

The Richlands Town council held the regular monthly meeting in the Richlands Town Council chambers on Tuesday, August 11, 2015 at 7:30 PM with the following present:

Mayor: Jannis White

Town Manager: Tim Taylor

Town Clerk: Kelly Goodman

Town Attorney: Brad Ratliff (absent)

Council Members: Joe McCracken, Larry Johnson, Doug Ratliff, Mary Ann Strong, Frances Meadows and Rod Cury.

Mayor White called a meeting to order at 7: 30 PM. Mayor White gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor asked for any unscheduled public comments. Several people were added to the unscheduled public comments. Dr. Anne Yearians, Sherry Stiltner, Connie Patrick, Stephanie Justus, Lori Salyers, Lisa Hess, Suzanne Barton and Craig Looney were added. Mayor White also asked that Section 2.2-3711A-3, consideration of real property and Section 2.2 3711A-5 Consideration of Business and Specific Projects be added.

Mayor White asked if there any additions or deletions to the agenda, there were none. Mayor White asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Larry Johnson made the motion to approve the agenda; the motion was seconded by Rod Cury. Vote, all in favor, 6/0. Motion carries.

Mayor White asked if there were any corrections, additions or deletions to the minutes from the meeting of July 14, 2015. Tim Taylor stated he had a couple of corrections that needed to be made. On page 11 on the third paragraph down, the engineering intern was Zack Frazier. Also on page 12, third paragraph from the bottom, check was made payable to Clatterbuck not Clatteback and on page 13 there's a few clarifications. On the second paragraph it should state Cash Reserve Policy Resolution. The next paragraph on street paving it should state that there was a motion made by Rod Cury; seconded by Doug Ratliff. Motion passed 6/0. On page 13 where Danville had issues because it depends on taxes should read depends on the electrical fund in lieu of taxes.

Rod Cury made the motion to approve the minutes with the corrections, Doug Ratliff seconded the motion. Vote, all in favor, 6/0. Motion carries.

Mayor White stated that first on the agenda was the Commonwealth Attorney, Dennis Lee. Mr. Lee stated he was going to be brief he only had four things to say tonight. He stated this will probably be his last appearance before the town council. He would like to thank each council member, previous council members and the citizens of Richlands for the hospitality that has been shown to him. He stated that it has been a pleasure serving as your Commonwealth Attorney and he wants to publicly thank everyone for their support. The second thing he would like to say is that Richlands has an exceptional police department. He has had the good fortune of working with a lot of agencies over the years in Tazewell County as well as surrounding counties including Federal agencies. He stated without a doubt that year after year that Richlands has the finest men and women that he has ever worked with. They have spent countless hours protecting the citizens of Richlands, he stated he is proud of them and knows that everyone else is also. He would like to take a few minutes to introduce everyone to a few members of his staff. Tina Newberry, legal assistant for over 20 years, Lisa Rasnick, legal assistant for over 15 years and Melanie Menathy, chief deputy for eight years. He stated he has been blessed with the best staff and commended them on the great job they do. He also stated that Frank Dorton is superb, he is a great police chief and a good friend to him and that he does a wonderful job. He also stated last but not least they would like to award the Richlands Police Department with a check for \$25,566.00 for equipment, primarily body cameras for the officers, which was one of his projects that he worked on. He also stated that policemen don't always get the respect they deserve. Many times they are falsely accused of things. He has made the push in the last couple of years for the body cameras. He stated that his office has given in excess of \$60,000 plus over the last year for equipment for the police department. He stated the reason they have this money to give is because of the work of the people in his office, he stated he doesn't mean to sound boastful but his office has taken on extra responsibility and they have not been paid any additional money. They money comes from awards from large pharmaceutical companies that have been found guilty of misleading and putting out drugs that are very dangerous. He thanked everyone for the kindness shown to him and stated it was a pleasure in being the Commonwealth attorney.

Angie Johnson:

Thanked the Council Members for allowing her to speak about the spay and neuter ordinance. She stated there were a couple things she would like to emphasize on; she also has some photos she would like to pass to the Council Members to look at. She also stated that is what they look at on a daily basis on rescue. She stated according to SPCA, 70% of all dog bites are from an unneutered male dog. She also stated that the ordinance is not going to be a quick fix; it's going to take time and dedication. There are not enough homes in our community to house the animals; she stated that the unwanted animal situation in our area could be considered as bad as a drug problem. If you take one animal out, five more will replace it. The spay/neuter ordinance will reduce the number of strays in our area. She stated that Richlands will be looked at by surrounding counties as a leader instead of a follower. She stated that animal control would answer the call and notify the citizens that the ordinance is in place. They also want to educate the public about the spay/neuter ordinance, they believe this will help to solve the problem in our area. She stated that the ordinance would not take away rights for legitimate breeders; not passing the ordinance was punishing the animals. There has to be laws, we don't live in a perfect world, we have to use common sense. She thanked everyone.

Ginger Branton:

She stated she wanted to thank everyone for all the help with The Greater Richlands Festival, it was a success. She also stated that the festival was scheduled for June 14, 2016 and requested to use the Police facilities. Rod Cury wanted to know how the festival went this year. Ginger Branton stated the festival went great. Mary Ann Strong stated that June 14, 2016 was a good date for next year. Joe McCracken stated they should vote on the date for the festival next year. Frances Meadows stated that it put the little league behind schedule due to the parking arrangement. The James H. Drew carnival needed to have the room for the rides. It set the little league behind schedule for tournament play. Mary Ann Strong asked if the Buskill lot was available for parking during the festival. Ginger Branton stated they did not use the parking lot. Mary Ann Strong made the motion to approve the date for the festival, Rod Cury seconded the motion. Frances Meadows stated she could not be in favor of the date due to the fact she hasn't talked to anyone in the league. Vote, 5/1. Motion carries.

Ginger Branton presented Miss Teen Greater Richlands and Miss Greater Richlands for introduction. Ms. Greater Richlands, Stephanie Brown is 19. She is a sophomore at SwVCC pursuing a career in Human Services. She also introduced Mrs. Greater Richlands, Crystal Shortridge is 27. She is a wife and mother of 3 children, her husband is also a coal miner. They both thanked everyone for allowing them to introduce themselves. Ginger Branton asked the Council Members if they would take a picture with the ladies, everyone agreed to the photo. Frances Meadows asked Ginger Branton if the girls would be available for the Women's Expo that will be held at The Clinic. Ginger Branton stated that could be arranged. She thanked the members of Council.

Dr. Ann Yearins:

She stated she came before the Council to speak on behalf of the spay/neuter ordinance. She stated a spay or neutered pet is less likely to roam and have a longer life span. It can also help with diseases. She stated that there is a behavior benefit that goes along with having the ordinance in place. She stated as expected there will be some push backs and bumps that have to be overcome but everything is achievable. She also stated that the cost to spay/neuter an animal is between \$60.00 - \$150.00 per animal. She stated that she supports the ordinance. She stated that from an economic standpoint there is a cost but it is not significant, the long term goal is very achievable. She thanked everyone for their time and allowing her to speak.

Cheri Stiltner:

Her address is 730 E. Second Street, Richlands, VA. She is stating that several residents in that area are exceeding the speed limit on that street. On August 9, 2015 at approximately 6:00 pm, her niece was involved in a bicycle accident. She was riding on the street and a vehicle exceeding the speed limit startled her niece and contributed to her bicycle accident. She girl was taken to the emergency room to have her arm examined; she had a contusion and a fractured elbow, a head injury and an abrasion. She is asking Council to consider posting the speed limit at 25 MPH on that street. She stated that the road should be considered a one lane road due to the street parking. She also stated that if the police would patrol that area and monitor the speed people would possibly obey the speed limit in the area. She stated most residents on the street want the speed limit set reduced.

Joe McCracken asked Ms. Stiltner if Children Playing signs would work in the area. Ms. Stiltner stated that could possibly work. Frances Meadows wanted to know how low the speed limit could be reduced. Tim Taylor stated that when people live on the street, they get callous and don't obey the speed limit. He stated technically the Town of Richlands cannot lower the speed limit, there are studies that have to be preformed and VDOT has to be involved. The town can look at the area and talk to the police, he stated the area is an older area, it was established before zoning laws. The town can put up children playing signs. Ms. Stiltner stated that all children should have the advantage of playing and riding their bikes along the street. She also asked if the police could monitor the area more frequently. Tim Taylor stated that he would talk to the police department about monitoring the area more, he stated that it wasn't an easy solution that it was a dead end street. He recommended to the Council to take a look at the area and designate a place to post the children playing signs. He stated he would also talk to the police department.

Rod Cury asked the child if she were ready for school. He also stated that they could visit the rec. park before school starts.

Stephanie Justus:

She stated she is with the Buchanan County Animal Shelter/Humane Society. She stated that Buchanan County is in a very similar situation as Tazewell County, there are not a lot of differences. They have close to the same amount of stray animals. There are approximately 2000 animals that come through the shelter per year. The shelter has to put down 50% of the animals that come to the shelter. She stated she agreed with Angie Johnson, good homes are saturated; they are waiting on rescues to come and get animals. The no kill animal shelters are mostly in the north. The southern regions are not really educated; it's not the popular idea to advise people on what to do with their animals. She stated that spaying/neutering does make a difference, it shouldn't be a choice. Doing the right thing isn't always popular but it's to keep people safe, animals safe. The ordinance won't be perfect, there will be things that have to be smoothed out but it will be the right thing to do. She told the Council that there was power with vote and to make a change in the community. The decision will be a ripple effect through the community and other communities. She also stated that the Council should make the animals lives mean something, it won't fix everything but it is a step in the right direction.

Mayor White asked if Buchanan County had the ordinance in place. Stephanie Justus stated that they did not but she is going to approach the board. She also stated the surrounding communities will follow the lead if the Town of Richlands passes the spay/neuter ordinance. She thanked everyone for their time.

Lori Salyers:

She is the director and founder of PAWS (Protect Animals with Sterilization). The program is split 50/50 with rescue spay and neuter. The kill rate for Tazewell County is approximately 70% to 80% for dogs and the kill rate for cats is a lot higher. There needs to be a state law in place in every state that animals need to be sterilized. Tazewell County needs to follow through with the spay/neuter ordinance. Our children shouldn't be faced and have to see things that we can change. In 2008/2009 the euthanized rate was 70% to 80%, when they stopped pulling animals from the shelter the rate dropped to 19%. There will be bumps and conflict but to control the problem counties must spay and neuter animals. Tazewell County has help, there a numerous volunteers that help. She also stated it wasn't always that way; there are more volunteers now than ever before. She also stated she is available to answer any question that anyone might have. She stated that statistics state that female cat's health tends to deteriorate with each litter of kittens they have. If there are financial issues, there are grants available that will help with the cost of spaying and neutering. She also stated that cats are more of an issue than dogs. She also is familiar and used TNR (Trap, Neuter and Release). She stated that sometimes a law has to be enforced but if an ordinance is in place most people will comply. She also stated that backyard breeding (puppy mills) have to be stopped. In her experience most of the money from the breeding is being spent on drugs. She asked the Council Members to please pass the ordinance; they need to get the ball rolling on this issue. She thanked everyone for their time.

Lisa Hess:

She stated that pet owners need to be responsible. The stray animal issue is a result of animal breeding that should have never been allowed and needs to be stopped. She stated that we live in a civilized society, the government needs to step in and help. She asked the Council Members to please consider passing the ordinance. She thanked everyone.

Suzanne Barton:

She wanted to speak and offer information of the spay/neuter ordinance laws. She also wanted to thank the previous volunteers that had spoken. She stated that some places do not support spay/neuter laws instead they support to educate the population. Many organizations that support proper treatment of animals say that enforcement is an issue. Most animal control budgets increase, increase in the number of animals in shelters and an increase in rabies due to the spay/neuter ordinance being enforced because most people don't want to get animals sterilized. She stated that she feels the ordinance will not make people more responsible. She also stated not to make responsible pet owners even more responsible since they are the only ones following the laws. She has read the ordinance and stated it will be hard to enforce due to the way it is written. She also asked where the money would go and does Virginia code specifically state that the money has to go to a specific area? Also, is the ordinance going to cost the town more money? She stated that there were a lot of questions that were not answered that need to be. There were also enforcement issues, she stated that education does work and enforcing stricter animal cruelty laws would also make a difference. She thanked the Council Members.

Larry Johnson stated that he knew a reputable dog breeder and that the spay/ordinance will cost him more but he is in favor of the ordinance.

Rhonda Kaye:

ARK director of Tazewell County. She is also affiliated with ASPCA and stated that getting the stray animals adopted is a problem. She also stated that grant money has been offered to Tazewell County but it has not been well received. The northern towns are fed up with receiving our animals, Tazewell County needs an ordinance; the county has strays everywhere. She has driven through communities and towns with a spay/neuter ordinance and there are no stray animals. Spay and neutering works, it sends a message and the Richlands Town Council needs to send a message. Everyone will let people know that the Town of Richlands has raised the bar, she is sure Tazewell County will follow. She thanked everyone.

Jim Talbert and Warren Hinkle, Animal Shelter Representatives

He felt he needed to speak on behalf of the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors. He felt the Council needed a heads up, the numbers that are being presented tonight at the meeting are not correct. He stated that the Board of Supervisors stated that if the numbers go up at the shelter the towns will be asked to help with supporting the shelter. Tim Taylor stated that everyone who pays county taxes contributes to the shelter. Joe McCracken stated that Richlands has a population of approximately 5500 people; Tazewell County has over 40000 people. He asked why can't the spay/neuter ordinance start with Tazewell County? He stated that it is a money thing; it will cost legitimate pet owners and citizens. He also stated he has not made up his mind on how he will vote; he works for the town and the citizens of Tazewell County. Jim Talbert stated that more research needs to be done.

Council Member Reports:

Rod Cury – The Planning Commission will meet September 1, 2015 at 7:30 pm. He has sent several concerns to Tim Taylor and thanked him for helping. He also stated that everyone should go by and see the Ellen Elmes mural wall and the Section House; the mural is beautiful. He also stated he has talked with Frank Dorton about enforcement if the spay/neuter ordinance is passed. He asked Frank Dorton if he had any ideas. Frank Dorton stated they would attempt to enforce the ordinance just like leash laws. He also asked what kind of proof they would need for sterilization. Larry Johnson stated that Brad Ratliff is researching that issue. Rod Cury asked about the Codification. In the notes of completion from Brad Ratliff he stated that he followed up with Alicia Manson. He provided an additional document that was required for completion of the project. Completion projected for mid-August. Rod Cury also stated his appreciation for Dennis Lee and his staff, being a business owner he knows the importance of a good staff. He stated that was all he had.

Joe McCracken – Stated he wanted to welcome the Huddle House to town. He also reiterated that he works for the Town of Richlands and the people of the town. He stated that before he votes on anything he wants to gather information and talk to people. He is researching the spay/neuter ordinance, one of his concerns is if the ordinance will be a cost to the town and to the tax payers. Larry Johnson asked why there would be any cost. Joe McCracken asked if the Town would have to hire additional help, he stated there is always a cost. If the ordinance was so great and easy why didn't more towns have the ordinance in place? Doug Ratliff stated he had talked to the Code Officer in Bluefield,

WV. They have the ordinance in place, it is handled by complaints, no additional expenses, and it was normal operations. Larry Johnson stated that the ordinance was explained on the first offense. Joe McCracken wanted to know where the ordinance was posted, Facebook? He stated he wanted to know the cost. Lori Salyer stated that financial help and grant money was available. Joe McCracken stated he can't vote without information.

Joe McCracken stated that Tim Taylor, his staff and he were trying to work on trying to help Teen Venture. They discussed putting a footnote or memo of the bottom of the water bill letting the citizens know that they could donate on a volunteer basis. He stated that Teen Venture has been persistent is asking the Council for help. Tim Taylor stated the donation process was like the neighbor to neighbor donation information on the AEP electrical bills. He stated that it couldn't be implemented but he can guarantee the money will go to the teen center. It has to be endorsed by the Council and it will take a couple of months to get the process up and going. Rod Cury stated that helping the Teen Venture will be a good venture and that the Town wants to help. Mayor White asked if Council would like to vote to implement the program on a volunteer basis. Joe McCracken made the Motion that donations will be on a voluntary basis and be placed on the bottom of the utility bills. Mary Ann Strong seconded the motion. Rod Cury stated that Teen Venture has been before Council several times, he wanted to know if other organizations will ask to be placed on the utility bills for donations. Tim Taylor stated that only one organization (benefit program) at a time. The Town needs a directive to place the program on the utility bill. Mayor White asked for a vote. Vote, all in favor, 6/0. Motion carries.

Joe McCracken stated that Council will discuss the fence when Brad Ratliff returns. He also asked about the burned trailer. Frank Dorton stated he told the owner he can't move another trailer in until the other one is removed. Joe McCracken also asked about the tree behind Mantis Crane, there are issues with being able to see traffic. He also stated there were issues with debris in the utility lines on Prater Drive. Also, continued problems with the wall on East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, who's responsible for repairs to the wall? Tim Taylor stated that the Town has secured the wall and the owner is responsible. Joe McCracken stated that all the cars, boats and trailers parked on the road making it a one way street, it's dangerous. Tim Taylor stated that the Town can't do anything about that issue, when the houses were built there were no zoning laws. Joe McCracken stated that there were issues on Spruce Street (Lake Park area). There are weeds in the drain and the street is washed out. He asked that some attention be shown to that street. He also asked about the mowing crew, there have been issues from citizens about trash not being picked up before mowing. Tim Taylor stated they are looking at another mowing plan.

Frances Meadows – She wanted to thank Fred Phillips, she stated that the rec. park looks great. The lifeguards were very courteous and helpful. Fred is still working on getting money for the roof. She also wanted to thank the Richlands Rescue Squad; she had a friend who suffered a heart attack. She said that their fast reaction saved his life. She also wanted to invite all the ladies to the Ladies Expo at The Clinic on Friday, August 14, 2015. There are numerous tests that will be available and there is no charge. She thanked everyone.

Doug Ratliff – wanted to know when the next utility meeting will be held. Tim Taylor stated it will be the week of the 25<sup>th</sup> (August 25, 2015). He also stated that mornings would be better to hold the meeting.

Larry Johnson – The spay/neuter ordinance has agencies against it. He stated most agencies are in business because of homeless animals. He stated just because the ordinance isn't popular doesn't mean it's not right. He stated he's all for other options if any are available. But as with anything else, there is always going to be opposition. Joe McCracken asked Frank Dorton if the animal population is bad in the Town of Richlands. Frank Dorton stated that stray dogs aren't bad but cats are really bad. Larry Johnson stated that the police only see what they pick up not what is brought to the shelters. Joe McCracken asked if the animal shelter takes in feral cats. Lori Salyer stated the shelter does take them in but they usually kill them. Jim Talbert stated that there was no law in place stating that cats have to be picked up. Suzanne Barton stated that Tazewell County Shelter does not have a violation of spay and neuter. Lori Salyer stated that yes they do. Suzanne Barton stated she has ideas and she would be glad to discuss them. Larry Johnson stated there were people outside the Town of Richlands here tonight to offer information, that's why they are here. It is a county problem but there is also a town problem. He also wanted to know about the Walt Keene property on Brooklyn Street. He stated that it has been partially cleared. Rod Cury stated that Larry Johnson had been working on clearing the property. Joe McCracken stated that Walt Keene is not that ill. Larry Johnson stated that Mr. Keene is still undergoing cancer treatments and that the property is also tied up in a divorce. Frank Dorton stated that Walt Keene is not being entirely honest and that citations have been issued to him before. Mayor White asked if the mobile homes on the property are secure. Larry Johnson stated that no they are not secure.

Mary Ann Strong – Thanked Joe McCracken for the Teen Venture help idea. She also thanked Travis Hackworth for building the Huddle House restaurant. She stated that the Richlands location have broken records. She also stated that the Kiwanis Club is holding a golf tournament on September 3, 2015, she has forms for sponsorship. She also thanked Larry Johnson for helping Walt Keene. She stated that all citizens should be treated equally. She thanked everyone.

Joe McCracken wanted to know when Frank Dorton will have the numbers for the spay/neuter ordinance. Frank Dorton stated that police cost will not go up; the guys will have to work harder. Joe McCracken stated there will be a lot of concerns on both sides. Mayor White asked about the vehicle on Buchanan Street. Frank Dorton asked if it was the Jeep, they had already addressed the issue. Mayor White also asked about the tall grass on the corner of Sunset and Buchanan. Frank Dorton stated they will look at it. Mayor White asked Rod Cury to read the Resolution from Brad Ratliff:

**A RESOLUTION CONCERNING PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS AT TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS**

WHEREAS, the business of the Town of Richlands is conducted at the Richlands Town Council meeting; and,

WHEREAS, the Town Council values the opinions of its citizens and welcomes public comment on agenda and non-agenda items of Town interest; and,

WHEREAS, the Town Council wishes to facilitate the order of reception and dissemination of information; and,

WHEREAS, the Town Council determines that this can best be accomplished in an environment where the rules of the conduct of meetings are clearly established;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY** the Town Council of the Town of Richlands, that the following rules and procedures are hereby established:

**Section 1. Agenda Items**

- a). The Town Council shall maintain an agenda which shall list items to be discussed at Town Council meetings. Speakers who have requested inclusion on the Town Council Meeting Agenda are limited to a maximum of five (5) minutes per person unless 1). Prior arrangements have been made with the mayor, or 2). The Town Council, by motion at the beginning of the meeting, increases or reduces the time limit. No speaker shall be permitted to cede his five (5)-minute allotment to another speaker. Each speaker shall speak from the podium or microphone and shall state his or her name and address for the record.
- b). Citizens are invited to suggest topics of Town interest to be placed on the Town Council agenda. A citizen who wishes to place a topic on the agenda shall notify the Town Clerk or their designee two weeks in advance of the Town Council meeting at which the proposed topic is to be discussed. The citizen who suggested that the topic be placed on the agenda shall have five (5) minutes to make his or her presentation on the topic.

**Section 2. Non-Agenda Items**

Citizens shall have the opportunity to make comment on a non-agenda item during Town Council meeting. Each speaker who has not been previously included on the Agenda shall be limited to a maximum comment period of three (3) minutes. No speaker shall be permitted to cede his three (3)-minute allotment to another speaker. Each speaker shall speak from the podium or microphone and shall state his or her name and address for the record.

**Section 3. Documents**

Any speaker who intends to produce a report, diagram, map, photograph, compilation of data, or other document to the Town Council at a meeting shall also provide the Town Clerk or their designee with ten (10) hard copies, and, if possible, one (1) electronic copy of all documents at least five (5) business days prior to the Town Council meeting so that the documents may be maintained as part of the record of the meeting.

**Section 4. Decorum**

a). Comments by citizens on agenda or non-agenda items are limited to statements; speakers may not engage the Town Council members or Town employees in a question-and-answer exchange.

b). The Town Council encourages civility in public discourse and requests that speakers refrain from language which would incite an immediate breach of the peace; and refrain from language which would incite and immediate breach of the peace; and refrain from undue repetition, extended discussion of irrelevancies, use of obscenities, and personal attacks.

c.) Any person who violates these rules may be declared out of order by the Mayor. A person who persists in violating these rules may be removed from the meeting.

A copy of this Resolution shall be posted on the Town's website. This Resolution shall take effect upon passage.

Mayor White asked for a Motion to adopt the Resolution. Frances Meadows made the Motion to approve the Resolution. Larry Johnson seconded the Motion. Vote, 6/0, all in favor (with corrections). Motion carries.

Tim Taylor – Stated that Council Members have a copy of the check register. He asked if anyone had any questions regarding the check register. The following checks were explained:

- CK# 51973 Capital Auto Group \$26,265.00 – police vehicle
- CK# 51982 Complete Comfort Heating & Cooling \$10,020.00 – heat pump repairs
- CK# 51988 DYNA Pump & Electric \$4,940.00 – water treatment plant repairs
- CK# 52040 State Electric Supply Company - \$14,776.69 –materials for electrical department & other areas
- CK# 52043 THI - \$475.00 – garbage truck repairs
- CK# 52052 USALCO - \$8,704.08 – DelPAC, coagulant for the water treatment and the water plant
- CK# 52053 Valley Boiler & Mechanical, Inc. - \$8,700.00 – to rebuild broiler for sludge at the waste water treatment plant
- CK# 52058 VRS-Treasurer of Virginia - \$27,498.52 – line of duty benefits for Police, Rescue and Fire Departments. The amount used to be paid by the state, now has to be paid by Town.

Mayor White asked for a Motion to pay the bills. Frances Meadows made the Motion. Larry Johnson seconded the Motion. Vote, 6/0, all in favor. Motion carried. Mayor White wanted to know if the power bill was higher than usual. Tim Taylor stated that the amount was in line for what they budgeted for. As far as usage, it was down a little.

Tim Taylor stated the next item to discuss was the VDOT House Bill 2 update. He gave out a handout of that particular legislation. He stated he just wanted to brief Council on it and they could read the legislation at their leisure. He stated that they were talking earlier about getting what rules and procedures were in place. He also stated he attended a meeting that helped trying to inject the Town's interested or at least let their voice be known in the process. It will be an ongoing issue but basically what has happened is all funding through VDOT except for what it identified in this item, such as revenue share which in exempt, has been changed. Distributing highway funds has to be allocated differently; the procedure has changed. VDOT is trying to address transportation needs statewide; they are going through a prioritization selection through the Commonwealth transportation board. They have amended the act to include criteria for basically prioritizing statewide project selection. He stated theoretically you would think this would remove the political side of it and it would be basically driven by need and other things of that particular nature. He stated that the reason he is bringing it up is because that introduces a whole level of bureaucracy to say the least. He also stated that pre-application as well as application for these cycles, there are deadline forms and lots of boxes to check, lots of things to write and lots of things to do. He stated you have to read a pre-application form to understand the application form, which is has 12 pages. Most of the questions are drop down boxes and it's all completed over the internet, all web based. When completed the application you have to check certain boxes, there's either/or type of answers and if every box is not checked or answer not submitted your application will be rejected. He stated that electronically the application would not be acceptable. The one he wanted to mention that he has concerns with is the one the Town needs improvements on is the bridge on Front Street. It was built in 1948, the bridge is on the Town's Urban 6 Year Plan and it's still on there. He stated that the Town will need to reapply for that as well as needing to apply for other projects. If there is extra money for some reason, the federal government gives more

money or the state has access funds for certain programs such as rail, bus, transportation or highway system, transportation system; it's the whole big picture. Fortunately, the revenue share has been left untouched, which has been one of the Town's best solutions for maintain the highways in our area. The one concern he has is one question on the application which states "Is your project listed as an item in your comprehensive plan?" The other answer to that question is "Is your item either/or?" The or is, has it been indentified on a regional nature? There are only 2 boxes to check, if it's not in those two or you haven't complete your planning process and you haven't included these adopted plans to be included in the regional projects you can't just check in and haven't been a part of these regional projects it will not accept it. You also can't check it and say it there when it's not there. Not only can't you do that but you have to scan the documents and send those to them for verification. He stated they have got to move on with that which brings up something else. He also stated they have until open enrollment or application process started August 1st and ends September 30<sup>th</sup>, they will be filling it out based on the needs today and what they already have in line. Based on future applicability they are going to have to include those as part of the Comprehensive Plan, they're going to have to get those finalized and out the door. It's going to be tough because it is a difficult process; he stated he hoped they were going to work with the town quite a bit because it is going to get those finished. They will be bringing it to Council by September, he stated if you had any questions you can email him or give him a call.

The National Weather Service Station has been an ongoing project for years; he is happy to state that the Town has their part complete. He stated that lightning did strike the weather station 2 weeks before it was relocated. They have repaired the service station, the only part left is the National Weather Service people are waiting on Verizon to get one more piece of analog lines installed and then they will have a completed project. He stated he would like for Council to consider having some kind of groundbreaking or ceremony. This is something that will help the entire end of the county as well as Buchanan County and some parts of Russell County because this radio will cover areas that were left out. There will be a small radio so you can access the National Weather Service Station and it will alert you at the same time it alerts everyone else; for weather events it will be a great project. For the Town of Richlands it enhances the EMS, fire and rescue. He also stated that Tazewell County has helped with funding, the town has put mostly labor into the project and they've had some donations and so forth. He stated that hopefully next month he can tell you it is finished and they can schedule some type of event. He is also hopeful that the National Weather Service will have some of their representatives available as well as some of the other participates in the program. Back to the Community Planning Project, he has been in contact with Craig Wilson. He knows it has been a long time since they've had a meeting with him. The Town had some issues with mapping the last time we met with him; he has since accomplished in getting those finished. Mr. Wilson is asking about scheduling some meeting dates and as soon as he finds out what dates Mr. Wilson is available, they will schedule the meetings.

One other item that is under miscellaneous is web activity. The Town is trying to handle online payments and to modernize with technology and while doing that they have uncovered deficiencies not only with software prospective but the hardware prospective also. Last year when the Town renewed its certificate, not to get too technical, but basically when you go to the Town's website you have to have a secured website certificate registered with someone. Unfortunately the Town has 2 domains; the 2 domain process has given the internet population some misery because they won't let the Town do that anymore. As of November 2015 they have to merge those 2 domains into a single server type of environment. Rod Cury asked if this was for the .org; Tim Taylor stated it was for the .gov. The Town still has 2 domains, they separated the PD from the Town financials, it made sense 15 years ago but unfortunately it doesn't make sense in today's times. The Town needs to be .gov for security issues. In order to have everything ready the Town will have to replace the servers and backup servers by November 2015. The money for the cost of the upgrade will come from technology, there's approximately \$80,000 budgeted for software. He wants to make everyone aware that this is a long range plan. He stated that is all he has for now.

Mayor White asked for a Motion to go into Closed Session to discuss 2.2-3711A3 – Acquisition of Real Property and 2.2-3711A5 – Prospective Business Acquisition. Doug Ratliff made the Motion; it was seconded by Mary Ann Strong. Vote, 6/0, all in favor. Motion carried. Council went into Closed Session at 10:43 pm.

Council returned from Closed Session at 11:38 pm. Mayor White asked for a Motion to return to Open Session. Larry Johnson made the Motion, Joe McCracken seconded the Motion. Vote, 6/0, all in favor. Motion carried. Each Council member confirmed that all that was discussed in Closed Session was Section 2.2-3711 A3 – Acquisition of Real Property and Section 2.2-3711A5 – Prospective Business Acquisition.

A Public Hearing will be held at the September council meeting at 7:00 pm on the spaying/neutering ordinance.

Mayor White asked for a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Joe McCracken made the Motion to adjourn; Mary Ann Strong seconded the Motion. Vote, 6/0, all in favor. Motion carried

Meeting was adjourned at 11:43 pm.

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Jannis White, Mayor

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Kelly Goodman, Clerk