

The Richlands Town Council held a regular monthly meeting in the Richlands Council Chambers on December 10, 2019 at 7:30pm with the following present:

Mayor: Paul Crawford
Town Manager: Tim Taylor
Town Clerk: Connie Allen
Council Members: Richard Brown, Vickie England, Rod Cury, Mary Ann Strong,
Rick Wood
Council Members Absent: Doug Ratliff
Town Attorney : Shannon Cooke

Mayor Crawford opened the meeting.

Rev. Philip Horton gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Crawford – Do we have any additions/deletions/corrections to the agenda?

Connie - Add Wayne White to the agenda and make changes under VI from "Jim Green, Swords Creek – Present Connie with wood carving" to "Jim Green, Swords Creek – Present Council with wood turning". The employee "Christmas Dinner" is at 6:30pm instead of 6:00pm.

Mayor Crawford – Do we have a motion to approve the agenda as amended? Vickie made the motion to approve the agenda as amended, Mary Ann seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford – We have two (2) sets of minutes, Regular Council Meeting and Work Session are there any corrections, additions or deletions to the minutes?

Mayor Crawford - Do I have a motion to approve the minutes as presented?

Richard - I make a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Rod seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries - 5/0.

Mayor Crawford – Jim Green

Jim – Good evening and thank you for having me, I live and reside in Swords Creek, VA. I got involved in the Arts and Crafts Festival thru Connie; she invited me to start participating. Earlier this year we learned there was a dead tree standing at the Police Department. We wanted pieces of the tree when it was cut down. It was an Oak Tree. I have made two (2) items which are simple bowls I would like to give to the Council and the Police Department. Connie promoted the Arts and Crafts and she has talked me into participating. I have been doing woodturning for around three (3) years and I fell in love with it. I was looking at the year when the town was incorporated, 1892, and I got to speculating about that tree, it is very large. I estimate the tree to be approximately 70 to 75 years old, has an historical value. Chief Gilbert said there was a corner stone at the building of the late 50's. Connie's idea has convinced me to promote crafts in the area. There are a lot of people like me just like doing things, most are retired and are able to do things. The bowl is simple, I left the worm holes, etc., I call it "Mining out God's Treasures" I just wanted to say thank you and hope you enjoy the crafts.

Mayor Crawford - Jim, on behalf of the Council we thank you so much and we are glad you are supporting Connie's efforts. I was at the Arts and Crafts Show and heard you talking about it, I am very excited. We will put the Town's bowl in the display case out front and the Police Department will do the same, again thank you so much.

Mayor Crawford - Wayne White

Wayne - I am from Raven, VA, I have been in wood turning around 1 ½ years, I actually purchased my first lathe from the Mayor. I also asked the Mayor if we could have some wood off the tree when it was cut down. I want to be part of the Arts and Crafts Event that Ms. Allen is organizing. Connie insisted that I bring the bowl to the meeting to present to Council. I also have a piece that came from a tree from the old Virginia Dump Body around a year ago. I would like to present the pieces to Council at this time.

Vickie - Do you sell your crafts?

Wayne - Yes

Rod - Do you have a contact number?

Connie - I have their contact information.

Mayor Crawford - Connie has all their information plus they will be participating in our Arts & Crafts Event. Wayne thanks you so much.

Mary Ann - I had never seen their crafts before until I went to the Arts & Crafts Event; I bought a few pieces from each of you for Christmas gifts. The ones that I purchased are from the tree at the hospital. I am excited to give to family members and explained where they came from.

Mayor Crawford - It is beautiful work and I like your phrase "Mining Out God's Treasures".

Rod - I like the date December 7.

Mayor Crawford - We have no "Scheduled Public Comments".

Mayor Crawford - "Unscheduled Public Comments"- Ernest Edgell

Ernest - 206 Terry Drive, I heard some good comments about your Christmas activities, I enjoyed the parade and hear a lot of good comments on your other events. On August 13 I brought to Council's attention about the water problem on 2nd Avenue, it was dry then but if you go over there now you will see where the water problem is coming from, water in the ditch is not draining like it should. Anywhere you go in this Town there is a house that needs to be removed, three (3) or four (4) that has burned and left sitting. One (1) is across the 4-lane and one (1) toward the crane place, and one street above the crane place, a house that is about to fall in and a trailer that someone started to move, they took off the aluminum and left it as is.

Vickie - It is on Farmer Street.

Ernest - Trailer Park, there is trash piled up there every day even after the garbage truck runs. Hidden Valley - how long are you supposed to leave your trash can sitting out?

Mayor Crawford - By code it should be taken in on the same evening.

Ernest - Some leave out all week. The Junk Yard beside of the Bowling Alley there is a 1960 Plymouth with the trunk up that has been there for at least two(2) years maybe longer. Are they supposed to have fences around junk yards?

Mayor Crawford - We did get the tow motor moved with the tree growing thru it.

Ernest - Is that Town property where the vehicle is located?

Tim - I think so.

Ernest - It is not the first time it has been brought to the Council's attention.

Mayor Crawford -- "Downtown Events" -- Connie Allen

Connie -- We had a great Small Town Christmas Week; I would like to thank all the Town employees, Tammy McConnell, Doug Allen and everyone who helped with the event and everyone who participated. I would also like to thank my committee for all their hard work. I look forward to next year.

Connie - Employee Christmas Dinner is December 12 at 6:30pm. We had 220 people to sign up for the dinner. I would also like to remind Council the Ethics Training must be completed before end of December. There are still a couple of Council Members that need to complete the training.

Mayor Crawford - I would like to add comments about the parade, it is my understanding that we had the most entries that we have had in the parades in a long time. Citizens commented that it was the biggest parade in a long time and very well attended. Thank you, Connie

Mayor Crawford -- "Council Member Reports" -- Rod Cury

Rod -- Any concerns that I had I relayed to the Town Manager. Thank you they have been addressed. I want to say Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone. I think the Town looks pretty with the lights throughout Town. It reminds me of an earlier time when we had a "White Light Christmas" that is when white lights first came in and the stores in Town participated.

Mayor Crawford -- "Council Member Reports" Vickie England

Vickie -- I have already talked to Tim about a couple of things, so I have nothing that needs to be done tonight. I just want to brag on Connie, she is doing an excellent job for our Town and I appreciate it from the bottom of my heart. Everything is just beautiful. We did the Home Tour on Friday night. As people came in and out of the homes it was a warming conversation on how they enjoy what the Town is doing. Our Christmas parade was awesome, when the last participant was going out the beginning was coming back in. I did not get to come to the Christmas Tree Lighting we were out of Town, but I have heard nothing but good comments. I appreciate it. Hope everyone has a Merry Christmas.

Mayor Crawford -- "Council Member Reports" -- Rick Wood

Rick -- I also think Connie did an excellent job. One thing on the Christmas Tree Lighting, next year can we light the big Christmas Tree the same time that Connie has her tree lighting. I think it would make everyone look forward to doing the event.

Tim -- Sure, did you notice we put some animation on it?

Rick -- Yes and I would like to wish everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Instead of going out of Town and spending all your money we need shop local and make our Town better.

Mayor Crawford - "Council Member Reports" -- Richard Brown

Richard -- I discussed with Tim earlier this week, followed-up with people on the ball field. The site plans should be finished this week, the question was proposed to me do they need to give the site plans to you, and you take the lead, or you want them to?

Tim - We want to be involved because of dealing with the drainage, I know it is going to be over 10,000 square feet so we will have to get the County Engineer involved. They can start with us.

Richard - That was the question. As far as the DEQ, wanted to know if you wanted to be involved in that phase and all the way thru.

Tim - We probably will since it is so sensitive. We will coordinate with them.

Richard - Merry Christmas

Mayor Crawford – “Council Member Reports” – Mary Ann Strong

Mary Ann – Things are active at the Rec Park as always, Lisa Cordle deserves a lot of appreciation for starting a girls Volleyball Team, it is my understanding there has been a lot a participation. Rec Commission will meet Monday night at 7:00pm upstairs at the Rec Park. You may want to stay tuned due to the holidays, we might have a change on the meeting date, will try to announce on the ACCESS Channel if we decided to meet another day this month. I would like thank Connie too and I know it is a family and church effort. Worship Hymn Church had their puppets at the event. My grandson wanted to watch them over and over again. It is a team effort which includes Richlands Community Development Committee. They were very involved with the Home Tour and Small Town Christmas. I think our Town is going in a positive direction. Like Vickie said there is a feeling of a spirit of cooperation. Everyone wants to see things improved. I had some guests from California during Thanksgiving; they were very impressed with the Town. George this says a lot for you and your street crew. They were talking about how clean out Town was and with all the lights they thought it looked like Hallmark Christmas. The Electrical Department gets a lot of credit for that for what they do with the decorations. I could have not been prouder. Years ago, when I would take guest thru Town I tried not going to certain areas because I wasn't proud of it. I would like to remind everyone that Chief Gilbert and the Police Department have White Christmas planned for Saturday and Sunday at 7:00am at Walmart.

Jerry - Currently we have 140 children, we have been blessed with donations again this year. Burger King will provide breakfast and Wal Mart will provide refreshments. People who want to volunteer to help assist taking the children around you are more than welcome.

Mary Ann - I challenge you, if you have never participated in White Christmas it will be the best thing you do this Christmas. In closing, already mentioned shop local, I know there are certain things we can't get here but try if possible, to shop local. We get caught up in presents, I would encourage you and I am trying hard this year myself, Rev. Cecil Herrin from Gethsemane Baptist many years ago spoke for me at a Kiwanis meeting, he talked about presence with Christ at this time of year instead of presents. I will close with that thought.

Mayor Crawford - I received a letter to myself and Town Council from Jim and Sylvia Boyd which states "It was my and Sylvia's pleasure to attend the Veterans Celebration Banquet, the event was well planned, touching and meaningful. It was most kind and thoughtful for you to give each Veteran a gift bag and the food was delicious." I also have appreciation letter from Mary Lawson from SVCC thanking us for the \$500 donation toward 2020 Festival of the Arts.

Mayor Crawford - I was asked yesterday if we could make a handicap place on the sidewalk where the Eye Doctor's office is on Suffolk.

Tim - We talked with the Doctor/Representative about it, we actually have one (1) closest to him on that end to accommodate the handicapped. It is hard to put one in the middle because of the logistics of doing it. We have made the signage for the spot. We have plans to put one on the other end too. I hope that satisfies him if not we will have to revisit.

Mayor Crawford - In November we had a Work Session meeting with Council and open to the public. We came and worked thru things that we don't take time to work thru on our regular meeting night. I think most of the Council members present agreed that it was a good idea. I don't think we should try to have a meeting in December, but I would like for you to think about one in January, a night that we can meet between our two (2) regular meetings. We will keep from Wednesday nights, so we don't

affect anyone's church night. I think it is a good idea, we had a lot of good information. It is a good time for Council to offer their thoughts and suggestions without a formal environment. I would like to wish everyone a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. I appreciate everyone.

Mayor Crawford - "Attorney Comments" - Shannon Cook

Shannon - At the last meeting it was suggested that I draft an ordinance to repeal the current cruising ordinance. I have done that and a copy of O-2020-01-01 is included in your packet. I am looking for a motion to have this read tonight, we can pick up at the January meeting and dispose of at that time.

Mayor Crawford - I will entertain a motion to have the ordinance read .

Rick - I make the motion for the Attorney to read O-2020-01-01, Vickie seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries - 5/0.

Shannon - "Read the Ordinance O-2020-01-01"

Mayor Crawford - Do we need any action?

Shannon - No, what we are going to do at the next meeting, Council can vote to read a second time and set over for the February meeting or the Council can vote to dispense with the second reading and vote in January.

Shannon - The other matter is Resolution of the Town approving and authorizing the purchase of the W.B.F. White Property. That should have been included in your packet. I need a motion to have Resolution R-2019-12-01 read.

Mary Ann - I make a motion for the Attorney to read Resolution R-2019-12-01, Rick seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries - 5/0.

Shannon - "Read Resolution R-2019-12-01"

Mayor Crawford - Do I hear a motion to adopt Resolution R-2019-12-01?

Vickie - I make the motion to adopt Resolution R-2019-12-01, Rick seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries - 5/0.

Shannon - Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Richard - Question on the Cruising Ordinance, I didn't recognize the code section, is it codified?

Shannon - Yes

Rod - We voted to read it and we left it right there.

Mayor Crawford - "Manager's Report" - Tim Taylor

Tim - You have a copy of two (2) check registers please review and let me know if you have any questions. Check No. 7060 - Altec Industries, Inc - \$182,852.00 - We purchased a new bucket truck. The

last inspection of our truck we were not able to use again due to safety issues. The truck was close to 20 years old not worth investing in to fix. Check No. 7153 -Robinson, Farmer and Cox Associates, PLC for \$22,000 this is our yearly billing for our auditors. Check No. 7149- Railroad Management Company IV, LLC – \$18,306.04 lease payments for pipes, etc. going over the tracks. Check No. 7118- Dominion Driveway and Parking Lot Paving, Inc. \$48,400.00 – Contractor we used to pave the Section House area and the River Street Boat Launch. Some of the expense is funded thru a TVA grant.

Rick - Are we finished?

Tim - We have a Kiosk to finish and a little bit of painting.

Rick – What about the Section House?

Tim - We need to finish the bathrooms and we can close that out, I talked to VDOT today, the only contractual thing we have left.

Mary Ann - I make a motion to allow the Town Manager to pay the bills as presented, Vickie seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries - 5/0.

Tim – Monthly Power Cost Report of October 2019. Actual sales came in 12% lower than budget. The other months had been higher this one is actual lower. We also had \$2.04/MWh higher than budget all in wholesale power cost rate of \$108.31/MWh with the dollar cost of \$4,325 lower than budget. That contributed to a couple of things mainly AFEC was down for maintain outage, only operated through the 12th of October. It is still not operating but should be back on by mid-December. For the year we are still doing better than we anticipated.

Tim - You have a letter included in your packet from Department of Housing and Community Development Planning (DHCD) for a grant award. There was a couple of typing errors. The only problem that we had with the award of the grant they wanted us to have all these activities done by January 4, but we didn't receive the letter until later in the month. We have talked to Jim Baldwin and he is supporting us. Basically, we wrote a letter to DHCD asking for an extension. More than likely we will receive the extension which will give us 45 to 60-day extension.

Tim - It is encouraging of the positive things that we are hearing in the community from the business section and the residents. We have had Christmas Dinners in the past but have been very poorly attended, this year we have 222 signed up for the dinner. That means a lot. I wanted to tell Council there are reasons why our employees are doing that, there is a moral boost, leadership matters and we appreciate things happening around us. I want to thank you for the Christmas Dinner.

Tim - I would like to ask Adrienne to come up front and go over the Financial Review. We did get a letter from Robinson Farmer and Cox and a financial statement for last fiscal year. Mr. Cox will be here in January to go over anything you may have questions on. We did include a report with collections and taxes, Adrienne will go over with you.

Adrienne – I included two (2) documents in your packet, "Report to Council" which basically has the Revenues from July to September 30 which is the first quarter of the fiscal year. The expenditures are broken down by departments. As of year- to- date September 30 the total revenue the town collected and billed is \$3.3 million, the total expenditures \$3.5 million that is a combined income statement. You have to remember the first quarter of the fiscal year there is not any collections on the governmental side. We collect real estate taxes and decals in the month of December. The only thing you have is your monthly income which is your meals tax, cigarette tax, business license is due in March and Bank Stock taxes are due in May. You will show a little bit of loss until you get to those months. You have a percent column, as of September 30 that column should be an average of 25%.

Richard - I think you need to give credit to the department heads to be able to keep the expenses under control.

Adrienne - Does anyone have any questions?

Mayor Crawford - Nondepartmental Fringe Benefits

Adrienne - We pay on a quarterly basis, we post and at the end of the quarter and we do a journal entry to split between the departments based on wages for workman's comp, liability, etc.

Adrienne - The Mayor had requested a report to look at collections and taxes report not detailed but broke down by revenue stream. If you look at the first page real estate taxes, delinquent taxes, etc. it is a more up-to-date report. The report is thru November 30, 2019.

Mayor Crawford - Thank you for the report, you don't have to go thru all the line items, but it does give Council something to look at.

Rick - When are the taxes due?

Adrienne - December 31

Vickie - Are there penalties for paying late?

Adrienne - Yes

Mayor Crawford - It is my understanding that customers are able to pay their bills with credit card or on-line.

Adrienne - Yes, they can pay by credit card, but we now have ACH, customer can enroll. We have quite a few to respond.

Mayor Crawford - I have heard a lot of positive comments on that.

Adrienne - We have drafted a Term Loan RFP for Fire Truck and RFP for Line of Credit for WWTP. I have submitted the RFP to the auditor firm, Corbin has contacted me back and he did have a few things that we need to change, hope to have out early next week to the banks. The biggest thing if we submit RFP financing for tax-exempt, we will have to secure a bond council more than likely and there is a fee associated with that which is around \$6000 to \$8000. What we will probably do on that is to submit an RFP and have them make quotes based on tax-exempt financing and non-tax financing. We can see what the best option is for the Town.

Rick - Fire Truck- are they going to send something on the financing?

Tim - We will exercise that option, Keith just got an update on that and there is a deadline to take advantage of the price increase too. We wanted to give the locals an opportunity too.

Vickie - How many banks responded?

Adrienne - Every bank inside the Town corporation limits responded with interest in receiving the RFP.

Tim - We need to get the date established for January. Planning Commission will try to have a meeting the first part of January.

Rick - Will the meeting be after the next Council meeting? I have something I want to talk about.

Tim - If you want to set a date tonight would be good.

Vickie - The 28 looks like a good date.

Mayor Crawford - That is on a Saturday.

Mayor Crawford - January 28 for Work Session at 6:00pm.

Mayor Crawford – At this time I need a motion for the Mayor and Members of Council convene in executive closed session for the purpose of discussion of 2.2-3711(A)(5) Prospective Business, 2.2-3711(A)(29)Contract negotiations for Fire and EMS protection.

Rick- I make the motion to go into executive session, Mary Ann seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries - 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - I now entertain a motion that the Members of Council reconvene in open session and accept the CERTIFICATE OF EXECUTIVE SESSION certifying that the matters discussed while in executive session were those both lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements and identified in the motion by which the closed session was convened.

Rick - I make the motion for Council to return from "Closed Session", Vickie seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion?

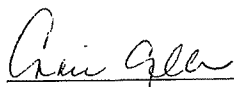
Mayor Crawford – Roll Call Vote - Vickie-Yes, Rick-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Richard-Yes, and Rod-Yes - Motion carries - 5/0.

Mayor Crawford- Do I have a motion to adjourn?

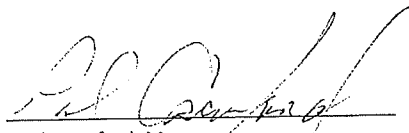
Rick- I make the motion to adjourn, Vickie seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries - 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - Adjourned



Connie Allen, Town Clerk


Paul Crawford, Mayor