

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF VINTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2010, IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE VINTON MUNICIPAL BUILDING LOCATED AT 311 SOUTH POLLARD STREET, VINTON, VIRGINIA.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bradley E. Grose, Mayor
Robert R. Altice
Carolyn D. Fidler
Matthew S. Hare
William W. Nance

STAFF PRESENT: Chris Lawrence, Town Manager
Consuella Caudill, Asst. Town Manager
Elizabeth Dillon, Town Attorney
Gloria Morgan, Acting Town Clerk
Barry Thompson, Finance Director/Treasurer
Anita McMillan, Planning Director
Joey Hiner, Assistant Public Works Director

Agenda

- A. 7:00 P.M. –Roll Call and Establishment of a Quorum
 - B. INVOCATION
 - C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U. S. FLAG
 - D. CONSENT AGENDA
 - 1. Request to Approve Minutes for Regular Meetings of July 20 and August 17, 2010 and Special Called Meeting of August 3, 20
 - 2. Request to Appoint Paul Mason to Vinton Planning Commission
 - 3. Request to Recommend Appointment of Don Altice as a Regular Member of the Vinton Board of Zoning Appeals
 - E. AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS, PRESENTATIONS
 - 1. Report from Vinton Historical Society
 - 2. Recognize Finance Department for GFOA Award
 - F. CITIZENS' COMMENTS AND PETITIONS
 - G. OLD BUSINESS
 - H. TOWN ATTORNEY
 - I. TOWN MANAGER
 - 1. Glade Creek Riparian Buffer Update
 - J. MAYOR
 - K. COUNCIL
 - 1. Finance Committee Report
 - L. ADJOURNMENT
- WORK SESSION
- 1. Discussion – Commercial Vehicles

Mayor Grose called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Following roll call, Mr. Bill Booth gave the invocation and Councilman Altice led the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

Roll call, invocation and Pledge of Allegiance to U.S. Flag.

The consent agenda was approved on a motion by Mr. Nance and seconded by Ms. Fidler. The motion passed with all in favor.

Approved Consent Agenda

Don and Carolyn Williams thanked Town Council and Town employees for their efforts to make Relay for Life a very successful event. They reported that all of their goals were met for 2010 and that they expected the Vinton Relay for Life per capita ranking to be very high in the nation. Ms. Williams noted that Vinton's Relay for Life per capita rate this year was \$10.81. Mr. and Mrs. Williams presented a framed certificate to the Mayor recognizing the Town for its contribution to the event.

Mattie Forbes expressed her appreciation on behalf of the Vinton Historical Society for the support they receive from the Town of Vinton and reported on their activities for the year. Doug Forbes gave a brief report on the work done by volunteers on the property and thanked Public Works employees who assisted with removing old bathroom and kitchen fixtures. He noted that the room upstairs that was a kitchen will be designated the Town of Vinton Room.

Mayor Grose presented the Town's Finance Director/Treasurer, Barry Thompson, with a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Governmental Finance Office. Mr. Thompson pointed out that he would not have received this award without the assistance of his great staff.

Aaron Lyles, who lives at 836 Mansard Square Drive, proposed that a Civic League be formed in the Town. Mr. Lyle felt that this would be a good way to actively engage citizens within the Town. He further explained that a civic league would be another avenue for Town officials and citizens to get together to discuss ideas.

Ms. Fidler commented that she felt that Council needs to look at what the financial implications may be before the Town gets involved. She requested more information.

The Mayor stated that he would certainly support such an organization.

Mr. Lawrence followed up on the development of a riparian buffer on

Follow-up on riparian

Glade Creek in the Midway area. He advised that a neighborhood meeting had taken place to address neighborhood concerns regarding vegetation growing in the buffer area. Mr. Lawrence noted that at the meeting, considerably more education on riparian buffers was provided to citizens who live in the area. buffer issue

A discussion ensued on what the Town could do to make the riparian buffer more acceptable to the neighborhood as well as what the neighbors wanted to see take place. Mr. Lawrence advised that the group was able to find a "happy medium" with respect to environmental responsibility for the creek and the Town's financial responsibility. He further advised that by the end of the meeting, everyone involved was in agreement with the decision to mow an additional 20 feet of ground area. He noted that 50 plus feet of the riparian buffer would remain and would provide the needed protection.

The Town Manager advised that he had informed Mr. Drewery of the compromise and that he and two other residents who had not attended the meeting, had agreed on the compromise to mow 20 feet of the riparian buffer area. Mr. Lawrence pointed out that another key issue was weeds that had grown to more than 3 feet in height. He went on to say that the urban forester who had attended the meeting had recommended that the Town spot spray the large weeds in the buffer area so they would not grow back.

Mr. Lawrence reported that Ms. McMillan is currently working on a grant to fund future projects that will focus on areas that are not in neighborhoods.

Mr. Nance thanked Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Kennedy and Ms. McMillan for their efforts to work out a plan that was agreeable with all parties.

Mr. Altice noted that staff would need to speak with Mr. Pritchard, a citizen in the neighborhood to advise him that he had to stop mowing the buffer area. Mr. Hare questioned the wisdom of spraying the tall weeds that were growing in the area and Mr. Lawrence assured him that it was an acceptable practice to spray them. Mr. Hare questioned the Assistant Public Works Director as to how much time it would take to mow the additional 20 feet of buffer area. Mr. Hiner responded that he was not sure how long it would take but the area would need considerable prep work before the mowing could be done.

Mayor Grose thanked staff for their efforts in arriving at an equitable agreement.

Mayor Grose commented that he had received a “thank you” note from Eagle Scout Lawrence Garland, who had installed the picnic area located next to the Municipal Building. He felt that the Town needed to thank Mr. Garland for his efforts in preparing the site and installing the picnic tables and benches. He asked the Town Clerk to prepare a Certificate of Appreciation for Mr. Garland and to invite him and his Scout Troop to attend a future Town Council meeting.

Mayor Grose reported that the Downtown Revitalization Plan had been presented at a meeting held earlier that day and advised that the process was continuing.

The Mayor expressed his appreciation to Thrasher Memorial United Methodist Church for their efforts that made it possible for the Town to operate the Vinton Pool this summer. Following a brief discussion, the Mayor announced that Town Council would be attending all three church services at Thrasher on Sunday, September 19th to recognize the Church’s congregation for their work and financial support. He asked the Town Clerk to prepare a proclamation to be presented at the Church services.

Mayor Grose reported that during the Fall Festival, Police Sergeant Anna Wooten had been asked to install a child safety seat in a Town resident’s vehicle. He advised that Sergeant Wooten had advised the vehicle owner that her car seat would not work properly and recommended that she purchase a new car seat. The Mayor went on to say that shortly after this incident, the vehicle was involved in an accident. He stated that the driver of the vehicle had spoken to him at church and had advised him that she credited the Vinton Police Department with the survival of her infant due to Sergeant Wooten’s recommendation. Mayor Grose noted that doing your job well every day can make a difference.

Vice Mayor Fidler commented that she enjoyed the Downtown Revitalization meeting and really liked the ideas for the Farmers Market. She also pointed out new businesses that had opened in the Town.

Mr. Nance congratulated the Finance Department for their GFOA award and recognized the Historical Society for the work they do.

Mr. Hare thanked Thrasher Memorial United Methodist Church for their time and money to make this year a successful one for the Vinton Pool. He also thanked Town staff for their efforts in the pool operation this year.

Mr. Hare moved to appoint Aaron Lyles to the Roanoke Valley Greenway Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Nance and unanimously approved on a roll call vote. Mr. Lyles thanked Council for the appointment.

Mr. Hare briefly reported on a finance committee meeting that was held on September 2nd. He advised that the Finance Committee gave staff clear direction to develop a method of reporting financial information that can be easily understood by Council and the general public.

He also reported that the Committee discussed sewer connections and whether or not Council may want to offer a loan program to citizens in need. He went on to say that staff is currently working on this issue and will bring it before Council in the near future.

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

WORK SESSION

1. Discussion – Commercial Vehicles

Mr. Lawrence advised that before staff prepares an ordinance to regulate commercial vehicles, they need to ensure that all the necessary issues are being addressed.

Karla Turman, Associate Planner, requested Council's input as to what should or should not be allowed so that an enforceable commercial vehicle code can be implemented that applies to private property as well as to the street.

She noted that during their last discussion with staff, it was apparent that Council was concerned with appearance, with the safety aspect and with the character of the Town. She pointed out that Council had expressed a desire for the Town to retain its character as a "working town". Ms. Turman advised that a committee was formed to discuss these issues.

She briefly enlightened Council on the Town's current commercial vehicle ordinance. The definition of a pick-up truck was also discussed. Ms. Turman asked for Council's input on signage for commercial vehicles, size of commercial vehicles and specific types of trucks. Ms. Fidler stated that she was concerned with how the size of vehicles would impact narrow streets. Ms. Turman responded that if safety was an issue, Council might need to consider vehicle size and

weight. Following further discussion, Ms. Turman advised that staff needs a definition that would not be left open to interpretation and can be enforced by the Police Department. Mr. Lawrence pointed out that the Town's current commercial vehicle ordinance is legal and enforceable.

In response to a question from the Mayor as to what needs to be included in a new ordinance, Ms. Turman asked for direction from Town Council on that issue. She requested Council's direction on how to classify commercial and personal vehicles and if classification should be based on size and weight or on appearance.

Mr. Hare questioned whether the Town wanted a general definition or a more broad definition. In response to a question from Mr. Nance on whether Council needs to regulate private vehicles, Council made it plain that they had no interest in regulating private vehicles. Mr. Lawrence questioned whether Council wanted to regulate signage on commercial vehicles and whether or not they wanted to change Code requirements for the number of tires or axels. Mr. Hare responded that he did not have a problem with regulating dual axels but did have a problem going after people with "dualleys". Mr. Nance commented that Council seemed to be looking more at heavier commercial vehicles than at commercial vehicles. He went on to say that they are going to have to set a flat 7,500 lb. weight or get more specific in the commercial truck definition. He stated that he doubted that Council would ever be able to come up with a perfect definition for a commercial vehicle but they needed to make a decision on the issue. Ms. Fidler stated that she would agree with anything under a certain size. Ms. Turman noted that the size would need to be determined in a manner that would not require the vehicle to be measured manually. She added that a police officer should also be able to run the tag number through DMV and determine the vehicle weight.

Ms. Fidler requested a copy of Roanoke City's ordinance. Ms. Turman replied that she would make a copy for her.

Mr. Nance asked if Council might wish to keep the old code but amend it to define a pick-up body type as one with a pick-up like cab that meets the light-duty truck requirements of the Virginia DMV. Mr. Lawrence felt that the numbers of axles needed to be clarified in the ordinance. Ms. Turman asked if Council wanted to change the section "empty weight of 5,000 pounds" or leave it as it is. It was recommended that the section remain as it is because it would catch most types of vehicles. Council also recommended changing the wording of "2 rear wheels" to "2 rear axles or more". The last change requested was to include the following statement: "This shall not apply to light-duty pick-up type trucks with a gross weight of 7,500 pounds or less".

Mr. Lawrence stated that the ordinance needs to be written specifically for the Town. He recommended that Council allow staff to go through the weight differentiation between gross weight and empty weight to see how that would change the ordinance and then bring a proposal back to Council for their consideration.

Ms. Turman asked for direction regarding parking on private property which is not allowed at the present. Council concluded that if a commercial vehicle is not allowed to park on the street they did not want them parking on private property in a residential area.

The work session adjourned at 9:37 p.m.

APPROVED:

Bradley E. Grose, Mayor

ATTEST:

Darleen R. Bailey, Town Clerk