

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2017 - 7:00 P.M.**

Council Members Present: Mayor Timothy Litz, Vice-Mayor, Dale Yontz; James P. “Sean” Viars; James Lloyd; Geary Jonas; Brian Vaught; Michael Duncan

Council Members Absent: None

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: Scott Wickham, Amy McBride

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

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

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Councilmember 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 Jonas to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2016. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of six (6) for: Lloyd, Yontz, Viars, Vaught, Duncan, Jonas; zero (0) against.

CITIZEN’S TIME

None

CORRESPONDENCE

PRESENTATION ON FY 2015-2016 FISCAL AUDIT BY ROBINSON FARMER COX ASSOCIATES - Scott Whickham, audit manager addressed council to report on the FY 2015-16 audit. Mr. Wickham began by distributing the audit presentation handout. He thanked the town office staff for their cooperation this year. He stated the accounting firm expresses an unmodified opinion which is the best opinion the town could receive. Mr. Whickham reported the ten-year trend from 2007 to 2016 shows annualized growth in property tax revenues of average 3.33%, local taxes increased an average of 2.25%, total revenues show a growth rate of -0.84% which is flat and indicates the state and federal governments are giving the town less money and are

requiring all counties and towns to be self-sustaining. Expenditures show a 4.75% increase when the one-time expenditures are taken out of the equation. Mr. Whickham reported the town's general fund balance is healthy. He added the town is in a healthy position and shows a positive trend which is good considering the state of the economy. The operating revenues for water and wastewater also show an upward trend with an increase over the ten-year period of 2.68%. Including depreciation, the operating fund's total revenue less expenditures show an increase of 2.21%. The funds net position indicates a .98% increase. Mayor Litz asked Mr. Whickham if the town appears to be doing what is needed financially for the benefit of the town's infrastructure. Mr. Whickham stated that with the healthy fund balance the town has, it would be a good idea to invest in the infrastructure or pay off the loans with Rural Development that have higher interest rates. Mr. Whickham ended his presentation stating there were no issues during the audit process and everyone was great to work with. Overall, the firm feels comfortable with the financial position of the town.

POLICE REPORT

Police Chief Breedlove reported his first week consisted of office work, getting the computer setup and meeting business owners and citizens. He will assist with a lockdown at the middle school on January 20, 2017. Mayor Litz stated he has received very positive feedback from citizens. Town Manager Childers stated from the town office is please with him and his presence in town. Mayor Litz expressed that council stand behind Chief Breedlove and support him while he enforces the law. Councilmember Viars stated he will not speak for all the council, but he wants to express the council gives him direction and expect him to do his job. Councilmember Vaught stated he wants to clarify that the town council has never told the Police Chief to not write tickets. The council expects the Chief to uphold the law and take enforcement actions when needed. Amy McBride offered her backyard property on Parsonage Avenue to Chief Breedlove to park and run radar anytime in an effort to slow traffic on Parsonage Avenue. Councilmember Duncan asked Chief Breedlove if he could possibly consider a lockdown drill at Klockner Pentaplast. Chief Breedlove stated he would speak with the county S.W.A.T. team and see if they might have a plan of action if something happens at the plant.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DR. PEPPER LOT PROJECT – Councilmember Lloyd stated he would like to get the committee together in the next two weeks to discuss the project.

CROSSWALKS – Town Manager Childers reported he will get a list of materials needed to update the crosswalks from the contractor that is currently working on the sidewalk project. He also stated the town would be placing crosswalk signs in the center of the crosswalks on Buck Avenue, Greever Street in the school zone, and the railroad crossing. Councilmember Vaught added the DMV has the safe routes to school grants available. One of the grants is for crosswalk safety. Vice-Mayor Yontz added to town manager Childers may want to look back through the records because the town considered grant money several years ago, for a similar project. Councilmember Viars asked Town Manager Childers if we would need to obtain a permit from VDOT to place the signs the road. Town manager Childers replied, he would check into the matter.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION – Town Manager Childers stated the town was forced to get a ninety (90) day extension due to an environmental study. The new date for the project to begin

is April 18, 2017. Town Manager Childers added he would like to begin making plans and at least have a committee meeting.

NEW BUSINESS - None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Vice-Mayor Yontz reported the next committee meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2017 at 6:00 pm.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – None

PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS – None

PUBLIC UTILITIES - None

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

SIDEWALK PROJECT – Town Manager Childers reported the project has been on hold due to the weather recently. One Property owner has voiced concerns regarding the work on their property and subsequently asked for construction to be halted on their property. The property owners have sent a list of demands for the town to sign off on. VDOT is the governing body over the project and have easements in place to complete the project. Town Manager Childers stated he feels like the property owners would be pleased if they would give VDOT a chance to finish the work.

RETAIL STRATEGIES – Town Manager Childers stated Wythe County has been in touch with other marketing firms to follow procurement. It is unclear now if Wythe County and Town of Wytheville are going forward now. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated his understanding was that Wythe County was on board and ready to move forward. He feels like Town of Wytheville stalled the project. Town Manager Childers stated he is not sure if Wytheville is just not interested or if they just want to make sure procurement is being met.

CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) SYSTEM- Town Manager Childers stated the CAD system is basically the information system used by the three law enforcement agencies, Town of Rural Retreat, Town of Wytheville, and Wythe County. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) board would like to see all three entities to be on board with the system. The County requested for proposals for procurement. Spillman’s proposal came in and seems to be by far the better system for our needs. The Town of Wytheville is on board with the Town of Rural Retreat to begin using the system. Darlene Lang will submit the proposal to the budget committee and then to the Board of Supervisors for them to decide on the system. Councilmember Viars asked if the EOC considered grant funding for the purchase of the system. Town Manager Childers stated that Darlene Lang will be checking on grants.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS - Town Manager Childers stated the Board of Zoning Appeals has members that are deceased. Therefore, the town needs to appoint new members. The appointments need to be staggered so each November the town will be reappointing a new member. The board is not used often and is the only board that can overturn a decision from council. Town

Manager Childers stated a Circuit Court Judge makes the appointments from the recommendation of members by the town manager. Councilmember Duncan asked Town Manager Childers who he plans to recommend for the board. Town Manager Childers stated the possible candidates include, Jerrell Hall, Raymond Matney, Billy Anderson, and Sherry Long.

JOINT GOVERNING BODIES MEETING – Town Manager Childers stated the next meeting of Joint Governing Bodies will be hosted by the Town of Rural Retreat on January 30, 2017. Town Manager Childers advised council to contact him if anyone has an item to add to the agenda.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The invoices for January 10, 2017 were read and approved.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Vice-Mayor Yontz. The motion was duly seconded and approved.

Mayor

Clerk