

The Town of Washington

"THE FIRST WASHINGTON OF ALL"

May 9, 2016

7:00 p.m.

Town Council Meeting

Approved Minutes

- CALL TO ORDER: Mayor John Fox Sullivan called the Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Council members Gary Schwartz, Jerry Goebel, Mary Ann Kuhn, Katharine Leggett, and Gary Aichele were present. Council member Patrick O'Connell was absent. Town Attorney John Bennett and Town Clerk Laura Dodd were also present.

- REPORTS: Treasury Report: Treasurer Goebel reviewed the attached Bank Summary Report, the Bills-To-Be Paid List, and the Additional Bills to Be Paid List.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that the Town needed to start consolidating bills to come to a final figure on some of the costs of repairs of the wastewater. He made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and Ms. Kuhn seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Planning Commission: Chairman Schwartz reported that the Planning Commission had met in April and reviewed the Comprehensive Plan as regards to Avon Hall and that they might be reaching out for public input.

Architectural Review Board: Mayor Sullivan reported that the ARB would be meeting on Wednesday and it was open to the public,

- PUBLIC HEARING: FY 2016-2017 Budget:

Mayor Sullivan opened the public hearing.

There were no comments from the public and the Mayor closed the public hearing.

- MINUTES: December 14, 2015 amended draft minutes and January 11, 2016 amended draft minutes: Mr. Aichele made a motion to approve the amended draft minutes for December 14, 2015 and Ms. Leggett seconded and the motion passed 6-0

Mayor Sullivan made a motion to approve the January 11, 2016 amended draft minutes and Mr. Goebel seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

- TOWN ATTORNEY: No Report

- OLD BUSINESS: a). Continued discussion of marketing and sale of Avon Hall property and possible consideration of a formal offer to purchase a portion of Avon Hall and authorization of a public hearing as to whether a portion of Avon Hall should be sold on stated terms and conditions as set forth in a firm offer: Mayor Sullivan discussed that the contract had not been seen by anyone except Mr. Bennett and the buyers until this meeting and that there would not be public comment that evening and discussed the public would be able to speak at the public hearing next month.

Mr. Bennett discussed that the Council had asked him to review for consideration any offers on Avon Hall and present any offers with serious merit and he had an offer to present that evening. He asked Mr. Aichele to first summarize the process of how the Town had gotten to that point.

Mr. Aichele discussed that the selling of Avon Hall had been an ongoing discussion for at least three years. He discussed that Avon Hall had been purchased to move the wastewater project forward and that once the sewer project was complete then the process of selling Avon Hall moved forward in a way that was consistent with the priorities of the Town and to make money. He discussed that about two years ago the process became more focused on how Avon Hall could be developed and sold and then about a year ago the Avon Hall Study Group was appointed, which at one point included about 20 people, and which then became a smaller focus group that reported regularly to Council. He discussed that Milt Herd had been hired and that two well attended public meetings had been held on Avon Hall and that it had become clear that there were several priorities in regards to Avon Hall including continued public use, about the affection for the property by the Town and County, about the ascetics of the property, and the need to preserve the unique character of the Town, which was imbedded in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. He discussed that it became clear that it was going to be a complicated process. He discussed that with the help of Milt Herd, Alan Comp, and Dan Clark, the Avon Hall Study Group had come up with a specific plan which was presented to Council, and which prioritized how best to sell Avon Hall, which the Council chose not to accept. He discussed that the Council decided to proceed on all fronts which led to the delegation of Mr. Bennett as a point person and a broad advertisement soliciting any interest from the community on moving forward with various options laid out. He discussed that since then there had been a wide expression of interest but not many offers.

He discussed that an offer had come forward, which Mr. Bennett, the Mayor and he had worked on. He discussed that the offer was many pages long and Mr. Bennett had been diligent in making sure good things would happen. He discussed that it was not a done deal and that a public hearing would have to be held but he felt good about where the Town was.

Mr. Bennett reviewed in a general fashion the attached contract and discussed that the purchasers had done all their inspections and had accepted the property as it was and where it was without warranties from the Town and that there would be no more negotiations about the condition of the property. He discussed that the contract had just been completed that evening and that the Council and the public were both seeing the contract at the same time.

He discussed that the contract was contingent on a public hearing to consider rezoning to allow the creation of a lot size smaller than allowed by Rural Residential and still consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and to clarify Comprehensive Plan language. He discussed that the contract required that Avon Hall be preserved and that the cost would be \$750,000 with a \$50,000 deposit, with the Town retaining the corner lot at Warren Avenue and Leggett Lane for possible mixed use. He discussed that the contract was contingent on the creation of another lot that the owners would own and that the town would own another lot of about 6 acres south of the Avon Hall building which would include the area needed for the wastewater treatment plant.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that the Town might sell about 3 acres in the future for housing. He introduced the buyers, Bill Fischer and Drew Mitchell, and discussed that they were professionals from Washington, DC and had been involved in historic restoration there. He read through a document written by Mr. Mitchell: "Unlike manor houses in other parts of the country Avon Hall has been and would remain an intimate

part of life in Washington. In order to flourish Avon Hall needs to be lived in not just looked upon. It should be more than a home for us but also a place of belonging for neighbors and friends now and in the future. Although it would be impossible to fill iMr. and Mrs. Carrigan’s shoes we will do our best to carry on their legacy by being highly active in the community and throwing open Avon Hall’s doors and lawn for a variety of community events and spending the rest of our lives helping Washington continue to maximize its potential”.

Mr. Mitchell discussed that they wanted to buy the house because Rappahannock County was the most beautiful county in Virginia and that there was such a high concentration of good, friendly people here and it was the kind of community they had been look for. He described how he loved the details of the house and discussed that they were looking forward to the opportunity to restore it. He discussed how Mr. Baggerly and Mr. Carrigan had been fond of technology and they would try and carry on that tradition using smart home improvements and solar energy. He discussed that they were excited about restoring the grounds. He discussed that something special like Avon Hall should remain intact and restored in a way to be enjoyed by the community and to make sure it was in the best shape possible for future owners.

Mr. Fischer discussed that they respected the house and would try and restore it.

Mayor Sullivan discussed Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Fischer had expressed keen interest in the nature trail and the work that had been done on the Avon Hall pond. He discussed that the Town was fortunate to find people who were so in synch with what people in the community wanted.

He complimented Mr. Aichele and the people who had worked with him in moving the process forward. He thanked Ms. Kuhn, Fred Catlin, Judy deSarno, Ray Gooch, and others. He complimented Mr. Bennett for the job he had done and discussed that Mr. Bennett had been extraordinary in his negotiations and getting people working honestly and well together and getting the job done.

Ms. Leggett discussed it was amazing that the property buyers had found the town and were interested in restoring the property and that she was excited about it.

Mr. Aichele made a motion to authorize a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission at the next meeting to consider the offer presented by Mr. Bennett and to rezone parcel two containing 1.5289 acres, and to consider a Comprehensive Plan amendment consistent with moving forward with the offer and Ms. Leggett seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schwartz voted “yes”

Mr. Goebel voted “yes”

Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”

Ms. Leggett voted “yes”

Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”

Mr. Aichele voted “yes”

And the motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that the Planning Commission would be meeting on May 16, 2016 to review the Avon Hall offer and to prepare for the joint public hearing.

b).

- NEW BUSINESS: a) Wastewater Treatment Plant Repairs: Check valve replacement: Mr. Schwartz reviewed a check valve proposal from Flomec and a proposal from Rick’s Welding for building a staging platform to repair the valves and

he made a motion to approve a figure not to exceed \$8000 for the Flomec and Rick's Welding proposal which included \$2000 for ESS's time for the check valve repair at the wastewater treatment plant and Mr. Goebel seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schwartz voted "yes"

Mr. Goebel voted "yes"

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Ms. Leggett voted "yes"

Mayor Sullivan voted "yes"

Mr. Aichele voted "yes"

And the motion passed 6-0.

b). Country Water Systems Proposal to repair the water level indicator: Mr. Schwartz reviewed the proposal from Country Water systems to repair the water level indicator on the reservoir and made a motion to approve a figure not to exceed \$3000 for the repair and Mr. Goebel seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schwartz voted "yes"

Mr. Goebel voted "yes"

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Ms. Leggett voted "yes"

Mayor Sullivan voted "yes"

Mr. Aichele voted "yes"

And the motion passed 6-0.

c) Meals and Lodging Taxes: Mayor Sullivan discussed that he wished the Meals and Lodging Taxes be tabled.

Mr. Aichele agreed that the discussion should be tabled until a future meeting and the Council agreed by consensus to table the matter.

Mr. Aichele discussed that given the number of repair requests for the water and wastewater plants he hoped that the Town could get to a point where a capital fund could be created to fund maintenance issues.

- PUBLIC FORUM: Mayor Sullivan opened the Public Forum: Fred Catlin discussed that the Trinity Church rectory would be holding an open house on June 11th from 1-3 p.m. to celebrate the renovation of the rectory and he invited everyone to attend.

Nancy Buntin agreed with Mr. Aichele that a capital fund was needed to continue repairs of the wastewater and water systems.

Mayor Sullivan closed the public forum _

- CLOSED SESSION: There was no closed session

- ADJOURNMENT: At 8:30 p.m. Mr. Goebel moved to adjourn and Mayor Sullivan seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

- NEXT SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON JUNE 13, 2016

Respectfully submitted,

Attachments:

Treasurer's report

Additional Bills to be Paid

Bills to be Paid

Flomec Proposal

Rick's Welding Proposal

Country Water Systems Proposal

Avon Hall Contract