

MINUTES OF A TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION
TOWN OF LURAY, VIRGINIA
Tuesday, October 28, 2014

The Luray Town Council met in a work session on Tuesday, October 28, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. in the Luray Town Council Chambers located at 45 East Main Street, Luray, Virginia at which time there were present the following:

Presiding: Mayor Barry Presgraves

Council Present: Ronald Vickers
Pam Flasch
Jerry Schiro
Leroy Lancaster
Joey Sours (*present after roll call*)
John Meaney

Also Present:

Charlie Hoke, Town Manager
Bryan Chrisman, Assistant Town Manager
Mary Broyles, Town Treasurer
Danielle Babb, Deputy Clerk Treasurer
Ligon Webb, Town Planner
Jason Spitler, Town Attorney
Jeff McMillan, Page News and Courier
Lowell Baughan, Park Association Board
Bill Fisher, Luray Downtown Initiative
Mark Malone, Luray Downtown Initiative

A quorum being present, Mayor Barry Presgraves declared the Council to be in session for the transaction of business. All present stood for a moment of silence. Everyone recited the United States Pledge of Allegiance.

Updates and Discussion Items

Luray Park Association Inc. - Lowell Baughan

Mr. Lowell Baughan greeted members of the Council and said that he would like to give a program that he presented to the Rotary Club several weeks ago. The presentation discusses the Luray Park Association and its establishment. He began by stating that the board was formed in 1917 and provided a brief history of its founding. Mr. Baughan stated that in 1881 the Luray Inn was built by the Luray Cave and Hotel Company, a subsidiary of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad. On the night of November 5th, 1891 the Luray Inn was destroyed by fire. In April of 1917, Vernon Ford of the Luray Land Corporation, wrote to his friend E.C. Harnsberger that if he could get a few citizens to purchase 100 feet along the railroad to provide an entrance to the Park from the railroad station, the land company would donate additional lots of the Inn Park to create a public park for the Town of Luray. Thus, on December 28th, 1917 the Luray Park Association was formed with seven founding members. The purpose of the association was to establish the maintenance of a public park in

the Town which was not only to be an ornament of the town but also a place of enjoyment and recreation for its people. The association also clearly stated that the park shall not be an “amusement park” operated for profit. Therefore, over the years the park has hosted many events without charge. Also, trustees were not permitted to sell or encumber the park property. Mr. Baughan also displayed a plat of the park property and explained how the land donations came together. Mr. Baughan discussed some of the park properties, including; Inn Lawn Park, Belle Brown Northcott Memorial Carillon, The Center for the Performing Arts building, and the land occupied by the Page Library and Massanutten School. Mr. Baughan discussed the deed of gift made by Theodore C. Northcott and Katherine Graves of the Belle Brown Northcott Memorial Carillon and the 6.4 acres of land, commonly known as the Luray Singing Tower. He explained the history of the carillon and noted its reputation among the carillons of North America. The carillon is one of few to host a regular schedule of recitals. The board receives its income from a small trust fund established by Colonel Northcott and a substantial annual contribution from Luray Caverns Corporation. Mr. Baughan explained the acquisition of the PALS (formerly BB&T) building and how the association was able to obtain financing for the property from Rural Development. The board currently leases the building to Performing Arts Luray for its programs. He also explained that the Page Library Association owns and operates the Page Public Library which is seated on park property. Likewise, the Massanutten School is property of the Page County Heritage Association and is also located on park property. Mr. Baughan also mentioned the current board members and stated that their seats are held in perpetuity and are at the discretion of the members themselves. Overall, the board’s mission is to “hold properties in trust which support recreational, historical and cultural programs in our community”.

Mr. Baughan said that the board has held a long standing relationship with the town. According to records dating back to 1918 the Luray Town Council agreed to make a cash appropriation to the Park Board to defray expenses. In 1941, the town took over the maintenance of the streets located within the park. He noted that in 1948, records indicate that discussion ensued regarding the town’s maintenance of the park. Mr. Baughan provided some letters from the time period, discussing the maintenance agreement of the park. Mr. Baughan became a member of the board in 1971 and went on to become president of the board in 1974. He explained the long standing relationship with the town and also recalled the matter of the tennis court ownership/maintenance.

Mayor Presgraves said until he sat on the board as a member, he was unaware of the board’s importance and the value of these parks to our community. Mayor Presgraves also noted the history of these facilities and stressed that the Council continue to support these facilities. Mr. Baughan discussed the uniqueness of the nonprofit corporation in that they own property that cannot be sold or encumbered and have no visible means of support. Mr. Baughan also offered to take members on a tour of the carillon if they so desire.

West Main Street Bridge Project Update

Assistant Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, reminded members that on November 5th at the Mimslyn Inn there will be the second of the town’s public information meetings. Mr. Chrisman said that the environmental report is moving along and the town is getting clarification on individual exceptions. Several properties adjacent to the project are contributing structures to the historic district, but are not individually eligible. Thus, clarification is being obtained on specific evaluations of these structures. Mr. Chrisman noted that the town’s environmental consultant, Katie Crum, will be in town on November 5th also. He added that the Bridge Consultant is moving along and has produced several documents. Project management continues to move forward and the Outreach Team continues its work as well. The team will meet next week prior to the November 5th event. Mr. Chrisman said that there will be many of the same exhibits from the last informational meeting but there will be some new displays. He explained that the invitation list for this meeting has been expanded to include those impacted along the proposed detour route. As members are aware, Blue Ridge Bank has been chosen as the finance team for the project and he has a meeting scheduled with them tomorrow morning. Mr. Chrisman said that the environmental firm hopes to be complete by February/March

2015 and the bridge consultant hopes to finish by April/May 2015. Thus, the project may be ready for an RFP by the end of June 2015. Mr. Chrisman is hopeful for a two phase process that will allow the town to have a request for qualifications first, followed up by a request for proposals. This would allow the town to select the best fit for the project, not merely the lowest cost submission.

VDOT Updates

Assistant Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, discussed VDOT funding updates and noted that on November 6th a meeting will be held at town hall. One of the projects that will be discussed will be the West Main Street Improvement projects. In October he attended the VDOT fall hearing and received the news of statewide funding jeopardies due to state legislation. He emphasized that it would be in the town's best interest to make a determination on the final conceptual design on the west main improvement project. This project is designed to improve four intersections in and around Northcott Drive and US 211. Mr. Chrisman said that the town has been slowly building its state allocations for such a project. He is in consultations with local, regional, and state level representatives to determine if our project is in jeopardy.

In terms of good news, the town's annual maintenance dollars will not be impacted by legislation. Also, two of the three Six Year Improvement Projects are bridges, which are exempt from the bill. And the West Main Improvement Project has been in the PE phase since FY2013.

Mr. Chrisman also noted that the town's street maintenance inventory system was very accurate upon VDOT's evaluation of UMIS last year. The overall discrepancy was .04 moving lane mileage which will be subtracted from our annual payments. This equates to a loss of only \$450 from our total \$1.02 million annual allocation. Mr. Chrisman attributed the accuracy of the town's inventory to the efforts of Mr. Mathews, Superintendent of Public Works.

South Court Street Parking

Mr. Chrisman discussed South Court Street parking restrictions and recalled that this has been a problem for some years now. With the street being very narrow at points, there is barely room for two way traffic. Also, secondary streets require specific widths to permit parking. The street at its narrowest points does not even closely meet the necessary requirements. In addition to the narrow width, site distance is also a problem. All houses on the eastern side of the road have some level of off-street parking, but due to the proximity of the houses to the street and the sloping, these parking areas are limited in size. Mr. Chrisman said that he has met with Mr. Mathews and Chief Campbell and the consensus is to prohibit parking in the areas that do not meet the minimum required lane widths. Mr. Chrisman said if there are no objections he will bring this before Council at the November meeting as an action item.

Laurance Hotel Request Parking, Loading Zone, ADA Ramp

Town Planner, Ligon Webb, said that this was for information purposes and was the subject of recent discussions with the property owner. He noted that the owner would like to reevaluate parking restrictions in front of the building on South Court Street in the area of the Reed and Reed, P.C. office. Currently the spaces are being used by construction workers on a temporary basis. The owner is considering making the two parking spaces a loading/unloading zone. Mr. Webb said that he has met with Pat Racey and there doesn't seem to be any justification for the parking restriction. Councilman Lancaster questioned why the curb was painted yellow initially. Mr. Chrisman said the only reason he can recall may have been from a temporary traffic light that was placed at the intersection during an old detour route. Mr. Webb also discussed the area as potential handicapped parking. Members discussed the ADA compliance requirements for the parking spaces. Mayor

Presgraves said that perhaps drawings would be helpful and that members would be willing to take a look at this.

Sign Ordinance Review

Town Manager, Charlie Hoke, said that the members have a copy of the Sign Ordinance revisions. These revisions have come before Council on several occasions and a sub-committee was formed to evaluate the ordinance. The Planning Commission has also reviewed the changes multiple times. Thus, Mr. Hoke said that ultimately there are two recommendations; the first concerning section 801.4 – Feather Banners and the second concerning 801.7 (f) - Sandwich Board Signs.

The Planning Commission's recommendation is to permit (2) Feather Banners per business. On the contrary, the subcommittee wishes to restrict all Feather Banners. Mr. Hoke said that he can understand why the town would want to avoid such signs, since they often resemble those in cities rather than small tourist communities. Mayor Presgraves countered that he is not opposed to (2) signs per location in order to promote friendly business competition. All members agreed that the signs must be maintained in good repair. Councilman Schiro asked if there was a minimum road frontage requirement for such banners. Mr. Webb said that there is not currently a minimum but that this provision could be added. Councilwoman Flasch said that in most instances the banners are in very poor condition and likely are not aiding the business owner. Members discussed some examples of these banners that are not located within the corporation limits, but are unfortunately at one of the main entrances to the town. Councilwoman Flasch said these are good examples of what we do not want our signs to look like.

The other sign issue is related to Sandwich Board Signs, more specifically Off Premises Signs. Mr. Hoke started by asking the Council if they want to support Off Premises signs. The Planning Commission has placed a limit of 200 feet of the adjoining property for such signs. Councilman Schiro stated that he does not find the Sandwich Board signs terribly offensive but prefers that the town maintain some level of control. Mr. Hoke recognized that the Off Premises signs are controversial. Councilman Lancaster said that he does not have an objection to the temporary event signs but prefers there be no Off Premises Signs. Mr. Hoke said that if Council chooses, the provision of 200 feet minimum on adjoining property would be more easily enforceable. He added that there has to be consistency in order for the Police Department to enforce. Councilman Schiro said that he feels the two key aspects of these signs are that they be both temporary in nature and that the distance from the business is a key factor. Council's general consensus was to go with option 2 of the revisions which would permit the signs with the distance limitation and regular review. Mr. Hoke advised that he will bring this back to Council for an official vote.

Mr. Webb also mentioned Electronic Signs but said that they are not permitted to scroll or flash. Mr. Webb said that these signs would also be required to have a special use permit and would be at the discretion of Council. Lastly, Mr. Webb said that he does not anticipate a Public Hearing on the Sign Ordinance Revisions until December. Therefore, Council would be able to take action on these in January 2015.

Ralph Dean Park, RFP for Concessions and Field Use Forms

Town Manager, Charlie Hoke, said that he recommends putting the Concession Stands at the R.H. Dean Park out for a Request for Proposal. Mr. Hoke said that this recommendation is based on his time on the league board and from the issues that the league experiences in obtaining volunteers to work the concessions. Mr. Hoke discussed research from other localities that manage their concessions in the same way. Mr. Hoke is also proposing a field use and fee form. He said that this is an effort to encourage the maintenance of the fields and would be a very nominal fee. Councilman Schiro suggested that this must be an RFP for the food services

rather than a lease of the concession stand. Councilman Vickers expressed concern that teams outside our community seem to be better stewards of our facilities. Mayor Presgraves said that the Little League does not seem to want the responsibility of the concession stand and they appear to be on board with this. He added that the facility was built for the enjoyment and recreation of the community, and if some costs can be defrayed then that would be beneficial. Mayor Presgraves noted that this is the first year that the town has not been offered a voting seat on the league's board. Councilman Lancaster expressed that this is the town's facility and it is Council's discretion on how it should be run. Mr. Hoke concluded that Council is in agreement with the RFP for Concessions and the Field Use Forms.

Items for Council Action

Resolution for the Display of In God We Trust

Mr. Hoke said that the next item is the In God We Trust Resolution, which was a request was made to all governing bodies across America. The request is to display the congressionally approved National Motto "In God We Trust" in a prominent place within the Council Chambers.

Council and Staff discussed how the motto would be displayed and suggested updating the town seal.

Motion: Councilman Vickers motioned to approve the In God We Trust Resolution; Councilman Sours seconded the motion with the following members voting YEA: Council Members Vickers, Flasch, Schiro, Lancaster, Sours, Meaney. **Approved 6-0**

Resolution of Appreciation for a Day to Serve

Mayor Presgraves said that the Imagination Station looks terrific. Mr. Hoke said that on October 18th members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints met with Pat O'Brien for "A Day to Serve". The group helped to rebuild/repair the Imagination Station and park area. The group provided a day of volunteer labor, with the town only purchasing the materials necessary for the renovations. Mayor Presgraves said that this resulted in a significant savings to the town and that the work was extremely valuable. He stated that the Resolution would be meaningful and show the town's appreciation.

Motion: Councilman Vickers motioned to approve the "A Day to Serve" Resolution; Councilman Schiro seconded the motion with the following members voting YEA: Council Members Vickers, Flasch, Schiro, Lancaster, Sours, Meaney. **Approved 6-0**

Town Attorney

Town Attorney, Jason Spitler, said that while he had no report this evening he did have one item of comment. He requested to speak as a citizen and discussed a letter he wrote to Pat O'Brien, regarding the R.H. Dean Park. The letter thanked Mr. O'Brien and his staff for allowing his team the use of Field 2 at the park. Mr. Spitler said that the use of these fields benefited 30 players, 14 of which were Page County residents. He stated that the team members were good stewards of the park and this use provided valuable experience to its players. As a token gift of appreciation to the recreation department the team presented a check for \$300.

Adjourn

Before adjourning the meeting, Mayor Presgraves advised Council members of several announcements. The Town of Stanley Christmas Parade will be held on December 6th. The town's Christmas Parade will be held on December 13th and he will continue to provide more information on these events.

There being no further business, Mayor Presgraves adjourned the work session of the Town Council at approximately 7:40 pm.

Barry Presgraves
Mayor

Danielle P. Babb
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer