

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Council of the Town of Blackstone, Virginia, held in the Council Chambers located at 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, on Monday, April 16, 2007, at 7:00 p.m.

There Were Present:

Mayor: William D. Coleburn

Council Members: L. Benjamin Green, John W. Hill, Jr., C. Duncan Quicke, Barbara Thompson, Alfred V. Tucker, J. A. Wilson, Jr., Constance T. Wynn

Town Attorney: Kennon C. Walden, Jr.

Town Staff: Jennifer H. Beck, Administrative Assistant, David Dunn, Assistant Town Manager, Nicholas C. Kuzmiak, Police Chief, J. Larry Palmore, Town Manager, Joan R. Palmore, Town Clerk, Charles C. Wells, Finance Director

Those Absent: None

Mayor Coleburn called the meeting to order and Councilman Green led in prayer.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Coleburn led those in the Chambers in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **MINUTES**

Councilman Wilson made a motion to dispense with reading and approve with correction the Minutes of the March 15, and March 19, 2007, Council Meetings. The motion was seconded by Councilman Green and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

*(Councilman Tucker was not present during this vote.)*

## VISITORS

1. Kevin Barr, Executive Vice-President of Bon-Secours, addressed Council and introduced Steve Craig, Director of Operations, and Brian Morton, Haley Consulting, Physicians Operations with Bon-Secours. Mr. Barr stated that he was asked to talk to Council about the Medical Center project. He thanked the Council for working with them and asked if anyone had any questions.

Councilman Green asked Mr. Barr who will be our liaison between the Town Council and Bon-Secours.

Mr. Barr answered Steve Craig is the primary liaison.

Mayor Coleburn thanked these gentlemen for coming to the meeting. He asked Mr. Barr to reiterate their commitment.

Mr. Barr stated that they are committed to this project as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding.

Councilman Quicke asked about the square footage.

Mr. Barr answered they are committed to leasing the square footage as stated in the memorandum of understanding.

Councilman Green asked how many doctors will we have in the building.

Mr. Morton answered they have one right now (Dr. Spence) but they are actively recruiting two more doctors.

Mayor Coleburn stated that he can think of nothing more important than ensuring the quality of our health care in the community.

Mr. Barr stated that he feels they have shown their commitment and they intend to do as they have said.

Councilman Quicke asked if we have to wait until the end of August before we can start construction.

Manager Palmore answered that we will have to wait for official word from the Governor then we would have to wait for word from DHCD. After that, we will have more concrete information. He hopes to be under construction by September or October, at the latest.

2. Sharon Harrup, Chamber of Commerce, addressed Council regarding use of the Armory and the Memorial Center for the Arts and Crafts Festival. She stated that the craft show dates have been changed to September 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. This change was due to the request of some of the crafters.

Councilman Hill made a motion to authorize the Chamber to use the Memorial Center and Armory for the Arts and Crafts Festival on September 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> and to block off the necessary streets. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

*(Councilman Tucker was not present during this vote.)*

3. Tom Daniel, Blackstone Alumni Association, addressed Council requesting support on four issues. These requests consisted of a flag raising ceremony, a banner, placement of signs around Town and use of BABS buses. They plan to place alumni signs at churches and on private properties. They would like to enter into some form of contract to bus their people to the Nottoway River Country Club from VUMAC. He feels there will be hundreds of people in Town because of this event.

*Councilman Tucker entered the meeting.*

Mr. Daniel stated that the Blackstone High School Alumni is a non-profit organization and they are sanctioned by the State of Virginia. Their specific request was to place their welcome banner over Main Street at the Post Office on June 21<sup>st</sup> and for the Town to remove the banner at its convenience after Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Coleburn proposed to Council that this come up under the Committee reports since this issue is further on down the agenda.

Mr. Daniel spoke to Council about the voting during the last Town-wide election. He stated that from a simplicity stand point, he thinks the citizens of Blackstone would like to have one place to go to vote.

4. Waymond Mitchell, NAACP, addressed Council regarding the Town-wide voting precinct. He stated that he disagrees with Mr. Daniel. He added that there is a voting precinct in each Ward and that on each voter registration card, it tells you where to go to vote. He does not feel the voting precincts should be changed. He feels this would be a step backwards.

Mayor Coleburn stated that this was his idea. He assured Mr. Mitchell and the NAACP that his idea behind this was for residents of all neighborhoods to come together and vote. He stated that he is in favor of the Ward System and has no intention of trying to have this changed. He admitted that he was against the Ward System back when it was done, but he is totally in favor of it now because he feels it has done a lot to help race relations in Blackstone.

Manager Palmore spoke to Mr. Mitchell. He stated that there is no intention by anyone other than to make it easier for all Town voters.

Mr. Mitchell feels that it is the responsibility of each voter to find out where they have to vote. If someone has a problem, they should contact the Registrar. He feels making this change in the voting precinct, will be a step backwards.

Councilman Green stated that his experience in running for office, in the last election, was a bad one. He wants everyone to have a chance to vote and for it to be easy for everyone to vote. He feels we need to hear all sides and decide what is best for the Town citizens. He is running for an At-Large seat so it would be an advantage for him to see everyone at one precinct.

Mr. Mitchell suggested to Council that they check and see why we have voter precincts in each Ward.

Mayor Coleburn stated that Mr. Mitchell's point about having a precinct in his neighborhood is well taken.

Mr. Mitchell stated that there are ways to go about doing things and this is not the way.

Manager Palmore stated that he tried for weeks, after he moved, to get his voter registration card straight so he understands how others could be frustrated.

Councilman Wilson feels that we should go to the Justice Department and have them do their investigation before we get the public upset.

Manager Palmore stated that we will call the Justice Department and see if we can get a meeting setup.

5. Todd Hulings addressed Council about picking up trash outside of Town. He is not satisfied with the results he got the last time he came to Council. He does not understand why the Town feels it should compete with an existing business.

Manager Palmore stated that the Town has been picking up trash for many, many years.

Councilman Hill asked Mr. Hulings, "If you decide to do something else in a few years, how would your customers get their garbage picked up?"

Mr. Hulings answered that he does not intend to stop picking up garbage.

Manager Palmore stated that the citizens of Blackstone choose not to have their garbage picked up only once a week as was Mr. Hulings original proposal. They are happy with their service as it is.

Councilman Wilson stated that we can't control where people dump their trash so it could become a real problem if we stop serving out of Town customers and they decide to start coming into Town to use our dumpsters.

Mr. Hulings answered that he does not understand why the Town wants to continue to do business out of Town.

Mayor Coleburn stated that what we need to remember is that the Town began providing a service to people when the service was not available so he does not see us discontinuing it now.

6. Rev. Raleigh Bagley, Faith New Testament Church, stated that his Church wants to sponsor a family and faith festival. He wants two streets blocked off-- Epes Street between Dinwiddie and Tavern Street on June 30<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This festival will consist of local as well as State and national gospel groups.

Councilman Green made a motion to approve Reverend Bagley's request. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Thompson.

Discussion: Councilman Quicke would want to make sure that the residents can get in and out of their property.

Rev. Bagley answered that they recently talked to the people in the neighborhood and they have worked this out to everyone's satisfaction.

Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

**FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT**

No one from the Fire Department was present to present the Fire Chief’s report.

Mayor Coleburn reported to Council that our fire truck was involved in an accident yesterday. Philip Armes was driving and fortunately no one was seriously injured.

Manager Palmore explained that the accident happened at the South Main and Eighth Street intersection. He added that one person was injured.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Councilman Wilson made a motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$762,114.03. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke.

Council discussed the bills.

Vote:

- Councilman Quicke - Aye
- Councilwoman Wynn - Aye
- Councilman Green - Aye
- Councilman Wilson - Aye
- Councilman Hill - Aye
- Councilwoman Thompson - Aye
- Councilman Tucker - Aye

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Health and Ordinance Committee* - Councilwoman Wynn stated that this Committee met on April 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the Town’s policy on banners. She added that none of the Council Members responded to a request for written input. Councilwoman Wynn stated that the Committee recommends that the policy remain as is without modification or expansion.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Health and Ordinance Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke.

Discussion: Councilman Green asked about Mr. Daniel’s request for a banner and how will this request be handled in the future.

Mayor Coleburn feels that this body should be clear, consistent and fair.

Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Nay
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

*Building and Property Committee* - Councilman Green reported that the Building and Property Committee met earlier this month. He stated that we agreed to fix the leaks in the roof of the Armory in order to preserve the building. He added that we received several estimates and the Committee recommends accepting the estimate from D&C Roofing in the amount of \$5,200.00 to patch all visible leaks, they will return and patch any leaks that they missed earlier, and D&C will evaluate the entire roof and give the Town an estimate of its worthiness.

Councilman Quicke made a motion to accept this bid in the amount of \$5,200.00 from D&C roofing. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved unanimously.  
Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

Councilman Green reported that the Building and Property Committee met on April 2nd. He then read the attached report. He showed Council and everyone present, a sample of the color vinyl siding they decided on and added that it will match Schwartz Tavern.

Councilman Hill asked about the two houses we bought and tore down. He asked if this was included in the total for the Town's match.

Manager Palmore answered that he did not mean to leave this out, Councilman Hill is correct. This amount should have been included in the Town's match.

Manager Palmore explained the Buy-A-Brick fund raiser that we are doing and he showed Council a sample of an engraved brick.

Councilman Green reported that the Building and Property Committee will get together and come up with some other ideas for this fund raiser. He added that he was very impressed by the presentation of GMW Contractors.

Manager Palmore stated that we need a motion from Council to authorize him to proceed as long as it meets with VDOT's approval.

Councilman Green made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to proceed with the Carriage Museum Project. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

#### **TOWN-WIDE VOTING PRECINCT**

Mayor Coleburn stated that he will keep in touch with Mr. Mitchell and he asked Town Staff to contact the Justice Department.

#### **RESOLUTION - MAIN STREET PROGRAM**

Councilman Hill made a motion to adopt the attached Resolution on the Main Street Program. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

Discussion: Councilman Green stated that the application is nearly complete. Wednesday it will be bound and Mr. Louis Malon has agreed to personally deliver it on Friday. He added that we have an applicant for the Director's job.

Mayor Coleburn thanked the Committee for their work on this project.

**CAROLINA TRANSFORMER/WARD TRANSFORMER/PHILIP SERVICES SUPERFUND SITE**

Manager Palmore stated that we now have three separate law suits. He asked Assistant Town Manager Dunn to explain further.

Assistant Town Manager Dunn stated that the Carolina Transformer suit involves VMEA, and the Federal Government. After our people meet and come up with some type of resolution, then our mediators will meet with all the 56 entities that have joined, they will determine each entities share.

Council discussed this further.

Manager Palmore added that Ward Transformer is another lawsuit and we cannot find that we did any business with them but we have sent them a letter asking for documentation. He stated that the other lawsuit has to do with some paint we disposed of years ago, as we were supposed to but, because Philip Services did not dispose of it as they should have, and we could possibly be sued.

Councilman Quicke asked if the \$10,000.00 Council approved for payment is only for the Carolina Transformer suit.

Manager Palmore answered, yes sir, the other two will fall under our insurance.

**RESOLUTION - AMERICAN VELVET**

Mayor Coleburn read the Resolution for American Velvet.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to adopt the attached Resolution commending American Velvet. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved as follows.  
Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

**ON-GOING PROJECTS**

Manager Palmore reported on the following *On-Going Projects*:

*Bus Shop* - We will begin moving some dirt after the field dries up. Manager Palmore cannot thank Southside Virginia Community College enough for their help on this project. He looks forward to getting it graded. We have the soil erosion test back on this and everything is fine.

*Carriage Museum* - We have not received final approval for accepting the bid from GMW.

*Downtown Revitalization* - We had the facilitated planning meeting recently.

Councilman Green asked when would we turn the Armory over to the Armory Authority.

Council discussed this further.

Councilman Hill feels that at this time, Town Staff is maintaining a calendar for both buildings and we should leave it as it is now.

Council agreed by Common Consent.

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT - EXCELLENCE IN WATERWORKS PERFORMANCE AWARD**

Manager Palmore stated that he gives all the credit to the Water Plant operators for this award. He would like to have the operators come to the June Council Meeting and have the award presented to the Mayor on behalf of the operators at that meeting. He is not sure who nominated us for this award but feels it probably came from one of the Health Department inspectors.

**BYRNE JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT**

Councilwoman Wynn made a motion to accept the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant in the amount of \$8,192.00 and to appropriate \$819.00 as the Town’s match. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Thompson. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye

Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

**BLACKSTONE INVESTMENT GROUP - RESIDENTIAL SUBURBAN ASSISTED LIVING RETIREMENT DISTRICT**

Manager Palmore stated we have been approached with a request to add a new zoning district to our Zoning Ordinance that would allow for assisted living and to rezone land at the end of College Road. We will be meeting with the Planning Commission and they will make recommendation to Council. Manager Palmore stated that this has its merits. Other communities like South Hill have similar zoning.

Councilman Wilson asked if this is going to create a lot of traffic for College Road and that neighborhood.

Manager Palmore answered, it may. He intends to visit South Hill and see how they have handled it. He explained that this would be an assisted living type facility.

Mayor Coleburn feels there should be a traffic outlet in the area.

Manager Palmore stated that one thing everyone should think about is do we want to send our elderly out of Town or keep them in Town.

Mayor Coleburn reiterated that the Planning Commission will meet first and then make their recommendation to Council.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Councilman Quicke stated that the Rotary Club is interested in doing something to improve the appearance of the “hole” Downtown. They would also like to install hanging baskets on Main Street and plant the eight planters that line Main Street. He asked if the Town would be willing to make sure the plants are watered.

Council discussed this request.

Councilman Quicke made a motion to authorize the Town workers to water the hanging baskets and the eight planters that line Main Street. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and approved as follows. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

Manager Palmore spoke to Council about Tom Daniel’s request he made earlier in the meeting. He stated that they cannot Charter the bus but we can expand the route from the College to Nottoway Country Club. We will keep count of the people who ride the bus and charge the alumni association \$.50 per rider.

Manager Palmore stated on the banner request, he recommends that the wording on the banner should be “The Town of Blackstone Welcome’s the Blackstone Alumni”and for the Town to donate \$150.00 for this.

Councilman Green stated that he is in favor of this request but he stated that he disagrees with the way we are going about it because he does not agree with the current Town policy on banners.

Manager Palmore stated that the Blackstone Alumni Association is not trying to sell anything but the Texas Festival is trying to sell tickets. That is the difference.

Mayor Coleburn feels that we should do the same thing with the Luther Foster annual event.

Manager Palmore agreed.

Councilman Green made a motion to donate \$150.00 towards the Blackstone High School Alumni banner and to hang the banner as requested. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

Manager Palmore stated he has received a request by Jim Robertson for the Town to put in Curb and Guttering in front of his home on Virginia Avenue. He explained the problem with water draining into Mr. Robertson's yard. Manager Palmore added that Mr. Robertson has agreed to the pay for the curbing and guttering according to our policy.

Councilman Green made a motion to grant the request of Jim and Beth Robertson, 405 Virginia Avenue. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Thompson and approved as follows. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

#### **RESOLUTION - POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Manager Palmore explained that the Town's portion of this rural development grant will be \$11,275.00 for a total grant amount of \$45,100.00.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to adopt the attached Resolution on the Blackstone Police Department Rural Development grant and to appropriate \$11,275.00 for the Town's match. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hill and approved as follows. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

#### **MAYOR'S MINUTE**

Council discussed the old Armbruster Restaurant on Church Street.

#### **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

There were none.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Councilman Hill made a motion to go into Closed Session according to the following:

Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711  
Sub Section A.  
-Prospective Business/Industry

The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and approved as follows:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

Mayor Coleburn declared the meeting back in Open Session.

Councilman Green made a motion to certify that to the best of each member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened, were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Tucker and approved as follows. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Coleburn declared the meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR  
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVED AND ADOPTED

\_\_\_\_\_  
TOWN CLERK  
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA