Crigger, Hall, Hash, Schaack, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against.

### **POLICE REPORT**

Chief Mitchell explained his monthly activity report for January. He noted his activity has decreased due to the weather. Chief Mitchell addressed dog complaints and stated he had spoken to the owner of one dog on Jefferson Avenue and explained the town and county ordinances regarding dogs. To date he had not received an update from Wythe County Animal Control regarding the complaints on North Greever Street and dogs getting into residents trash cans. Chief Mitchell explained he is continuing to work with the Sheriff's Office to patrol East Buck Avenue as school dismisses and during the evening hours. He stated he had patrolled Gienow Road one evening and made vehicle stops.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**TREE REMOVAL AT RURAL RETREAT COMMUNITY CENTER** – Town Manager James reported he had contacted tree service companies regarding the removal of the trees at the Community Center but only one response has been received that being Logan Tree Service in Hillsville for \$1,500. Councilmember Hall asked if this provider suggested a complete takedown of the trees instead of cutting them back. Town Manager James responded yes due to the trees being infected. Councilmember Hash suggested contacting Jerry Bell and explained she had hired him to remove several trees in her yard and he had done a great job. Vice-Mayor Crigger asked the Councilmembers to provide Town Manager James with names of additional tree service providers in order to receive more feedback. This item was tabled until the next meeting.

**DISTRIBUTION OF NEWSPAPER PUBLICATION** – Town Manager James explained he had met with representatives with the Bristol Herald on Monday morning. They had heard the town was planning to consider an ordinance to regulate the distribution of the newspapers along the streets. The representative informed him they will discontinue the distribution of the papers along streets at the end of February and will begin utilizing mail service. Town Manager James asked if the Council wished to pursue advertising and adopting this ordinance since the Bristol Herald will be making changes to their distribution method. The consensus was to proceed with the ordinance in order to regulate the distribution. A public hearing will be scheduled.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**RFP FOR TRASH COLLECTION SERVICES** – Town Manager James explained this item was sent out for an RFP in 2004 but was not feasible at the time. He added a new truck will be needed within the next four to five years and he felt it would be a good idea to look at privatizing the trash collections. Vice-Mayor Crigger asked what the figures were from 2004. Town Manager James stated BFI was \$10/house and Waste Industries was \$5/house and both included carts and was based on 650 households. He added by privatizing the collections it will free up a workday for the crew and improve the aesthetics of the town on Thursday's. Vice-Mayor Crigger

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stated work has been done to improve the trash truck and extend the life of it. He asked for the consensus of Councilmember's in reference to privatizing the collections. The consensus was to solicit RFP's for consideration. Vice-Mayor Crigger suggested compiling an average of expenses over the next month for manpower, fuel and tipping fees for comparison purposes.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**HERITAGE DAYS** – Chairman Yontz reported the committee did not meet prior to the meeting. Work is continuing on the sponsorship letters to be sent. A proposal was received for the inflatables. The Rural Retreat High School Auditorium has been reserved for Friday evening. The Hall of Honor inductions may take place on Friday evening instead of during the opening ceremonies on Saturday. The next meeting will be held prior to the next Council meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**PERSONNEL** – No report.

**FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS** – Chairman Crigger reported the committee met prior to the meeting and they are in the basic stages of planning the budget. Items discussed included the Capital Improvement Plan that addresses the roof at the fire department building, a fire truck, enhancements to the Dr. Pepper lot, meter reading software, vacuum jetter truck, UV disinfection system which funding is being secured for and pump replacement at the lift station. A draft budget will be compiled and presented to the committee for review. The next meeting will be scheduled and announced.

Councilmember Hash asked if the fire department had to give the town financial reports though the town supports them. Vice-Mayor Crigger stated he has asked for a year-end financial report to have during the town's budget process. He added he has proposed that any entity that seeks funding from the town must submit financial reports for consideration of the request. Vice-Mayor Crigger pointed out this was a good business practice.

### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

**OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECTS** – The pedestals will be installed underneath the VFD's this week. The project will then be 100% completed and closed out with Rural Development.

Once the weather turns around we will complete the three (3) remaining hookups on Chinquapin Avenue.

**DR. PEPPER LOT** – This past week I met with Troy Harris from Dr. Pepper about the Dr. Pepper lot project. He was very interested in viability of the project and he will research and discuss the project with upper level management in the company and come back to the Town with some possibilities of a partnership. We are also waiting to hear back from the National

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Endowment of the Arts Grant that was submitted. If received, it will increase the potential of completing this project.

**WWTP IMPROVEMENT** – We have contacted DEQ about the excessive flow reports from our WWTP. The intense rains and large snowfalls have caused the rising of the Reed Creek basin and with that the submerging of the discharge outlet. There is a need for the relocation of the discharge piping and DEQ will allow this work and the Town will work on the minor project in the coming weeks.

**FY 2013-2014 BUDGET** – We will continue with Finance Committee meetings in the coming weeks and have a preliminary budget proposed to the committee by the first meeting in April.

**RURAL RETREAT DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION** – The Town has been awarded a \$35,000 planning grant for the continuation of the previous planning activities and contract with a consultant to perform detailed studies of the needs of Rural Retreat. I am meeting with a DHCD representative Thursday afternoon to discuss the next few steps. More public meetings and vision sessions will be held.

**WWTP RECEIVING STORM WATER RUNOFF FROM VDOT** – The Town has recently worked on an agreement with Fox Valley, LLC to allow them to discharge storm water runoff from the interstate into our wastewater system. We previously have had the agreement with another firm until VDOT ended the contract with them. This will be excess revenue for the enterprise fund with a rate of \$.08/gallon. We expect around 5,000 gallons a month from October to May.

Vice-Mayor Crigger asked if this organization was connected to Tick Lefler that had the interstate contract prior to TME Enterprises. Town Manager James stated not that he was aware of.

**SUMMER CONCERT SERIES** – The Summer Concert Series has been downsized from last year to three concerts including Heritage Day. Jim Lloyd is still finalizing the acts. A budget for the series will be presented upon finalization.

Prior to continuing with the agenda, Councilmember Yontz explained Blue Ridge Country WBRF 98.1 FM in Galax is offering a program that allows the town to have a ten minute on air interview to discuss activities taking place. The ten minute spot is \$90 and currently they have 13 towns participating. He added this would be inexpensive advertising for Heritage Days and the Summer Concert Series. Councilmember Yontz explained there are also promos that will air leading up to the ten minute spot. Town Manager James stated this is a good outreach program that is community focused. Vice-Mayor Crigger commented this also allows the town to build a relationship with another advertising agency. Councilmember Schaack made a motion to purchase a ten minute advertising spot for \$90 on Blue Ridge Country WBRF 98.1 FM in Galax. Councilmember Yontz seconded the motion and it passed by a vote of six (6) for: Crigger, Hall, Hash, Schaack, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against.

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**TREASURER’S REPORT**

DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTIONS - Clerk/Treasurer Guynn reported information had been received from TACS concerning their process and fee structure to pursue delinquent tax collections. Upon reviewing the information she stated she will provide a summary for review and consideration.

The bills for February 12<sup>th</sup> 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 Viars. The motion was duly seconded and approved.

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Mayor

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Clerk