

**MINUTES  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2014  
TOWN HALL – 6:00 P.M.**

Council Members:

Kyle Fletcher-Mayor  
Kenneth Holbrook  
Greg Bailey  
Tim Boardwine  
Harry Kelly  
Jason Kilgore  
Monty Salyer

Julie Hensley – Town Attorney  
Debora Baca – Clerk/Treasurer  
Earl Carter – Public Works Director  
Bo Phillips – Police Chief  
Randy Beckner – Mattern & Craig  
Bob Harrison - IDA  
Andrea Hicks – Spearhead Trails  
Allen Gregory – CVTimes

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Fletcher at 6:03 p.m.

Due to weather conditions, Councilman Salyer asked that Andrea Hicks and Randy Beckner speak under “Public Requests” and move closed session to the next item of business in order to allow Ms. Hensley to leave early. Ms. Baca asked to add “ARC Filming” under New Business. Councilman Holbrook asked to add “Donation Request” as Item #11 under New Business. A motion was made by Councilman Holbrook to accept the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kilgore and approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Under Public Requests, Ms. Baca advised that Ronnie David was unable to attend the meeting. Next, Andrea Hicks, representing Spearhead Trails, addressed the Council regarding the funding request submitted by the Southwest Regional Recreation Authority. Andrea said they are asking for \$5,000 from the Town and \$5,000 from St. Paul IDA for maintenance and security costs associated with the trail. The security cost for the trail is about \$40,000 per year and a copy of their proposed budget was provided to Council. Wise County is currently contributing \$18,500 and a request has been submitted for an increase. She reviewed the contributions by other area towns and counties for their trail systems, including \$100,000 from Buchanan County, \$50,000 from Tazewell County, \$10,000 from Dickenson County, and Haysi has made a verbal commitment to provide assistance funding. Councilman Bailey commented on the positive impact of Spearhead Trails on our local economy. Councilman Kelly said he is supportive, but suggested considering this request in the 2015-16 budget because the Town’s budget is also tight, especially until after December. Andrea stressed the importance of keeping the security factor intact and the financial needs associated with providing the security and maintenance necessary to operate a safe, attractive trail system.

Randy Beckner, Mattern & Craig, reviewed the Project Report and award letter from the Virginia Department of Health for the Downtown Comprehensive Project. There is also an application pending with Rural Development for the downtown water system upgrades. The VDH award offers a 75% loan of \$510,730 at 2.25% for 30 years with \$136,000 of principal forgiveness. One of the requirements would be a required water rate increase in order to qualify. There was a brief discussion about median household income, possible rate increase requirements, and a

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combination of increasing water rates and decreasing the sewer percentage. Mr. Beckner noted that VDH must receive a response no later than December 12, 2014, and he recommended responding to the award offer by requesting a meeting indicating the town agrees to consider raising user rates and to arrange a meeting to further discuss the details of the award. Upon inquiry, Mr. Beckner said if the town receives a better grant or cannot agree on specifics, they do not have to accept the award. During further discussion about the household median income being near \$40,000, Councilman Holbrook stated concern about raising water rates, but noted that he cannot believe the median income is that high. Mr. Beckner said the response letter can be worded so that VDH understands there is question about the median income and the amount of user rate increase required. He further said he would write the letter on behalf of the town. Councilman Salyer made a motion to authorize Randy Beckner to prepare such a letter. The motion was seconded by Councilman Boardwine and passed unanimously.

Councilman Salyer moved to enter into Closed Session to discuss Personnel under VA Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), Acquisition & Disposition of Property under VA Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(3), and Legal under VA Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(7). The motion was seconded by Councilman Boardwine and a roll call vote was taken: Kelly-Aye; Kilgore-Aye; Boardwine-Aye; Holbrook-Aye; Bailey-Aye; Salyer-Aye. The motion passed 6-0.

A motion was made by Councilman Holbrook to enter back into Open Session, certifying that the only matters discussed in Closed Session was Personnel under VA Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), Acquisition & Disposition of Property under VA Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(3), and Legal under VA Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(7). The motion was seconded by Councilman Kilgore and a roll call vote was taken: Kelly-Aye; Kilgore-Aye; Boardwine-Aye; Holbrook-Aye; Bailey-Aye; Salyer-Aye. The motion passed 6-0.

Upon return from Closed Session, a motion was offered by Councilman Holbrook to give employee Mancil Kiser an increase of \$1.00 per hour. Mr. Kiser has passed his Level III water certification test. A second was offered by Councilman Kelly and a roll call vote was taken: Kelly-Aye; Kilgore-Aye; Boardwine-Aye; Holbrook-Aye; Bailey-Aye; Salyer-Aye. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

Mayor Fletcher made the following announcements:

- 1) The Christmas Bazaar will be on November 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. The Santa Train will arrive at 11:08 a.m. and depart at 11:28 a.m. Amy Grant will be on the train.
- 2) The Christmas Tree Lighting will be held on December 5<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. with the Castlewood High School Band and St. Paul Elementary Choir performing. Hot chocolate, popcorn, and cookies will be served. The Christmas Parade will be held the following day, Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.
- 3) The dredging of Oxbow Lake has been completed. Approximately 13,000 yards of sediment was removed and can be used as backfill for the new sewer plant. The low bid for dredging was \$83,000 and the town crew did it for less than \$25,000, saving the town

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almost \$60,000 on the project. The crew also created a sediment basin where it can be cleaned out each year. The banks will be reworked in the spring.

- 4) Mark Hutchinson is a fly fishing expert looking for an opportunity to hold classes in the spring at our local gyms. Councilman Salyer asked that a notice be placed in the paper at that time to contact the town hall to determine the amount of interest in this class.

A motion was made by Councilman Salyer, seconded by Councilman Kilgore, to approve the October minutes as presented. The motion carried by unanimous roll call vote.

Councilman Holbrook moved to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Boardwine and unanimously approved by roll call vote.

**Old Business:**

Earl Carter reported that the screens have been ordered but we still have not received them. Mr. Carter said we will be contacting Kason to check on the status of the screens. Mayor Fletcher said he will contact Kason. Mr. Carter said if this is going to be the norm for screen repair, we may have to look at getting another screen or look at a different way to deal with the sand.

A motion was made by Councilman Bailey to allocate \$5,000 to Southwest Regional Recreation Authority (Spearhead Trails) from this year's budget. Councilman Kelly said he is supportive of assisting with the trails, but questioned the amount of money remaining in the budget for this year and suggested considering this for the budget next year. The motion was seconded by Councilman Boardwine. Councilman Bailey talked about the increase in revenue from purchased meals tax and lodging tax over the past year. Three percent of the lodging tax is designated to go back to tourism. Councilman Bailey also pointed out that we have not spent any money from the "Trails Maintenance" line item. Ms. Baca said it could be paid from that, but \$5,000 was for the Bluebell to Oxbow Trail. She also explained that other items that were not budgeted have been paid from the contingency line and Council will be looking at making the appropriate adjustment after the first of the year because we will then know the exact amount of the Dominion taxes and rebate. Pointing out the commitment by the town to support recreational tourism, Councilman Salyer called for the question and a roll call vote was taken: Salyer-Aye; Bailey-Aye; Holbrook-Aye; Boardwine-Aye; Kilgore-Abstain; Kelly-Aye. The motion passed 5-0.

A motion was made by Councilman Salyer to allocate \$600 from the Advertising Line Item #10-400-0550 for an advertisement in the Crooked Road Appalachian Backroads map of the area designated motorcycle trails. The motion was seconded by Councilman Boardwine and passed unanimously.

Mayor Fletcher reported that the park pavilion roof and stage roof painting has been completed. A motion was made by Councilman Holbrook to remove this item from the table. The motion was seconded by Councilman Boardwine and passed unanimously. Councilman Kelly said there

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is a gallon of paint left over and the contractor indicated he would paint the old restroom roof and the small shelter roof for \$150 more. It was decided this could be discussed under New Business Item#6.

**New Business:**

The Treasurer discussed paying off the Interim Financing Note with First Bank & Trust. She reminded Council members that in February of this year, they voted to pay the additional \$200,000 to Merrell Brothers for sludge removal and to use the interim financing until it could be paid. Ms. Baca explained that the loan balance due to the utility fund from the general fund is \$600,000 and the agreement between funds is that the general fund will pay back \$100,000 per year. She recommended paying \$200,000 this year in order to pay off the interim financing note with First Bank & Trust. Councilman Salyer moved to pay \$200,000 from the general fund to the utility fund note. The motion was seconded by Councilman Boardwine and unanimously approved. Next, Ms. Baca noted that the utility fund has a negative balance in the checking account. The amount in the budget to transfer from the general fund is \$157,000, but a motion is needed to indicate if Council intends for this transfer to be paid back. Ms. Baca recommended that \$100,000 of this be transferred before the next council meeting. A motion was made by Councilman Boardwine, seconded by Councilman Kilgore, to approve the Treasurer's recommendation to transfer \$100,000 from the general fund to the utility fund, not to be paid back. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Councilman Salyer moved to advertise one time in a local paper for proposals for a three year lease on the rental of the park caboose. He proposed the longer term lease be considered so we are not addressing this on an annual basis. The motion was seconded by Councilman Holbrook and passed unanimously.

At the last council meeting, the Student Government Association at Castlewood High School expressed an interest in selecting a student to be a non-voting member of the town council. Councilman Salyer stated his support of this idea, offering a motion to contact Castlewood High School to advise that the town is willing to work with them on this, but only if the motion passes unanimously. He would not support this if any council member objects. The motion was seconded by Councilman Boardwine. Mayor Fletcher acknowledged his support of the motion. Councilman Bailey commented on the advantage of having a young member to provide a different perspective. A roll call vote was taken: Kelly-Aye; Kilgore-Aye; Boardwine-Aye; Holbrook-Aye; Bailey-Aye; Salyer-Aye. The motion passed 6-0.

Councilman Holbrook reminded Council that when the park cameras were installed, the Little League phone line was utilized for the internet service. He and Ms. Baca discussed this matter and decided to bring it to the Council to decide if they want to change this line over to the town or if they just want the town to reimburse the Little League. There was discussion about the DSL service currently provided and the need for additional band width. Councilman Kilgore said Verizon offers different packages and we could increase the upload speed. Chief Phillips

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explained the reason we used the existing line was to save money because the amount quoted for a new service was about \$140 per month and the current line costs around \$70 per month, therefore, we asked the Little League to keep their phone line and we would pay the bill. Councilman Salyer asked why the town couldn't just change the responsible party on the current line. Councilman Kilgore recommended getting an access point so wi-fi would be available at the park. Mayor Fletcher pointed out that it needs to be determined exactly what services we want, but the Little League has been paying the bills in the meantime. Following further discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Salyer to table this item, check with Verizon about changing the line to the town, and to reimburse the Little League until it is resolved. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kilgore and unanimously approved.

Implementing a first responder program for police officers was tabled from last month's meeting pending cost information on equipment needed and training the officers. Earl Carter presented several options on how to implement this idea; 1) set up training and equipment for the police department only; 2) include the police and fire department; 3) open it up to other entities or citizens. There are multiple options as to how this can be set up. There would need to be an emergency medical technician to be a primary person. The first responder course is a 63 hour course and the EMT course is 160 hour course. Mr. Carter provided everyone a copy of the equipment list and advised it would cost about \$3500 per vehicle, but that could be decreased depending on the number of participants. Mr. Carter said he is certified to provide the training and will provide training at no cost to the town. There would be a cost for a federal background check on each person who is a member of the organization. Mr. Carter discussed the requirements to become a licensed first responder agency. Mayor Fletcher commented that the goal was to train police officers to be able to respond to a medical emergency since they are typically the first to arrive on the scene. He also stated concern that, as this is discussed further, it appears we are trying to become an independent agency. Chief Phillips said it is important for the officers to be trained and to have the needed equipment to respond. Right now, he believes there are 5 officers willing to participate, but they would be first responders only. Mr. Carter said Wellmont is pushing the first response agencies and equipment costs may be reduced through various equipment grants. Chief Phillips said if the town opts to become a certified agency, more grant monies are available. After discussion about the required paperwork to become an agency and the initial application, Councilman Holbrook asked if this action would require a resolution. Mayor Fletcher said that question would need to be referred to the Town Attorney. Councilman Holbrook moved to table, authorizing Earl and Bo to continue looking into this and come back with answer to the questions raised. The motion was seconded by Councilman Salyer. Councilman Kelly suggested looking at getting a couple of equipment bags and sharing them between vehicles. Mr. Carter said he has one fire department vehicle that is equipped, but isn't certified. Councilman Salyer recommended starting by certifying what we have. Upon inquiry by Councilman Boardwine, Mr. Carter said the unit would be a St. Paul Police & Fire Department single agency. Mayor Fletcher called for a roll call vote: Kelly-Aye; Kilgore-Aye; Boardwine-Aye; Holbrook-Aye; Bailey-Aye; Salyer-Aye. The motion passed 6-0.

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While viewing the new paving at the park, Councilman Kilgore said he realized we have a tan bathroom, a green picnic shelter, and a brown stage. He suggested painting the pavilion and the old bathroom the same color as the new restroom at the end of the park. Following a brief discussion, Councilman Salyer suggested this matter be referred to the Beautification Committee. A motion was made by Councilman Kilgore, seconded by Councilman Salyer, to refer park building painting to the Beautification Committee. The motion passed unanimously. Councilman Kelly said they will select from branding colors.

Next, Councilman Kilgore discussed placing fishing docks or platforms at Oxbow Lake so fishermen could fish off the trail site and it would be handicap accessible. There was a brief discussion about the advantages of having a fishing platform and where one or more could be placed. Councilman Kilgore also mentioned the possibility of having a walking bridge across the lake. Mayor Fletcher said we have a foot bridge at Estonoa that needs to be replaced, so we need to think about the cost of that. Councilman Kilgore said several people have asked about placing concrete benches that would not be easy to move. Councilman Kilgore asked council members to be thinking about these ideas and to consider them when planning enhancements at Oxbow Lake. Mayor Fletcher commented on how much Oxbow is used and the importance of continuing to maintain it.

Councilman Bailey asked why the Oxbow Lake was dredged but the rip rap wasn't placed on the banks. Mayor Fletcher said a sediment pond was created to help keep sediment out and make it easy to remove every year. Councilman Bailey said the engineer had recommended the rip rap wall to keep the sediment expanding into the lake. Ms. Baca said some rip rap was used because there were invoices for two loads. Earl said they probably used it along the bank. He also commented that a lot of the rip rap could be done without draining the lake very much. Mayor Fletcher said he will check on it and get back to Council.

Councilman Holbrook said he likes the idea of fishing docks, offering a motion to table the matter for further discussion. The motion was seconded by Councilman Boardwine and passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Councilman Bailey to purchase an \$80 full page ad in the Castlewood High School Yearbook. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kilgore and carried unanimously.

Ms. Baca said ARC has called to ask if the town would like to have the Christmas Bazaar, Santa Train, and Parade filmed. The cost would be \$600, all of the events would be shown on the local cable channel, and a cd would be given to the town for their use. Mayor Fletcher asked if anyone wanted to make a motion regarding this item. The issue died due to lack of a motion.

Councilman Holbrook said he was asked to bring a donation request to help with expenses for Trevor Ingle, a sixteen year old Castlewood student who recently had a hunting accident. He was sent to UVA hospital in Charlottesville and the injuries will require multiple surgeries to

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save his arm. His father is currently out of work and they are in need of assistance. Even though it may not be appropriate for the town to consider a donation, Councilman Holbrook said he is willing to donate his last two council checks and challenged others to do the same. There was a discussion about different ways people in the community are helping.

There being no further business, Mayor Fletcher adjourned the meeting.

\_\_\_\_\_ Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_ Clerk