

# The Town of Washington

"THE FIRST WASHINGTON OF ALL"

December 14, 2020

7:00 p.m.

Approved Minutes

- CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Fred Catlin opened the electronically held meeting at 7:02 p.m. Council members Mary Ann Kuhn, Patrick O'Connell, Brad Schneider, Gail Swift and Joe Whited were present. Town Attorney John Bennett and Town Clerk Barbara Batson were present.

John Bennett announced that the Governor of Virginia issued Executive Order 72 on December 10, 2020 extending the State of Emergency to January 31, 2021.

- APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Mayor Catlin requested deferring item a) Northern Piedmont Community Fund discussion for post office enhancement and Ms. Swift requested deferring item c) FY 20-21 Budget Review under new business. Ms. Swift motioned the updated agenda be approved. Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

Ms. Swift voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

And the motion passed 6-0.

- a) MINUTES: Ms. Swift motioned to accept the minutes and Mr. Whited seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

Ms. Swift voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

And the motion passed 6-0.

- b) REPORTS:

Mayor's Report: Mayor Catlin reported a major amount of ground work has been completed at the post office site. The underground water tanks for storm water retention have been put in place. The existing top soil had to be removed because it was not compactable and new top soil has been delivered.

He shared the Town recently lost another valued citizen, Mr. Phil Irwin. Mayor Catlin thanked Mr. Irwin for his contributions to the Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection, the Piedmont Environmental Council and the dark lights initiative and fondly recalled Mr. Irwin "as an institution" at Town Council (TC) meetings that he rarely missed even though he was not a Town resident.

Treasurer's Report: Ms. Swift reported there were no unusual bills this month.

Ms. Kuhn made a motion to accept the treasurer's report and approve the bills to be paid and Mayor Catlin seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

And the motion passed 6-0.

Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"

Ms. Swift voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

Planning Commission Report: Caroline Anstey reported the Planning Commission did not meet in November.

Architectural Review Board Report: Drew Mitchell reported the ARB met on December 9, 2020 and considered four applications: a cottage on the corner of Gay and Wheeler streets owned by Fredette Eagle; an enclosed area in back of The Inn at Little Washington; a parking sign at Town Hall; and additional details presented by Mr. John Kilgore for 567 Gay Street.

Town Attorney: Mr. Bennett had no report.

PUBLIC FORUM: Mayor Catlin opened the public forum at 7:18 p.m.

Town resident Chuck Akre shared details on a potential new development of a nine-acre property bordering Lee Highway, Warren Avenue and Leggett Lane where the abandoned Black Kettle Motel and Restaurant is. This would be a gift to the community from Mr. Akre. He has spoken with community members to ask for ideas of what they'd like to see done with the property. Options being considered are for a community center that anyone in Rappahannock County could use and to create space for non-profit entities. Mr. Akre has had preliminary discussions with the Rappahannock Food Pantry, Rapp at Home and the library board about moving to the new development. Additional ideas for the development include walking paths along the existing stream and inclusive housing.

Mr. John Foote is planning to make a presentation to the Rappahannock County Board of Supervisors about the development. Ms. Betsy Dietel has engaged four landscape architects to consult on the property design.

Mr. Akre shared a boundary line adjustment would need to be approved in order for the property to be able to tie into the Town of Washington's water and sewer system.

Mayor Catlin opened the discussion for questions. Ms. Swift thanked Mr. Akre and his team for the transparency they were showing during the planning stage of this project. She recommended if anyone had any questions they should contact Mr. Akre directly. Mr. Akre shared the website for the project is [blackkettlecommons.com](http://blackkettlecommons.com).

- OLD BUSINESS:

- (a) Town Council vacancy: Mayor Catlin shared that Ms. Jean Goodine had submitted a letter of interest in filling the open TC vacancy. He informed the TC that Ms. Goodine had previously served on the Council when the wastewater system was installed and Ms. Kuhn said that she feels Ms. Goodine would be an asset to the Council.

Ms. Kuhn made a motion to appoint Ms. Goodine to the TC and Ms. Swift seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

And the motion passed 6-0.

Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"

Ms. Swift voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

- (b) Motion to take credit card payments via Atlantic Union Bank: Mr. Whited shared he had a good conversation with Atlantic Union Bank to discuss the numbers for using this service. There will be an initial startup cost of \$100 and the fee structure would be revenue neutral. There would be a 3% processing fee. The service would allow the Town to take payments not only for water and sewer bills but any fee the Town collects. He also shared that using this service could possibly eliminate the \$55 spent monthly on postage and would reduce the time the Town Clerk spends on processing payments. The online payment service would be hosted on the Town's website.

Mr. Whited made a motion to allow the Town to contract with Atlantic Union Bank to set up electronic payment services and Ms. Swift seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

And the motion passed 6-0.

Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"

Ms. Swift voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

- (c) Resolution to honor Ray Gooch: Ms. Kuhn presented a resolution to honor the life of long-time Town Council member and resident, Ray Gooch that John Bennett had approved.

Ms. Kuhn made a motion to approve the resolution honoring Ray Gooch and Ms. Swift seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

And the motion passed 6-0.

Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"

Ms. Swift voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- (a) Consideration of grinder pot inventory: Ms. Swift shared that two grinder pot pumps currently need to be repaired and two pumps need to be replaced. She is asking for approval to spend up to \$5,500 to purchase two new pumps when needed.

Ms. Swift made a motion to approve spending up to \$5,500 to purchase two new grinder pot pumps and Mr. Schneider seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"

Ms. Swift voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted “yes”  
And the motion passed 6-0.

Mayor Catlin voted “yes”

CLOSED SESSION: The Council decided to defer the closed session, employee compensation for the new year, until it received guidance from Town Attorney John Bennett regarding the guidelines for holding a closed session during an electronically held meeting.

Mr. Schneider reported that he exchanged emails with Cody Hoehna from Environmental System Services (ESS) regarding COVID testing other jurisdictions are doing. A sample of wastewater influent is taken and tested for COVID to identify if COVID is present in the community. This test could give possible insight as early as two weeks in advance of an outbreak. The testing costs \$100 and would have to be processed at an outside lab because ESS does not perform this type of testing. Mr. Schneider offered to discuss the testing with the County Administrator to see if Sperryville might also be interested. Mayor Catlin encouraged Mr. Schneider to seek out other opinions and said the cost is within his discretionary spending limit if the Town decides to move forward with the testing. Ms. Swift encouraged Mr. Schneider to have a discussion with the County Administrator and Mr. Schneider said he would provide an update at the January Town Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: At 8:00 p.m. Ms. Swift made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Whited seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”  
Mr. Schneider voted “yes”  
Mr. Whited voted “yes”  
And the motion passed 6-0.

Mr. O’Connell voted “yes”  
Ms. Swift voted “yes”  
Mayor Catlin voted “yes”

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL IS January 11, 2020.

Barbara Batson, Town Clerk

Attachments:

Treasurer’s Report

Bills to be paid

Resolution honoring Ray Gooch