

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2015, 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: Brian Reed, Interim Town Manager; Lori Guynn, Clerk/Treasurer

Administration Absent: Scott Mitchell, Police Chief

Others Present: Tony Wright – General Services Director; Ed Schaack; Jerry Hurt; Brenda Maxey

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 Hall, seconded by Councilmember Hash to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2015 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Lloyd, Viars; zero (0) against; one (1) abstention: Yontz, due to his absence.

CITIZEN’S TIME

Ed Schaack addressed the Council and stated he is attending on behalf of the farmers market and the Rural Retreat Depot Foundation. He invited the Council to attend the foundation’s first fiber-optic pilot project on August 4 at the town hall because the depot isn’t ready to host this type of event yet. He explained a program will be streamed that may be from Virginia Tech’s Moss Arts Center or it could be a children’s program or program for older citizens. Mr. Schaack pointed out in the future the programs will be held at the depot and will include local school students and also students from surrounding counties.

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Mr. Schaack stated the reason he was present was to ask the Town Council for permission to close the town flat for the farmer's market that is held on Wednesday's. He noted the street would need to be closed from approximately 1:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. because the market begins at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Schaack explained he is asking this on behalf of the farmer's market and because usually children are there and they love to play in the street and go back and forth among the vendors. He added the customers also have children with them and closing the street will be safer. Mr. Schaack stated there are older people there that this will benefit in addition to the children.

Mayor Litz explained what precipitated the Council to ask for this is that we are receiving complaints from local business owners and the Council doesn't want to hinder either party. He stated the town would like to offer additional parking because it is 99% of the problem. Mayor Litz offered the farmer's market the use of the Dr. Pepper lot to set vendors up on. He explained visitors are parking in front of Old Mount Airy Machine and hindering their business. He stated the town would like to offer the use of a property that the town doesn't own but maintains and asked that customer parking be directed to the vacant lot across the railroad tracks beside the section house. Mayor Litz stated as a policy of the town to make sure the insurance covers and also so that the town can plan, he would like one written request for the summer. He noted a request is not needed for each week. He also stated when other events are being held that requires the use of the flat a request would be needed. Mayor Litz explained the Council's intention is to grant the request every time but to make it easier for the town employees to keep up with. He explained due to problems with the car show, the Council needs to know what is going on. He added that people need to park so that everything keeps moving on each side.

Mr. Schaack explained the vendor parking has been straightened out. Some were using the lot owned by Old Mount Airy Machine and the owner encouraged that until there was a mishap. Mayor Litz advised Mr. Schaack for the market vendors and patrons to use the open lot and the Dr. Pepper lot. Mr. Schaack added the farmer's market will extend through the end of September. Mayor Litz thanked Mr. Schaack for his comments.

Jerry Hurt commented he would like to clarify one item. He asked if the depot foundation wanted to close the flat if they will need to make a formal request to Clerk/Treasurer Guynn. Mayor Litz replied yes, this allows her to include it in with the Council's information and it also gives the town a way to trace the request. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn explained the Council wants to know what is going on but a written request needs to come to them to approve prior to an event being held.

Councilmember Viars asked if the town was any closer to getting the detour signs. Mayor Litz stated the request has been made but the wheels of bureaucracy turn slow. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn explained the signs we were going to take care of because VDOT won't provide those for the reason they are needed. Jerry Hurt stated Tony Wright had a good idea when he suggested roping the flat off from the corner of the depot to the corner of the caboose to allow for more parking. Mayor Litz explained there isn't much parking and the caboose is in the way. Jerry Hurt asked for clarification and asked if a request was needed if the depot was having an event

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and wasn't closing the street. Mayor Litz responded by explaining a request was needed only if the flat area was going to be closed.

Jerry Hurt explained the auction was scheduled from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. so that it would be over and attendees would be out of the way in time for the parade but with the change in the parade time it will be halted for the parade to pass by then will resume. He noted the auction will be held in the depot.

Councilmember Jonas made a motion to approve the request by the Rural Retreat Depot Foundation to close the town flat area for the purpose of holding the farmer's market on Wednesday's from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. from now through the last Wednesday in September. Councilmember Lloyd seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the motion passed by a vote of six (6) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Lloyd, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Litz reported a letter was received from David Manley, Executive Director with the Joint Industrial Development Authority thanking the Council for their consideration in the town's budget. Mayor Litz read the letter.

Councilmember Hall stated he wanted to brag on the fire department. He explained he had had a small fire at home and called the fire department. They happened to be at the fire house and were at his house within about two minutes. Councilmember Hall stated you don't realize how professional the guys are until you see them in action. He noted his building was saved.

POLICE REPORT

In Chief Mitchell's absence, the monthly activity report for June was provided.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DR PEPPER LOT PROJECT – Councilmember Lloyd reported he has not received a response though he would be contacting Mr. Harris via email to follow-up on his previous email. Jerry Hurt explained Shannon Dickenson has indicated that he would be interested in moving the pharmacy to the rebuilt building and also running the soda shop. Mayor Litz stated the potential is great. Councilmember Lloyd stated in his previous meetings Dr. Pepper wasn't in favor of a pharmacy. Mayor Litz explained people want to know when construction is going to start because the news indicated this was a done deal though he didn't tell them that. He added the town makes no claim other than Dr. Pepper had contacted us. Mayor Litz further stated the town has spent a lot of money on this.

STATUS OF SINGLETON PROPERTY – Tony Wright reported Mr. Singleton has made some effort to clean-up his property but the town will be cleaning-up near the road.

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FIDDLER’S CONVENTION – Councilmember Hash asked Councilmember Lloyd how the fiddler’s convention turned out. Councilmember Lloyd explained the rain hurt the event but he thought the Fair Association broke even though they didn’t receive money from Wythe County. There was a good crowd on Saturday and it did go smooth. Councilmember Lloyd explained participants came from Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, New York and South Carolina. He stated he also announced the sponsors for the event and announced the Town of Rural Retreat donated \$2,000 and Wythe County gave nothing.

NEW BUSINESS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Chairman Yontz reported the posters are available and all media advertisements will begin this week. Councilmember Hash asked how many vendors were attending. Brenda Maxey reported there are approximately twelve regular vendors, seven to eight food vendors and three vendors in the community center. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn noted the vendor deadline is this Friday.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – No report.

PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS – Chair Hash reported the committee has narrowed the number of candidates down to five. All have been interviewed by the committee with the exception of one new person. Another interview session will be held Thursday at 4:00 p.m. to interview the five candidates. Chair Hash invited the full Council to participate in the interviews. Councilmember Lloyd added this will be the last interviews and a person will be selected. Mayor Litz asked Clerk/Treasurer Guynn if an appointment will need to be made at the next meeting. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn stated it will depend on how soon a decision is made on who to hire. Mayor Litz stated the appointment would need to be made then because the Council won’t be in session until then. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn stated if the majority of Council is present on Thursday then the Council will be in session. Mayor Litz commented the meeting wasn’t advertised. Councilmember Lloyd suggested continuing tonight’s meeting to Thursday. Mayor Litz concurred due to the meeting on Thursday not being advertised.

PUBLIC UTILITIES – No report.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Interim Manager, Brain Reed reported the following items:

1. Secured \$10,800 through the water/wastewater program with the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission to fund water system improvements which is guaranteed funds. Mayor Litz signed the agreement. He informed Tony Wright the materials needed could

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be ordered and he would need to see the invoices and proof that the flow valve and drivers have been installed.

2. The Water/Wastewater Grant Application was completed for the new wastewater grinder pump for approximately \$50,000. This funding is not guaranteed and will be based on the competition received. To date 15 other applications have been received.
3. Contact was made with USDA Rural Development about a grant for a police vehicle. The paperwork has been completed and signed to receive a grant to cover at least 50% of the cost for a new vehicle. Mr. Reed stated he will assist the town with purchasing a vehicle through the state contract program that will save the town funding also.
4. The grant with the Department of Housing and Community Development for the Downtown Revitalization Project has been closed out. A response on the status of receiving funding from the Downtown Implementation Grant should be received no later than mid-August.
5. Met with Virginia Tourism Commission, the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce and the Department of Housing and Community Development to setup a small business boot camp in Rural Retreat that will be started in September. This will hopefully fill some space in downtown and good business plans will be developed.

Councilmember Viars inquired about the water project item that was referred to. Mr. Reed explained the health department had concerns about the amount of water that comes out of the water plant compared to the amount that is actually billed. He added it is mainly an accountability issue. Mr. Reed stated Tony Wright had gotten some cost estimates on a rate of flow control valve that can be placed in the line to actually record the amount of water that leaves the plant. A control valve had been installed years ago and is no longer working.

GENERAL SERVICES DIRECTOR'S REPORT

ULTRA VIOLET SYSTEM – Director Wright stated he met with Bobby Lane with The Lane Group and they are denying liability with the design. Mr. Lane has said the system should control the wastewater going through it but the main concern is the 90° offset. Mr. Lane is available to meet with us any time after August 13th for anyone interested in meeting with him.

WASTEWATER GRANT – The grant application has been signed off on by Mayor Litz. It will take approximately two to four weeks to be completed. Director Wright thanked Mr. Reed for his work on this grant and explained this will be an item that won't have to be funded through the budget.

FENCING OF TOWN PROPERTY – Director Wright explained he had spoken to Mayor Litz about fencing some of the town's property especially the town dump since some of the property has been sold to Dallas Shumate. The property is partially cleared and the survey markers are still there so it is a good time to fence the property from Cedar Springs Road to the back of the property. The estimated cost is \$3,060. The fencing of Staley Spring was also discussed because of the potential future use of the spring. The fence is down and cattle are on the spring boxes. Some equipment at the spring still works but if the spring isn't protected soon more

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damage will occur, Mr. Wright explained. The estimated cost to replace the fencing that is there is \$2,400. Mayor Litz stated this is an unbudgeted expense and asked Clerk/Treasurer Guynn where this expense could be paid from. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn suggested paying the cost from the General Fund undesignated account because that is the only account with any leeway to cover the cost due to very little extra funding in the water and wastewater funds. Mayor Litz explained Director Wright has had the property graded some to clean it up and it has covered four wheeler tracks. He added we are not trying to be bad neighbors but we don't take very good care of our property.

Councilmember Viars made a motion to fence the new property line between the town dump and the parcel being conveyed to Dallas Shumate and around Staley Spring per the quoted cost of \$5,460. Councilmember Lloyd seconded the motion. Councilmember Jonas commented if people are going on the town dump property with four wheelers and get hurt then it comes back on the town. Mayor Litz commented he was worried about Mr. Shumate if we fenced on him but he advised Director Wright that a gate may need to be put in. He added it isn't being fenced to keep Mr. Shumate off but the town just doesn't take very good care of it. Mayor Litz reiterated this will be paid from undesignated funds. There being no further discussion, the motion passed by a vote of six (6) for: Hall, Hash, Jonas, Lloyd, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against.

RAILROAD SECTION HOUSE – Director Wright reported he had made an inquiry about demolishing the former section house along Church Street. Upon speaking to two gentlemen, he was given a general cost of \$15,000 - \$20,000 to have it torn down and removed from the property. He reported he has also made calls to several companies that salvage materials from old houses that he will be meeting with. Director Wright stated this isn't a definite project but a proposal if the Downtown Revitalization Project continues.

RANDY'S INC. BUILDING – Director Wright explained he has been approached by Tommy, co-owner, of Randy's Inc. for an extension to the first of the year to remove items from the building. The other co-owner has passed away and Tommy has had health issues, Director Wright stated. He stated he didn't know who the request would need to go to whether it would be the Town Council or Mr. Reed. Mayor Litz stated the request will need to be made to the Council.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT ISSUES – Director Wright explained due to the recent storms the water treatment plant has had two breakers, seven fuses, a chlorine analyzer and turbidity meter damaged. He noted the town water level was at the lowest he has known it to be. The blue water tank is out of service due to a recent washout and inspection that required the tank to be drained. Today, five feet of water was gained in the orange tanks. The problem has now been located and determined to be a five dollar part within the communication line in the telemetry system.

Mayor Litz commented some upgrades may need to be done to the water system because we now have equipment that is 20 years old. He added the town may need to ask the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission (MRPDC) for financial help. Mr. Reed stated the MRPDC money

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may be able to be awarded to the town. He suggested organizing and prioritizing the town's water needs. Mayor Litz added the town has been stung recently by engineers on projects and he now has concerns with trusting their recommendations. He added it is the town's duty to keep the water supply going. He then explained water filters can only be purchased from Australia for our system. Mr. Reed explained the MRPDC can provide matching funds for Virginia Department of Health funds or if it is for the water treatment plant and certain criteria is met, it could be tied to a block grant in the spring which will require an engineer to sign off on the plans. Mayor Litz addressed the security of our water system and inquired if public safety can be included in a grant. Discussion ensued concerning the companies the town is contracted with to provide support services for the water plant and the companies that provide parts for repairs.

VALLEY VIEW WATER CONCERNS – Councilmember Hall asked Director Wright about the water concerns on Valley View Avenue and the detention pond behind the nursing home. Director Wright explained with recent rain the ground has absorbed some water so the runoff doesn't seem to be as bad. He stated there was some water running out of the pond after lunch time today. He explained Family Dollar has completed more grading and planted grass but hopefully once a good stand of grass is there it should help with slowing the water.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The invoices for July 14, 2015 were read and approved.

TALK OF THE TOWN

No one was available to attend the *Talk of the Town* radio program at the WYVE/WXBX radio station on Wednesday morning.

RECESS

The Council recessed to Thursday, July 16, 2015, at 4:00 p.m.

RECONVENE

The Council reconvened on Thursday, July 10, 2015, at 4:00 p.m.

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

Council Members Absent: Jerrell Hall; Geary Jonas

Administration Present: Brian Reed, Interim Town Manager; Lori Guynn, Clerk/Treasurer

Administration Absent: Scott Mitchell, Police Chief

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CLOSED MEETING – DISCUSSION OF PERSONNEL MATTERS

A motion was made by Councilmember Yontz, seconded by Councilmember Viars to convene to a closed meeting in accordance with §2.2-3711, A-1 of the Code of Virginia to conduct interviews with prospective candidates for employment and to allow Interim Town Manager Brian Reed to participate in the interviews.

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

(Councilmember Hall arrived at 5:45 p.m.)

Mayor Litz called the regular meeting back into open session.

Motion was made by Councilmember Viars, seconded by Vice-Mayor Yontz, 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

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ADJOURNMENT

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