



TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

Monday, May 8, 2023

Town Hall Conference Room

The following minutes are a summary of items on the agenda. This meeting may be viewed in its entirety by accessing the video of the same date online via the Town's website at www.frontroyalva.com for a limited time.

ROLL CALL BY CLERK OF COUNCIL

PRESENT: Mayor Lori A. Cockrell
Councilwoman Melissa DeDomenico-Payne
Councilman Joshua L. Ingram
Councilwoman Amber F. Morris
Councilman H. Bruce Rappaport
Councilman Duane R. "Skip" Rogers
Vice Mayor R. Wayne Sealock

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Manager Joseph E. Waltz
Town Attorney George M. Sonnett, Jr.
Clerk of Council Tina L. Presley
Various members of the staff and public

Special Use Permit to Allow a Cemetery at 1600 John Marshall Hwy – Dynamic Life Ministries

Director of Planning Lauren Kopishke advised that the application had met all standards and recommended approval. There was no further discussion and Council agreed to advertise for a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission at 6:30pm on May 22nd.

Items Slated for Consent Agenda on May 22nd

A. FY23 Budget Amendment & Budget Transfer Additional Revenue for Projects

Finance Director BJ Wilson gave an overview of the allocations. Mayor Cockrell confirmed that the new sidewalk listed was W. Criser Road which grant funding would be applied for. Town Manager Joe Waltz noted that this was one of Council's goals.

Councilwoman Morris confirmed that the Transportation Study was in Planning/Zoning and that the street construction was \$198,000 and paving was \$132,000. She questioned the funding for the Prospect Bridge replacement. Mr. Wilson advised that there were funds in the budget for next year; however, the costs continued to rise. Mr. Waltz confirmed that realistically it would be 2027. He suggested allowing staff to look at other alternatives and bring back to Council with options at the June 5th work session. Discussion continued with Council feeling the bridge was an important safety issue.

Councilman Rappaport stated that the sidewalk on Main Street around the Element Restaurant and the old Bank of Warren needed to be addressed if there were any funds available. Councilman Rogers agreed noting the liability issue. Councilwoman Morris advised that the Transportation Study should show walkability and accessibility as well as addressing liabilities.

Council agreed to move forward with the amendment under the Consent Agenda for May 22nd.

B. Bid for 500kVA Three-Phased Pad-Mounted Transformer, Remanufactured – Michelle Campbell

Purchasing Manager Michelle Campbell advised that the transformer was for the Fleet Maintenance Building with a lead time of 16 weeks. Vice Mayor Sealock questioned the costs for new versus manufactured. Mrs. Campbell advised that it was \$70,000 for a new one with a 3-year lead time. Director of Energy Services Carey Saffelle advised that the guarantee was three years for this purchase.

Council agreed to add to the Consent Agenda for May 22nd.

C. Bid for Substation Breakers and Voltage Regulators

Mrs. Campbell advised that there were six bids, three for each part. She explained that there was an amendment to the voltage regulators because the lowest bidder was unresponsive, and the Town had to go with the next lowest bidder.

Council agreed to add to the Consent Agenda for May 22nd showing the new amount.

D. Re-bid for Dump Bed Body

Mrs. Campbell advised that this was the third time Council has seen this item and there was only one response this time around. Mr. Wilson confirmed that three responses to the bid were not required.

Council agreed to the Consent Agenda for May 22nd.

E. Proclamation to Celebrate National Public Works Week May 21-27 – Robbie Boyer

Robbie gave a brief overview of what the Public Works Department does.

Council agreed to add to the Consent Agenda for May 22nd.

Utilize Asset Forfeiture Funds to Replace Current Standard Issue Firearms – Chief of Police

Chief Magalis explained that the Police Department's current side arms were 20 years old, and he was looking to upgrade them to smaller weapons, noting they were cheaper and equipped with a red dot optic sight for accuracy. He advised that funding would come from asset forfeitures that were accumulated from drug cases and all associated equipment was included in the price of \$36,000. He hoped to get a grant to offset the training costs for the new optic system. Mayor Cockrell questioned who would purchase the older weapons. The Chief advised that the used side arms would be given to the distributors who would sell them on the open market. Councilman Rogers confirmed that the entire department would receive a new weapon with approximately five or six to spare. The Chief confirmed that there would be three bids for the purchase of the weapons.

Councilwoman Morris stated the importance of asset forfeiture and thanked the Chief for looking out for his officers and department.

Councilman Rappaport questioned whether there were problems with the current weapons. The Chief found them to be problematic and the FBI performed tests that improved ballistics.

Council agreed to the Consent Agenda for May 22nd.

Information Pertaining to Installation of Speed Camera Enforcement in School Zones

Chief Magalis explained that since speeding was a big topic around Town he began investigating what other jurisdictions were doing and realized they were placing speed cameras in school zones in the morning and afternoon. He further explained that the camera would take a picture of the violators' vehicle, the vendor would receive the information and send the violations to the Police Department to be vetted. He cautioned that the violation would be for the vehicle not the driver, noting the violation would be a civil penalty which is similar to a parking ticket. He advised that the Police Department would begin with four cameras to be placed at Strasburg Road, Criser Road, Luray Avenue and Leach Run Parkway. Councilman Rogers commented that Chester Street was an area that speeders were constant. The Chief reiterated that there would only be four cameras and the locations chosen were the areas that created the most safety situations. He advised that the cameras would be in place for two years.

Mayor Cockrell questioned the number of walkers on Strasburg Road. The Chief advised those who were walking from the trailer park and cautioned that the speed zone was not just for pedestrians but vehicle traffic as well. Councilwoman DeDomenico-Payne voiced concern about the vehicles on Leach Run Parkway that may be trying to get to the hospital and not the school. The Chief reiterated that the violations would be vetted to "weed out" vehicles such as ambulances. Town Manager Joe Waltz stated that the vendor explained that it would be for those 10+ over the speed limit who would receive a violation. Councilwoman Morris voiced her satisfaction that it was only during school zones.

The Chief explained the specifics of the procurement and the details of how the program would begin: 1) send engineers out; 2) conduct a public information campaign; 3) provide materials for the Town's website and social media accounts; 4) conduct a 30-day grace period with warning; and 5) enforcement. He commented that the vendor would handle all the collections and distribute accordingly.

It was confirmed that the violations were similar to how the Town handles parking tickets and there was a civil contest option for those ultimately going to General District court to handle. It was also confirmed that no one's insurance would increase, or violations be reported to the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV). The Chief noted that the proceeds collected would go specifically towards traffic safety. Vice Mayor Sealock confirmed that the cameras could be controlled remotely.

Council directed staff to move forward with quotes.

Maintenance for Unimproved Alleys

Town Manager Joe Waltz reminded Council that this item originated from a complaint regarding an alley on 12th Steet. He advised that Staff had determined that there were 52 unimproved alleys in Town, and he was recommending the institution of an annual inspection of these alleys.

Director of Public Works showed Council a PowerPoint TOWN OF FRONT ROYAL: UNIMPROVED ALLEYS that named the 52 unimproved alleys; a couple of pictures of the unimproved alleys; excerpt of Town Code Chapter 156-4B that shows the *Town is not required to cut and/or remove weeds, brush, plants, grass or other vegetation growing in the public alleys, unimproved streets and other unimproved rights-of-ways except as provided in Section 170-2 of the Town Code*; Staff recommendations; and various maps of the unimproved alleys.

Councilman Rogers confirmed that residents that reside in and around the alleys were dumping and not those who lived elsewhere. He also questioned what impact on the budget there would be to remove trees

and clean up the alleys. It was noted that the impact would not show until after the inspections began. Councilwoman DeDomenico-Payne questioned whether there was a pattern in terms of rented or owned homes where the alleys were located that needed cleaning. Mr. Boyer advised that it was hit or miss as some were being used at both ends, noting some residents wanted to leave the growth as a buffer from their neighbors. She stated the importance of the Town maintaining the alleys because they are the owner with the hopes of setting an example for the residents.

Councilman Ingram suggested educating the public. Mr. Boyer advised that the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee (ESAC) was getting more involved with the Adopt-A-Street Program.

Town Attorney George Sonnett noted that illegal dumping is cited in the Town Code. Councilwoman Morris suggested creating/installing "NO DUMPING" signs to deter criminals.

Mayor Cockrell suggested that Staff come back to Council with an update once the inspections have been completed.

CLOSED MEETING

Councilman Ingram moved seconded by Councilwoman Morris that Town Council convene a closed meeting, pursuant to Sections 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, for the following purpose:

- 1) *pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(8) of the Code of Virginia, for consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, more specifically, proposed tourism agreements with Discover Front Royal, Inc. and Warren County.*

Councilwoman Morris left the meeting at 9:12pm and returned at 9:14pm

Vice Mayor Sealock left the meeting at 9:13pm and returned at 9:15pm.

Clerk of Council left at 9:50pm

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers DeDomenico-Payne, Ingram, Morris, Rappaport, Rogers, Vice Mayor Sealock

No – N/A

Absent – N/A

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL by the Town Manager

Councilman Ingram moved seconded by Councilwoman Morris that Council certify that to the best of each member's knowledge, as recognized by each Council member's affirmative vote, that only such public business matters lawfully exempted from Open Meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the Closed Meeting by Council, and that the vote of each individual member of Council be taken by roll call and recorded and included in the minutes of the meeting of Town Council.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers DeDomenico-Payne, Ingram, Morris, Rappaport, Rogers, Vice Mayor Sealock

No – N/A

Absent – N/A

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

Approved by Town Council

Adjourned meeting at 10:06pm

Date: 5/22/23