

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 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; James Lloyd

Council Members Absent: None

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: Vicki Sprouse; 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 Vice-Mayor Yontz, seconded by Councilmember Viars to approve the minutes of the October 28, 2014 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of six (6) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Lloyd, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against.

CITIZEN’S TIME

Mayor Litz asked Town Manager James to address the request made by Vicki Sprouse at this time. Town Manager James addressed Mrs. Sprouse and explained the Council was not ready to vote on her request to host a Beach Fest due to needing more details. He asked Mrs. Sprouse to gather additional information to develop a full plan for the event over the next month then her request could be considered possibly in early January. There was discussion on the deposit deadlines for each band and Mrs. Sprouse stated each deadline was by mid-December. Town Manager James asked Mrs. Sprouse to contact each band and ask if the deadline could be extended to January. Vice-Mayor Yontz advised Mrs. Sprouse that he had some sponsorship leads and would share the information with her. Mrs. Sprouse stated she had currently secured \$2,000 in sponsorships for the event. Town Manager James commented he, Vice-Mayor Yontz

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 28, 2014 – PAGE 2

and Mrs. Sprouse should meet to discuss putting the project together. Mayor Litz stated this sounds like a really nice project and told Mrs. Sprouse that he appreciated her taking the time to organize the event.

Jerry Hurt addressed the Council and stated he had made a request via email to Town Manager James that he wanted to follow-up on. He explained he and Vice-Mayor Yontz had made two 4x8 signs for the Rural Retreat Depot Foundation to increase visibility for the depot. He pointed out there isn't a lot of grant money available so by using the signs to increase visibility, the foundation can show we are making progress and extend the message that help is needed. Mr. Hurt asked permission to put the signs on the Dr. Pepper lot and at the lift station by McDonald's. The consensus of the Council was to grant this request.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell explained his monthly activity report for October. He noted due to a change in his work schedule the number of traffic related verbal warnings had decreased. Chief Mitchell is soliciting bids for radar equipment though some companies have advised to wait until after the first of the year because prices will be changing. He advised he will be contacting the local grant coordinator for the Department of Motor Vehicles to find out if a grant would be available to assist with the purchase of radar equipment. Chief Mitchell stated the Veterans' Day Parade went well and pointed out the Christmas Parade will be held Sunday, December 7 at 2:00 p.m.

Mayor Litz pointed out Chief Mitchell has had some help from the Virginia State Police on Parsonage Avenue with radar. Chief Mitchell stated the VSP has been issuing tickets on Parsonage Avenue and when he worked the area today it was baron. Town Manager James explained he had received a call from a citizen that was very upset because she had been stopped on Parsonage Avenue and was issued a ticket. Mayor Litz commented the speed limit signs show 25 mph and if citizens are traveling over that speed they should get a ticket.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

ZONING ORDINANCE REVISIONS – Town Manager James explained the Planning Commission had recently met and held a public hearing on the proposed revisions to the Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission voted to recommend the Town Council approve the revisions as presented. Town Manager James referred to a summary that he distributed and noted the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission reviewed the ordinance and some

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 28, 2014 – PAGE 3

changes were made including the all uses permitted language in a portion of the ordinance because it blended the developments among the zoning districts which can cause problems when trying to organize development in town. The R-3, Mobile Home Park District was removed because this district is not on the zoning map and wasn't needed. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Yontz to approve the revised Zoning Ordinance as written. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jonas and passed by a vote of six (6) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Lloyd, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against.

DOWNTOWN HISTORICAL DISTRICT – Town Manager James stated this item is more for informational purposes at this time with more details to be available in January. He explained in 2001 Anne Beckett developed a downtown historical study for the town. This area will be created and proposed to the Department of Historical Resources as part of the designated downtown historical district. The historical district will also allow for historical tax credits. Town Manager James stated the quote received from Ms. Beckett was \$6,500 though he will be meeting with her to discuss possibly reducing the cost. It takes approximately two to three months to develop the plan. This project will be paid for with reserve funding or may be placed on hold until the beginning of the next fiscal year, Town Manager James reported.

DOWNTOWN RESERVE FUNDING – Town Manager James reported the Finance Committee met prior to the Council meeting and discussed setting aside some of the town's reserve money for the Downtown Revitalization Project. The Committee concluded to set aside \$150,000 of reserve funds. Town Manager James referred to a budget breakdown and explained the Council will vote on every dollar spent from the allocated funds. The money will be used as our local contribution in addition to the CDBG funding, he added, and will be the maximum amount that we will spend from town funds. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated when the committee met they were concerned with the amount of money being allocated but what he wanted to clarify is the Council will vote on every dollar spent and the entire \$150,000 doesn't have to be spent. He further stated small miscellaneous purchases such as bolts and screws won't require approval. Mayor Litz added there will be no micromanaging. Town Manager James explained once the CDBG grant application is reviewed and approved there will be a project plan in place and all foreseeable costs will be known months in advance. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated it was discussed whether or not funds needed to be committed now but there must be a commitment in order to get something back. He added if the application isn't granted we don't have to use the allocated money. Councilmember Viars commented it is good to show we are behind the project and willing to support the grant. Town Manager James stated he wanted citizens to understand the money being used is not coming from the operating budget but from reserve funds that are already sitting in the bank. Councilmember Viars made a motion to allocate \$150,000 from current reserve funds in the LGIP to the Downtown Project. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall and passed by a vote of six (6) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Lloyd, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 28, 2014 – PAGE 4

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Vice-Mayor Yontz reported he needs to have Mayor Litz to sign the entertainment contracts.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – No report.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE – Town Manager James is to verify the meeting date with the Wythe County Water Committee.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

PHASE 8 SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – We have contacted AEP to schedule the pole realignment outside of the project area. VDOT is currently reviewing our changes made based off of their preliminary review.

PHASE 9 SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – The town is still awaiting word from VDOT on when we can continue the planning and development of our latest phase. We hope to receive word after the first of the year that the administrative issues have been resolved and we can move forward.

NORFOLK SOUTHERN DOWNTOWN MAINTENANCE EASEMENT – We have forwarded our application for a land lease agreement, with specific terms not yet discussed. Any financial agreement will come before the Council. The requested easement would be 25', similar to the depot property, which would be fenced as well. We hope they will accept our plans for downtown improvement and work with us to remove this deterrent to downtown redevelopment. It was agreed that the application fee would be waived.

SOUTH FORK REED CREEK SEWER REPLACEMENT PROJECT – We have been in discussion with the Mount Rogers PDC on the FY 15-16 Construction Assistance Grant Program, we previously planned to utilize to assist with the SFRC project. We are not sure of having adequate funding in place next year due to state budget cuts so this program through the PDC may not be available. We will move forward using VRA funds and evaluate the debt service we would accept. If PDC funds are available we will apply next year but it would be recommended that we move forward at the beginning of 2015 using the VRA.

SCADA PROJECT – The proposals we received were well above our budgeted projections due to a change in our focus on which technology to use. We will recommend a firm to Council in January as well as funding options that are available to us. We do not recommend taking on any debt for the project.

SURPLUS LAND PROJECT – Staff is finalizing a proposal to Council. The preliminary map is available for review and comment.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 28, 2014 – PAGE 5

RURAL RETREAT RESCUE SQUAD – The Mayor and Councilmember Hash participated in a meeting with representatives from the County and Rescue Squad Administrator Jay Hawkins. We discussed the county's proposed changes to rescue squad operations countywide. We will be involved in the development of these changes and will have further discussions with the county as we move forward.

Councilmember Viars asked who requested the meeting. Town Manager James stated the rescue squad did. Mayor Litz asked Councilmember Hash based on her involvement with the rescue squad how did they react. She responded Jay Hawkins reacted well and was positive and very pleased with the meeting. Councilmember Hash added this was one of the best meetings she has had with the County and it was very informative. Mayor Litz commented hopefully this will stop the rumor mill and will now make things more open. He added he also felt it was a positive meeting. Town Manager James explained there will be Council involvement and changes will be presented after the first of the year. Mayor Litz stated Rural Retreat has proved itself to the Council and the County. He noted due to financial situations the Board made some hard decisions to overcome their issues. Councilmember Hash complimented Town Manager James for working with the rescue squad and added he has given them advice that has helped because he was right.

MOBILE HOME AT SHUPE'S TRAILER COURT – Councilmember Viars inquired if the mobile home at Shupe's Trailer Court on Chinquapin Avenue was still there. Town Manager James replied yes, the owner has left the trailer and the property owner has to deal with it. He explained he is continuing to work with Mr. Shupe to get it removed.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Clerk/Treasurer Guynn informed the Council that the town's Christmas Dinner has been scheduled for Wednesday, December 17 at 6:00 p.m. at the Rural Retreat Community Center. The meal will be catered by Joey's Country Kitchen and will be served at 6:30 p.m. RSVP's are needed no later than Tuesday, December 9.

Trash collection will be tomorrow due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Town facilities will be closing at noon tomorrow and will remain closed the remainder of the week.

The invoices for November 25, 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.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 28, 2014 – PAGE 6

CLOSED MEETING – DISCUSSION OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE JOINT IDA BOARD AND PLANNING COMMISSION AND DISCUSSION OF REAL PROPERTY

A motion was made by Councilmember Lloyd, seconded by Vice-Mayor Yontz to convene to a closed meeting in accordance with §2.2-3711, A-1 – of the Code of Virginia – discussion, consideration or interview 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; and evaluation of performance of departments and §2.2-3711, A-3 of the Code of Virginia - discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

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

Mayor Litz called the regular meeting back into open session.

Motion was made by Councilmember Lloyd, 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.

Roll Call Vote:	Ayes	Nays
Jerrell Hall	X	
Peggy Hash	X	
Geary W. Jonas	X	
James N. Lloyd	X	
James P. “Sean” Viars	X	
Dale Yontz	X	

Absent during meeting: None

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 28, 2014 – PAGE 7

Absent during vote: None

ADJOURNMENT

Prior to adjourning, Town Manager James stated he been contacted by Shentel and they will be implementing rate increases which they wanted to make the Council aware of. He also reported Swanson Industries has hired a firm in Pennsylvania to market the former Mid-Atlantic Manufacturing building.

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

Mayor

Clerk