

**A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TOWN COUNCIL
OF THE TOWN OF LURAY, PAGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA**

MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2015

The Luray Town Council met in regular session on Monday, June 8, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Luray Town Council Chambers located at 45 East Main Street, Luray, Virginia at which time there were present the following:

Presiding: Mayor Barry Presgraves

Council Present: Ronald Vickers
Jerry Dofflemyer
Jerry Schiro
Leroy Lancaster
Joseph Sours
John Meaney

Also Present:

Charlie Hoke, Town Manager
Mary Broyles, Clerk Treasurer
~~Danielle Babb, Deputy Clerk Treasurer~~
Ligon Webb, Town Planner
Chief Page Campbell, Luray Police Department
Assistant Chief Carl "Bow" Cook, Luray Police Department
Jeff McMillan, Page News and Courier
Nancy Shifflett, Luray Downtown Initiative
John Robbins, Luray Page County Chamber of Commerce
Jason Spidler, Town Attorney
Jason Pettit, Sign Permit Request
Leslie Currle, People Incorporated
Burt Whisman, People Incorporated
Rob Goldsmith, People Incorporated
Pat Racey, Racey Engineering
Arlene Ballou, Center for Workforce Development

A quorum being present, Mayor Barry Presgraves declared the Council to be in session for the transaction of business. All present stood for a moment of silence. Councilman Meaney led everyone in reciting the United States Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called with no members absent.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Councilman Sours motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with one revision to the minutes of May 11th as discussed, motion seconded by Councilman Dofflemyer with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, Schiro, Lancaster, Sours, Meaney. **Approved 6-0**

Consent Agenda

- A) Minutes of Regular Council Meeting – 5-11-2015
- B) Minutes of Council Work Session – 5-26-2015
- C) Financial Report – Month Ending May 31, 2015
- D) Accounts payable checks totaling \$ 181,789.72.

GENERAL CITIZEN COMMENT

Jason Pettit- 111 North Court Street

Jason Pettit, 111 North Court Street, thanked Council members for the opportunity to speak this evening regarding a sign for a proposed business. Mr. Pettit said that he has recently submitted a sign application for a business that he hopes to open in the near future; located next to the railroad tracks across from the Luray Fire Department. Mr. Pettit acknowledged that he is only making comments this evening and would need to follow up with the Town Manager with a detailed list of changes. Mr. Pettit said he was unclear from looking at the Sign Ordinance if he would have an opportunity to speak with Council or simply be submitting his thoughts on paper.

Mr. Pettit explained that he is very passionate about the history of the town. He spoke about the history of neon signage in the town between the 1930's and 1950's within the business district. He said that this type of signage had disappeared during the 1960's and 1970's had been replaced by cheaper plastic signage. Mr. Pettit provided a photo of an "EAT" arrow that had occupied several locations throughout the town beginning in the 1950's.

Mr. Pettit said that one of the issues he is facing is the size of the sign combined with the minimum ground clearance stated by the town's sign ordinance. The sign also cannot exceed the height of the roof line, which also presents a challenge due to the grading/slope of the property. Section 802.2 of the ordinance also calls for an 8-foot minimum set back which would place the sign nearly behind the building. The ordinance also calls for no illumination within 100 feet of any residential structure. Mr. Pettit said that his neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick, are not opposed to the sign. Mr. and Mrs. Frederick were both present at this evening's meeting. Mr. Pettit also compared the lumens produced by the neighboring street lights with the neon that would be produced by his signage. He explained that neon is not meant for the purpose of illuminating an area but to merely catch one's eye. Mr. Pettit explained a similar sign that is located in downtown Roanoke and discussed that Roanoke seems to have really embraced its historical neon signage.

In conclusion, Mr. Pettit said that he will submit his request in writing essentially addressing several issues. He will address the setback standards and request a 3 foot setback as opposed to 5 feet, to address the elevation, and to request the illumination of the sign. Mr. Pettit said that he has been through a similar process before regarding an accessory dwelling unit and he appreciates the steps that were taken to make some slight amendments. He understands that with these steps can come some cost and time. Mr. Pettit noted that under Section 802.3.A. of the Sign Ordinance that changes can be submitted to the Council by written request. He hopes that this can be a consideration under this part of the code for revision. Lastly, Mr. Pettit thanked the Council for their time and said he would be pleased to answer any questions.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

PLANNING AND ZONING

Town Planner, Ligon Webb, apologized for not submitting a written report due to a sudden out-of-town trip this week. Mr. Webb reported on The Laurance property and said that Ms. Kramer has contacted the telephone

company and they are willing to relocate the utility pole at the proposed entrance site. Ms. Kramer is also obtaining an engineered entrance plan that will meet the 24-foot requirement. The plan should be available for the work session on June 23rd.

Also, the Mimslyn Inn has purchased the Falter Property and has plans to develop the site in a phased approach. The owners plan to utilize the existing cabins on the property and the house. Mr. Webb said that he has been working with the Mimslyn Inn on a proffer statement to detail the dos and don'ts of the property in accordance with its zoning. Currently, they are working on about nine different points that make up a conditional rezoning.

TOWN AFFILIATED BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

LURAY DOWNTOWN INITIATIVE

Nancy Shifflett, Luray Downtown Initiative

Ms. Nancy Shifflett, LDI Board Member, said that it has been a very exciting month for LDI. One of the exciting points of news is that the Market Collective is now owned and operated by Ms. Arlene Ballou. Ms. Ballou said that she is the Founder and Executive Director for the Center for Workforce Development. She explained that her type of workforce is to set up business incubators and assist with all phases of the business development process.

Ms. Shifflett stated that she completed the visit to neighboring Culpepper. She explained that despite its population difference, she gained a great deal of information. Culpepper formed its Mainstreet Program in order to save its railroad and was founded with the support of the community. Ms. Shifflett explained that Culpepper has not had an "executive director" for approximately seven years. However, they have enlisted a Program Chairman and pay three full time employees. Culpepper receives a budget of \$150,000 per year which covers all administrative costs for the organization. Also, she explained that all special events are self-funded.

Ms. Shifflett said that Eddie Bumbaugh, Executive Director for Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance, is now helping LDI through Virginia Mainstreet. Mr. Bumbaugh is assisting with the Economic Reconstruction, staffing and other areas. At the May 28th meeting, LDI announced that Leslie Currell will serve as the Chairperson for the Economic Reconstruction Committee and Jim Sims will serve as the Reorganization Committee Chair.

One of the highlights of the last month was a meeting held last Friday concerning the Task Force Committee meeting. Ms. Shifflett said the meeting heard discussion on the 2016 Centennial for the Shenandoah National Park and how the town can become involved. She said that things are happening in Luray and this committee is committed to seeing results. Also, she was pleased to announce a Community Meeting that will be held on June 24th at the Mimslyn Inn.

Ms. Shifflett also presented the "One Luray, One Mainstreet" fund and how business leaders can pledge to support annual funding to promote maximum opportunities for revitalization in downtown Luray. The pledge of support will provide for fundraising, matching mini grants, brochures, etc. for downtown campaigns. Ms. Shifflett was pleased to announce that so far an aggregate total of \$50,000 has been committed for the five year term.

Ms. Shifflett also updated members on the Tailgate Party Fundraiser and said that \$20,900 in sponsorships have been received to date. She reminded that the date is September 26th. Ms. Shifflett requested permission for an event sign, portable in nature, to display the sponsorships for the event. Mr. Hoke said that the billboard sign is non-compliant with the town's sign ordinance. Councilman Schiro countered that this would be a temporary event sign. Mr. Hoke said that the signage would not meet the size restrictions. Councilman Vickers said that

he would like to find a way to permit this since the council has been asking LDI to fundraise. Councilman Schiro said that this would be very different from a sign of a permanent nature. Mr. Hoke said that the Council does have the provision to permit this, but that it should be safe in nature. Mayor Presgraves said that Council will take this under advisement and review at the work session.

Ms. Shifflett said that on July 8th, LDI will hold another visitation to Harrisonburg and she encouraged everyone to attend that can do so. She will send everyone an email reminder about this and asked members to mark their calendars for this visit.

Councilman Schiro said that he would like to commend Ms. Shifflett for the tremendous job that she has done and what has been accomplished. He said that these efforts have been really amazing and thanked her for her efforts. Councilman Vickers said that as the board liaison for the town, that LDI's board is very energetic and is doing everything they have been asked to.

LURAY PAGE COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

John Robbins, Chamber Director

Director John Robbins said that the Chamber is thrilled to finally have the Luray Railway Museum open and that the grand opening ceremony went very well. He said that WHSV aired the event which has resulted in increased visitation to the center and museum. Mr. Robbins said that the Chamber has continued to be in contact regarding a possible half marathon. Mr. Robbins said that he recently spent the day with a gentlemen from California about this and discussing some possible course locations. Other visits were held in Harrisonburg and Waynesboro and he hopes the coordinator is leaning toward Luray as a potential location. The race would likely not be scheduled until 2016. Several chamber members have requested to bring back the "annual meeting". The purpose of this meeting is for everyone organizing an event or festival to work collectively on dates, times, and places. Over the last month several seminars have been focusing on different aspects of social media. Mr. Robbins said this is an important topic for anyone hoping to bring more exposure to their business. Mr. Robbins also mentioned *Blue Ridge Country* magazine which is read by 350,000 people which has featured a 2-page article on Luray. The story features dining and activities in Luray. Mr. Robbins said that a board vacancy has been filled with a business member from Shenandoah; the board seat was formerly held by Candace Mathews.

Mr. Robbins also discussed once a month radio coverage through Tourism Tuesdays. Recent coverage has included Performing Arts Luray and the Veterans Bluegrass Festival. Next month's coverage will include Ken Racine to discuss the Luray Triathlon. Tourist walk-ins for the month of May were 1,955 and tourist phone calls were 550, both were increases over May 2014.

UPDATES AND DISCUSSION ITEM

People Inc.

Mr. Burt Whisman, Director of Housing-People Incorporated, spoke to Council members along with Rob Goldsmith, President and CEO. Mr. Goldsmith spoke about the disappointing news regarding the housing project, Luray Meadows. Mr. Goldsmith said that the bids came in over \$1.3 million over budget and therefore resulted in the cancellation of the project. He said that People Inc. is looking at other potential sites and ways that costs could be cut. Mr. Goldsmith thanked Council for their support in the process and hoped that the next project will be successful.

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Bridge Acquisition Option

Town Manager, Charlie Hoke, said that unfortunately Bryan Chrisman could not be present this evening. Nonetheless, Council needs to address the bridge acquisition option. The option allows the town the determination to relocate the existing bridge, give away the structure, or maintain for historic purposes. The bridge is within the town's historic district and could be purchased or given to a heritage society that would be interested in maintaining the historic nature of the bridge. The Page County Heritage Association was not interested in doing so due to the associated maintenance costs. Staff recommends electing not to relocate the structure and proceed with demolition.

Motion: Councilman Sours motioned to proceed with the plans for demolition, motion seconded by Councilman Vickers with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, Schiro, Lancaster, Sours, Meaney. **Approved 6-0**

Sewer Line Study Dry Run to the Hawksbill Main

Mr. Hoke discussed the east end of town's drainage to the Gorman Rupp pump station. This issue was discussed several years ago due to the bottleneck in the town's sewer system. Currently all of the wastewater flows into the pump station in the Brookside Subdivision and is then pumped back up to Main Street near Bo's Belly Barn. This sewer line is now nearing its capacity. Mr. Hoke said that the Yogi Bear Camp Ground has expressed an interest in securing an out-of-town sewer connection for the campground. In order for the Town to consider an out-of-town service of this type and volume, this sewer study should be completed. Mr. Hoke said that it would be beneficial if the owners of the campground would partner with the town on the installation of a new line. Mr. Hoke said that the study would be necessary to find out the costs associated with the new line. He said that some opportunities are available for grants and recommends conducting the study. Mr. Hoke noted that this could alleviate four other pumping stations in the area and relieve the capacity of the Main Street line. He noted that this was not budgeted for in the FY2015-2016 Budget. The total cost of the study by Racey Engineering would not exceed \$12,850.00 Mayor Presgraves clarified that the campground owners are willing to collaborate on the cost of the line installation but not the cost of the study. Councilman Schiro said that this makes good sense in terms of the town's existing infrastructure but also that Council consider the expansion of this service to an out-of-town connection in order to reduce water and sewer rates. He explained that in order to provide the service at a lower cost to existing customers, the town would need to expand its customer base. Councilman Vickers asked if it would be possible to spend the funds in the current year. Mr. Hoke said that staff would like to avoid a 1% increase in the approved budget since this would cause need to advertise for a budget amendment. Mr. Hoke said that there is a need for this study and discussed several grant options for sewer improvements. Mr. Racey said that the study would provide the data needed to complete grant applications. Members also discussed pursuing any grant assistance from NSVRC. Mr. Racey discussed existing infrastructure at the campground and the timing of improvements. Councilman Vickers asked about the funding for the study since this expense was not budgeted. Mr. Hoke said that the funding would need to come from reserves. Councilman Schiro said that he feels the return on investment for the study is worthwhile to the town. He also requested that throughout the budget year, town staff pursue other areas that could be cut to cover this cost.

Motion: Councilman Vickers motioned to approve the \$12,850 for the sewer study as discussed, motion seconded by Councilman Schiro with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Schiro, Lancaster, Sours, Meaney. ABSTAIN: Dofflemyer **Approved 5-0**

TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Town Attorney, Jason Spitler, had no business items for this evening's meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Personnel, Section 2.2-3711.A.1

Mayor Presgraves requested a motion to adjourn into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters relevant to Section 2.2-3711.A.1.

Motion: Councilman Lancaster motioned to recess the regular session and to convene in executive session; Councilman Sours seconded the motion with the following members voting YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, Schiro, Lancaster, Sours, Meaney. **Approved 6-0**

Motion: Councilman Vickers motioned to adjourn the closed session and to reconvene in open session; Councilman Lancaster seconded the motion with the following members voting YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, Schiro, Lancaster, Sours, Meaney. **Approved 6-0**

Mayor Presgraves asked members of Council to certify that to the best of their knowledge only matters covered under Section 2.2-3711.A.1 were heard, discussed, or considered during the closed session. **The roll was called with all members certifying "Yes".**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

With no further business, Mayor Presgraves adjourned the regular session of the Luray Town Council at approximately 9:45pm.

Barry Presgraves
Mayor

Danielle Babb
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer