

Town of Grottoes
Workshop Meeting

CALL TO ORDER: The Town of Grottoes Town Council held a workshop meeting on Tuesday, October 15, 2019, at 6:00 p.m., with Mayor Holloway presiding.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present were: Emily Holloway, David Raynes, Jo Plaster, Mark Keeler, and Tim Leeth,

Other Town Officials present were: Town Manager Nathan Garrison, Attorney Burns Earle, Town Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks and Tourism Director Ashley Collier, and Police Chief Thomas James.

Mayor Holloway stated that the first item for discussion is the personnel handbook. She stated at the last meeting everyone was asked to review all the changes that were in red and asked if anyone had any questions or comments on the handbook. Councilman Tim Leeth made a motion to approve the personnel handbook update dated 9/9/19 with the noted changes Nathan discussed on page 49. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Council members David Raynes, Jo Plaster Mark Keeler, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Mayor Holloway stated that the next item for discussion is gas and diesel. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that as he was checking with other companies he also talked with Southern States and found out that last July 2018 they had a software change and the Town did not get tagged as road tax exempt. He stated that this is what increases our price compared to other companies. He stated that Southern States is going to be issuing us a refund for the road tax we paid on our gas and diesel. He stated that he compared Southern States with other companies the next cheapest was Dixie gas. He stated that Southern States was still cheaper on there no ethanol gas. He stated that they are little more expensive with their on-road diesel however they have a better quality of on-road diesel and feels that we would be better off to stay with Southern States. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that he will let them know what the refund will be when he gets that amount. Councilman Mark Keeler stated that in the email they asked about gas cards. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said they are still looking into that. This would be used only for transports, training or if we ran out of gas. Mayor Holloway asked if we really needed them when we already have a credit card. Chief James stated that if his officer had to transport a person to Williamsburg, they would not be able to come to the police department to get a card this would always

have to be carried on them. He said a gas card restricts it to just gas purchases.

Mayor Holloway stated that the next item for discussion is Chapter 134 Solid Waste and Weeds. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that the biggest change is taking brush from a pile to having to be bundled up by a certain size and weight. Mayor Holloway asked if the Council had any questions. Councilman Mark Keeler stated that he feels that will help encourage our citizens to take their own trash and brush and deposit it in a good manner. Along with doing this I hope we can keep attention on our place on 20th Street and make sure we have it open once a month and not skip the months with holidays so people can depend on using that area to keep their place cleaned up. Councilwoman Jo Plaster stated that in her committee meeting they even discussed adding another day, especially in the spring and fall, to give people more of an opportunity to use the refuse site to clean up their yard debris. Mayor Holloway stated after the storms we had last year it would have been a good thing to have another day or two. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that he has been looking into having the work crew from Rockingham County come out a day during the week. Councilman Tim Leeth asked if we have a sign that says when the dump site is open so that the citizens know.

Mayor Holloway stated that the next item for discussion is maintenance concerns. She stated that Councilman C.W. Stephenson asked for this to be on the agenda and then couldn't get off work to come. She stated that he asked some of the complaints and wanted to know if anyone else had. She said one complaint is seeing the maintenance men just riding around in trucks. Mayor Holloway said that one of the people she followed up with from the previous meeting had the same complaint. She said another concern he had was contracting out the installation of our water lines instead of doing them ourselves. She said he noticed on some of the bills that they were charging us for fixing leaks and wanted to know why we are paying for that it our maintenance staff can fix leaks. Public Works Director AJ Hummel asked who and mayor Holloway said whoever who contract with to put in waterlines. Bradford Morris is the contractor who put in a line. AJ said there shouldn't be any leak repairs on there. Mayor Holloway said we will need to check on that. She asked why we are contracting out water lines if we use to do them ourselves. AJ said he has not run main waterlines since he has been here and is not sure what was done before him. Mayor Holloway said another concern was an extension cord that runs up the side of the building and is wired into a light. AJ said that was put there as a spotlight for the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. Mayor Holloway said it needs to be removed each time after the event. She stated

another concern is the light sockets outside that are hanging down and or does not have covers on them. She said we need to add this to a list that needs to be repaired. Mayor Holloway said another concern is there is no weed eating going on at Mountain View Park and the weeds are growing up around things or its been sprayed and we have tall dead weeds. Mayor Holloway said there is a gap in the door of the police department that needs to be fixed. She said these are items that need to be added to a to-do list. Mayor Holloway said that we got rid of trash truck and hired an extra person and still hear we are behind. She said when we hired an additional person we asked for a strategic plan and haven't gotten it she also asked where we are with training. Mayor Holloway said that she does get a lot of complaints about the maintenance and gave an example of signs that are missing on 3rd street but the posts are still there. AJ responded that they are VDOT signs. Mayor Holloway asked if we could call them to report it because they may not know the sign is down, but our citizens think that it is us. AJ said he doesn't know what they mean by driving around in the truck they must get from job to job. Mayor Holloway said she did miss one thing. They got a complaint that there was welding going on in front of the Town Hall. She said there was one guy welding and three guys standing around watching. AJ said that was part of training. AJ said it would be helpful if someone has a concern that it is addressed with him. He said he has so much on his mind all day long that he would not see everything that needs to be done. Mayor Holloway said that she has shared some things before with Jeff and with Nathan of some of the complaints she received and stated that honestly most are about mowing. Councilwoman Jo Plaster said that Nathan and herself has rode around looking at some places that would be beneficial for mowing to put in a culvert and close the ditch. Councilman Mark Keeler stated that C.W. isn't the only one that has received some of these calls and he thinks explaining is the best solution. He said that this Council is more involved than some of the previous and said when he gets these questions asked to him, he would like to be able to reach out to AJ to ask and then give the person the reason why. He said previously everything basically went through the Mayor because there were times that we didn't have a manager but now feels like we need direction on how the Council should address the citizens' concerns. He said should we take everything to the Mayor or the Town Manager. Mayor Holloway said with the way our departments are set up it should either go to the department head or to the Town Manager. Mayor Holloway said she feels like our roll is to facilitate for the people and not to fix the problem. Mayor Holloway said anytime there is a complaint or something specific she always goes to the Department Head over that department.

Mayor Holloway said the next item is committee updates. Councilman Tim Leeth said that the senior citizen luncheon was very successful. He also stated that the Fort Defiance band will be coming to our Christmas Parade and the teacher was going to spread the word about the parade to other school bands. Councilman Tim Leeth said that after Halloween and before Thanksgiving he wants to hold a meeting to make sure we have everything in order for the Christmas Parade.

Councilwoman Jo Plaster stated that the paving schedule is on its way. She said it supposed to start October 21st and will be detouring the traffic around Dogwood Avenue while they are working in that area. She stated that we will be milling and replacing the asphalt with 1½ inch overlay. She said that they also talked about the dumping site and putting up signs to give better direction. Councilwoman Jo Plaster stated that she did attend the meeting with the Little League. She said the new leadership is willing to work with the Town to find a better solution for everyone. She said that they have an idea of improving the grounds at the park. She said that Kaylor Field is going to be given back to the family and the little league is going to repair it back to usable facility. She stated that the new president is Derrick Mowbray and the Information Officer is Jonah Pence. She stated that they are willing to share their point of contacts with us. She said we will need to appoint a liaison and a back-up, and they are planning to meet the third Monday of every month. Councilman Mark Keeler stated that the state is requiring some changes so the planning commission will be looking into this further. Mayor Holloway stated that she is working on the Christmas Dinner and will have that finalized and sent out this week. Mayor Holloway said she wanted to discuss and get your feedback on planning a Council Retreat where it's not just a one-hour meeting but where we can work and really talk through some things. She stated that the new budget will be coming up. She asked if a weekday or a Saturday was better in November.

Councilman Mark Keeler stated that he loved the idea and will try to be flexible in making this work. Councilman Tim Leeth agreed.

With no further business to discuss Mayor Holloway adjourned the workshop meeting.

Mayor Holloway called the October 15, 2019 meeting of the Grottoes Town Council to order and welcomed citizens. Town Treasurer Rhonda Danner called the roll. Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, Emily Holloway, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth were present. Also present were Town Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Attorney Burns Earle, Town Manager Nathan Garrison, Public Works Director AJ Hummel, Tourism and Parks Director Ashley Collier, and Police Chief Thomas James.

Councilman Mark Keeler made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meetings. Councilman David Raynes seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

FINANCE

Councilman David Raynes made a motion to pay the bills as of October 15, 2019 and the remaining bills for the month of September totaling \$117,564.39. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman David Raynes made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Councilman Tim Leeth seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

ORDINANCE, HEALTH AND PROPERTY

Councilman Mark Keeler announced the second reading to amend Chapter 134 Solid Waste and Weeds. Councilman Mark asked if staff has received any comments regarding the proposed changes. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that he has not.

Councilman Mark Keeler made a motion to amend Chapter 134 Solid Waste and Weeds as presented. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Councilman Tim Leeth stated that on October 19th we will have the 10-year Anniversary Ball and on the Haunted Cave will be from October 29th – 31st starting at 6:00 pm. Councilman Tim Leeth announced on November 11th we will have our Veterans Day Ceremony at the Town Hall at 11:00 am and on November 13th SRES has a Veterans Day Concert at 6:00 pm at South River Elementary.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION

Mayor Holloway stated that previously at the workshop meeting they did vote to accept the new personnel handbook.

Mayor Holloway stated that Justin Neitzey is interested in serving another term on the Planning Commission and we would need to reappoint for another term. She stated that she would need a motion if the Council wishes to reappoint him. Councilman Mark Keeler so moved. Councilman Tim Leeth seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Mayor Holloway stated that we have a resolution to reappoint Justin Neitzey to the Board of Zoning Appeals and if the Council wishes we would need a motion. Councilman Mark Keeler so moved. Councilman Tim Leeth seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman Mark Keeler made a motion to convene into closed session pursuant to section 2.2-3711(A)1 of the Code of Virginia to discuss matters for the purpose of considering such persons assignments, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman Mark Keeler made motion to adjourn the closed session and reconvene into open session. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Mayor Holloway read the certification of the closed session to the best of your knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711(A)1 of the Code of Virginia as only such public business matters that were identified in the motion by which a closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the meeting. Town Treasurer Rhonda Danner took a roll call. M. Keeler; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, E. Holloway; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, L. Leeth; so certified.

Councilman Mark Keeler made a motion to appoint Miriam Miller to the Planning Commission. Councilman Tim Leeth seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS

Sandra Mace addressed the Council and thanked them for the taking care of the railroad ties at the park playground. She also stated that Miller's Run and 256 looks much better. Ms. Mace also commented about how much better the front of the Town Hall looks. She stated that she had all good things to bring up to the Council but received a phone call about a concern in the 300 block of 18th Street. She stated that there is a basketball goal, right up on the street, that has been cemented in. She said this has drawn kids from other streets over to play basketball and these kids are throwing trash and rocks in the neighbors' yards. Ms. Mace said she heard that they were told they needed to move the basketball goal, but it has not been moved yet. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said the owner was verbally told it needed to be moved and a letter has been sent. He said it is still within the time period given to move it. Mayor Holloway thanked Ms. Mace for coming tonight.

Glenn Hughes addressed the Council and stated that he was here last month about the alley between church and the apartment building and nothing has been done. He said Nathan called him last week and wanted to meet so they met Wednesday. He said first he said they can't do it. Mr. Hughes said he went into the office on Friday and was told we didn't have the money to fix it right now. Mr. Hughes said he asked to buy that part of the alley and he would fix it. Mayor Holloway stated that we are working on coming up with a solution, but it is not a problem that can be fixed overnight or in a week. She stated that the job would have to be bided out and worked into the budget. She stated that Mrs. Plaster is working on it with her committee to come up with a solution to resolve the problem but it will not happen within a week. Mr. Hughes said they pour 8 yards of concrete in two

days. Mayor Holloway explained that its not only coming up with the solution the council must follow a budget process, and have it approved and with the Council only meeting once a month these projects take a little time. Mayor Holloway thanked him for coming.

With no further business to discuss Mayor Holloway adjourned the meeting.