

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF VINTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT 6:00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2015, IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE VINTON MUNICIPAL BUILDING LOCATED AT 311 SOUTH POLLARD STREET, VINTON, VIRGINIA

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bradley E. Grose, Mayor  
Matthew S. Hare, Vice Mayor  
I. Douglas Adams, Jr.  
William W. Nance  
Sabrina M. Weeks

STAFF PRESENT: Christopher S. Lawrence, Town Manager  
Theresa Fontana, Town Attorney  
Susan N. Johnson, Town Clerk  
Ryan Spitzer, Assistant Town Manager  
Ben Cook, Police Chief  
Donna Collins, Human Resources Specialist  
Barry Thompson, Finance Director/Treasurer  
Mary Beth Layman, Special Programs Director  
Gary Woodson, Public Works Director  
Joey Hiner, Public Works Assistant Director

**The Mayor called the work session to order at 6:00 p.m.** for further review and discussion of the proposed FY2015-2016 budget. The Town Manager first commented that the Budget Team had addressed a number of budget questions from Council and the goal for this work session was to discuss the Police Department budget, the swimming pool, War Memorial grounds maintenance and public transportation.

After the departments submitted their initial budgets, they were asked to also present budgets with a five percent reduction. The Budget Team next reviewed each budget using a priority matrix and other facts to come up with items they felt were not easy, but were long-term solutions.

Chief Cook presented the Team with \$66,000 in reductions from his initial budget. Some of the recommended reductions included the K9 unit, ammunition, and training. One of the comments from Council was that the Police Department always ends the budget year in the black on salaries because of the inherent turn-over in officers. Through a review of the historical trends back to 2008, they found there was one surplus year with \$134,000 in savings and one year the budget was overspent by \$54,000 due to the approved over-hire of one police officer while three officers were deployed overseas. An average savings for all six years was \$40,543 which equates to one full-time officer.

They sent that number back to Chief Cook and he reviewed all the reductions and suggested where he would restore the \$40,543 amount. The Town Manager

next showed a slide listing the line items that have been revised from the original recommendation for a total of \$40,100. Vice Mayor Hare asked about the overtime line item and the Town Manager commented that by re-instituting the overtime, the Chief felt comfortable that the K9 could continue with additional management.

Chief Cook commented that he prioritized the list and then applied the amount of \$40,100 to that list. There is no increase over this year's budget. There was \$35,000 for overtime for the past couple of years and that is the amount in the proposed budget. With that, they are looking at schedule adjustments and he would like to continue the K9. He thought it was his duty to report that they are overspending in overtime to maintain the program; however, he feels the dog is a good tool and a lot of money was spent to get him. He will work to try and get the schedule changed so that the overtime is not overspent.

The Uniforms line item was restored back to this year's budget amount of \$15,000 and contract services was restored to \$23,350 which reinstates the car wash and other items that were originally cut for the K9. The telephone line item still shows a reduction of \$2,000. They will still keep all the air cards and all the MDTs in the vehicles, but the wireless connectivity to the iPads are still cut. The firearms, training and meeting expenses budgets were restored to the same as this year. The other equipment line item was reduced by \$1,900, which was for software.

With regard to wages/contract services, this was cut out of the budget and was for Manna Ministries. Maintenance services contracts was cut for a radio system fee that has been absorbed in the Town's cost for communications service. Miscellaneous was reduced by \$500 and printing and binding was reduced by \$1,500.

Council Member Nance commented that he appreciated the suggestion that was made by Vice Mayor Hare and his initial comfort level was a 2% cut at 98%. This is suggested roughly a 4% cut at the projected full employment wage. He then asked the opinion of Barry Thompson, the Finance Director to which Mr. Thompson responded that next year when the proposed budget is prepared; he would like to fund the salaries back at full level again and not continue to project it at this level. He would agree to do this for this fiscal year, but it will need to be monitored during the year and if the Police Department goes to full staffing level, they may have to come back to Council. Council Member Nance then commented that he felt more comfortable with 2-3% instead of 4% and asked for Council's comments.

Vice Mayor Hare commented that he understood Mr. Thompson's concerns, but we do this with revenue. He would be the exact opposite and if this is done this year and it works out, why would we not continue. Mr. Thompson then commented that the budget is a work plan and the figures are just estimates. This is his 11<sup>th</sup> budget with the Town and he has been very conservative over that period of time; however, he supports anything that Council desires to do, but his comfort level is to fully fund it.

Vice Mayor Hare next commented that it was interesting that Chief Cook valued the K9 higher than some of the other items such as ammo and training. Chief Cook responded that it was the overtime that was the priority, but it is not just for the dog. This also covers court appearances and special events. Council Member Adams then commented that it was discussed that perhaps the amount of overtime that the K9 Officer has to work could also be reduced. In response to that and another question regarding the K9 Officer's schedule, Chief Cook commented they are looking at creating a power shift for the K9 Unit in the middle of a shift to help cut out an hour or two and allow him to do his required maintenance during his shift.

Chief Cook announced that Detective Sergeant Jimmy Testerman has been hired by Norfolk and Southern and will be leaving on Friday. His family will be moving to Atlanta because of his wife's transfer.

#### **Council Member Weeks arrived at 6:39 p.m.**

The Town Manager next commented that our second major area was the swimming pool analysis. There is data back to 2008 and they have been able to graph the last three years. In general the trends are down slightly in attendance and revenues. In 2012, around 9,000 people attended the pool; in 2013 around 8,000 and in 2014 around 7,500. In 2009 there were 7,500 and in 2010 and 2011, there were just over 12,000. They also tracked and graphed the revenue. The revenue went up in 2011 with a lot of effort and volunteerism to \$33,000. In 2012, 2013 and 2014, it started to go down from \$31,000 to \$25,000 due to the decreased in the number of visitors to the pool. The Town Manager next commented that there are individuals who think the pool is closing this summer. What is proposed is to keep the pool open this summer and close it in August. The question is how to enhance the revenue.

Next a slide was shown that compared our fees with Roanoke City, Roanoke County, Lancerlot and the Gator Pool. The Town Manager commented on the amenities

provided at each location. If there is an interest to raise our fees, the most he would suggest would be \$1.00. The question is will our people be willing to pay that and we would just have to wait and see.

The Town Manager further commented that part of Ms. Layman's salary is included in the pool budget, so if that is pulled out of the subsidy, there is approximately \$25,000 left. The 68 year old pool is currently functioning, but no matter when it is closed it will be a hard decision.

Vice Mayor Hare asked if Council could agree on what the subsidy and then have discussion from there. On paper it is \$35,000, but we have to exclude the full-time salaries that are not going to disappear. Are we comfortable with saying there is a \$20,000 subsidy? A part of the \$20,000 is our water at \$5,000 so that brings the subsidy to \$15,000. The Town Manager commented the reason the water cost is so high because once or twice the pool had to be drained mid-summer to make repairs to the bottom and then fill it back up again.

Vice Mayor Hare next commented that if we raise the rate by \$1.00 that is \$8,000 possibly, so is the pool worth a \$7,000 subsidy. Council Member Adams commented that when there is a catastrophic failure such as the pump that would cost a lot to repair, that would be the end. There are a lot of kids, adults and seniors that go to our pool and he would rather see them in Town than going to Roanoke City or somewhere else for recreation.

The Mayor agreed with Mr. Adams that if the pool has some drastic to happen, we may at that point not be able to afford to make the investment to keep it. As long as the pool is working, with the figures we have been given it is costing \$7,000 to provide summer recreation for 8,000 people. The Mayor next commented that perhaps we should consider raising the rates. This will be one way to see if people are willing to spend more money and if they consider the pool of value.

Council Member Nance commented that the supplement is too high and for his continued support, he would need to see the supplement somehow cut again. He felt like the fees needed to be raised to have it try to recoup a little more. He thought \$5 across the board was a good rate and then he asked if money could be saved by not having a concession stand. Everyone likes the idea of a low cost recreational option for children and adults in the Town, but it is not a core service.

Council Member Weeks agreed with Mr. Nance that \$5.00 would be a good price for the fee at the pool. She

then asked Mary Beth Layman if the price was increased would it impact the attendance. Mr. Layman responded that she thought \$5 was more palatable than \$6. Our pool is like a large hotel pool, it is a convenience. We do not have amenities such as a diving board, so it cannot be compared to a facility such as Green Ridge. She then commented that she would need to know as soon as possible because she has to get the information out to the public and to the schools.

Stuart Tousman from the audience commented that he went to the Gator Pool and he thought a \$5 fee would not be a problem.

The Town Manager commented that discussion and any action on increasing the fees can be done at the end of the regular meeting tonight. The War Memorial Grounds and Valley Metro can also be discussed at the end of the meeting.

**The Mayor called the regular meeting to order at 7:00** p.m. The Town Clerk called the roll with Council Member Adams, Council Member Nance, Council Member Weeks, Vice Mayor Hare and Mayor Grose present. After a Moment of Silence, Vice Mayor Hare led the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

Roll call

**Under upcoming community events/announcements,** Council Member Weeks announced the Wine and Food Festival on May 16<sup>th</sup> at the War Memorial.

**Vice Mayor Hare asked about the section in the minutes** concerning the presentation by Valley Metro, on Page 4, third paragraph where Mr. Palmer referred to riderships. He was not exactly clear if that was Vinton or not. The Town Clerk responded that was in his power point. The Town Manager then commented that it was in reference to Vinton and it was confirmed at their follow-up meeting last week.

The Town Clerk next commented on two corrections in the minutes, one on page 7 to correct the "City" of Blacksburg to "Town" of Blacksburg and one on page 15, to correct that the Town has been a Tree City Community for 13 years instead of 18 years.

**Vice Mayor Hare made a motion to approve the Consent** Agenda with the noted corrections; the motion was seconded by Council Member Nance and carried by the following vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Adams, Nance, Weeks, Hare, Grose; Nays (0) - None.

Approved minutes for the regular meeting of April 7, 2015 with noted corrections

**Under awards, recognitions and presentations, the first** item was a Proclamation for Asthma Awareness Month. Council Member Weeks read the Proclamation. Stuart Tousman, Asthma Coalition Committee Member, made brief comments and then accepted the Proclamation. This Saturday there will be an educational program at the Mill Mountain Zoo on having pets that are good for people with asthma and asthma triggers.

**The next recognition was a Proclamation for National Police Officers Week.** Vice Mayor Hare read the Proclamation and presented the same to Chief Ben Cook.

**The next recognition was a Proclamation for Public Works Week.** Council Member Nance read the Proclamation and presented the same to Gary Woodson, Public Works Director.

**The next recognition was a Proclamation for National Emergency Medical Services Week.** Council Member Adams read the Proclamation and presented the same to John Hobbs, Lieutenant of EMS.

**The next item on the agenda was the annual update** by Wayne Strickland, Executive Director, on behalf of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission. Mr. Strickland began by thanking Council for the opportunity to make his annual report to them. The Town has been a member of the Commission for 45 years, since its conception. They have helped the Town with Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Ordinances along with the Downtown Revitalization and are currently serving on the Management Team. They also assisted several years ago with hazardous mitigation and worked through FEMA to get some homes removed that were flooded.

The Town has also been involved in a number of regional activities such as the Regional Conference of Economic Development Strategy, the Roanoke Valley Congestion Management Plan which involved all of the communities in the urbanized area of Roanoke. Also, the Greater Roanoke Water Supply Plan, a State mandated plan, where 13 of the governments came together and saved about \$600,000.

Mr. Strickland next commented that recently his staff had developed mapping for four alternative sites for a multi-purpose park in relation to a skate board area. Based on the analysis done on the four sites, they are now preparing more detailed maps and the site plan for the Walnut Avenue site. They have done a way finding sign study for the Tow, which continues to be a problem all over the Valley.

They are in the process of completing a pedestrian vision plan and have just completed the transit vision plan. They have mapped all the cross-walks, the pedestrian signals and all the curbs ramps on all of the transit routes. They have also mapped all the sidewalks in the Town with the intent being to look at how accessibility is gained in the Town for both pedestrians and transit riders and to capture all of the infrastructures that deal with accessibility to enhance them. His staff is also working with Valley Metro now to evaluate the Town's fixed routes and the paratransit bus service to determine how costs can be reduced.

The Commission assisted the Town with the grant from the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for the Tinker Creek canoe launch as part of the new blueway being developed for the entire Roanoke River. As they finish up this fiscal year, they are already thinking about the big projects for next year, along with regional activities that they continue to work on. Those will be a grant resource guide to look at sources for improving the Town and also amendments to the current Zoning Ordinance. There are some projects through the Transportation Planning Organization in the Town such as the Roanoke River Greenway near Vinton, Walnut Avenue Phase II, Tinker Creek Pedestrian Bridge, Tinker Creek Trail Expansion in the City close to Vinton and are also working with Valley Metro with regard to bus replacements.

The Mayor commented that he appreciated the work that Mr. Strickland has done and the work of the Regional Commission for the entire Valley for a lot of years. He commented that several years ago he attended the State Association of Planning District Commissions and the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission and Mr. Strickland, in particular, has a lot of respect in that organization and he was the go-to guy throughout the entire conference. The Commission is like a silent partner that we rely on for so much and they do not always get the recognition and credit they deserve.

The Town Manager commented on the Workforce Development Board and the fact that one of the staff members from the Commission is now serving as the Interim Director. This has helped to change the focus to industrial, manufacturing and business needs that are really not provided for instead of focusing on some of the other services that have not added a huge amount of economic development type of value. Mr. Strickland commented that the Workforce Development Board is going to be housed in the Commission's building.

**Mary Beth Layman commented that there was a** Downs Syndrome Race this past Saturday in Town. This race has grown over the past three years, from having 50 runners the first year, 100 last year and close to 200 runners this year. She applauded the Association for their success and the cooperation of our Public Works staff during the event.

**The next item on the agenda was to consider adoption** of a Resolution approving the 2015-2016 operating budget for the Roanoke Valley Regional Cable Television Committee. Elaine Bays-Murphy first commented on the history of RVTV-3 and then stated that she wanted Council to know the value of what they do and that it is more than how many people watch Cox Cable. In our world of social media, she can quantitatively give some of the numbers of how many people are really seeing the videos and the benefits of producing them. She then reviewed the videos produced in 2014 for the Town contained in the letter as part of the agenda. Not only do some of these videos run on RVTV, they were uploaded to Spotlight for Cox Cable which ran across the channels on Cox for 30 times in the month of February. If these videos were created through the private sector, the value would have been \$198,750.

Ms. Bays-Murphy next commented that on May 1<sup>st</sup> she posted the Vinton Active Senior Adult Program PSA on the RVTV Facebook page which was also shared through the In Vinton Facebook page. From that date through today, there had been 1,108 reached and 473 views. The Vinton Dogwood Festival reached 2,424 people with 746 views and was shared 26 times. The Magnets USA PSA was posted on March 20<sup>th</sup> and 1,479 people were reached with 443 views.

On the website, she has posted more long-form videos because with social media, you basically have to get your message out in three minutes or less. For example, the Vinton First Aid Crew PSA on the website had 193 views, the Vinton Farmers Market PSA had 349 views and the Vinton Branding Presentation had 327 views. She then commented that the Town has got to be able to communicate its message.

The total budget request for all three localities is \$394,047 which is a decrease of \$3,981 over the current budget. The Town's share is 4% or \$15,762. The budget was approved by Roanoke City on April 20<sup>th</sup> and by Roanoke County on May 5<sup>th</sup>.

Council Member Adams commented on behalf of the Rescue Squad that they get comments from individuals that look at the PSAs all of the time. They are one of the

strongest squads in the Valley and he thinks the PSAs have helped tremendously and he appreciates what RVTV did for the Squad. Vice Mayor Hare asked if they had done anything for the Fire Department and Ms. Bays-Murphy said no, but they would love to. This is the resource that is available to the Town and they have never said no to a video.

Mr. Hare next commented that in the operating budget, several years back they were using surplus to balance the budget and are they not doing that any more. Ms. Bays-Murphy responded that they do have a slight surplus balance. Basically, the localities supplemented the Operating Budget for four years with the surplus funds which had taken it down to less than \$10,000. At one time it had been roughly \$200,000. As of today, they have worked the balance back up to \$35,335. Several years ago the Committee voted to keep a balance of \$15,000 in the account and they did not suggest using surplus this year because of the slight decrease in the budget over last year.

Mr. Hare next asked if she could explain the funding strategy for the funds that Cox gives the Valley. Ms. Bays-Murphy responded that this was called the franchise fee tax and is essentially the money being received is coming from Cox subscribers. They changed the name to the Virginia Communications Sales and Use Tax. These funds are paid directly from Cox to the State and then the State pays back to the locality a certain amount. Prior to her presentation to Roanoke County, she asked Rebecca Owens to find out how much the County was receiving and Ms. Owens stated they received the entire amount. Mr. Hare said it would be nice to know what portion the Town gets.

In response to comments regarding televising the Council meeting, Ms. Bays-Murphy commented the services of RVTV would be free. There would have to be modifications to the room, but all of the equipment that would be needed would come out of the capital money. With regard to the audio portion, Roanoke City hires a person to run their audio and Roanoke County uses someone from their Comm IT staff.

Council Member Nance commented that Ms. Bays-Murphy did a great job with her presentation and with what RVTV does. It is a benefit to our community and the quantity and quality of what they produce is excellent. He has no issue with that nor the budget request. However, when he has to prioritize it, he would place a K9 Unit over RVTV as well as a community pool that has been opened for 68 years. He then asked what would be the procedure if Council decided to give a one-year notice to

RVTV. The Town Manager responded that the contract states that by June 30<sup>th</sup> the local body must give notice to RVTV by Resolution or Ordinance. Then there is a one-year time period for the other members to deal with the budget. There is a 60-day period to rescind the notice with no contractual issues. After the 60 days, it would be the decision of the remaining two localities to invite the Town back. Ms. Bays-Murphy commented that during the one-year, RVTV would continue to serve the Town at the same capacity they are serving now.

Council Member Nance asked Council for their comments in this regard. The Mayor responded that Council could consider the Resolution for the budget tonight, but if there is support from Council to withdraw from RVTV, that would be a separate motion. The Town Manager responded that either way Council would be responsible for the \$15,762 part of next year's budget.

The Town Manager further commented that the issue had been discussed in several budget work sessions. However, we would need an official action to present to RVTV by June 30<sup>th</sup>. From his perspective, since we do not have a Public Information Officer, staff leans on each other for certain skill sets and RVTV is the media expert to get out our information. For example, through education on stormwater, we get credit for a lot of the educational components that are incorporated in RVTV even though some of them are not ours.

Council Member Adams commented there is a value to RVTV and he appreciated Ms. Bays-Murphy comments regarding social media. If we do not have the availability of RVTV, we will have to pay for another source. Council Member Weeks commented that she appreciates the presentation, but Council is in a situation where they are having to make tough decisions and have to look at the big picture. Vice Mayor Hare commented that it is a valuable service, but he also thinks that the Town offers a lot of valuable services. He fully supports the budget, but he thinks Council in the next month needs to make a decision on where we will spend our money.

The Mayor then commented that he thinks RVTV is a great asset on a lot of different levels and we need to look at the big picture when we consider RVTV or any of our services. One of the challenges that we have is communicating with our citizens and RVTV is a good way to try to do that. It provides a lot of exposure for our Town and it is an important part of helping our Town to grow. RVTV has some intangible benefits that are hard to quantify sometimes. He has heard for a number of years that the Town needs to work on its image. We have done a good job in trying to do that and RVTV has

been a big part of that. He thinks withdrawing from RVTV is a step away from a lot of regional cooperation that this Town benefits from in a huge way. He further commented that \$15,000 is a small part of the budget and we cannot go out and buy the positive image building that is received for this investment.

Mary Beth Layman commented that if the Town went out to a video production company, it would cost \$1,500-2,000 a minute and if we prepared a 12-15 minute video that would be about the same cost. That would be one video a year that we could do. Ms. Bays-Murphy and her staff have never turned down any request for production video. We never know when someone looking for a business opportunity might see one of our videos on RVTV that triggers that individual to visit the Town pursue that opportunity. The First Aid Squad video has helped to recruit new volunteers and the videos on stormwater management are a huge asset in getting the word out. From a citizen perspective, she thinks RVTV does a great job and they are a good value.

Council Member Adams made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented; the motion was seconded by Council Member Nance carried by the following roll call vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Adams, Nance, Weeks, Hare, Grose; Nays (0).

Adopted Resolution No. 2105 approving the 2015-2016 operating budget for the Roanoke Valley Regional Cable Television Committee

The Mayor then asked for Council's direction on any further discussion about continuing with membership in RVTV. Vice Mayor Hare commented that in the context of everything he feels that we need to have further discussion. The Mayor then asked if there is support for a Resolution to be placed on an upcoming agenda to consider withdrawing from RVTV. The Town Manager commented that the Public Hearing on the budget is scheduled for May 19<sup>th</sup>, and then the June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting is tentatively scheduled to adopt the budget with one more meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup>. The Mayor then commented that Council would like to discuss the matter further.

**The next item on the agenda was to consider adoption** of a Resolution awarding a bid and authorizing the Town Manager to execute a contract with Mid-Atlantic Waste Systems in the amount of \$133,099.00 for a new Hooklift Truck with Dump Body and to apply for lease financing through VML/VACo for said purchase. The Town Manager first commented that the funds for this item was in the budget a year ago, but with the concerns regarding the decrease in the cigarette taxes, this and several other purchases were placed on hold. It was put back into this year's budget and sent out for bid. Mr. Woodson will make comments and then Council can ask any questions.

Gary Woodson, Public Works Director, commented that a dump truck needed to be replaced, so they went out for bid for Hooklift Truck that has a dump bed body. This truck will also have the capacity in the future for the purchase of separate chassis or bodies to be used for other purposes. There was \$129,000 that was allocated in the budget and the bids came in around \$4,000 over that for a total of \$133,099.00. There was one bidder, Mid-Atlantic Waste Systems. We contacted about six other suppliers prior to the bid and in discussion we found out that they manufacture the actual body and frame and then sub it out to someone else and were actually using the same people. So, it ended up basically being a sole source and that is why the bid is where it is at today.

They did go out with some alternates for some other pieces of equipment and got some prices on those as well. We can add up to nine or ten different chassis and use one vehicle; however, at this time, we are only purchasing the dump truck chassis. A regular dump truck would have been around \$125-128,000.

Council Member Adams asked which truck is this replacing and Mr. Woodson responded the dump truck used for the Adopt-A-Truck, which has exceeded its useful life.

In response to a question, the Town Manager commented now that we have the bid which is \$4,000 more than was budgeted which will run approximately \$1,000 more a year in lease payments depending on the interest rate we are able to get. If Council approves the purchase, the next step is to obtain our lease and secure the rate.

Mr. Woodson commented that the short-term arrival of the truck would be 180 days and the contract is for 240 and we are not required to pay anything up front. Once approved we will issue a PO and they will move forward. It will take Mr. Thompson 45 days to get the funds from VML/VACo and the purchasing agent for Mid-Atlantic has indicated that will be no problem. They will give us 30 days after delivery to pay and we can time that draw-down.

The Town Manager commented that this is an innovative approach and a way to think about our equipment in a different way. Mr. Woodson indicated that when we look at the funds we have realistically and the equipment that we are going to need in the future, there are some big priced items that we are not going to be able to afford. For instance, a new street sweeper is going to cost around \$225-250,000 and a new trash truck will cost up to \$300,000 plus. The long-range plan would be to have

two hooklift trucks with different chassis so when one is out of service, we will have a backup truck.

Council Member Nance made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented; the motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Hare carried by the following roll call vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Adams, Nance, Weeks, Hare, Grose; Nays (0).

**The next item on the agenda was a briefing on the HVAC systems for the Municipal Building and Fire Department Building.** The Town Manager commented that we have a quarterly maintenance contract on our current units with Southern Air. One unit was rebuilt last year at a cost of about \$1,000 and two others will no longer hold Freon. We received quotes from two vendors and W. C. Butler was the low bidder to replace a 4 ton unit, a 5 ton unit and a 7.5 ton unit at a cost of \$23,000. If Council approves we will order the units and bring back a formal request for approval to transfer the funds.

Also, in our efforts to renovate the Fire House, the boiler, which is 40 years old, has developed significant leaks in the boiler tank. The only solution is to re-weld at a cost of \$10,000 or replace it at a cost of \$40-60,000. We have to solicit three quotes and out of the two we have received, the lowest bid is in the low \$40,000s. The recommendation is to replace the boiler. If Council approved, he would proceed with replacement of the boiler and also bring the matter back to Council for action to transfer the funds.

Council gave their consensus to proceed with the purchase of the three HVAC units and the new boiler.

**The Town Manager next continued with items from the work session.** The first item related to the War Memorial. Council requested staff to evaluate the maintenance of the War Memorial grounds. Approximately \$10,000 is contracted annually for general grounds maintenance as well as snow removal with One Earth. Council was given a list showing every piece of property that is currently being mowed by the Public Works staff and the mowing schedule grouped by 13 functional areas. This takes about six weeks to complete the list and the cycle starts over again.

In 2009-2010, there were four Public Works service crews, but now there are three. We have not changed the type of service we provide, but we have changed the level of service. Two service crews currently do all of the construction-type work and one crew does grounds. After the big mowing season, the grounds crew helps with

Adopted Resolution No. 2106 awarding a bid and authorizing the Town Manager to execute a contract with Mid-Atlantic Waste Systems in the amount of \$133,099.00 for a new Hooklift Truck with Dump Body and to apply for lease financing through VML/VACo for said purchase

special projects as well as fills in when employees are out. Considering the demands that our Public Works employees have on them and adding that the War Memorial requires a higher level of service due to the type of events that are held there, the best option is what we already have with One Earth. Perhaps we could go without putting the chemicals on the grounds and save the cost of the stormwater requirement of developing a plan.

If Council desired for Public Works to maintain the War Memorial Grounds, it would require us to hire two part-time seasonable laborers, which has been difficult to find the past several years. Even with that, he does not feel that we can produce the quality and maintain the property at the frequency it is currently being done.

In response to a question regarding the stormwater requirement, the Town Manager commented that because the War Memorial grounds is more than an acre and we are putting chemicals on our property, we have to have a nutrient management plan. This cost is approximately \$4,000 to develop the plan, not the actual cost of applying the chemicals.

Council Member Nance commented that the Town has lost \$125,000 of taxpayer money on the War Memorial and the subsidy must change dramatically. We have CIP items that those funds can go instead of a business that if held by a private industry would have been bankrupt a long time ago. The Mayor agreed that the War Memorial has clearly been identified as a major problem.

Vice Mayor Hare next commented that the plan being followed is the one that Council agreed on, so if we have to do something different he is going after something we can cut, such as no longer fertilizing the grounds. Council Member Nance commented we had a 2-1/2 year plan and we are past that and there is no change. Vice Mayor Hare commented it has been through at least two budget cycles. The Town Manager commented that the plan is about as good as it is going to get, so we need to change the business plan.

Council Member Nance next commented that the War Memorial is going to remain a place that is a cornerstone of our community and honors the people that it was originally built for and dedicated to. It does not have to be an elegant wedding venue. When we are talking about the services that we provide for our citizens, providing kids an inexpensive place to entertain themselves is a higher priority than a nice place to have a business meeting. Maybe even spending \$15,000 to let

our citizens know what we are doing is a higher priority. Either way, there either needs to be a plan or we can amend the budget which amends the plan. Vice Mayor Hare commented that there is a Finance Committee meeting next week and they can look at it. Council Member Adams agreed that we need to make a change because the current business plan is not working.

The Mayor commented that the building is starting to show some signs of wear and tear which is another consideration. Council Member Weeks commented that perhaps the Finance Committee can do something at their meeting and then Council can decide where we need to go with the business plan and gradually fade it out over a period of time.

Vice Mayor Hare next commented that Council needed to be aware that would mean letting go of people. Also, regardless of what we do, we will lose money because there is a cost to running that building. The Town Manager further commented that we need to be very deliberate in how we engage the community and how we communicate our intent.

**The next item from the work session was Valley Metro.**

The Town Manager commented that this is \$130,000 in the proposed budget. Staff met last week with Carl Palmer and Kevin Price, both of Valley Metro, and Sherman Stovall, the Assistant City Manager for Roanoke. The City is the fiscal agent for the bus service and also provided legal services. Originally, the City owned the bus system and then contracted that service out. Valley Metro only has two employees and there is a subsidiary that has all the rest of the employees.

We went through every question that we had and received answers to all of them which we will formally put together. We reviewed current routes, riderships and fares based on current statistics. We did find out that the lower the number of riders, the more the Town's share is because the fare being paid is not being allocated to our share of the total cost. Also, their model has fundamentally changed with federal and state money dramatically going down and local subsidy has increased as we see it.

We have not been able to find an actual contract which means there is not a prescribed legal relationship and notification process to follow. However, if the system is changed, there are federal transit rules that require advertising a public hearing and having citizen engagement. In 1997, there was a tripper that ran a 30-minute route in the Town in the morning and evening. We were able to find in our records that following a Council meeting and Public Hearing, a Memo was sent to eliminate

the tripper.

Valley Metro is looking at a two-route modification which would change the routing and lower the miles in Town or a single route through Town. They are working with the Regional Commission from a routing and mapping standpoint. They continue to state that they are going to evaluate the STAR program and re-evaluate the certification that qualifies individuals to ride. They have not purged that list in years and said it will take six months. The other item we looked at are some bus stops that have minimal infrastructure to get to them and there are several STAR riders that cannot get to their closest bus stop.

Vice Mayor Hare asked if there was any discussion on adjusting who pays the line share of the subsidy. They pay 25% and we get a majority of it. The Town Manager responded that the fare was discussed, but their Board has no support to raise the fare. Their Board has a predominately City-focused, social responsible focus on how the bus is supposed to run. The bus system is not run with the mindset of an alternative transportation system, but that it is predominately for individuals that demographically need a ride because they do not have the means to get where they need to go otherwise.

Council Member Adams asked if there was any discussion about the size of the buses. The Town Manager responded yes and the answer was there is an efficiency of standardizing the bus design to the mechanics, parts and labor. They are looking at 30-foot buses.

The Town Manager next commented that the fundamental process if Council has any desire to change anything is that we need to design and plan a public hearing with information to look at one route, a different route or no route as options to solicit feedback. We should have two meetings so we can state we used our due diligence and then ultimately there is either a negotiation of the route, a decision on the level of service or the elimination of service. With regard to the ADA side, Cortran would still be offered to those individuals because we are still a County entity. However, this aspect has not been discussed with the County. With regard to the budget, this can be done within a reasonable timeframe and we can amend the budget mid-year if we need to.

Vice Mayor Hare recommended that Council move forward with the Public Hearing and discussion to see what the options are and how it impacts people. It was the consensus of Council to move forward with scheduling public meetings on the matter.

Consensus of Council to move forward with scheduling public meetings regarding the future of the bus system in the Town

**The Mayor thanked those who helped with Dogwood Festival and the Vinton Relay for Life.** He also mentioned that he attended the Junior ROTC Military Ball and what a nice event it was.

**The next item was to consider an appointment to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee.** Council Member Nance made a motion to appoint Council Member Adams to the CEDS Committee; the motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Hare and carried by the following vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Adams, Nance, Weeks, Hare, Grose; Nays (0).

**Comments from Council Members: Council Member Adams** mentioned the chili cook-off this past Friday sponsored by the Police Department to raise funds for the Relay for Life. Vice Mayor Hare commented on the William Byrd After Prom event to be held this week and that if anyone had the time before the event, they should go by and check it out.

**The Town Manager next commented that the recommendation on the changes in the swimming pool fees that was discussed earlier in the meeting are as follows:** Adults (16 years and over) - \$5; Children (5-15 years) and Seniors (55 years and over) - \$4; Twilight Swim - \$2; Groups - \$3 and Non-swimmer - \$2. This is fundamentally an increase in each fee of \$1 with a \$0.50 increase in the group rate.

Vice Mayor Hare made a motion to approve the new fee schedule as presented; the motion was seconded by Council Member Weeks and carried by the following roll call vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Adams, Nance, Weeks, Hare, Grose; Nays (0).

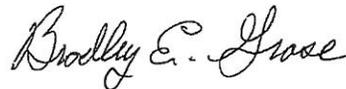
**Vice Mayor Hare made a motion to adjourn the meeting;** the motion was seconded by Council Member Adams and carried by the following vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Adams, Nance, Weeks, Hare, Grose; Nays (0) – None. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Appointed Council Member Adams to an unexpired term on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee ending June 30, 2017

Approved changes in the fees for the Swimming Pool for the upcoming 2015 summer season

Meeting adjourned

APPROVED:



Bradley E. Grose, Mayor

ATTEST:



Susan N. Johnson, Town Clerk