

## **Town of Grottoes Workshop Meeting**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Town of Grottoes Town Council held a workshop meeting on Wednesday, October 14, 2020, at 5:30 p.m., with Mayor Emily Holloway presiding.

**ATTENDANCE:** Council Members present were: Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, Tim Leeth, Joshua Bailey, and David Raynes.

**Other Town Officials present were:** Town Manager Nathan Garrison, Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Clerk Tara Morris, Town Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director AJ Hummel, and Police Officer Alan Johnson.

Mayor Holloway said the first item on the agenda is CARES Act Funding. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said the finance committee has met and discussed some items and staff has met and created a spreadsheet to look over. He stated that we did get quotes back for the keyless entry option and the Town Hall and Police renovations upgrades. He stated that the cost of the upgrades for the Town Hall and Police department were \$33,273.00 this would include putting a service window in where the closet is in the front office. He said this would stop citizens from coming into the office. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said that a wall will be built to add a service window in the foyer of the police department and still have enough room for a waiting area. He stated this would create a barrier, in both offices, which will help keep staff safer. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that the next quote we received is for the keyless entry. He stated this would be on all outside doors and only on the office entry doors, which are the high frequency used doors. He stated this would not be on the individual office doors. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated there are many features with this system such as sitting timers to open and close at a certain time. Councilman Joshua Bailey said that you can add onto the system with security cameras. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said that he thought about installing touchless toilets and sinks in as many restrooms as we can. He said we will start with the most used restrooms at the Town Hall and Grand Caverns and see how many we can do. Councilman Tim Leeth said some of the restrooms have recently had toilets replaced and we could just add the no flush valves on them. Councilman Tim Leeth said that he would be willing to help with this section. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that another item discussed would be laptops for the Council and some staff. He stated in this number we had seven for Council, one for maintenance, one for the treatment plant so they could telework if need to and still

operate the plant. He said a little down the list their will be more that goes with this. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that we will skip over the items that have question marks by them and stated that we would come back to them. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said that the glass door at the Caverns. He said if we update the door, we could have an entrance and exit flow which would help with social distancing. He stated adding another cash register at the caverns is to distance employees and our guests and stated that it could be put in a separate room. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that the amount there should cover the expenses for PPE for the remainder of the year. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said the waste water treatment plant remote access in addition to what we have now could be installed to our software system at the plant then our operator could actually run the plant from home if need be. He said with being only one person to operate the plant this could be very important. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said some items that we had question marks beside were a Grant for the Boys and Girls Club. He stated that the Boys and Girls Club at South River is open the entire day to help with virtual learning and allow parents to work. Mayor Holloway said we may want to check with them moving forward since the kids will be going back on November 16<sup>th</sup>. She said they may not be able to have kids there during the day and the day program may have to end because the school will probably need their space. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said that another idea he had a question mark by was Small Business Grants to local businesses that were affected by Covid. He said he has an example from another Town which has an application that would need to be completed then reviewed to determine if the business would qualify. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said another item is the Public Safety Payroll. He said the CARES Act money could be used for expenses for police responding and mitigation of Covid-19. He said we can use some of this funding to assist in the payroll of the police officers. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that the last question mark is the Hazard Pay. He stated that some other localities are giving their staff a hazard pay workforce bonus. He stated other localities are giving police officers a different tier than the rest of the employees for working during this Covid period. Mayor Holloway stated that in the finance committee meeting they discussed money for the fire department for their losses. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said that in the CARES Act criteria it states not to be used solely based on the reduction of revenue. He stated that we could do a grant, but it would have to come from the admin fund. Councilman Joshua Bailey said these projects must be done by December 30<sup>th</sup>. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said that was correct. He said that Harman Construction said that it would be about a four-week project and they felt sure they could get it done by December 30<sup>th</sup>. He said the rep for the keyless entry said it

should not be a problem, but we will need approval tonight to get these projects going if that is what Council wants to do. Mayor Holloway asked if we needed any more quotes. Councilwoman Jo Plaster said she has talked with Sandra Quigg with the Boys and Girls Club about donations and she did say that we can make sure the money goes to the South River Club if we are wanting to do that. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that we don't have to make a decision on everything tonight but if we want to do some of the upgrade items at the Town Hall we will need a motion so we can get those projects stated. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said if we are interested in doing a small business grant than he would recommend that we take that back to the finance committee to work out. He said that he has some examples from other towns. Councilman Joshua Bailey made a motion to approve the first three items on the list. Councilman Tim Leeth seconded the motion. Mayor Holloway asked if we wanted to go ahead and approve the wastewater treatment plant remote access. Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that he would amend is motion to include the wastewater treatment plant remote access. Councilman Tim Leeth accepted the amendment. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, Tim Leeth, Joshua Bailey, and David Raynes voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Town Manager Nathan Garrison asked if we could take the remaining money to finance. Mayor Holloway asked if we were going to wait until November to get approval on that because that will really cut stuff short. Town Treasurer Rhonda Danner said this deadline is the end of October. Mayor Holloway said if we wait until November to set this up it's not going to happen. Councilwoman Jo Plaster said she would like to offer business grants and come up with an amount for the Boys and Girls Club and the have finance committee review those things. She said she did have a question on laptops for council and asked how many were we talking. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said it would be seven laptops. Councilman Tim Leeth said that he doesn't feel it is necessary if we are going to continue to get paper copies of everything. Councilwoman Jo Plaster agreed. Councilwoman Jo Plaster made a motion to have the finance committee to look into small business grant and a grant for boys and girls club. Councilman Joshua Bailey seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, Tim Leeth, Joshua Bailey, and David Raynes voted in favor of the motion, motion carried. Mayor Holloway asked if everything else could be finalized later. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said yes. Mayor Holloway said Finance would look at dates to meet. She said we do not want to wait too long and said we should schedule a meeting before we leave here tonight.

Mayor Holloway said the next item on the agenda is Chapter 4 - Administration and the Grottoes Code of Conduct and Ethics. Councilman Joshua Bailey said he would like us to consider a change to the meeting order to allow the presentation of petitions to be moved before the standing committees. Town Clerk Tara Morris said they this was not on the agenda for the second reading and action because it has not been discussed. Town Attorney Nathan Miller said if Council is ready to proceed, they could amend the agenda to add it and then act. Councilman Joshua Bailey said he would rather wait until November so we can review it further. Councilman Tim Leeth made a motion to move the presentation and petitions and claims to the beginning of the meeting. Councilman Joshua Bailey seconded the motion. Town Attorney Nathan Miller asked where it should go. Councilman Tim Leeth amended his motion to include after the approval of the minutes and before the standing committees and to have this on the agenda for November. Councilman Joshua Bailey accepted the amendment. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, Tim Leeth, Joshua Bailey, and David Raynes voted in favor of the motion, motion carried. Town Clerk Tara Morris said that we need to look at the "gray area" of what makes a quorum, as far as when a committee meeting would turn into a regular meeting. Town Attorney Nathan Miller said that he would get with Tara and come up with some language to address the committee situation. Councilman Mark Keeler asked about 4-32. He asked if we should add, on our website, so that we can keep the citizens updated when it happens. Town Attorney Nathan Miller said the reason this is in there is we have an ordinance company that makes sure our ordinances are properly updated and Town Clerk Tara Morris said they also provide the updated ordinances for the website. Mr. Miller said he would make these changes and we can look at them at the next meeting. Councilman Mark Keeler asked the Council's thoughts on the Grottoes Code of Conduct and Ethics. Councilman Tim Leeth said he thought it was well written and is a good guideline on how we should present ourselves. He said he thought this could be done as a resolution adopted at the organizational meeting each year.

Mayor Holloway said that next on the agenda is the noise ordinance. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said that it was asked to be put on this agenda for discussion after what was proposed was turned down. Mayor Holloway asked about the copies the citizen asked them to look at along with the information Josh had drafted for the Council to review. Town Clerk Tara Morris found a copy of the paper and made copies for everyone. Mayor Holloway stated that the decibel reading is used a lot for inside music events. Councilman Tim Leeth said that he has received more complaints in the last three weeks over the music being louder than ever before. He said that for as many people that spoke in

favor, he has received that many emails and phone calls speaking against the music. Councilman Joshua Bailey said he has received complaints too and is not sure why the people are afraid to speak out about it. Councilman Joshua Bailey said his proposal was just the current ordinance with amending the daytime hours and nighttime hours from 7:00 am until 10:00 pm to 7:00 am until 9:30 pm. This would cut the music off a half hour earlier. He said he did this because he was getting complaints that it's too loud for kids to go to bed for school. Councilman Joshua Bailey said the other change he made was under the exceptions sections he added where live music performances at certain places of business with sound amplifying equipment during daylight hours on Friday and Saturday. He said the sound monitoring equipment and the limiter is required and also not to exceed 85 decibels. Councilman Bailey said the other exception he added was live performances at certain places without sound amplifying equipment or microphone on Sunday through Thursday during daylight hours. Councilman Joshua Bailey said under the current ordinance if any place is in violation of the decibels it would be a criminal offense not a civil penalty. Mayor Holloway asked if we wanted to take this and review it and have a 1<sup>st</sup> reading in November. Councilman Mark Keeler said he feels the Council needs to discuss this further because he is not comfortable with the way it would read. Councilman Mark Keeler stated that a decibel reading of 85 is not a compromise at all. He said that something that is not addressed is the base and that is considered audible noise. He said he was watching television in his house and could feel the base and he said that was at 78 decibels. He said if we would go the route of a music venue then we could look into licenses for music venues and we could include location of the outdoor stage, speaker location, and sound absorption. Councilman Mark Keeler said that if we do not set some limits then it will be out of control again next year. Councilwoman Jo Plaster said she has researched about hiring an acoustical consultant who could give us some variables on what to do. She said they specialize in helping localities with outdoor music. Councilman Joshua Bailey asked if everyone is in agreement that after the 60-Day Special Use Permit that they are in direct violation of the current ordinance. Some council members agreed. Councilman Tim Leeth said we need to find some common ground with the business owners because so far what we have asked has not been done. Councilman Joshua Bailey said that back in August the ABC agent came in and told us he did a canvas of the area and had no complaints. He said we were told that the neighbors were okay with it and now he is hearing conflicting stories and was told that was why their house is for sale. Councilman Joshua Bailey said then we had the public hearing, and nobody shows up from the town, everyone is from outside of town speaking in favor of it. Mayor Holloway said that most

everyone was from town or was a business owner in town. Councilman Joshua Bailey said we have not heard from the neighbors surrounding the business and now we have someone moving out because of this problem. Councilman Joshua Bailey suggested doing a survey to get our citizens input whether we do it by paper or online. Mayor Holloway said we could put it in the November newsletter. Town Manager Nathan Garrison said you could do both paper and online survey. Mayor Holloway asked if we should require their address because some may not want to complete it if they have to provide it. Councilman Tim Leeth said lets ask them for it, not require it, because if you have one person saying it bothers them and they are far away maybe it's not really a bother to them but to their friend that lives nearby and wanted to share their concern. Councilman Mark Keeler said that we are not going to please everyone but if the people living near can tell that we are working to make this better for everyone than we are doing what we can. Councilman Mark Keeler brought up about having a license for a music venue that would be renewable every year. He said that would give us the ability not to renew the license if the business does not follow the requirements. Mayor Holloway asked if we wanted to put a survey in the November newsletter and online and asked Tara if she could set this up on survey monkey. Councilman Tim Leeth asked everyone to send some questions to Tara by Monday and Mayor Holloway said then we can finalize the questions. Mayor Holloway said we should explain why we are wanting their address so maybe they will submit it or ask for cross streets so we can at least see what block they are talking about. Councilman Mark Keeler said that he would meet with Tara to set up the survey.

Mayor Holloway gave a quick personnel update and stated that the second interview for the Police Chief position is this Friday. She stated that we will start at 8:00 am and should finish up by 12:00 pm. Officer Alan Johnson informed the Council that we received a grant from the Lion's Club for the Live Scan (finger printing) for the police department. He stated that they will be able to do finger printing for children and citizens.

Mayor Holloway said we are out of time and adjourned the meeting.

Mayor Holloway called the October 14, 2020 meeting of the Grottoes Town Council to order and welcomed citizens. Town Clerk Tara Morris called the roll. Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, Emily Holloway, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth were present. Also present were Town Clerk Tara Morris, Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Nathan Garrison, Public Works Director AJ Hummel, and Police Officer Alan Johnson.

Councilman David Raynes made a motion to approve the minutes from the September Workshop Meeting, Public Hearing, and Town Council Meeting as presented. Councilman Tim Leeth seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

#### **FINANCE**

Councilman David Raynes made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report for September 2020. Councilman Joshua Bailey seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman David Raynes made a motion to approve the bills as of October 14, 2020 and the remaining bills paid in September 2020 totaling \$126,399.54. Councilman Joshua Bailey seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

#### **ORDINANCE, HEALTH AND PROPERTY**

Councilman Mark Keeler made a motion to accept the recommendation from the Planning Commission to approve the Erickson subdivide request. Councilman Tim Leeth seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

#### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

Councilman Tim Leeth said the senior citizens luncheon went very well. He said we delivered 160 meals to our seniors. Mayor Holloway said that she had some mention this is the first time

they have been able to participate because they cannot get to the fire department. She suggested in the future to keep the delivery of meals as an option for our seniors.

Councilman Tim Leeth said the Halloween event at Grand Caverns has been cancelled due to Covid. Councilman Tim Leeth said as far as Trick or Treating goes if you want to participate turn your light on or take your kids to those houses but to practice social distancing.

#### **PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION**

Mayor Holloway said that we need to reappoint David Gorjup to the BZA and asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Councilman Tim Leeth replied so moved. Councilman Mark Keeler seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman Tim Leeth 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 person's assignments, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, discipling, or resignation and Section 2.2-3711(A)3 of the Code of Virginia for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. Councilman David Raynes seconded the motion. Councilman Joshua Bailey asked why we needed to go into closed session to interview candidates for a commission or board. Mayor Holloway said that we may ask something that someone may not want on public record. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman Tim Leeth made a motion to adjourn the closed session. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, 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 and section 2.2-3711(A)3 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 Clerk Tara Morris took a roll call. M. Keeler; so certified, J. Bailey; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, E. Holloway; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, T. Leeth; so certified.

Mayor Holloway asked for a motion to appoint Dylan Nicely to our Planning Commission. Councilman Tim Leeth stated so moved. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

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

A Special Called Meeting of the Grottoes Town Council was held on Friday, October 16, 2020 at 8:00 A.M. Mayor Holloway called the meeting to order and Town Clerk Tara Morris called the roll. Members present were Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, Emily Holloway, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth. Also present were Town Clerk Tara Morris, and Town Manager Nathan Garrison.

Councilman Tim Leeth made a motion to go into closed session under section 2.2-3711(A)1 of the Code of Virginia to discuss matters for the purpose of considering such person's 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.

Councilwoman Jo Plaster made a motion to adjourn the closed session. 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 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 Clerk Tara Morris took a roll call. M. Keeler; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, E. Holloway; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, and T. Leeth; so certified.

Councilman Tim Leeth made a motion to accept the resignation of Town Manager Nathan Garrison. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Councilman Tim Leeth amended his motion to state his last day will be October 28<sup>th</sup>. Councilwoman Jo Plaster accepted the amendment. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman Tim Leeth made a motion to look for an interim manager to fill in while searching for a permanent Town Manager. Councilman Mark Keeler seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

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

An Emergency Meeting of the Grottoes Town Council was held on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 5:30 P.M. Mayor Holloway called the meeting to order and Town Manager Nathan Garrison called the roll. Members present were Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, Emily Holloway, David Raynes, C.W. Stephenson, and Tim Leeth. Also present was Town Manager Nathan Garrison.

Councilman Joshua Bailey made a motion to go into closed session under section 2.2-3711(A)1 of the Code of Virginia to discuss matters for the purpose of considering such person's assignments, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, discipling, or resignation. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, C.W. Stephenson, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman Tim Leeth made a motion to adjourn the closed session. Councilman Mark Keeler seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, C.W. Stephenson, 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 Manager Nathan Garrison took a roll call. M. Keeler; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, E. Holloway; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, and T. Leeth; so certified.

Councilman Tim Leeth made a motion to offer Tim Carroll the position of Police Chief. Councilman Mark Keeler seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, David Raynes, C.W. Stephenson, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

With no other business to discuss and Mayor Holloway adjourned the meeting.