

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2015, 7:00 P.M.**

Council Members Present: Vice-Mayor Dale Yontz; Jerrell Hall; James P. “Sean” Viars;
Geary Jonas

Council Members Absent: Mayor Timothy Litz; Peggy Hash; James Lloyd

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: Bob Lewis

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Vice-Mayor Yontz 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 Vice-Mayor Yontz.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Viars, seconded by Councilmember Jonas to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2015 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Hall, Jonas, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hash, Lloyd.

CITIZEN’S TIME

CORRESPONDENCE

Clerk/Treasurer Guynn read a letter from the Rural Retreat High School Band Boosters thanking the town for the donation to purchase sweatshirts for the band members.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell reviewed his monthly activity report for September. Chief Mitchell reported he is continuing to place the radar speed sign around town and he is receiving good feedback about the

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use of the sign. He explained he and Town Manager Childers had attended the 911 Advisory Board meeting in which upcoming changes were reported that may affect the town. A new computer dispatching system is needed to produce the necessary 911 call reports. Chief Mitchell explained the company the system was purchased from has gone out of business and the company that took over isn't honoring the contract. He noted this will not affect him because he generates his own reports but it does affect the fire department and rescue squad due to the system generating their call sheets. Chief Mitchell stated if the system is changed there was discussion on involving him in the system so that it will put him in connection with the Wytheville Police Department and the Wythe County Sheriff's Office for information sharing purposes. This will require the town to provide funding. Chief Mitchell explained he inquired about the radio system which has problems throughout the county. He was told if replaced the system will have to begin at the bottom and be completely changed. He added he anticipates eventually all first responders will be mandated to change to digital radios.

Councilmember Viars inquired about the potential cost to replace the radio system. Chief Mitchell explained previously the system discussed would incorporate Wythe County with Carroll and Grayson Counties and the amount given was a little over one million dollars. He stated he was told this would be funded and budgeted through the 911 center so the town would have to pay a share. Town Manager Childers stated our numbers should be low because we have one officer. Councilmember Viars asked if the town's funding is based on population. Chief Mitchell explained this has been discussed and he foresees this being changed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DR PEPPER LOT PROJECT – No report.

STATUS OF SINGLETON PROPERTY – Town Manager Childers reported Mr. Singleton has called and stated he had weedeated the property about two weeks ago. He noted that Mr. Singleton has recently suffered severe medical issues and is in the hospital.

Bob Lewis asked permission to speak. He stated he had been by Mr. Singleton's property and it appears that much hasn't been done. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated though Mr. Singleton is incapacitated at some point something has to be done. Councilmember Viars asked if the town could mow the property since it was tall enough and send a bill for it. Chief Mitchell pointed out the property has been taken over by trees and there isn't much left to mow. Councilmember Hall asked if Mr. Singleton was charged for the mowing the last time the town mowed it. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn stated the town hasn't billed any citizens for mowing in years. She added we mow properties but bills aren't sent because previous administration didn't have the properties billed. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn added this should be changed. Councilmember Jonas stated he thought the town should be billing to recover the cost of man hours and equipment being used. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn commented it had been possibly at least three years since bills had been sent for mowing services. She further commented she didn't think this had been done since Rodney Hurt was working for the town.

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RENTING A PORTION OF THE RANDY’S BUILDING – Town Manager Childers stated the person interested in renting the property wants a long term lease and he doesn’t think that is in the town’s best interest. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated his concern is if a long term lease is signed how much will it affect the Downtown Revitalization Project going forward. Town Manager Childers stated this is his concern because the potential tenant wants a three year lease. Vice-Mayor Yontz added if funding is received and part of the building has been leased then it may kill the project. Councilmember Viars stated he would rather not do that.

NEW BUSINESS

MAP-21 COMMUNITY SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – Town Manager Childers reported a resolution will need to be adopted for inclusion with the project application. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn pointed out the resolution states the town agrees to pay 20% of the total project costs. A motion was made by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Jonas to accept the resolution as presented including the town’s responsibility of paying 20% of the project cost. There being no further discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Hall, Jonas, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hash, Lloyd.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – No report.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – No report.

PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS – No report.

PUBLIC UTILITIES – Chairman Hall reported the committee hasn’t met. He inquired about the effluent discharge issues. Town Manager Childers stated he would address this during his report.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

Town Manager Childers reported on the following items:

WINGO PROPERTY ON NORTH GREEVER STREET – This property has been cleaned up and grass seed has been sown. The estimated cost was \$5,000 but the final bill received was for \$3,850 which was lower than expected.

NEW POLICE VEHICLE – This vehicle has been ordered and it will not include lighting or the decals. A grant was obtained by Brian Reed that will pay 55% of the cost. Originally \$40,000 had been budgeted to purchase the vehicle so this will save the town \$22,314. The savings between the dump truck and the police vehicle will be approximately \$40,000-\$50,000.

WASTEWATER PLANT EFFLUENT DISCHARGE – A sewer camera was borrowed from the Town of Wytheville. It was discovered a section of pipe that had been replaced had collapsed.

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The couplings had also collapsed and discharge was hitting this instead of going out. Upon talking with Brian Reed about applying for grant funds to replace the screen compactor and repair the effluent discharge issues, the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission has awarded the town \$56,210 to pay for both projects. The town will install the equipment therefore we should be at or below budget.

UV DISINFECTION SYSTEM – Councilmember Hall inquired about the issues with the bulbs. Town Manager Childers reported he had spoken to Mike Whalen and reviewed his log sheets. He explained there are two sets of bulbs and if the weather is dry each set will rotate being on in order to save the bulb life. When the water level is high both sets are to be on but the problem is both are staying on all the time. During the dry days the bulbs did rotate. Town Manager Childers explained to have the company look at the system it will cost \$1,200 though he will talk with Tony Wright and try to find out if there is another solution. He noted there still appears to be a problem with the system.

PAVING AT THE RURAL RETREAT FIREHOUSE – This item is a budgeted item. There is \$32,000 for paving and with this being a large amount; Town Manager Childers stated it is his intentions to have the parking lot at the firehouse paved. He stated it is in bad shape and pieces are coming up. A quote from Medley's Sugar Grove Asphalt was received for \$23,000 which will leave \$9,000 in the budget. Upon talking to Tony Wright, he was told that asphalt patch is needed but the town has enough asphalt patch to last the rest of the year. Vice-Mayor Yontz asked if the parking lot will be torn out and repaved and not just capped. Town Manager Childers replied yes it will be paved.

Clerk/Treasurer Guynn asked Town Manager Childers if he was looking at the street maintenance line item in the budget to cover this cost because this line item is for patching the streets due to water and sewer repair work and paving town streets. She noted the funding for paving the firehouse parking lot should be taken from the fire department budget but since it wasn't budgeted the cost will have to be paid from the General Fund undesignated account.

Town Manager Childers stated he wanted to make the Council aware that this is a need and he would like to act on it quickly. He explained in a previous meeting, the Council had told him that he didn't have to get permission to spend money on a budgeted item but the purchasing policy says certain things. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn stated this type of expenditure is heavily reviewed by the auditors and the Council needs to take action on these items to avoid being written up.

Bob Lewis inquired about only using Medley's Sugar Grove Asphalt because there are other asphalt companies that have been around town working. Councilmember Hall commented with the amount of this contract we should have more than one quote. Clerk/Treasurer Guynn stated it is generally three. Councilmember Viars stated this needs to proceed soon because the plants will be closing down. Vice-Mayor Yontz asked if this should wait until spring to keep the snow plows from scraping across it. Councilmember Viars stated if it is delayed to the spring there probably won't be a parking lot left. Vice-Mayor Yontz commented he would like to have other

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quotes. Following additional discussion, Councilmember Viars made a motion to authorize Town Manager Childers to spend no more than \$23,000 to be paid from the General Fund undesignated account to pave the firehouse parking lot upon receiving and reviewing three quotes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jonas and passed by a vote of four (4) for: Hall, Jonas, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hash, Lloyd.

WATER REQUEST AT RURAL RETREAT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – A meeting was held with Alan Rouse, Principal at Rural Retreat Elementary School who spoke with Wes Poole about installing water service at the top and bottom fields at the school. This will be no expense to the town for installation. In the future, a request will be received for the waiver of the tap fees.

RURAL RETREAT GARMENT COMPANY PROPERTY – There is a crew cleaning up the former garment company building. They will be cleaning up the exterior of the property and pressure cleaning the interior and repairing the heat system and leaks in the roof to put the property on the market. If access is needed for town purposes, we have been given access.

RANDY’S BUILDING – When touring the Randy’s property, Raymond Matney suggested bringing in a structural engineer to evaluate the building and determine if it can be remodeled or structurally it can’t. Proof that a structural engineer has been previously brought in to review the building can’t be found though it was believed that one was brought in from North Carolina. Discussion ensued about whether or not a person was associated with Anderson and Associates, Inc. Town Manager Childers is to contact Anderson and Associates, Inc. to inquire if a structural engineer has assessed the building.

TREASURER’S REPORT

CERTIFICATION OF PPTRA RATE – Clerk/Treasurer Guynn explained the Council will need to certify the 2015 Personal Property Tax Relief rate and referred to the distributed handout. She noted the 2015 rate has been calculated at 46.7% which will be a decrease of 1.55% from the 2014 rate of 48.25%. Councilmember Jonas made a motion to certify the 2015 personal property tax relief rate of 46.7%. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Hall, Jonas, Viars, Yontz; zero (0) against; two (2) absent: Hash, Lloyd.

The invoices for October 13, 2015 were read and approved.

TALK OF THE TOWN

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

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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