

The regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Front Royal, Virginia was held on June 25, 2018, in the Warren County Government Center’s Board Meeting Room. Mayor Tharpe 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 Hollis L. Tharpe  
Councilman John P. Connolly  
Councilman Gary L. Gillispie  
Councilman Jacob L. Meza  
Councilman Christopher S. Morrison  
Councilman William A. Sealock  
Vice Mayor Eugene R. Tewalt  
Town Attorney Douglas W. Napier  
Town Manager Joseph E. Waltz  
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 Tewalt moved, seconded by Councilman Sealock, to approve the Regular Council Meeting minutes of June 11, 2018 as presented.*

Vote: Yes – Connolly, Gillispie, Meza, Morrison, Sealock and Tewalt  
No – N/A  
Abstain – N/A  
Absent – N/A  
(Mayor Tharpe did not vote as there was no tie to require his vote)  
(By Roll Call)

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**RECEIPT OF PETITIONS OR CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE PUBLIC**

Steven Schlesinger, of 8 W. Prospect Street, noted that the Town needed some type of program for the community on Fourth of July, fireworks, food trucks, etc. He noted that the Bing Crosby site would be a prime location. He suggested that his company may be able to assist with donating some funding for the event for 2019.

Town Manager, Joseph Waltz did not have a report this evening.

Felicia Hart, Community Development Director, reported the following to Council:

**Community Development Block Grant**

We have had a number of meetings both with representatives from the State and without

- Updated budget to State to reflect the \$700,000 vs \$1M
- We have asked for an extension until June 30<sup>th</sup>
  - Not uncommon
  - We are in both the Historic District and the Flood Plain
  - Flood plain notices in newspapers
  - About 1/3 of our area is in the flood plain
  - Army Corp of Engineers
  - 20+ Indian tribes
  - Department of Historic Resources
  - American Council on Historic Preservation

**New businesses opening their doors in Town**

- Try Thai is now open
  - Art in the Valley Gallery is also now open
  - Fireball Arcade opened too
  - And Front Royal Brewing is open
  - B&L Custard on South Street is now open
  - Robert MacDougall with TransForm has literally been transforming several of his properties
  - We do still have a couple of properties available on Main Street and throughout Town that are being showcased by realtors right now - making sure we educate them about the town incentives and number of funding options available, i.e. USDA, Virginia Tourism Corporation, EDA, etc.
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- In January we had 9 business licenses granted; February had 13; March had 23; and April had 12; May had 7
  - We have 18 businesses we are collecting lodging taxes from
  - Year-to-date receipts \$287,055 = -4% below budget numbers
  - Projects completed: bridge work; Leach Run Parkway; Water treatment plant
  - In the Town, we have 86 businesses we are collecting meals tax from
  - Year-to-date receipts \$1,539,359 = 3% above budget numbers

We continue working with Virginia Main Street group to highlight our story and the private investments:

- We're still working on the 3-minute videos of some of the businesses here in town; more will be coming on this a little later
- Regularly meeting with both FRIBA and the Merchants on Main to give regular updates on all projects
- We just hosted the Business Forum meeting and will be putting those on a regularly scheduled quarterly timeline.

We're still getting great mentions on the Appalachian Trail social media sites bragging about how good (and cheap!) our trolley service is. Thru-hiker numbers are already up this year

- I presented at the Appalachian Trail Summit hosted in Waynesboro, PA for all AT communities (Maine to Georgia) – about the tourism value of being a trail community
- Once we have signed off with the State regarding our Block Grant, we'll be developing our own, stand-alone visitors website – won't be integrated with Town's site
- This will greatly help with Google Analytics

We will be investing in Search Engine Optimization (SEO), GeoTracking and GeoFencing to attract visitors to our area

- We're adding an iPad kiosk at the Visitors Center for our guests to complete a quick questionnaire – it's currently handwritten and tedious – this will be much quicker and allow us to ask more questions in the same amount of time
- Both of these will allow us to be much more strategic in our advertising – and will give us the ability to have measurements and adjust as needed – when needed.

**Tourism**

- We were invited to participate in the National Tourism Week and had a display at the Northern Virginia Gateway Welcome Center. Virginia's First Lady was in attendance and we had some quality one-on-one time with her.
- We had a display at the Virginia Welcome Center in Clearbrook with over 86,000 visitors going through.

We just won two coveted awards from Virginia Destination Marketing Organizations (VADMO) – VIRGO Awards

- One for the Shenandoah Spirits Trail – as a Regional Marketing Initiative
- And one for the Shenandoah Valley Tourism Partnership – that was selected Best in Show by our peers
- Joint Tourism Advisory Committee has been meeting every month – establishing budget, project priorities, etc.
- Presented to the Hospitality and Outdoor Recreational students at Lord Fairfax Community College. We got a student intern from this too
- Regularly present to the Warren County Board of Supervisors now
- Still hosting a monthly Tourism Tuesday radio show

For the fiscal year this year we are at \$20,915.63 in merchandise sales - \$7,227.75 over this time last year

- As part of the Shenandoah Valley Tourism Partnership we hosted the Beer Garden at the DC Metro Cooking Show – Backroom Brewery participated showcasing their product. Attendance of over 36,000 people were exposed to what we have to offer here in FR/WC
- We partnered with the Front Royal Canoe Company to showcase FR/WC offerings at the DC Travel Show. Over 40,000 were in attendance
- To date we've hosted 38 travel writers (from all over the world and many different media outlets)
- 8 tour bus groups are scheduled over the next couple of months – 3 in May alone

### **Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC)**

- Members from VTC were here last week shooting video at numerous locations in the County including Front Royal Canoe, Down River Canoe, and others;
- We sent a story writer and photographer to pull together information for submission for Best BBQ – and Apple House won.
- Tourism Zone discussion – kudos to our Planning and Zoning Department – according to VTC many other localities in Virginia are modeling their zones after ours. They will be following up with a story and a white paper that will be included on the State site

### **Mid-Atlantic Women's Motorcycle Rally**

- This was their second year here
- All have been expressing how much they love coming to our community - and how much fun they had
- I think they ate at every restaurant (breakfast, lunch and dinner) in the Town/County
- Shopped at - or had on-site - numerous businesses from the Town/County
- Were able to get their Parade of Chrome down Main Street
- They loved getting the Proclamation from Town Council!
- Hopefully they will be coming back for a third year next year!

### **Certificate of Excellence**

- Congratulations to my staff at the Visitors Center! Because they’ve earned a Certificate of Excellence every year for the past five years, Trip Advisor has announced that the Front Royal Visitors Center has qualified for the Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence Hall of Fame

Councilman Meza thanked Ms. Hart for her work and noted that the statistics were notable. He stated that she was doing an excellent job throughout the community and to advertise and promote Front Royal as well.

Brandon Davis, NSVRC Director stated that they cover the entire Northern Shenandoah Valley and owned and operated by the local governments. He noted that to update on a couple projects that are ongoing, he advised Council of the Shenandoah Council Tourism and the transportation planning initiatives. He stated that they are working to increase pedestrian access and bus routes to DC. Mr. Davis stated that the bus to DC had the maiden voyage today and it was successful. Councilman Meza asked about the commuter bus. Mr. Davis noted that the bus was intended to assist with taking vehicles off the road and gave more information about the cost and the website, which is: [ridesmartva.org](http://ridesmartva.org).

Councilman Connolly asked that Staff speak to Mr. Schlesinger to discuss partnerships regarding the Fourth of July.

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

*Councilman Connolly moved, seconded Vice Mayor Tewalt, that Council add CLOSED MEETING to the agenda, Consultation with Legal Counsel.*

Vote: Yes – Connolly, Gillispie, Meza, Morrison, Sealock and Tewalt  
 No – N/A  
 Abstain – N/A  
 Absent – N/A  
 (Mayor Tharpe did not vote as there was no tie to require his vote)  
 (By Roll Call)

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS – (ROLL CALL VOTE REQUIRED)**

- A. COUNCIL APPROVAL – Liaison Committee Meeting Items
  - 1) IT Federal Main Street Project – Joe Waltz
  - 2) Route 522 Corridor Water Upgrade Project – Joe Waltz
  - 3) Phase II Happy Creek Road Project Update – Joe Waltz
  - 4) Town Building Maintenance Code Enforcement Update – Joe Waltz
  - ~~5) Update on Wastewater Treatment Plant – Joe Waltz~~
  - 6) Development Review Committee – Doug Stanley
  - ~~7) Relocation of VA Inspection Sticker/Motor Vehicle Decals – Joe Waltz~~
  - 8) Building Inspections Software – Doug Stanley
  - 9) Warren County’s In-Town Projects – Doug Stanley
  - 10) Joint Towing Board – Joe Waltz / Doug Stanley
- B. COUNCIL APPROVAL – Bid – Mowing Services for Leach Run Parkway
- C. COUNCIL APPROVAL – Bid – Leak Detection Survey
- D. COUNCIL APPROVAL – Bid – Various Grades of Stone

E. COUNCIL APPROVAL – Bid – Various Grades of Asphalt

F. COUNCIL APPROVAL – Bid – Gate Valves

G. COUNCIL APPROVAL – Resolution that Approves Governing Documents & Authorizes the Execution of Documents for the Front Royal Downtown Revitalization Project - CDBG

*Councilman Gillispie moved seconded, by Vice Mayor Tewalt that Council approve the consent agenda as presented.*

Vote: Yes – Connolly, Gillispie, Meza, Morrison, Sealock and Tewalt

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – N/A

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

(By Roll Call)

**Resolution from the Town of Front Royal**

**Approving the Governing Documents and Authorizing the Execution of All Necessary Contract Documents for the Front Royal Downtown Revitalization Project**

**WHEREAS**, the Town applied for and has been awarded a FY 2017 Community Development Block Grant-funded Community Improvement Grant in the amount of \$700,000 from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (VDHCD) to undertake a Downtown Revitalization Project as defined by the grant application; and

**WHEREAS**, VDHCD has entered into negotiations with the Town of Front Royal regarding a contract for a Downtown Revitalization Project grant award of \$700,000 as CIG Project #17-23;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the Town of Front Royal, Virginia that:

1. The Town of Front Royal hereby approves the following documents that will govern the Front Royal Downtown Revitalization Project:

a. Members and Bylaws of the Façade Advisory Board, Front Royal Downtown Revitalization Project, including the appointment of the members indicated therein.

b. Façade Improvement Program Design, Front Royal Downtown Revitalization Project.

c. Program Income Plan, Front Royal Downtown Revitalization Project.

2. The Town hereby authorizes the Town Manager, the Town’s chief administrative official, to execute all contracts and other documents necessary for the implementation of the Front Royal Downtown Revitalization Project.

3. The Town hereby appropriates \$700,000 in funding awarded to the Town of Front Royal by the VDHCD for the Front Royal Downtown Revitalization Project to the FY2019 General Fund Budget.

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**COUNCIL APPROVAL – Resolution of Support for Submission of an Application for the Virginia SMART SCALE Program to Facilitate Funding for**

**the Happy Creek Road Phase II Project**

**Summary: Council is requested to approve a Resolution of Support for the submission of an application for the Virginia SMART SCALE Program to facilitate funding for the Happy Creek Road Phase II Project., as presented.**

*Councilman Connolly moved, seconded by Councilman Morrison that Council approve a Resolution of Support for the submission of an application for the Virginia SMART SCALE Program to facilitate funding for the Happy Creek Road Phase II Project., as presented.*

Vote: Yes – Connolly, Gillispie, Meza, Morrison, Sealock and Tewart  
No – N/A  
Abstain – N/A  
Absent – N/A  
(Mayor Tharpe did not vote as there was no tie to require his vote)  
(By Roll Call)

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT**

**Submission of Virginia’s SMART SCALE Application for the Happy Creek Road Phase II Project**

**WHEREAS**, Virginia’s SMART SCALE is choosing transportation projects for funding and ensuring the best use of limited tax dollars Projects could be approved up to 100%; and, **WHEREAS**, the design of the project must comply with all Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) standards and all applications are required to have the governing body submit an approved resolution of support with the completed application; and, **WHEREAS**, the Happy Creek Road Phase II Project has been estimated to cost approximately \$8,000,000 with an additional \$1,500,000 for rock blasting for a total amount of \$9,500,000; and,  
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOVED**, that the Front Royal Town Council approve the submission of an application for the Virginia SMART SCALE program to facilitate funding for the Happy Creek Road Phase II Project.

**CLOSED MEETING**

**Motion to Go into Closed Meeting**

*Councilman Connolly moved, seconded by Councilman Sealock that Council convene and go into Closed Meeting for the purpose of consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters, specifically, legal mechanisms relating to handling debt service related to prior and current budget years, requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711. A. 8. of the Code of Virginia.*

Vote: Yes – Connolly, Gillispie, Meza, Morrison, Sealock and Tewart  
No – N/A  
Abstain – N/A  
Absent – N/A  
(Mayor Tharpe did not vote as there was no tie to require his vote)  
(By Roll Call)

***Motion to Certify Closed Meeting***

*Councilman Connolly moved, seconded by Councilman Sealock, 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 by roll call and recorded and included in the minutes of the meeting of Town Council.*

Vote: Yes – Connolly, Gillispie, Meza, Morrison, Sealock, Tewalt and Tharpe  
No – N/A  
Abstain – N/A  
Absent – N/A

(By Roll Call)

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There being no further business, the Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Jennifer E. Berry  
Clerk of Council