

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2014, 7:00 P.M.**

Council Members Present: Mayor Timothy Litz; Vice-Mayor A. Keith Crigger; Ed Schaack; Dale Yontz; Peggy Hash; James P. “Sean” Viars

Council Members Absent: Jerrell Hall

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: Danny Cline, Tyler Harrison & Clayton Reynolds – Boy Scout Troop #58; George “Butch” Childers

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

Mayor Litz asked Tyler Harrison and Clayton Reynolds to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Both of the young men obliged. Mayor Litz thanked them for their participation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Yontz, seconded by Councilmember Schaack to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2013 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Crigger, Schaack, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) abstention: Hash due to her absence at the previous meeting; one (1) absent: Hall.

CITIZEN’S TIME

Mayor Litz asked Danny Cline if he would tell the Council why he and the scouts were in attendance. Mr. Cline explained that Mr. Harrison and Mr. Reynolds are working on earning their citizenship and community merit badge and a requirement is to attend a local government meeting. Mayor Litz stated the Council was glad to have them in attendance.

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CORRESPONDENCE

None

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell explained his monthly activity report for December. He pointed out there was an increase in verbal warnings due to the increase in traffic enforcement by looking for possible DUI subjects as an initiative with the Virginia State Police during the holidays. One larceny investigation has been turned over to the Wythe County Sheriff's Office due to them having more resources. Chief Mitchell stated he has begun patrolling on East Buck Avenue again since school is back in session and has resumed the school visits. He added the year end activity reports will be presented at the next meeting.

Mayor Litz asked if the dog complaints have been resolved since the weather is cold. Chief Mitchell replied most have been at this time.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

TOWN NEWSLETTER – Councilmember Yontz reported the newsletter has been on delay due to the holidays.

MRPDC AMENDED CONTRACT – ZONING ORDINANCE – Town Manager James explained he had asked Mount Rogers to amend the proposed cost to develop a new Zoning Ordinance. In the new proposal, the review of the zoning map was removed, he pointed out. He further stated the needed changes will help us meet the goals outlined in our Comprehensive Plan. The new proposed cost is \$1,500. MRPDC will meet with the Planning Commission twice and with Town Manager James once. Councilmember Schaack asked when Mount Rogers would be paid for their services. Town Manager James explained they will receive payment upon the completion of the new Zoning Ordinance. He further explained he had told the PDC that he could handle some of the items they were charging for which also helped reduced the cost.

Vice-Mayor Crigger expressed concern in paying the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission to revise the Zoning Ordinance and inquired if any of these services were available through the Virginia Municipal League specifically Mark Flynn. Town Manager James stated VML probably would not be able to assist and this is why the Planning District Commissions are made available to localities. Vice-Mayor Crigger added he thought it was unnecessary when the Planning Commission, with the assistance of Town Manager James, can redraft the ordinance.

Mayor Litz asked Town Manager James what his concerns are with the current ordinance. Town Manager James explained the blending of the zoning codes because currently residential developments can be placed in commercial areas and he added there is a need for strictly a commercial district. He added he mainly wants another person to review the ordinance to ensure

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all potential issues are corrected. Councilmember Yontz asked if the ordinance is rewritten by the MRPDC will it be completely legal upon receiving it back and will be it cheaper for them to handle this than us writing the ordinance and having the town attorney to review it and make recommendations. Town Manager James explained the ordinance will be completely rewritten up on receiving it back from the PDC and further explained it would take longer to complete the revision if we revise it and ask for recommendations from the town attorney.

Councilmember Schaack commented in the past, the PDC has been very helpful to the Planning Commission and have knowledge of what is happening in communities around us and have been a great resource. Councilmember Hash also added they were an asset to the town while she served on the Planning Commission.

Councilmember Viars inquired about the downtown area and asked if the areas were more clearly defined would it help more with downtown development. Town Manager James stated the ultimate goal is to have uniformity in the downtown area in hopes of having a downtown business district. He further stated if the Council will approve the Memorandum of Understanding the project can be started and will be complete by the end of the summer.

(George “Butch” Childers arrived at 7:20 p.m.)

A motion was made by Councilmember Hash, seconded by Councilmember Viars to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission for \$1,500 to provide services to update the Zoning Ordinance and digital copies. Vice-Mayor Crigger asked Town Manager James where this project will be paid from. Town Manager James stated there is money in the engineering projects line item and other related items that haven't been used that will pay for this project. Councilmember Viars commented it will be beneficial to have someone on the outside to look at the ordinance. There being no further discussion, the motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Crigger, Hash, Schaack, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) absent: Hall.

NEW BUSINESS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Chairman Yontz reported the entertainment is being worked on. This year WMEV FM94 will be a presenting sponsor instead of WBRF 98.1 FM. A meeting will be held on January 28 at 6:00 to work out some festival details.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Treasurer Guynn reported the final audit report has been received and will be distributed at the next meeting. Upon receiving the adjusting entries, the year-end financial reports will be distributed.

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PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES AND LEGAL MATTERS – No report.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

RURAL RETREAT SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PHASE 7 – We are coordinating with King Contractors on final cleanup work and removal of their equipment from the school property. The final pay request is expected soon.

RURAL RETREAT SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PHASE 8 – All survey work has been completed and we anticipate receiving preliminary designs within the next few weeks. As mentioned before at the closing of Phase 7 we will evaluate left over funding in combination with new funding received in 2013 to estimate a start date for this project.

SOUTH FORK REED CREEK PROJECT – We have received preliminary plans from Anderson & Associates. These will be reviewed and funding package goals will be set in the coming weeks. The Town will be applying for financial assistance with several agencies throughout 2014 including the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and USDA Rural Development.

UV DISINFECTION SYSTEM – All closing paperwork with DEQ has been submitted and the project is near closing. We should receive our final payment disbursement from the Virginia Resources Authority by next week. All testing has been beyond DEQ requirements and we are now in complete compliance. The total project came in \$9,000 under the \$100,000 budgeted amount.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION – We have conducted interviews with the top two firms who submitted proposals for the Economic Restructuring Study of the town. The management team has submitted their preference and we will notify the firm who was chosen this week.

RED CROSS SHELTER SITES – The town is working with the Rural Retreat Volunteer Emergency Services and the Rural Retreat Community Center on their designation as a secondary shelter site in town. We hope to have this completed by the end of the month. Red Cross has promised to provide supplies which will be stored at the rescue squad building as soon as the designations are confirmed by their agency.

Wythe County is interested in finding a site away from the school. This will also allow the town to open a site without direction from Wythe County.

Vice-Mayor Crigger suggested using the upstairs of the fire house above the meeting room for storage space if needed. Councilmember Schaack commented that several churches in the area had received requests to be shelter sites but he was unaware if they responded. Town Manager James explained he is interested in having two to three small sites to accommodate a small number of people.

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SANITATION COLLECTION – Staff is currently collecting quotes from trash truck dealers; per our purchasing policy we will require four formal quotes from sellers. We have already secured costs for privatization and these two options will be further explored by the finance committee during budget preparation.

CHARTER AMENDMENTS – Following the certification of the prior meeting's minutes tonight, we will provide all required documentation to Delegate Campbell's office tomorrow morning. His staff will prepare draft legislation for submission to the Cities, Counties and Towns Committee of which Del. Campbell is a member. His fortunate seating should provide expedited processing.

FAMILY DOLLAR – The town is continuing to work with developers out of Charlotte, NC who are preparing preliminary plans for the new business here in town. More information will be provided as it becomes available. The property survey has been completed and the purchase of the lot is being finalized.

SMITH-PACKETT SKILLED NURSING FACILITY – This morning Aubury Knox and I met with officials at the Bank of Rural Retreat in Marion about the proposed project. They will most likely be in favor of the needed grading easement on the back of the BORR property for the site development. We had early concerns of VDOT's entrance requirements but some headway has been made on the possibility of VDOT allowing for a separate entrance solely for the nursing facility to be approved as presented. (*See attachment*) We have not received final word but we are encouraged and appreciate VDOT's willingness to work with the Town and developer.

Councilmember Viars asked if a shared entrance was still being considered. Town Manager James stated it is still on the table but it will depend on VDOT's final recommendation. Councilmember Schaack shared his concerns with the water runoff from the property onto Valley View Avenue and referenced the detention pond being constructed. Town Manager James stated stormwater detention ponds are developed to control the water flow to avoid flooding issues in the surrounding areas.

Mayor Litz welcomed George "Butch" Childers to the meeting and asked if he would like to address the Council. Mr. Childers stated he wanted to inquire on the status of a potential recreation center in the area. Town Manager James explained the town had handed the proposal over to the county to pursue because the town can't afford to fund a project of that size. Mr. Childers commented it would be a great thing for us to have here especially during the winter time so people could get exercise. Mayor Litz commented it isn't a dead idea but it isn't going anywhere. Vice-Mayor Crigger added the support from the county wasn't forthcoming to move forward. Mayor Litz added it must be a partnership between both groups. Town Manager James explained there has been discussion on downsizing to a gym area with a track. Vice-Mayor Crigger explained when the idea was first presented it was for an 8,000-9,000 sq. ft. area to include a gym, walking track and exercise machines. At the time, he added, there was hope the hospitals may help fund the facility to be used as a rehab center also.

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Councilmember Yontz asked if Smith-Packett would participate in funding the facility. Town Manager James responded possibly and he felt Klöckner would still donate the land.

Mayor Litz thanked Mr. Childers for attending and inquiring about the recreation center because it needs to be brought back up. Mr. Childers thanked the Council for their comments and stated he mainly wanted to get the status of the center.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The bills for January 14, 2014 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

Prior to adjourning, Councilmember Viars thanked everyone for the recent retirement dinner held for Rodney Hurt.

There being no additional business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Councilmember Viars. The motion was duly seconded and approved.

Mayor

Clerk