

The Town of Washington

"THE FIRST WASHINGTON OF ALL"

December 9, 2013

7:00 p.m.

Town Council Meeting

Approved Minutes

- CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Sullivan called the Town Council to order at 7:05 p.m. Council members Jerry Goebel, Gary Schwartz, Dan Spethmann, and Mary Ann Kuhn were present. Council members, Patrick O'Connell and Alice Butler were absent. Town Attorney John Bennett and Town Clerk Laura Dodd were present. _

Mayor Sullivan expressed his appreciation for all the work done on the Artisan's Market and also the Christmas Parade, which did not take place because of severe weather. He discussed that an extraordinary amount of work had been done by various people including Chris Doxzen and Denise Chandler on the parade and by Bernie Olsen on the Artisan's Market. He discussed that although the parade had not happened he wished to think the thirty plus people involved in organizing it.

He welcomed Ken Thompson to the meeting and discussed that Mr. Thompson upgraded restaurant would be a welcome addition to the town. He also discussed that the Council would be holding a closed session at the end of the meeting.

- MINUTES: August 12, 2013 minutes: Ms. Kuhn discussed that she had given several typo corrections to Ms. Dodd. Mr. Schwartz moved to approve the minutes as corrected and Ms. Kuhn seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

- REPORTS: Treasury Report: Mr. Goebel reviewed the attached Bank Summary Report, the Bills-To-Be Paid List, and the Additional Bills to Be Paid List. Mayor Sullivan discussed that the numbers for Meals and Lodging Tax revenue were looking good and that for July through November the Meals and Lodging Taxes were up 17.7% over last year and that January through November was up 18.7% over the previous period, which was a significant improvement which continued to be good for everybody.

Ms. Kuhn made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and Mayor Sullivan seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

Planning Commission: Chairman Schwartz had no report.

Architectural Review Board: Mayor Sullivan reported that at the upcoming ARB meeting the committee would be reviewing an ARB application from Charlie Thompson to repair fire damage on his property on Warren Avenue. He also discussed that the ARB would be also considering a revised signage application from Wine Loves Chocolate.

Website: No report.

- TOWN ATTORNEY: Mr. Bennett discussed that at the last meeting the Council had discussed reviewing and updating the Town's Meals and Lodging Tax Ordinance and

that since the Ordinance was passed in 1987 there had been many changes in the legislation to the definition of a food establishment and what could be done by the Town. He discussed that he was preparing a draft revision for the Council to consider at the next Town Council meeting.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that since most of the Town's revenue came from Meals and Lodging Taxes it made sense to review the definition.

Ms. Kuhn asked what had prompted the idea of a review.

Mayor Sullivan discussed it was prompted partially by Wine Loves Chocolate and whether they should be charged Meals and Lodging Taxes and also by other upcoming uses in town.

Mr. Schwartz discussed it also went back to the MacPherson SUP and whether the Foster Harris House was a restaurant now that it was serving to non-guests.

Mr. Bennett discussed that he would be presenting talking points for the Council's review at the next meeting.

Mr. Spethmann asked that besides the first step of conforming the Ordinance to current legislation would it also make sense to lead a discussion to the question of what the current Meals and Lodging Taxes rate should be.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that it could and while the Town might look at changing the rate in the future what was driving the discussion was to look at the definition of a food establishment.

Mr. Spethmann discussed that the Town might need to be looking at the Meals and Lodging Tax rate in regards to other issues such as funding the sewer system.

Mr. Bennett discussed that the current rate was 2.5% and the Town rate could only be as high as 4%.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that the 2.5% rate was less than most places, which might be important looking down the road. He discussed that he would like to look at the Town's future financing of the sewer system and Avon Hall while looking at the next budget process. He discussed that there was a dynamic of increasing the Meals and Lodging Taxes rate but if there was a room availability increase in town by 40% when the Clopton House and the White Moose came on line then there would inevitably be some significant increase in the Meals and Lodging revenue.

Mr. Gary Aichele discussed that as he had discussed at a previous Council meeting there was a need for increased lighting and sidewalks in town being driven by increased traffic and it might make sense in the review of the Ordinance to consider capturing from the increased traffic an increase in taxes since there was an increasing demand for services. He discussed that the added taxes for his guests was much less than what most people expected.

Mayor Sullivan discussed it was something the Town would be looking at but the Town would not wish to play that card too soon.

- OLD BUSINESS: a). Avon Hall Update: Mayor Sullivan discussed that he had asked Mr. Spethmann and Ms. Kuhn to lead a team for the Council to figure out how to focus on Avon Hall and to help determine the process of what to do with Avon Hall and that they both had agreed.

He discussed that he had also asked Peter Kreyling to look at Avon Hall and the Avon Hall Cottage and give an assessment of conditions and that his assessment was that essentially that Avon Hall building was in generally good shape but some prior patch work on the roof needed to be redone, that the gutters needed to be cleaned out, and that the roof should be repainted within the next six months. Mayor Sullivan discussed that

that painting the building was not an immediate issued but should be done in the next few years. He discussed that the Avon Hall Cottage need immediate repairs to the flashing around the chimney as soon as possible as there was water damage.

Ms. Kuhn asked if the Town should ask Mr. Kreyling to also look at the Town's Warren House and the white building on Leggett Lane.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that that was a good idea and he would ask Mr. Kreyling to look at them.

Mr. Goebel discussed having Mark's Painting give estimates on painting the roof, painting the front of Avon Hall, and having him go ahead and clean the gutters and to repair the flashing on Avon Hall Cottage, which the Council agreed to by consensus.

Mr. Spethmann discussed that he felt his and Ms. Kuhn's goals would be to look at perspective possibilities for Avon Hall and not to look at immediate repairs.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that the Town would also be looking for input from other Council members and people living and working in the town as well as looking at people who lived in the County who might have knowledge and expertise on how one might use the space.

Mr. Bennett discussed that three or more Council members could meet as long as the meeting was advertised in advance.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that there might be a way to monetize Avon Hall by holding pay as you go events such as the Farm Tour and the upcoming Music Festival. He suggested that the Town might want to have a web cam showing activities on Main Street.

b). Planning Commission Vacancy: Mayor Sullivan discussed that there were still two vacancies on the Planning Commission and that Mr. Gary Aichele had submitted a letter of interest in being appointed. Mayor Sullivan discussed that he felt that based on the Council experiences with Mr. Aichele that he would be a fabulous addition.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that he appreciated the letter of interest and that he felt Mr. Aichele would be a good addition.

Ms. Kuhn discussed that Mr. Aichele had provided an impressive resume and that he would be an asset to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Schwartz nominated Mr. Aichele to the Planning Commission to serve the longest vacant term available and Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schwartz voted "yes" Mr. Goebel voted "yes"

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes" Mr. Spethmann voted "yes"

Mayor Sullivan voted "yes"

And Mr. Aichele was appointed to the Planning Commission to replace Steve Ray whose term expires 10.01.2016.

• NEW BUSINESS: a). Emergency Repairs to the Water Plant and Wastewater Plant Generators: Ms. Dodd discussed that the Wastewater treatment Plant's generator needed its radiator repaired and that the generator at the Water Plant also needed some repairs and the battery replaced. After a short discussion, in which Mr. Spethmann asked that the determining the cause of the problem with the Wastewater Plant's generator's radiator be included in the scope of work, Mr. Schwartz moved to approve Sam Morris proposal to repair the generators up to \$5,5000 and Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schwartz voted "yes" Mr. Goebel voted "yes"

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes" Mr. Spethmann voted "yes"

Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”
And the motion passed 5-0.

Mayor Sullivan reminded everyone that the Christmas Party was coming up on Sunday and encouraged everyone to invite a person who worked and lived in Town as well as anyone who was engaged in Town activities such as in organizing the parade.

- **PUBLIC FORUM:** Mayor Sullivan opened the Public Forum:
Ms. Nancy Buntin asked what was the projection for the life on the water system.
Mr. Schwartz discussed that the plastic piping lasted a long time and that there were no major problems there but there had been some mayor repairs at the plant, and it was hard to determine future problems there.. He discussed that the reservoir was in relatively good shape.
Ms. Dodd discussed that the Health Department inspected the Water Treatment Plant annually and made recommendations for needed repairs, which were usually minor. She discussed that the Town needed to have some minor repairs and cleaning done to the inside Reservoir tank.
Mr. Schwartz discussed that the biggest expense that the Town was looking at was a new well and replacing old meters.
Ms. Buntin asked if the Town could raise the water rates to create a reserve fund.
Mr. Schwartz discussed that the rates needed to be raised just to break even and cover costs which should be looked at during the next budget process.
Mr. Aichele discussed that the decision to cancel the parade was sad but was definitely the right choice as far as public safety went.

- **CLOSED SESSION:** At 8:35 p.m. Mr. Sullivan made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to the provisions of Section 2.2-3.711A1 of the Code of Virginia to discuss a named Town employee. Ms. Kuhn seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

- **OPEN SESSION:** Mayor Sullivan reconvened the public session at 8:35 p.m. and asked each member to certify that to the best of your knowledge:
Only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meetings requirements under the Code of Virginia and only, such public business matters as identified in the motion by which the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered by the Town Council. A roll call vote was taken and

Mr. Schwartz voted “yes”	Mr. Goebel voted “yes”
Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”	Mr. Spethmann voted “yes”
Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”	

Mr. Spethmann made a motion to give Ms. Dodd a \$1500 award performance bonus and a salary review. Mr. Goebel seconded and a roll vote was taken:

Mr. Schwartz voted “yes”	Mr. Goebel voted “yes”
Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”	Mr. Spethmann voted “yes”
Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”	

And the motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Spethmann made a motion to authorize that Ms. Dodd receive an annual salary of \$40,000 effective January 1, 2014 and Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schwartz voted "yes"

Mr. Goebel voted "yes"

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. Spethmann voted "yes"

Mayor Sullivan voted "yes"

And the motion passed 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT: At 8:38 p.m. Mr. Goebel made a motion to adjourn and Mayor Sullivan seconded and the motion passed 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned.

THE TOWN COUNCIL CONTINUED TO JANUARY 13, 2014

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Dodd
Town Clerk

Attachments:

Treasurer's report

Additional Bills to be Paid

Bills to be Paid

Sam Morris quote to repair generators

Letter of interest from Gary Aichele for Planning Commission vacancy

Peter Kreyling's Avon Hall assessment