



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.

Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance led by Mary Lane

ROLL CALL BY CLERK OF COUNCIL

PRESENT: Mayor Lori A. Cockrell
Vice Mayor R. Wayne Sealock
Councilman Joshua L. Ingram
Councilman H. Bruce Rappaport
Councilwoman Melissa DeDomenico-Payne
Councilman Glenn E. Wood

ABSENT: Councilwoman Amber F. Morris

OTHERS PRESENT: Clerk of Council Tina L. Presley
Town Manager Joseph E. Waltz
Town Attorney George M. Sonnett, Jr.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Councilman Rappaport moved seconded by Vice Mayor Sealock that *Council approve the 2024 Council Meeting minutes of the July 22nd Regular Meeting, August 5th Work Session and August 12th Work Session, as presented.*

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Sealock, Ingram, Rappaport, Wood

No – N/A

Absent – Councilwoman Morris

Abstain – Councilwoman DeDomenico-Payne (*noted was not present at August 12th work session*)

ROLL CALL

ADDITION/DELETION OF ITEMS FROM THE AGENDA OR REVISION TO ORDER OF BUSINESS –

Councilman Rappaport moved seconded by Councilman Wood to remove #10D – Appointments to the Planning Commission from the agenda and move to closed meeting on September 3, 2024.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Sealock, Rappaport, De-Domenico=Payne, Wood

No – Councilman Ingram

Absent – Councilwoman Morris

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

RECOGNITIONS/AWARDS/REPORTS

Presentation for “Dinner Together” from Lynn Downs - Mrs. Downs, President of the local non-profit “Dinner Together” explaining that it was a low barrier community hot meal served four evenings weekly by churches and civic organizations in the First Baptist Church Fellowship Hall to anyone who was hungry and delivery of meals to those homebound once a week. She stated the mission: *To work together as a united community of faith and civic organizations to reduce hunger and improve community healthcare outcomes in Warren County by providing fresh, hot meals to our neighbors.* She explained those individuals and families in the community who were considered ALICE (asset limited, income constrained and employed), noting that “Dinner Together” served those who “fall through the cracks and do not qualify for traditional services.” She mentioned that September was Hunger Action Month which was a nationwide campaign to raise awareness about food insecurity and mobilize action against hunger with this year’s theme being



Choose to End the Impossible Choices of Hunger. She expressed the need for donations to organizations like "Dinner Together" and/or local food pantries, as well as volunteers to prepare, serve and distribute meals encouraging the public to get involved.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. Rezoning Application from Rappahannock HC, LLC Requesting an Amendment to the Zoning Map to Reclassify 1321 Happy Creek Road from R-2, Suburban Residential District to R-1, Residential District -

Planning Director Lauren Kopishke gave a presentation that included: various maps; dimensional requirements; reference to the Comprehensive Plan; density comparison with surrounding subdivisions; various renditions of the houses to be built; required submission document conclusions; Wetland Delineation Report; Environmental Site Assessment; Traffic Impact Analysis; Fiscal Impact Analysis; Warren County Planning Staff, Building Department and Fire Marshall comments and reviews; proffers; summary of Proffer Statement; diagrams of playground and fence; transportation; homeowners association; and cash proffers.

The Mayor and Council confirmed that regardless of tonight's outcome 82 homes could be built by-right with no proffers; the approval of the rezoning would be approximately 20 more homes; the rezoning was inline with the Comprehensive Plan and there had been no feedback from the County or schools on the latest revisions to the proffers. Ms. Kopishke stated that she did not know the value of the intended proffered right-of-way for Happy Creek Road at this time. She advised that setbacks and stormwater management ponds would be worked out during the next phase of the development noting that the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) reviewed all water runoffs. She stated that there were standards in the Subdivision Ordinance that addressed steep slopes in relation to the concern of the removal of trees near Ashby Street.

Chris Hornung, Chief Development Officer of Rappahannock Development Group (who is also the owner and developer of this project) pointed out the following: 1) the project was consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; 2) the fiscal impact analysis showed a net surplus from the taxes collected from the project will exceed the cost to the Town by a computed \$407,000/year; 3) voluntary transportation proffer for the Town to use at their discretion; 4) tot lot/playground for the general public to use; and 5) one million dollars in utility impact fees for water and sewer infrastructure. It was suggested to place the entrance sign to the development back to accommodate for the future widening of Happy Creek Road.

At this time Mr. Hornung answered and explained various concerns of the Mayor and Council. The drainage issue was part of how the land was originally designed but the plan was to rectify this issue during the first phase of construction. The issue of the retention ponds was being configured and once the project was completed the Homeowners Association (HOA) would maintain them. The setback would be 30 feet between homes. After discussions with staff the per lot proffer was preferred over the lump sum. They liked using local tradesman especially for the groundwork, but Ryan Homes was the developer, and they used their own labor inside the homes. The cost of the homes would be in the upper \$400,000's to upper \$500,000's. It was projected that the development would be nine to ten months for additional permitting; twelve months before the first house was completed and six years before the development was completed, barring any recessions.

Ariel Goldring, real estate consultant for the project, explained the base model home cost was upper \$400,000's and the loaded models would be upper \$600,000's, noting that onsite was tax positive and offsite was spending in the retail community.



Mayor Cockrell opened the public hearing.

Christine Dawson, 1212 Oden Street, voiced concern of the current speeding on Oden Street especially since there was no outlet and how that would increase when there was an outlet. She asked that the speed limit be reduced to 15mph and add speed bumps making it safer for the children in the neighborhood,

Evan Casey, 413 Remount Road, voiced concern that the Town has had to go into mandatory water conservation recently and how 104 homes would affect the system. He noted that Happy Creek Road was already a dangerous road and that single-family homes could potentially bring large families with children noting most schools were already full. He suggested keeping the development at ½ acre lots.

William Black, 1121 Ashby Street, voiced concern over the installation of the proposed fence, where the water was going to go since his property had a hill and who would be responsible for keeping the grass trimmed at the fence on both sides.

Glen Hunt, 1302 Imboden Drive, questioned and voiced concern on when the Happy Creek Road entrance would be considered. He asked if the Transportation Study could it be updated with new statistics.

Steven Pilon, 1138 Happy Ridge Drive, questioned whether the nicer trees would be saved and if the fencing would all be matching.

Mayor Cockrell closed the public hearing.

Town Attorney George Sonnett asked for an opportunity for rebuttal from the applicant. Mr. Hornung advised that he could discuss with staff and VDOT on traffic calming for Oden Street including speed tables and a sign that signified their existence. He advised that early in the process there would be a connection to Happy Creek Road, as a "right in - right out only" meeting all VDOT requirements. He continued that the fences would be board-on-board with the nicer side facing the neighbor and being set back inside the boundary and consistent throughout the development. The HOA would mow and maintain around them. Mr. Hornung explained that the owner/developer would manage the HOA until 100% build out and then the residents in the development would elect their own board who would manage from there. He made himself available for further question from the public.

In furtherance of the purposes and objectives contained in Town Code §175-1 (B), Councilman Rappaport moved seconded by Councilman Wood that Council approve a conditional rezoning application from Rappahannock HC, LLC to reclassify 1321 Happy Creek Road (tax map # 20A21-2-4) from R-S, Suburban Residential District to R-1, Residential District for their project known as Marshall's Glen, subject to the proffered conditions.

Councilman Rappaport thanked the applicant for their presentation and the residents for their concerns but advised that there would be over one million dollars in potential revenue for the community which was a great opportunity for Front Royal.

Councilman Ingram agreed with Mr. Rappaport on several points but voiced concern on increasing the density in this part of Town thus his reservation for approval.



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Vice Mayor Sealock confirmed that the Comprehensive Plan stated 1,300 by-right developable lots in Town. He complimented the applicant on a well put together package and understood the residents' concerns.

Councilwoman DeDomenico-Payne agreed on a good presentation noting their responsiveness to the public but voiced concern on houses being crammed onto small spaces and the high cost of the homes. She preferred that the project stay by-right.

Councilman Wood stated that people come to Front Royal for a specific lifestyle and low taxes and felt like this project was the smartest use of the land. He noted that the 104 homes included proffers and would attract residents who will contribute to the community to help keep taxes low. He thanked the applicant for a thorough presentation.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Sealock, Rapport, Wood
No – Councilmembers Ingram and DeDomenico-Payne
Absent – Councilwoman Morris
Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENTS NOT RELATED TO PUBLIC HEARINGS

Holly Goode, 178 Oregon Trail Road, Linden, spoke about senior adults and their caregivers, and how to take care of them through various resources and support giving them the best quality of life possible. She mentioned the Senior Alliance Team sponsored by the Front Royal-Warren County Chamber of Commerce. A flyer about this resource was given to Council.

Ellen Aders, 219 E. Prospect Street, President of Downtown Front Royal Inc. gave an update on Downtown Front Royal, Inc. (DFR) Council was given a copy of their 2023-24 Annual Report. She advised that they applied for a \$15,000 grant with 50% matching which was met from individuals in the community. She continued that DFR revamped their vision and mission; worked with a non-profit consultant developing a strategic plan that included an impact report; and was currently developing a Friends of Downtown Front Royal Program. She advised that the Farmers Market was an initiative DFR started, noting that not only do the vendors almost sell out, but the downtown merchants have also seen an increase in their revenue during market hours. She noted that their future ideas were to begin a design project that would improve the entrance to Main Street at Commerce Avenue and to achieve Main Street accreditation.

Jennifer Coello, 258 Douglas Drive, Vice President of Operations and Administrator of Warren Memorial Hospital (WMH) addressed misinformation from recent council meetings and news articles. She stated several recognitions for WMH since the completion of the new hospital. She shared additional services and features of the facility stating extraordinary healthcare was right here in Front Royal. She welcomed the opportunity to host the Mayor and Council on a visit to WMH to meet the constituents who work there.

Tonya Smith, Senior Vice President of Warren Memorial Hospital (WMH) and President of Winchester Medical Center (WMC). She too addressed misinformation that was shared at recent meetings stating that the comments effected the caregivers at Valley Health and the work they do every day in a hurtful and damaging way. She expressed the incredible passionate caring team that served cancer patients and the investment that WMC made in the Maternity/Obstetrics unit. She agreed to bringing additional healthcare services and providers to the community believing that recruitment of healthcare professionals required collaboration and commitment from businesses and community leaders working together. She encouraged



celebrating healthcare not tearing it down. She expressed interest in working with Council to develop a resolution that celebrated healthcare workers in Front Royal and Warren County.

Sheila Smith, 706 Parkview Drive, voiced concerns in her neighborhood specifically neighbors living in a house with no running water or electricity since November.

REPORTS

A. Town Manager Report – Mr. Waltz updated citizens on the Labor Day closure and revised trash collection schedule. He also explained about the Town of Front Royal Citizens Academy and encouraged participation.

B. Town Council Reports

Councilman Ingram identified his experience meeting an out-of-town couple who expressed their admiration of Front Royal's downtown area especially around the gazebo and farmer's market. He extended appreciation to staff for assisting with this positive impact.

Vice Mayor Sealock also identified meeting a couple from out of town at the gazebo area and how they had researched several small towns and selected Front Royal. He congratulated staff for their hard work.

Councilman Wood congratulated the Warren Coalition on their 30th anniversary and announced their Kids Day event happening next month. He thanked the Town employees for their hard work during Tropical Storm Debby and their 24/7 efforts to keep the community free of issues as quickly as possible. He voiced disappointment that the Town/County Liaison Meeting was cancelled last month by the County. He thanked the Blue Ridge Arts Council for a successful season of music.

Councilwoman DeDomenico-Payne attended the Warren County Fair and National Night Out. She gave a shout out to Front Royal Main Street. She expressed sympathy for the many suicides in the community lately and asked to be kind to fellow neighbors. She thanked Valley Health for their attendance tonight noting that there were positive and negative experiences in all organizations.

Councilman Rappaport attended the Christendom College Presidential Ceremony and the VML Infrastructure Policy Committee Meeting. He mentioned the approved transfer of additional revenue that was appropriated towards the Criser Road Sidewalk Project and suggested that Council discuss funding for Reaching Out Now (RON) at an upcoming work session. He agreed with the cost of senior caregiving and understood the amount it cost to care for an older adult that needed 24/7 care.

C. Report of the Mayor – Attended the following events: New Teachers Meet and Greet, Warren County Fair, National Night Out, and Annual Community Fun Day at Warren County High School. She gave a history of her own positive experiences with Valley Health.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Councilman Wood moved seconded by Councilwoman DeDomenico-Payne that Council approve the consent agenda, as presented minus Item #10D – Appointments to the Planning Commission.

A. Wastewater Treatment Plant SCADA Visualization System Upgrade

Council approved the Wastewater Treatment Plant SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) Visualization System Upgrade to Valley Automation, Inc. in the amount of \$153,750.00.



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B. Purchase of Two Dump Truck Chassis for Public Works Department

Council approved the purchase of two (2) Dump Truck Chassis for the Department of Highway Maintenance-Public Works, to replace #763 & #764 2002 GMC 8500 series dump truck chassis from Excel Truck Group in the amount of \$195,952.00 (\$97,976.00 each) with the second chassis price remaining the same until the 1st quarter of January when pricing will increase approximately 5%.

C. Purchase of Services for Curb & Gutter Removal and Installation

Council approved the purchase of services for curb and gutter removal and installation to Gordian JOC / F.H. Paschen, in the amount of \$449,760.55 for work on the following streets: Washington Ave: curb & gutter and new cul-de-sac; E. 7th Street: curb & gutter; Belair Ave: curb & gutter and stormwater; Sherwood Ave: curb & gutter and ADA ramps; Jamestown Road: curb & gutter

D. Appointments to the Planning Commission REMOVED

E. Recommendation to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA)

Council recommended Lorie Noakes to the Judge of the Circuit Court for appointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) for an unexpired term ending May 1, 2026.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Sealock, Ingram, Rappaport, DeDomenico-Payne, Wood

No – N/A

Absent – Councilwoman Morris

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Request to Discontinue, Vacate and Sell a Portion of a Public Alley Behind 125 W. 8th Street Received from Michael D. and Jane M. McCool, Applicant

Councilman Wood moved seconded by Councilman Rappaport that Council approve the request if applicant grants an easement to the Town to the west.

Councilman Wood noted that staff saw no issues and the viewing committee advised that access would be hindered if approved so he was suggesting to ask for an easement from the applicant to gain the access. Councilman Ingram noted that the easement should have been discussed during the public hearing and if approved tonight the land would be landlocked and another public hearing would have to be held along with another ordinance. Town Manager Joe Waltz advised that staff did not have any concerns but confirmed that the lots would have no access if the request was granted. Councilman Rappaport noted that he walked the alley and there was no access on the west side and the east side needed a lot of work. He voiced concern that if this was granted the Town would have a problem. He stated that he seconded the motion to give Mr. Wood the courtesy to explain his position. Councilwoman DeDomenico-Payne noted that nothing was heard from the residents and voiced concern creating a landlock issue if approved.

Vote: Yes – N/A

No – Councilmembers Sealock, Ingram, Rappaport, DeDomenico-Payne, Wood

Absent – Councilwoman Morris

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

On motion to approve the request if applicant grants an easement to the Town to the west.



Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes of 8/26/24 - Page | 7

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Councilman Rappaport moved seconded by Councilman Ingram that Council deny the request from the applicant.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Sealock, Ingram, Rappaport, DeDomenico-Payne

No – Councilman Wood

Absent – Councilwoman Morris

Abstain – N/A

ROLL CALL

On motion to deny

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:45pm.

Approved by Town Council

Date: 9/23/24