

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN  
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON  
TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2016 - 7:00 P.M.**

Council Members Present: Mayor Timothy Litz; Vice-Mayor Dale Yontz; Jerell Hall; Geary Jonas; Peggy Hash; James Lloyd

Council Members Absent: James P. "Sean" Viars

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

Others Present: Carolyn Ellison, Brian Vaught, Michael Duncan, Clifford Chewning

**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.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

2015/2016 FISCAL BUDGET – Mayor Litz read the public notice as duly published and opened the public hearing for comments.

Brian Vaught addressed the Council and asked about the \$25,000 allocated for the fire department with no refund from Wythe County and the \$2 service charge that shows on the monthly water/sewer bill. He stated he felt looking at the financial statement that the \$2 charge could be removed. Mayor Litz explained that the previous Town Manager, Michael James implemented the \$2 service charge. Mayor Litz stated that renters do not pay real estate taxes but by charging the \$2 service charge renters are helping pay for the cost of refuse collection not just real estate owners and Town Manager James felt the cost was distributed more evenly by adding the service charge for trash collection. Town Manager Childers stated from talking with Brian Reed with Mount Rogers, the charge for our trash collection is minimal but if it was out sourced it would be more costly to the citizens. He also told Mr. Vaught if he is asked this question in the future; please let the citizen know that they can contact him anytime at the Town Office and he will be happy to answer any questions about the trash collection. Mr. Vaught understands the reason for the charge but he feels the citizens need to understand why the trash truck is not being used during the trash collection. He understands that was the reason for the charge to help with the cost of the trash truck. Town Manager Childers stated he is not sure how to get this information out to the citizens. Councilmember Hall stated that the trash truck is being

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used each week by taking the trash to the transfer station. The problem is getting information out to the citizens and in the past the town has tried newsletters, website and water bills but people do not read the information stated Councilmember Lloyd. Mr. Vaught commented that he is just bringing up concerns he has heard from citizens. Mayor Litz inquired if there were any additional comments. There being none he closed the public hearing and stated no action will be taken tonight and the budget will be adopted at the June 28, 2016 meeting.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Yontz and seconded by Councilmember Hash to approve the minutes of the May 24, 2016 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote for four (4) for: Yontz, Jonas, Lloyd, Hash; zero (0) against; one (1) abstain: Hall.

### **CITIZEN'S TIME**

Carolyn Ellison addressed Council complaining about her neighbor's dogs and there excessive barking. Within the last week her neighbor has rebuilt a pen and has three large dogs in it. Mrs. Ellison asked the neighbor while what he was building and he stated a kennel. She also commented that when he rebuilt his pen that one side of the pen is actually her fence. He only built three sides of the pen. Town Manager Childers told Mrs. Ellison he was aware of the pen but her neighbor is not allowed to have a kennel. Councilmember Lloyd asked isn't it illegal to put a structure on the property line. Town Manager Childers responded there is a setback required. He stated that he and Chief Mitchell will address this situation. Clifford Chewing another neighbor also addressed the Council stating that the dogs are constantly barking and there is supposedly an invisible fence to keep them on the property, but it apparently it does not work because the dogs have been at his house. Mr. Chewing and his wife are trying to figure out a way to enjoy their yard without the dogs barking at them. Mr. Chewing asked about speeding down Main Street in front of his home which is located across from Harpo's Hardware and if anything could be done. It is a constant problem. Mayor Litz stated that Chief Mitchell is aware of the speeding problems and he would ask Chief Mitchell to check traffic for speeding. Chief Mitchell stated that the speed limit sign at K & B Cabinetry is leaning and needs repaired to make it more visible for drivers. Town Manager Childers stated that he would have the town maintenance crew to repair the pole.

### **CORRESPONDENCE - None**

### **POLICE REPORT**

Chief Mitchell distributed a Monthly Activities report and a 2015 Crime Statistics Review report. Of the inoperative vehicles letters sent out only one had complied so far. He is working on properties that are not mowed and has sent a letter to Jack Singleton about his property.

Chief Mitchell stated the issue with the dogs will fall into our Noise Ordinance and Councilmember Lloyd asked does he not have to move his pen. Chief Mitchell stated that they would fall under the Zoning Ordinance.

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### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

DR. PEPPER LOT PROJECT – Councilmember Lloyd has nothing to report. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated it might be worth our time to see what it entails to place a camera on the Dr. Pepper lot and try to get a media to use the camera. It could be designated as the Dr. Pepper Downtown camera. Vice-Mayor Yontz has requested more information on the cost of a camera and it may work out to be more cost effective or more visibility than a billboard.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

INVOICE FROM WYTHE COUNTY REGISTRAR OFFICE – Town Manager Childers stated we were contacted by the Wythe County Registrar Office and they have a part time employee who had to work overtime due to the town elections in the Town of Rural Retreat and Town of Wytheville. This person worked a total of 18 days and the cost of \$1584 was split between the Town of Rural Retreat and the Town of Wytheville. The reason for this invoice was because the county had no more money in their budget to pay the overtime to their employee. Town Manager Childers spoke to the Town of Wytheville and they have never received an invoice for extra time in past elections. We paid for our town election and up to this point we have paid \$727 and we budgeted around \$2000 for the election. There is still a bill that hasn't been received yet for the coding and other expenditures for the ballots which will be an additional cost of \$700 to \$800 dollars bringing our total expenditure for the election to \$1500. Councilmember Jonas asked why they hired someone if they didn't have the money to pay them. Town Manager Childers replied he couldn't answer that question. Councilmember Hash wanted to know why they hired a part time employee and paid them overtime. Vice-Mayor Yontz asked can they document what the part time person was hired for and what work that person was actually doing. Town Manager Childers quoted the invoice: "Extra days paid to part-time worker in Registrar's Office due to town elections; 18 days @ \$88.00/day= \$1584.00/2. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated if he had to do with the new voting machines the town had nothing to do with those being purchased. Town Manager Childers asked if the Council would like more information. Mayor Litz stated yes, we have every right to ask and added if Town Manager Childers comes back and says it's a true bill then Council will make a decision.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

HERITAGE DAYS – Mayor Litz stated there will be a schedule distributed soon. Town Manager Childers stated he was able to talk to VDOT today and we will have the electronic sign to advertise Heritage Days down toward the interstate. Treasurer Patton asked about a payment due for the main entertainment and wanted to make sure it is okay to make that payment. She stated the first deposit has been made. Vice-Mayor Yontz said the contract is executed and to make the payment. Councilmember Jonas noticed on an email that a gentleman out of Winston Salem asked about the Duke of Hazard car to be exhibited at Heritage Days. Town Manager Childers stated he invited the gentleman to come as a spectator not as a part of the exhibits.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Councilmember Yontz thanked Town Manager Childers and Treasurer Patton on all their hard work on putting the budget together. He stated that this was one of the best budget processes since he has been on the Budget Committee. Town

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Manager Childers stated he wants to thank Treasurer Patton for all her work on the budget and she has done a great job.

**PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS** – Councilmember Hash stated the Personnel Committee had a meeting and has submitted to Council a copy of a Sick Leave Policy. Council was asked to review the proposed policy and direct any questions to Town Manager Childers or any Personnel Committee member. If the policy is acceptable the Personnel Committee would like to have it voted on at the June 28<sup>th</sup> meeting with an effective date of July 1, 2016.

**PUBLIC UTILITIES** –No report

### **TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT**

**RANDY’S BUILDING** – Town Manager Childers stated that the demolition of the property at Randy’s building was well worth the money. They have had citizens to come by and thank the town for the work being done and how much better it looks. He believes Tommy Reedy did a great job on the demolition plus we can use it for our match if we receive the grant. Councilmember Hash asked when the grant is awarded. Town Manager Childers replied in August.

**PHASE IX SIDEWALK PROJECT** – It is going to take a couple more weeks for AEP to move the poles stated Town Manager Childers. When moving poles they are rarely in a community environment, they are usually in a rural environment. They cannot move the poles all at one time because of being among businesses and residences. The estimated time to complete the relocation of the poles is one and a half week to two weeks. Shentel representative Jason Durant stated they will take three to four days to move their lines and he spoke to Greg Williams, Century Link he stated it will take them about a week. Town Manager Childers stated we are looking at another three to four weeks before all the pole and line relocations can be completed.

**STREET SWEEPING** –VDOT will be in the town on Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup> to sweep the streets.

**VDOT PAINTING STREET CROSS WALKS** – The town is on the schedule to be painted. VDOT sent an email stating they would not repaint anything that does not meet ADA (American with Disability Act) requirements. If we have a cross walk that is just a curb it does not meet the ADA requirements because there is not a ramp for access to the sidewalks. Town Manager Childers is to see if any accesses to sidewalks with cross walk do not meet the ADA requirements and report at the next Council meeting.

**PAVING WEST BAUMGARDNER-** Paving will start Thursday, June 16 and we will be raising man holes for this job. The cost of this job will use up what has been budgeted for street paving. Town Manager Childers spoke to VDOT and Williams Avenue and East Baumgardner Avenue is on schedule for next year to pave. Councilmember Lloyd stated it bothers him there has never been a divider line painted on Williams Avenue so people will know that it is an actual street and not part of the parking lot. Town Manager Childers stated he would speak to VDOT about painting a divider line on Williams Avenue.

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**TREASURER’S REPORT**

The invoices for June 14, 2016 were read and approved.

**TALK OF THE TOWN**

Town Manager Childers will 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.

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Mayor

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Clerk