

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 Tuesday, March 17, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.

There Were Present:

Mayor: William D. Coleburn

Council Members: L. Benjamin Green, John W. Hill, Jr., C. Duncan Quicke, 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:

Council Member: Barbara Thompson

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Coleburn opened the Public Hearing and asked the Town Clerk to read the Public Hearing Notice as follows.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The public is hereby notified that the Town Council of the Town of Blackstone, Virginia will hold a public hearing on March 17, 2008, at 7:00 p.m., in the Town Hall, 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, Virginia to consider the application to vacate an unopened alley that opens up on Eighth Street as Eighth Street enters Lakeview Cemetery; said unopened alley being behind the property of Stuart B. and Joan C. White. The application seeks to vacate the entire alley. Said alley is shown on Tax Map No. 50A31. A copy of said tax map is on file in the Town Office.

The alley proposed to be vacated is described as follows:

An unopened alley that is located in Section or Block 61 on the Map of West Blackstone, Section 61 being bounded on the North by Seventh Street (unopened), East by College Avenue, South by Eighth Street where it is the entrance to Lakeview Cemetery and West by Lakeview Cemetery; said alley is 10 feet wide; runs parallel to College Avenue and outlets onto Eighth Street. The alley is bounded on the East by Lots 35-40 Block 61 on the West by Lot 28 Block 61, South of Eighth Street and North by the Methodist Assembly Center. The entire alley is shown on the plat of West Blackstone filed in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Nottoway County, Virginia in Plat Cabinet 1, Page 292.

Members of the public are invited to attend to express their views.

It is the intention of the Town to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Should you need special accommodations, please contact the Town Manager's Office prior to 5:00 p.m., on Friday, March 14, 2008.

Dr. Stuart White stated that he feels the public hearing notice is incorrect in the description of the alleyway.

Councilman Wilson is concerned with the legal description.

Town Attorney Walden reviewed the plat and the Public Hearing Notice.

After further discussion, Councilman Quicke made a motion to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Councilman Green. Vote:

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

Councilman Hill made a motion to adopt the attached Alleyway Vacation Ordinance and to authorize the Mayor to sign. The motion was seconded by Councilman Green. Motion carried. Vote:

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

MINUTES

Councilman Wilson made a motion to dispense with reading and approve with correction the Minutes of the February 19, 2008, Council Meeting. 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
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

VISITORS

1. Janette Baranishyn addressed Council and requested permission to use the Armory for a fund-raising event on April 12th. She explained that the purpose of the event is to help fund the “Save the Armory” effort that is underway. She stated there will be crafters, tee-shirts, Brunswick Stew, etc. They are hoping for lots of community involvement.

Councilman Green made a motion to authorize the Friends of Blackstone to use the Armory on April 12th for a fund raising event. 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
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT

Fire Chief Tony Bradford presented the Fire Chief’s report for February. He reported on the bowling alley fire. He stated that the Blackstone Fire Department did a great job putting out that fire. He thanked the Fort Pickett Fire Department, Crewe Fire Department, the Nottoway Sheriff’s Department and the Nottoway County Rescue Squad. He added that all these agencies worked very well together. Fire Chief Bradford then thanked Councilman Tucker and Councilman Green for coming to the Fire Station recently to look at their equipment. He stated that they will be applying for a FEMA grant soon and he added that they recently got a \$5,000.00 grant to help consolidate their computer software programs. This grant is a 50/50 match and the Fire Department will use their own funds to pay this match.

Manager Palmore stated that there is no question in his mind after a recent car accident near his home that if it weren't for the excellent training these men and women receive and for the way they handled the gentleman who was hurt in the accident, he would probably have been paralyzed in a wheelchair for the rest of this life. He stated that there is no doubt in his mind this was a miracle.

Fire Chief Bradford agreed that they all did an excellent job.

Mayor Coleburn thanked Chief Bradford for what he does.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Councilman Wilson made a motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$584,590.57. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke.

Discussion: Councilman Hill asked about the bills from U.S. Bank and Fleetwood Financial. He also asked about the fuel sales at the airport.

Council discussed the airport fuel.

The motion made and seconded was approved as follows.

Vote:

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Health and Ordinance - Manager Palmore gave the following report on the Health and Ordinance Committee. He stated that they met and spent quite a bit of time on the weeds, dilapidated property and junk car ordinances. He added that they will need to have a few more meetings in order to get something together to present to Council.

599 FUNDING

Manager Palmore stated that he received word that the House of Delegates left this funding as it is which is a good thing. The County is probably going to take a lot bigger hit than the Town. He thanked Chief Kuzmiak for the letters he wrote on this issue.

REPORT ON MEDICAL CENTER

Manager Palmore reported that he has a meeting with Bon-Secours on March 25th to sit down and talk with them and see what they have come up with. He hopes they are going to tell him they will be ready to go to work no later than April 4th. Right now, it looks like the fountain may not be in the final plans but everything else will probably be the same. The meeting next Tuesday is scheduled for 10:00 a.m.

Manager Palmore reviewed a report he received on the grating of the pad for the new medical center building. He stated that he cannot say enough about the Town workers and he thanked the Southside Virginia Community College Heavy Equipment School for their expertise, use of their equipment, etc. He stated that Dan and Woodson Irby worked on the site one night until 3:00 in the morning. He added that our price tag for getting the site ready is \$64,421.37.

Mayor Coleburn stated that this has been a 12 month project. He thanked the Town Manager, Staff and the Town Attorney for all their hard work.

STREET SWEEPER

Manager Palmore informed Council that we got the price tag on the Street Sweeper down to \$136,500.00 and we hope to put it into service when we get the title back.

On motion by Councilwoman Wynn, seconded by Councilman Wilson, the Council unanimously approved the lease/purchase of a new street sweeper from Mid-Atlantic Waste Systems in the amount of \$136,500.00. Vote:

Council discussed where the extra \$6,500.00 is going to come from to pay for the sweeper.

Vote:

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

ON-GOING PROJECTS

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

Bus Shop - Things are going great. A lot has to happen before we can move in but we are moving forward.

Downtown Revitalization - He stated that we are moving along and we have had several meetings. He reminded Council that Broadband people are running cable all over Town. He added that we will be putting in a conduit that will run down the alleys. He explained that the first building under design is the antique mall. We have done a tremendous amount of work especially on storm drainage and State highway maintenance funds will help with this.

Castle Trailer Park - Manager Palmore handed out a copy of the deed on Castles Trailer Park. The funding came in at \$195,000.00 with the purchase price of \$186,000.00. He added that R.C. Sullivan and Bobby Wells gave a donation of \$9,000.00 back to the project to make it come to \$186,000.00. He stated that we hope to work out a fire training session to burn down an old house in the project area. He explained that we plan to move two families at a time. The Nottoway County landfill fees have been waived and he stated that the land was totally purchased by CDBG funds. No money came from the Town.

Mayor Coleburn asked are we going to put 10 homes on the property.

Manager Palmore answered, yes sir.

Mayor Coleburn asked about the acreage of the site.

Manager Palmore answered a little over three acres.

Mayor Coleburn clarified that the land is now owned by the Town of Blackstone.

Manager Palmore answered, yes sir.

Council discussed this project.

Mayor Coleburn commended Town Staff on the framed list of Council's 2008 Goals in the Council Chambers and in the hallway.

Manager Palmore informed Council that construction on Mattie8 Neal's home on North West Avenue is coming along great.

TROOPS AT PICKETT

Mayor Coleburn stated that he asked that this be on the agenda for tonight because the manager at Subway is always asking him when the troops are coming to Pickett. He stated that if he could find out when they will be in Town he could then anticipate and serve the military better. Mayor Coleburn feels the other business owners would benefit also.

Assistant Town Manager Dunn answered that even if we gave the business owners the information, it could cause more problems than it would help because the information is not always reliable as far as when the troops will be coming in. He stated that this can't be done for three reasons, first even if they could give us information on when they will be there, we don't know when they will be allowed to come into Town, second security reasons would not allow them to give out that information, and third, the bulletin that they put out doesn't give you numbers, it only gives you units. So even if we gave the business owners the information, it would cause more confusion than it would help.

RE-APPOINT TOWN MANAGER TO VMEA BOARD

Councilman Green made a motion to appoint J. Larry Palmore to the Virginia Municipal Electric Association Board. 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
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

Manager Palmore stated that we have been having quite a bit of fun with an organization called DCR (Department of Conservation and Recreation) with the work we are doing at the bus shop and the industrial park. We are moving forward with the work on the bus shop and the land at the industrial park. We are working with them, but there does come a point when we can't afford to do what we want to do because of the hoops DCR is requiring that we jump through. He feels that we will hear more and more people talking about this and there is going to come a time when they will realize that we need to be reasonable. He explained that if you disturb over 10,000 square feet of land, other than agricultural land, you have to comply with DCR requirements.

Council discussed this further.

MAYOR'S MINUTE

Mayor Coleburn thanked the Town for the flowers for his mother-in-law's funeral recently.

Mayor Coleburn asked when will we have a Financial Report from the auditors.

Finance Director Wells answered we should have something next month or maybe in May.

MISCELLANEOUS

Councilman Quicke asked about the sale of the bricks.

Town Clerk Palmore answered that things are going well with the sale of bricks. A form has been provided in the local paper for those interested in donating.

Councilman Quicke informed those present that Rotary is doing a sale on April 4th and 5th from 4:00 to 9:00 p.m., at one of Mr. Yancey's store fronts on Broad Street. They would like to earmark the funds received at the sale for something that would be helpful to the Medical Center.

Council discussed bricks at the Medical Center.

Councilman Green asked how are things going at the cemetery.

Manager Palmore stated that we had a town employee who worked at the cemetery was helping himself to gasoline. He no longer works for the Town. He added that we will be spending quite a bit of time working up there beginning tomorrow to get things ready for this weekend.

Councilman Wilson stated that when we did the budget last year we raised the cost of the pink slips from \$5.00 to \$25.00. He asked the Finance Director did increasing the pink slip fee cut down on the number of pink slips or has it raised our income.

Finance Director Wells answered, initially the number of pink slips went down but now they are back up.

Mayor Coleburn asked are people having a hard time paying their bills in Blackstone.

Manager Palmore stated that people in Blackstone are really hurting when it comes to paying their bills. He added there have been many more cold days this year than in the past.

Mayor Coleburn informed Council that he was approached by Jimmy Branum and Ron Chipper of American Legion Post 40. They would like to use Seay Park for a Memorial Day Service on Memorial Day which is May 31st, a Saturday this year.

Councilwoman Wynn asked are we going to put in a sidewalk near Brother's Pizza (as part of the Brown Street Project).

Manager Palmore answered yes mam, we are also going to give him a nice entrance and we will certainly work with him in anyway we can.

CAROLINA TRANSFORMER

Assistant Town Manager Dunn informed Council that the State of North Carolina spent somewhere between \$3 and \$5 million on this issue. North Carolina has joined the feds now and the feds have agreed to pay \$800,000 of their cost. We are going to get relief from liability from the feds and North Carolina, so this is good news for us.

POLICE REPORT

There was no comment on the Police Report.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizens comments.

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Coleburn declared the meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

MAYOR
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

_____ APPROVED AND ADOPTED

TOWN CLERK
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

