

The Town of Washington

"THE FIRST WASHINGTON OF ALL"

December 11, 2017

7:00 p.m.

Approved Minutes

- **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor John Fox Sullivan called the Town Council meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Council members Mary Ann Kuhn, Patrick O'Connell, Brad Schneider, and Katharine Leggett were present. Council member Jerry Goebel was absent. Council member Gary Aichele resigned effective Oct. 31, 2017. Town Attorney John Bennett and Town Clerk Laura Dodd were present.

- **OLD BUSINESS:** a). Appointment of Council member: Mayor Sullivan discussed that former Council member Aichele had done an incredible job and was missed. He discussed that the Council was fortunate that Fred Catlin, a career educator and fundraiser, Executive Director of CCLC, and Planning Commission Chair for the last several years, had expressed interest in being appointed as Council member. He moved to nominate Mr. Catlin to fulfil the term of Mr. Aichele and Ms. Leggett seconded.

Mayor Sullivan asked if there were any other nominations and there being none a roll call vote was taken on Mr. Catlin's nomination:

Ms. Leggett voted "yes"

Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"

Mayor Sullivan voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

And the appointment was approved 5-0.

Peggy Ralph, Clerk of the Rappahannock County Court, swore Mr. Catlin in and he joined the Council at the Council table.

Mr. Schneider discussed that with the appointment of Mr. Catlin to the Council there was now two Council members on the Planning Commission, which was not allowed and he resigned his seat on the Planning Commission effective immediately.

Mayor Sullivan and Mr. Catlin thanked Mr. Schneider for his work on the Planning Commission.

- **MINUTES:** September 11, 2017 draft minutes: Ms. Kuhn gave Ms. Dodd a few corrections and made a motion to approve the September 11, 2017 minutes and Mr. O'Connell seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

- **REPORTS:** Treasury Report: Mayor Sullivan reviewed the attached Bank Summary Report, the Bills-To-Be-Paid list and the Additional Bills to Be Paid List.

Mayor Sullivan reported that in the Additional Bills to be Paid the check for \$5,395.06 to Mitzie Young was to pay off the Town Hall loan, which had been approved in September. He also discussed that the check for \$8,000 to the Washington Volunteer Fire and Rescue was a contribution from the Town towards the pumper truck.

Ms. Leggett made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and Mr. O'Connell seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Planning Commission: Chairman Catlin discussed that had met and was beginning the aligning of the Zoning Ordinances with the Comprehensive Plan.

He discussed that there was now a vacancy on the Planning Commission and the Planning Commission was now looking for a new member.

Ms. Dodd discussed that she would advertise the vacancy in the meetings and notices section of the newspaper and would send the announcement to the Town email list with the condition that letters of interest needed to be received by the Town by January 6, 2018 to be considered for appointment at the January 8, 2018 Council meeting.

Architectural Review Board: Mayor Sullivan reported that ARB would be meeting on Wednesday, January 14, 2018 to consider an application from the Akres for a shed.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that the Christmas Parade held the day before was the best ever in town and he thanked Judy deSarno, Thom Pellikaan, Kim Nelson, Fred Catlin, and the rest of the Parade committee for all their work. He estimated that between 1,200 and 1,500 had attended.

He discussed that Rick Hancock, who was overseeing the Post Office move, would be present at the January 8, 2018 Council meeting to make an advertised presentation on the Post Office relocation process. He discussed that Mr. Hancock would also be meeting with various property owners in town and within the Washington zip code about possible sites to lease an existing building or to lease a building to be built. He discussed that the Post Office was looking for 2,500 square feet and tractor truck accessibility for box handling enterprises. He discussed that he was actively involved in discussions with several town property owners in order to facilitate keeping the Post Office in town and in the County seat.

There was a short discussion regarding the need to encourage residents and Post Office users to come and support the Town's efforts to keep the Post Office in Town., and to perhaps sign a petition in support. Mayor Sullivan and Ms. Kuhn agreed to work on a letter from the Council to the Post Office in support the Town's desire to keep the Post Office in town and to also send out an email to the Town's email list encouraging people to attend the January 8th meeting in support.

- TOWN ATTORNEY: Mayor Sullivan discussed that the Town needed to focus on Mr. Bennett's draft Ordinance to address P to P(Nee Air BnB's).

There was a short discussion on the review process that needed to be done by both the Council and the Planning Commission. Mr. Bennett discussed that now that the General Assembly had addressed the issue of Air BnB's it was important that local governments act on the new legislation and address the issue and that it was important that local governments let their State representatives know it was a local issue worth preserving.

Chairman Catlin agreed that the P to P (Nee Air BnB's) draft Ordinance would be on the Planning Commission's December 29th meeting agenda for review and that the Planning Commission would come back to the Council with their comments and recommendations.

- NEW BUSINESS: a). Consideration of Planning Commission Recommendations: Mayor Sullivan discussed that the Planning Commission had given the Council a four page list of recommendations, attached. He discussed that he felt the topics represented could be narrowed down into five themes or categories including: 1). Infrastructure, including water, sewer, roads, painting the Town Hall roof, and a new well; 2). Town Vitality, including more people, more businesses, assembling a business group, and looking at housing issues; 3). Zoning issues, including looking at expanding

the Town's boundaries; 4). Financial for long term economics and revenues; 5). Coordination with other governments particularly Rappahannock County; 6). Cultural and Social, including events such as the Christmas Parade, Halloween, and events at the RAAC Theatre and the Theatre At Little Washington that promoted community building.

There was a long discussion of the Mayor's comments and of the Planning Commission's recommendations. Mr. Catlin discussed that the Planning Commission was looking at planned and deliberate growth not cookie cutter subdivisions.

Mr. O'Connell discussed that each year the town became more unique in America and how it was easy to trade convenience for charm when desiring more and closer services and it was a struggle to find the balance. He discussed that it continued to come up that people wanted the town to be more like other towns but its value was that it was not like other towns and that he felt that everyone was not on board with that. He discussed that the town was experiencing its hay day now compared to its past.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that he felt that most people did not want the convenience of a super markets, etc. if it meant change and that they did not want to be like everybody else.

Mr. Catlin discussed that he felt that the town could retain its charm and value with planned growth articulated in its Zoning Ordinances and other mechanisms.

Mr. O'Connell discussed that a word that was valuable in the discussion was authenticity and a sense of place that might be eradicated by over regulating. He discussed that people were magnetized and attracted to the town because of its authenticity.

Mr. Schneider discussed that once you lost your authenticity you could not recreate it but there was the potential to retain the town's charm and character and still evolve and that was a delicate balance. He discussed that some conveniences could be encourage outside of town in the county.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that he hoped each Council member and Planning Commissioners and others would pick a category to become involved in.

Mr. Catlin discussed using Mayor Sullivan's categories to form task forces and that the vitality issue was major and might need two Council members and might need to be divided into two task forces.

Ms. Kuhn discussed that she was interested in the vitality issue and in forming a business group.

Mr. Catlin discussed that they could continue to move forward by encouraging people to join in the different task forces on the different categories.

- PUBLIC FORUM: Mayor Sullivan opened the Public Forum.

Ms. deSarno discussed that she felt that the Post Office facilitator would not be impressed by a petition and that an email to every Post Office user may not result in everyone supporting the Post Office staying in town. She spoke in favor of broadening the committees and expanding the Town's boundaries. She discussed that it was important for the Town to control its boundaries. She discussed that stagnant growth was not good for the Town. She questioned the need for the Post Office to have tractor trailer access and wondered if other small post offices might be closed and consolidated with the Washington Post Office.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that no other Post Offices were to be closed but hopefully Mr. Hancock would articulate what was being planned.

Mr. Comp discussed that he regretted that there were no ARB members present to hear about retaining the authenticity of the town and preserving the Historic District as that was exactly their job. He spoke in favor of having a Council member serve as an ex-

officio member of the ARB. He spoke in favor of each Council member joining a task force as part of the driving force of moving forward.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that the ARB and others could watch the RappNews video of the meeting. He closed the Public Forum.

- CLOSED SESSION: At 8:30 p.m. Mayor Sullivan moved 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 and Ms. Kuhn seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

- OPEN SESSION: Mayor Sullivan reconvened the public session at 9:42 p.m.

Mr. Bennett asked each member to certify that to the best of their 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. Schneider voted “yes”	Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”
Mr. O’Connell voted “yes”	Ms. Leggett voted “yes”
Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”	Mr. Catlin voted “yes”

Mr. O’Connell made a motion in recognition of Ms. Dodd’s service to the Town that she receive a holiday bonus of \$500 and an increase in salary to \$44,000 reflecting her increased ARB and zoning responsibilities and Mr. Schneider seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schneider voted “yes”	Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”
Mr. O’Connell voted “yes”	Ms. Leggett voted “yes”
Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”	Mr. Catlin voted “yes”

“

And the motion passed 6-0.

- ADJOURNMENT: At 9:44 p.m. Mayor Sullivan moved to adjourn and Ms. Leggett seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING ON JANUARY 8, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Dodd

Attachments:

Treasurer’s report

Additional Bills to be Paid

Bills to be Paid

Mr. Catlin’s Letter of Interest in being appointed to the Council

Planning Commission’s Recommendations

