

The Rural Retreat Town Council held a regular scheduled meeting on May 11, 2010, 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  
Jerrell Hall  
Peggy Hash

**ABSENT**

Dale Yontz

**ADMINISTRATION PRESENT**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Wilma Justus and daughter, Jack Weaver  
Jim Hall – Rural Retreat Community Center

**DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**

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

**INVOCATION**

The invocation was given by Rev. Ed Schaack.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Litz.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

The public hearing scheduled for tonight was postponed until Tuesday, June 8, 2010.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Keith Crigger, seconded by Councilmember Peggy Hash to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2010 regular meeting as written. The motion passed by a vote of five (5) for and zero (0) against.

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### **CITIZEN'S TIME**

Ms. Wilma Justus stated she had attended the National Day of Prayer ceremony held at Withers Park in Wytheville. She explained Trent Crewe, Mayor of Wytheville, had read a proclamation recognizing the day. Ms. Justus asked the Council to consider adopting a proclamation in the future as Wytheville had done. Mayor Litz thanked Ms. Justus for her comments. He added the Council begins their meetings with a prayer by inviting an area minister to the meetings.

Mr. Jim Hall addressed the Council on behalf of the Rural Retreat Community Center Board and provided a handout reflecting future plans and the previous year's revenues and expenses. He asked for the Community Center to be considered in the Town's annual budget. Projects and upgrades completed during the past year with funding provided by the town included replacing the shelter roof and purchasing a new stove and refrigerator for the kitchen. Mr. Hall explained the roof on the main building was damaged during the winter and had been repaired and a volunteer group has done some painting on the building. He added during the next five years the Board would like to repair the parking lot, replace the main floor with tile or laminate flooring and the roof over the stage area. Mr. Hall reported the Community Center's revenue in 2009 totaled \$7,900 but expenses totaled \$12,300. He stated the Board appreciates the Town's support. Finance Committee Chairman Crigger explained the Community Center is included in the Town's budget as a line item for \$7,500 for the next fiscal year. Mr. Matney added the town is appreciative of the Board's work.

Mr. Jack Weaver addressed the Council concerning the lack of long-term planning. He added he has been attending the meetings and no discussion has been held regarding the depot. Mr. Weaver stated he had extended the olive branch but he would like to see a return on it. Mayor Litz thanked Mr. Weaver for his comments. Mr. Matney asked Mr. Weaver what he wants from the town. Mr. Weaver responded he would like a responsive town council and a town manager that does something and what he means by that is to do something to make this a viable town instead of keep going by and saying things that never happens. Mr. Matney told Mr. Weaver he appreciated his comments but he felt strides had been made since the last meeting with The Crooked Road and The Southwest Virginia Heritage Culture Center in which things could come together and people are excited about them. Mr. Matney asked Mr. Weaver how the depot fits into this. Mr. Weaver responded the depot was the most historical building in town. Mr. Matney asked what it would take to make it a part of revitalization. Mr. Weaver told Mr. Matney to tell him. Mr. Matney responded to Mr. Weaver by stating he owns the depot. Mr. Weaver commented a million dollars is needed to restore the depot, get the property from Norfolk Southern and put the project together. Councilmember Mecimore added the town can't get the land unless we own the depot. Mr. Weaver asked Councilmember Mecimore if the Council had come to him and made an offer to buy the building. Councilmember Mecimore responded the Council had tried. Mr. Weaver responded by saying no the Council hadn't because they offered him \$6,000 then \$30,000. Councilmember Mecimore stated there was no negotiation he just said no. Mr. Weaver offered to negotiate and added the \$30,000 offer was unacceptable. Mr. Matney added there was no counter offer. Mr. Weaver stated he would take \$1,000,000 for the depot. Councilmember Mecimore commented the town couldn't afford \$1,000,000. Mayor Litz then

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stated the bad blood was because the Council was not going to take public money and buy a building that is appraised at \$6,000. Mr. Weaver responded the depot is not appraised at that. Mr. Matney added \$6,000 is the tax assessment. Mayor Litz stated is it assessed at \$6,000 due to the condition of the building. Mayor Litz continued by explaining the Council has received comments from citizens on the depot on the town's original offer and he quoted a citizen as saying to him "you idiot, you offered him that much for that damn building." He further added the Council has to answer to the citizens of the town for decision they make because they have to live in town. Following additional comments by Mayor Litz, Mr. Matney reiterated Mr. Weaver had offered the depot at a price of \$1,000,000. Councilmember Hash addressed Mr. Weaver by stating if he loves the community as much as he says he does and he wants to be a part of it then be reasonable and work with community on restoring it. Mr. Weaver responded the Council said the depot was negotiable. Councilmember Hash asked what the appraisal of the depot was. Mr. Weaver responded it hasn't been appraised. Vice-Mayor Crigger commented it was not the town's property to appraise and Mr. Weaver would have to get the building appraised. Councilmember Hash added she would like to see an appraisal. Mayor Litz added the town's counter offer to Mr. Weaver's offer was to see an appraisal.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to be shared.

### **POLICE REPORT**

Chief Mitchell explained his monthly activity report for April. He also explained the 2009 Virginia Crime Report released by the Virginia State Police. He compared Rural Retreat to other localities of the same population. Chief Mitchell added he is the only one man department in the population range and the other ten localities with only one officer have a lower population. Mr. Matney asked Chief Mitchell if he was comfortable with a one person department. Chief Mitchell responded yes, but he would like to review the next census report along with the 2010 Virginia Crime Report when it is released next year.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

The items for unfinished business were addressed in the Town Manager's Report.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business for discussion.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCE** – Chairman Crigger stated the council members received a copy of the draft budget for review. He added the Committee will not meet following the regular meeting as previously scheduled. The next meeting will be scheduled at a later time.

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PERSONNEL – Chairman Schaack stated there had been no changes made to the town manager profile. The next committee meeting will be Tuesday, May 25, 2010 following the regular meeting. All members were asked to review the town manager profile and bring their suggestions to the meeting.

HERITAGE DAY – Mr. Matney reported work is continuing on parking and shuttle issues. Mayor Litz explained the placement of tents for vendors and spectators is in the process of being resolved. Mr. Matney asked Mayor Litz to continue his work with Gary Wolfe whom is handling the sound for the day.

### **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:

RD BOND RESOLUTION PUBLIC HEARING – The issues previously reported regarding the councilmember’s oaths have been resolved. The public hearing was advertised for this meeting but the incorrect notice was published. The hearing will be re-advertised for Tuesday, June 8, 2010 for the adoption of the out-of-town water project bond resolution.

VIRGINIA BICYCLING FEDERATION – This organization is riding across the state to promote tourism and biking along Route 76. The riders will be in Rural Retreat Monday, May 17, 2010 for refreshments which have been donated.

THE CROOKED ROAD – As a result of Keith Holland’s presentation at a previous meeting, information has been received from the Southwest Virginia Downtown Interchange, the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Commission and Heartwood. All organizations promote tourism in Southwest Virginia communities. The Southwest Virginia Downtown Interchange will be meeting, May 26, 2010. Jack Weaver will be attending this meeting with Mr. Matney.

REQUEST FOR WATER SERVICE – A request for water service has been received from a potential property owner at 973 Murphyville Road. Mr. Matney explained this service would be the last connection on a 4” water main and he recommended this connection be approved. Councilmember Schaack made a motion to approve the request for water service at 973 Murphyville Road. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Crigger and passed by vote of five (5) for and zero (0) against.

COMMUNITY WARNING SYSTEM – The installation of the warning system is to be completed tomorrow. Testing will begin the week on May 17. An announcement will be published in the *Wytheville Enterprise* and is being announced on WYVE 1280 AM/WXBX 95.3 FM and WMEV 93.9 FM radio stations. Mr. Matney read the written announcement being published. Mr. Weaver asked what would be the range on the system. Mr. Matney responded it is to be heard at the interstate, near Rural Retreat Lake and near his property. The warning tones will include a different tone for a natural disaster and a man made disaster and a tone that will notify residents the disaster is over.

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**FIRE STATION FLOOR REPAIRS** – Engine Bay Floors has provided a proposal for floor repairs at the fire station and included two options. The first is a ¼" system for \$29,295.34 with a 10-year warranty and the second is a 1/8" system for \$24,608.08 with a five-year warranty. Mayor Litz asked what the cost would be to replace the entire floor. Mr. Matney responded it would be labor intensive. He asked the councilmember's to consider the life of the building which is a post-frame facility. He added discussion has been held on replacing the roof. Mr. Matney explained Engine Bay Floors has repaired the floor for the Dublin Fire Department. He contacted the Dublin town manager for more information and was told the fire department paid for the repairs themselves through various fundraisers but the cracks in the floor are no longer visible. The town manager invited Rural Retreat's council members to look at their floor repairs. Councilmember Hall commented the quote from Engine Bay Floors was pursued because they offer free estimates but the feasibility of spending the quoted amount of money on the building should be considered. He expressed his concern about the cracks that are currently in the floor because he feels it will become a safety hazard.

**TEA-21 SIDEWALK / BIKEWAY PROJECT** – The bid opening will be held Tuesday, May 18, 2010. Mayor Litz asked Mr. Matney to explain where sidewalks will be built for clarification of this project. Mr. Matney responded the project will replace the sidewalk on both sides of East Buck Avenue from North Main Street to the North Greever Street intersection, build new sidewalks on one side of Catron Street and East Railroad Avenue from North Greever Street to North Main Street. Mr. Matney explained this project will be paid for with funding received over a period of years that now amounts to enough to complete the project. He added the power poles will be set back behind the sidewalk area and drainage issues will be addressed on East Buck Avenue. An application is pending to construct additional sidewalks on East Buck Avenue from North Greever Street to the Rural Retreat High/Middle School Agricultural building.

**IN-TOWN WATER PROJECT** – The documents for Rural Development are being finalized and approval is pending. Mr. Matney explained he had met with Wythe County Administrator Cellel Dalton and discussed the additional bids to the out-of-town water project to extend the water lines from Ridge Avenue to Myrtle Lane and from the current ending point on Rural Retreat Lake Road to the Rural Retreat Fairgrounds which he had no issues with the town doing so. There were no issues with the line extension from Gienow Road to Rural Retreat Elementary School to increase the fire flow at that facility. Additional discussion was held on the potential Smyth County water extension in which Mr. Dalton requested a letter from the Smyth County administrator and Mr. Matney regarding this project. Mr. Matney added the Virginia Department of Health would possibly write a letter of support. He continued by explaining if possible an application with Rural Development needs to be filed in June.

**ARCET WELDING & SUPPLIES** – The Rural Retreat facility will officially open on May 17. Mr. Matney encouraged the council members to visit the facility and welcome them to the community.

**MEMORIAL DONATIONS FOR WALKING TRACK** – Mr. Matney explained Mr. Thomas Vernon recently passed away and his family requested donations be made to the town for the

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walking track at the Rural Retreat Community Center and spent to maintain the area. Mr. Matney suggested any donations received be sent to the Rural Retreat Community Center Board to be used for the requested purpose. Mayor Litz commented the family would like the money to be used to add exercise stations along the walking track. Mr. Matney suggested to Mr. Hall that he contact the Vernon family to address their requests. Mrs. Guynn stated a donation of \$100 has been received to date. The consensus of the Council was to send donations received to the Board.

WELLNESS/FITNESS STUDY – The committee has concluded their program on the marketing analysis, architect rendering of space and potential site locations. The primary site selected is owned by Klöckner Pentaplast of America and a letter inquiring as to whether or not they would be interested in participating in a facility at that location has been sent. A response has not been received at this time.

Mr. Matney added he had spoken to Ms. Gail Catron with the Wythe-Bland Community Foundation earlier in the day and she was very pleased with what the committee has done with the Foundation’s money. Their reporting system is being reworked and Ms. Catron suggested waiting until June to report on the committee’s progress. Mayor Litz stated it was very important for Ms. Catron to report that the grant money was being spent wisely. Mr. Matney added she was very pleased.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

The bills for May 11, 2010 were read and approved.

**TALK OF THE TOWN**

Mr. Matney was asked to attend the *Talk of the Town* radio program at the WYVE/WXBX radio station on Wednesday morning if his schedule allowed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no additional business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Councilmember Schaack and was duly seconded and approved.

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Mayor

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Clerk