

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, June 13, 2017 - 7:00 P.M.**

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

Council Members Absent: Michael Duncan

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

Administration Absent: None

Others Present: Jerry Hurt, Anna Laura May, Sheena Atkinson

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.

PUBLIC HEARING – 2017-18 FISCAL BUDGET

Mayor Litz called the Public Hearing to order and asked if anyone had questions or comments regarding the proposed 2017-2018 fiscal year budget. Jerry Hurt stated he reviewed the budget in detail and emailed his questions to Treasurer Patton prior to the meeting. He stated his questions were answered in a very professional manner and the budget was well prepared. Treasurer Patton reported that council would adopt the budget at the June 27, 2017 regular meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Yontz and seconded by Councilmember Jonas to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2017. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Jonas, Viars, Vaught, Yontz, Lloyd; zero (0) against.

CITIZEN'S TIME

Anna Laura May and Sheena Atkinson from Carrington Place at Rural Retreat were present. Town Manager Childers expressed his appreciation to Carrington Place for their involvement in the community. Ms. May stated that Carrington Place is very interested in the town and would like to continue to be involved and will support the town.

Jerry Hurt reminded everyone of the festivities at the Farmer's Market on June 14, 2017. The Depot Foundation will sponsor "Appalachian Culture Day at the Depot". Live music, food, carriage rides, appearance by the Hokie Bird and opening day at the Farmer's Market will all be part of the festivities.

CORRESPONDENCE

Treasurer Patton read a thank you note from the family of Elizabeth Lyons in appreciation of the flowers that were sent to the funeral service for Elizabeth. Elizabeth was the mother-in-law of Michael Whalen in the Water Department and sister-in-law of Debbie Lyons in the town office.

Treasurer Patton read a letter from Debbie Wilkerson, Education Coordinator for Edith Bolling Wilson Museum in Wytheville, VA. The letter requests to host a 5K run/walk on Saturday, November 11, 2017 in Rural Retreat. The race will begin at the War Memorial next to the Emergency Services Department and cross Main Street and go by the Depot, turning right to go past the Methodist Church. Turning left onto Sherwood Avenue, the runners will go to the end of Sherwood and make a circle and come back down Sherwood Avenue. They will turn left onto Church Street and continue up the hill onto Main Street and cross the street at Food Country. They will continue to Gienow Road and back to the Emergency Services facility.

Councilmember Jonas stated he has had complaints about a trash can which sits on Main Street full of trash. Councilmember Vaught reported that he has had complaints regarding trash being collected on Wednesday afternoons when trash pickup is on Thursday. Town Manager Childers stated the trash bins at the apartment buildings are the only trash that should be collected on Wednesdays. He added that he will find out why trash is being picked up early and see that it does not continue.

Vice-Mayor Yontz reported he has had complaints regarding fields and lots that are not being mowed regularly. Some of the fields are clearly hay fields and others need a brush hog. Town Manager Childers stated he and Chief Breedlove have contacted several property owners regarding property that needs mowing. Councilmember Viars stated he spoke with a citizen regarding the property on the corner of Baumgardner and Miller. The homeowners on the corner are concerned about a vehicle going too fast and possibly crashing into their house. Town Manager Childers stated that he has looked at the situation and will contact Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to check into getting a stop sign installed at the corner. Councilmember Viars requested a cold patch to the potholes on Church Street in addition to one in the flat at the Depot. Town Manager Childers stated he has already contacted VDOT regarding the issue.

Councilmember Jonas stated a citizen complained about blue shop rags from Hilltop Auto blowing out of the dumpster across the street into the fence. The lid to the dumpster remains open and the trash is blowing out into the streets. Town Manager Childers stated he would address the issue with the business owner and ask them to bag their trash before placing it in the dumpster.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Breedlove reported he made one arrest since the last meeting and he charged a juvenile with shoplifting. Councilmember Vaught asked Chief Breedlove if he can tell a difference since using the digital speed limit sign. Chief Breedlove stated he can tell a difference on the streets where he has utilized the sign. There are other streets he would like to use the sign but he cannot because the sign is designed to mount on a metal post underneath a speed limit sign.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DR. PEPPER LOT PROJECT – Report included in Town Manager’s report.

CROSSWALKS - Report included in Town Manager’s report.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION – Report included in Town Manager’s report.

THE CROOKED ROAD –Councilmember Lloyd reported that he has received interest from musicians to play at the Depot on their way through Rural Retreat for a percentage of the door. He added the town can start by sponsoring four major concerts per year and have special concerts in between as musicians are available. Councilmember Vaught asked how much it will cost the town to sponsor the events. Councilmember Lloyd stated it would cost \$1,000-\$1,500 per event with a seating capacity of around eighty (80) people at the Depot. Councilmember Viars asked if the town would still pay the fee to The Crooked Road. Vice-Mayor Yontz added if the town uses the Depot for the concerts would the Depot be required to join The Crooked Road as well. Councilmember Lloyd stated the Depot could be utilized as a venue for The Crooked Road events and would not be required to pay a separate fee. Town Manager Childers stated that The Crooked Road is an advertising agency which limits the type of music that is required. He suggested the town use the funds to advertise the types of music citizens of Rural Retreat would like to hear instead of joining The Crooked Road. Councilmember Viars asked how much the fee was to join The Crooked Road. Treasurer Patton stated the letter the town office received stated the fee would be \$2,500. Councilmember Lloyd stated he agrees that the town does not necessarily need to use The Crooked Road, but we should set a high standard for the bands and stay away from electric instruments. Councilmember Vaught stated he disagrees with not using electric instruments. He added we should open the series up to all types of music. Councilmember Viars stated we do not want electric instruments playing in the Depot. We should utilize Pepper Stage for certain types of music and crowds. Councilmember Lloyd stated one person should make decisions on the musicians. We should market our concert series ourselves and have control of what types of music we sponsor. Vice-Mayor Yontz stated we should offer different types of music and utilize Pepper Stage. Councilmember Viars stated we should form a committee and utilize the Depot Foundation for marketing assistance. Councilmember Vaught stated we are providing entertainment as well as education to the citizens. He added that all types of music are artforms. Councilmember Viars stated that we are investing a lot of money into the Downtown and we need to focus on providing entertainment to get the people to utilize the downtown area. Mayor Litz stated the town must decide regarding the types of music to offer the people. The town of Rural Retreat is responsible for over \$1 million investment into the downtown and surrounding area for these types of events. Mayor Litz reminded council that the decisions made regarding this should be made for the good of the people of the town.

MYRTLE LANE WATER CUSTOMERS – Town Manager Childers spoke with Virginia Municipal League(VML) regarding billing customers that did not hook onto the water lines when they were installed. Town Manager Childers stated a decision needs to be made by council to either send the customers a letter giving them 30 days for mandatory hookup, start billing the minimum, or we stop billing and adopt a mandatory hookup ordinance. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Yontz and seconded by Councilmember Vaught to cease billing customers that did not hookup to water system when lines were installed and adopt a new mandatory hookup ordinance. Town Manager Childers stated that Rural Development requires all customers to be treated equally to stay in compliance with the grant that was awarded. There being no further discussion the motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Yontz, Jonas, Lloyd, Viars, Vaught; zero (0) against.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION TO HONOR THE RURAL RETREAT LIONS CLUB – Mayor Litz read a resolution to honor the Rural Retreat Lions Club. Mayor Litz added that the Lions Club is dedicating a bench to the Depot on Thursday, June 15, 2017 at 7 pm. Jerry Hurt added that the Lions Club is dedicating the bench as a legacy project in observance of the 100th anniversary of the Lions Club. A motion was made by Councilmember Viars and seconded by Vice-Mayor Yontz to accept the resolution for the Rural Retreat Lions Club. The motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Yontz, Viars, Lloyd, Jonas, Vaught; zero (0) against.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Vice-Mayor Yontz reported the committee is on track preparing for the event. He added Harpo's Hardware and Depot Designs will sponsor a Chili Cookoff, the Rescue Squad is working on a hot dog eating contest, Direct Dodge of Wytheville is sponsoring a cruise in. Posters will be printed as soon as all the details are finalized. Mayor Litz invited everyone to the gospel singing on Friday, July 28, 2017 at the Rural Retreat High School auditorium. Treasurer Patton asked council if the wall of honor inductees would still be introduced at the gospel singing. Mayor Litz stated we need to announce the citizen of the year and wall of honor inductees at a different time because it makes the event on Friday night very long. Vice-Mayor Yontz added that for the 2018 festival the committee plans to sponsor an "All Indian Class Reunion" inside the Community Center. Treasurer Patton stated the class reunion will be marketed at the festival this year giving alumni a chance to plan for the event.

Councilmember Vaught asked Chief Breedlove if he would check with the Sheriff regarding trustees from the jail to pick up trash after the festival. He also stated the county has a trash pickup truck and trailer we may be able to utilize. Chief Breedlove stated he would contact the Sheriff regarding the trustees.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – None

PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS – Town Manager Childers reported that there are several industries in the town that have the capability of causing the wastewater treatment plant problems. Fines from Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are \$10,000 per day the wastewater plant is down. Town Manager Childers suggested that council adopt an ordinance that lists the violation and penalty if certain hazardous materials are placed in the sewer. The town office will send all businesses that could potentially have hazardous materials that could get into

the sewer a letter explaining the situation. Town Manager Childers stated this past week 1,600 gallons of raw milk was dumped into the sewer. He explained this much milk could potentially kill the bacteria in the wastewater treatment plant and cause it to shut down and become septic. DEQ did an inspection and suggested the town be proactive and monitor what businesses are placing in the sewer. He continued to say DEQ does not police the industries. It is the towns responsibility to monitor what goes into the sewer system. Mayor Litz stated when the new ordinance is written council should consider adding water that does not come through the water meter be introduced into the sewer system. Mayor Litz also suggested that the ordinance state that no chemical or biological agent that will cause the sewer system harm to be placed in the sewer.

PUBLIC UTILITIES – None

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

The Town Manager’s report is attached and is hereby made part of these minutes. The following items were reported and discussed:

- I met with the asbestos and lead inspector with Hurt and Proffitt. He took all necessary samples from the Randy’s Property, The Farm Bureau Building, and the building next to the Masonic Lodge. He stated that he really didn’t see any threats of serious asbestos or lead contamination in any of the property’s. He said I may have the results as quickly as tomorrow.

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Town Manager Childers added the town will demolish the vacant building behind the Masonic Lodge building on West Baumgardner Avenue. He stated as soon as the asbestos study is completed the demolition process can begin.

- R&R Septic and the Town Maintenance Crew replaced 700 feet of sewer line on Milk Plant Rd. This was part of the Town’s Wastewater Environmental Assessment and Compliance project. This money was budgeted as a Capital Outlay program. The town feels like replacing this line will not only provide better service to our citizen’s, but also help with the infiltration of groundwater into our Waste Water Treatment Plant. The town still has \$50,000 of grant money to use on resealing manholes throughout our service area.
- I received correspondence from three architectural firms and all are interested in sitting down with the town to go over our proposed plans pertaining to the Dr. Pepper Project. Once these meetings take place we will have met our procurement needs, and we can move forward.
- Alan Cornett came last week and did a spot inspection at our Waste Water Treatment Plant. He stated that all of our current procedures were satisfactory and working well. He will be back tomorrow to do a pretreatment inspection. I don’t foresee any issues.

- Spoke with Jennifer Hall with Shentel. She wants to do a free movie night behind the RRVES. They provide an inflatable screen and will be showing a Disney Movie.

- Crosswalk Signs- I feel that we need to purchase 2 more crosswalk signs. The reason for this is the areas that these crosswalks are located. One at Buck Ave. and one at Railroad Ave. My feeling is that buses and larger vehicles will tear the signs down in a short period of time. My suggestion is to put 2 signs at each crosswalk but instead of them being in the crosswalk itself put one on each side of the crosswalk at a distance for each lane of traffic.

- I have made corrections to the Town's Purchasing Policy for council's review. I spoke with Michelle Gowdy from VML to make sure they meet current standards.

Town Manager Childers read the changes to the purchasing policy for council to review. The changes are as follows:

An emergency shall be deemed to exist when a breakdown in machinery or equipment, and/or a threatened termination of essential services or a dangerous condition develops, or when any unforeseen circumstances arise causing curtailment or diminution of an essential service or where materials or services are needed to prevent loss of life or property.

The procurement of goods and services that are expected to cost between \$1,500.01 and \$15,000 shall require a minimum of three (3) written quotations.

The procurement of goods and services that are expected to cost between \$15,000.01 and \$50,000 shall require a minimum of three (3) written quotations. Council approval must be given prior to the purchase.

In the case of emergency, needed purchases of equipment or services may be approved by the consent of (a) The Town of Rural Retreat's Mayor or (b) The Town of Rural Retreat's Vice-Mayor. In the case an emergency purchase is required, spending limits and procurement will not apply. A motion was made by Councilmember Viars and seconded by Councilmember Vaught to approve the updated purchasing policy. There being no further discussion the motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Viars, Vaught, Lloyd, Jonas, Yontz.

Councilmember Viars asked how the transition is progressing from the Community Center. Town Manager Childers stated July 1, 2017 is the date the board will pass the books over to the town office. He added the town office would like to add a link on the town's website to book the center using a credit card. Treasurer Patton reminded council that the rental fees need to be established. Councilmember Vaught stated The Rural Retreat Fair Association set rates for non-profit organizations and individuals that rent their facility. The town should consider establishing lower rates for non-profit organizations. Town Manager Childers stated the property will be added to the mowing contract and the insurance will be effective July 1, 2017. Treasurer Patton asked if the county would be billed when the center is used for elections.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The invoices for June 13, 2017 were read and approved.

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