

The Rural Retreat Town Council held a regular meeting on April 8, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. in the Rural Retreat Town Hall Council Chambers.

PRESENT RURAL RETREAT TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Timothy Litz
Vice-Mayor Keith Crigger
Ed Schaack
Scott Mecimore

Dale Yontz
Jerrell Hall
Kristie Osborne

ABSENT

NONE

PRESENT RURAL RETREAT PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

Chairman Charles McMillan
Vice-Chairman Ed Schaack

James A. Hall
Larry Lindsey

ABSENT RURAL RETREAT PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

George Reasor
Peggy Hash

Brenda Atwell

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Raymond Matney, Town Manager
Robert Lewis, Police Chief
Lori Guynn, Clerk/Treasurer

OTHERS PRESENT

Rev. Geary Jonas

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mayor Litz called the meeting to order and determined the presence of a quorum.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Rev. Geary Jonas.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Litz.

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JOINT PUBLIC HEARING

REZONING REQUEST – EAST BAUMGARDNER AVENUE – Planning Commission Vice-Chairman Ed Schaack conducted the meeting on behalf of Chairman Charles McMillan. Vice-Chairman Schaack read the public notice as published in the *Wytheville Enterprise*. A copy of the notice is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. The public hearing was opened for public comment. There being no comments the public hearing was closed.

Vice-Chairman Schaack asked the Planning Commission for comments or questions. Chairman McMillan asked if this request had been discussed at the Planning Commission meeting in March. Vice-Chairman Schaack stated the request had been discussed and the Commission found no issues with rezoning the property to Commercial General. He then asked for a recommendation from the Commission. Chairman McMillan made a motion to recommend to the Town Council to approve the rezoning request for the property located on East Baumgardner Avenue from Industrial to Commercial General, seconded by Commissioner Hall. The motion passed with the following voting in favor: Charles McMillan, Ed Schaack, James A. Hall and Larry Lindsey. Commissioners Atwell, Hash and Reasor were not present at the meeting.

Vice-Chairman Schaack informed Mayor Litz of the Planning Commission's recommendation.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

LODGING TAX ORDINANCE – Mayor Litz read the public notice as published in the *Wytheville Enterprise*. A copy of the notice is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. The public hearing was opened for public comment. There being no comments concerning the Lodging Tax Ordinance, the public hearing was closed.

FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE - Mayor Litz read the public notice as published in the *Wytheville Enterprise*. A copy of the notice is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. The public hearing was opened for public comment. There being no comments concerning the Floodplain Ordinance, the public hearing was closed.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT FIRE APPARATUS FUNDING - Mayor Litz read the public notice as published in the *Wytheville Enterprise*. A copy of the notice is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. The public hearing was opened for public comment. There being no comments concerning the Rural Development fire apparatus funding, the public hearing was closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Scott Mecimore, seconded by Vice-Mayor Crigger to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2008 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

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CITIZEN'S TIME

There being no one present that wished to address the Council, the meeting proceeded.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Matney read a request from the Rural Retreat Head Start requesting the Town provide two vehicle decals at no charge for their transportation buses. This request has been honored in the past. Councilmember Osborne made a motion to issue two vehicle decals to the Rural Retreat Head Start at no charge. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Yontz and passed unanimously.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Lewis explained his monthly report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

REZONING REQUEST – EAST BAUMGARDNER AVENUE – Councilmember Mecimore made a motion to rezone the property located on East Baumgardner Avenue from Industrial to Commercial General. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall. Vice-Mayor Crigger asked Mr. Matney if there would be any problems in the future if the property needed to be rezoned back to Industrial. Mr. Matney stated it could be changed at any time with the proper request and if the Planning Commission and Town Council deemed it necessary to do so. There being no further discussion, the motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

LODGING TAX ORDINANCE – Councilmember Hall made a motion to adopt the Lodging Tax Ordinance as written. Vice-Mayor Crigger seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE – Councilmember Yontz made a motion to adopt the revised Floodplain Ordinance as written. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Schaack and passed unanimously.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT FIRE APPARATUS FUNDING/LOAN – A motion was made by Councilmember Yontz to apply for the Rural Development fire apparatus funding grant/loan. Councilmember Osborne seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

2006/2007 FISCAL YEAR AUDIT – Treasurer Lori Guynn informed the Council that she had received an email from Corbin Stone with Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates stating that quality control had reviewed the audit and made cosmetic changes only. Upon final approval from Tammy Copenhaver, Mr. Matney and herself, the audit would be issued. The audit was reviewed in house and there were no additional comments or concerns. Ms. Guynn reported that the final copies will be issued within the next few weeks.

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Mr. Matney stated that Ms. Guynn and he had discussed sending out request for proposals for auditing services but due to the previous issues that we have encountered it was decided that we would continue with our current engagements with Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates and Hicok, Fern, Brown and Garcia.

REQUEST FOR STREET LIGHT – WEST LEE HIGHWAY – Mr. Matney stated he had a meeting scheduled yesterday with Larry Roberts with AEP but due to a death in Mr. Roberts' family it has been rescheduled to tomorrow, April 9, 2008. This item was tabled until additional information is received. Councilmember Osborne asked Mayor Litz to contact Cheryl Turner to update her on the status of her request.

2008 HERITAGE DAYS FESTIVAL –Heritage Days Committee Chairman Dale Yontz stated a meeting was held prior to the Council meeting. There was discussion about honoring a Citizen of Year and having grand marshals for the parade. Vice-Mayor Keith Crigger is working on organizing a car show. Mayor Litz is organizing the entertainment lineup which will possibly include a magician. Bill Hall is also working on numerous other items for the festival. Chairman Yontz stated Mr. Matney and himself are working on letters for levels of sponsorship. The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, April 22, 2008 but will need to be rescheduled due to the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce hosting a Candidates Forum at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business offered for discussion.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Matney asked the Finance and Appropriations Committee if they had discussed the possibility of selling the lot on Maple Avenue that is owned by the Town to Chief Lewis. The lot is one-quarter of a lot that is 25 feet wide on Maple Avenue and 36 feet wide on East Baumgardner Avenue. Based on the assessment by Wythe County the lot is valued at \$6,000. Mr. Matney stated he felt the Finance and Appropriations Committee should decide on a fair market value for the lot. He suggested \$4,000. Finance and Appropriations Committee Chairman Keith Crigger stated he felt the lot needed to be priced fairly to avoid showing favoritism to Chief Lewis. Chief Lewis stated he felt \$4,000 was reasonable and he would pay that price for the lot.

Finance and Appropriations Committee Chairman Crigger asked the Finance Committee members if they had any comments or concerns. Councilmember Hall stated he agreed with Chairman Crigger's comment. Councilmember Yontz then made a motion to accept the offer of \$4,000 from Chief and Mrs. Robert Lewis for the parcel of land on Maple Avenue with the stipulation that a utility easement will be retained by the Town. The motion passed unanimously.

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TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

The Town Manager’s report is attached and is hereby made a part of these minutes. The following items were discussed and/or acted upon:

BIO-DIESEL – At the last Joint Governmental Bodies Meeting, Mr. Jerry Spraker gave a presentation on bio-diesel. Wythe County asked that a committee be organized to explore the possibilities. Councilmember Mecimore is Rural Retreat’s representative however, due to time constraints; he is unable to continue to serve. Rodney Hurt, the town’s maintenance supervisor has been appointed to replace Councilmember Mecimore. A trip is being planned to North Carolina where an entire school system has converted their fleet of buses to bio-diesel. Upon attending some of the meetings, Mr. Matney stated he would ask Mr. Hurt to attend a Council meeting to give an update on the progress of the committee.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT/LOAN - AUDIBLE WARNING SYSTEM – The application has been filed for funding on the audible warning system. A public hearing has been scheduled for the next meeting on Tuesday, April 22, 2008 to hear public comment prior to the Council’s consideration of purchasing a warning system. This grant is a 55% grant with 45% local funding match. Councilmember Mecimore asked if the system would be used everyday or tested on a periodic basis and then used in emergency situations due to the system’s volume. Mr. Matney responded it would be the Council’s decision. Vice-Mayor Crigger stated he would like to see people from the community attend the public hearing to express their opinions on the audible warning system.

TOWN HALL RENOVATIONS – FLOOR AND WALL COVERINGS – The original building has been occupied for the past ten years and is need of renovations such as new carpet and painting/wallpapering of the walls. Mr. Matney suggested wallpapering the wainscot area in order to protect it more. He further stated the work will have to be completed in pieces especially in Chief Lewis’ office and his office due to having to move the furniture and office contents out. Mr. Matney also stated he would like to hire Mike Miller to paint the office because it will have to be done when the office is closed and he feels that Mr. Miller can be trusted in the office.

Vice-Mayor Crigger stated the cost for the renovations are already included in the current budget. Mr. Matney asked if the Council was interested in requesting bids on the project or pursue hiring Mr. Miller, if he is interested. The consensus of the Council was to allow Mr. Matney to pursue hiring personnel to do the requested renovation work to the Town Hall.

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT – PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT – Copies of the planned unit development zoning ordinance have been received from the towns of Chilhowie and Wytheville. We are trying to locate the ordinance for Abingdon on their website. Upon reviewing the ordinances, we will need to write one that suits the Town of Rural Retreat. This amendment will need to go before the Planning Commission and a Joint Public Hearing will need to be held.

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PERSONNEL POLICY AMENDMENT TO SICK LEAVE POLICY – The sick leave policy amendment has not been drafted. As soon as the draft is composed it will be distributed to the Personnel Committee for review.

WWTP SCREEN UNIT – The bar screen unit was delivered on Monday. Currently we are waiting for final approval on the plans from the Virginia Department of Health. The engineering firm was requesting \$2,000 to send the plans through the approval process; however a contact with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality stated he would get the plans approved at no charge.

STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION RATE INCREASE REQUEST – Atmos Energy has petitioned the State Corporation Commission for a rate increase.

TEA-21 SIDEWALK PROJECT PLAN REVIEW – The plans for phases four, five and six that involve East Buck Avenue, Catron Street and East Railroad Avenue are currently being reviewed by the Virginia Department of Transportation and in house. There are approximately six property owners that we will need to meet with due to the plans having an impact on their driveway/parking entrances.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PLANNING GRANTS – The contracts have been received from The Lane Group however they have not been reviewed.

POLICE CHIEF APPLICATIONS – A total of eleven applications were received for the police chief position. Chief Lewis and Mr. Matney have reviewed the applications and narrowed them down to three for interviews. Mr. Matney asked the Council to give him guidance on how they would like to handle this process since this position is appointed by the Town Council. Mayor Litz suggested having the Personnel Committee to participate in interviews. Mr. Matney stated that Personnel Committee Chairman Ed Schaack has requested that he not participate due to a family member applying for the position. Mayor Litz stated Chairman Schaack has asked him to participate in the hiring process in his absence. Councilmember Mecimore asked Chief Lewis to participate in the interviews. Chief Lewis agreed.

Mr. Matney asked committee members Osborne and Mecimore if they would participate. Both members stated they would participate contingent on scheduling availability. Committee members Osborne and Mecimore asked Mr. Matney to send them copies of the applications and attachments for the three individuals they are interested in interviewing. Chief Lewis stated some interviews may have to be conducted at night due to the applicant's schedules. Mr. Matney stated the applicants would be contacted and after times were set up the interviewing committee would be notified of the interview schedule.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The bills were read and approved for April 8, 2008.

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TALK OF THE TOWN

Mayor Litz is to attend the Talk of the Town radio program at WYVE/WXBX radio station on Wednesday morning.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Councilmember Schaack.

Mayor

Clerk