

The Rural Retreat Town Council held a public hearing during the regular scheduled meeting on June 22, 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
Dale Yontz

Jerrell Hall
Peggy Hash

ABSENT

Ed Schaack
Scott Mecimore

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT

Wilma Justus and Jack Weaver

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

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

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Raymond Matney.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Litz.

PUBLIC HEARING

2010/2011 FISCAL BUDGET – Mayor Litz read the public notice as published in the *Wytheville Enterprise*. A copy of the public notice is attached and hereby made a part of these minutes. Mayor Litz opened the public hearing for comments. There being no comments from the citizens present, Mayor Litz closed the public hearing. Mr. Matney stated he anticipated this being the last year without a tax increase unless the economy improves. Mayor Litz commented the only fee increase in the budget was for water and sewer services. He added the town's rates are lower than the federal government states the rates should be. Mayor Litz stated the budget will be acted upon during unfinished business.

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There being no additional comments, the public hearing was closed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Dale Yontz, seconded by Councilmember Peggy Hash to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2010 regular meeting as written. The motion passed by a vote of three (3) for: Dale Yontz, Peggy Hash, Jerrell Hall; zero (0) against and one (1) abstention: Keith Crigger due to his absence at the previous meeting.

CITIZEN'S TIME

Mr. Jack Weaver gave an update on The Crooked Road Board of Directors meeting in which he and Mr. Matney attended. He added they were the only two guests present. Mr. Weaver distributed a handout outlining suggestions for the town to follow in order to organize committees to develop into a non-profit organization in the future. Following The Crooked Road meeting, Mr. Weaver and Mr. Matney visited the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission in which they are willing to support Rural Retreat. Mr. Weaver further explained he had a telephone conversation with Tom Vilsack, Secretary for the Department of Agriculture concerning rural economic development. He added Mr. Vilsack had stated stimulus funds are available for this type of development and grants for broadband. Mr. Matney commented the money for broadband is not available because it is available through the phone lines with CenturyLink. Mr. Weaver continued by stating he would like to see two boards appointed for economic development, a managing board consisting of citizens who live within the 24368 zip code and the other an advisory board that will review the managing boards recommendations prior to the recommendations going to the town council. He continued by explaining the boards should be named, develop a vision and the formation of the two boards. Vice-Mayor Crigger asked Mr. Weaver how these committees would be different from the local Chamber of Commerce that promotes businesses and tourism. Mr. Weaver responded this would be more for the citizens in the 24368 zip code. He then distributed a questionnaire to everyone present and asked they return this to him. Mayor Litz asked Mr. Weaver to not be impatient because sometimes things don't move as fast as preferred.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mayor Litz explained he had received a thank you card from American Legion Post 229 thanking him for his participation in the Memorial Day Service. He added the members put a lot of work into this service.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Mitchell explained June has been a busy month to date. He added four larcenies have occurred; two are being investigated by the Wythe County Sheriff's Office and the other two he is investigating. Chief Mitchell commented he didn't believe the cases were related. Dog complaints are still being received. He added he is continuing to work on inoperable motor

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vehicle notices. He has sent two notices to those in violation and a third will be sent. Chief Mitchell asked for the Council's guidance on how they felt the violations should be handled if the owners continue to be in violation following the third notice. Mr. Matney stated he seen no need for a third notice and he directed Chief Mitchell to charge those in violation since two previous notices had been sent. Councilmember Hash asked for clarification on inoperable motor vehicles. Chief Mitchell and Mr. Matney explained the town's ordinance pertaining to such vehicles. Chief Mitchell informed the Council a meeting had been held with Sheriff King in reference to Heritage Day. Four off duty deputies will be hired to assist with the days activities.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2010/2011 FISCAL BUDGET – Vice-Mayor Crigger made the motion to adopt the 2010/2011 Fiscal Year Budget as presented to include the unchanged tax rates and the increase in the water and sewer user fees. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Yontz and was approved by a roll call vote of four (4) ayes: Yontz, Crigger, Hash and Hall; zero (0) nays and two (2) members absent from the meeting: Schaack and Mecimore.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business offered for discussion at this time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PERSONNEL – No report was given.

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – No report was given.

HERITAGE DAY – Chairman Yontz reported promotional items are being finalized. Mr. Matney asked Councilmember Hash if she had gotten local sponsors for the festival. Councilmember Hash responded yes, but the businesses had asked her to come back to get the money. Ms. Guynn offered to send the sponsors an invoice for their sponsorships. Councilmember Hash is to send a list of sponsorships to Chairman Yontz to be included on the promotional flyers. Mr. Matney asked Mayor Litz and Chairman Yontz to meet with him following the meeting.

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE – Chairman Hall stated he would like to schedule a committee meeting to discuss the fire department floor and other issues. Following discussion with the committee members, Chairman Hall scheduled a meeting for Tuesday, June 29, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

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

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RESOLUTION – PREDATORY USURIOUS LENDING – The City of Staunton is asking for support to ask the General Assembly to limit the interest rates and fees on payday lending facilities. This is not an issue in Rural Retreat but a resolution of support has been drafted and would need the Council's approval, Mr. Matney commented. Mayor Litz asked if the town attorney should review this request. Mr. Matney responded no but if he would prefer he would ask Mr. Sobey to do so. Mayor Litz and Vice-Mayor Crigger asked for this item to be placed as unfinished business to be readdressed at the next meeting.

RESOLUTION- VRS – Mr. Matney explained the changes to the Virginia Retirement System. He added a resolution must be adopted specifying the percentage of retirement the town will pay on behalf of the current employees and employees hired after July 1, 2010. Vice-Mayor Crigger made a motion to adopt the draft resolution specifying the town will continue to pay the 5% employee's contributions to the VRS. He added he felt this helps to make the town's benefit package more appealing. Councilmember Hash seconded the motion and it passed by a vote of four (4) for and zero (0) against.

OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT – DIVISION I – The contract documents have been revised as requested by Rural Development, re-executed and returned to them for final approval.

OUT-OF-TOWN WATER PROJECT – DIVISION II – The contracts documents have been executed and returned to Rural Development for final approval. Pre-construction conferences should be scheduled for both projects next week.

IN-TOWN WATER PROJECT – All information has been sent to Rural Development for review and notice to proceed should be received soon.

TEA-21 SIDEWALK/BIKEWAY PROJECT – Approval from VDOT has not been received. The notice to proceed must be received to continue with the project.

VDH PLANNING PROJECTS – The projects included in this were Phillippi #1 and Phillippi #2, Staley Spring and Gienow to RRES. Updated reports have been sent to the VDH on all projects. The Gienow to RRES project will be included in the out-of-town water project. Additional grant money from the Phillippi #2 project was requested to be used on the environmental review. The balance of funds for Staley Spring is being used on the environmental review.

DOWNTOWN HISTORICAL DISTRICT – At the request of the Council, the Planning Commission discussed forming a Historical District at their previous meeting. The Commissioners recommended placing a notice in the local paper to determine if there is sufficient interest of the property owners that would be affected. A Preliminary Information Form was submitted to the regional and state office of the Department of Historic Resources in June 2001. According to the minutes of that meeting, to be eligible for state (25%) and federal (20%) tax credits, the consultants estimated the cost to put everything in place would be \$8,500. Mr. Matney stated he felt the Council should find how much interest there is in this program before proceeding. He encouraged Mr. Weaver to encourage the affected property owners of the

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benefits of this program. He added some of the work was previously completed. Councilmember Hash referenced the historic building recently torn down in Wytheville. Mr. Weaver commented it is based on ordinances, unless additional guidelines are set. Mr. Matney responded he thought Wytheville's Board of Architectural Review overseen the historic buildings however, following a telephone conversation with Steve Moore, Wytheville's Assistant Town Manager he explained they only govern the downtown area. The owners of buildings that are on the state or national historic landmark list have the option to participate in the program or not. If they choose to then they can take advantage of the tax credits available but they have to follow the guidelines. Mr. Matney stated Mr. Moore had provided him with general information regarding Historical Districts.

ANDERSONSON & ASSOCIATES STATUS REPORT – The monthly report has been distributed for review. We are still waiting for a proposal that outlines how we can have better access to the Web GIS information.

WATER ACCOUNTABILITY – The water loss for May is questionable due to the low percentage in April. Mr. Matney stated he felt the operators may not be accounting for the water that is used during the water plant backwash cycle. This would improve the accountability if this is not currently being accounted for.

WATER AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT DAMAGE – Since the last meeting, there have been several electrical storms which have caused significant damage to the wastewater plant. A motor at the water treatment plant was damaged and was attributed to one of the electrical storms. Mr. Matney explained the motor was pulled from the mounts on the wall and thrown against an adjacent wall. The motor was repairable. The wastewater plant has serious damage which included the loss of two motors and one blower. Mr. Matney further explained the damage one of the operators discovered when arriving for work. The estimated cost to replace the motors is \$2,500 and the blower at \$3,000. This damage will be filed against the town's insurance with the Virginia Municipal League in an attempt to recover some of the cost. Mayor Litz suggested installing a sensory device to prevent this from happening again. Mr. Matney stated he would look into this possibility and thanked Mayor Litz for his suggestion.

TRASH TRUCK – The truck has been refurbished and will be picked up tomorrow.

FORMER RURAL RETREAT MAYOR – Earlier today, Charles H. Worley visited the office. He served as mayor of Rural Retreat from 1954 – 1956 between Mayor Akers and Mayor Reynolds. Mrs. Guynn explained Mr. Worley and his wife were visiting Rural Retreat because during a previous visit she had asked him to send a picture to the town so it could be included on the wall of Mayor's in the council chambers. Mr. Matney added he spent time talking with Mr. Worley and discovered he was elected by a write in campaign. Mr. Matney continued by explaining Mr. Worley also served as the Worshipful Master of the Mt. Airy Masonic Lodge and as President of the Lion's Club while living in Rural Retreat. Mrs. Guynn and Mr. Matney expressed their joy in visiting with Mr. and Mrs. Worley and discussing the town and the people who lived here at the same time he did.

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TREASURER’S REPORT

The bills for June 22, 2010 were read and approved.

TALK OF THE TOWN

Neither the councilmember’s nor Mr. Matney would be available to attend the *Talk of the Town* radio program at the WYVE/WXBX radio station on Wednesday morning.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business for discussion, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Vice-Mayor Crigger and was duly seconded and approved.

Mayor

Clerk