

The Rural Retreat Town Council held a regular scheduled meeting on February 24, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the Rural Retreat Town Hall Council Chambers.

PRESENT RURAL RETREAT TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Timothy Litz
Ed Schaack
Scott Mecimore

Dale Yontz
Jerrell Hall

ABSENT

Vice-Mayor Keith Crigger
Kristie Osborne

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

Raymond Matney, Town Manager
Lori Guynn, Clerk/Treasurer
Scott Mitchell, Police Chief

OTHERS PRESENT

Jeff Spickard – The Lane Group
Michael Sobey – Rural Retreat Town Attorney
Ryan Phipps

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. Ed Schaack.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Litz.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Scott Mecimore, seconded by Councilmember Dale Yontz to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2009 meeting as written. The motion passed by a vote of four (4) for and zero (0) against.

CITIZEN'S TIME

Those present did not wish to address the council at this time.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Matney read a letter from the Louise Bennett, Executive Secretary for Friends of the Rural Retreat Public Library thanking the town for their annual financial assistance. The letter stated the annual funding aids in maintaining their building and grounds.

A letter was read by Mr. Matney from Virginia State Senator Wm. Roscoe Reynolds stating the town had received a planning grant for \$22,300.

Mayor Litz read a letter he had received from Jim Lloyd in which Mr. Lloyd expressed his appreciation to Police Chief Mitchell for assisting him with an issue he had with a tenant.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell stated the month of February has been relatively slow. He explained he is working more during the daytime hours in order to keep a better check on the issue with the Star Transportation trucks going to Mid-Atlantic Manufacturing. At this time there haven't been any incidents since the one previously reported.

Mr. Matney explained the industrial signs that are on Gienow Road directing traffic to the industrial park have now been relocated to the intersection of Gienow Road and North Main Street and he felt this would assist in resolving some of the truck issues.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

YOUTH ATHLETIC FACILITY REQUEST - Mr. Matney stated a meeting with Gail Catron of the Wythe-Bland Community Foundation has been scheduled for Tuesday, March 3 at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the possibilities of receiving funding from the Foundation.

Mayor Litz requested this item be renamed and remain as unfinished business on the next meeting agenda.

PER PRESENTATION ON STALEY SPRING – Mr. Jeff Spickard with the Lane Group gave a presentation on the status of the preliminary engineering report on Staley Spring. Mr. Spickard gave a recap on the projects the Lane Group is providing engineering services for.

There was a desire to capture more water from Phillippi Spring #1. Upon completing various studies it was determined the water capture could not be increased therefore this project will not be pursued.

After monitoring the water at Phillippi Spring #2, it was determined this source has a maximum capacity of 370,000 gallons per day. The development of this spring would require an expansion of the water treatment plant in order to accommodate the additional water treatment needs because this source is under the influence of ground water therefore it would need to be treated.

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The construction of a pump station and approximately 1,000 feet of water line would need to be constructed to get the water from the spring house to the current treatment plant. The estimated cost of this project, to accommodate the additional water source, is \$300,000.

Staley Spring is another water source owned by the town but is not in use due to the construction of the current treatment plant facility. This source could be put back into the town's water system with the construction of a membrane filtration system like the one being used to filter the town's other water source. An approximate cost for this project is \$1,100,000. The development of this facility could lead to a regional water project with Smyth and Wythe Counties, if agreed upon.

Councilmember Mecimore asked how much the up front expense would be if the council decided to continue with the preliminary engineering projects. The planning grants received from the Virginia Department of Health are covering the current expenses, Mr. Matney responded. He added the council would need to decide if they would like to proceed with pursuing the projects based on the presentation made by Mr. Spickard.

Councilmember Mecimore made a motion to continue with the preliminary engineering projects. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Yontz and was passed by a vote of four (4) for and zero (0) against.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilmember Schaack suggested the town host a cleanup day prior to Heritage Day being held this year. He added there are places in town that are collecting trash that is being blown around by the wind especially the ditch line along the railroad tracks on East Railroad Avenue. Councilmember Schaack also stated he had noticed Norfolk Southern is using the property at the depot as a dumping site. Mayor Litz stated he had notified Norfolk Southern and was informed it would be cleaned up.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HERITAGE DAY COMMITTEE – Committee Chairman Dale Yontz stated the theme for the 2009 festival will be Dr. Pepper and communications are continuing with them. Mr. Matney stated Bobby Lane with the Lane Group has offered to design a stage for the committee but he hasn't received the plans. The next Heritage Day Committee meeting will be Tuesday, March 10 at 6:00 p.m.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – Chairman Ed Schaack stated the committee will meet following the conclusion of the council meeting and will meet again Tuesday, March 3 following the meeting with Gail Catron.

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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:

WATER TANK MAINTENANCE – The exterior of water tank #2 is scheduled to be painted this year. Tank #3 is also in need of being painted but is not scheduled until 2010. Mr. Matney requested the council approve the painting of tank #3 at the time tank #2 is painted. He asked if the use of the international orange color wanted to be continued. The consensus was to continue using this color.

WATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (OUT-OF-TOWN) – The final plans should be received this week. A meeting was conducted by Wythe County on February 17 to receive comments from the people that reside in the Myrtle Lane and Rural Retreat Lake Road areas. There were five families represented at this meeting and all stated they would like to have town water. The Wythe County Board of Supervisors is to consider the town’s project request at their March 10 meeting.

WATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (IN-TOWN) – The Virginia Department of Health has offered the town a loan for \$678,918 for a 20 year term at an interest rate of 3% or 4%. The total repay amount at a 3% loan rate would be \$948,011 and at the 4% rate it would be \$1,037,598. USDA Rural Development has offered a loan with a 3.125% interest rate for a 40 year term in which the total repay would be \$1,245,128.

Mr. Matney explained the loans through VDH would require the water rates to be raised significantly to meet their loan requirements. The loan term through USDA Rural Development would double compared to the VDH term but the annual debt service would be \$15,000-\$20,000 less and would be more feasible for the town.

DEQ FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDING – As part of the federal stimulus funding that is available, the Department of Environmental Quality is offering 50% of their stimulus package money for wastewater treatment and collection systems. The money is being offered with principle forgiveness and negative interest. The deadline to apply is March 9, 2009.

REQUEST FOR WATER SERVICE – A request for water service at 413 Rural Retreat Lake Road has been received. Mr. Matney explained this property is one of the flag lots that are located beyond the former Charles Steffey property. He recommended approving the connection with the stipulation the tap be made at Rural Retreat Lake Road. It would be the homeowner’s responsibility to run the water from the road to the home. Councilmember Yontz made a motion to approve the request for water service at 413 Rural Retreat Lake Road. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall and passed by a vote of four (4) for and zero (0) against.

STREET LIGHTS – WEST LEE HIGHWAY – One street light has been installed on the Wytheville side of the crossroads area with the remaining lights scheduled to be installed next week.

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Councilmember Schaack asked when the street lights on East Buck Avenue would be moved for the upcoming sidewalk project. Mr. Matney stated the light poles between North Main Street and Catron Street are Embarq utility poles. At this time, a meeting hasn't been held with Embarq.

WATER ACCOUNTABILITY – The water accountability for January 2009 decreased to 51%, down from 59% in December 2008. There have been some leaks repaired during this time that has contributed to the decrease.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The bills for February 24, 2009 were read and approved by a vote of four (4) for and zero (0) against.

TALK OF THE TOWN

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

RE: CLOSED MEETING

A motion was made by Councilmember Yontz, seconded by Councilmember Mecimore to convene to a closed meeting in accordance with the Virginia Code §2.2-3711, paragraph A, subparagraph 3, discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

The motion was approved by four (4) for and zero (0) against with the following voting in favor: Dale Yontz, Scott Mecimore, Ed Schaack and Jerrell Hall.

At the conclusion of the closed session, Mayor Litz called the regular meeting back into open session.

Motion was made by Councilmember Jerrell Hall, seconded by Councilmember Ed Schaack, **WHEREAS**, the Rural Retreat Town Council has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and,

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712, paragraph D, of the Code of Virginia requires a certificate by this Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Retreat Town Council hereby certifies that to the best of each member’s knowledge, (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certificate resolution applies, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Council.

Vote:	Ayes	Nays
Jerrell Hall	X	
Ed Schaack	X	
Scott Mecimore	X	
Dale Yontz	X	

(For each nay vote, the substance of the departure from the requirements of the Act should be described.)

Absent during meeting: Keith Crigger and Kristie Osborne.

Absent during vote: Keith Crigger and Kristie Osborne.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned by Mayor Litz.

Mayor

Clerk