



TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

Monday, July 12th, 2021 at 7:00 PM

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.

Proposed Revised Special Events Policy and Procedures – Purchasing Manager Alisa Scott, highlighted some new changes to the draft version of the Policies and Procedures for Special Events. She noted that with Council approval, the new Policies and Procedures would go into effect on September 1st, 2021.

Vice Mayor Cockrell recommended adding specific 'framework' for cancellations to receive a refund, such as weather and unforeseen circumstances. She also wondered how event organizers would effectively accomplish notifying the affected downtown business owners and residents. Mrs. Scott stated that there were several ways the Town would assist with notification including 'no parking' signs placed along the street in a timely manner, and a 'listserv' on the Town's website that would allow those who are signed up to be automatically notified.

Councilman McFadden wondered how Staff would determine certain items on the proposed matrix, such as the volume of overnight stays. Mrs. Scott noted that in the beginning it would be an estimation, but staff would then work with JLL and the Destination Marketing Board of Directors on an After-Action Report to determine the real number.

Councilman Meza clarified that scoring low on the matrix would not mean an application was denied, rather classified as a 'Community Gathering.' Mrs. Scott agreed and added that the intent of the Matrix was to help determine whether an event would qualify for street or parking lot closures. She noted that reservations are granted on a first come first serve basis and reiterated that the Town Commons is a 'green space' and is always available for public use. Vice Mayor Cockrell added that even if it was reserved for an event, the new Policies and Procedures would require all events to be open to the public.

Water and Sewer Replacement Program – Finance Director BJ Wilson presented options to Council for their requested Water and Sewer lateral replacement program. The program would assist homeowners with old galvanized and lead pipes with updating and fixing their laterals. He explained they could place tax liens on the properties that use the program, however the contractors would then need to be procured through the town. Another option would be to allow

reimbursable grants, which would allow homeowners to hire their own contractors with work inspected by the town.

Councilman Lloyd wondered if lateral inspection was generally included in regular home inspections when properties change hands. Mayor Holloway explained that most lateral issues are not detectable until they are 'too far gone.' He added his belief that many homeowners are likely aware of potential problems, but do not have the means to repair them.

Councilman Meza expressed his wish to make the program as easy and accessible as possible. He stated his support of the grant option but noted some residents may not be able to front the funds. Mayor Holloway suggested a hybrid approach that would allow for grants up to \$5,000 with anything exceeding that amount to be paid by the homeowner outright or through installation payments, which would then require a tax lien. Council also agreed that if the repair were covered by a resident's homeowners' insurance, the town could issue a grant to cover their deductible.

Ordinance Amendment Proposing Text Amendments to the Regulations of the Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 175) Pertaining to Blighted Structures and Nonconformities – Interim Planning and Community Development explained the proposed ordinance amendments that would allow building owners of blighted buildings with nonconformities to make necessary improvements to their property. Town Manager Steven Hicks noted that all ordinance changes require council approval. He recommended Council allow him to approve these specific changes to expedite the process since they had already been reviewed by the Planning Commission. Councilman Meza agreed and stated that, if possible, Council did not want to wait. Mr. Hicks added that the Town offers an appeal process through the Board of Zoning Appeals that building owners could use if they disagree with his recommendation.

Request to Rezone Approximately 0.74 Acres from I-1 to R-2 on Crosby Road – Council approved the request.

Open Discussion

Town Manager Steven Hicks explained the preliminary plans for a new Sustainability Advisory Committee. He noted that the Committee would be made up of five members, including one member of staff, and one eighteen-year-old high school student. He added that they would be responsible for Urban Forestry as well as all facets of sustainability. Council all agreed.

Councilman Meza expressed his belief that the Town should make the necessary code changes to allow short term rentals. Mr. Hicks stated that Staff would only need guidance from Council on how to proceed.

Councilman Meza asked about the process for installing Dusk to Dawn lights in residents' backyards. He questioned why neighbor approval was not part of the process. Mr. Hicks agreed that the town's current policy was very generous and provided no criteria for installation and that he would have Town Staff review the process and make recommendations.

Mayor Holloway mentioned inoperable vehicles parked along streets within town limits. He wondered if the allowed time before removal could be shortened from ten days to forty-eight hours.

Councilman McFadden cited several questions he had received about the progress of the Afton Inn Project. He went on record to state that the project is currently in the permitting phase and will be moving forward.

Mr. Hicks noted that the Front Royal Volunteer Fireman's Carnival was currently happening. He also mentioned that the Town would be celebrating Employee Appreciation Week beginning July 17th.

Councilman Lloyd expressed his wish to bring a proposed Medical Freedom Ordinance to a vote as soon as possible. Town Attorney Napier confirmed that items can be added to an Agenda for both Work Sessions and Regular Meetings with the support of two councilmen. Mr. Hicks noted that ordinance changes require a public hearing, and public hearings require a twenty-one-day advertisement. Councilman Lloyd mentioned that emergency ordinance changes do not require public hearings and requested the Medical Freedom Ordinance be treated as such and added to the next Regular Meeting Agenda.

Closed Meeting – Investment of Public Funds, Disposition of Publicly Held Property and Consultation with Legal Counsel

Councilman McFadden moved (second was mistakenly overlooked) that Council convene and go into Closed Meeting for the following purposes pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Freedom of Information Act of the Code of Virginia:

- (1) The discussion or consideration of the investment of public funds from a federal program where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the Town would be adversely affected, under Subsection A. 6. of said Act; And further, the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an Open Meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the Town, pursuant to Subsection A. 29 of said Act.*
- (2) Discussion or consideration of the disposition of publicly held real property, specifically (A) new lease of parking spaces on Town property. (B) renewal of existing lease on Town property of parking spaces for an existing business; and (C) the conveyance of the Town's interest in two different pieces property it owns with others outside the Town limits; all where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of Town Council, all pursuant to Subsection A.3 of said Act*

Vote: Yes – Mayor Holloway, Councilmen Cockrell, Lloyd, McFadden, Meza & Thompson

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – Councilman Gillispie

ROLL CALL

Councilman McFadden moved, seconded by Councilman Meza, 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 – Mayor Holloway, Councilmen Cockrell, Lloyd, McFadden, Meza & Thompson

No – N/A

Abstain – N/A

Absent – Councilman Gillispie

ROLL CALL

Council discussed which items from the Work Session they wished to put on their next Regular Meeting Agenda as Consent Items or Business Items.

Mayor adjourned the work session at 10:33 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Holloway, Vice Mayor Cockrell, Councilmen Lloyd, McFadden, Meza and Thompson, Town Manager Steven Hicks, Deputy Clerk of Council Mary Ellen Lynn, Finance Director BJ Wilson, Interim Planning and Community Development Director Chris Brock, Purchasing Manager Alisa Scott, Information Technology Director Todd Jones, members of the public and press.

ABSENT: Councilman Gillispie

Approved by Town Council

Date: 8/23/21