

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2014, 7:00 P.M.**

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

Council Members Absent: None

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: Jim Hall – Rural Retreat Community Center; Marcel Legare

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 Viars to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2014 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Crigger, Hash, Schaack, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) abstention: Hall due to his absence at the previous meeting.

CITIZEN’S TIME

Jim Hall with the Rural Retreat Community Center Board came forward and addressed the Council and distributed their 2013 revenue and expense report for review. He pointed out their income for 2013 totaled \$17,200 and expenses totaled \$14,975 resulting in a \$2,225 profit. Mr. Hall noted without the town’s annual allocation a profit would not have been made. The rental rates for the main room were raised during 2013. Upcoming major expenses this year include replacing the roof over the stage section of the building because it is still covered in shingles and water damage has occurred and sealing the parking lot. Vice-Mayor Crigger asked Mr. Hall how many times the center is rented each month on average. Mr. Hall referred to the first page of the revenue and expense report for total monthly income. He also stated the manager’s monthly pay

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has been raised due to a lot of work being done at the center. Mayor Litz addressed the use of gas heat and stated this has helped to save on the electric bill. Councilmember Viars asked Mr. Hall if the center is required to have a phone. Mr. Hall responded the phone is needed if there is an emergency. Councilmember Viars stated everyone has a cell phone now but it can't be counted on. Mr. Hall also explained the Board is working with Town Manager James to set up a Red Cross Shelter at the community center when needed.

Mayor Litz asked Mr. Hall if he was asking for more money for the next budget year. Mr. Hall responded they would like to receive the same amount if possible. He added currently they have \$30,000 in reserve funds for emergency repairs to the heat pump or other drastic needs. Mr. Hall thanked the town for all that is done to help them. Mayor Litz thanked Mr. Hall for his presentation and for providing the financial information.

Mayor Litz asked Mr. Legare if he would like to address the Council. Mr. Legare declined and stated he was at the meeting to listen.

CORRESPONDENCE

Town Manager James reported thank you cards had been received from Tia Morris and the family of Roy Williams in appreciation of the flowers sent and from Rodney Hurt thanking the town for his retirement dinner, time spent with the town and everyone's kindness.

Mayor Litz stated he had received a call from an elderly lady about Chris Buckingham. She told Mayor Litz that her trash wasn't out on a recent Thursday which it was very cold out and Chris had come to her door to ask if she was okay. Mayor Litz commended Chris for his extra effort and for checking on the town's citizens. He added an employee's extra effort is appreciated more than realized and asked Town Manager James to share his comment with the maintenance crew.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell explained his 2013 year end activity report. He pointed out there was an increase in the following activities compared to 2012: traffic accidents increased from five to 15, larceny/thefts increased from five to 11 and dog complaints from six to 16. Other activities remained on average. Chief Mitchell reported tomorrow at 10:30 a.m. he will be meeting with WDBJ 7 News reporter Orlando Salinas who will be riding with him on patrol for two hours. Mr. Salinas is doing a report on small law enforcement agencies in southwest Virginia and the segment will air in February.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

TOWN NEWSLETTER – Town Manager James reported he and Councilmember Yontz are redrafting the newsletter. Printed copies will be available when complete.

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NEW BUSINESS

Vice-Mayor Crigger addressed an article on the front page of Saturday's *Wytheville Enterprise* that was about the fire department. He stated there was a comment about the funding the department receives that stated "the department received a yearly contribution from the Wythe County Board of Supervisors and some funding by the Rural Retreat Town Council." Mayor Litz commented that statement was backwards. He directed Town Manager James to ask questions about this because the department knows where their money comes from. Vice-Mayor Crigger commented he thinks the fire department has the taxpayers of Rural Retreat to thank for what they have which does require the town council to allocate and vote on. The citizens of Rural Retreat should be thanked because they are good to support fire department activities.

Vice-Mayor Crigger referred to the report provided by the Rural Retreat Community Center and stated he would like for any entity asking for funding to submit financial statements which the community center always has. He further stated the community center does a great job with their reporting and have always been forthcoming with the reports. Mr. Hall inquired if they should reflect their reserve funds on the financial statements. Vice-Mayor Crigger stated he thought it was good to show all monies on hand. He added everyday there is a report of an entity that has a person taking money.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Chairman Yontz reported the committee met to discuss the parade and entertainment lineup. He noted once the entertainment is determined he will be going to visit potential sponsors. A meeting will be held on February 11 at 6:00 p.m. prior to the Council meeting.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Vice-Mayor Crigger reported the 2012-2013 Financial Report had been distributed. He asked the Councilmembers to review the report and bring any questions or concerns to the Finance Committee for review and to return the report to Clerk/Treasurer Guynn when complete. He added Town Manager James is preparing a budget schedule that will be released soon. Vice-Mayor Crigger asked if any salary changes were being reviewed with the Personnel Committee. Town Manager James stated he will present those to the committee.

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 – The majority of the equipment has been removed from the RRHS parking area. Cleanup has been completed but we will review the work when the weather improves and if some areas need attention King Contractors, Inc. will be responsible. A one year warranty is included in the contract.

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RURAL RETREAT SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PHASE 8 – Once all project costs have been disbursed we will begin evaluating the residual grant funding from Phases 1-7. This process should begin in the coming weeks. If there isn't enough money to fund the Phase 8 project we may have to submit another application in November.

SOUTH FORK REED CREEK PROJECT – Staff met with Anderson & Associates this morning and we have identified plausible funding options for the SFRC project. DEQ will be our most suitable funding partner along with the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission. These funding applications will be submitted later this year and we will receive their decision in early 2015. Possible debt service impacts will be evaluated during preparation of the FY15-16 budget. However the item will be included in the upcoming year's Capital Improvement Plan. Rural Development has more strict guidelines including requiring a current PER which will be costly.

SMITH PACKETT SKILLED NURSING FACILITY – Smith Packett has yet to receive final approval from the state, but the deadline for complaints against the project has passed and they are certain they will receive approval soon. VDOT has received their request for an entrance requirement exemption, which would allow them to have one entrance dedicated to their facility. They should hear back from VDOT sometime in February. They are planning to break ground in March, and we are currently negotiating the utility hookup. It has become apparent to us that the developer may be better suited to contract and utilize one company for all utility work on site and connections as well. More information will be available this week.

Vice-Mayor Crigger asked Town Manager James what the estimated demand for water is. Town Manager James replied 30,000 gallons/day.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION – We are scheduling a kickoff meeting with the citizens in early February. Anderson & Associates along with Greenburg Development from Charlotte, NC will begin work in late February or early March. We have plenty of time for public discussion which is a positive for the success of this project. This project will cost \$32,000 and will be split between Anderson & Associates and Greenburg Development.

COUNTY RESIDENTS REQUEST FOR WATER CONNECTIONS – We have received requests from residents on Earles Road who wish to hookup to the town water system. We are currently evaluating a cost estimate for the total project, which will be completed by town staff. We expect 4-5 new connections. We are attempting to contact Wythe County to ensure their approval of our acceptance of county residents. A formal request will be presented to the council in the spring.

RRVFD LIGHT TOWER REPAIR – The truck repair that was approved by council last month will be reimbursable through the State of Virginia's Aid-to-Localities Fund, which is administered by Wythe County. We will apply to Wythe County for reimbursement.

PLANNING COMMISSION – ZONING CODE REVIEW – We have talked to Mount Rogers Planning District Commission about how best to proceed with the review of our existing zoning

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code. I will meet with the planning commission during our next meeting in February to discuss our goals and receive input from members on what they would like to see happen during this process.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The bills for January 28, 2014 were read and approved.

TALK OF THE TOWN

Town Manager James 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 to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Councilmember Schaack. The motion was duly seconded and approved.

Mayor

Clerk