

The Town of Washington

"THE FIRST WASHINGTON OF ALL"

October 14, 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 Alice Butler, Jerry Goebel, Mary Ann Kuhn, Gary Schwartz, and Dan Spethmann were present. Council member Patrick O'Connell was absent. Town Attorney John Bennett and Town Clerk Laura Dodd were present. _

- MINUTES: July 15, 2013: Ms. Kuhn made a motion to approve the minutes of July 15, 2013 and Mr. Spethmann seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

- 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.

Ms. Butler made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report and Mr. Schwartz seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

- Planning Commission: Chairman Schwartz had no report,

- Architectural Review Board: Mayor Sullivan reported that the ARB had met the previous Thursday and approved an application for a small project at his house as well as approving a County application for some repairs to several County buildings.

- Website: Ms. Kuhn reported there was a new link on the Town website to a fun video from the Washington Post TV on how people in Little Washington were weathering the shutdown in "Big" Washington in which the Mayor and several local people were interviewed.

- TOWN ATTORNEY: Mr. Bennett: No report.

- OLD BUSINESS: a). Consideration and clarification by Council of the "on site" management requirement for SU# 12-07-01, Inn at the Ridge LLC, the applicant requesting the manager be allowed to live at the Pullen house, two doors away, on a temporary basis not to exceed one year: Mayor Sullivan discussed that the Council would be clarifying the definition of on-site management as stated on the SUP granted to the Inn at the Ridge, LLC. He discussed that when the Council granted the original SUP there had been a discussion of whether or not there should be an on-site manager for that B&B, which was the general practice, and the SUP did call for an on-site manager. He discussed that Mr. Abdo, owner of the B&B, and Chris Myers, the manager, were both present to request that given that Mr. Abdo had recently purchased the Pullen building,

which was two doors down from the B&B, named the White Moose, he would like to have to have his manger to be able to manage the B&B from the Pullen property.

He discussed that the Council had before them a resolution, attached, for their consideration regarding the issue. He discussed that there was a related issue that Mr. Pullen had never hooked up his sewer line to the grinder pot and had not paid some fees but those fees had now been paid. He discussed that Mr. Abdo was ready to proceed with hooking up to the Town's sewer system. He discussed that the resolution, if passed, would allow the management of the B&B to reside at the Pullen house property for up to one year but before any occupancy of the Pullen property could occur the house must be connected to the Town sewer system.

Mr. Abdo introduced Mr. Myers, his manager and discussed that the White Moose did have a very small accommodation for a manager but Mr. Myers had recently gotten engaged and that there would be a lot more room available for a couple at the Pullen house. He discussed that Mr. Myers would still be willing to stay in house at the B&B if it was busy and business justified it. He discussed that he was hoping that the Council would grant his request since the Pullen property was only about sixty-five feet away from the B&B. He discussed that he was unsure of what he would be doing with the Pullen property in the long term.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that there were sewer system connection requirements that would have to be met for the Pullen property as well as Health Department requirements that would have to be met for food establishments and B&Bs regardless of the SUP being granted.

Mr. Bennett discussed that he had drafted the resolution to allow for the occupying of the Pullen house only after it was connected to the sewer system.

Mr. Abdo discussed that he was quite willing to make the sewer connection and that he had already contacted a plumber and an electrician.

Mr. Spethmann asked what the criteria would be to extend the management from the Pullen house at the end a year.

Mr. Bennett discussed that the resolution expired in a year.

Mr. Abdo discussed that he would come back to the Council in a year and if the Council was unhappy with things and wanted someone in house rather than being adjacent he would make the change.

Ms. Kuhn asked if there would be a direct phone connection between the B&B and the Pullen house.

Mr. Abdo discussed that both houses would have land lines.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that in regards to Mr. Spethmann's question then if this arrangement did not make the guests happy that would be Mr. Abdo's problem but if the Council felt that there were concerns that the B&B was not manageable or had noise issues or that the neighbors were disturbed then that would be a reason for the Council to be concerned.

Mr. Spethmann discussed that his question was really about a newly married couple having to move from their home in a year and if there was criteria to determine if it worked out. He discussed that he felt that there was an inherent understanding that this option could be renewed in a year barring that were no significant problems.

Mr. Bennett discussed that a temporary agreement was asked for and that was what it was and it would expire in a year. He discussed that the Council would have to have a base to judge the situation after the year had passed.

Mr. Spethmann made a motion to approve the resolution and Ms. Butler seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schwartz voted "yes"

Mr. Goebel voted "yes"

Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”
Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”
And the motion passed 6-0.

Ms. Butler voted “yes”
Mr. Spethmann voted “yes”

b). Review of wastewater pump station emergency response procedures and education of property owners: Mayor Sullivan discussed that this was a subject that had been discussed since the sewer system had been put in and that various efforts had been made to educate the public. He discussed that there had been a recent serious problem at the Theatre a few Saturdays back when the system malfunctioned right before a performance which, understandably, put Wendy Weinberg, the owner, under a considerable amount of pressure as there was crowd without facilities. He discussed that the Town and Council needed to do a better job of educating folks and as a consequence the Town had put on the back of the water and sewer bills emergency contact information as well as what could not be put into the sewer system. He discussed that the same information would also be sent out in a letter to all the homeowners and that the Town would be following up with purchasing magnets with that displayed emergency info and what could not go into the system, which the Town would distribute to users. He discussed that he was sympathetic with the property owner and whatever the Town could do to make things easier for people it would do.

Ms. Weinberg thanked everyone for their help during her emergency and discussed that Ms. Dodd had indicated that she would make sure that the emergency phone number was posted on the control box for the grinder pot.

Mayor Sullivan asked if anyone else had any ideas.

Ms. Kuhn discussed that Ms. Dodd had put all the emergency numbers on the Town phone message and had also given them to the Sheriff’s office.

Mr. Goebel asked that the emergency numbers be put onto the Town website.

Mr. Gary Aichele asked what would happen if the power went out.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that if the power went out the pump would stop working but there was an outlet on the box so a commercial user with a generator could pump it down.

Mr. Goebel discussed that the Town had a portable generator on a trailer that could be used to pump out the pots.

Mr. Aichele discussed that his business partner was concerned about what to do if they had a house full of B&B guests and no power.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that they shouldn’t use water and that commercial users such as Mr. Aichele with a duplex system had some storage capability and to use it wisely, which was about twenty flushes. He discussed that the normal homeowner did not have much storage but during an extended outage the Town would have to arrange to pump the pots down.

He discussed that there was a problem with disposable wipes and kitty litter damaging the pumps and he also cautioned homeowners about letting contractors dump chemicals and paints down into the system as they also damaged the system.

Ms. Nancy Buntin discussed that non-resident would not know what not to put into the system.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that it was the homeowner’s responsibility to make sure that nothing inappropriate went into the system and they certainly could let contractors know.

Ms. Weinberg discussed that the proposed magnets should go a long way in educating users.

- NEW BUSINESS: a). May 17, 2014 Music Festival on Avon Hall: Mayor Sullivan discussed that Ben Jones was hoping to host a music festival featuring Americana with various bands down by the Avon Hall Pond from noon until five on May 17th and then that evening more bands would play at the Theatre. He discussed that this would be on a much smaller scale than the Dukes of Hazzard events that Mr. Jones regularly put on in the county. He discussed that Mr. Jones was seeking permission from both the Town and the County.

Mr. Spethmann asked if there was an estimate of the crowd size and expressed concerns about parking.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that there was no real estimate, maybe a thousand people, and that there were parking and noise issues that would have to be addressed.

Ms. Butler asked about insurance.

Ms. Dodd discussed that the Town always required a certificate of insurance from an outside entity.

Mr. Bennett discussed that the Town could ask for a rider from its insurance company to protect the Town.

Mr. Spethmann discussed that the Town needed to have a written agreement with Mr. Jones that dealt with the specifics of what would be provided. He discussed that the new plantings around the pond would have to be protected.

Mr. Sullivan discussed that if the Town did not want to do it they should indicate that now.

Mr. Goebel discussed that he thought it was a good idea but he had a lot of questions such as if alcohol would be served.

Ms. Kuhn discussed that the Town should determine how many people the area would hold and set a limit.

Mr. Spethmann asked if the Town would receive any proceeds from the sale of the tickets.

The Council agreed by consensus that the festival was a good idea but they needed more information.

- b). Halloween Bonfire on Avon Hall: Mayor Sullivan discussed that Hunt Harris was asking to do a bonfire on Avon Hall on Halloween night, probably on County property. The Council agreed by consensus to the bonfire.

Mayor Sullivan reported that the lower level of Jean Goodine's retail space had been rented out to the Little Washington Winery and discussed that he thought it would be a good use of the space.

Mr. Spethmann asked how far along was the new house on Main St.

Ms. Dodd reported that the Hodges had received ARB approval and next thing the Town would need would be an application from them for sewer.

Mayor Sullivan reported that the Hodges had gotten their building permit and that this would be the first house built since the Batchelder's house had been built.

Ms. Butler reported that her house, built in the early 1970's was the second youngest house in town.

- PUBLIC FORUM: Mayor Sullivan opened the public forum.

Ms. Weinberg expressed her concerns about the horrible streetlights and asked that the Town take up the issue.

Ms. Buntin discussed that the show Virginia Insight talked about light pollution and a solution was to have streetlights that pointed downward.

Mayor Sullivan asked when the streetlights were put in.

Ms. Kuhn discussed that they were put in in the 1990's.

Ms. Dodd discussed that many of the lightening problems were with the fixtures themselves and that the Town might want to look at new fixtures.

Mr. Aichele asked if the lighting and sidewalk issues were considered in the five year plan and suggested that the Town work on the issues block by block.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that there were parts of town where sidewalks would be a good idea.

Mr. Spethmann discussed that he had seen student projects where lighting was mapped out for an area and that there might be a school interested in working with the Town. He discussed that the Comp Plan was a guideline.

Mr. Aichele discussed that he felt that the Comp Plan could set goals and there should be a coordinated plan for the sidewalks and lighting.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that there was a lot happening in the town and issues that had not been such a priority such as lighting, sidewalks, and parking would soon become significant issues. He discussed that the Town and County had met with VDoT about grants for sidewalks and that there might be an opportunity there.

Mr. Phil Irwin asked if the Town expected VDoT to repave the Town streets.

Mr. Bennett discussed that it was the Town's responsibility to repave the streets but had received a waiver.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that it was a huge expense without a financial plan.

Mr. Spethmann raised concerns that if VDoT did pave the Town streets the Town might not like VDoT's guidelines for repaving and if used might detract from the town's charm. He discussed that he was an advocate for the Town remaining in control. He discussed that as the good things like the new town center happened, then other good things would expand outward from them. He discussed that the ARB provided good, thoughtful, and professional advice that did look at the whole picture. He discussed that money was the main constraint in providing infrastructure improvements and that lighting, sidewalks, and parking were important issues now.

Mr. Goebel discussed that more lighting would be coming with the new parking lot and also to the Clopton House.

Ms. Butler discussed that lighting was a safety issue.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that the Comp Plan was the long term vision which looked at the big picture and was reviewed every five years and did have guidelines, goals, and an implementation plan. He discussed that there was a Planning Commission vacancy and welcomed a letter of interest from anyone who wished to participate. He discussed that another Comp Plan review would be coming up in a few years.

Mr. Bennett discussed the land use process and that the Comp Plan details would be worked on for months and then would be reviewed and approved by the Council and that would be the legal document and that when zoning issue came up it had to be decided consistent with the Comp Plan. He discussed that fifty people might show up but the fundamentals had been decided before with the Comp Plan.

Mayor Sullivan closed the public forum.

- CLOSED SESSION:
- ADJOURMENT: At 8:35 p.m. Mr. Schwartz moved to adjourn the meeting and Mayor Sullivan seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL ON NOVEMBER 11,
2013

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Dodd
Town Clerk

Attachments:

Bank Summary Report
List of Bills-To-Be-Paid
Additional Bills Paid
Resolution relating to the SUP of the Inn at the Ridge, LLC, TW # 12-07-01