

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2014, 7:00 P.M.**

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

Council Members Absent: Geary Jonas

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: David Hughes; Amy McBride

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

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

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Amy McBride.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Litz.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Viars, seconded by Councilmember Lloyd to approve the minutes of the July 22, 2014 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Hall, Hash, Lloyd, Viars; zero (0) against; one (1) abstention: Yontz due to his absence; one (1) absent: Jonas.

CITIZEN'S TIME

Mayor Litz asked the citizens present if they wished to address the Council.

David Hughes introduced himself and stated he has lived in Rural Retreat for five years and pointed out the town has a lot of history. He stated he would like to propose using the caboos to open an ice cream parlor. Mr. Hughes further stated the town is 103 years old and he has found pictures showing the town's history such as the showing of movie pictures on the wall of buildings near the depot. He stated his main goal is to show the history of the town. Mr. Hughes asked if the caboos was available for lease and if he could look at it with an inspector to see what would need to be done to use it for a business. He also asked if the caboos needs to be

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moved because he had been hearing rumors that it did. Eventually, Mr. Hughes explained, he would like to have street dances on the weekends. He stated he needs permission from the Council before seeing if any of this is possible.

Mayor Litz explained to Mr. Hughes that Town Manager James would need to do a lot of research and the Council wouldn't be able to give him an answer tonight. He added the request will be investigated. Mayor Litz stated he is the cause of the rumors inadvertently about moving the caboose. He stated there isn't anything that says it has to be moved. He said at one time it was put there overnight because the town didn't know what to do with it but it could be moved if necessary. Town Manager James explained as part of the Downtown Revitalization Project there has been discussion on moving the caboose to allow for more parking. Mr. Hughes commented if it had to be moved it could be moved across the street to tie in with the depot. Town Manager James stated that is the proposed location to move it too. Mayor Litz asked Mr. Hughes to work with Town Manager James and when the time comes a decision will be made. He noted at this time the Council isn't saying yes or no at this point. Town Manager James asked Mr. Hughes to contact him to set up a time to look at the caboose.

CORRESPONDENCE

Clerk/Treasurer Guynn read a thank you card received from the family of Tim and Sandy Litz in recognition of the arrangement sent during the loss of Sandy's mother, Maxine Haga.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell explained his monthly activity report for July. He noted he had issued one summons and had a shoplifting arrest. Chief Mitchell stated he is updating his business information and following up on the business check cards due to receiving minimal response. He offered to attend the "Talk of the Town" with Danny Gordon on Wednesday morning to discuss the yard sale and noise ordinances to make the public more aware. Chief Mitchell explained he is working with Fire Chief Dave Evans on having safety classes at the elementary school.

Councilmember Lloyd commented he had received comments on the business cards. Councilmember Hall asked Chief Mitchell if he was able to get the radar trailer from the Town of Wytheville. Chief Mitchell responded no, it was in use but he is going to try to get it soon. Mayor Litz suggested setting it up at Food Country.

Mayor Litz asked Town Manager James to have the maintenance crew to fill the hole on North Main Street across from the entrance to the nursing home. He stated the gravel has been beaten out of the hole. Vice-Mayor Yontz asked Town Manager James to look at the possible water leak on Sherwood Avenue. Mayor Litz encouraged the Councilmembers to contact Town Manager James or Tony Wright if they notice water leaks.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

TOWN NEWSLETTER – Mayor Litz stated he is receiving comments on the second edition of the town newsletter. He added if comments are made then citizens are seeing it.

NEW BUSINESS

ANDERSON & ASSOCIATES COST PROPOSAL – SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PHASE 9 – Town Manager James explained the Sidewalk Improvement Project Phase 9 cost proposal from Anderson & Associates was received. The proposal includes all associated cost for West Baumgardner Avenue, Miller Street and Parsonage Avenue for less than \$200,000 which is in line with the cost for Phase 8. He asked for authorization to execute all documents on behalf of the town. Mayor Litz asked how far the sidewalks would extend on Parsonage Avenue. Town Manager James stated the sidewalk will be built from Miller Street to South Main Street. Councilmember Hall made a motion to authorize Town Manager James to sign all documents related to Phase 9 of the Sidewalk Improvement Project. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hash and was approved by a vote of five (5) for: Hall, Hash, Lloyd, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) absent: Jonas.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Mayor Litz stated Heritage Days is a yearlong event and he hasn't seen as much excitement as there has been following this year's festival. He added work has already begun on next year's. Vice-Mayor Yontz explained the entertainment for next year on Friday night is almost in place. Town Manager James asked if there was an attendance count for Friday night. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated he counted the attendees as The Churchmen were finishing up and he counted 109 people. Town Manager James stated he had received an email from Exile's representative thanking everyone in town for being so gracious while they were here. Mayor Litz commented they presented themselves well and we really enjoyed having them. He also commented we get tied up with the big act on Saturday night but the presentations and entertainment on Friday night was just as big. He complimented the town staff for their work. Mayor Litz complimented the committee on choosing the Hall of Honor inductees and stated he enjoyed making the presentations. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated everything went very well this year and he couldn't thank everyone enough for their work and Chief Mitchell for arranging to have the trash picked up. Mayor Litz added a goal should be to promote Friday night more. Discussion ensued on the low attendance during the day on Saturday and for the parade. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated Shentel was pleased and they are ready to begin discussing what else they can do.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE – Chairman Hall explained the committee met prior to the meeting. He stated Town Manager James is to contact Smyth County during the next week. Mayor Litz asked Chairman Hall if he feels comfortable with proceeding with this because we feel we have an asset in Staley Spring. Chairman Hall stated in order to make distribution work we have to have Smyth County and they need to be interested. Mayor Litz stated Wythe County

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will be in touch about water in the west end of the county. We decided we weren't going to entertain getting grant money for bulk water sales, he added.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

PHASE 8 SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – We have reached out to VDOT for an update on our Phase 8 plan review. We hope to receive feedback fairly soon. Town Manager James stated he had contacted them today but they didn't provide any set answers.

RURAL RETREAT DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION – Our downtown management team will meet next week and go over some of the recommendations from the consultant team in preparation for our September 10th public meeting.

WYTHE HEALTH & REHABILITATION CENTER – The building construction has progressed and the town is assisting Integrated Construction with lighting schematics that will be presented by AEP. The majority of the site development is near completion. Town Manager James explained the project is on schedule. We are still waiting for the completion of the water work on Chestnut Avenue. Mayor Litz inquired about how much of the building was under roof. Town Manager James replied the entire building is under roof.

SCADA SYSTEM – We have received several inquiries from firms interested in submitting proposals for the updated SCADA system. We will continue to field questions and provide detailed information prior to the September 26th deadline.

MOVIES IN THE PARK – We are moving forward with planning the fall "Movie in the Park" events. We will hold events in September and October. The final schedule will be presented at the next meeting. The money originally set aside for the Summer Concert Series will be used to pay for the movies.

FORMER MID-ATLANTIC BUILDING – The town is working to assist Swanson, Inc. on finding a suitable buyer or tenant for the soon to be empty facility. The JIDA has been contacted to spearhead this effort and Mr. Manley will begin that work when Swanson representatives are ready.

ZONING CODE REVISIONS – Town staff and the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission are nearly finished with the compiling of recommended amendments to the zoning code. These revisions will be presented to the Planning Commission for consideration during their September meeting.

COMMUNITY GYMNASIUM PROJECT – Councilmember Viars inquired about the status of the community gym project. Town Manager James stated it has been placed on the back burner at this time. Councilmember Viars asked if he was still trying to find land. Town Manager James replied yes. He explained with the Downtown Project the idea of having a rec center

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downtown was discussed but it didn't work out to be the best idea. Mayor Litz thanked Councilmember Viars for inquiring about this.

FAMILY DOLLAR – Councilmember Hash inquired about the Family Dollar store. Town Manager James explained the architectural plans were received today and a set was sent to Wythe County. Mayor Litz asked about the demolition schedule. Town Manager James stated they are planning to begin around the end of August or early September. Councilmember Hash commented she had notice the “for sale” sign was gone but was back on the lot the following week. Town Manager James noted they have been bought by the Dollar Tree but they are keeping their stores and will have different ownership.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Clerk/Treasurer Guynn explained the firm Hicok, Fern, Brown and Garcia began the work to prepare the books for audit on Monday and will continue working through at least Wednesday. The complete audit will be completed by Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates during the second full week of September. Mayor Litz asked how long the audit usually lasts. Mrs. Guynn explained usually three days depending upon the number of people on the team. She noted on Monday there were three, today there was two and tomorrow there will only be one person to finish up. She further explained when Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates comes in September they are usually here for two days. Mayor Litz asked Mrs. Guynn if the auditors work unaided or if she has to devote most of her day to them. Mrs. Guynn stated she devotes all of the first day to them which primarily involves pulling information and answering questions. The second day she noted doesn't require as much attention and the final day they are mainly tying up loose ends. Mrs. Guynn explained she is more involved with the first group because the audit group is mainly checking the information and running tests but it isn't as time consuming. She further explained Hicok, Fern, Brown and Garcia are great to work with because they have audited our books enough that they will ask for a specific report by name. Mayor Litz stated he was asking questions for his own information and he knew they don't come in, sit down and look at each other. Mrs. Guynn stated they review everything which lets her know she is doing what she should be and lets the Council know that also.

The financial statements as of June 30, 2014 were distributed. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn noted the reports contain unadjusted balances which will change following the adjusting entries made by the auditors.

The bills for August 12, 2014 were read and approved.

TALK OF THE TOWN

Chief Mitchell is to attend the *Talk of the Town* radio program at the WYVE/WXBX radio station on Wednesday morning.

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CLOSED MEETING – DISCUSSION OF PERSONNEL MATTERS

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Yontz, seconded by Councilmember Viars to convene to a closed meeting in accordance with §2.2-3711,A-1 of the Code of Virginia - discussion, consideration or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment; appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of any public body.

The motion was approved with the following voting in favor: Hall, Hash, Lloyd, Viars, Yontz.

Mayor Litz called the regular meeting back into open session.

A motion was made by Councilmember Viars, seconded by Councilmember Hash, to adopt the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, the Rural Retreat Town Council has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and,

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712, paragraph D, of the Code of Virginia requires a certificate by this Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Retreat Town Council hereby certifies that to the best of each member’s knowledge, (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certificate resolution applies, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Council.

Vote:	Ayes	Nays
Jerrell Hall	X	
Peggy Hash	X	
James Lloyd	X	
James P. “Sean” Viars	X	
Dale Yontz	X	

Absent during meeting: Geary Jonas

Absent during vote: Geary Jonas

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Litz thanked everyone for attending.

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

Mayor

Clerk