

The Town of Washington

"THE FIRST WASHINGTON OF ALL"

March 9, 2020

7:00 p.m.

Approved Minutes

- CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Fred Catlin called the Town Council (TC) meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Council members Mary Ann Kuhn, Katharine Leggett, Brad Schneider and Joe Whited were present with Patrick O'Connell and Gail Swift absent. Town Attorney John Bennett and Town Clerk Barbara Batson were present.
- APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Mr. Schneider motioned to approve the agenda. Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

Ms. Leggett voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

And the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Swift absent.

- MINUTES: Ms. Kuhn motioned to accept the minutes and Ms. Leggett seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

Ms. Leggett voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

And the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Swift absent.

- REPORTS:

Mayor's Report: Mayor Catlin reported the tree planting, delayed from the fall, will occur on April 8 and 9, 2020. He directed everyone to call Miss Utility (811) prior to doing any digging. The planting crew will require a copy of the waiver before digging. They also recommend having two bags of compost available. He also thanked Ms. Kuhn and Ms. Leggett for their work planning the Spring Town Social.

There are plans to have the holding tank at the new Post Office location placed under the parking lot. These plans will go to the Architectural Review Board and the building and zoning administrators for approval. Mayor Catlin is hopeful this will be accomplished in the next three weeks. A group of Town citizens met on March 7, 2020 to discuss the garden planting at the Post Office.

Ms. Leggett is moving out of town and thus resigning from her position on the Town Council. Mayor Catlin thanked her on behalf of the town for her many years of service on the Town Council, Planning Commission, and Board of Zoning Appeals. There will be an ad posted in the Rappahannock News seeking applicants for the vacancy.

Treasurer's Report: In Ms. Swift's absence Mayor Catlin informed the Council that the treasurer's report would be sent out via email later in the week. He explained the difference in the Meals & Lodging taxes for January was due to late payments in prior months.

Mr. Schneider made a motion to approve the bills to be paid and Ms. Leggett seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"	Mr. Whited voted "yes"
Ms. Leggett voted "yes"	Mayor Catlin voted "yes"
Mr. Schneider voted "yes"	

And the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Swift absent.

Planning Commission Report: Judy DeSarno reported the Planning Commission (PC) did not meet in February.

Architectural Review Board Report: The ARB did not meet in February.

Town Attorney: Mr. Bennett had no report.

- OLD BUSINESS:

- (a) Capacity Proposal for WWTP: Mr. Schneider reported he had a conversation with Don Hearl regarding the previously submitted proposal. Town Council has approved the work to be completed for \$7,600. Mr. Hearl changed the services to be provided based on the new pricing to only give an overview of the waterworks system. He will still be performing an in-depth review of the wastewater system.

Mr. Whited joined the meeting at 7:23 pm.

- (b) Budget Assumptions: Mayor Catlin asked the Council to bring any budget assumptions they had to the FY 20-21 budget work session scheduled for March 28, 9:00 am-12:00 pm at Town Hall.
- (c) Temporary clerical support: Mayor Catlin did not have an opportunity to reach out to a local high school for students wanted to complete community service work. He will make inquiries before the next meeting. If there are no students interested by March 27, an ad will be placed in the newspaper.

- NEW BUSINESS:

- (a) Consideration of consulting services proposal by Don Hearl: Mr. Schneider shared the proposal from Mr. Hearl to perform contracting work with the Town on an as-needed basis. He urged the Council to approve the rate of \$100 an hour. Mr. Hearl has retired from ESS but works as a consultant and has vast knowledge and experience with the Town's system. Ms. Leggett said she feels Mr. Hearl is the best person for the job.

Mr. Schneider made a motion to approve Mr. Hearl's consulting rate of \$100 an hour. Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"	Mr. Whited voted "yes"
Ms. Leggett voted "yes"	Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted “yes”

And the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. O’Connell and Ms. Swift absent.

- (b) Funding proposal: Mayor Catlin shared that during his time in office Town residents inquired if there were a way they could make charitable donations to the Town. Examples of contribution projects are: requesting to change the architectural look of the new post office and installation of sidewalks. There currently is no vehicle to allow a tax deductible contribution to be made to the Town. He suggested through a third party vendor- like Northern Piedmont Community Foundation- a tax deductible fund could be established that would allow individuals to make contributions to specific projects. Those projects would first be approved by the Town Council prior to being setup through a vendor. The identity of the contributor would be published in an annual report but not the amount of the donation.

Mr. Schneider shared that he felt it was key to have transparency in a plan like this and feels a third party vendor would allow that. He also feels donations made to a specific fund approved by the Town Council is a good idea. Ms. Kuhn asked if the interested donors were Town residents. Mayor Catlin replied that approximately 80% were.

Mr. Whited asked if it were possible to set up a 501(c)(3) so donations could be made directly to the Town. Mr. Bennett responded that this solution is not optimal because it would be like buying action from the Town but might be possible if the donation was made to a specific project. Mayor Catlin said contributions made directly to the Town would require reporting not only the donor but the amount of the donation. He said possible donors have expressed concerns regarding reports of the donation amount along with their names being made public.

- (c) Approval of financial procedures: This agenda item was tabled.
- (d) Annual Town contribution to local non-profit: This agenda item was tabled. Mayor Catlin will draft an application process for donations to be presented to the Council.
- (e) Appointment of ARB member: There is a vacancy on the ARB with the resignation of Sussanah Smith. There was one application submitted, Drew Mitchell, for the vacancy. Mayor Catlin shared Mr. Mitchell is a resident of the Town and had the opportunity to restore Avon Hall. During the last 18 years he has done similar projects of various sizes. Mr. Mitchell said he is excited for the opportunity to become more involved in the community.

Mayor Catlin made a motion to appoint Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”

Mr. Whited voted “yes”

Ms. Leggett voted “yes”

Mayor Catlin voted “yes”

Mr. Schneider voted “yes”

And the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. O’Connell and Ms. Swift absent.

- (f) Develop annual master calendar for 2020-2021: Mayor Catlin suggested a master calendar for the Town should be developed. Mr. Schneider asked whether the calendar would include FY due dates including tax filings or would it be a social calendar for Town events? Mayor Catlin

responded there could be two calendars established, one for Town social events and another for Town administration dates.

Mayor Catlin requested the Council send any ideas on activities to be included on the calendar to Barbara Batson, Town Clerk. Mr. Whited suggested the calendars be posted on the Town website to provide transparency.

- Public Forum: Mayor Catlin opened the Public Forum. Ms. DeSarno expressed her concern over having the Town set up a donation fund with a third party vendor that does not publish the amounts of the donations received. She feels this does not provide transparency and that by only publishing the names of donors you cannot see if any interested party has made a sizable contribution that would influence the Council. She also feels that a setup like this would lead individuals or outside groups to set ideas and agendas on what should be done in Town.

Mayor Catlin responded that the Town Council would approve prior to any donations what categories would be available for contributions. He again gave the examples of architectural updates to the post office and installation of sidewalks.

Ms. DeSarno expressed she is still very worried about this if the donation amounts weren't published because you couldn't be sure of the vested interests of the donors.

Mr. Bennett responded that if someone came to the Town with a proposal or a restricted gift the Council would still have its own agenda and would not fall prey to outside sources. No contribution buckets would be created without prior approval from Town Council.

Mayor Catlin suggested the item be tabled and he would draft protocols and present them at the April TC meeting and have a vote during the May TC meeting. He proposed Mr. Bennett investigate options available and a voice vote was taken. Ms. Kuhn, Ms. Leggett, Mr. Schneider, Mr. Whited and Mayor Catlin voted yes, with Ms. Swift and Mr. O'Connell absent.

- CLOSED SESSION: At 8:41 p.m. Mayor Catlin closed the public forum and motioned to go into closed session in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.2-3711A.7 for consultation with the town attorney regarding a specific legal matter requiring the provision of legal advice, namely, the rate for the Town's Meals and Lodging tax. Mr. Schneider seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

Ms. Leggett voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

And the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Swift absent.

- OPEN SESSION: At 9:45 p.m. Council returned to open session. 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 closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered by the Town Council. A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Ms. Leggett voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

And the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Swift absent.

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

- ADJOURNMENT: At 9:51 p.m. Mr. Whited motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Schneider seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"

Ms. Leggett voted "yes"

Mr. Schneider voted "yes"

And the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. O'Connell and Ms. Swift absent.

Mr. Whited voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL IS April 13, 2020.

Barbara Batson, Town Clerk

Attachments:

Additional Bills Paid

Bills to be Paid

Consulting Services Proposal from Don Hearl