

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

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

Council Members Absent: James Lloyd

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: Jerry Hurt

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

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

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Geary Jonas.

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 Hash to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2014 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Hash, Jonas, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) abstention: Hall; one (1) absent: Lloyd.

CITIZEN'S TIME

Jerry Hurt explained the Rural Retreat Depot Foundation will be holding a home tour fundraiser this upcoming Sunday. A person will be at the depot between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. selling tickets. A total of three homes and one church will be toured, he added. Mr. Hurt invited the Councilmembers to participate in the tours and he explained the beef raffle tickets are also available. This year the winner will have the option of taking the beef or \$1,200 cash.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

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POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell stated he had distributed a copy of the data from the traffic study the Wythe County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) recently conducted on East Buck Avenue. He explained the WCSO has purchased a radar unit, through a grant, that is mountable on a pole that monitors traffic on a specific road. The traffic on East Buck Avenue was monitored September 30 to October 6. Chief Mitchell reported the total amount of traffic during this time was 10,422 vehicles with the daily average at 2,084 vehicles. He explained the posted speed limit is 25 mph and the enforcement tolerance is 35 resulting in 325 vehicles traveling above the enforcement tolerance or 4.6% total. Most vehicles traveling above the enforcement tolerance were traveling west bound and the average speed of traffic in both directions was 25-30 mph, Chief Mitchell explained. He further explained the fastest speed recorded was 61-65 mph on October 6 between 2:44 a.m. and 3:44 a.m. The device can be programmed to report every hour and in this instance the time wasn't set on the hour. He pointed out one vehicle was recorded traveling over 50 mph during the same time over four mornings. Chief Mitchell explained there isn't a set time that traffic is in excess of the enforcement tolerance because the reporting shows various times. He stated a complaint about speeding on East Buck Avenue was received last week and one was also made to the Virginia State Police, VDOT, Wythe County Sheriff's Office, Wythe County School Board and Rural Retreat High School. Chief Mitchell stated he had spoken to Town Manager James and they discussed looking into new signage that will be more noticeable to identify the school zone and the lights similar to those on Rt. 11 that flash. He also stated traffic is still being monitored on East Buck Avenue. This device was used to monitor traffic on Murphyville Road and Gienow Road and Chief Mitchell will be contacting the WCSO to get a copy of the reports. Councilmember Viars added the biggest concern is East Buck Avenue is in the middle of a residential area and a school zone. Chief Mitchell explained the data was reviewed and the day and times that people were speeding was considered. Mayor Litz commented this report is proactive and is good information to have. Chief Mitchell added the data may help with obtaining grant funds in the future. Mayor Litz commented it would be nice if the DOT would obtain this kind of data on Main Street. Discussion then ensued on asking the WCSO to place the device on Main Street. Town Manager James thanked Chief Mitchell for his report and added this is a good tool to use because it shows there are issues but it isn't out of control. Mayor Litz stated he has noticed the pole mounted speed monitoring device in Wytheville that will flash your speed at you. Following discussion on a pole mounted device, Chief Mitchell was asked to look into the cost for this type of equipment instead of the trailer mounted equipment that had been previously discussed.

Councilmember Yontz inquired on the status of the investigations regarding the break-ins into resident's cars and buildings. Chief Mitchell explained it is believed to be two separate incidents but the WCSO is looking onto the investigations and may have a suspect. Councilmember Viars inquired about plans for Halloween night. Chief Mitchell stated he will conduct regular patrol and once trick or treating begins he will monitor the heavily attended streets more. He added people will be allowed to park in the street but if they are remaining in one spot for long periods of time they will be asked to move. Jerry Hurt asked if Chief Mitchell would monitor the town flat area for the haunted house because the cones were moved in toward the depot about 25'-30'

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and people were turning then realizing the street was closed and were turning around in the middle of the street. The fair association will be contacted and asked to move the cones closer to the end of the street.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

SURPLUS PROPERTY – Town Manager James explained he would like to contract with Pillar Engineering to complete mapping on the town's property around the water plant and old town dump area. He stated he would like to determine what property the town clearly owns then it could be sectioned off to sell. The estimated cost to complete the surveying is less than \$500. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Yontz and seconded by Councilmember Jonas to contract with Pillar Engineering to survey the town owned property around the water plant and old town dump. Mayor Litz commented the property in front of the water plant belongs to the town and we aren't taking very good care of it because it needs new fence though the town isn't in the cattle business. He added Town Manager James wants to have clear boundaries to possibly interest someone in the property. Town Manager James also noted that Dallas Shumate's driveway is on the town's property and he doesn't have frontage so all of this needs to be clarified to establish his right-of-way. There being no further discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) abstention: Viars; one (1) absent: Lloyd.

SALE OF SURPLUS TRASH TRUCK – Town Manager James reported the auction on the old trash truck through Gov Deals closed on October 24 with \$5,797 being the highest bid by a company in Louisville, Kentucky. Gov Deals has received payment for the truck and we are working with the winning bidder to pick up the truck. Town Manager James asked the Council to accept the high bid of \$5,797 for the old trash truck. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Yontz and seconded by Councilmember Hash to accept the bid of \$5,797 for the 1993 Ford trash truck. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) absent: Lloyd.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Vice-Mayor Yontz reported the planning for the 2015 festival is progressing. The contracts for the Saturday night show have been received from Gene Watson and Johnny Lee and are being reviewed by Mayor Litz. The Friday night event is being finalized.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE – Chairman Hall reported the committee may have a tentative time to meet with the Wythe County Water Committee. Town Manager James stated he spoke to Gary Houseman and it will potentially be the third week of November. Mayor Litz

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explained the two committees meeting was at the recommendation of Supervisor Houseman to eliminate the middle people.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Chairman Yontz reported the committee met prior to the meeting. The committee is prepared to make a recommendation at the next Council meeting to set a funding amount to vote on for the Downtown Revitalization Project.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

SOUTH FORK REED CREEK SEWER REPLACEMENT PROJECT – Monday we met with staff members from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the Virginia Resources Authority. We discussed the final loan approval which is anticipated to take place next month. VRA loan rates are currently very low and we will monitor them before final closing takes place. We still plan to wait until we can secure Mount Rogers PDC grant monies before we close out the project. We hope to have options in the timing of the funding from the PDC so that the project process can begin sooner. The Town will have to secure permitting from Norfolk Southern and KPA for utility work within their right-of-way. More information will be presented to Council soon.

PHASE 8 SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – Anderson & Associates is continuing to work on the town’s response to 50% plans submittal comments for revision forwarded by VDOT. Staff is beginning to discuss the project with property owners along East Baumgardner Avenue. We will have to remove portions of decorative walls and trees along the project route. AEP has been contacted about the relocation of the poles and this work should be scheduled fairly soon.

PHASE 9 SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – VDOT was contacted last week for an update on the funding that was preliminarily granted but no final notice was given to the town. VDOT has responded that there have been internal issues that must be addressed but there were no issues involving the town. This project will be placed on hold indefinitely until VDOT gives notices that the money has been allocated for this local project.

SHUPE MOBILE HOME PARK – The non-conforming use issue on Mr. Bill Shupe’s property is being addressed. He has notified the town that the mobile home would be removed within a week. We will follow up with Mr. Shupe over the next few days. An extension has been given to allow the trailer to be removed.

FAMILY DOLLAR DEVELOPMENT – The zoning permit for the Family Dollar has been approved by town staff and forwarded to Wythe County for the release of the building permit. We anticipate site clearing and development to take place very soon.

RURAL RETREAT HISTORIC DISTRICT – Town staff is exploring options for National Historic District within our downtown to provide additional incentive for development. The

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basis for this project is to allow access to historic tax credits if the property owners wish to use them. We will be meeting with Mike Pulice of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources this week as well as Anne Beckett who worked on our 2001 study that was not finalized. Council will be presented with options after the first of the year.

WYTHE HEALTH & REHABILITATION CENTER – The storm water detention pond was tested last week and water overflowed into yards on Chestnut Avenue. We are trying find out more information.

GARMENT FACTORY – On Thursday morning, we will be meeting with Wythe County and the Joint IDA to tour the garment factory. The BB&T representatives want to meet with all parties to determine how the Joint IDA can help them to market the building.

WATER ACCOUNTABILITY – Mayor Litz commented the water accountability is staying stable. Town Manager James stated there are still a few water leaks to be repaired.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN RIGHT-OF-WAY – Councilmember Viars asked Town Manager James if he had received a response from Norfolk Southern about the right-of-way for the Downtown Project. Town Manager James replied no but he has made follow-up attempts. He further stated we are looking at possibly getting involved with Congressman Griffith's office because the right-of-way is needed for this and the South Fork Reed Creek projects.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The invoices for October 28, 2014 were read and approved.

Prior to proceeding with the agenda, Mayor Litz pointed out the next Council meeting is scheduled for November 11th which is Veteran's Day and the town hall is closed. He asked if the Council was interested in dispensing with the meeting or if they would prefer to meet. Councilmember Viars made a motion to dispense with the Council meeting on November 11 due to the Veteran's Day holiday. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Yontz and was approved by a vote of five (5) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) absent: Lloyd. Mayor Litz asked for authorization to allow invoices to be paid that would normally be approved during the Council meeting. Councilmember Jonas made a motion to authorize the town treasurer to pay invoices for November 11. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Yontz and approved by a vote of five (5) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; one (1) absent: Lloyd.

Town Manager James informed the Council that at the November 25 meeting they will be considering the revisions to the Zoning Ordinance for approval and will be entering into a closed meeting to discuss appointments to the Planning Commission and the Joint Industrial Development Authority Board.

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TALK OF THE TOWN

Vice-Mayor Yontz is to attend the *Talk of the Town* radio program at the WYVE/WXBX radio station on Wednesday morning.

CLOSED MEETING – DISCUSSION OF REAL PROPERTY

The Council did not enter into a closed meeting.

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