

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF VINTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2016, 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.  
Sabrina McCarty  
Janet Scheid

STAFF PRESENT: Barry W. Thompson, Interim Town Manager  
Susan N. Johnson, Executive Assistant/Town Clerk  
Theresa Fontana, Town Attorney  
Pete Peters, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Economic Development  
Donna Collins, Human Resources Director  
Jeff Dudley, Interim Police Chief  
Gary Woodson, Public Works Director  
Joey Hiner, Assistant Public Works Director  
Chris Linkous, Fire/EMS Captain  
Chad Helms, Lieutenant-Fire

**The Mayor called the regular meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.** The Town Clerk called the roll with Council Member Adams, Council Member McCarty, Council Member Scheid, 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, Council Member McCarty** commented on the New Year's Eve Gala and announced that tickets are now on sale for the event on February 13<sup>th</sup> at The Woodland Place with Tru Sol.

**Vice Mayor Hare made a comment with regard to** the December 15<sup>th</sup> minutes that his motion to table to the discussion on the October Financial Report should have been to the second meeting in January after the Finance Committee has a change to review it. He then made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as corrected; the motion was seconded by Council Member Adams and carried by the following vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Adams, McCarty, Scheid, Hare, Grose; Nays (0) – None.

Approved minutes for the regular meetings of December 1, 2015 and the corrected minutes for the regular meeting of December 15, 2015

**The next item on the agenda was the introduction** of Marrion Burden, Firefighter, and Jeremy Shrewsbury, Police Officer. Captain Linkous introduced Marrion Burden and Chief Dudley introduced Jeremy Shrewsbury.

**The next item on the agenda was to consider** adoption of a Resolution awarding a bid and authorizing the Interim Town Manager to execute a contract with Virginia Infrastructure, Inc. in the amount of \$78,501.00 for the Walnut Avenue Sidewalk Improvements Project. Barry Thompson, the Interim Town Manager commented on the scope of the project and that bids were opened on December 15<sup>th</sup>. The low bidder was Virginia Infrastructure, Inc.

Vice Mayor Hare commented that he thought this project went from the Fire House to where the Greenway is going to be. Mr. Thompson commented that it originally went to 5<sup>th</sup> Street, but the project had to be scaled back because of the cost. Gary Woodson commented that we had \$100,000 from the RSTP grant and \$20,000 of that had to go to VDOT for the administration of the project. Also, there were engineering costs to Gay and Neel for designing the project.

Council Member Scheid asked how we would connect to the Greenway. Mr. Woodson responded that there is some connectivity on the existing sidewalks, but there will not be new sidewalks installed all the way down. Ms. Scheid asked if there were plans for another grant application and Mr. Woodson responded not at this time.

The Mayor asked if we had an idea of the cost to complete the sidewalks all the way from the Greenway to the Farmers Market. Mr. Woodson said he could figure that cost by using the unit cost that came in with the bids. Mr. Woodson further commented that they will not be bringing the contractor on the site until Spring. They are also looking at what the additional cost would be to restripe that section of the roadway. Vice Mayor Hare reminded Council that the original intent was to not put sidewalks in front of some of the buildings because of their existing paving, but to add striping in those areas. Mr. Woodson commented that he would bring back to Council a report of what it would take to extend the sidewalks to the Farmers Market

and to provide striping and/or sidewalk for the connectivity to the greenway trail.

Council Member Scheid made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented; the motion was seconded by Council Member McCarty and carried by the following roll call vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Adams, McCarty, Scheid, Hare, Grose; Nays (0) - None.

**The next item on the agenda was a briefing on a proposed lease agreement with Southern States Cooperative, Inc. for the use of eight vacant lots that are adjacent to the mill for the purpose of temporary parking for trailers and an employee parking area. Mr. Thompson first commented that Southern States is currently leasing five lots from the Town at an annual rental of \$400, which goes to the Needy Family Program. We are proposing that these additional lots be included in a new lease and the additional \$400 also go to the Needy Family Program.**

Mr. Peters showed a diagram of the property in question and commented that the original lease with Southern States for the five lots was prepared in 2004. The Manager for Southern States contacted staff and indicated that they would like to lease the three additional lots for an employee parking area. This would get the employee parking that is within the plant grounds to an off-site area and help to ease truck congestion. He was advised by Planning Staff that gravel is a suitable surface for this property as a pervious material and will meet the requirements of FEMA since this property was acquired through the flood mitigation program.

The Town Attorney has drafted a new lease to include all eight lots for a term of one year with four additional one-year renewals. In response to a question, Mr. Peters indicated that it would be the expense of Southern States to make any improvements to the site.

Council Member Scheid asked if we could sell the property. Mr. Peters responded that the property is undevelopable, which was part of the rationale for the Town acquiring it and could not be sold. Council Member Scheid next asked if all the trailers had to be mobile. Mr. Peters responded that they had to be operable and able to be moved to another

Adopted Resolution No. 2126 awarding a bid and authorizing the Interim Town Manager to execute a contract with Virginia Infrastructure, Inc. in the amount of \$78,501.00 for the Walnut Avenue Sidewalk Improvements Project

site in the case of a potential flood event in the area. This is a stipulation through FEMA. Mr. Thompson commented that Southern States did move them in the last flood event to Billy Vinyard's property. In closing, Mr. Peters commented that the lease will be brought back for Council's formal action at the next meeting.

**The next item on the agenda was a briefing on the potential future re-development of the Town of Vinton's Gateway along Gus Nicks Boulevard.** Mr. Thompson first commented that we want to look at Gus Nicks Boulevard along with the old William Byrd High School, the Gish Mill and our entrance into Town. We want to have an open discussion with Council and see what their vision is for this area and any future development to give staff some direction. He then turned the meeting over to Mr. Peters for his presentation.

Mr. Peters commented that as the new staff member with the task to coordinate these various economic development activities, he felt that it is important to engage Council on a high-level discussion so he can better understand their vision and better direct his efforts for this gateway corridor.

He began with a PowerPoint presentation and first commented on the opportunities such as street lamps-overhead utilities, sidewalks, bike accommodations, gateway signage, wayfinding/directional signage, landscaping and tree canopy, trailhead and park amenities, other road improvements and the Gish Mill. Mr. Peters next commented that some of the challenges would be cost, control/ownership, implementation, ongoing maintenance, ability/desire to replicate to other gateways.

The next slide showed the new street lights in the downtown area in comparison to the overhead utilities on Gus Nicks. There are 18 street lamps from the Gus Nicks bridge just short of Gish Mill to the Pollard/Washington intersection. One consideration would be if we want to continue that look to help in pulling visitors into the downtown area.

With regard to sidewalks, they are along both sides of Gus Nicks; however, they are missing along Highland Avenue. While we do not know what will

be proposed for the old William Byrd School, there will likely be some pedestrian aspect to that development. In order to pull that traffic into downtown, we need to provide that connectivity.

For bike accommodations, there is a bike lane striped on the Roanoke City side of Gus Nicks which stops just sort of the Vinton line along with signage. Another consideration would be do we want to continue that theme of making that connection and welcoming bikers into the Town limits. If so, it would require some additional research to determine if the speeds and traffic counts can accommodate this.

Mr. Peters next showed slides with regard to gateway signage. There is a very common iconic existing structure at each of our four gateways. Would Council desire to maintain this existing look or are there updates to modernize the materials and update the appearance both with the gateway and with wayfinding signage. He then showed three examples of current signs in Town with various materials, colors and posts. We need to consider how we might want to update the materials and the look to be consistent throughout the Town. There is an existing study that the Regional Commission prepared that gives us a good start at some recommendations for our existing signs.

With regard to landscaping and tree canopy, there are some trees along Gus Nicks, some of which are on private property and have not been maintained. Would we want to continue that look and what would we want as landscaping for the gateway signage. At present, we have been very minimal with our landscaping because we do not have the resources to maintain it. We are going to be addressing some of the landscaping in the very near future.

The next slide showed trailhead and park amenities. Mr. Peters commented that the picture shows the approximate location that the Glade Creek Greenway will run along the back of the William Byrd property and potentially stop in that area. This would make a nice trailhead with trashcans, park benches and landscaping. The next slide showed crosswalks and other road improvements and Mr. Peters asked if we would want to consider realignment of Omar and the William Byrd access

and provide crosswalks for future greenway connectivity further up Glade Creek to Vinyard Park. Vice Mayor Hare commented about getting across Gus Nicks safety and Mr. Peters responded that if the roads were aligned, there would be the potential for a crosswalk signal. Council Member Scheid commented that at one point the plan was to take the greenway under the bridge.

Mr. Peters commented that with regard to the Gish Mill property, the Town's insurance carrier gave a site assessment and staff is attempting to implement their recommendations of safety measures to secure the building and further prevent the building from exposure to the elements. We are in the process of getting estimates for materials and labor from local contractors and there is a grant that we can apply for with VML for this purpose. Any future developments will need additional studies and then the citizen engagement aspect.

The Mayor commented that in his opinion we could move ahead on the signage because it is something that has been discussed by Council for quite some time. They realize there is no consistency and he would like for staff to take a look at that very soon. Council Member Adams commented that he would like to see some business development in that area and possibly a restaurant at the Gish Mill property.

Council Member Scheid commented that she is very interested in seeing the sidewalks continue into downtown, bike lanes and the signage that is in the City continue into the Town. She wondered if a work session should be scheduled on all of the gateways and asked what studies have already been done that could be reviewed without reinventing the wheel. This could be the first gateway we look at, but we would want them to be consistent with signage, landscaping and other areas.

Vice Mayor Hare commented on the condition of the wayfinding sign at the corner of Pollard and Washington and it should be taken down. Mr. Thompson commented that there is another one on Virginia Avenue. Also, the entrance signs we currently have could be updated with regard to the landscaping. Vice Mayor Hare then made further comments regarding the Gish Mill and stated that Council should give some level of consensus of

what their expectations of the gateway would be before a developer comes in and starts setting their terms.

Council Member Scheid commented that we could possibly put a gateway district in our zoning ordinance that would address some of the standards and guidelines within that district.

The Mayor directed staff to put the matter on a future meeting as a work session item for further discussion.

**The Mayor commented on several of the new staff changes and assured the citizens that services will continue as always during the transition. The Mayor next read a prepared statement and announced that he would be running again for Mayor in the upcoming election in May.**

**The next item on the agenda was appointments to Boards/Commissions/Committees.** Council Member Adams made the following nominations to the Western Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority: Barry W. Thompson to the unexpired term ending February 3, 2018 to replace Christopher S. Lawrence; Gary W. Woodson to a new four year term beginning February 4, 2016 and ending February 3, 2020 and Sabrina McCarty to a new four year term as an alternate beginning February 4, 2016 and ending February 3, 2020. The motion was seconded by Council Member Scheid and carried by the following roll call vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Adams, McCarty, Scheid, Hare, Grose; Nays (0) - None.

The Town Clerk commented that she would administer the oaths after the meeting is adjourned.

**Comments from Council Members:** Council Member Adams announced that he would run for re-election in May. Council Member McCarty asked for an update with regard to the skate park. Mr. Thompson responded that we have sent additional information to VDEM, but we have not received a response back.

Council Member Scheid asked if we have heard back on the extension of the downtown grant. Mr. Thompson responded that we filed the letter

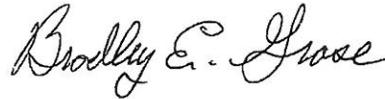
Appointed the following individuals to the Western Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority Barry W. Thompson to the unexpired term ending February 3, 2018 to replace Christopher S. Lawrence; Gary W. Woodson to a new four year term beginning February 4, 2016 and ending February 3, 2020 and Sabrina McCarty to a new four year term as an alternate beginning February 4, 2016 and ending February 3, 2020

requesting the extension through September 30th, but we have not heard back yet. Mr. Peters has taken over the administration of the grant and we are working with several businesses regarding the façade grants and we have two businesses that are interested in the revolving loans. Council Member Scheid next asked about the project list and would it be presented to Council at their next meeting. Mr. Thompson commented that staff is working on the list which has 43 projects. We plan to present it at the January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting and ask Council to give us input as to the format and if it meets the criteria they are looking for. It will then be placed in Drobox and updated on a regular basis. This will be a good working tool for Council and staff.

**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, McCarty, Scheid, Hare, Grose; Nays (0) – None. The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Meeting adjourned

APPROVED:



Bradley E. Grose, Mayor

ATTEST:



Susan N. Johnson, Town Clerk