

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF VINTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2017, 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  
Keith N. Liles  
Sabrina McCarty  
Janet Scheid

STAFF PRESENT: Barry W. Thompson, Town Manager  
Susan N. Johnson, Executive Assistant/Town Clerk  
Susan Waddell, Town Attorney  
Pete Peters, Assistant Town Manager/Director of Economic Development  
Anne Cantrell, Finance Director/Treasurer  
Tom Foster, Police Chief  
Christopher Linkous, Deputy Chief-Fire/EMS  
Joey Hiner, Public Works Director

**The Mayor called the regular meeting to order** at 7:00 p.m. The Town Clerk called the roll with Council Member Liles, Council Member McCarty, Council Member Scheid, Vice Mayor Hare and Mayor Grose present.

Roll call

**After a Moment of Silence, Council Member Scheid** led the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

**Under upcoming community events, Council Member McCarty** announced the following events: March 15-Roanoke Valley Gives, a 24-hour online giving event to local nonprofit organizations; March 21-6:30 p.m.-Roanoke Valley Greenway Plan Update Regional Meeting at Greenfield Education & Training Center in Daleville; March 28-10:00 a.m.-Senior Expo at War Memorial and March 30-6:30 p.m.-Roanoke Valley Greenway Plan Update Regional Meeting at Fishburn Park Elementary School. On March 16-11:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.- Aging Ain't for Sissies event at the War Memorial and the Vinton History Museum will be having a yard sale in June and are asking for donations. The Town Clerk announced the Event Zone concert on Friday night at the War Memorial from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. with the band "Too Much Sylvia". The Town Manager announced the RCACP St. Patrick's Day adoption event on March 12-11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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

Approved minutes of the regular Council meeting of February 7, 2017 and the regular Council meeting of February 21, 2017

**The next item on the agenda was the annual** update of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission. Wayne Strickland, Executive Director, first thanked the Town for being a member of the Commission for 48 years and for all the Vinton representatives that have been very active in the work of the Commission.

The Town has participated with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) and the Regional Commission was recently designated an Economic Development District by the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The Town has also been active in the Roanoke Valley Congestion Management and Long Range Transportation Plans along with 12 other localities in the Greater Roanoke Water Supply Plan.

The Commission has assisted the Town with several local technical assistance projects including a grant application to the Virginia Trees for Clean Water program to obtain grant funds for tree plantings in association with Arbor Day; serving on the Urban Development Area (UDA) Advisory Committee; assisting in developing and submitting a SMART SCALE application for the Walnut Avenue Improvement Project; studying and making recommendations for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations on Vinton's major corridors and providing a report/analysis for a pedestrian crosswalk on Hardy Road.

Mr. Strickland next commented that recently when they were asked to do a map for the Town calendar, it was discovered that the U.S. Census Bureau had an inaccurate boundary for the Town. They are currently working with Roanoke County to submit the correct boundary map to the Census Bureau. They also have provided maps for the Glade Creek Greenway grant application to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Recreational Trails program; researched options for providing transportation services for seniors in the Town and worked with Valley Metro and the Town to review the current

bus routes, bus stop activity, and opportunities to reduce costs.

Most recent, the Commission worked with the Town and other officials to complete the Roanoke Valley Transit Vision Plan and the Citizens' Version of Vision 2040, which is the region's 25-year long-range transportation plan for the Valley. They also are assisting the Roanoke Valley Broadband Authority by providing maps for Phase II fiber expansion to Vinton and are assisting the six local governments that are part of the Western Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority by providing administrative support and serving as the fiscal agent.

Council Member Scheid commented that Cristina Finch has been very helpful in the discussions regarding Valley Metro. The Mayor expressed thanks to the Commission and for all the work that they do for the region.

**The next item on the agenda was a request** for funding presentation by Mountain View Humane. Mark Brittain, Executive Director, first provided some printed materials and then commented that they have been opened since August of 2012. Since that time, they have performed 600 surgeries for Town residents, which represent about 4% of the total surgeries for the Roanoke clinic. They also have a clinic in Christiansburg which opened in 2010.

The Town has been providing \$500 in funding and they are strongly trying to utilize these funds in the way they were intended. They use the USDA eligibility requirements for the use of these funds. Even though their prices (as well as Angels of Assisi) are very low compared to traditional veterinarians, they are finding that customers still struggle with the cost. About 72% of all of the surgeries between the two clinics are subsidized in one way or another.

Mr. Brittain next commented that they are proposing to change the strategy for the use of the Town funds. They applied for PetSmart Charity funding last year; however, last fall the entire department of PetSmart that ran the funding was eliminated and this amounted to \$70,000 in lost funding for the Clinic. Even without this funding, their surgery numbers are

very similar to a year ago, but those are being served has changed. He then commented on the current funding model through June 2017 and the proposed funding model for the upcoming FY2018. Instead of a \$23 subsidy if the eligibility requirements are met, they are proposing to only charge the customer \$20 out-of-pocket and the difference would be subsidized with the Town funds. This would mean serving fewer customers, but it would be more affordable. Another advantage to this proposal is the fact that by law they have to administer a rabies vaccination before surgery if the animal is old enough and has not already had the vaccination at a cost of \$12.00.

Council Member Scheid asked with regard to the required rabies vaccination with the surgery how do they get the customers back to the Clinic the next time. Mr. Brittain responded that last Thursday they decided to start a wellness clinic. This idea had been considered for a number of years, but not started because they were very sensitive to the other veterinarians in the area and do not want to take business away from them. However, it is their belief that if an individual comes to the Clinic to begin with, they may not have the money to see a regular veterinarian. Although their vaccinations are still affordable by most people's standards, for those individuals they see, it still remains a challenge for them. They are first going to target former customers and those who used the subsidies.

**The next item on the agenda was a request** for funding presentation by the Vinton Volunteer First Aid Crew. Chief Wayne Guffey commented that the Crew is made up of 50 dedicated members who gave over 22,000 hours of service for the Calendar Year 2016. The Crew answered 1,139 calls and had a truck marked up for 6,437 hours. He then gave a breakdown of the expenditure request of \$17,000 from the Town. Further discussion was had regarding their current membership.

**The Mayor commented that Chief Oakes was** unable to attend the meeting for the Vinton Volunteer Fire Department's presentation and his presentation will be at the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

**The next item on the agenda was to consider**

adoption of a Resolution appropriating \$866.99 received from the sale of equipment at the Vinton Fire/EMS Department through Public Surplus. Deputy Chief Linkous commented that several pieces of old equipment were sold through Public Surplus for \$866.99. They are requesting to appropriate these funds back into their equipment fund to purchase a washing machine. This washing machine will be used for their turnout gear.

Several members of the department along with the HR Director recently attended a cancer symposium which emphasized how important it is for the turnout gear to be washed, particularly after a call to reduce exposure to potentially serious harmful carcinogenic containments. Currently, they are placing their gear into large trash bags and bringing it back to the station. He further commented that the volunteers do have other gear that can be used while their gear is being washed. Council Member Scheid asked how many pieces of turnout gear could be washed at one time. Deputy Chief Linkous responded no more than two sets.

Vice Mayor Hare made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented; 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) – Liles, McCarty, Scheid, Hare, Grose; Nays (0) – None.

Adopted Resolution No. 2194 appropriating \$866.99 received from the sale of equipment at the Vinton Fire/EMS Department through Public Surplus

**The next item on the agenda was to consider**

adoption of a Resolution appropriating \$500.00 received from Huterra, the Charitable Social Network, for reimbursement of a gift basket purchased by Special Programs to promote holiday local shopping. Anne Cantrell commented that this was an economic development project with several local businesses participating and the basket was handled as an on-line prize drawing.

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

Adopted Resolution No. 2195 appropriating \$500.00 received from Huterra, the Charitable Social Network, for reimbursement of a gift basket purchased by Special Programs to promote holiday local shopping

**The next item on the agenda was an update**

on real estate tax assessment for Calendar Year 2017 and request to advertise a public hearing for April 4, 2017 to set the real estate tax, personal property tax and machinery and tools tax rates. Anne Cantrell commented that we have received the final assessment from the Real Estate Office for 2017, which came in at just over \$467 million. This is approximately a \$5 million increase from last year. By the time new construction was backed out, the real estate increase was 0.93% which does not require us to advertise by State Code since it is less than 1%. However, we will do an advertisement one time as we have in the past. The dollar value increase is \$3,700 and we are not proposing any real estate or personal property tax increases at this time. This was more than our increase last year which was only 0.6%.

Council Member Scheid made a motion to approve the advertisement of the public hearing as requested; the motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Hare and carried by the following roll call vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Liles, McCarty, Scheid, Hare, Grose; Nays (0) – None

**The next item on the agenda was a briefing**

on the proposed Gish Mill Redevelopment Feasibility Study and a potential FY17 Budget Transfer of \$25,000 to fund the study. Pete Peters commented that the Town purchased the Gish Mill property for the purpose of salvaging one of the Town's founding buildings and for the eventual rehabilitation of the structure for potential commercial or civic use, while preserving its historic character. Staff recently worked with a local architectural and engineering firm with expertise in historic renovations to draft a scope of work for a redevelopment feasibility study for the property with a cost estimate of \$25,000.00.

The scope of work consists of the following elements; Structural & Building Assessment (Internal and External), Historical Inventory (Structural and Aesthetic), Land-use/Zoning, Flood Mitigation and Design, Concept Plan and Rendering Development, Public/Stakeholder Input and Construction Cost Estimates for the eventual restoration.

Approved advertising a Public Hearing for April 4, 2017 to set the real estate, personal property tax and machinery and tools tax rates

Funds are available within the local match line item associated with the recently completed Community Development Block Grant within the Economic Development budget. Staff is in the process of applying for a Local Assistance Planning Grant through the Department of Housing and Community Development which could potentially reimburse the Town for all or a portion of the expense.

Staff will also consider applying for an Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF) grant, also with DHCD in March of 2018 to potentially fund the rehab. The concept of this grant is to restore the property to a point and then allow the end user or developer to complete the build-out.

Mr. Peters further commented that this information has been reviewed with the Council Economic Development and Finance Committees and both endorsed proceeding with the study as well as the transfer of these funds. If Council were to approve this at their March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the study would begin in April and should be substantially completed by mid-summer.

Council Member Scheid asked if we had to put this out to bid. Mr. Peters responded that the plan is to use one of our on-call A & E firms and we are within the threshold to do so. Ms. Scheid next asked if there would be some type of public input meetings over the summer and Mr. Peters responded yes.

**The Mayor apologized for missing the opening** of the Safe Exchange Zone. He thanked Sergeant Byrd and the other officers who attended the recent activities at Longwood Apartments. Sergeant Byrd commented that the other officers were Corporal Giles, Officer Hoover and Officer Stafford.

**Under comments by Council:** **Council Member** Scheid commented on the opening of the Safe Exchange Zone and the positive comments she has received. She also commented on the success of the litter pick up this past Saturday and expressed thanks to everyone that was involved. Council Member McCarty announced that Arbor Day will be at the Vinton History Museum this year on April 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Chief Foster commented that he is coming up** on his one-year anniversary next week and expressed appreciation to the Town for the opportunity to serve as the Police Chief.

**The Town Manager commented that Elaine Bays-Murphy** with RVTV had told him that the Safe Exchange Zone PSA has had over 45,000 hits on the site.

**Vice Mayor Hare made a motion to adjourn the** meeting; the motion was seconded by Council Member Scheid and carried by the following vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Liles, McCarty, Scheid, Hare, Grose; Nays (0) – None. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned

APPROVED:



Bradley E. Grose, Mayor

ATTEST:



Susan N. Johnson, Town Clerk