

The Richlands Town Council held a "Regular Meeting" on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in the Richlands Council Chambers at 6:00 pm with the following present:

Mayor: Rod D. Cury

Interim Town Manager: Heather Peery (absent)

Acting Town Clerk: Susan Whitt

Council Members: Doug Ratliff, Gary Jackson, Rick Wood, Jordan Bales, Jan White, and Laura Mollo.

Town Attorney: Michael Thomas

Mayor Cury opened the meeting.

Mayor Cury gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members of council we have before us an agenda, if you'll please look over the agenda and see if there are any deletions additions or corrections. I will entertain uh any thoughts regarding the agenda

Jan-Mr. Mayor- yes I would like to add Street Paving to the agenda. Added under Agenda Items as letter i.

Laura-I also have two things please. For letter j-an events committee appointment. The other thing I would like Council to consider moving the scholastic bowl up before public comment

Mayor Cury-yes and I think we should. So, under Roman numeral eight a Scholastic Bowl if you please move that up we'll call it Roman numeral four a, IV 4A.

Mayor- are there any other deletions or additions to the agenda?

Doug-maybe an addition. I've had a lot of complaints with things in the river like trees and stuff to talk about maybe having removed.

We will add that to Agenda Items as letter k.-River Debris.

Rick- let's add Cornelia Cox's driveway. Letter L is going to be consideration of Cornelia Cox driveway.

Mike- I have one correction under Executive Closed Session that is the Code Section is 2.2-3711 A1 it's not 37.11. So, if you will please remove the second decimal.

Mayor Cury-are there any other additions or deletions or corrections to the agenda.

Rick- can we add the Magic Mart property right of way easement. Added as letter m.

Doug-one other thing, the power cost adjustments, PCA. Added as item n.

Mayor Cury-I should have said it at the very beginning, Heather cannot be here tonight. Heather Perry, for those of you who do not know, is the interim town manager and she is sick and her doctor has told her she must be off work until Thursday. So, she sends her regrets and I'm very sorry I didn't recognize her nor did I pray for her but in the spirit of our heavenly father we offer up vocal prayer.

Any other additions, deletions or corrections to the agenda?

Jordan- I'll defer to Gary on this, but do we want to discuss the renovations that we went and looked at the rec park? We'll be ready to discuss the renovations at Rec Park. Can we add that to I guess letter o.

Added as Agenda item-o- Rec Park renovations.

Mayor Cury-Let me review this to make sure I have it right and that everybody else is all on the same page. we have if you look down the agenda in order, one is call the meeting to order, two is invocation, three is Pledge of Allegiance, four is additions/deletions. So here they are, we have moved the Scholastic Bowl Recognition to Roman IV-a. Then going down to agenda items, we have Roman numeral VIII and they are in order. We're going to scratch the Scholastic Bowl . b

is SAFER which is Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response. c- is personalized drawing of Tazewell in Richlands High School. d is the grand opening of Whiskey Fields Boutique, e is Resolution for Interconnection, f is utility date ordinance, g-is an Executive Closed Session pursuant to Virginia Code, h is return to open session, i is Street Paving, j- is events committee appointments, k- is debris in the river, l is considering Cornelia Cox's driveway, m is the Magic Mart easement, n is PCA and electric questions, and then we have o- Rec Park Renovations. Is that correct, everyone? I have one thought let me ask you, Council, would it be prudent or efficient to move the Executive Session to the very bottom, so if anybody wants to stay for that they can. Council agreed. So I will ask that we take item g which is executive closed session and move that. We're going to just eliminate the g and we're going to put it right after Rec Park renovation as item p as closed session. Is that okay everyone. And we would want to move H as well. Yes, we'll move H, that's right, let's do that.

I think it will be more favorable to people who would like to stay with us as much as they can through all this of the discussion. Council agrees. Are there any other additions, deletions, corrections to the agenda. Hearing none, I will entertain a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Laura makes the motion to accept the agenda as amended, Rick makes the second. There being no discussion, I would ask for a roll call vote please: Doug-yes, Gary-yes, Rick-yes, Jordan-yes, Jan-yes, Laura-yes.

The motion is unanimous, it carries.

First on our agenda is recognition of the Scholastic Bowl and these are the things that bring great joy to all our hearts, so I'm speaking to you heart in a heartfelt manner in my position and also, personally to these students and to coattail this team. I will read you the list of accomplishments. I just want to say this team of outstanding young students from Richlands High School has achieved so much and they actually went to the state competition and correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Hale, I believe they came in second, which is no small feat and they're to be honored tonight. So that being said, I would like to read this, I had Mr. Hale send this to me so I would not miss anything. I would like to note that some of these students could not be here tonight because as many busy people are, they have many things to do and they're called in many directions, which actually refutes the notion that young people don't get tired. So I want to recognize them. I will read the names and as I read them you don't have to stand for very long but if you'll just please stand up and be recognized and then at the end of my recognition, our recognition, I would appreciate it if all of you would come forward for a picture with the council and also introduce yourselves to the members of the council, please and thank you.

So let me say first, this is the roster for the 2022-2023 Scholastic Bowl Team. I've had the honor of teaching some of these students, but not all, and I'll be honest with you if I'd had the honor, it would be more complete for me personally. But I can tell you they're outstanding not only for academics, but they're pretty well-rounded people, some of them participate in band, some in various sports, some are currently involved in the play that's going to be presented by the Richlands High School Drama Club, The Beauty and the Beast, which is this coming Friday and Saturday night at 7 pm at the Community College. So, while I've tried to explain what all these students are doing, they've maintained such an excellent record and they are to be commended, highly commended. I could single out people, but that certainly would be inappropriate and unfair because all of you make a team. So as I call your name, would you please stand up and be recognized: Joey Simmons is the captain, Joey, can you remain standing, please. I could expand on these and we could take a whole meeting with what I think is so important. Joey's an outstanding student, I had him in the 10th grade and he's an outstanding student at Richlands High School in so many ways. Owen Bales, Owen is also an outstanding student. Unfortunately, he knows how I feel. He took AP History and I wish I'd had him in regular history, but I will have to give him a ton of credit, he would come to me for various interesting tidbits and I tried to impart what little I know. Owen is also the brother of our new Town Council Member, Jordan Bales (and campaign manager). And we have unfortunately, Gavin Littrell, who cannot be here tonight, I had the pleasure to teach Gavin. Gavin is an outstanding young man, he's a junior at Richlands High School. Jayden Daniels is on the team, but she could not be here tonight she has other obligations. Tristan Jones, another outstanding student, could not be here tonight. Zoe Elswick. Zoe, I think I see you back there. I had the pleasure and honor of teaching Zoe. They just don't come any better and sharper and I want to commend you Zoe on your hard work. Braley Griffith. Braley, are you here. Braley, how nice to see you, I didn't have Braley either but you know it's wonderful for you to be here to be a part of a team, it really becomes family. Emily Van Dyke. Emily, I'm so proud of you and we all are, thank you for your accomplishments and your hard work. Rihanna Addison. Rihanna, thank you, for being a part of this team and contributing to the success of it. Everybody has an important

role, it really takes everybody. Abby Arney. Abby, thank you, Abby you're a bright light in this picture and you're in white which gives you a brighter glow, thank you so much for participating for Richlands High School in this important endeavor of wits and brains and sportsmanship. Then we have Brady Woody, who cannot be here tonight and last but not least, we have our coach, Chris Hale. Chris, would you please stand. Chris teaches the classics, in particular Latin, he's fluent in several languages but Latin is his primary course and he also coaches this team to Victory, and I call it Victory. It's unqualified, it doesn't need any particular yardsticks at all. We can't put them to these kids because there just aren't yard sticks to put to them, there are no limits and I am so proud of all of you. Chris, thank you. Sometimes last year, before I retired, I would pass his room and this year when I've subbed, I would pass his room and they are there late in the evenings working and trying to learn how to work the buzzers, how to answer questions fast. All the things that I don't even know about that are so important in being a competitor and I will say I attended what a few events I was able to at Richlands High School. You will not find a more competitive spirited team with such excellent sportsmanship. It attests to your character, not only your gray matter but to your character and I thank you on behalf of this Council, thank you.  
Applause.

Team came up and introduced themselves to Council and took a group photo with them.  
Mayor Cury-before you go, I have a whole list of accomplishments, just stand here, please.  
\*Early Bird Tournament of Tusculum University- first place.  
\*EMIT at Eastern Montgomery High School- third place top team from the state of Virginia  
\*State Line showdown at Virginia High School- fourth place  
\*Tornado Invitational Tournament at Richlands High School- first place VHSL that's the Virginia High School League, that's highly regulated  
\*Southwest District regular season 12-0 -no losses  
\* VHSL Southwest District Tournament first place  
\*VHSL Region 2D tournament first place  
\*VHSL state tournament runner-up, two to one, highest place in Richlands High School history, All State tournament team Joey Simmons, top five scorers amongst 100 plus players from the 1A 6A schools.

So back to the agenda, is there anyone, we are on Roman numeral VII, is there anyone under unscheduled comments who would like to speak tonight?

Jackie Barrett with the Bleachy Mama.

Jackie, I've got you, is there anyone else who would like to speak under unscheduled public comments? None.

Consent agenda- the authorization to pay the bills, does everyone have the check register in front of you? Have you had a chance to review it? Are there any questions about the check register? No questions. Let's go to the next one, the minutes, are there any questions about the minutes? They are quite lengthy because Susan did a superb job of typing them and I will share with the audience here, 70 pages.

Any questions about the minutes of our regular meeting for February the 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Jan-I don't have a question but I'd certainly like to thank Susan for her patience and recording all these minutes because I'm sure that takes a long time. We thank you so much, Susan.

Mayor-is there a motion to accept the consent agenda as presented? Doug makes the motion , Gary made the second. Any discussion on this motion?

There being no discussion.... Rick-are you doing the minutes and the check register all at one time?

Mayor Cury-see, it's under consent agenda right here and if you have any questions we can go back.

Jan- are you voting on both of them at once or are you splitting them?

Mayor Cury-it's on the consent agenda, I was asking for them both at once.

Jan- I prefer to separate them.

Mayor Cury- okay, we can do that. Well let's do this, first let's take the authorization to pay the bills. Is there a motion to.....

Mike-Mayor, yes, there was already a motion and a second that you have to take a vote on that. Or you could withdraw the Motions so we could separate the two. Mayor Cury- Would you like to have someone withdraw the motion?

Mike- well that's council's decision or that's the individuals who made it.

Mayor Cury- so would you like to withdraw the motion?

Doug withdraws the Motion and Gary withdraws his second.

Mayor Cury- so let's take it one by one. We have authorization to pay the bills and I'd ask for any questions to make sure. Are there any questions about the check register, any at all. Is there a motion to authorize the town manager to pay the bills?

Doug makes the motion; Gary makes the second. Any discussion?

There being no discussion, I would ask for a roll call vote: Doug-yes, Gary-Yes, Rick-no

Jordan-yes, Jan- no, Laura-no.

Mayor Cury-does that leave what, three yes's and three no's, I vote yes.

Next, we have minutes of the regular meeting from February the 14th, we discussed it, is there any other discussion on these minutes? Is there a motion to accept the minutes as presented?

Laura makes the motion; Jan makes the second.

There being no discussion on the minutes, I would ask for a roll call vote please: Doug yes Gary yes, Rick yes, Jordan yes, Jan yes, and Laura yes. Motion passes unanimously.

Next, we have Roman numeral VI-Scheduled public comments- this is a five minute maximum. I would ask, I don't know if Mr. Hess or Mr. Breimann are here, I'm looking for them.

I would ask members of the audience who are going to address Council, to please not direct your conversation to any one member but to address the council as a whole and in a very civil manner. Is Mr. Breimann here or Rusty Hess?

They are not here, so we will just put a no-show.

Next, we have unscheduled public comments. Jackie come on up and please stand at the podium and please note this is a three-minute maximum and I will ask uh we don't have a timekeeper right now so I'll ask Jordan would you keep the time for us please. He'll tell you when to go. Jackie, again we ask that everybody be considerate and civil and direct your statements to the council as a whole.

My name is Jacqueline Barrett. So again, I'm not the person to kind of complain and do anything, I'm normally super patient, happy go lucky, whatever. So on May 24<sup>th</sup> I was granted the pop-up Richlands fund, May 24<sup>th</sup> of 2022. That was \$5,000 plus an additional \$1,000 thousand dollars from the VCC, so it made it \$6,000.00. So I sent my information into John and John completely declined it said no you're not getting it blah blah blah

Well, he never told anyone, it never went any farther than John. I sent that in twice to John, both times they were declined. I was told the reasons why I couldn't get it by John, fast forward to January 11<sup>th</sup>, Jordan contacts me, there's an IDA meeting that evening, he was like hey this is what's going on we need you to kind of come tell us what has happened, so I did. The IDA approved everything and then I get a notification that it has to be approved by Town Council, which you guys did last Town council meeting. Well since then I have been treated a little poorly by a member of .... we'll just say, by Heather and I've been patient and I haven't bothered her. I waited for a call back for several weeks before I finally heard from her and the only reason I heard from her was because I called again. Whenever she answered she literally answered the phone yelling at me down my throat in a very poor manner because I was asking about the check that I was told that I would be getting that week. This has been approximately two and a half three weeks ago, and the lady for Magic Moments Photography is now also having these issues as well. We are just trying to figure out when our checks are going to be written as it's been, the first check was approved well over a month ago, the second check was approved a month ago for me. I'm not

sure exactly on Magic Moments, but I would just appreciate kind of an update and not to be talked to like a dog would be my thing. I try to put out as much respect as I get and I've been very patient and respectful during this whole process.

Mayor Cury- Jackie thank you, what we can address... not at this moment but we can't address payment. We really can't address anything more about personalities but thank you very much.

Jackie- how can I file a formal complaint on her? I would suggest you would have to go through the grievance process and I would think that you would write to our attorney, and I would copy Susan Whitt on it and Heather. I would put it in writing.

Thank you very much, Jackie.

Laura- Mr. Mayor, I wasn't going to bring it up again, but here we are again with pop-up so I'm going to ask Council one last time. I'm in favor of they won, they won, okay. They might not,

the process was confusing, they might not be going through how they are supposed to, but I think as a town we did not fulfill our obligation to them. I understand the hesitation, I am still of the mindset, they won, let's nix the back and forth and the turn this in and meet these requirements. Let's get all three winners the money and let's call it a day and let's revisit this when we can do it.

So, I'd like to put that in form of a Motion. I will make the motion that the pop-up Richlands winners are to get any funds remaining to them with no obligation to them. They've won, let's check that off our list here. Doug seconds.

Mayor Cury-kay there's a motion on the floor to pay other pop-up winners what we owe them. Based on their wins, there's three remaining.

There had been some drawdown, so she's less than five thousand, but I don't know what that number is, but again all that money is in a separate account specifically for the pop-up winners.

Jordan -so the only thing I'll add to this is, Jackie's turned in all of her paperwork, at this point it's a process issue. Even if we make this motion, it's going to have to go through the same process.

Laura-so that is in my motion, I'm saying no more process, let's write the checks, let's let the IDA move on to what the IDA needs to move on to. Let the council move on to what the council needs to move on to, we have some very pressing issues at this point, pop-up Richlands is not one of them. I might be outvoted, I might not, it might be, but I'm putting it to a vote-let's pay these guys and everybody move forward.

Mayor Cury- Laura, just to be sure about the motion, you're making a motion to pay these people what they won, what they are currently owed? yes sir

Doug seconds.

Jordan-okay should we put a time constraint on that because I think that's the big problem?

Laura- that's my fear even if we say let's approve it right now it still has to go through... I don't think Heather can write and approve the check is the problem that we're running into. Laura - that's why we're approving it right now and when Heather comes back because Heather won't have to check anyone's paperwork or receipts, she will be able to write that check, now I'm not sure when Heather will be back because as we heard she's out sick but there will be no more and if this motion passes there will be no more back and forth about is this valid, is this receipt over here. Just write the check and let's focus on moving forward.

Doug makes the second. Is there any discussion on this motion. There being no discussion, I would ask for a roll call vote please: Doug yes Gary Yes Rick yes Jordan yes Jan yes Laura yes. The motion is unanimous.

VIII-b-SAFER-Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response  
Council directed Heather to direct Chief Reynolds to apply for the Grant.  
Laura made the Motion, seconded by Doug. Vote 6/0. Unanimous.

VIII-e-Resolution R-2022-12-01-Interconnection  
Council agreed to table for now. Take off agenda until further notice.

VIII f-Utility Due Date Ordinance-O-2023-01-03  
Previously passed, just verifying the wording, no cut off until 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

J-Events Committee Appointments:  
Brent Humphries, Josh Grimmett nominated. Motion by Laura to appoint, seconded by Jan.  
Vote was 6/0, carries unanimously.

Short recess.

Return to open session.

Laura also nominated Jerome VanDyke and Jacob VanDyke to the Events Committee. Jan seconds. Vote was unanimous to appoint both to the Events Committee.

VIII k-River debris over behind Magic Mart. Army Corps of Engineers were here recently for a flood meeting, they are identifying places that flood. We will have to be cautious removing trees out of the river due to the protection of the mussels. They will ask Billy Shelton to look at it.

VIII l-Cornelia Cox Driveway-Rick made Motion for Attorney to draw up and have her sign an easement for our water lines in exchange for fixing her driveway to park one car. Jan seconds. Vote 6/0. Passes unanimously.

VIII m.-former Magic Mart property easement. The building will be sold on March 22, 2023. Council directed attorney to draw up 10 ft. easement as requested by property owner. Rick makes the motion, Jan seconds. Vote 6/0. Carries unanimously.

VIII n-PCA-Doug made motion to move the PCA to zero this month. Seconded by Jan. Vote was 6/0. Carries unanimously. Doug also requested that the revenue from the electric utilities is put at the bottom of the check register so they can see a snapshot of what is coming in.

VIII o-Rec Park Renovations-repairs and renovations as listed by Gary and Jordan will cost \$10,700-materials only. Rick wants to authorize the town employees to help with the work. Council gave consensus for that request.

VIII p-Closed Session for Personnel Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1). Rick made the Motion, seconded by Gary. Vote was 6/0. Carries unanimously.

Return to from Closed Session for Personnel Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1). Rick made the Motion, seconded by Gary. Vote was 6/0. Carries unanimously.

Council certification that nothing was discussed in Closed Session other than Personnel - Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1). Doug-yes, Gary-yes, Rick-yes, Jordan-yes, Jan-yes, Laura-yes.

IX-Attorney Comments:

Discussed Ordinance -Virtual meeting, state code, remote participation, zoom meetings. Will have Ordinance next meeting for Council to review and vote.

-Forensic Accountants-UHY-there were 2 concerns in the contract that need to be changed.

Approval to make changes and have contract signed.

X-Town Manager Report-Heather Perry Absent due to illness.

Ron Holt-Glow Run 5K-Fundraiser for St. Jude's-March 17, 2023

Described route and handed out maps of the Route.

Council Member Reports:

Doug-asked about RFP for help in getting Town Manager applicants.

Laura-according to information she was given recently, Town Electric Rates are lower than AEP. Council discussion about rates.

Army Corps of Engineers were here recently for flood remedies meetings, very positive. They will provide answers and solutions.

Jan-wanted to see who the Town purchase fireworks from last year? Susan will check and let her know.

Jordan-Tiny Tots at the Rec Park, such a fun and positive program.

Richlands Little League-Opening Day, April 2

Billie Roberts of VCC will be coming to IDA Meeting.

Mike Yates drain pipe at 371 Plantation Drive, Hidden Valley, Council had agreed to furnishing drain pipe, hasn't been done yet. Need to follow up with George.

IDA -Battery Backup-have we ordered? Mike-no progress has been made, miscommunication.

ADA Live Stream requirements-Mike to follow up- (sign language)

Rick-trees hanging over press box at Critterville. Might be dangerous if they were to fall. Need to follow up with Electric Crew.

CEE Prop Grants-still out, needs to be closed. Train stored at PD needs to be put together and installed at Greenway so we can close out the grant.

Gary-Vendors set up in town, like fruit stands? Have to have permits to sell in town? Food Trucks do, have to check on fruit stands.

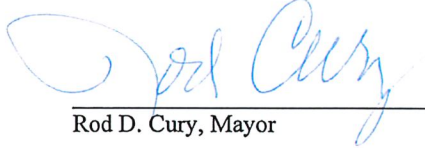
Doug suggested having an Electrical Committee meeting 1 hour before the regular council meeting each month.

Mayor's comments: Recognized Laura Mollo for her recent accomplishment and recognition at the UVA Sorenson Institute at the 2023 Lauren E Sorenson FIOA awards.

No further business to be discussed, Rick made the Motion to adjourn seconded by Jan.

Vote was 6/0 all in favor.

Meeting adjourned.



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Rod D. Cury, Mayor



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Susan Whitt, Acting Clerk