

The regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Front Royal, Virginia was held on November 25, 2013, in the Warren County Government Center’s Board Meeting Room. Mayor Darr and Boy Scout Troop #4 led Council and those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and a Moment of Silence. The roll was called at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Timothy W. Darr
Vice Mayor N. Shae Parker
Councilman Daryl L. Funk
Councilman Bret W. Hrbek
Councilman Thomas H. Sayre
Councilman Eugene R. Tewalt
Councilman Hollis L. Tharpe
Town Manager Steven M. Burke, P.E.
Town Attorney Douglas W. Napier
Clerk of Council Jennifer E. Berry, CMC

(The above listed members represent the full body of Council as authorized in the Town Charter.)

Vice Mayor Parker moved, seconded by Councilman Tewalt that Council approve the Regular Council Meeting minutes of November 12, 2013 as presented.

Vote: Yes – Funk, Hrbek, Parker, Tewalt, Tharpe and Sayre
No – N/A
Abstain – N/A
Absent – N/A
(Mayor Darr did not vote as there was no tie to require his vote)

RECEIPT OF PETITIONS OR CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE PUBLIC

George McIntyre, 457 Milldale Road, noted that the Council is doing well with the progress along Main Street. He thanked Council for their work and efforts thus far. He stated that FRIBA, the Front Royal Independent Business Alliance, had been encouraging businesses to dress the area up along Main Street in order to entice people downtown to shop and dine. Mr. McIntyre stated that he is proud of the Main Street area and the people of this community and he asked if the Town would consider placing lighting atop the buildings in order to draw attention to Main Street. He noted that it was his hope that this year Council would consider a starter project in order to string lights from one building to the next, with the project progressing each year. Mr. McIntyre stated that they would like to have more lights up for the parade the first week of December.

Councilman Tewalt asked if the property owners would give the Town a waiver that would ensure that the Town would not be liable should there be any damage to the building. Mr. McIntyre noted that FRIBA could collect the documents if need be.

Councilman Sayre thanked them for the Chamber mixer held recently at The Apple House Deli

Mayor Darr asked if the Town Manager could look into the meeting with the Warren County Building officials and the Department of Energy Services in order to spearhead the project to begin the process for the downtown light project that Mr. McIntyre described.

Mr. McIntyre noted that Mr. Burke has been a pleasure to work with thus far on the matter. He stated that they were promoting the SHOP SMALL idea and he hoped that the smaller businesses would flourish this season in the community.

Councilman Tewalt asked about the cost of the electricity for the lights. Mr. McIntyre noted that donations were being collected and they were hoping that the Town could assist with other aspects to benefit the program and the community as a whole.

Councilman Hrbek asked if there was a need from Staff in order to move forward on the pilot program at this point for the lights. Mr. Burke noted that they would not need an official endorsement from the Council on this matter at this time, though they always prefer input on such matters.

Thomas Conkey, of 1401 N. Royal Avenue, stated that when he was on Council they voted to hire a Tourism Coordinator to bring business into the Town of Front Royal. He noted that legislators across the country were struggling to balance budgets where revenues were down and costs are up. He stated that there are options and he wished that Council would consider innovation, such as new technology that costs less, for example.

Mr. Conkey described a situation in Lynchburg with a developer who has worked to change the face of certain buildings and bring in jobs and revenue. He noted that other buildings are beginning to follow suit.

Mr. Conkey noted the financial benefits of a large change such as in Lynchburg. He stated that the problem the Town has resides in the fact that there is open land in the Corridor and inside the Town limits there are roadblocks with existing buildings and historical district snags.

Mr. Conkey encouraged Council to take an active role in bringing change to the community. He stated that Council had the responsibility to balance the Town's budget, though he asked them to break out of the old way of thinking and seek the right answers to assist the community move forward.

Christian Failmezger, of 124 E. Main Street, noted that he supported the hiring of an individual for the new Community Development position. He gave some statistics about the change in the community that could arise from positive adjustments.

Craig Laird, of Royal Oak Computers, noted that he agrees with all the speakers thus far, adding that he supports the EDA entirely as well. He stated that his comments are not meant to be disparagingly against anyone. Mr. Laird noted that getting companies through tax incentives alone are not necessarily the way to go at this point. He added that everyone should work towards sustainability as there were tremendous opportunities available through the community and he supports bringing someone in that is on that starting line.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR, COUNCIL & STAFF

Town Manager Steve Burke:

- Stated that the offices will be closed Thursday and Friday for the Thanksgiving holiday; and he noted the change in the refuse schedule for the week;

- Reminded Council and the public the Christmas Parade will be held on December 7th and he invited Council to ride on the Trolley; and
- Noted that the draft final version has been published on Envision's website

Jennifer McDonald, Executive Director of the Economic Development Authority:

- Noted that they continued to work on the restrictive covenant documents;
- Stated that they continued to work on the stakeholder contacts regarding the property for the public safety building for the Police Department;
- Noted that FMC plans an open house in May 2014 for 160 acres of land to be developed in town;
- Announced that they were working with a pharmacy, two retail shops, three fast food establishments, and three bakeries;
- Stated that they continued to work on the Leach Run Parkway project;
- Noted that they awaiting a response on the grant for the derelict structures;
- Announced that the Brown Bag lunches were planned for the coming months; and
- Noted that some Main Street merchants were planning specials for the upcoming holiday week.

Councilman Hrbek asked about the trail opening date. Mr. Burke stated that they hoped it would be the end of the year. Mr. Hrbek complimented the Staff and the contractor as the trail was looking quite nicely, including lighting in the area.

Vice Mayor Parker asked about restriping the Peyton Street parking lot, especially near the Chester Street area. Mr. Burke noted that they would make it a priority.

Councilman Tewalt asked about a letter from Mr. Bouiseau regarding the benches. Messrs. Burke and Napier noted that they had yet to receive anything at this time. Mr. Tewalt noted that the benches could be placed along the trail in memory or in honor of an individual, and those interested were to contact the Town Manager's Office.

Councilman Sayre noted that he walked the area and it is a beautiful trail. He added that he has heard a lot of positive feedback from the community.

Councilman Sayre stated that through a FOIA request he determined that regarding the 522 Corridor study issue, the County had spent \$4,000 so far, and the Town had spent over \$9,000 and there was one additional bill coming as well.

Councilman Funk stated that he was thankful to serve with his fellow Councilmen and he was pleased to work on the great things before the Town on behalf of the citizens of this community this year and the coming new year.

Mayor Darr noted that it was a busy time of year and recently some had attended the Annual Salvation Army Kettle Kick Off and the Founder's Day event the Saturday before, and he thanked the four previous Mayor's that spoke that day. Mayor Darr stated that Front Royal Police Department Officer Rosemack was chosen as Elks Officer of the Year at their recent banquet and the Warren Coalition Tulips for Violence held their event where 48 tulips were

planted to bring awareness to such tragedies. He added that many youth were in attendance at the Coalition event.

Mayor Darr also stated that the Blue Ridge Arts Council held their Deck the Halls Annual Benefit and he was pleased that their work blended so well with the community. He noted that they did so much that worked well for the betterment of the citizenry.

Mayor Darr asked if there were any other proposals for additions or deletions to the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS - NONE

COUNCIL REAPPOINTMENTS – Board of Architectural Review

Vice Mayor Parker moved, seconded by Councilman Funk that Council re-appoint Gary D. Vaughn and Joan E. Harding to the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) each to a four-year term ending November 13, 2017.

Vote: Yes – Funk, Hrbek, Parker, Tewalt, Tharpe and Sayre
No – N/A
Abstain – N/A
Absent – N/A
(Mayor Darr did not vote as there was no tie to require his vote)

COUNCIL APPROVAL – Bid – Sewer Line Replacement along Fletcher Street

Summary: Council has received a request from the Purchasing Agent, seeking approval of a bid from Bushong Contracting Corporation in the amount of \$29,967.00 for the sewer line replacement along Fletcher Street.

Vice Mayor Parker moved, seconded by Councilman Tewalt, that Council approve a bid from Bushong Contracting Corporation in the amount of \$29,967.00 for the sewer line replacement along Fletcher Street.

Councilman Hrbek asked about the large discrepancy in the amounts and should there be a concern. Mr. Burke noted that the selected contractor is just now completing work for the Town on 16th Street, and that explains the low mobilization costs. He added that Staff did confirm with them that their bid is accurate and whole.

Councilman Sayre stated that the improvements were needed for the Town’s I&I program efforts.

Vote: Yes – Funk, Hrbek, Parker, Tewalt, Tharpe and Sayre
No – N/A
Abstain – N/A
Absent – N/A
(Mayor Darr did not vote as there was no tie to require his vote)
(By Roll Call)

COUNCIL AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE – Community Development Director Position

Summary: Council is requested to authorize the Town Manager to begin advertising for thirty (30) days the position of Community Development Director. The position will be an employee who will report directly to the Town Council.

Councilman Hrbek moved, seconded by Councilman Tewalt, that Council direct the Town Manager to begin advertising for 30 days for the position of Community Development Director. The position will be an employee and will report directly to the Town Council.

Councilman Hrbek noted that this position was not to override or overstep the work of the EDA, and the scope of the position included the following:

- 1) Provide the Case for Front Royal
- 2) Develop economic incentives for job creation within the Town of Front Royal
- 3) **Negotiate "catalyst" economic opportunities within the Town of Front Royal**
- 4) Assist in the development of economic zones within the Town
- 5) Represent the Town Council to the Economic Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, FRIBA, Downtown Front Royal and other community and civic organizations for economic matters
- 6) Work with the Planning & Zoning Department to identify areas for economic redevelopment
- 7) Work with the Tourism Department to identify new areas for economic development
- 8) Work with stakeholders to develop a comprehensive economic plan for the town

Councilman Hrbek noted that he would like the Town to move forward with an advertisement to attract people from the State in order to secure an individual for this position.

Councilman Funk stated that one concern was of duplication of efforts. He noted that he felt that perhaps it would function better at the EDA Office rather than at the Town.

Councilman Sayre stated that the Town was working to gather a committee for Community Development matters. He asked if the former advertisement was for a contract position; Mr. Burke noted that it was a contract position with a broader scope of work than what is presented this evening.

Vice Mayor Parker asked about where the previous ads were placed. Mr. Burke noted that he believed they were placed in the VML magazine and other publications. Mr. Parker stated that Council has identified \$50,000 towards Community Development efforts and he that he did not feel it was a duplication of funds or efforts, he stated that he would support the matter.

Councilman Tewalt stated that he was against the matter previously though now he saw it differently. He noted that the scope was previously so large, and this was now much narrower and well defined to bring in prospects and help to develop the downtown and Front Royal as a whole. He stated that it could be a win-win situation for the Town with the right person.

Councilman Tharpe stated that hopefully it would be an enhancement to the Town and he hoped it would not be a duplication of efforts.

Mayor Darr stated that the motion was only for an advertisement for the position at this point. He noted that it would be discussed during the worksession following this regular Council

meeting in more detail. He commended Mr. Hrbek for his efforts on the matter and noted that the salary and other matters would be fine-tuned and debated at a later time.

Vote: Yes – Hrbek, Parker, Tewalt, Tharpe and Sayre

No – Funk

Abstain – N/A

Absent – N/A

(Mayor Darr did not vote as there was no tie to require his vote)

(By Roll Call)

There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

APPROVED:

Jennifer E. Berry
Clerk of Council