

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN OF VINTON PLANNING
COMMISSION HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 29, 2011, AT 6:30 P.M., AT THE
VINTON MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 311 SOUTH POLLARD STREET.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: **Dave Jones, Chairman**
 Bill Booth
 Paul Mason
 Bob Patterson

MEMBERS ABSENT: **Dawn Michelsen, Vice Chairperson**

STAFF PRESENT: **Chris Lawrence, Town Manager**
 Anita McMillan, Planning and Zoning Director
 Barry Thompson, Finance Director
 Julie S. Tucei, Planning and Zoning Coordinator

AGENDA:

- I. Call to Order**
- II. CIP Requests for FY 2011 – 2016**
- III. Alternative Energy Sources:**
 - a) Wind Energy Facilities**
 - b) Solar Energy Systems**
- IV. Updates:**
 - a) VA DHCD CDBG Downtown Revitalization Project**
 - b) Chickens in Urban Residential Areas – Proposed Ordinance**
- V. Other Business**
- VI. Adjournment**

The meeting of the Vinton Planning Commission was called to order at 6:28 p.m. by Chairman Jones. Four members including Chairman Jones, Commissioner Booth, Commissioner Mason, and Commissioner Patterson were present. Vice Chairperson Michelsen was absent.

The first item on the agenda was the discussion of the CIP Requests for FY 2011–2016. Mr. Lawrence stated that they should have received two sets of the CIP Requests—one listing all the requests and then one with his prioritizations. He explained that the Capital Improvement Program is a five-year funding plan. Mr. Thompson stated that five, up to forty years, is usually the span of the projects that are to be funded in the CIP. Mr. Lawrence mentioned that funding is still very limited. He stated that Council has decided not to raise any taxes at this time since they just had to increase water and sewer rates recently. He said the CIP that is being presented this year is very lean. The first priority items are items that are already scheduled to be billed, such as the lease of several police cars. Mr. Thompson pointed out an error on the list that they had been given: the lease of the police cars in the FY 2012–2013 column should have been removed since a new lease has not yet been arranged. According to Mr. Lawrence, the police department has assigned a vehicle to each officer, which increases the life of the cars and increases accountability of those who drive them. Mr. Mason asked how much shortfall the Town currently has in its budget. Mr. Lawrence said it is about \$200,000. Mr. Thompson stated that the Town has had to rely on the reserve fund to make up the shortfall. Mr. Lawrence pointed out that the Town has cut the budget, the Council also created a new tax on cigarettes. Mr. Lawrence said they will still have to cut the budget even more because Council does not want to raise any taxes or keep using the reserve funds to make up the shortfall. Mr. Thompson pointed out that service levels have not been cut along with the budget. Mr. Lawrence said that the next

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priority on his list is the new ambulance that is on order. He stated that the Town will be responsible for 25 percent of the cost of the new ambulance, the County for 25 percent, and the State for 50 percent. The bill will come in for it after July 1st. The next priority on the list is the Walnut Avenue corridor improvement project. The Town's share will be two percent, and the State and Federal governments will pay the balance. Next on the priority list is the public works department tractor replacement with implements for mowing and maintenance. The tractors the department currently uses are more than 20 years old. The Fire/EMS Department roof replacement is the next item Mr. Lawrence recommended. He stated that it is out to bid right now because the leaks in the roof had gotten so bad. The final recommendation is for the thermal image camera replacement that will ultimately be funded through a state grant. Mr. Jones asked if the Town would have to eventually issue a bond. Mr. Lawrence said that, more than likely, there will have to be a bond issue to pay for the big ticket items that will have to be done. Next, Mr. Lawrence discussed the utility fund items. He stated that the utility fund lost \$700,000 last year. He said that the utility fund is supposed to run like a business where the users pay for the actual cost of the services, rather than it losing money each year. He mentioned that they are debating whether or not to put off the purchase of a new front end loader. With there being nothing further to discuss regarding the FY 2011-2016 CIP, Mr. Booth made a motion for Council to accept the Town Manager's recommendations on the CIP. Mr. Patterson seconded it. Before a vote was taken, Mr. Jones mentioned that he would still like the Town to consider two intersections downtown, Lee and Pollard and Poplar and Lee, that he feels have stormwater runoff issues. He said that he does not feel the problem has been adequately investigated. Mr. Jones stated that the problem needs attention because they are two major intersections in our downtown. Mr. Thompson stated that he discussed it with Mr. Kennedy, and it would have to be included in larger projects that are slated for funding in the future. As to the motion, all members stated "Aye" in favor of the motion made by Mr. Booth.

Ms. McMillan briefly updated the Commissioners on the CDBG Downtown Revitalization Project grant application. She stated that it will be mailed out tomorrow. She also updated them on the request for a proposed ordinance for Chickens in Urban Residential Areas. She mentioned the recent developments in the ordinance preparation: a one acre requirement to qualify to keep chickens; an increase to four square feet of area per bird in coops and tractors; a maximum coop size of 64 square feet; the maximum number of chickens that would be allowed increased from four to six; and portable tractors will be required to have a setback of at least 20 feet. Ms. McMillan stated that on April 5th Council will hear the request again and perhaps take a vote on it then. Ms. McMillan also updated and reminded them of the Arbor Day celebration on April 21st at Herman L. Horn Elementary School.

Last, the commissioners briefly discussed alternative energy sources, including wind and solar energy. Ms. McMillan provided some handouts pertaining to alternative energy sources to the commissioners. For wind energy facilities, a one acre minimum lot size is what is being recommended. Ms. McMillan stated that two requests had been fielded by her office, but both lots are less than one acre. Solar energy systems were also briefly discussed. Ms. Tucei provided the commissioners with some photos taken of a home on a corner lot in her own neighborhood that has installed three large solar panels in the back yard. The commission's decision was to take more time to read over the information given to them by Ms. McMillan and

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discuss it at the next meeting. Ms. McMillan mentioned that they also might have a rezoning request for some properties owned by Bojangles.

There was nothing further to be discussed; therefore, the meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anita McMillan
Planning Commission Secretary