



TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

Monday, July 11, 2022 at 7:00 PM - Town Hall Conference Room

The following minutes are a summary of items on the agenda.

This meeting may be viewed in its entirety by accessing the video of the same date online via the Town's website at www.frontroyalva.com.

Items Slated for Public hearings on July 25th and August 22nd –

Proposed Ordinance Amendments to Town Code Chapter 16 – Industrial Development Authority – Town Manager Hicks gave Council a brief overview of the proposed amendments and that it would be placed on the July 25th agenda as a public hearing. There was no further discussion.

Proposed Ordinance Amendments to Town Code Chapter 175 – Data Centers – Director of Planning Kopishke gave Council an overview of the proposed text amendments to Chapter 175 and that it would go to the Planning Commission and Town Council for public hearings. There was no further discussion.

Items Slated for Consent Agenda for July 25th Regular Council Meeting –

Bid for Three-Phase Transformers – Finance Director Wilson advised Council that it would be approximately 1 ½ years before the Town was to receive the transformer. Mr. Hicks advised that all localities are having the same issue of receiving transformers. It was noted that it would be placed on the Consent Agenda of the July 25th meeting.

Bid for Concrete – Mr. Wilson advised Council that the bids were due tomorrow and that it would be placed on the Consent Agenda of the July 25th meeting.

FY23 Budget Amendment to Receive Funds from the Anti-Litter Council – Mr. Wilson gave a brief overview of the funds and that it would be placed on the Consent Agenda of the July 25th meeting.

Proposed Ordinance Amendments to Town Code Chapter 4 – Clerk of Council Presley gave Council a brief overview of the proposed amendments to Chapter 4. Vice Mayor Cockrell questioned remote participation. Deputy Town Attorney Sonnett advised that the proposed amendments were to match wording as currently stated in the Virginia State Code. There was much discussion regarding the difference between participating in meetings remotely and being absent. Mr. Sonnett advised striking 4-1.1.D. as it was redundant and not needed. Vice Mayor Cockrell also questioned the removal of the Town Manager supervising the legal department (4-27 and 4-39). There was much discussion on whether to leave this amendment as presented or not. Mr. Hicks suggested adding "Assistant Town Manager" as 4-53.B.5. Council agreed to advertise the proposed amendments to Chapter 4 as presented and to include the two amendments suggested by Mr. Sonnett and Mr. Hicks, for August 22nd. It was also noted that Council would continue to discuss the amendments at their next work session on August 8th.

Condemnation Resolution for Redundant Waterline for the Route 522 North Corridor – Assistant Town Manager Leidich briefed Council on the condemnation resolution, noting that it was the next natural step in the process. There was no further discussion.

Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) Special Use Permits – Ms. Kopishke advised that a text amendment to Chapter 175 is required to allow the BZA to approve special use permits. She explained that it would remove the Planning Commission and Town Council from commenting and/or approving them. It was noted that the amendment would be for all special use permit requests and a public hearing would be held for each. She noted that other jurisdictions are allowing the BZA to handle the permit requests and it is allowed by Virginia State Code. Council voiced concern over the appeal process since all appeals would be heard by the Circuit Court whether they were denied by Council or the BZA. After much discussion, Council agreed to leave the approval process of special use permits as it currently stands.

E. Main Street Walking Mall Kickoff – Mr. Hicks reminded Council that the proposed walking mall is a FY23 Council initiative. He showed them a timeline. Councilman Gillispie voiced concern that when this subject was discussed before there was a public outcry from businesses on Main Street that included parking and costs. Mr. Hicks noted that Council has budgeted \$15,000 to begin, noting that it would not be expensive to begin the conversion. Councilman McFadden noted that the closure was “awesome” during COVID restrictions. Rick Novak of Royal Cinemas was in attendance and was asked to speak by Council. Mr. Novak advised that the approximately 20 weeks Main Street was closed on the weekends went very well but felt the demand was not there to close the street permanently. Council asked that Mr. Hicks get the number of parking spaces that would be removed on Main Street if the closure were to occur. After much discussion Council agreed to the timeline suggested and that a survey and public input sessions were a must.

Appoint Non-Elected Representative to Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission – Council agreed to appoint Director of Planning Lauren Kopsishe as the non-elected representative.

Liaison Committee Meeting Items for July 21st – The following were asked to be placed on the Liaison Committee Meeting for July 21st:

- Parks and Recreation Activities to include Midget Football Status of charges
- Update on Building Department that included the process of dealing with blighted buildings in Town limits and whether the Committee that was stated in the Agreement has been meeting
- Update on Water Study
- Tourism’s next steps with an update to Council in form of report or matrix
- Update on Town and County Comprehensive Plans
- Update on McKay Springs property
- Update on WCEDA negotiations
- Additional funds for the trolley (match)

Open Discussion – Councilman Gillispie questioned the process of the condemnation of blighted buildings, noting that the Building Official was not needed for the Town to move forward. It was noted to confirm this at the Liaison Committee Meeting. Staff confirmed that paving would begin on July 18th. Mr. Gillispie questioned the Prospect Bridge replacement. Mr. Wilson advised that it has not been put back out to bid due to the costs of the first bid. Mr. Gillispie also questioned the 8th Street Bridge replacement. Mr. Wilson advised that this would be approximately three years being a revenue sharing project with VDOT.

Mayor Holloway questioned what Town events were being planned for downtown. Mr. Hicks advised that the electric hookups for the food trucks had just been completed. He noted that he would be speaking with Special Events Coordinator Lizi Lewis and get back with Council on updates.

Vice Mayor Cockrell asked for a Rail Trail update from Mr. Hindman at an upcoming regular meeting.

Mr. Hicks reminded Council of the following:

- July 13 – Joint Retreat with FREDA from 4:00p – 8:00p
- July 13 – Fireman’s Parade at 5:00pm
- July 14 – Fireman’s Fireworks after the Cardinals Game

He also noted that the Town’s July 3rd fireworks display was a “hit”. The flagpole has been installed in the Commons Area in Downtown Front Royal.

Adjourn – 8:30pm

PRESENT: Mayor Holloway, Vice Mayor Cockrell, Councilmembers Gillispie, Jackson, McFadden, and Thompson, Town Manager Steven Hicks, Deputy Town Attorney George Sonnett, Clerk of Council Tina Presley, Finance Director BJ Wilson, Assistant Town Manager Kathy Leidich, Director of Planning Lauren Kopishke, Manager of IT Grant Autry and members of the public and press.

ABSENT: Councilwoman Morris

Approved by Town Council

Date: 7/25/22