

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING OF THE STEPHENS CITY TOWN COUNCIL
Tuesday, February 7, 2012
7:30 p.m.

Mayor Joy Shull-Gellner called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council member Harter offered the invocation.

Roll call showed the following present:

Councilmember Bowers, Council member Joseph Grayson, Council member James Harter and Council member Joseph Hollis.

Absent: Vice Mayor Fravel and Council member Martha Dilg

Staff present: Mike Kehoe, Town Manager; Brian Henshaw, Town Planner/Asst. Town Manager; David Griffin, Town Attorney; Officer Scott Baber, Police Department; Dianne MacMillan, Town Clerk; Shannon Rothemich, Acting Town Treasurer

Guests: Dave Stegmaier, Frank Wolfs Office; two students

Press: Sarah Greenhalgh, Winchester Star

AGENDA

The Agenda for February 7, 2012 was adopted by consensus.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Shull-Gellner opened the floor for public comments on any topic not on the agenda and there were none.

MINUTES – Regular Meeting of January 3, 2012

Council member Hollis moved for approval of the minutes of the regular monthly meeting of January 2, 2012 and the motion carried with the following vote:

Recorded Vote:

Council member Bowers	-	Aye	Nay - None
Council member Grayson	-	Aye	Abstain - None
Council member Harter	-	Aye	Absent – Fravel and Dilg
Council member Hollis	-	Aye	

TREASURERS REPORT – Shannon Rothemich – Acting Treasurer

The Mayor said that Council had the Treasurer’s report and asked for any questions. There were none. The Town Manager added that the office had sent out notices on delinquent taxes and had gotten good return on those already. He said the Town did not send out reminders last year and this would clear up a lot of issues with the personal property taxes early. The acting Treasurer reported that the office had collected approximately \$1,500.00 of back taxes since the notices went out last Friday.

POLICE REPORT – Charles Bockey, Chief

Mayor Shull-Gellner announced that the members had Chief Bockey’s police report for information and asked if there were any questions. There were none and the police report was accepted for information as presented

ACTION AGENDA

A. Appointment of Town Treasurer

The Mayor announced that Council needed to appoint a Town Treasurer. Council member Hollis moved that the Town appoint Shannon Rothemich Town Treasurer effective this date. Mayor Shull-Gellner asked if salary needed to be set and she was advised that this had been set by finance and personnel committees after review. The Mayor welcomed the Treasurer officially.

Recorded Vote:

Council member Bowers	-	Aye	Nay - None
Council member Grayson	-	Aye	Abstain - None
Council member Harter	-	Aye	Absent – Fravel and Dilg
Council member Hollis	-	Aye	

B. Discussion of Possible Purchase of School Property

The Mayor reported that there needed to be a discussion about the possible purchase of surplus school property. She said it had come to the Town’s attention that the Frederick County School Board had declared the remainder of the property around the old school as surplus property and were considering putting it up for sale. The Mayor announced that she would like to turn this issue over to the Public Works Committee to have them look at it to see if the Town would be interested in purchasing this property. After review they could recommend making an offer. Mr. Kehoe said he had spoken with the Assistant to the County Administrator and asked if they were in a hurry to get rid of the property as there were many issues to consider in the purchase. He said that they did not seem to be in a big hurry. Council member Hollis noted that there were many issues of condition to consider before any offer could be made.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Administrative Committee – Joseph Hollis, Chair

Council member Hollis reported the Committee had not met.

B. Finance Committee – Joseph Hollis, Chair – report attached

Council member Hollis reported the Finance Committee met but there was nothing to report except what was included in the committee report.

C. Public Works Committee – Joseph Grayson, Chair

No meeting was held.

D. Water/Sewer Committee – James Harter, Chair

No meeting was held.

E. Personnel Committee – Martha Dilg, Chair

The Mayor noted action taken earlier with the appointment of the Town Treasurer after review by committee.

F. Public Safety Committee – Ronald Bowers, Chair

No meeting was held but Council member Bowers asked that a meeting be set for February 15th at 5:00 p.m.

G. Parks & Recreation Commission – Ronald Bowers, Chair – report attached

Council member Bowers reported there was a meeting but he did not attend and Mr. Henshaw had filled in. He asked him for his comments. Mr. Henshaw said they had formed an action plan for the veteran's memorial and the application for the sponsorship of bricks which was available. He added that they have not launched a full scale publicity campaign yet but he encouraged everyone to get the word out. Mr. Henshaw said he would like to get a few more donations before breaking ground because once ground was broken more donations would come in. Council member Hollis asked at what point would ground breaking begin - how much money was needed – half the amount? Mr. Henshaw said that once \$15,000 to \$20,000 was received through private donations, it would be a good time to begin. Council member Hollis suggested that the committee write an article, including the form, to put into the newsletter in order to reach all the residents of the Town. Council member Bowers thanked Mr. Henshaw and everyone agreed it looked like a good plan.

1. Newtown Heritage Festival Subcommittee.

The Mayor noted that there was no report and asked Mr. Kehoe about the committee. Mr. Kehoe reported that the committee met in January and received two large donations. He said since this would be the 20th year the committee planned to go back to pottery as a commemorative this year - maybe a flower pot with the Newtown Heritage Festival logo.

PLANNER'S REPORT – Brian Henshaw

Mr. Henshaw reported that he was in the process of wrapping up a remodeling of the website which would be announced in the next newsletter. He said it would provide more tools.

He added that it would also have a connection to the Town’s Facebook page which was active with hopes to increase its usefulness. Mr. Henshaw said it was an excellent tool for reminders on billings that are due and updating announcements for events. He noted that there would be a notation if a reminder was specifically for town residents.

Mr. Henshaw reported that they were still working on the N. Main Street enhancement project which has been a long and tedious process. He said these projects tended to have overruns just because of changes and comments required by VDOT which resulted in changes to some designs and plans. He said there was a change order from LPDA for an additional \$23,000.00. He explained that the project was going in one direction and they were told they could not go that way resulting in having to go back to a more conventional stormwater collection system. Mr. Henshaw said there would be more than enough to cover this and take the Town all the way through the approved plan process. Council member Hollis asked if anything would happen this year and Mr. Henshaw said it would depend on how far the Town wants to go and how much is covered. He said once the plans were approved, it would be decided how to phase in the project. He added that once the project was underway, it might open the Town up for more funding.

Council member Hollis moved that the Town Council approve the change order from LPDA and direct Mr. Kehoe, Town Manager to sign the order on behalf of the Town. The motion passed with the following recorded vote:

Recorded Vote:

Council member Bowers	-	Aye	Nay - None
Council member Grayson	-	Aye	Abstain - None
Council member Harter	-	Aye	Absent – Fravel and Dilg
Council member Hollis	-	Aye	

Mr. Henshaw called Council’s attention to the annual reports from the Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission provided in the packet.

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT – Mike Kehoe, Town Manager

1. Mr. Kehoe advised that the bill to change the town election date had passed the house and was on the way to the Senate. He said it looked like elections would be in November.
2. He advised that the 2010 audit reports should be completed and mailed by Thursday.
3. Mr. Kehoe said Rappahannock’s new rate schedule had been approved by the SCC. Mr. Griffin said there had been controversy about the new rate structure for specific people who opted for it. On the pay as you go basis, once the money was gone, the electricity was turned off and there was a concern about who the people would contact if the power was turned off. He added that Rappahannock was proposing this in a limited area and really wanted to make it work so they went overboard to provide procedural safeguards. He said that people could elect to participate, could have an automatic fund transfer and opt for many ways to avoid getting the power turned off. Mr. Griffin said that given the

remarkable steps that the Coop took to appease these concerns, it was decided to withdraw participation in the review after all the concerns were addressed. He said that the citizens should be protected. He added that if it did not work out well, the Town would still have the right to go back to the SCC and ask for a review. Rappahannock had been responsive to the Town's concerns.

4. Mr. Kehoe reported that the maintenance crew had been busy making improvements in the garage to make a workable area. This kept them busy through the winter months.
5. Mr. Kehoe also reported he had learned from FCSA they were still having problems with rags. He advised that the Town would continue to work with them and would start screening where the problem might be in Town. One month they screened at the bottom of the town line and did not have problems with the pump which may indicate that the problem was not exclusive to the Town. Mr. Kehoe gave FCSA credit for doing a thorough investigation and said the Town would continue to work with them. The issue was diminished but not gone
6. Mr. Kehoe reported that the preliminary work on the budget had begun and so far the Town was about where it should be at this time of the year.

COUNCIL COMMENTS/CALENDAR

By consensus of Council the calendar with the addition of Public Safety on the 15th of February would stand as published. If changes were needed later in the month, the members would be notified.

There being no further business, Council member Harter moved to adjourn at 7:53 p.m. and the motion carried.

Joy B. Shull-Gellner, Mayor

Dianne L. MacMillan, CMC, Town Clerk