

# The Town of Washington

December 13, 2021  
Council Meeting  
APPROVED Agenda  
7:00 p.m.

- CALL TO ORDER Action
- APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA Action
- MINUTES • November 8, 2021 Council meeting minutes Action
- REPORTS
  - Mayor's Report: Mayor Catlin Information
  - Planning Commission Information
  - Architectural Review Board Information
  - Treasurer's Report: Ms. Swift Action
  - Public Works Committee Information
- OLD BUSINESS
  - a) Council member to attend a meeting electronically Action
  - b) Water and sewer rates Action
  - c) ARB vacancy Action
- NEW BUSINESS
  - a) Discussion regarding pools Information
  - b) Discussion of Zoning Administrator and Town Attorney Information
  - c) Appoint Acting Zoning Administrator, Town Attorney and FOIA Officer Action
  - d) Schedule special meeting for December 17, 2021 Action
- PUBLIC FORUM
- CLOSED SESSION
  - Council may vote to enter into closed session in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.2-3711A.1 to discuss Town Clerk salary. Information
  - Council may vote to enter into closed session in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.2-3711 A.7 of the Va Code for consultation with the town attorney concerning adjustments to the Town boundaries, a specific legal matter requiring the provision of legal advice. Information

- OPEN SESSION
- ADJOURNMENT

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL  
JANUARY 10, 2021

# The Town of Washington

"THE FIRST WASHINGTON OF ALL"

December 13, 2021

7:00 p.m.

APPROVED Minutes

- CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Fred Catlin opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Council members Jean Goodine, Mary Ann Kuhn, Patrick O'Connell, Brad Schneider, Gail Swift and Joe Whited were present. Acting Town Attorney Martin Crim and Town Clerk Barbara Batson were present.
- APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA: Mayor Catlin made a motion to appoint an Acting Town Attorney after the minutes have been approved and add under new business: open vacancies, appointing an Acting FOIA Officer, continuing this meeting with a closed session, reviewing recent actions of the zoning administrator, and a request from the ARB. Ms. Swift seconded and a roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"  
Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"  
Ms. Swift voted "yes"  
Mayor Catlin voted "yes"  
And the motion passed 7-0

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"  
Mr. Schneider voted "yes"  
Mr. Whited voted "yes"

- MINUTES: Ms. Swift motioned to accept the minutes for November 8, 2021 and Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"  
Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"  
Ms. Swift voted "yes"  
Mayor Catlin voted "yes"  
And the motion passed 7-0

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"  
Mr. Schneider voted "yes"  
Mr. Whited voted "yes"

- Appointment of an Acting Town Attorney: Ms. Kuhn made a motion to appoint Mr. Martin Crim as the Acting Town Attorney through the end of business on December 17 and Mr. Whited seconded and a roll call vote was taken.

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"  
Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"  
Ms. Swift voted "yes"  
Mayor Catlin voted "yes"  
And the motion passed 7-0

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"  
Mr. Schneider voted "yes"  
Mr. Whited voted "yes"

REPORTS:

Mayor's Report: Mayor Catlin shared that Mr. John Bennett who has served as the Town Attorney and Zoning Administer resigned after 26 years of service. Mayor Catlin said that Mr. Bennett will be deeply missed. Since his resignation was tendered shortly before the Council meeting, Mayor Catlin suggested the Council would honor Mr. Bennett more fully at the next meeting.

Mayor Catlin shared that the planting has been completed at the post office and most of the interior work is done. The postmistress shared that they were waiting for IT work to be completed and the new signage should be installed next week. Given the approaching holiday season the post office will most likely open in the new year.

He thanked Ms. Dot Lessard, Ms. Kim Nelson and other volunteers for the work they did to make Winter Wonderland in Washington, on December 5, a wonderful event. Several hundred people attended this event. It was made possible by countless hours of Town and County volunteers. Mayor Catlin also thanked Mr. Drew Mitchell who provided the use of Avon Hall.

He also thanked the Washington planters for everything they did in town to decorate for the holiday season.

Planning Commission (PC): Ms. Caroline Anstey reported the Planning Commission (PC) met at the end of November. It focused on planning for the review of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan that is due in September 2022. The PC will invite the public to comment at its January 2022 meeting. The PC will look to see if it's still appropriate to call for a population of 250 residents in town, the impact of renewable and solar energy, the issue of internet connectivity and hotspots, plans for planned unit developments and boundary line adjustments. The commission is hoping to work with the public during several meetings throughout the process.

Architectural Review Board (ARB): Mayor Catlin reported that the ARB met on December 8 to review three applications, two of which were approved and another continued. The continued application was for the residential units for Rush River Commons. He shared that the ARB will have a work session on January 12, instead of its regular meeting, to discuss the Rush River Commons application. The ARB's regular meeting has been rescheduled to January 26.

Treasurer's Report: Ms. Swift asked that a review of the zoning fees be added to the January TC agenda. She mentioned the annual donation to the fire department of \$8,500 was included in this month's bills.

Ms. Swift made a motion to approve the bills to be paid and Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"  
Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"  
Ms. Swift voted "yes"  
Mayor Catlin voted "yes"

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"  
Mr. Schneider voted "yes"  
Mr. Whited voted "yes"

And the motion passed 7-0

Public works committee: Mr. Whited reported that the water meter replacement project has been continuing and is coming in under budget. There have been five meters replaced so far and another four scheduled for next month. The hope is to have the project completed by the end of the fiscal year. He also reported that the valve inspections would be occurring next month and the town is moving forward to create a plan to perform maintenance on the water tanks and to replace the cable on the water tower. The American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds have covered these projects so far.

Mr. Schneider said there is still more work to do at the wastewater treatment plant. The upcoming work is due to a combination of the age of the plant (15 years) and correcting problems from the initial installation. Any work being done on the plant is a long-term fix.

- **OLD BUSINESS:**

(a) Allowing a Council member to attend a meeting electronically: Ms. Kuhn asked for this topic be tabled to allow Mr. Crim time to review the policy and provide his feedback.

(b) Water and sewer rates: Ms. Swift suggested this topic be tabled until the January 10 meeting to allow time for another public hearing. Mr. Whited shared he felt this agenda item should move forward today since it had been discussed publicly for nine months and a public hearing was previously held. Mayor Catlin asked Mr. Crim for his opinion. Mr. Crim said when a public hearing is advertised it needs to include a notice that the proposed ordinance is available for inspection at the town office. He advised that the legal notice be advertised with the correct language and table this until January. Mayor Catlin asked if the rate change could be made retroactive to January 1, 2022 and Mr. Crim advised it could.

(c) ARB vacancy: Mayor Catlin motioned to extend the deadline for accepting applications to the January 10 meeting and Mr. Whited seconded and a voice vote was taken and was passed unanimously.

- **NEW BUSINESS:**

(a) Discussion regarding pools: Mayor Catlin shared that there is no clear information regarding swimming pools or solar panels for the ARB or Zoning Administrator to use when considering applications. He suggested referring these two items to the PC to review and make a recommendation back to TC. Mr. Whited suggested tabling this topic to the next TC meeting.

Mr. Whited made a motion to defer this agenda item and Ms. Kuhn seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"  
Mr. O'Connell voted "yes"  
Ms. Swift voted "yes"

Ms. Kuhn voted "yes"  
Mr. Schneider voted "yes"  
Mr. Whited voted "yes"

Mayor Catlin voted "yes"  
And the motion passed 7-0

(b) Town Vacancies:

- 1) Town Attorney and Zoning Administrator: Mayor Catlin shared that there is a vacancy for both the Town Attorney and Zoning Administrator. Any interested candidates should submit their interest to the Town Clerk by close of business on December 16.
- 2) Freedom of Information Act Officer (FOIA): Mayor Catlin motioned to appoint Ms. Batson, Town Clerk, as the Acting FOIA Officer until close of business on December 17 and Ms. Swift seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"	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 7-0

- (c) Continuation of meeting and closed session: Mayor Catlin motioned to continue this meeting until December 17 at 2:00 p.m. at Town Hall and include a closed session to interview prospective candidates for employment in accordance with the provisions in Section 2.2-3711A.1 and Ms. Swift seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"	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 7-0

- (d) ARB request for funding: Mayor Catlin shared the ARB has requested up to \$5,000 to employ an architect as a consultant to review the residential units on the Rush River Commons ARB application if the ARB couldn't find a voluntary architect who would do it pro bono.

Mayor Catlin motioned to approve the ARB to spend up to \$5,000 to employ an architect to review the plans for residential units at Rush River Commons and Ms. Swift seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"	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 7-0

(e) Recent zoning discussion: Mr. Whited made the following motions:

- 1) That the Council set aside the actions taken by the Zoning Administrator following his notification to the Council of his intent to resign on Saturday December 11 and that all applications under consideration be held over until the Council appoints a permanent Zoning Administrator.
- 2) That Ms. Batson, the Town Clerk, be appointed as the Acting Zoning Administrator with duties limited to the receipt and review for completeness of zoning applications until such time as a permanent Zoning Administrator is appointed.

Mayor Catlin seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"	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 7-0	

PUBLIC FORUM: Mayor Catlin opened the public forum at 7:40 p.m.

Ms. Anstey shared she feels it makes sense to separate the zoning administrator and town attorney roles but feels it's a great loss to the town to have lost Mr. Bennett as the town attorney. She feels he has been an enormous support to the PC and the Rush River Commons project. She hopes it's put on the record what a great loss it is for Mr. Bennett to resign as Town Attorney and feels we have been somewhat careless to have lost him.

Mayor Catlin said that Mr. Bennett is appreciated for everything he has done for the town and more opportunity will be given to acknowledge his contributions at the next meeting.

Mayor Catlin closed the public forum at 7:42 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION:

Mayor Catlin motioned to go into closed session in accordance with the provisions of Section 2.2-3711A.1 to discuss the Town Clerk's salary and Ms. Swift seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"	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 7-0

OPEN SESSION: Mayor Catlin moved to go into open session and Mr. Schneider seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"	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 7-0	

Mr. Crim asked each member: Do each of you certify that to the best of your knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in such meeting?

A roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"	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 7-0	

(f) Town Clerk's salary and job title: Ms. Swift made a motion to increase the Town Clerk's salary 10%, change her title to Town Administrator/Town Clerk and issue a holiday bonus and Ms. Goodine seconded and a roll call vote was taken:

Ms. Goodine voted "yes"	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 7-0	

CONTINUATION OF MEETING: Mayor Catlin said Town Council will continue this meeting to Friday, December 17 at 2 p.m.



THE CONTINUED MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL IS  
DECEMBER 17, 2021.

Barbara Batson, Town Clerk

Attachments:

Treasurer's report

Bills to be paid

Letter from ARB requesting funds