

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

Council Members Present: Mayor Timothy Litz; Vice-Mayor Dale Yontz; Geary Jonas; James P. "Sean" Viars; Brian Vaught; Mike Duncan

Council Members Absent: James Lloyd

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: Jerry Hurt, Donnie Buck

**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 Vaught and seconded by Councilmember Viars to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2016 regular meeting. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote for five (5) for: Jonas, Viars, Yontz, Vaught, Duncan; zero (0) against.

**CITIZEN'S TIME**

Jerry Hurt addressed council to give an update on the Depot. Mr. Hurt reported a group of graduate students from Virginia Tech met with members of the Depot Foundation and some town officials earlier in the spring. The group did a study to assist the foundation in finding the best use for the Depot once it is renovated. The group would like to present their findings to council at the September 13, 2016 meeting.

Donnie Buck addressed council and personally thanked council for their support of the Depot. Mr. Buck stated the auction that took place on July 30, 2016 during the Heritage Days festival was a huge success. He added that there was standing room only at the Depot the morning of the auction and they raised a little over \$11,000. All the items donated for the auction were not auction material therefore they would like to sell these items at a yard sale. The Foundation

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would like to have a community yard sale on September 10, 2016. They will offer spaces to churches and civic organizations outside of the Depot around the caboose. Mr. Buck stated they do not want to close the street but would like to have permission from the town to use the parking area in the flat to set up spaces. Town Manager Childers stated he would work with the Depot and assist in any way. Councilmember Vaught asked Mr. Buck if the Depot would take donations. Mr. Buck stated they would gladly accept donations to add to the sale. Councilmember Jonas made a motion to allow the Rural Retreat Depot Foundation to use the parking area in the flat (around the caboose) for a community yard sale on September 10, 2016 from 8:00am to 4:00pm. Motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Yontz. With no further discussion the motion passed with a vote of five (5) for: Yontz, Jonas, Duncan, Vaught, Viars; Zero (0) against.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

**RURAL RETREAT DEPOT FOUNDATION** – Treasurer Patton read a thank you note from the Depot Foundation signed by Jerry Hurt. Mr. Hurt thanked the town on behalf of the foundation for the \$7500 donation that will be used towards the restoration of the Depot. The letter stated Mr. & Mrs. Hurt matched the donation with an additional contribution of \$7500.

**FM-94** – Treasurer Patton read a thank you note from Jim Mabe and Marsha Turpin with FM-94. The note thanked the town for allowing the radio station the opportunity to sponsor the 2016 Heritage Days Festival.

**JERRY HURT** – Treasurer Patton read a thank you note from Jerry Hurt which extended his sincere appreciation for the honor of being named the 2016 citizen of the year.

**VIRGINIA INTERFAITH CENTER** – Treasurer Patton explained a letter from Virginia Interfaith Center which asks the town to take a position regarding Medicaid expansion by adopting a resolution. The resolution would call upon the General assembly to close Virginia's health care coverage gap by drawing down federal Medicaid dollars. Councilmember Viars stated that he feels like he is not knowledgeable enough regarding the issue to support a resolution of this sort. Councilmember Vaught stated he researched the issue to his knowledge the General Assembly has blocked the bill because it is another way to expand universal healthcare. Vice-Mayor Yontz added he does not feel it is our place as a local government to push the Legislature. No action was taken on the issue.

### **POLICE REPORT**

Chief Mitchell distributed the activity report for July 2016. Chief Mitchell reported that Heritage Days went well and he did not receive any complaints. He will be placing the radar sign on Buck Avenue since school starting.

Chief Mitchell reported he spoke to Jack Singleton regarding his property. Mr. Singleton has attempted to cut weeds down on the property. Mr. Singleton told Chief Mitchell that he was going to work on cutting trees and removing the trash from the yard.

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Councilmember Vaught asked Chief Mitchell about the property on North Greever Street owned by Wendy Wingo. Chief Mitchell replied that he has not been able to get in touch with Ms. Wingo. Town Manager Childers told Chief Mitchell that she is usually a vendor at the Farmers Market every Wednesday. Chief Mitchell stated he would try to speak with her at the market.

Councilmember Duncan asked Chief Mitchell if he has had any reports of a person in a silver vehicle taking pictures of homes around cemetery on Mountain View Avenue. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated the reassessment office has a silver vehicle but it has a sign indicating such. Chief Mitchell stated he would check on the vehicle.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**DR. PEPPER LOT PROJECT** – Councilmember Viars stated he had a request from a citizen inquiring about the status of the Dr. Pepper Project. Councilmember Yontz stated the committee needs to meet with Troy Harris of Dr. Pepper Corporation regarding the project. Mayor Litz stated the group from Virginia Tech that is assisting the Depot Foundation was inquiring about the project as well. Councilmember Viars stated the project has been on the agenda over a year and he feels it is time for the town to finalize plans. Mayor Litz asked Town Manager Childers to contact the Dr. Pepper Corporation and set up a meeting. Town Manager Childers agreed and that the Dr. Pepper Corporation needs to see that the entire council and many citizens are interested in a relationship with their organization. Jerry Hurt added that he spoke to Senator Edwards from Roanoke and his grandmother worked in the drug store. Senator Edwards indicated that he is interested in assisting the town in their efforts.

**DOG ORDINANCE ISSUE ON CHINQUAPIN AVENUE** – Town Manager Childers reported that he spoke with Attorney, Trent Crewe and Mr. David Rose on a conference call. Mr. Rose stated he would be moving this week or at the latest next week. Town Manager Childers contacted Mr. Chewning and Mrs. Ellison and they were at the very least very appreciative and happy. Trent Crewe asked if Mr. Rose moved would the town go forward with any charges. Town Manager Childers stated no that once Mr. Rose moved outside of the town limits the town will not have any issues.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**PLANNING COMMISSION REAPPOINTMENT** – Town Manager Childers stated council needs to reappoint one member and another person be appointed to replace Alan West. Councilmember Vaught made a motion to reappoint Bob Lewis to the planning commission. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Jonas. Motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Yontz, Viars, Jonas, Duncan, Vaught; zero (0) against.

Councilmember Viars made a motion to Sherry Long to the planning commission. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Jonas. Motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Yontz, Viars, Jonas, Duncan, Vaught; zero (0) against.

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### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

HERITAGE DAYS – Treasurer Patton presented an income statement for the Heritage Days festival. She reported there may be a few invoices still out such as the invoice from Depot Designs for t-shirts. To date the total expenses are \$31,092, total revenue from a contribution from Shentel is \$5,000. The total amount over budget to date is \$1,092. Treasurer Patton stated we may need to increase next year's budget to allow for the extra expenses to be covered. The total amount in the budget for fiscal year 2016-2017 is \$25,000. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated he believes we will have additional sponsors contribute next year and this will help pay some of the expenses. Town Manager Childers stated the event was for the good of the town and everything went smoothly and everyone had a good time. Mayor Litz reported the attendance on Friday night was approximately 250 people, which was the biggest turnout ever for the gospel singing. Mayor Litz stated the presentations for wall of honor inductees were done a little different this year and it went well. Vice-Mayor Yontz added everyone at the town office and council worked well together this year. Everything was very positive and the committee will be making adjustments next year to make the festival even better. Town Manager Childers stated the schedule will need to be adjusted next year to announce the citizen of the year. In an effort to give the recipient of the award the attention they deserve the announcement needs to be made when more people are in attendance.

Councilmember Vaught asked about multiple vendors selling the same product. Councilmember Viars stated the vendor application states there is a possibility of someone else selling the same product.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Treasurer Patton reported the pre-audit process is complete and the auditors will be in the office on August 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>.

PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS – NONE

PUBLIC UTILITIES – Councilmember Viars asked Town Manager Childers if he had contacted Smyth County regarding the water project. Town Manager Childers stated he has not had contact with Smyth at this time.

### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

ISSUE WITH CITIZEN AT COUNCIL MEETING – Town Manager Childers stated a letter has been written to a citizen regarding his behavior in council meetings. At the advice of council, Mr. Sobey drafted a letter to the citizen basically stating that council will not tolerate threats from anyone and should he continue to threaten councilmembers and/or town employees he would be subject to arrest.

PARSONAGE AVENUE ALLEY – Town Manager Childers stated he spoke with Kitty Milton regarding an alleyway located on Parsonage Avenue. Town Manager Childers stated Mrs. Milton told him she tried to purchase the property several years ago in order to clean it up. She was offended because a councilmember stated she was trying to get the property for free. The property in question is an extension to Scott Street and it is currently owned by the town. Town

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Manager Childers stated the property is ideal for the county and town to run radar and monitor the speeding situation on Parsonage Avenue.

SHUPE PROPERTY ON EAST BUCK AVENUE – Town Manager Childers stated he spoke with General Services Director Tony Wright and the town will obtain a sample of the water in the basement of the home to be tested to determine if the water is ground water or town water.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST - Town Manager Childers stated the FOIA request from Virginia Open the Books organization was completed and returned this week. The town office will add Town Manager Childers to the website as the FOIA coordinator.

JOINT GOVERNING BODIES MEETING – Town Manager Childers reported the meeting of the Joint Governing Bodies will be on Monday, August 29, 2016. Town Manager Childers stated he will find out the time of the meeting. Town Manager Childers requested anything councilmembers would like to see added to the agenda be sent to him by Thursday, August 18, 2016.

PHASE 8 SIDEWALK PROJECT – Town Manager Childers reported the contractors will begin no later than September 1, 2016. The majority of poles have been relocated. Town Manager Childers sent Dennis Amos with Anderson & Associates an email with this information which was forwarded to King Contractors. Councilmember Vaught asked Town Manager Childers if the town had an ordinance against parking on the sidewalks because he saw a pickup truck parked on a sidewalk on Railroad Avenue earlier in the week. Chief Mitchell stated there is an ordinance that states not to block a sidewalk. Councilmember Vaught stated that a vehicle parked on a sidewalk would possibly cause damage to it. Chief Mitchell stated he would watch for the vehicle and speak to the owner if it parks there again.

### **TREASURER’S REPORT**

The invoices for August 9, 2016 were read and approved.

### **TALK OF THE TOWN**

Vice-Mayor Yontz will be attending the *Talk of the Town* radio program at the WYVE/WXBX radio station.

### **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