



TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
Monday, November 6, 2023 @ 6:00pm
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 for a limited time.

Roll Call by Clerk of Council

PRESENT: Mayor Lori A. Cockrell
 Councilwoman Melissa DeDomenico-Payne
 Councilman Joshua L. Ingram
 Councilwoman Amber F. Morris
 Councilman H. Bruce Rappaport
 Councilman Duane R. "Skip" Rogers
 Vice Mayor R. Wayne Sealock

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Manager Joseph E. Waltz
 Town Attorney George M. Sonnett, Jr.
 Clerk of Council Tina L. Presley
 Various members of the staff and public (in open session only)

2. CLOSED MEETING

Councilman Rappaport moved, seconded by Councilwoman Morris that Town Council convene a closed meeting, pursuant to Sections 2.2-3711 and 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, for the following purpose:

1) pursuant to §2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia, for the discussion, consideration, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body, more specifically Front Royal Economic Development Authority (FREDA) and the Local Board of Building Code Appeals (LBBCA); and,

2) pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(7) of the Code of Virginia, consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body, more specifically, Town of Front Royal v. Front Royal-Warren County EDA and Front Royal – Warren County EDA v. Town of Front Royal

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers DeDomenico-Payne, Ingram, Morris, Rappaport, Rogers, Vice Mayor Sealock

No – N/A

Absent – N/A

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

Councilman Ingram moved seconded by Vice Mayor Sealock that Council certify that to the best of each member's knowledge, as recognized by each Council member's affirmative vote, that only such public business matters lawfully exempted from Open Meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the Closed Meeting by Council, and that the vote of each individual member of Council be taken by roll call and recorded and included in the minutes of the meeting of Town Council.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers DeDomenico-Payne, Ingram, Morris, Rappaport, Rogers, Vice Mayor Sealock

No – N/A

Absent – N/A

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

3. ACTION ITEMS

A. Memorandum of Agreement (“MOA”) Between the Town of Front Royal, the County of Warren, and Reaching Out Now, Inc. (RON) for the Operation of the Santmyers Student Union and Activity Center by Revitalizing the Former Raymond E. Santmyers Youth Center, Located at 201 E. 8th Street

Mayor Cockrell gave an overview of how the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was finalized during the last several months that included discussions with *Reaching Out Now, Inc. (RON)* and the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) during the latest Liaison Committee Meeting. She advised after meeting with RON the MOA was tweaked to meet their concerns as early as today. Town Attorney George Sonnett passed out the latest redlined MOA to Council and commented on the revisions. Mayor Cockrell summarized that the building was being provided by the County pursuant to the Voluntary Settlement Agreement (VSA) and the Town was providing a \$25,000 donation immediately upon final execution of the MOA. She stressed the importance of each localities’ responsibilities so there was no confusion. Mr. Sonnett advised that he was contacted by the County Attorney today advising him that the BOS was placing the MOA on their next agenda for discussion. He stated that RON was fine with the agreement as presented in the redlined document he just passed out. He reminded Council that they authorized him to send the original draft to the County Attorney in October which he did and that it was an action item tonight to get the MOA moving forward.

Mayor Cockrell advised that it was the Town’s intent to provide funding now and additional funding would be decided in January for the next year. She also advised that the County Administrator advised her that RON hoped to get into the building by the end of the year which placed the funding approval on a “faster track.”

Councilwoman Morris moved, seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenico-Payne that Council approve a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Reaching Out Now, Inc. (RON) and Warren County as presented, with the Mayor to execute the MOA on behalf of the Town following execution by Reaching Out Now, Inc. (RON) and Warren County and provided that there are no material changes to the MOA as determined by the Town Attorney.

Amber stated that the Town’s part was done, and RON was comfortable with the MOA as written. Mayor Cockrell reiterated that the motion allowed the opportunity for her as Mayor to execute the MOA as long as there were no material changes, noting material changes would come back to Council for review.

Councilman Ingram noticed an error in the MOA specifically Section 11 Termination first sentence “Section 16”, noting there was no Section 16 in the document. Mr. Sonnett advised he would revise.

Councilman Rogers suggested that the Town execute the MOA especially since RON was agreeable, noting the BOS could review on their time. Mayor Cockrell stated that this was a great opportunity for the Town and County to work together and was grateful to the County for all the work done on the building.

Councilwoman DeDomenico-Payne questioned the controversy about the name change from “Raymond E. Santmyers Youth Center” to “Santmyers Student Union and Activity Center”. Mayor Cockrell explained that it was RON’s intent to keep the name “Santmyers”. Vice Mayor Sealock voiced displeasure in changing the name from what it was originally called. Mayor Cockrell explained that RON was avoiding “youth center” in the name after talking with the youth because to them “youth center” sound too young and “student union” was more in line with colleges. It was noted that the two original signs/plaques located on the inside and outside of the building would remain.

Councilman Rappaport voiced concern that at the Liaison Committee Meeting the BOS did not want a three-way agreement. Mayor Cockrell advised that she had talked with a few BOS members since the Liaison Committee Meeting and gathered that they did not understand the agreement fully. She advised them that the Voluntary Settlement Agreement (VSA) obligated the County to use the building for the youth which they are already doing.

Mr. Rappaport asked what would happen if the BOS did not sign the agreement since there could be a delay in RON receiving the funding. Mr. Sonnett advised that the County Attorney did not provide any information to him today as to what the BOS would want in the MOA. Ms. Morris reiterated that the Town had done their part and the Mayor can approve non-material changes if the BOS had any. Mrs. DeDomenico-Payne stated that the Town was not delaying the funding. Mr. Rappaport voiced concern that the money would not move without the signatures and RON would be caught in the middle. Mr. Ingram advised that approving the MOA tonight was the quickest way for RON to get their money. Ms. Morris reiterated that the motion solidified the Town’s intent. Mr. Sealock was fine with the funding but not happy about the name change.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers DeDomenico-Payne, Ingram, Morris, Rappaport, Rogers, Vice Mayor Sealock

No – N/A

Absent – N/A

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

B. FY24 Budget Amendment to Receive Grant Funding from the Virginia Department of Forestry and Approve the Give-Away of Trees to the Public

Finance Director BJ Wilson explained that the Advisory Committee for Environmental Sustainability (ACES) applied for a grant and received funds to purchase trees and in turn give away the trees to the public. Council was requested to accept the grant monies and approve the giveaway of the trees to the public since the trees are Town property.

Councilman Ingram moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Sealock that Council approve a FY24 Budget Amendment to Receive Grant Funding from the Virginia Department of Forestry’ Virginia Trees for Clean Water Grant in the amount of \$5,862.50 to be used to purchase trees and to allow the Advisory Committee of Environmental Sustainability (ACES) to give away the trees to the public.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers DeDomenico-Payne, Ingram, Morris, Rappaport, Rogers, Vice Mayor Sealock

No – N/A

Absent – N/A

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

4. Presentation of the VDOT STARS Study for 340/522 Corridor – Director of Planning Lauren Kopishke gave Council an overview of the Study noting that there were 384 vehicle accidents between Guard Hill Road and the Roundabout located in the Walmart/Lowes Shopping Center. The accidents contained two fatalities which triggered a closer look by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). She explained the various phases that included: Phase 1 was information gathering; Phase 2 was public outreach (survey) slated for end of December, which should be completed by February 2024; and Phase 3 another public outreach with recommended changes. She noted that this would be the time to apply for funding through VDOT's Smart Scale. Town Manager Joe Waltz advised that he asked Ms. Kopishke to give Council a preview of what a STAR study was so they would know what to expect for the East/West Connector Study.

5. Consent Agenda Items Slated for November 23rd

A. Sole Source Purchase of a Traffic Signal Cabinet and Equipment – Purchasing Manager Michelle Campbell noted that the cabinet had already been replaced and the purchase was to replace the Town's supplies with the money received from the insurance company since the cabinet was damaged due to a vehicle accident.

B. Purchase of Pickup Truck for Solid Waste Department – Purchasing Manager Michelle noted that the money was being used from the sale of two vehicles at the Town's auction held last year.

C. Purchase of Cab/Chassis for Water/Sewer Maintenance Department – Purchasing Manager Michelle Campbell noted that the body would be procured separately.

D. FY24 Budget Amendment to Accept Additional Funds from VDOT to be Used for Street Maintenance, Construction and Reconstruction Purposes – Finance Director BJ Wilson advised that the Town received additional monies from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) because the estimates for projects were more than the actual costs.

New Business

A. Bridge Dedication William P. Farrell - Vice Mayor Sealock advised that he had talked with Chief Magalis and Mr. Farrell's family, and it was suggested to name the South Street bridge located at Commerce Avenue and South Street after Police Lieutenant William Patrick "Pat" Farrell who died from a duty related illness. After a brief discussion it was agreed to have the Dedication Ceremony sometime on a Saturday in late November or early December. Town Manager Joe Waltz advised that a Resolution would be placed on the November 27th agenda for approval by Council. He also noted that traffic should not be impacted as there was ample room to have the ceremony on the grassy areas around the bridge.

Adjourned at 8:27pm

Approved by Town Council

Date: 11/27/23