

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, July 11, 2017 - 7:00 P.M.**

Mayor and Council Members Present: Mayor Timothy Litz; James P. “Sean” Viars; Geary Jonas; Brian Vaught; Michael Duncan; James Lloyd

Council Members Absent: Vice-Mayor Dale Yontz

Administration Present: Jason Childers, Town Manager
Monica Patton, Clerk/Treasurer

Administration Absent: Derek Breedlove, Police Chief

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 Councilmember Jonas.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Litz.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Jonas and seconded by Councilmember Vaught to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2017. There being no discussion, the motion passed by a vote of four (4) for: Jonas, Viars, Vaught; Duncan; zero (0) against; one (1) abstain: Lloyd.

CITIZEN’S TIME

Jerry Hurt addressed Council on behalf of the Rural Retreat Depot Foundation. Mr. Hurt asked for permission to use a flyer that the Depot Foundation created to advertise activities for Heritage Days. Mr. Hurt added the Foundation would like to place the flyer on their Facebook page. He stated the Depot and Farmer’s Market page receive approximately 2,000 views per day. The Foundation would like to pay to advertise the event which would increase the views to 25,000 to 30,000 per day.

Donnie Buck addressed Council regarding the Depot Foundation’s use of the Randy’s building for their upcoming auction on July 29, 2017. Mr. Buck came forward to request that the town restore

electricity, water, and sewer to the building. Mr. Buck stated the Depot Foundation will renovate the bathroom by painting and installing new plumbing fixtures. The Foundation will pay all costs incurred from the renovation of the bathroom. Councilmember Vaught asked Mr. Buck about the concrete that needs to be removed in the back of the building. Mr. Buck stated the removal of the concrete is a safety concern. The concern is that someone may be injured or receive damage to their vehicle. Town Manager Childers stated he would work on obtaining bids to remove the concrete. Councilmember Viars asked if the concrete slabs could be taped off during the auction to keep people from driving and walking in the area. Town Manager Childers stated there is a cistern underneath the concrete in the back lot of the property. A motion was made by Councilmember Lloyd and seconded by Councilmember Vaught to restore electricity, water, and sewer to the garage section of the Randy's building. The motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Lloyd, Vaught, Jonas, Viars, Vaught; zero (0) against.

CORRESPONDENCE

Treasurer Patton read a letter from Jerry Hurt on behalf of the Depot Foundation. The letter requests \$7,500 which was appropriated in the 2017-2018 fiscal year budget for the Rural Retreat Depot Foundation. Mr. Hurt indicated in his letter that he and his wife, Phyllis would personally match the contribution upon receipt of the town's donation.

Town Manager Childers stated he has was approached by a resident on Greever Street regarding two properties one owned by Mr. Singleton and one by Mrs. Grubb. Town Manager Childers stated he would like to recommend that council consider legal actions regarding the derelict properties. A motion was made by Councilmember Vaught and seconded by Councilmember Lloyd to begin the process and take actions to comply with the town ordinance regarding derelict property. Councilmember Vaught stated council should make every effort to have the property cleaned up for the neighboring citizens. Councilmember Jonas added he agrees that the property needs to be cleaned up because citizens deserve to have the properties adjacent to theirs kept nice. The motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Lloyd, Vaught, Jonas, Viars, Duncan; zero (0) against.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Breedlove was on a call and not present to give a report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DR. PEPPER LOT PROJECT – Councilmember Lloyd reported the committee needs to meet and discuss a plan. Mayor Litz stated the town needs an ad hoc committee to plan for the future of the Dr. Pepper Lot. Mayor Litz appointed Councilmembers Viars and Duncan to join Councilmember Lloyd to discuss plans. A meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 25, 2017 at 6:00 pm before the town council meeting.

CROSSWALKS - Report included in Town Manager's report.

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

EDITH BOLING WILSON 5K RUN/WALK – Treasurer Patton reported a letter requesting permission to hold a 5K run/walk by The Edith Boling Wilson Museum in Wytheville, VA. Debbie Wilkerson, Education Coordinator of the museum would like to have council approval to conduct the event. Treasurer Patton added that council would not be required to act since the

event is not sanctioned by the town. Mayor Litz advised Treasurer Patton to contact Mrs. Wilkerson and allow the group to hold the event on November 11, 2017.

NEW BUSINESS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAYS – Treasurer Patton stated the Rural Retreat Rescue Squad has arranged the vendor sites and they have at least 20 vendors committed to attend. Town Manager Childers stated the committee that votes in the citizen of the year and wall of honor inductees should consist of people that know more about the nominees. Town Manager Childers suggested a committee of long-time citizens consisting of Mayor Litz, Doug Humphrey, Verna Henley, Porter Sage and Don Meredith to choose the citizen of the year and wall of honor inductees each year. Councilmember Lloyd asked how the citizen of the year and hall of honor inductees were chosen in the past. Treasurer Patton answered by stating that in the past the Heritage Days Committee would choose the citizen of the year and prior hall of honor inductees would assemble to choose the next inductees. Town Manager Childers stated in his opinion the citizen of the year should be voted on by the Heritage Days Committee and hall of honor inductees voted on by the committee he suggested which consists of the long-time citizens. Councilmember Lloyd suggested the hall of honor inductees should be limited to two each year.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – Treasurer Patton asked Council to amend the fiscal year 2017-2018 budget to include \$25,000 that was approved by the county after the town's budget was approved on June 27, 2017. A motion was made by Councilmember Viars and seconded by Councilmember Jonas to amend the 2017-2018 fiscal year budget to include \$25,000 for the fire program fund. The motion passed by a vote of four (4): Jonas, Lloyd, Viars, Vaught, Duncan; zero (0) against.

Treasurer Patton explained when the budget was prepared the capital outlay accounts were budgeted incorrectly. She requested an amendment to correct the capital outlay accounts in the general fund. The correction will increase the undesignated expense and decrease the capital outlay accounts as follows: Capital Outlays – Administration \$81,891.00; Capital Outlays – Public Works \$7,591.00 and Capital Outlays- Police \$409.00. Treasurer Patton further explained that the changes do not affect the total budget. The amendment will distribute expenses from one expense account to another. A motion was made by Councilmember Vaught and seconded by Councilmember Lloyd to amend the fiscal year 2017-2018 budget by adjusting capital outlay and undesignated expenses in the amount of \$81,891.00. There being no discussion the vote passed by a vote of five (5) for: Lloyd, Jonas, Viars, Vaught, Duncan; zero (0) against.

Treasurer Patton explained to Council the town office server is not backing up because the hard drive is full. She stated that she spoke with Jeff Hooper to see what options were available in order to remedy the problem. One option is to purchase a new server which will cost approximately \$4,000. The second option is to purchase an external backup which will cost approximately \$1,200. Treasurer Patton recommended the external backup option because it costs less and it contains five hard drives that can be replaced individually in the future. Mayor Litz asked how long the data will last. Treasurer Patton explained the entire system would be backed up every day. She added that if one of the hard drives goes bad then it could be replaced for approximately

\$100. A motion was made by Councilmember Viars and seconded by Councilmember Jonas to purchase a backup system for the town office computer system at an approximate cost of \$1,200 from undesignated funds. Councilmember Viars thanked Treasurer Patton for her diligence in obtaining the best price and not just asking Council to purchase the \$4,000 server. Councilmember Duncan asked if the price includes installation. Treasurer Patton reported the cost includes installation but she will work with Mr. Hooper to find the best price on the hardware. The motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Lloyd, Jonas, Viars, Vaught, Duncan; zero (0) against.

Treasurer Patton reported the auditors requested delinquent tax notices be sent twice between the January due date and issuance of tax tickets in November. Notices were sent in March and again in June. She added that for the 2016 taxes 97.06 percent of the real estate tax billed and 93.65 percent of the personal property tax billed has been collected.

PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS – Councilmember Viars asked Town Manager Childers if a meeting had been set up regarding the mandatory hookup ordinance. Town Manager Childers stated he would set up a committee meeting soon to address the issue.

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:

- Got the Lead testing for the paint in the town owned buildings at Randy's. Some of the buildings have lead based paints that exceed the governmental regulations. The areas where the lead based paint is present will have to be collected prior to demo and sent to a lab to see if they are too hazardous to take to a land fill. The buildings that did include lead based paint are in the Randy's building and the old feed store adjacent to the Masonic Lodge.
- Crosswalk signs have been installed and seem to be slowing down traffic at the Buck Ave. and Main St. intersection. I spoke to quit a few people and asked their opinion. It has overwhelmingly positive. There have been a few negative remarks, but the majority of people are happy with the change.

Councilmember Vaught remarked that the signs are only an educational tool. Citizens need to realize that stopping at a crosswalk when pedestrians are crossing is a state law. Councilmember Jonas added that pedestrians have the right-of-way whether there is a sign in place or not. Town Manager Childers commented that most folks that walk on a regular basis are happy that traffic yields when they approach the crosswalks now.

- I have a meeting tomorrow with Todd Caldwell with Century Link to go over pole relocation for phase 9 and 10 of the Sidewalk Projects. I will also make sure there is no connection to any of the properties we plan to demo.
- I have received some of the easements for Phase 9 of the sidewalk project. I will be getting with property owners in the near future to get them signed. I am still waiting on a few easements from Mr. Sobey.

- I left another message with the property owner on Main St. about setting out her trash can during trash pickup and removing it from the street after trash collection. The trash can has been moved.
- I have been checking the dumpster at Hilltop Auto, and they have keeping lid shut for the most part. I did see one evening it was left open.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The invoices for July 11, 2017 were read and approved.

Councilmember Vaught inquired about the transaction for new building expenses on the report. Treasurer Patton explained the expenses were for a capital outlay item for fiscal year 2016-2017 to place a building at the wastewater treatment plant to protect equipment. Councilmember Vaught added it is impressive that the town's payables are so detailed. Citizens can easily see where the town's money is being spent.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Councilmember Lloyd. The motion was duly seconded and approved.

Mayor

Clerk