

**Town of Grottoes
Workshop Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER: The Town of Grottoes Town Council held a workshop meeting on Monday, December 9, 2019, at 6:00 p.m., with Mayor Holloway presiding.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present were: Emily Holloway, Jo Plaster, Mark Keeler, Tim Leeth, Joshua Bailey and C.W. Stephenson.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Manager Nathan Garrison, Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Clerk Tara Morris, 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 Town Manager Nathan Garrison has been working with the Little League President on the lease agreement. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that most of the changes are in number six - Use of Premises. He said that we asked for copies of the practice schedules. Councilman C.W. Stephenson said one of their concerns was the use of the lights. He said they agreed to take that out. Councilwoman Jo Plaster said that we will have to provide our own bases, rakes, chalk and chalk machine to line the field and we will have to have a place down there to store it. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that we will discuss this agreement every year. Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that they need to provide us the weed killer for the Town maintenance to use. Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that the two things they did not want us to use were the lights and the concession stand. Councilwoman Jo Plaster said that the Council Liaison will be Councilman C.W. Stephenson and the backup would be Councilwoman Jo Plaster. Mayor Holloway asked for a motion to approve the Little League Agreement as presented. Councilman Mark Keeler replied so moved. Councilman C.W. Stephenson seconded. Council members Mark Keeler, Tim Leeth, C.W. Stephenson, Jo Plaster voted in favor of the motion, Councilman Joshua Bailey abstained from the motion, motion carried.

Mayor Holloway stated that the next item on the agenda is de-icing salt and safety training. Public Works Director AJ Hummel stated that we were looking into the road salt supplier. He stated we were purchasing road salt from Houff at a price of \$122.55 per ton plus \$7.55 per ton for delivery. He said he got a quote from Morton's Salt for \$85.65 per ton including delivery. He stated that we will order from Morton's the next time we need salt. Councilman C.W. Stephenson said that would be a savings of just over \$44.00 per ton.

Public Works Director AJ Hummel said that our insurance carrier has a safety guy that will come around and hold safety trainings for the maintenance guys. He said that he will be coming in January to hold a training on trench safety and they will be opening the training to other localities that would like to attend. Public Works Director AJ Hummel said that he just sent two guys to Eastcom training to learn to use the line locator.

Mayor Holloway stated that the personnel committee will meet soon to start looking at samples of evaluations. Mayor Holloway stated that there is an opening in the police department and Chief James will be moving forward to fill that position.

Councilman Tim Leeth said there is not much going on in January and February so we will include those events in the newsletter and work toward sending out a spring/summer card and a fall/winter card. He said that BCB is going to play the Street Dance and Danczet is going to play at the End of Summer Celebration.

Town Manager Nathan Garrison stated that the GIS system is close to being done. He said they are working on the zoning overlay right now.

Councilman C.W. Stephenson said that the pool construction is well underway and if you haven't been by to see it you should go. He said they are currently working on the beach access and are working right on schedule.

Mayor Holloway announced the Town Christmas Dinner is on the 11th at 6:30 at the Fire Department.

Councilman Mark Keeler thanked everyone for their help with Caroling in the Caverns. He stated that it was a successful event with over 880 people in attendance.

Town Attorney Nathan Miller said he talked to Nathan this week about people wanting to come to speak on supporting the second amendment. He said that he didn't know what the Council would want to do so he sent Nathan a version for the Town. He said that he, personally, supports the resolution and said the Town has two choices. One they can listen to the citizens and not do anything tonight or two they can listen to the citizens and approve the resolution tonight. Town Manager Nathan Garrison passed out the resolution so Council can review it. Town Attorney Nathan Miller said that the Town could wait and see what Rockingham County does but if the Council wants to approve it, they can because they are their own entity. Mayor Holloway said so if the County does it then it covers the Town too but if the County doesn't do it then the Town could still approve the resolution. Town Attorney

Nathan Miller said that was correct or if they wanted to approve it then they could approve it now even though the County hasn't acted on it. He said it's basically a political document stating that we support the second amendment. He said we support them all, but this is getting attention because of the governor introducing a bill that's got a lot of stuff in it. Councilman Joshua Bailey asked if the resolution could be condensed and handed Nathan Miller a resolution to review. Town Attorney Nathan Miller stated that it looks fine. Attorney Nathan Miller said he just wanted them to be prepared because every jurisdiction he represents has had this come up.

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

Mayor Holloway called the December 9, 2019 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, C.W. Stephenson, 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, Tourism and Parks Director Ashley Collier, and Police Chief Thomas James.

Councilwoman Jo Plaster made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 12th Workshop and Town Council meetings and the minutes from the November 16th Council Retreat. Councilman Mark Keeler seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Jo Plaster, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, Councilman Joshua Bailey and C.W. Stephens abstained the motion, motion carried.

FINANCE

Councilman Joshua Bailey made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report as presented. Councilman Mark Keeler seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, C.W. Stephenson, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman Joshua Bailey made a motion to pay the bills as of December 9, 2019 and the remaining bills for the month of November totaling \$240,081.54. Councilman Mark Keeler seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, C.W. Stephenson, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

PARKS RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

Bill Henry addressed the Council and stated that he is the Founder and Current Chairman of the Board for the Blue Ridge Heritage Project. He stated they are a small non-profit organization that was founded in 2013. Mr. Henry said the purpose was to erect monuments in the eight counties where land was acquired for the Shenandoah National Park. He said today we have seven of the eight monuments and have a committee formed to work on the eighth monument to be placed in Augusta County. He said they are trying to let everyone know about the project and

that they are not looking for money. He said they have a committee looking at the best place to locate the monument. He said after the last monument is done, they will be creating a driving tour so they people can visit all the monuments. Mr. Henry introduced Tom Fleming who is the Chairman of the Augusta County group. Mr. Fleming said that they have looked at Grand Caverns as a possible place to put this monument. He said the footprint for this would be a 12-14 feet round circle and will be made of stone, so the maintenance for this would be none. He said that it will be a big stone chimney commemorating the people that were moved. Mr. Fleming stated if you know anybody in town that was affected by this, they would greatly appreciate their names. Councilman C.W. Stephenson made a motion to go with the Blue Ridge Heritage Project allowing them to use Grand Caverns as their site for the monument. Councilwoman Jo Plaster seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, C.W. Stephenson, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Councilman Tim Leeth stated that we had the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting last night which went very well. He said coming up we have the home decorating contest on December 16th starting at 7:00 pm, and South River's Christmas Concert is on December 18th at 6:00 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilman Joshua Bailey moved to place the Second Amendment Sanctuary of the agenda for discussion. Councilman C.W. Stephenson seconded the motion. Council members Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, C.W. Stephenson, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion, motion carried.

Councilman Joshua Bailey moved to pass a resolution that states: Whereas, The Second Amendment of the Constitution of the United States reads: "*A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be fringed,*" and;

Whereas, Article 1, Section 13 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia provides: "*That a well-regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the proper, natural, and safe*

self-defense of a free state, therefore, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed, that standing armies, in time of peace, shall be avoided as dangerous to liberty, and that in all cases the military should be under strict subordination to and governed by, the civil powers;

Whereas, The Town Council of the Town of Grottoes is concerned about the passage of any bill containing language which could be interpreted as infringing the rights of the citizens of Grottoes to keep and bear arms, and;

Whereas, The Town Council of the Town of Grottoes wishes to express opposition to any law that would unconstitutionally restrict the rights under the Second Amendment of the Constitution of the United States, or Article 1, Section 13 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia;

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved: The Town Council of the Town of Grottoes does hereby declare Grottoes as a Second Amendment sanctuary Town.

Councilman C.W. Stephenson seconded the motion. Councilman Tim Leeth asked if this was the same document you shared in the Workshop. Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that it is. Councilman Tim Leeth asked the Town Attorney Nathan Miller if he was ok with the language on the resolution. Town Attorney Nathan Miller replied yes. Council members Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, C.W. Stephenson, and Tim Leeth voted in favor of the motion. Councilman Mark Keeler voted against the motion, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Councilman Joshua Bailey stated he would like to place discussion on the Rockingham County School Board proposed redistricting on the agenda for discussion. Councilman C.W. Stephenson seconded the motion. Councilman Mark Keeler said that his understanding that since a decision has been made by the Council this needs to be brought up by somebody who was in attendance making that motion. Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that he wasn't present during the retreat and did not vote that's why it wants to put it back on the agenda for discussion. Town Attorney Nathan Garrison asked who else wasn't there. Councilman C.W. Stephenson stated he was not at the retreat. Mayor Holloway stated that there were four members of Council and herself present at the retreat and a motion was made and passed on how to proceed with the redistricting. Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that doesn't have a motion to reconsider anything he only has a motion for discussion at this time. Town Attorney Nathan Miller stated that he can make a

motion for discussion. Councilman Mark Keeler stated that he is okay with that. He said he was concerned of the legalities of an issue they have already addressed and made a decision on in terms of bringing it back up. Councilman Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, and C.W. Stephenson voted in favor of the motion, Councilman Tim Leeth voted against the motion, motion carried.

Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that the reason he wanted to bring it back up for discussion is because he wasn't present and wasn't able to provide his input or his opinion on it. He said it seemed like there was a decision made by reading the minutes that I did not vote on prior to that meeting taking place. Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that he is going to make a motion on another resolution since he was not present. Councilman Joshua Bailey asked if that was in his legal bounds since he was not present. Town Attorney Nathan Miller replied yes you can. Councilman Joshua Bailey moved to pass a resolution which states:

WHEREAS, The Town of Grottoes has been made aware of, and is concerned with decisions considered by the Rockingham County School Board involving children from the Grottoes area with regard to school assignments and schedule changes forthcoming.

WHEREAS, The Town of Grottoes respectfully requests the Rockingham County School Board consider additional problem-solving solutions, with a delay of implementation of any proposed policy, notwithstanding greater public input in development of any changes to the present policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: This resolution will be forwarded to the Rockingham County School Board.

Councilman C.W. Stephenson seconded the motion. Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that they only thing this is asking is for them to not haste fully make a decision with notwithstanding greater public input from our citizens because our citizens are the ones that are affected the most out of the hole redistricting. He said that he was out of the state for the last meeting, but we had several citizens speak in opposition of and no one spoke in favor of and he feels that we need to back our citizens. Councilman C.W. Stephenson stated that he agreed. Councilwoman Jo Plaster stated that she agreed that we should ask for this delay because we are talking about an entire Town not a couple streets. Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that we get advice from the Town Attorney and that he doesn't make decisions for us. He said we are not asking them to not make this decision we are asking them to get more public input. Councilman Joshua Bailey stated that he

feels that there was a misinterpretation from the attorney to the town staff then to Council. Councilman Mark Keeler stated that he feels that the decision that was made at the time it was made was so that we could collect more information. He stated that we wanted to make sure the people went through the proper channels to be heard and feels that they listened with the turn out that was at the fire department for the meeting. Councilman Mark Keeler, Joshua Bailey, Jo Plaster, and C.W. Stephenson voted in favor of the motion, Councilman Tim Leeth voted against the motion, motion carried.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS

Mayor Holloway stated that two people signed up on the agenda and called for Jason Doty. Mr. Jason Doty stated that the Council already voted on the second amendment sanctuary town and thanked the Council for their support.

Mayor Holloway called for Nathan Carlton. He was not able to make it tonight.

A gentleman stated that he did not sign up but has a question and asked if he could ask it at this time. Mayor Holloway stated he could. He stated that his name is Kevin McDonald and he is a citizen of Grottoes. He said to Councilman Keeler that he noticed when we took the vote for the second amendment sanctuary you voted against it and was wondering if you could explain your position so he could understand why you voted against it. Councilman Mark Keeler stated that the resolution that was presented to me about five minutes ago and he didn't feel he had the amount of time to carefully look it over is the reason he was opposed to it at this point and time. Mr. McDonald asked what part of the constitution did you not understand. Councilman Keeler stated that its not the constitution but the wording on the resolution. Mr. McDonald stated that it is his understanding that the governor of the state of Virginia is going to infringe on the second amendment and I would think if you support the constitution of the united states you would support this issue. Councilman Mark Keeler stated he certainly would. Mr. McDonald stated that at this time he would like to ask for your resignation. Mayor Holloway addressed Mr. McDonald and stated that he didn't sign up for petitions and claims and they will not hear that type of presentation to a Council member.

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