

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2016 7:00 P.M.**

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

Council Members Absent: James Lloyd

Administration Present: James Childers, Town Manager; Monica H. Patton, Clerk/Treasurer; Brenda Maxey, Secretary

Administration Absent: Scott Mitchell, Police Chief

Others Present: J.M. Blevins – Wythe County Sheriff’s office; Corbin C. Stone-Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates; Scott Wickham- Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates; Jerry Hurt; Billy Anderson

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

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

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Councilmember 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 and seconded by Councilmember Hash to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2016 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Yontz, Viars, Jonas, Hash; zero (0) against. *Councilmember Hall entered the meeting at 7:15 after vote.*

Mayor Litz requested a motion to appoint Monica Patton as Clerk/Treasurer. The motion was made by Councilmember Jonas and seconded by Vice-Mayor Yontz. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Yontz, Viars, Jonas, Hash; zero (0) against. *Councilmember Hall entered the meeting at 7:15 after vote.* Mayor Litz commended the Personnel Committee for their decision.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 9, 2016 – PAGE 2

CITIZEN'S TIME

PRESENTATION ON FY 2014-2015 FISCAL AUDIT BY ROBINSON FARMER COX ASSOCIATES - Corbin C. Stone, CPA, MBA and Scott Wickham, CPA, CFE began by distributing a handout of the year-end audit report. Mr. Wickham began the presentation by stating the firm expresses an unmodified opinion for the years ended June 30, 2007 – 2015, which is good. He stated that the town's books are in good order. He continued through the handout and pointed out that the town's revenue had a growth rate of 3.28%. The fund balance is in a healthy position. Mr. Wickham then discussed the rate of 3.71% for operating expenditures. He stated that this rate of growth is about average. He stated the most important number is the growth of the fund balance of 12.15%. Mr. Stone stated that it is unusual to see this amount of growth during this period of time. Continuing through the handout, the summary of debt per capita for the town is in line with the state average. Growth for water and sewer is at 2.37% which is almost the same as expenditures with a rate of 2.09%. Expenditures have remained the same which is a good thing. Mr. Stone indicated that the town presents a net pension liability which is the difference between investments held in trust and the present value of projected pension benefits owed. Mr. Stone stated that the staff does a very good job and they had no issues with the staff producing the information needed to perform and complete the audit. Mayor Litz stated that Rural Retreat has been the fastest growing segment of Wye County and we have the most sought after real estate in the county. Mayor Litz expressed that the Budget Committee has done a very good job over the years. Mayor Litz stated that he likes to see positive information for the Town of Rural Retreat. Mayor Litz asked if anyone had any questions. Mr. Stone said they are available for anyone that has any questions anytime. Mayor Litz thanked Mr. Wickham and Mr. Stone for their time.

CORRESPONDENCE

Town Manager Childers reported that Vice-Mayor Yontz forwarded two emails regarding a visibility problem when exiting from Indian Circle when the snow is plowed and piled up around the sign at the Hilltop Carryout convenience store. Town Manager Childers stated that he called the business owner and asked him if he could remove the snow. The business owner stated that he could not. Town Manager Childers told him that the town would remove the snow and send him a bill. Mike Jones moved the snow back to the dumpster area away from the street to make visibility better for citizens pulling out of Indian Circle. Town Manager Childers said another issue is with parking along the street on the business's parking lot. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated that many times there are vehicles parked along the street on the parking lot. He said his main concern is for the citizens and their safety. Councilmember Viars said that there is not really anything we can dictate to the business owner since it is private property. It is up to them if they want to create a buffer to the street by painting lines. Councilman Jonas stated the vendors in tractor trailers will park in the most convenient place to get back on the road. Mayor Litz stated there is a similar issue on the corner of Parsonage Avenue and the parking lot of Billy Shoemaker's property. Mayor Litz explained that there is an area at the street that is not used for

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 9, 2016- PAGE 3

parking because motorist cannot see to pull off of Parsonage Avenue. He suggested that someone look into that. Town Manager Childers said he would talk to VDOT and talk to the business owner. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated the biggest issue is to make sure we go back to the citizens that made the complaint and let them know what the outcome is. Town manager Childers stated he would send a letter to every citizen that had a complaint regarding this issue.

POLICE REPORT - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DR. PEPPER LOT PROJECT – Town Manager Childers spoke with the 2nd property owner about a billboard being placed on their property with visibility from the southbound lane of Interstate I-81. Town Manager, Childers has contacted VDOT and has a contact person. Town Manager, Childers stated that we have some good prospects for potential billboards. Mayor Litz indicated the billboards are for advertising.

NEW BUSINESS - None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Vice-Mayor Yontz stated work has begun on the vendor letters and everything is coming together. He hopes to have more to report at the next meeting. Councilmember Hash asked if he had met with the Rural Retreat Rescue and Fire Department. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated that he has not spoken with them yet but would soon.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Town Manager Childers reported that he spoke with Brian Reed from Mount Rogers Planning District Commission and he has agreed to assist with the budget. Mayor Litz stated it would be good to have help with the budget process this year.

PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS – No report.

PUBLIC UTILITIES – No report.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROJECT– The block grant application is due in March. Town Manager Childers met with Brian Reed and Anderson and Associates, Inc. They spoke about the changes they are going to make for the resubmittal of the application. Improvements are going to be made to the east side of the map that was left off. They are going to add the

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 9, 2016- PAGE 4

investment made by Doctor Spraker and his new office building. They are also going to include the demolition of the Gammon's building. The invoice for demolishing the building was \$19,000. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated that the Depot Design building was included as well and he will get the amounts together for the improvements to this property. Jerry Hurt stated the Depot foundation has spent around \$200,000 which is in the downtown area. Town Manager Childers stated that the grant only applies to money spent to improve the exterior of the buildings. Mayor Litz asked how much was spent to improve the exterior of the Randy's building. Town Manager Childers said the hours were kept down and that amount will be added as an investment by the town as well. Councilmember Viars stated that we also can include the \$30,000 donation made by the town to the Depot foundation as well. Town Manager Childers indicated that he plans on meeting with Jeannie Stosser regarding the building that Dr. Martin owned. She will be here on February 23rd at 4:00 pm for the block grant meeting with Brian Reed to discuss the Downtown Revitalization. Jerry Hurt stated that Jeannie Stosser plans to tear down the existing building and rebuild a building to lease.

Waste Water Environmental Assessment and Compliance Project- Rural Water will deliver the smoke testing equipment next week so we can begin smoke testing in manholes as well as pipes for leaks. The GIS shows each manhole as being prefabricated or cinder block manholes. Anderson & Associates did a sewer study to identify troubled manholes within the town. Town Manager Childers has a list of the manholes that are not up to par. This project was done 10 years ago in 2006 and he wants to add an item to the budget to repair the manholes.

Sidewalk Project- Phase 8 – Wednesday, February 10, 2016 at 2:00 p.m., we will be accepting open bids from contractors for this project. Town Manager Childers will report back to Council for approval of the bid. The project is expected to begin in March 2016.

H.O.P.E. Ministries Backpack Project – Town Manager Childers wants the Town Council and employees of The Town of Rural Retreat to get involved in this project. Children at Bland, Spiller, Rural Retreat and Speedwell Elementary schools get a backpack with food sent home with them on Friday in order to have food available to them over the weekend. They pack around 600 backpacks every 6 weeks and it takes around 10 volunteers. Food City provides the food and Old Dominion Trucking Company provides transportation. Town Manager Childers will check on availability and get a team together. He stated it is a great way to get involved in the community.

Re-Election Packets – Town Manager Childers reminded members that their packets are due by March 1, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. Packets may be picked up at the Registrar's Office in Wytheville.

Mayor Litz asked if anyone had any questions for the town manager. Councilman Jonas asked if anyone had any information regarding the old section house located along the railroad. He asked if anything has been decided regarding the house. He had someone approach him regarding payment to tear the house down. Mayor Litz had correspondence from an architectural firm regarding tearing down the house for a fee. The railroad will not pay the town to tear the house down or sell any property. The house belongs to Wythe County for the taxes that are unpaid.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 9, 2016- PAGE 5

TREASURER’S REPORT

The invoices for February 09, 2016 were read and approved.

TALK OF THE TOWN

A Councilmember was not available to attend the *Talk of the Town* radio program at the WYVE/WXBX radio station on Wednesday morning.

ADJOURNMENT

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