

January 10, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, January 10, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of January 10, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, Michael Kohl, and Mark Sterling. ABSENT: Joshua Bailey.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Town Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster said the first item on the agenda is the 2021 end of the year summary. Town Manager McAlister this has been a busy year for the Town and even with the amount of turn over the town has seen; staff has continued working together to get a lot of projects done. She said everyone has a copy of the summary they can review. Manager McAlister said there has been some problems with filling vacancies in the police department. She said other localities are having the same issues and now are offering sign on bonuses or assistance with family health insurance plans and asked if council wants to consider any type of recruitment incentives.

Mayor Plaster said the next item of the agenda is the February Council Meeting date. Manager McAlister said we have heard some feedback saying that we should hold this meeting on Valentine's Day so that people can come and express their views on chickens. Council decided to move the meeting to Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Fire Department. Clerk Morris confirmed the date change with the Planning Commission.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is Planning Commission applications received. Manager McAlister said we have received two applications and feels that we need to give more time since the newsletter recently went out. Council decided to review this again in March.

Mayor Plaster said next item on the agenda is a draft of the strategic plan. Manager McAlister handed council a draft copy of the strategic plan and asked them to review it before the next retreat, so everyone is prepared to move forward with goals and planning.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the work session at 6:47 p.m.

January 10, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, January 10, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of January 10, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked Clerk Morris for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Mark Sterling, David Raynes, Michael Kohl, and Tim Leeth. ABSENT: Joshua Bailey.

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Nathan Miller, Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5-0, voting recorded as follows: RAYNES – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, JUSTIS – AYE; the Council approved the minutes of the December 13, 2021 meetings with one correction. Council member Mark Sterling was absent and was recorded as voting.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Bucky Berry addressed the Council and thanked Chief Sullivan and the Council for their support to the Brent Berry Food Drive. Mr. Berry said this is the best year they have ever had. He said they collected five county bus loads in Bridgewater. Mr. Berry said Broadway Police helped work the food drive and that he really appreciates everything that everyone does to support this event. He said they collected enough food this year for a two-year supply. Mr. Berry presented Chief Sullivan with a plaque for participating in the food drive. He said this is the second year that the Grottoes Police Department has participated.

Scott Sacra addressed the Council with a safety concern. He said there are some streetlights out and asked how the town goes about getting them fixed. Chief Sullivan said that each month he has a nighttime officer go around town and then a list is submitted to Dominion Virginia Energy. He said once they are submitted it's a matter of when Dominion can get out here to get them fixed. Mr. Sacra said there's a light out on Forest Avenue, but the biggest concern is the streetlight at Lil' Gus's is out, and it makes it hard to see people crossing the street. He asked if the Town is going to put lighting on the opposite side of Dogwood for the parking area and Mayor Plaster replied that we are still looking at what needs to be done in that area.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5-0, voting recorded as follows: RAYNES – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, JUSTIS – AYE; to approve the financial reports for the month of December.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH AND PROPERTY – no report

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – no report

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Thanked the staff for all their hard work during the recent snowstorm.

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. Manager McAlister said the personal property tax bills has been very troublesome since the county changed to a new software company. She explained that the data file provided by the county did not match up to our software data format. If we had our software company write a data conversion it was going to cost \$9,500.00. She said she didn't feel comfortable with doing that since the county was having data problems too. Manager McAlister said that Rhonda has been going through each bill and manually making the appropriate changes. She said entering the bill payments into our system will be another challenge that we are working on solutions for. Manager McAlister said this was in her staff report but she wanted to explain it more thoroughly now, to give council a better understanding.

ATTORNEY. Mr. Miller informed the Council that the Charter change is moving along in the General Assembly and should be on the docket this session. He also informed them that he has a title company researching ownership of railroad alley back to 1896 so that we can proceed with taking that alley. Mr. Miller said that we have collected previous taxes from two delinquent parcels in town. He stated it wasn't much money, but they are back on the books and we should start collecting each year for those parcels.

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

RECREATION AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

NEW BUSINESS –

ELECTION OF VICE MAYOR.

Mayor Plaster advised Council member Raynes currently serves as Vice Mayor and asked if anyone would like to make a nomination for Vice Mayor.

Council member Leeth nominated David Raynes for Vice Mayor, seconded by Council member Sterling.

Voting to affirm Council member Raynes as Vice Mayor – Council member Kohl, Council member Leeth, Council member Sterling; – Council member Justis, Abstaining from the vote – Council member Raynes.

SETTING OF DATE AND TIME OF MEETING.

On motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: KOHL – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; STERLING – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE, the Council approved Resolution #20220110-01 pertaining to the Meeting Date and Times for 2022 and Inclement Weather Policy

RESOLUTION

#20220110-01

ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE DATES AND TIMES OF THE WORK SESSIONS AND REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GROTTUES, VIRGINIA, FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2022

WHEREAS the Charter of the Town of Grottoes, Virginia (the “Town”) requires the Town Council (the “Council”) of the Town approve an ordinance to set forth the regular meeting times of the Council; and

WHEREAS Va. Code § 15.2-1416 requires the Council to pass a resolution establishing such regular meeting times at the organizational meeting of the Council following the election of the new members thereof.

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF GROTTUES, VIRGINIA, to-wit:

1. A) Meeting Date and Times for 2022. In accordance with the Town Charter, beginning January 10, 2022, and the second Monday of each month thereafter, the meeting of the Council shall commence with a work session at 6:00 p.m., followed at 7:00 p.m. by the regular meeting, with the following exception: the meeting in February shall be held on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, beginning at 6:00 p.m., and the meeting in October shall be held on Wednesday, October 12, 2022, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

B) Inclement Weather Policy for Council Meetings for 2022. If a meeting cannot be held due to inclement weather or for any reason as determined by the mayor, of the Vice-Mayor if the Mayor is not available, the meeting will be held at the scheduled time on the following Monday, unless otherwise determined by the Council.

2021 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS.

Mayor Plaster asked if anyone had any comments on the proposed committee assignments for 2022.

With no changes being made, a motion by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: KOHL – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; STERLING – AYE; JUSTIS - AYE, the Council approved the following committees for 2022:

2022 Committee Assignments

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair: David Raynes
Jo Plaster
Tim Leeth

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Chair: Jo Plaster
Mark Sterling
Michael Kohl

ORDINANCE, HEALTH AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Chair: Michael Kohl - Planning Commission Liaison
Joshua Bailey
Mark Sterling

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

Chair: Tim Leeth
James Justis
Jo Plaster

WATER & SEWER COMMITTEE

Chair: Joshua Bailey
David Raynes
Tim Leeth

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Chair: Mark Sterling
James Justis
Michael Kohl

STREETS AND STREET LIGHTS COMMITTEE

Chair: James Justis
Joshua Bailey
David Raynes

CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS.

On motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: KOHL – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; STERLING – AYE; JUSTIS - AYE, the Council approved Resolution #20220110-02 reaffirming and readopting a Code of Conduct and Ethics for the Members of the Grottoes Town Council, as follows:

**RESOLUTION
20220110-02**

**A RESOLUTION TO REAFFIRM AND ADOPT A CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS
FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE GROTTUES TOWN COUNCIL**

WHEREAS, the Town of Grottoes Council has previously determined that the adoption of a Code of Conduct and Ethics is important to emphasize the imperatives of integrity, fairness, and accountability in local government.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Grottoes Town Council this 10th day of January 2022, the following Code of Conduct and Ethics, including Conduct and Ethical Standards, are hereby reaffirmed, and adopted:

GROTTOES TOWN COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

PREAMBLE.

The citizens of Grottoes are entitled to fair, ethical, accountable, and effective local government. Such a government requires that public officials:

- Comply with both the letter and the spirit of the laws, ordinances. and policies affecting government.
- Be independent, impartial, and fair in their judgment and actions.
- Use their public office for the public good, not for personal gain.
- Conduct public deliberations and processes openly.
- Act with respect and civility.

To this end, the Grottoes Town Council has adopted this Code of Conduct and Ethics to emphasize the imperatives of integrity, fairness, and accountability in local government.

1. Act in the Public Interest

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, Council Members shall work for the common good of the people of Grottoes and not for any private or personal interest. They will treat all persons, claims, and transactions in a fair and equitable manner.

2. Conduct of Members

Council Members shall at all times restrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the Town Council, boards, commissions, committees, staff, or the public.

3. Respect for Process

Council Member duties shall be performed in accordance with the processes and rules established by the Town Council. A Council Member shall respect a decision once it has been made by the majority of Council.

4. Communication

It is the responsibility of Council Members to share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration that they have received from sources outside of the decision-making process with all other Council Members.

Council Members shall interact with one another honestly, forthrightly, and respectfully. Discussions shall focus on issues, policies, and other substantive matters relating to the function of Town government.

5. Confidential Information

Council Members shall respect and preserve the confidentiality of information provided to them concerning the matters of the Town. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization nor use such information to advance their personal, financial, or private interests.

6. Advocacy

To the best of their ability, Council Members shall represent the official policies and positions of the Town Council. When presenting their personal opinions or positions, members shall explicitly state that they do not represent the Council or the Town.

7. Positive Work Environment

Council Members shall support and maintain a positive and constructive environment for residents, businesses, Town employees, and others involved in Town activities.

8. Compliance

The Grottoes Town Council Code of Conduct and Ethics expresses standards of ethical conduct expected of Members of the Grottoes Town Council.

Members of the Council have the primary responsibility to ensure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the integrity of the Town Council.

TOWN OF GROTTUES, VIRGINIA

Conduct and Ethical Standards

Guidelines and Suggestions to Maintain Good Working Relationships

1. Relationships with other Council Members

A Council Member wants to be a success in getting certain policies approved and carried out. The most important factor in determining whether this will happen is the attitude of other Council Members. They are a crucial audience.

Questions you need to ask yourself:

- Do you act in a way that suggests you are concerned primarily with your own benefit (or a select group)? Or does your behavior convince your colleagues that you are acting in the best interest of the entire town?
- Do you help your colleagues obtain the information they need to participate effectively? Or do you try to look good at their expense?
- Do you try to get everyone to agree on an issue? Or are you satisfied once you know the majority is achieved?
- In short: Do you compete or cooperate?

A Council Member will be respected by colleagues if the Member behaves in a way that is seen as fair as well as effective. Knowing and understanding your colleagues is central to establishing, building, and maintaining effective relationships.

Keys to working well together:

- Be willing to listen to others.
- Respect others' skills and attitudes.
- Keep an open mind.
- Disclose yourself to others openly and freely. Express your opinion and let colleagues learn why you think the way you do on issues.
- Make a conscientious effort to be well prepared for each meeting.
- Offer criticism of colleagues only in private meetings with appropriate individuals or in closed meeting.
- **ADHERE TO THE ESTABLISHED CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS**

2. Remember the Rule of Four!

When it comes to adopting policy, or getting any item approved in our community, you need to remember the Rule of Four. A simple question you need to ask is, "How many citizens does it take to get any policy or action item approved?" The answer is four. The point is the three additional citizens you convince have to currently share a position with you on the Council or one of them be the Mayor. Obviously, your own mind is made up on an issue, if

you persuade three other Council Members or two and the Mayor (in case of ties) in your favor, then the motion will pass. So, although the citizens are very important in what we do, when it comes to approving policy and items at hand, you need to convince your colleagues. It is easier to accomplish this by working with them instead of alienating them.

3. Management of Conflict

Council Members who don't think and act as part of a team, who are difficult to get along with, most often become ineffective. They are left out of the decision-making process, which is a loss to the entire Council. Disagreements among Council Members are inevitable, and a normal part of any decision-making process. It is important that disagreements do not interfere with cooperative processes. The most serious paralysis a Council can have is the inability of Members to work with one another. This inability becomes visible to the community and reduces the Council's political authority within the community. The interests of individual Members become personal and apparently more important than the interests of other citizens. To manage conflict constructively may require that ground rules be established, so that an atmosphere can be created where differences can be raised, and respectful dialogue can occur.

4. Relationships with Town Staff

Staff bashing is tempting for a Council Member who wants to look good to those who are complaining. But the local government pays a heavy price for such behavior. The morale of town employees is likely to decline if the Council expects the laws to be enforced, but then publicly jumps on those responsible for enforcement. Therefore, Council Members should be careful about how they deal with specific complaints about staff expressed at a public meeting.

Things to remember about staff relationships:

- Treat all employees with courtesy and respect.
- Avoid publicly criticizing any employee in any way that reflects on the competence and integrity of the employee.
- Don't try to resolve controversies during a public meeting.
- Make clear to a citizen that the complaint will be addressed and ask the Town Manager to appoint a staff member to contact the citizen.
- Don't let the staff be blamed for major policies, since those are the responsibility of the Council.
- Remember that the success of every policy depends on its implementation by an effective staff.
- If there is a problem with a staff person, resolve it in private rather than at a public meeting (or the press). Raise concerns about employees with the Town Manager, and concerns about the Town Manager with the Mayor.

Town Manager- Council Relationships

- Council Members must understand that their role is to develop policy, not get involved in administration. Such activity can erode the manager's authority with staff members and often lead to morale and productivity problems within the staff.
- Council Members should maintain consistent positions in both their public declarations and their private discussions with the Town Manager. Our actions can increase or minimize the quality of work by our Town Manager and Staff.
- All dealings with town staff should be handled via the Town Manager, unless he or she prescribes otherwise.

5. Relationships with the Media (Print, Radio, TV, Websites)

- When talking with the media, avoid attacking others, even if they attacked you. Don't let an aggressive reporter or citizen lure you into battle. Fighting with a citizen, staff member, or fellow Council person can make you look small minded and divert attention from what you were elected to do. Resist the urge to be vindictive.
- While Facebook, blogs, wikis and other forms of online discourse are individual interactions, please remember that to our citizens, you are always a representative of the Town of Grottoes. We have an official Town website and Face book page for our town and that content is controlled by Town Staff
- Please refrain from conducting any town related business on personal websites. If you receive questions via personal websites, please direct people to our official Town website or Facebook page to find information and/or post comments.

6. Relations with the Public (Citizens)

- Avoid a private lifestyle that casts public doubt upon the integrity and competence of the town government
- Pay all taxes due to the county, state, or national government.
- Work to create a positive environment in public meetings where citizens will feel comfortable in their roles as observers or participants.
- Be tolerant. Allow citizens, employees, or colleagues sufficient opportunity to present their views.
- Be respectful and attentive. Avoid comments, body language or distracting activity that conveys a message of disrespect for the presentations from citizens, personnel or colleagues.

- When making comments, make sure you clarify when you are speaking individually and not for the Council as a whole.
- There will be times when we are asked to speak at public meetings, with the media, post comments on websites, etc. If you are sharing your personal thoughts and/or opinions, you need to make this clear to your audience by stating your comments do not represent the Council as a whole.
- Reflect on your comments before you speak to make sure they cannot be misinterpreted. Comments based on fact and forethought will hopefully eliminate any possible misunderstandings.
- Serious issues should be discussed as a whole (Council and Staff) before public comments are made.
- Remember that even though you are an individual, in the eyes of the public and media, you represent the Council and our community. Choose your words wisely and make decisions appropriately.

OLD BUSINESS – none

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

February 8, 2022

A retreat of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the retreat of February 8, 2022 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 5:33 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, Mark Sterling, Joshua Bailey, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Town Clerk Tara Morris, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Public Works Director AJ Hummel, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan. Town Officials absent were Treasurer Rhonda Danner.

Mayor Plaster said the first item for discussion is regarding Chapter 48 – Animals section 48-19 (7)(b). Manager McAlister said that we need to set the fees in this section, so we have a clean draft to consider at the next meeting. She stated that staff is recommending a \$50.00 permitting fee and a \$50.00 renewal fee, which renewal is every two years. Manager McAlister said that the council needs to decide on the penalty fee per day and the maximum fee for a 12th month period. After discussion the council decided to charge a \$25.00 fee per day with a maximum of \$750.00 per 12 months. Manager McAlister said that staff is also recommending an effective date of July 1, 2022 instead of effective immediately. She said that we still need to work out the permitting process and get forms printed for the permits. Council member Kohl said he could see allowing a little time but feels that July is too long. Clerk Morris said that it is currently taking about 8 weeks to get envelopes printed and we want to make sure we have the forms before we have to start issuing permits. After discussion council decided, if approved, the effective date would be July 1, 2022.

Mayor Plaster said the next agenda item is funding request from the Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department. Mayor Plaster said she met with Chief Andrew Holloway and said with the lack of fundraising due to Covid-19 the department is in need of some assistance on purchasing some needed equipment to keep providing the community with the high-quality service they are use too. Mayor Plaster said in the letter provided by Chief Holloway the fire department is requesting \$60,655.76. She said \$45,000.00 is for a new SUV for medical calls, \$8,244.00 is for three defibrillators and \$7,411.76 for two ventilation fans. Manager McAlister said Mcquire Woods has been hired to assist VML with interpreting what ARPA funding can and can't be used for. She said after talking to them, it is their opinion that we would be able to use ARPA funds for these items. Council member Leeth made a motion to grant the fire department \$60,655.76 for the purchase of a new SUV, the three defibrillators, and two ventilation fans out of the Town's ARPA funds. Council member Justis seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 5 to

0 to 1, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY - ABSTAIN; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is discussion on memorial for retired Chief Painter. Mayor Plaster said she received an email from a citizen suggesting to renaming a road after him. Mayor Plaster said if this is something we want to do that she would suggest renaming Third Street. Manager McAlister said that can be problematic for the citizens and businesses already there to change their addresses. Clerk Morris said that we could name Third Street a memorial highway just as Rockingham County did with Stone Springs Road. It is named William “Bill” O’Brien Memorial Highway. Other suggestions were to rename the extended part of 20th Street from Forest Avenue to the Mountain View Park. It was also suggested to rename the park. Mayor Plaster said she would like for the town do have a memorial social for Chief Painter, but to keep it casual having a time frame where people could come. She asked the Council to think about some ideas and we will discuss them soon.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the strategic visioning and goal setting. Manager McAlister said at the past meetings we have set the mission statement which is: MISSION STATEMENT - In partnership with the community, the Town of Grottoes will protect, enrich, and enhance the quality of life of its citizens by providing a high level of service, in an efficient, equitable and responsive manner, and by creating opportunities for the town to thrive and prosper.

She said we have listed several goals under five different focus areas and asked each Council member to take the provided five tabs and mark the goals they feel should be in the top five. Manager McAlister said she had staff do the same and this will help prioritize the goals. Manager McAlister went through the goals and tallied the council votes, staff votes and total votes for each goal:

Priority Focus Area: Government Services	
Goal: Maintain and enhance infrastructure and facilities 9T/ 3S/ 6C	
a.	Utilize results from engineering water and sewer network study reports to prioritize needs of these infrastructure
b.	Enhance the town wide inventory/mapping of assets to include all water and sewer features (lines, valves, intakes, meters, etc.) as well as conducting a sign inventory.
Goal: Support a Capital Improvement Plan that includes asset inventory and replacement schedule 0 VOTES	
Goal: Support a positive organizational culture that fosters respect, excellent customer service, and teamwork among all staff 3T/ 2S/1C	
a.	Provide opportunities for training, career development, education and leadership advancement
b.	Where feasible improve job description structures to encourage leadership advancement.

Goal: Explore ways to improve financial stability 4T/ 1S/ 3C
a. Complete audit of all past fiscal years through July 1, 2021
b. With each new budget cycle review and update, if necessary, fees for water, sewer, trash, etc. as well as any user-fees.
c. Determine process for discovering, evaluating, and applying for grant opportunities to support significant projects and work initiatives
Goal: Assure appropriate staffing levels for current and future growth 6T/ 6S/ 0C
a. To support current and future services, evaluate staffing levels and determine a plan that allows for continued growth of staff and their education. The town must maintain services through population growth and provide the new services necessary for economic growth and future development. Staffing levels in administration/finance and law enforcement must increase in the near future to sustain efficient service levels to the citizens.
b. An effective economic development and tourism strategy requires dedicated staff time to implement programs and build relationships in the community. Assign one person to economic development activities, including operating programs, pursuing funding, and tracking results.

Priority Focus Area: Land Use and Development
Goal: Create defined areas in Town to allow for a Central Business District (CBD) and to create a “downtown” feel with community serving shops and restaurants 5T/ 2S/ 3C
a. Consider this goal a primary focus in the update of the Town of Grottoes Comprehensive Plan
b. Consider utilization of the Town’s growth area(s) as a new CBD
Goal: Update the Town’s current Land Development ordinance to improve contradictions and ease of interpretation, and to have consistency in regulations 0 VOTES
a. Engage the services of a professional organization to review and update the current Land Development chapter of the Town Code
Goal: Work toward the improvement of quality of life with a thriving commercial district; aesthetic improvements including green and open space; providing transportation choices, including walking, biking, driving, and public transit; having artistic, cultural, and community resources such as museums, public art, community centers, religious institutions, and other community gathering spaces; and medical, technical, and academic institutions. 0 VOTES
a. Each element of this goal will be refined in the updated Grottoes Comprehensive Plan where design, placement and further description can be detailed.

Priority Focus Area: Economic Development and Tourism
Goal: Reduce mixed land use throughout town and specifically in business zoned areas 8T/ 4S/ 4C
a. Consider ability of the Town to purchase properties within Business zoned districts as they become available.
b. Consider ability of the Town to remodel existing, or build new commercial space to entice retail businesses
Goal: Create an environment that is supportive of businesses and services 6T/ 3S/ 3C
a. Strengthen business networks by encouraging local participation in Chamber of Commerce offerings, such as hosting Business After Hours events
b. Encourage local businesses to participate in the offerings of business development organizations in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham area

c. Engage Rockingham County Economic Development to assist in promoting the Town of Grottoes as a good location for businesses
d. Seek out resources and grants for supporting businesses currently within town and those wanting to come to town. Encourage entrepreneurship.
Goal: Create an economic development handout for prospective agents, owners, and entrepreneurs 1T/ 0S/ 1C
a. Make an easy-to-understand zoning handout / online guide that gives simple explanation about what is allowed in what zoning districts, with a town map showing available spaces, and that includes contact information for further questions
Goal: Engage in Economic Development and Tourism agencies and partnerships to further enhance opportunities for growth and tourism 0 VOTES
a. Update Harrisonburg/Rockingham Chamber of Commerce and others about new businesses, events, and amenities, so they can be promoted.
b. Participate in Tourism efforts throughout the region to promote Grottoes
Goal: Have an emphasis on building on existing community assets, rather than pursuing jobs or tax base growth without particular regard for location or synergies among existing assets 3T/ 1S /2C
a. Utilize the existing natural resource of a pristine water supply to draw commercial/industry interest.
b. A great deal of tourism and revenue is created by visitors to Grand Caverns. Pursue additional opportunities to lure tourists. Examples include overnight accommodations, a LOVE sign, expanding recreational activities at parks, etc.
c. Gather information from residents regarding what businesses or industries would best serve them. Target these key economic sectors for growth. This will allow staff to direct economic development efforts in a strategic manner, and to use limited resources wisely.

Priority Focus Area: Community Connection and Engagement
Goal: Establish community connections and a sense of community in Grottoes, and encourage civic engagement 7T/ 3S/ 4C
a. Develop and distribute an elected and appointed officials' description and call to action letter for residents
b. Continue to plan and host existing community events and expand upon them
c. Work to recruit new volunteers that will assist with programs, projects, and events through a community
d. Encourage events, festivals, etc, organized, sponsored and/or promoted by outside sources in cooperation with the Town
e. Establish a community center
Goal: Continue and improve communications to the citizens of the Town. 4T/ 4S/ 0C
a. Invest in a digital sign at Town Hall to advertise upcoming events, public meetings, services, and general information to passers-by
b. Invest in a service that will improve two-way communication with citizens and provide immediate automated data and feedback to inquiries.
c. Have a biannual, or yearly review Town Newsletter that reflects current events, status of town projects, citizen achievements, promotion of town events, reviews and reminders of town services,
Goal: Support the current quality of life and strive to improve upon it. 0 VOTES
a. Create easy access to needed goods and services, both retail and daily needs
b. Improve on existing open spaces while also increasing opportunities for recreation and gathering
c. Preserve natural spaces and increase walkability of town
d. Maintain historic character and distinctive assets of town

Priority Focus Area: Beautification and Historic Preservation

Goal: Take measures to reduce visually unappealing uses of property that negatively affect the Town's image. 6T/ 4S/ 2C

- a. Continue to support the enforcement of existing Town ordinances and codes that reduce the number of derelict structures, improperly stored household items, rubbish and/or vehicles
- b. Continue to support the enforcement of the land development code specifically as it relates to placement of structures and fences on properties.

Goal: Create/update a community conceptual open space and entrance design master plan that establishes a "consistent identity of place". 2T/ 0S/ 2C

- a. Plan would include an open space master plan, improved entrance designs, and a "main street" corridor design
- b. Plan would focus on having an interconnected and cohesive network of open spaces, improving the visibility, aesthetic quality and design of entrance points, and phased improvements to the main corridor(s) designs.

Goal: Preserve and maintain historic building(s) owned by the town and perhaps purchase historic properties for future uses. 4T/ 0S/ 4C

- c. Assure the maintenance of Town Hall and the iconic Stone Lodge at Grand Caverns Park.

Manager McAlister said we determine how to work toward these goals as we cannot focus on all of them at once. Council member Justis suggested taking the top six in the order of votes received. Council agreed. Manager McAlister said she will now add the prioritization details to the strategic plan and will have a final draft out to council ahead of the March meeting. At that meeting council will consider adopting the strategic plan.

Mayor Plaster said we are out of time and thanked everyone for coming and participating in this meeting.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

February 15, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Tuesday, February 15, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Fire Department, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of February 15, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:01 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Town Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster said the first item on the agenda is the US Bicycle Route 211 through Grottoes. Town Manager McAlister said this project is part of a national effort through the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and is being lead in Virginia by the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition, the Virginia Bicycle Federation, the Adventure Cycling Association and VDOT. The proposed route starts in Waynesboro, VA, and would runs through Grottoes on Dogwood Avenue, and ends in Front Royal, VA. Council asked that staff check into the VML coverage to see if we designate this route if it would make the town liable. Council also asked would the town be notified when a large group is using the trail. Manager McAlister said she would check into those questions and get back to council.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the Planning Commission membership and organization. Manager McAlister said we have received two volunteer applications and that we currently have three vacancies on the planning commission and two on the board of zoning appeals. She said at the January Planning Commission meeting, they decided to wait until there is full membership before assigning committee membership. Council asked that we give more time for applications, and then interview candidates at the March meeting.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the potential sale of a portion of an alley. Manager McAlister informed the council that since we now know that the town owns the 60-foot alley between 11th and 12th Streets that Mr. Milstead has inquired about purchasing 40-feet of the alley leaving the town a 20-foot alley for utilities. Attorney Miller said an appraisal and survey would need to be done for that portion of the alley to see if selling this is even viable. Attorney Miller said we would put in the agreement that those fees would be reimbursed. Council member Justis made a motion, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 4 to 2, voting recorded as follows: BAILEY – NAY; JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – NAY; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE to conduct a survey of the 60-foot alley between Birch

Avenue and Cherry Avenue, leaving 20-foot for utilities and to obtain an appraisal cost of the 40' foot section that could be sold. The buyer would have to reimburse the town for all expenses incurred.

Council member Bailey made a motion to amend the agenda to discuss Chapter 48 of the Town Code prior to the public hearing. Council member Leeth seconded the motion, and carried by a vote of 5 to 1, voting recorded as follows: BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – NAY.

Council member Bailey asked the attorney if there was a possibility to place this on a referendum, so town citizens can vote on whether they are in support of allowing “backyard” chickens. He said he has read Virginia Code 24.2-684 and 24.2-687 and it’s unclear as to if the council can hold a referendum for an issue like this. Attorney Miller said he would have to check to see if this could be done. Council member Bailey said he feels even if we can all agree on an ordinance to allow this, if we can, we should allow the citizens to vote on it. He said allowing this is not making a decision on who shows up tonight and not people from other areas giving their opinions, it will put it back on our own registered voters to decide if they want the ordinance to pass. Attorney Miller said he would check into it but doesn’t think you can, especially if doesn’t state it in the Town Charter. Council member Leeth asked if there was a way to get our citizens to vote on this without getting it on the ballot. Attorney Miller said if a registered voter got a petition signed by a majority of the registered voters than they could present that to council. Council Member Kohl said he feels it’s time to move forward with this. He said we have spent a year on the subject, and he feels the planning commission and council has worked hard and has drafted the best ordinance that could be drafted to still allow chickens. Council member Bailey said he still hasn’t gotten answers on some of the questions he had such as, who will be enforcing this ordinance and how we dispose of the chickens when there is a violation. Attorney Miller said you don’t want to have a criminal penalty and Council member Bailey asked why not. He said in 2017 we changed Chapter 117 to a civil penalty and haven’t been able to enforce anything since. Council member Bailey said he is afraid that since we can’t enforce the Nuisance ordinance criminally, then the regulations in the chicken ordinance wouldn’t be very enforceable either. We need to make changes so these ordinances can be enforced. Council member Justis said that he thinks council is getting the wrong impression of how many chickens. He said Harrisonburg has 40,000 plus citizens and there are 40 permits issued. Council member Justis said for the town it may be five or six permits issued. Mayor Plaster said that we are scheduled for public hearing and feels we should go forward with the public hearing and then take a vote. Council member Bailey stated that he wants to go on record saying that “we have spent over a year on this ordinance for five or six people that want something. He said we are looking at a minority instead of looking at a utilitarian approach to what’s better for the overall citizens of the Town of Grottoes”. Council member Justis stated that he wanted to go on record too and said, “we did the same exact thing for golf carts”.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the meeting at 6:44 p.m.

February 15, 2022

A public hearing, a joint public hearing and the regular session of the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, February 15, 2022, beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Fire Department, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the public hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Mayor Jo Plaster, Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, and Michael Kohl.

Mayor Plaster stated the reason for the public hearing is to hear citizens comments regarding the consideration to amend Chapter 48 – Animals. To add Article IV Chickens to the Grottoes Town Code. This would allow homeowners, zoned correctly, to keep/maintain chickens on their property while meeting regulated requirements. Also, to amend Chapter A171 to add §A171 (A)(1) Chickens (a) Permitting Fee (b) Renewal Fee.

Speaking for the request – None.

Speaking against the request – Melissa Mays addressed the council stating that she is against allowing chickens in town for several reasons. She said they make a lot of noise, they stink, and they draw in other predatorial animals.

Eric Chittum addressed the council saying he is against allowing chickens in town. He stated there are a lot of ordinances on the books that are already not enforced and is afraid this would be another. He said they draw other predators like foxes, coyotes, bear and skunks and we do not need to draw those animals here. Mr. Chittum said we need to keep the kids' safety in mind because they will not know to not walk up to an animal. He also said that Fauquier County is battling an Avian Flu outbreak from backyard chickens, and we don't need that here either.

Questions by Council – Council member Bailey said that he mentioned this at the work session but he feels if we pass this ordinance that is proposed then we would be messing up. He said we should not enforce this with a civil penalty because our police department cannot enforce it because they do not have a surety bond like the sheriffs' deputies do. Mr. Bailey said he is also concerned about predators that chickens will draw into town.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the public hearing at 7:07 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the joint public hearing of the Grottoes Town Council and the Grottoes Planning Commission to order at 7:07 p.m. on February 15, 2022.

ATTENDANCE: Planning Commission Members present: Chairman Justin Neitzey, Nathan Foerster, Dylan Nicely, and Michael Kohl.

Council Members present: Mayor Jo Plaster, Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, and Michael Kohl.

Mayor Plaster said the reason for the public hearing is to hear citizen comments on the consideration of amending Articles VI (R-1), VII (R-2), and VIII (R-3) of the Grottoes Town Code Chapter 100 – Land Development. This would allow chickens to be kept/maintained on property greater or equal to 10,000 square feet containing a single family detached dwelling and zoned residential, (does not include townhouse, duplex, or apartments).

Speaking for the request – None.

Speaking against the request – Scott Sacra addressed the council stating that almost everyone in those zones could have chickens, based off the 10,000 square feet. He said he knows not everybody will but is concerned with the amount of chickens that could possibly be in town. Mr. Sacra said that he is concerned with predators coming into town and that he knows people in Port Republic that are having problems with bears getting their chickens. He said this council needs to keep the safety of the children in mind before passing something like this.

Callie Bailey said she supports the current chicken ordinance and if someone can meet that requirement then great, she said she is not saying anything bad about the police department or the town administration but says there are already ordinances that are not being enforced. She said that she read the ordinance and sees that there is a permitting process and requirements that have to be met, but she is not seeing how we are enforcing this. Who will be the person that will be making sure they only have the correct number of chickens and that the pen is the right size, etc. Ms. Bailey said that it sounds great ideally but is concerned that it's going to be another ordinance that is not enforced. She said her other concerns are safety and health, is this criminal or civil, the costs to the town, and who's going to fight the fight?

There was no discussion from Council or Planning Commission.

Mayor Plaster closed the public hearing at 7:13 p.m. and turned the meeting over to the Planning Commission.

Chairman Neitzey asked the Commission if they had any comments or if they were prepared to make a recommendation.

On a motion from Commission member Foerster, seconded by Commission member Kohl, and carried by a 3-1 vote, voting as follows: FOERSTER – AYE; NEITZEY - AYE; NICELY – NAY; KOHL – AYE, to recommend amending Articles VI (R-1), VII (R-2), and VIII (R-3) of the Grottoes Town Code Chapter 100 – Land Development.

Chairman Neitzey adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of February 15, 2022 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:16 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked Clerk Morris for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Director of Public Works AJ Hummel, Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY - AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, the Council approved the minutes from the meetings of January 10, 2022.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS

Melissa Mays addressed the Council saying they are having problems with people not stopping at the stop sign by her house and wanted to thank the police department for sitting along her road. She said this happens continuously and asked if we could possibly put cameras up so if the stop sign is run the person driving will get a picture and fine in the mail. Ms. Mays asked if there were other precautions that can be taken and said there has already been one accident there.

Eddie Chittum addressed the Council and said she brought up a good point. He said previously it was discussed to investigate the speed on other avenues and asked if this has been done. Council member Justis said that the streets committee has been looking at this and will be making a recommendation to council next month for some markings and additional stop signs to help control the speed and flow of traffic.

Scott Sacra said he has a couple questions from the work session meeting. He asked where the US 211 bike route would be proposed to go through town. Mayor Plaster responded and said it is proposed to go along Dogwood Avenue. Mr. Sacra asked where the portion of the alley is located that is being considered for sale. Mayor Plaster asked Clerk Morris to explain. Clerk Morris advised that the portion of the alley is between 11th and 12th Street and Birch and Cherry Avenues. She said this is a 60-foot alley and all other alleys in town are 20-foot.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve the financial reports for January 2022.

WATER AND SEWER – Council member Bailey said that water and sewer committee will be having a meeting as soon as staff completes the review of the water study.

ORDINANCE, HEALTH AND PROPERTY – Council member Kohl thanked everyone for their comments, and he appreciates council's time over the last year considering all the options. He stated that he would like to note for the record that chickens have always been allowed in Grottoes just on a one-acre plot and this would allow a smaller plot. He made a motion to amend Chapter 48 to add Article IV Chickens. Council member Justis seconded the motion. Council member Bailey said he thinks he is in agreeance with most people here tonight by opening ourselves up by reducing the lot sizes that we allow people to have chickens. He said if we do allow chickens on a smaller plot, he still doesn't feel this ordinance is the right answer. He feels there are a lot of questions that need to be answered and that's why staff wanted it delayed until July 1, 2022. Council member Bailey said with that being said, he wants to move to table this indefinitely with obtaining answers to those questions and getting this detailed out. Council member Sterling seconded the motion. Council member Kohl said that we have worked hard on this. He said the planning commission, the ordinance committee and the entire council has been involved and feels this is the best ordinance and is not in favor of tabling this. Council member Bailey said he would like to comment on this too. He said at the work session he brought up to put this on a referendum so the citizens could decide if they want chickens. He said with that being said, we cannot do that, so we need to something that is best for the overall town. Council member Bailey said he is not taking anything away from this planning commission, he knows they work hard not only on a lot of items we send them. He said answers need to be made before we approve something and doesn't feel this draft is complete until we do that. Council member Sterling said he feels he was voted in to serve as a voice of the public and all he has heard tonight is against the ordinance. Council member Justis called for a vote. Mayor Plaster called for a vote on tabling this indefinitely. The motion carried by a vote of 4 to 2, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – NAY; BAILEY - AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – NAY. Council member Leeth asked if we could find out a definite answer by the March meeting as to if we can do this as a referendum or not. He said he is in favor of the ordinance but does feel if we can't get the referendum than we need to get answers on these questions before it could be passed.

Council member Justis made a motion to table items two and three under Ordinance, Health and Property at this time. Council member Bailey seconded the motion. The motion carried by a

vote of 5 to 1, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY - AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – NAY.

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS - Council member Justis stated that we are aware that the traffic patterns in this town are not consistent with what we need of a town this size and with the growth that we have and will be working on new traffic patterns on more streets.

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth said the events committee will be meeting at the end of the week to get a preliminary list of events together.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Raynes and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY - AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve the 2022 Officers for the Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department.

STAFF REPORT

TOWN MANAGER. – A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ATTORNEY. – Attorney Miller informed the Council that the amendment to the Town Charter has passed the senate and should go to vote in the house next week.

Attorney Miller said he had a title search done and they were able to examine the title back to 1883 and discovered it was never dedicated to the railroad. He said in those days it was the Chesapeake and Western Railroad. He said it is clear and the town owns the alley.

TREASURER. - A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. - A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. - A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PUBLIC WORKS. - A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR.- A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

NEW BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

March 8, 20221

A Special Meeting of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the special meeting of March 8, 2022 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m. The special meeting was called by Mayor Plaster to discuss possible land acquisition and a business locating to town. Mayor Plaster requested roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Joshua Bailey, Jim Justis, Mark Sterling, David Raynes, and Tim Leeth. ABSENT: Council member Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Clerk Tara Morris and Town Manager Stefanie McAlister.

CLOSED SESSION

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; the Council recessed the meeting from 6:01 p.m. to 6:59 p.m., for a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A(3) for the discussion and consideration of acquisition of real property and Section 2.2-3711A(5) of the code of Virginia, and concerning a prospective business locating to town.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; the Council returned to open session.

Mayor Plaster read the certification of the closed session, “to the best of your knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711(A)3 of the Code of Virginia, regarding the discussion and consideration of acquisition of real property for a public purpose and Section 2.2-3711(A)5 of the code of Virginia, concerning a prospective business where no previous announcement has been made of the business locating to town.” J. Justis; so certified, J. Bailey; so certified, M. Sterling; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, and T. Leeth; so certified.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

March 14, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, March 14, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of March 14, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Joshua Bailey, Jim Justis, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, Michael Kohl, and Council member Mark Sterling teleconferenced into the meeting from Leesburg, Florida.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Town Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster said we have a request from Council member Mark Sterling to participate in the meeting by teleconference. She stated that according to state code we will need a motion to allow his participation. On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5-0-1, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – ABSTAIN; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved to allow Council member Sterling to participate in the work session and regular meetings by teleconference from Leesburg, Florida.

Mayor Plaster said the first item on the agenda is the Streets and Street Lights committee report. Council member Justis said the committee met in February and discussed adding a couple of stop signs on some avenues. He said we have some streets that you are stopping every block and others where there are no stop signs and people are using those roads and not obeying the speed limit. Council member Justis said after much consideration the committee is proposing to add three stop signs. He said one would be added at 13th Street and Holly Avenue. Council member Justis said two would be added on Forest Avenue, one at 11th Street and another at 16th Street. He stated that these would now become 4-way stops and the streets committee is also proposing to add white painted stop stripes. Council member Sterling asked is Chief Sullivan is in agreement that these stop signs should be added. Clerk Morris informed Council member Sterling that Chief Sullivan has been doing a traffic study in the area and attended the streets committee meeting and agreed these are good locations to add them. Mayor Plaster asked what we were going to do about the intersection of 6th Street. She said this is an area that we receive the most complaints on. Chief Sullivan said there is already a stop sign there and he has asked the officers to set in the area watching these stop signs and issue citations for people that run them. Chief Sullivan said he feels adding the stop signs on Forest Avenue will help lower the actual speed and should help with stopping at the stop signs. Council member Bailey asked if we could look at taking some of

the stops signs off of Cherry Avenue and Elm Avenue to open those up some. He said when you are trying to get emergency services to a call you don't want to have to stop at every block. Council member Sterling asked if adding these stop signs would cause more confusion and accidents than we already have. Mayor Plaster asked if we are going to add these stop signs, she wants to make sure we notify the citizens of the changes that will be happening. Council member Bailey asked if it would be better to implement a complete traffic pattern change making it uniformed instead of adding a stop sign here and there. Council member Leeth said he agrees if we are going to change the map of the town, we should do this all at one time. Council member Justis, chair of the Streets and Street Lights Committee said the committee will do a traffic pattern study and make all suggested changes at one time with Council's approval.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the Strategic Plan final draft. Manager McAlister went through the final draft of the strategic plan. She said the next step is to take the top six goals and create an action plan. Manager McAlister said that if the council was ready, she would ask for a motion to adopt the strategic plan during her staff report at the regular council meeting.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is a Law Enforcement Jurisdictional Authority Agreement. Manager McAlister said that Chief Sullivan is working with Sheriff Smith to update the MOU with Augusta County. She said nothing in the original agreement is changing. This adoption would allow for current leadership's agreement, and that the MOU has not been updated since 2016. Manager McAlister said this is an action item on her staff report for the regular meeting.

Mayor Plaster said the next item in the US 211 Bicycle Route resolution. Manager McAlister said the council asked that she check into liability and if the town would be notified of large events. She stated that she did check on the liability and provided documentation that states that the town there is no additional liability by allowing this bicycle route. Manager McAlister said the AASHTO (American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials) do not hold events. She said they are hopefully that if a group was to hold a large-scale event, that they would notify the localities, but there is nothing that says they must. She said this would be a nationally recognized trail where normally you would have small groups of 2, 4, maybe 6 people riding at a time.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the VDOT Land Use Resolution. Manager McAlister informed the council that staff met with VDOT and in that conversation we were notified that the town does not have a Land Use Resolution with them. She said this would eliminate the town having to have a surety bond to cross or do any work on or within VDOT maintained roads and rights-of-way. Manager McAlister said we would still have to go through the permitting process to do work, but not the bond process. She said the VDOT resolution is an action item under staff report.

Mayor Plaster said the last item on the agenda is an alley vacation and sale request. Manager McAlister said under the Land Development staff report you will see a plat of the property that Mr. Tom Tourje is requesting the Town vacate and he purchase. She said that this is a utility alley but the utilities for these properties will be located in the front. She said this property borders conservation property that Mr. Tourje owns that goes to the river and we see no reason to keep the utility alley open. Council member Justis said we still have 6th Street and 7th Street if for any reason we need to get behind the property toward the river. Manager McAlister said if this is something that the council decides to do, we will have to hold a public hearing for the sale of the property.

Mayor Plaster adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

March 14, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, March 14, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of March 14, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked Clerk Morris for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Joshua Bailey, Jim Justis, David Raynes, Michael Kohl, and Tim Leeth. Council member Mark Sterling teleconferenced in from Leesburg, Florida.

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Nathan Miller, Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the minutes from the retreat on February 8, 2022 and the work session and regular meetings on February 15, 2022.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Scott Sacra addressed the Council saying after the last public meeting on chickens he has done some research on allowing chickens in much smaller spaces and has discovered several interesting things. He said after reading the minutes, he thinks that a citizen can get a petition together for a referendum to be placed on the ballot for citizens to vote on. He said he and one other person collected signatures against your proposal in a very short amount of time and could easily collect more if more time was allowed. He said these are residents that are within R-1, R-2, and R-3 and who strongly oppose amendments to any article of the town code to allow chickens to be kept or maintained on property greater than 10,000 square feet. Mr. Sacra said that he found out that Councilman Justis, Mayor Plaster and Councilman Kohl had all preciously owned chickens and had to get rid of them due to the existing ordinance. He said that he was curious as to why the proposal was to reduce the required land size from 1 acre, or 43,560 square feet, to .23 acre or 10,000 square feet? He said his research showed that Mr. Kohl, who is head of planning commission and pushed at the last meeting to have this ordinance approved has just over 10,000 square feet. He said most concerns are safety related. Mr. Sacra said he feels this needs to be a referendum for the citizens to vote on.

Council member Justis said he needed to state that Mr. Kohl never owned chickens in this town.

Heather Chittum addressed the Council stating that Mr. Sacra addressed a lot that she wanted to. She is also concerned that this will turn neighbors against their neighbors. Ms. Chittum said three of you live on Park Avenue and a lot of what has been passed through has been for your benefit and that concerns her as a resident. She said she would like to know if you have ever passed anything that you didn't believe in, but knew it was the best for the community. Mrs. Chittum said that she doesn't believe chickens are what's best. She said the 10,000 square foot needs to be looked at and that it needs to be bigger. She said she is worried about disease and how they will be discarded if they do get sick and how the town plans to keep up with that. Ms. Chittum stated that she already sees ordinances that are not being enforced when she is out walking and said that she would like to get some confidence in council to address these ordinances such as trash cans not being taken in after collection, vehicles that are not properly tagged, and yards that are not maintained. She said if we start enforcing some of these ordinances first and then that would entrust some confidence in how ordinances are handled.

Eddie Chittum addressed the Council and said that he is here for his girls. He said that is the reason he shows up every month. Mr. Chittum said if you'll want chickens, you're going to get chickens, you'll find a way to get them and that's on you. He said for his girl's safety and well being he will fight against this until the point his hands are tied. He said he has spoke his peace.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Bailey, and carried by a vote of 6-0, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the financial reports for the month of February.

Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to donate \$2,000.00 to the Grottoes Cardinal Baseball Team.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – Council member Kohl made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 4-2, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – NAY; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to bring the topic of backyard chickens off the table for discussion.

Council member Kohl stated that the Town Attorney Nathan Miller provided the council with information on adding a referendum on a ballot and stated that we would not be able to do it according to our Town Charter. Attorney Miller said you cannot do a referendum under Virginia law unless your Town Charter specifically allows it. He said the only other option would be if the town residents presented you with a petition to show for or against. Council member Leeth

asked since Mr. Sacra has a petition can we have a citizens vote on the petition. Attorney Miller stated that he can submit the petition and the council would know how those citizens feel but a petition is not binding. Council member Leeth asked if we could do a survey like we did on the noise ordinance. Attorney Miller stated that you can. Council member Leeth said this would allow anyone in town to voice their opinion on whether they are for or against chickens. Attorney Miller said a petition or survey is informational for the council and that neither is binding. Council member Leeth said that he would like to see this done. Council member Kohl said that since he was singled out by the comments that he would like to address why he brought this back up. He said it was six years ago that people had to get rid of their backyard chickens. He said he didn't do anything, didn't petition the council or anything. He said over the last two years our lives have changed and that is because of the Covid 19 pandemic. He said he never thought he would see supply chain issues in America and how it has affected our food supply. He said that when the pandemic started it was hit or miss as if you could get eggs at the local Food Lion. He said you can google it now and there are meat, eggs, and dairy shortages. Council member Kohl said what this is not about Councilman Kohl wants to have some chickens. He said most likely he probably wouldn't get chickens. He said this is about our citizens being as secure in their food source as possible, for your children, so you are not running into food shortage issues. Council member Kohl said he is not saying everyone should do it, but it should be an option for the citizens of Grottoes. He said it is not about him personally, it's about food freedom for our citizens of Grottoes. Council member Kohl said that is why he keeps pushing this and feels this is more important than maybe a predator coming in or a little bit of smell. He said those things we can deal with. Council member Kohl said he is sorry if he has not made his reasons clear as to why he is pushing for chickens but feels this is important to the citizens of town.

Council member Kohl made a motion to conduct a citizen survey on chickens. Seconded by Council member Justis. Council member Bailey asked if we could amend the Charter through the state legislators like we did for amending the mayor's term. Attorney Miller said that you could amend charter to be sent to the state legislators for approval to add referendums. Council member Bailey agreed with Mr. Kohl saying that Covid did change some things. It taught us that there are diseases that can be transferred from animal to humans and cause a pandemic from zoonotic diseases. He said right now the bird flu is rampant throughout the nation and in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Council member Bailey said that he would be in favor of amending the charter adding referendums and putting this up for the citizens to decide. Council member Kohl said he feels this is something that needs immediate attention considering what is going on in the world verses waiting to amend the charter. Council member Sterling asked if we sent out a survey about chickens would it be on the current ordinance or the proposed ordinance. Mayor Plaster replied that it would be on the proposed ordinance. Mayor Plaster called for a vote and the motion was denied by a vote of 3-4, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – NAY; RAYNES – NAY; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; PLASTER- NAY.

Council member Leeth said that he would still like to accept Mr. Sacra's petition. He said he wants to here from our citizens. He thanked Mr. Sacra for making the effort and taking the time to get those signatures.

Council member Kohl made a motion to add referendum to our Town Charter. Council member Bailey amended the motion to have our town attorney draft a resolution to bring back to this governing body for approval to petition state legislators. Council member Justis seconded the motion. Attorney Miller asked to amend the motion to let him research it and allow him to bring back some answers. Council member Bailey replied so moved, seconded by Council member Justis. Mayor Plaster called for the vote, and it carried by a vote of 6-0, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – Council member Justis said the Streets Committee met and Council discussed their recommendation at the work session. He said council suggested reviewing all the streets and traffic patterns in town and asked the streets committee to bring a recommendation back. Council member Justis said a comprehensive study will be done and the streets committee will meet to discuss and make a recommendation to council.

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth made a motion, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 6-0, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to donate \$1,500.00 to the Friday Night Bluegrass in the Park.

Council member Leeth mentioned that Chief Charlie's Kids Fish Day will be held on Saturday, April 2, 2022, from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. He said this event is free and there will be door prizes, food, and other activities.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – no report

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. Manager McAlister said there are three action items that she would like council to address. She said if the council is ready, first would be the adoption of the strategic plan. On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the strategic plan. *(see attachment "A" at the end of the minutes)*

Manager McAlister said the Law Enforcement Jurisdictional Authority Agreement (MOU) with Augusta County was the next item needing council's consideration. She stated nothing has changed from the previous MOU, just needing to update signatures for both parties. On a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Bailey, and carried by a vote of 6-0, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the MOU with Augusta County. *(see attachment "B" at the end of the minutes)*

Manager McAlister said the last item for consideration is the VDOT Land Use Permit Resolution. She stated that if we pass this resolution then anytime we need to work along Augusta Avenue (Rt. 340) or 3rd Street (Rt. 256) the town would not have to get bonds for the work. She stated that we would still have to go through the permitting process. On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 6-0, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council adopted the VDOT Land Use Permit Resolution. *(see attachment "C" at the end of the minutes)*

ATTORNEY. No report

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. Parks Director Shank said he has one action item on his staff report. He said there is an old lawn mower that should go to surplus. He is recommending a \$250.00 reserve. On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved to place the mower to surplus to be sold on auction.

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Plaster said at our work session we had a discussion to have the Town Manager negotiate a contract for the sale of land and if we are going to allow this, we will need a motion.

On a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5-1, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING –

AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to have the Town Manager negotiate a contract with Mr. Tourje for the sale of the alley between 6th Street & 7th Street and to present it to Council.

OLD BUSINESS – Mayor Plaster asked if the council was ready to make a motion on the US 211 Bicycle resolution.

On a motion by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 4-2, roll call vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – NAY; KOHL – AYE; to approve the resolution for the US 211 Bicycle Route.

RESOLUTION 2022.3.14

Whereas, bicycle tourism is a growing industry in North America, contributing \$47 billion a year to the economies of communities that provide facilities for such tourists; and

Whereas, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has designated a corridor crossing Virginia to be developed as United States Bicycle Route 211 (USBR 211), and

Whereas, the Adventure Cycling Association, Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition, and the Virginia Bicycle Federation, with the cooperation of VDOT, have proposed specific route to be designated as USBR 211, and

Whereas, the proposed route for USBR 211 comes through Grottoes and can therefore provide benefits to our town, and

Whereas, we have investigated the proposed route and found it to be a suitable route, and desire that the route be designated so that it can be mapped and signed, thereby promoting bicycle tourism in our area,

Therefore be it resolved, that Grottoes hereby expresses its approval and support for the development of USBR 211, and requests that VDOT get the route officially designated by AASHTO as soon as this can be achieved, and authorizes the posting of signs within Grottoes right-of-way identifying the route through the town once the official designation has been made.

ADOPTED this _____ day of March 2022

CLOSED SESSION

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council recessed the meeting from 7:54 p.m. to 8:28 p.m., for a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A(1), Code of Virginia,

subparagraph (7) consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members pertaining to actual and probable litigation.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council returned to open session.

Mayor Plaster read the certification of the closed session – “to the best of your knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711(A)7 of the Code of Virginia, as only such public business matters that were identified in the motion by which a closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting”. Clerk Morris took a roll call. J. Justis; so certified, J. Bailey; so certified, M. Sterling; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, T. Leeth; so certified, M. Kohl, so certified.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Attachment “A”

Grottoes Strategic Plan

Vision Statement

A thoughtful vision statement is one of the elements needed to form a forward-looking strategic framework. It gives the long-term comprehensive perspective necessary to make disciplined tactical and incremental decisions on community issues as they arise. Community vision statements are typically crafted through a collaborative process. Vision statements describe what you want your organization to be in the future. The statement has both an internal and external focus. It will guide employee efforts, and strategic decision making while also broadcasting the Town’s grandest ambitions. The following aspirational vision statement has been developed by the Grottoes Town Council:

Vision Statement

The Town of Grottoes shall provide excellence in government services and will therefore be a safe, well-planned, economically viable community, with equal opportunity for all.

Core Mission

Mission statements are directly connected to vision statements. While a vision statement describes the desired future state of the organization, the mission statement describes how that vision will be achieved. A well-crafted mission statement can capture in a short, concise paragraph the purpose of the organization's existence and what actions it takes to fulfill this purpose. The mission statement defines, why your “business” exists and why it’s important, the problems you aim to solve, your organization’s plan for the present based on what it wants to achieve in the future while also being unique and realistic. The following core mission statement has been developed by the Grottoes Town Council:

Core Mission

In partnership with the community, the Town of Grottoes will protect, enrich, and enhance the quality of life of its citizens by providing a high level of government service in an efficient, equitable and responsive manner, and will create opportunities for the town to thrive and prosper.

Strategic Priorities, Goals, and Initiatives

During the workshops Council determined the following to be primary focus areas and points for consideration and future action. Creating a comprehensive action plan for each item will need to be accomplished and all necessary resources will need to be identified and put in place for the items to be executed successfully. Then, work can begin on the items which will put the Town on the path to achieving its long-term vision. Rather than an exhaustive list of strategies, what follows is gathering of initial priorities that will generate momentum for community development projects to be built upon in future years.

Priority Focus Area: Government Services

Goal: Maintain and enhance infrastructure and facilities

- c. Utilize results from engineering water and sewer network study reports to prioritize needs of these infrastructure
- d. Enhance the town wide inventory/mapping of assets to include all water and sewer features (lines, valves, intakes, meters, etc.) as well as conducting a sign inventory.

Goal: Support a Capital Improvement Plan that includes asset inventory and replacement schedule

Goal: Support a positive organizational culture that fosters respect, excellent customer service, and teamwork among all staff

- c. Provide opportunities for training, career development, education and leadership advancement
- d. Where feasible improve job description structures to encourage leadership advancement.

Goal: Explore ways to improve financial stability

- d. Complete audit of all past fiscal years through July 1, 2021
- e. With each new budget cycle review and update, if necessary, fees for water, sewer, trash, etc. as well as any user-fees.
- f. Determine process for discovering, evaluating, and applying for grant opportunities to support significant projects and work initiatives

Goal: Assure appropriate staffing levels for current and future growth

- c. To support current and future services, evaluate staffing levels and determine a plan that allows for continued growth of staff and their education. The town must maintain services through population growth and provide the new services necessary for economic growth and future development. Staffing levels in administration/finance and law enforcement must increase in the near future to sustain efficient service levels to the citizens.
- d. An effective economic development and tourism strategy requires dedicated staff time to implement programs and build relationships in the community. Assign one person to economic development activities, including operating programs, pursuing funding, and tracking results.

Priority Focus Area: Land Use and Development

Goal: Create defined areas in Town to allow for a Central Business District (CBD) and to create a “downtown” feel with community serving shops and restaurants

- c. Consider this goal a primary focus in the update of the Town of Grottoes Comprehensive Plan
- d. Consider utilization of the Town’s growth area(s) as a new CBD

Goal: Update the Town’s current Land Development ordinance to improve contradictions and ease of interpretation, and to have consistency in regulations

- b. Engage the services of a professional organization to review and update the current Land Development chapter of the Town Code

Goal: Work toward the improvement of quality of life with a thriving commercial district; aesthetic improvements including green and open space; providing transportation choices, including walking, biking, driving, and public transit; having artistic, cultural, and community resources such as museums, public art, community centers, religious institutions, and other community gathering spaces; and medical, technical, and academic institutions.

- b. Each element of this goal will be refined in the updated Grottoes Comprehensive Plan where design, placement and further description can be detailed.

Priority Focus Area: Economic Development and Tourism

Goal: Reduce mixed land use throughout town and specifically in business zoned areas

- c. Consider ability of the Town to purchase properties within Business zoned districts as they become available.
- d. Consider ability of the Town to remodel existing, or build new commercial space to entice retail businesses

Goal: Create an environment that is supportive of businesses and services

- e. Strengthen business networks by encouraging local participation in Chamber of Commerce offerings, such as hosting Business After Hours events
- f. Encourage local businesses to participate in the offerings of business development organizations in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham area
- g. Engage Rockingham County Economic Development to assist in promoting the Town of Grottoes as a good location for businesses
- h. Seek out resources and grants for supporting businesses currently within town and those wanting to come to town. Encourage entrepreneurship.

Goal: Create an economic development handout for prospective agents, owners, and entrepreneurs

- b. Make an easy-to-understand zoning handout / online guide that gives simple explanation about what is allowed in what zoning districts, with a town map showing available spaces, and that includes contact information for further questions

Goal: Engage in Economic Development and Tourism agencies and partnerships to further enhance opportunities for growth and tourism

- c. Update Harrisonburg/Rockingham Chamber of Commerce and others about new businesses, events, and amenities, so they can be promoted.
- d. Participate in Tourism efforts throughout the region to promote Grottoes

Goal: Have an emphasis on building on existing community assets, rather than pursuing jobs or tax base growth without particular regard for location or synergies among existing assets

d. Utilize the existing natural resource of a pristine water supply to draw commercial/industry interest.
e. A great deal of tourism and revenue is created by visitors to Grand Caverns. Pursue additional opportunities to lure tourists. Examples include overnight accommodations, a LOVE sign, expanding recreational activities at parks, etc.
f. Gather information from residents regarding what businesses or industries would best serve them. Target these key economic sectors for growth. This will allow staff to direct economic development efforts in a strategic manner, and to use limited resources wisely.

Priority Focus Area: Community Connection and Engagement	
Goal: Establish community connections and a sense of community in Grottoes, and encourage civic engagement	
f.	Develop and distribute an elected and appointed officials’ description and call to action letter for residents
g.	Continue to plan and host existing community events and expand upon them
h.	Work to recruit new volunteers that will assist with programs, projects, and events through a community
i.	Encourage events, festivals, etc, organized, sponsored and/or promoted by outside sources in cooperation with the Town
j.	Establish a community center
Goal: Continue and improve communications to the citizens of the Town.	
d.	Invest in a digital sign at Town Hall to advertise upcoming events, public meetings, services, and general information to passers-by
e.	Invest in a service that will improve two-way communication with citizens and provide immediate automated data and feedback to inquiries.
f.	Have a biannual, or yearly review Town Newsletter that reflects current events, status of town projects, citizen achievements, promotion of town events, reviews and reminders of town services,
Goal: Support the current quality of life and strive to improve upon it.	
e.	Create easy access to needed goods and services, both retail and daily needs
f.	Improve on existing open spaces while also increasing opportunities for recreation and gathering
g.	Preserve natural spaces and increase walkability of town
h.	Maintain historic character and distinctive assets of town

Priority Focus Area: Beautification and Historic Preservation

Goal: Take measures to reduce visually unappealing uses of property that negatively affect the Town’s image.

- c. Continue to support the enforcement of existing Town ordinances and codes that reduce the number of derelict structures, improperly stored household items, rubbish and/or vehicles
- d. Continue to support the enforcement of the land development code specifically as it relates to placement of structures and fences on properties.

Goal: Create/update a community conceptual open space and entrance design master plan that establishes a “consistent identity of place”.

- d. Plan would include an open space master plan, improved entrance designs, and a “main street” corridor design
- e. Plan would focus on having an interconnected and cohesive network of open spaces, improving the visibility, aesthetic quality and design of entrance points, and phased improvements to the main corridor(s) designs.

Goal: Preserve and maintain historic building(s) owned by the town and perhaps purchase historic properties for future uses.

- f. Assure the maintenance of Town Hall and the iconic Stone Lodge at Grand Caverns Park.

Strategic Goals Prioritized

In early February 2022, Town Council and staff met to begin prioritizing the 19 goals listed in the tables above. Goal prioritization is the process of organizing objectives based on their urgency, value, and importance. Once completed it allows the organization to appropriately allocate resources, time, and effort where it is most needed. Prioritization is a method to determine what to focus on first, before moving on to other tasks. It is important to keep in mind here, that the prioritized goals must be considered in the scope of all the other “day-to-day” work carried out by Town staff in the delivery of governmental services. The method deployed to create the prioritized list, was one of simple voting. All seven (7) councilors and six (6) staff members were asked to vote on their top 5 priorities from the list of stated goals. The following figures depict the results of that voting.

Figure 1: Focus Areas and Goal with number of votes and ranking identified

Focus Area and Goals	Staff Voting Results (6 voters)	Council Voting Results (7 voters)	Total Votes	Priority Ranking
Government Services Goals			22	
<i>Maintain and enhance infrastructure and facilities</i>	3	6	9	1st
Support a Capital Improvement Plan that includes asset inventory and replacement schedule	0	0	0	10th (tie)
Support a positive organizational culture that fosters respect, excellent customer service, and teamwork among all staff	2	1	3	7th (tie)
Explore ways to improve financial stability	1	3	4	6th (tie)
<i>Assure appropriate staffing levels for current and future growth</i>	6	0	6	4th (tie)
Land Use and Development Goals			5	
Create defined areas in Town to allow for a Central Business District (CBD) and to create a “downtown” feel with community serving shops and restaurants	2	3	5	5th
Update the Town’s current Land Development ordinance to improve contradictions and ease of interpretation, and to have consistency in regulations	0	0	0	10th (tie)
Work toward the improvement of quality of life with a thriving commercial district; aesthetic improvements including green and open space; providing transportation choices, including walking, biking, driving, and public transit; having artistic, cultural, and community resources such as museums, public art, community centers, religious institutions, and other community gathering spaces; and medical, technical, and academic institutions.	0	0	0	10th (tie)

Economic Development and Tourism Goals				18
<i>Reduce mixed land use throughout town and specifically in business zoned areas</i>	4	4	8	2nd
<i>Create an environment that is supportive of businesses and services</i>	3	3	6	4th (tie)
Create an economic development handout for prospective agents, owners, and entrepreneurs	0	1	1	9th
Engage in Economic Development and Tourism agencies and partnerships to further enhance opportunities for growth and tourism	0	0	0	10th (tie)
Have an emphasis on building on existing community assets, rather than pursuing jobs or tax base growth without particular regard for location or synergies among existing assets	1	2	3	7th (tie)
Community Connection and Engagement Goals				11
<i>Establish community connections and a sense of community in Grottoes, and encourage civic engagement</i>	3	4	7	3rd
Continue and improve communications to the citizens of the Town.	4	0	4	6th (tie)
Support the current quality of life and strive to improve upon it.	0	0	0	10th (tie)
Beautification and Historic Preservation Goals				12
<i>Take measures to reduce visually unappealing uses of property that negatively affect the Town's image</i>	4	2	6	4th (tie)
Create/update a community conceptual open space and entrance design master plan that establishes a "consistent identity of place".	0	2	2	8th
Preserve and maintain historic building(s) owned by the town and perhaps purchase historic properties for future uses	0	4	4	6th (tie)

Note: Highlighted goals are the top 6 vote receivers and the first goals that will be focused on.

Figure 2: Goals prioritized by votes with Councilor voting noted.

Focus Area and Goals	Staff Voting Results (6 voters)	Council Voting Results (7 voters)	Total Votes	Priority Ranking	Bailey	Justis	Kohl	Leeth	Plaster	Raynes	Sterling
<i>Maintain and enhance infrastructure and facilities</i>	3	6	9	1st	√	√	√	√	√		√
<i>Reduce mixed land use throughout town and specifically in business zoned areas</i>	4	4	8	2nd		√		√	√		√
<i>Establish community connections and a sense of community in Grottoes, and encourage civic engagement</i>	3	4	7	3rd	√			√	√	√	
<i>Assure appropriate staffing levels for current and future growth</i>	6	0	6	4th (tie)							
<i>Create an environment that is supportive of businesses and services</i>	3	3	6	4th (tie)		√		√		√	
<i>Take measures to reduce visually unappealing uses of property that negatively affect the Town's image</i>	4	2	6	4th (tie)				√		√	
Create defined areas in Town to allow for a Central Business District (CBD) and to create a "downtown" feel with community serving shops and restaurants	2	3	5	5th		√			√		√
Explore ways to improve financial stability	1	3	4	6th (tie)	√	√	√				
Continue and improve communications to the citizens of the Town.	4	0	4	6th (tie)							
Preserve and maintain historic building(s) owned by the town and perhaps purchase historic properties for future uses	0	4	4	6th (tie)	√		√		√	√	
Support a positive organizational culture that fosters respect, excellent customer service, and teamwork among all staff	2	1	3	7th (tie)	√						
Have an emphasis on building on existing community assets, rather than pursuing jobs or tax base growth without particular regard for location or synergies among existing assets	1	2	3	7th (tie)			√				√
Create/update a community conceptual open space and entrance design master plan that establishes a "consistent identity of place".	0	2	2	8th			√				√
Create an economic development handout for prospective agents, owners, and entrepreneurs	0	1	1	9th						√	
Support a Capital Improvement Plan that includes asset inventory and replacement schedule	0	0	0	10th (tie)							
Update the Town's current Land Development ordinance to improve contradictions and ease of interpretation, and to have consistency in regulations	0	0	0	10th (tie)							
Work toward the improvement of quality of life with a thriving commercial district; aesthetic improvements (...); providing transportation choices, (...); having artistic, cultural, and community resources such as museums, public art, community centers, religious institutions, and other community gathering spaces; and medical, technical, and academic institutions.	0	0	0	10th (tie)							
Engage in Economic Development and Tourism agencies and partnerships to further enhance opportunities for growth and tourism	0	0	0	10th (tie)							
Support the current quality of life and strive to improve upon it.	0	0	0	10th (tie)							

Next Steps

Following adoption of this document, staff will begin to develop an action plan for each of the top six (6) goals. These plans will include a list of specific tasks that must be included to execute each goal. This will provide an idea of what work, and just how much work, will need to be put toward accomplishing the objective. Other items included in the action plans will be budget, need for any additional resources, defined roles and responsibilities, key performance indicators, and timelines.

Summary

This Grottoes Town Council Strategic Plan is a working document. To date, it reflects the intention of Council set by their vision and mission statements, and documents the priority focus areas, goals, and initiatives. Council and staff has built on the contents of this documents by producing a prioritization of goals. Work will now begin on setting achievable timelines and creating an action plan to reach successful implementation for each of the top six (6) prioritized goals.

Document Tracking		Notes
Draft development	December 2021	Compiled from Council workshops
Final draft presented to Council	March 11, 2022	This is the final draft after review of initial draft and prioritization of goals in February 2022.
Council adoption	March 15, 2022	Adopted unanimously

Attachment "B"

**POLICE JURISDICTIONAL AUTHORITY AGREEMENT
AUGUSTA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
GROTTOES POLICE DEPARTMENT**

This agreement, dated for purposes of reference the 1st day of January 2022 and entered into by and between the County of Augusta, Virginia a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Town of Grottoes, a municipal corporation of the Commonwealth of Virginia,

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, §15.2-1736 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, authorizes local governments to enter in reciprocal agreements for cooperation in the furnishing of police services;

WHEREAS, the parties have determined that the provision of certain police services across jurisdictional lines will increase their ability to preserve the safety and welfare of the entire area; and

WHEREAS, it is deemed to be mutually beneficial to the parties hereto to enter into an agreement concerning cooperation with regard to law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the parties desire that the terms and conditions of any such Police Jurisdictional Authority Agreement to be established;

NOW, THEREFORE, inconsideration of the mutual benefits to be derived from a Police Jurisdictional Authority Agreement, the parties hereto covenant and agree as follows:

1. Subject to the terms of this Agreement, the Town of Grottoes agrees to extend full law enforcement arrest authority in the territory of the Town of Grottoes to Augusta County Sheriff Deputies.
2. Augusta County agrees to extend full law enforcement arrest authority to the Town of Grottoes Police Officers, with the following limitations:

The geographical extent of authority for Grottoes Police in Augusta County shall be delineated by the following:

All that area surrounding The Town of Grottoes in Augusta County delineated by perimeter consisting of Leroy Road from its intersection with Augusta County-Rockingham County Line to its intersection with Weyers Cave Road, from that point west on Weyers Cave Road to its intersection with Rockfish Road, from that point south on Rockfish Road to its intersection with Patterson Mill Road, from that point east on Patterson Mill Road to its intersection with U.S. Route 340 (East Side Highway), from that point south on U.S. Route 340 to its intersection with Harriston Road, from that point east on Harriston Road to its intersection with Horsehead Road, from that point north on Horsehead Road to its intersection with Augusta County—Rockingham County Line. Enforcement authority shall extend to any property or portion of property lying proximal to and accessed from any of the roads delineating the perimeter described in this section.

3. Augusta County Deputies and Grottoes Police acting pursuant to this Agreement shall be granted authority to enforce the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and Ordinances of the Town of Grottoes and the ordinances of Augusta County and to perform the other duties of a law enforcement officer while acting pursuant to this Agreement. Augusta County Deputies shall under supervision of the Town of Grottoes police supervisor on duty, or the highest-ranking officer on duty, while acting within the Town of Grottoes and Grottoes Police shall be under the supervision of the Augusta County Sheriff's Office supervisor on duty while acting within the County of Augusta.
4. All Augusta County Deputies and Grottoes Police Officers shall have the same powers, rights, benefits, privileges, and immunities within the prescribed area of Augusta County and the Town of Grottoes, including the authority to make arrests and secure arrest warrants.
5. Violations in Augusta County shall be cited by Grottoes Police officers as violations of County Code whenever possible, Violations in Grottoes shall be cited by Augusta County Deputies as violation of town ordinance whenever possible.
6. The services performed and expenditures made under this Agreement shall be deemed to be for public and governmental purposes and all immunities from liability enjoyed by the local government of the County of Augusta within its boundaries shall extend to the services they perform under this Agreement outside their respective jurisdiction.
7. The services performed and expenditures made under this Agreement shall be deemed to be for public and governmental purposes and all immunities from liability enjoyed by the

local government of the Town of Grottoes within its boundaries shall extend to the services they perform under this Agreement outside their respective jurisdiction.

8. All pensions, relief, disability, worker's compensation, life and health insurance, and other benefits enjoyed by said employees shall extend to the services they perform under this Agreement outside their respective jurisdictions.
9. Each party agrees that, in activities involving police jurisdictional authority pursuant to §15.2-1726, Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, each party shall (1) waive any and all claims against the other party which may arise out of their activities outside their respective jurisdictions; and (2) indemnify and save harmless the other party from all claims by third parties for property damage or personal injury which may arise out of the activities of the other party outside its jurisdiction.
10. The parties shall not be liable to each other for reimbursement for injuries to personnel or damage to equipment or be liable to each other for any other costs associated with, or arising out of, the rendering of assistance pursuant to this Agreement.
11. Any party may withdraw from this Agreement by giving (30) days written notice to the other party.
12. Nothing in this Agreement shall limit or bind either party in the event that assistance is requested by either party pursuant to mutual aid beyond the limitations set forth in this Agreement. Also, under this Agreement neither party is obligated and/or required to respond or assist when request for assistance is made by either party. The decision to respond and/or assist will be left to the on-duty supervisor of the assisting agency.
13. This Agreement supersedes any previous Agreements made by and between the parties pertaining to mutual aid.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Agreement to be executed in two (2) originals by their respective Mayor and County Administrator pursuant to duly approved motions or resolutions authorizing the execution.

Attachment "C"

LAND USE PERMIT
RESOLUTION
March 14, 2022

WHEREAS, it becomes necessary from time to time for the *Town of Grottoes* to obtain land use permits from the Virginia Department of Transportation to install, construct, maintain and operate certain public works and public utilities projects along, across over and upon highway systems of the Commonwealth of Virginia; and,

WHEREAS, expense, damage or injury may be sustained by the Commonwealth of Virginia growing out of granting to the *Town of Grottoes* by the Virginia Department of Transportation of said permits for the work aforesaid;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the *Town Council of the Town of Grottoes* this 14th day of March, 2022:

Section 1: That in accordance with the provisions of Section 24VAC30-151-720 of the Land Use Permit Regulations of the Virginia Department of Transportation, the *Town of Grottoes* does hereby grant assurances to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) that it shall in all respects comply with all of the conditions of the permit or permits that have been, or will be, granted to the *Town of Grottoes* and guarantees the successful completion of the work, or, if appropriate, restoration of the right of way to its original condition.

Section 2: That the County Administrator, City or Town Mayor, or their designee, be, and hereby is authorized to execute on behalf of the *Town of Grottoes* all land use permits and related documents of the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Section 3: That this resolution shall be a continuing resolution and shall not be revoked unless and until sixty (60) days written notice of any proposed revocation be submitted to the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Section 4: That the *Town of Grottoes* shall, if requested by the Virginia Department of Transportation, provide a letter that commits to using the surety provided by its contractor or to have the contractor execute a dual obligation rider that adds the Virginia Department of Transportation as an additional obligee to the surety bond provided to the locality, with either of these options guaranteeing the work performed within state maintained right-of-way under the terms of the land use permit for that purpose.

BE IT STILL FURTHER RESOLVED that the County Administrator, City or Town Mayor, or their designee, be, and hereby is authorized and directed to procure insurance required by Section 1 herein.

ADOPTED this _____ day of March 2022

March 22, 2022

A Special Meeting of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the special meeting of March 22, 2022 meeting of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m. The special meeting was called by Mayor Plaster for the discussion of honorary degree or special awards. Mayor Plaster requested roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Joshua Bailey, Jim Justis, David Raynes, Michael Kohl, and Tim Leeth. ABSENT: Council member Mark Sterling.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster said the first item for discussion is special events. Council member Leeth said the Special Events committee met with the Grottoes Fire Department to see if they would be interested in preparing food for our party in the park on June 3rd and they asked about having a small-scale lawn party with food and games. They would like to have it Thursday through Saturday and have their parade on Saturday. Council member Leeth said they talked about having fireworks on Saturday night and wanted to see if the council was on board to co-sponsor the fireworks. He said the cost would not exceed \$4,800.00.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 4 – 0 – 1, voting recorded as follows: BAILEY – ABSTAIN; JUSTIS – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE to split the cost of fireworks with the Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department for June 4th not to exceed \$4,800.00.

CLOSED SESSION

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL- AYE, the Council recessed the meeting from 6:06 p.m. to 6:47 p.m., for a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A(11) for the discussion and consideration of honorary degrees or special awards.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council returned to open session.

Mayor Plaster read the certification of the closed meeting to the best of our knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section 2.2-

3711(A)11 of the Code of Virginia as only such public business matters that were identified in the motion by which a closed meeting called, were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting. J. Justis; so certified, J. Bailey; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified T. Leeth; so certified and M. Kohl; so certified.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

April 2, 2022

A Special Meeting of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Saturday, April 2, 2022 at 8:45 a.m. at Mountain View Park, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the special meeting of April 2, 2022 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 8:46 a.m. The special meeting was called by Mayor Plaster for the consideration of a resolution for honorary degree. Mayor Plaster requested roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Joshua Bailey, Jim Justis, Mark Sterling, David Raynes, Michael Kohl, and Tim Leeth.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Park/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster read a statement as to why this special meeting was called, it said “It is with great honor and humble intent that we gather here today to pay tribute to a great man who served our community and gave the ultimate sacrifice while in the line of duty, by renaming Mountain View Park, John E. Painter Park.

John served our town for over 18 years as an officer and police chief. He was well respected and loved by many. Since his departure from us on February 1, 2022, we have mourned, we have rallied together and celebrated the life of John Painter.

Today, we wish to continue the legacy of John Painter. Today we will vote to adopt a resolution to rename this park at which John spent much time on special days such as this, our annual Chief Charlie’s Kid’s Fish Day, dutifully serving our community.

Mayor Plaster read the resolution and called for a motion to adopt. Council member Leeth made a motion, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 6 – 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to adopt the resolution to rename Mountain View Park to John E. Painter Park.

Resolution Renaming Mountain View Park To John E. Painter Park

WHEREAS, John E. Painter devoted 18 years, 9 months and 22 days serving and protecting the citizens of the Town of Grottoes; and,

WHEREAS, He served as a Police Officer from July 9, 2001 until being promoted to Police Sergeant on October 1, 2004; and,

WHEREAS, Sergeant Painter served the citizens of Grottoes in that capacity until he was promoted to Chief of Police on August 17, 2006; and,

WHEREAS, Chief Painter continued serving as Chief until his retirement on May 1, 2019, and

WHEREAS, After his retirement, John E. Painter continued serving and protecting as a Police Officer for Bridgewater College and on February 1, 2022 made the ultimate sacrifice; and,

WHEREAS, the Council unanimously recommended, in memory of John E. Painter, the approval of the renaming of Mountain View Park to **John E. Painter Park**.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Grottoes Town Council approves changing the name of Mountain View Park to **John E. Painter Park** in appreciation of his dedication and commitment to the citizens of the Town of Grottoes and for his service to our community.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 8:51 a.m.

April 11, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, April 11, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of April 11, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:01 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Joshua Bailey, Jim Justis, Tim Leeth, Mark Sterling David Raynes, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster said the first item on the agenda is the FY2023 draft budget review. Manager McAlister reviewed the proposed FY23 annual budget with the council. She said the overall budget increased twenty percent and that it includes the second payment of the American Rescue Plan Act. Manager McAlister said there is no proposed increase in real property tax but did mention that the reassessment that Rockingham County completed will increase the real estate tax income. She said the other local taxes and fees are starting to rebound since the Covid 19 pandemic and there are no increases proposed in those taxes. Manager McAlister said the state has not completed their budget, so the budget reflects an estimate based off the current year. Manager McAlister said the water and sewer rate will increase three percent and connection fees will increase \$500.00 per service. She said the trash collection will increase seven and half percent which equals to \$1.50 a month. Manager McAlister said the park has proposed an increase of \$2.00 for admission types. She said this keeps us with one of the lowest admission prices, but it will help offset the increases in minimum wage that we must pay to our staff at the Caverns. Manager McAlister said that covers the revenue side of the budget. Manager McAlister said you will notice that overall supplies, materials, and equipment costs have increased due to the economic environment. She said she is asking for two new positions for next year. The first is for an Administration and Finance Assistant and the other position is a Parks Coordinator. Manager McAlister stated as the town continues to grow additional staff will be needed to keep up. She said she is also asking for a 5.9% wage increase for all full-time employees. She said we have a good group of employees, and we need to try to stay competitive to keep them. Manager McAlister said the insurance increased this year by \$61 per month per employee, which is a lot, but there was no increase last year. Manager McAlister said that she is proposing to purchase a dump truck and a new police car with part of American Rescue Plan Act funding. She said these are vehicle replacements for the maintenance and police departments. She said public works is requesting attachments for the skid steer so they won't have to rent them anymore and a storage building to separate salt/chemicals from the equipment and autos, and to keep some of the

materials currently sitting around, out of sight. She said there is \$147,000.00 budgeted for paving and sidewalk maintenance. Manager McAlister stated that the police department is working towards being fully staffed. She said there is about \$30,000.00 to cover the body cameras and tasers and its software. Also, Lexipol software for policies and up-to-date legislation. Manager McAlister said the water and sewer department has seen increases in many costs for chemicals, supplies and materials. She said that we are looking to use some of the ARPA monies to upgrade services lines in our water supply. Manager McAlister said parks and tourism is working with the parks committee on capital projects that have been previously approved. She said adding a new position and increases in minimum wage are other expenses that the parks department will incur.

Mayor Plaster thanked Manager McAlister for going over the budget and said the next item on the agenda is B-2 property usage. Clerk Morris said this is included in her staff report and that we are not looking for a decision, but the developer would like to know what the town thinks before going through the expense of drawing up plans and paying all the fees. She said the developer is looking at the building at 700 Dogwood Avenue. He would like to tear it down completely. He then wants to construct a business front with two townhouses attached to the back. Clerk Morris said in order to do this all business have to be approved by Council in the B-2 zoning, and all dwellings have to be done as a Conditional Use Permit, which requires a public hearing. Council member Leeth said he wasn't too sure because he thought we were trying to get away from mixed use zonings. Clerk Morris stated when the change was made to rezone Dogwood Avenue to B-2 it was changed to allow both business and residential. Council member Kohl said the planning commission looked at this too and felt that way, but also feels that the property is surrounded in residential. Any business there must be approved by the town. He said he doesn't think it would be cost effective for just a small business in today's market.

Mayor Plaster adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

April 11, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, April 11, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of April 11, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:03 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked Clerk Morris for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, David Raynes, Tim Leeth, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Nathan Miller, Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the minutes from the special meeting on March 8, 2022. the work session and regular meetings on March 14, 2022, and the special meeting on March 22, 2022.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Scott Sacra addressed the Council and started out by thanking Mayor Plaster for voting down the survey for chickens. He said that he knows that was a hard decision for her and appreciated her listening to the citizens that have expressed concern over chickens. Mr. Sacra said he knows that the attorney is checking into changing the charter so the citizens can vote on chickens. He mentioned that we amended the charter to change the mayor term, so he feels we should be able to amend the charter to add referendums. He said he gave Council member Leeth the petition he had at the last meeting and Council member Leeth said he has given each council member a copy.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the financial reports for the month of March.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – no report

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth announced that the Grand Caverns 5K Race will be held on Friday, April 29th at 6:30 p.m. He said he wanted to say how good it was to be able to have the Chief Charlie's Kid's Fish Day again this year. He said it was a great event and that we rededicated the pond as Lawhorne's Pond in honor of former Chief Charlie Lawhorne who founded Kids Fish Day back in 1995. Council member Leeth said the council held a special meeting before the Kid's Fish Day event and passed a resolution to rename Mountain View Park to John E. Painter Park in honor of former Police Chief John Painter.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster thanked the staff for working hard to prepare for the Kid's Fish Day event, the pond rededication, and the renaming of the park.

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. Manager McAlister said she wanted to point out a couple things in her staff report. She said the first item is the telephone system. She said we have been paying about 5,000.00 out of each budget for the landline phone system and with changing to a VOIP system (Voice over Internet Protocol) this will cost about \$1,000.00 out of each budget saving about 80% over what we have been paying. Manager McAlister said the next item in her staff report was to just make sure Council is aware that DMV Connects will be at Town Hall on May 2nd from 9:00 am until 4:00 p.m. by appointment only. She said this is a good service they provide so citizens have an opportunity to come here verses having to go to the DMV for services.

ATTORNEY. No report

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. Parks Director Shank said in his staff report he said we were waiting for the commemorative plaque to be delivered so the benches can be placed in the

dog park. He said we received them today and he will be getting with maintenance to get everything installed.

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Plaster said last couple year council has donated their salaries to purchase banners for in town seniors. She said if we are wanting to do this again this year than we need a motion so she can get the information out and get the banners ordered. Council members Bailey said he would donate his salary, others agreed. Mayor Plaster asked for a motion to proceed with getting the orders for the senior banners/ signs. Council member Leeth replied so moved, seconded by Council member Sterling, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

OLD BUSINESS –

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

May 9, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, May 9, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of May 9, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:01 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Mayor Jo Plaster, Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Tim Leeth, Mark Sterling, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster said the first item on the agenda is the draft budget discussion. Manager McAlister said she wanted to see if anyone had any questions since the budget presentation at the last meeting and stated that tonight we have the public hearing for the budget. Manager McAlister explained the public hearing for May 16th, which is called a notice of tax increase, is to hear citizens' comments regarding the increased revenue due to new real estate assessments from Rockingham County, and that our tax rate is not changing. Council member Sterling asked if we are going to cover any more on the family plans for insurance. He said he knows this is one reason we have a hard time getting people to apply. Manager McAlister said that is a possibility and would be a decision of council. We would need to check with all full-time employees to see if they would want to change to a family plan. If we increased the coverage to fifty percent, it would cost an additional of \$8,600.00 per year per employee that chose the family plan. She said then we would know what the additional cost would be for the town. Manager McAlister said currently the town covers the employee and twenty percent of family plans and that the insurance premium for the year went up \$61.00 per month per employee. Council member Bailey said he would like the town to look about paying retiree insurance. He said there would have to be some guidelines set for the number of years working for the town and so forth. Council member Bailey said he would like to be able to offer more for the employees and feels we need to start looking at this now, for next year's budget.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the sign for John E. Painter Park. She said she has a couple examples and wanted to see what council thought. She said the size of the sign would be about a 4'x 8' and would have two columns. Manager McAlister said she reached out to see what an estimated cost would be for materials and labor and was given the range of \$6,000 - \$,7000.00. She stated that Rockingham County is offering a grant for tourism and thought updating the park sign and town entrance signs would be a good use of the grant. Council

decided to move forward with getting quotes for the sign installation and to start with the park sign first.

Mayor Plaster handed out committee descriptions to all council members to look over. She asked each committee to concentrate on two elements of change that council needs to be focusing on for improvements or changes. Mayor Plaster said we have issues with signage, temporary building structures, zoning, and other items that need attention. She said we will discuss these at our next working session along with our strategic plan. Mayor Plaster said one item she feels needs some attention is violations and if they are civil or criminal and who enforces them and how far does the enforcement go. Chief Sullivan said he has contacted several localities and they are having the same issues as we are. Council member Kohl asked if he check with Waynesboro. Chief Sullivan said he has not because some of the cities have code enforcement officers and most of the towns do not. Council member Sterling asked if the town could do a heavy trash clean-up day like some of the other towns to help our citizens out that have no way of having large items removed. Chief Sullivan said it may help if we have the manpower and the resources to do it. Council member Bailey said that some people choose to live that way and unless you have a way to enforce it not much can be done

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is referendum discussion. Attorney Miller said we have been discussing ordinances and whether it can be placed on the ballot for a referendum. He said there is a Virginia Code specifically on referendums and it says, "No referendum shall be placed on the ballots unless specially authorized". He said that means it has to be specially directed for a purpose by statute or by charter. He said the only statute in Virginia is to fill a vacancy or if there is a bond or financial issue. He said the only ordinance that he has found for referendums is requiring dogs to be kept on leashes. He said there is only two ways to do it. Attorney Miller said one is to amend our Charter, or two, to get a legislator to put it in the Virginia Code. He said another issue becomes the timeliness of going that route and the costs to get everything done. Attorney Miller said his recommendation is if the council wants the citizens input, you could do a non-binding survey to review before making any decision. He said he feels your response would be just as good or maybe better if they can send it back with their utility payment verses having to go to the polls to vote.

Mayor Plaster said the last item is the Parks Committee Discussion. Council member Sterling said he wanted to ask council how they felt about setting an allowance to have bands come down to the John Painter Park and play music on the stage for the citizens to enjoy. He said he was thinking maybe once or twice a month. Mayor Plaster that would come from the special events committee budget. Council member Leeth said he liked the idea and that they would talk.

Mayor said we are out of time adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

May 9, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, May 9, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular meeting of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:02 p.m. on May 9, 2022. Mayor Plaster asked for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Mayor Jo Plaster, Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, and Michael Kohl; Council member absent: David Raynes.

Other Town Officials present: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Public Works Director AJ Hummel, Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, the Council approved the minutes of the special meeting of April 2, 2022 and the regular meetings on April 11, 2022.

RECESS

Mayor Plaster recessed the regular meeting at 7:04 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Mayor Plaster called to order the public hearing for the FY 22-23 Annual Budget and read the rules for the public hearing.

Mayor Plaster said we had one person to sign up to speak against the budget.

Scott Sacra addressed the council asking about the sewer rate for summer use since a lot of the water will not be going back into the sewer system. He said that was one of the first concerns Mr. Chittum brought before the council. Mr. Sacra also expressed concern in the proposed 3% increase in the water and sewer rates. He questioned if the rate would need to increase if the town could consider not giving the full-time employees 5.9% raise and maybe a 2% raise. He said he feels raises should be merit based.

Mayor Plaster asked if Council had any comments, no comments were made.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the public hearing at 7:06 p.m.

Mayor Plaster reconvened the regular meeting at 7:07 p.m.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Leeth announced the First Reading of the FY22-23 Annual Budget

Council member Leeth made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, the Council accepted the financial report for April 2022.

WATER AND SEWER – Council member Bailey said the water sewer will be meeting in the next week or so and will have a report next month.

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – no report

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – Council member Justis said the committee met and decided to start with painting stop bars and install thermoplastic rumble strips at the intersections of Holly Avenue and 6th Street and Forest Avenue and 6th Street. Council member Justis made a motion, seconded by Council member Bailey, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to paint the stop strips and thermoplastic rumble strips at the intersections at a cost not to exceed \$2,000.00 per intersection.

Council member Justis made a motion, seconded by Council member Bailey, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to purchase a radar sign not exceeding \$3,600.00.

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth announced the upcoming events starting with the Memorial Day Ceremony at the Town Hall at 11:00 am on May 30th. He said June 3rd is the party in the park, which will run with the Fire Departments Lawn Party from June 2nd -4th, both events will be in John E. Painter Park. Council member Leeth said looking ahead we will be hosting a First Responders Day on July 30th and with more details to come.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – no report

STAFF REPORT

TOWN MANAGER. Manager McAlister said she wanted to point out a couple items from her staff report. She said the first item is Rockingham County is offering a Tourism Grant Program which each town may submit for up to \$50,000.00 to promote tourism in their town and that we

will send our submission in as soon as the program is opened. Manager McAlister said next we are moving forward with the sale of the railroad alley and as soon as the documents are completed, we will be setting the date for the public hearing. She said the last item she wanted to point out was the Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) system. She said we have received the phones and are working with our IT Specialist to get the system changed over. Council member Sterling asked about the vehicle license fee and if she was recommending not getting rid of this charge. Manager McAlister replied he is not recommending it at this time and feels we need to see what the personal property values are before making this decision.

ATTORNEY.

TREASURER. A written report was provided.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. Council member Sterling asked what we could do about the sewer rates for summer. Public Works Director Hummel said the sewer charge is based off the water consumption. He stated that we only have one meter and that is going into the house and that we do not meter what is leaving the house to our sewer system. Director Hummel said right off the only way he could see a discount given would be off an average of usage.

PARKS AND TOURISM. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

NEW BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

CLOSED SESSION - On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Sterling, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council recessed the meeting from 7:35 p.m. to 8:23 p.m., for a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A(1), Code of Virginia, subparagraph (1) regarding the discussion and consideration of prospective candidates for vacancies on Boards and Commissions.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council returned to open session.

Mayor Plaster read the certification of the closed session – “to the best of your knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711(A)1 of the Code of Virginia, as only such public business matters that were identified in the motion by which a closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting”. Clerk Morris took a roll call. J. Justis; so certified, J. Bailey; so certified, M. Sterling; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified; T. Leeth; so certified, M. Kohl, so certified.

On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to appoint René Ehlenfeldt and Darrell Baker to the Planning Commission for the remainder of the four-year terms.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

May 16, 2022

A Public Hearing of the Grottoes Town Council was held on Monday, May 16, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the public hearing of May 16, 2022 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:01 p.m. Mayor Plaster requested roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth and Michael Kohl. ABSENT: Council member David Raynes.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster stated that the public hearing is for the proposed real property tax increase. Mayor Plaster said we have someone signed up to speak and asked him to come forward.

Scott Sacra addressed the council stating at last week's public hearing he presented an argument against the proposed budget that included a three percent increase in water and sewer, seven percent increase in trash and a COLA increase of five-point nine percent for all full-time employees. He stated that all these burdens are passed onto the residence of the town. He said now you want to keep the real estate tax rate at twelve cents per hundred after the county has increased the property assessments by 40 - 50 percent. He said the county has lowered their rate to help offset some of the increase and said he is asking the council to consider following Rockingham County and lowering the town's tax rate.

Council member Bailey said he would like to discuss lowering our current tax rate. He said if we drop it one cent per hundred that would decrease the amount taken in by \$30,000.00 and if we drop it two cents on the hundred that would drop it \$57,000.00 which he feels is a minuscule amount to reduce our budget to show our citizens we are taking care of them. He said he would like for us to reduce our tax rate to at least ten cents per hundred.

Mayor Plaster said she has received some phone calls from citizens. She said the tax rate has been the same since 1998 and that she is not opposed to reducing the amount to help our citizens, but she said we have to keep in mind the budget and needs in town and that's why the town is trying to bring businesses. Doing so would help take some of the financial burden off our homeowners.

Council member Justis stated that he has made this point several times throughout his time on council and said that we cannot finance this town on real estate taxes. Something must be done about bringing economic growth to this town. He stated that the reason our tax rate was the highest of any locality in the county is because we have the lowest economic income for any incorporated entity. Council member Justis stated that he supports reducing the tax rate now but said we will

need to look at possibly adjusting them in the future.

On a motion by Council member Bailey, seconded by council member Justis and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to change the real estate tax rate from twelve cents to ten cents per hundred dollars of assessed value.

Council member Bailey said that he feels staff can find where to cut the \$57,000.00 from the budget and bring it to council at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m.

May 27, 2022

A Special Meeting of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Tuesday, May 27, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the special meeting of May 27, 2022 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 5:00 p.m. The special meeting was called by Mayor Plaster for consultation with legal counsel. Mayor Plaster requested roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, and Tim Leeth.

ABSENT: Council member David Raynes and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister (via telephone) and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

CLOSED SESSION

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 4 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; the Council recessed the meeting from 5:02 p.m. to 5:52 p.m., for a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A) subparagraph 7 for consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual and probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 4 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; the Council returned to open session.

Mayor Plaster read the certification of the closed session, to the best of your knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711(A)7 of the Code of Virginia, as only such public business matters that were identified in the motion by which a closed meeting called, were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting J. Justis; so certified, J. Bailey; so certified, M. Sterling; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, and T. Leeth; so certified.

Council member Bailey said with the pool still leaking he moved to not open the pool until we can get a structural engineer to sign off on the pool being structurally sound enough to open. He said that information should be brought back to council and council will make an informed decision on it. Seconded by Council member Sterling and carried by a vote of 4 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

June 13, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, June 13, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of June 13, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Mayor Jo Plaster, Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, Mark Sterling, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, and Officer Shane Turner.

Mayor Plaster said the first item on the agenda is the budget discussion. Manager McAlister said at the public hearing on May 16th the council lowered the real property tax from 12 cents to 10 cents per every \$100 of assessed value. She said that was a decrease of \$57,462.41 in real estate tax revenue. Manager McAlister said, as directed from the May 16th meeting, staff has made the following adjustments to the budget: eliminated the \$38,000 administrative M&R building and grounds. She stated these funds were for repairs to Town Hall and that we could use ARPA funds to cover the repairs. Decrease the water expense capital reserve by \$9,731.21 and decrease the sewer expense capital reserve by \$9,731.21. Manager McAlister asked if anyone had any questions concerning the changes. No one did.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the Grand Caverns Pool. Park Director Shank said after receiving the Geophysical Study from Draper Aden Associates to assess the area under the pool because of the leak, Council voted at the May 27th Special Meeting, not to open the pool until a structural engineer report was done and declared the pool safe. Parks Director Shank said he contact Draper Aden Associates to complete the structural engineering evaluation of the pool and everyone has received a copy of that report. Council member Sterling said he did not want to put more money into the pool. Council member Kohl felt that we have already spent the money for operations, hired staff, and said that after receiving both reports he feels safe opening the pool for the season. Council member Bailey said he feels we have done our due diligence but still doesn't feel comfortable with opening the pool for the season. Council member Bailey said according to his calculations the pool is losing 24,000 gallons a day, 720,000 gallons a month, 4.3 million gallons in 6 months, and 96 thousand cubic feet of water in one month. He stated that the water has to be going somewhere. Council member Justis said he would rather spend \$150,000.00 to repair this pool then to spend \$1,000,000.00 for a new pool. Council members Leeth and Raynes felt that staff needs to continue to inspect the pool for any structural strains but felt safe with opening the pool for the season.

Mayor Plaster said the next item is high speed internet to cave entrance building. Parks Director Shank said since the town is transitioning to VOIP phones he is proposing a two-phase project to run high speed internet up to the cave entrance building. He said once the project is done this would include phones in the cave for emergencies. It would allow for surveillance system (inside and outside) of the cave. Director Shank said he is proposing a two-phase project with the first phase of \$13,500.00 coming from capital outlay from the FY22 budget. He stated that the second phase could be completed by the close of FY24 and stated that we could use ARPA funds. Council member Kohl said he took a tour and cannot believe the old system still works and feels we need to upgrade. Director Shank said he asked to explain this project in the work session but has it as an action item under his staff report. He recommends that council support the project.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is Water and Sewer Committee update. Council member Bailey said the committee reviewed the water study done by Mangrum and Associates. He said their report provided repairs and upgrades to the water system totaling \$4.5 million. Council member Bailey said that public works submitted their own plan based off council allocating \$1,000,000.00 to the water fund to fix the most troubled areas. He said the committee is recommending going with the plan submitted by the public works department which includes \$770,000.00 in repairs to the most troubled areas and \$230,000.00 for radio read meters.

Mayor Plaster said the last item is the public hearing. Manager McAlister said the public hearing for the sale of the 40-foot section of alley between 11th and 12th Street is on the agenda tonight and asked if anyone had any questions or comments.

Council member Sterling asked where we are with the junk vehicle ordinance. He said he talked with the chief and our ordinance already has a fee in place to tow people's vehicles if they don't come into compliance and he said he would like to start doing this. Attorney Miller said we already have an ordinance, so we do not need any action from the council, but we need to make sure we follow the ordinance. Attorney Miller said he would review the ordinance.

Mayor Plaster said we are out of time and adjourned the meeting at 6:58 p.m.

June 13, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, June 13, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular meeting of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. on June 13, 2022. Mayor Plaster asked for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Mayor Jo Plaster, Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, David Raynes, Tim Leeth, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Public Works Director AJ Hummel, Town Treasurer Rhonda Danner, and Officer Shane Turner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, the Council approved the minutes of the regular meetings on May 9, 2022, the public hearing on May 16, 2022 and the special called meeting on May 27, 2022.

RECESS

Mayor Plaster recessed the regular meeting at 7:02 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Mayor Plaster called to order the public hearing for the request to purchase a 40-foot section of alley located in block 37 between 11th & 12th Street.

Mayor Plaster asked if anyone wanted to speak either for or against. No one spoke.

Mayor Plaster asked if Council had any comments, no comments were made.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the public hearing at 7:04 p.m.

Mayor Plaster reconvened the regular meeting at 7:04 p.m.

On a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to amend the agenda moving the action

item- Grand Caverns pool from the Ordinance Health and Property Committee to the Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities Committee.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS

Eddie Chittum addressed the council and apologized for not being at the last couple meetings but stated that he had been coaching a t-ball team. He said the last meeting he attended was March and at that meeting Mr. Kohl mentioned that his platform running for council was to help get chickens. He said he is not attacking Mr. Kohl but said he feels that is what is wrong with politics, that people are running with an agenda and not for the better good of the community. Mr. Chittum asked the council to focus more on the kids and things for them to do, especially in the fall and winter months.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, the Council accepted the financial report for May 2022.

Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, for the second reading and to approve the FY 2022-2023 budget, appropriate amounts to each fund as defined below, and set fee schedule as set forth below.

REVENUES

	FY 21-22 Amended	FY 22-23 Proposed
General Fund		
Property Taxes	\$ 286,000	\$ 344,538
Other Local Taxes	\$ 514,200	\$ 589,000
Other Local Revenue	\$ 71,040	\$ 73,940
State Revenue	\$ 765,415	\$ 791,197
Federal Revenue	\$ 410,209	\$ 410,209
Use of Reserve	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
Total General Fund	\$ 2,046,864	\$ 2,208,884
Water Fund	\$ 836,200	\$ 1,103,069
Sewer Fund	\$ 591,900	\$ 865,769
Parks Fund	\$ 921,575	\$ 1,039,528
Refuse Fund	\$ 186,354	\$ 212,860
Total Revenues	\$ 4,582,893	\$ 5,430,109

EXPENDITURES

FY 20-21 FY 21-22

	Amended	Proposed
General Fund		
Administration	\$ 790,342	\$ 836,806
Public Works	\$ 33,110	\$ 36,534
Street Lights	\$ 8,500	\$ 8,500
Police	\$ 617,712	\$ 708,421
Street Maintenance	<u>\$ 597,200</u>	<u>\$ 618,623</u>
Total General Fund	\$ 2,046,864	\$ 2,208,883
Water Fund	\$ 836,200	\$ 1,103,069
Sewer Fund	\$ 591,900	\$ 865,769
Parks Fund	\$ 470,750	\$ 721,575
Refuse Fund	\$ 186,354	\$ 1,039,528
Total Expenditures	\$ 4,582,893	\$ 5,430,109

The budget ordinance includes the setting of tax rates for calendar year 2022 as follows:

Classification of Tax	Adopted 2021	Proposed 2022
Real Estate	\$.12	\$.10
Manufactured Home	\$.12	\$.10
Personal Property	\$.38	\$.38
Machinery & Tools	\$.38	\$.38
Farm Machinery	\$.38	\$.38

Property taxes are levied for each \$100 of assessed value as of January 1. Property is assessed at fair market value for all classes except personal property vehicles, which are assessed at loan value. Tax rates are effective January 1, 2022.

Further the ordinance includes acceptance of the Town of Grottoes Tax & Fee Schedule for FY 2023 set forth below. Fees that are revised as of July 1, 2022.

TOWN OF GROTTUES TAX & FEE SCHEDULE

FY 2023

TAXES:	FY23	
Real Estate Tax	\$0.10	Per \$100.00 assessed value
Personal Property Tax	\$0.38	Per \$100.00 assessed value
Machinery and Tools Tax	\$0.38	Per \$100.00 assessed value
Farm Machinery Tax	\$0.38	Per \$100.00 assessed value
Mobile Home Tax	\$0.10	Per \$100.00 assessed value
Communication Tax		Set by State Code 58.1-622
Utility Tax		Set by State Code 58.1-2900
Bank Stock Tax	80%	On Net Capital of the State Rate of the Franchise Tax
Motor Vehicle Licensing Fee (Automobiles)	\$20.00	

Motor Vehicle Licensing Fee (Motorcycles)	\$7.50	
Motor Vehicle Licensing Fee (Trailers Under 1,500 lbs.)	\$6.50	
Motor Vehicle Licensing Fee (Trailers Over 1,500 lbs.)	\$15.00	
Golf Cart / UTV Registration	\$25.00	
Meals Tax	5%	based on gross receipts for prepared meals
Cigarette Tax	\$0.20	Per Pack
Transient Occupancy Tax	2%	On the amount paid for short term rental
Business License/ Occupation Tax:		
Solicitors	\$25.00	
Bill Posters	\$30.00	
Carnivals/Circuses/ Animal Shows	\$100.00	Per Day
Coin-Operated Machines or Devices	\$10.00	Per Machine (Not to Exceed \$200 Annually)
	\$0.12	Per \$100.00 of Gross Receipts
Contractors	\$0.12	Per \$100 of Gross Receipts (Minimum \$25) (Based on \$25,000 or Greater Project)
Financial, Real Estate, & Other Professional Services	\$0.30	Per \$100.00 of Gross Receipts
Fortune Tellers	\$100.00	Per Week
Peddlers	\$500.00	
Repair, Personal, & Business Services	\$0.20	Per \$100 of Gross Receipts (Minimum \$25)
Retail Merchants	\$0.12	Per \$100 of Gross Receipts (Minimum \$50)
Direct Sellers (for sales exceeding \$4,000)	\$0.20	Per \$100 of Retail Sales, OR
	\$0.05	Per \$100 of Wholesale Sales; whichever is applicable
Telephone and Telegraph Companies	0.50%	of Gross Receipts
Water, Heat, Light & Power Companies	0.50%	of Gross Receipts
Wholesale Merchants	\$0.05	Per \$100 of Purchases (Minimum \$25)
Hobby Horses/ Merry-Go-Rounds	\$30.00	
Shooting Galleries	\$30.00	
Photographer (w/no place of business)	\$10.00	
Retail Sellers of Alcoholic Beverages	\$10.00	In addition to Retail Merchant Taxation
Junk Dealers	\$50.00 +\$25.00	For license for transacting business; For doing business at premise other than listed on the license
Itinerant (Precious Metals/Gems) Dealer	\$ 50.00	Per Day
Taxicab Driver's License	\$0.50 +\$5.00 +\$5.00 +\$1.50	Each Application Form; Each Fingerprinting by the Police Department; For Making of Photographs by the Police Dept; For Each License Issued;

	+\$1.00	For Each License Renewal
ADMINISTRATIVE FEE SCHEDULE:		
Copies	\$0.25	Per Page
Facsimile	\$1.25	Per Page
Return Check Fee	\$30.00	
Hard Copy of Large Town Map	\$10.00	
Hard Copy of Zoning Ordinance	\$20.00	
Parking Tickets:		
Handicapped Zone	\$100.00	
Fire Lane	\$50.00	
No Valid Inspection	\$25.00	
Fire Hydrant	\$50.00	
No Valid Plates/License	\$25.00	
No Parking Zone/Painted Curb	\$20.00	
Blocking Establishment/Driveway	\$20.00	
DMV Processing Administrative Fee	\$30.00	
ZONING/PLANNING FEE SCHEDULE:		
Zoning Permit	\$2.50	Per \$1,000 of Value (Minimum \$30.00)
Conditional/Special Use Application	\$200.00	(Plus Cost of Zoning Permit)
Variance Application	\$250.00	(Before BZA)
Rezoning	\$250.00	plus \$10 per lot
Site Plan Processing/Review Fee	\$200.00	
Subdivision Plan Review	\$250.00	
Subdivision Plat Submission and Review Fee	\$100.00	Plus \$10 per lot
Approved Plan/Plat Amendment or Revision	\$100.00	
Comprehensive Plan Amendment	\$250.00	
FACILITY FEE SCHEDULE:		
Community Room	\$150.00	Per Day (Includes \$50.00 Refundable Deposit)
Mountain View Park:		
Small Shelter	\$35.00	Per Day
Large Shelter	\$45.00	Per Day
Shifflett Field Light Usage	\$10.00	Per Hour (Excludes RCBL and GCLL Teams)
Grand Caverns Park:		
Shelter #1	\$70.00	Per Day
Shelter #2	\$85.00	Per Day
Shelter #3	\$70.00	Per Day
Shelter #4	\$70.00	Per Day
Shelter #5	\$55.00	Per Day
Miniature Golf	\$3.00	1st Game (\$2.00 each game after)

Grand Caverns:		
Regular Adult Admission	\$ 3.00	
Regular Child Admission	\$13.50	Ages 3-12 (Ages 2 & Under Not Allowed)
Grottoes Resident Rate	\$13.50	Proof of Residency Required
Grottoes Resident Child Rate	\$10.50	
Senior Citizen Rate	\$21.50	age 60+
AAA Adult Rate	\$20.50	Card Required
AAA Child Rate	\$11.50	
Military/Public Servant Adult Rate	\$20.50	Proper ID Required (Fire, Police, & Rescue)
Military/Public Servant Child Rate	\$11.50	
AARP Member Rate	\$20.50	Card Required
Fountain Cave Tour	\$55.00	
Fountain Cave Tour - student	\$45.00	
Adult Private Tours:		
25 Person Maximum	\$425.00	\$21 per additional person up to 28 people
35 Person Maximum	\$590.00	
35 Person Max; student or non-profit	\$500.00	
Fountain Cave 15 Person Maximum	\$650.00	
Historic Off Trail 12 Person Maximum	\$650.00	
Youth Private Tours:		
25 Person Maximum	\$280.00	\$21 per additional person
35 Person Maximum	\$400.00	
Grand Caverns Rental:		
First 2 hours	\$500.00	(Minimum Charge)
Additional per hour charge:	\$100.00	
Weddings in the Cave:		
Rental Fee	\$1,000.00	50 Person Maximum
Tip Fee	\$50.00	Per Tour Guide (1 Guide per 25 Persons)
Pool Admissions:		
Daily Admissions	\$5.00	Per Day (Ages 2 and Under Free)
Resident Daily Admission	\$4.00	Proof of Residency Required
Group Child Rate (ex. Daycares)	\$2.00	Per Child/ Per Day (Group of 12 or More)
Resident Family Pass	\$150.00	Proof of Residency Required (Family of 4)
Non-Resident Family Pass	\$225.00	(Family of 4)
Additional Family Member for Pass	\$30.00	
Individual Resident Pass	\$75.00	Proof of Residency Required (Ages 12 & Over)
Individual Non-Resident Pass	\$100.00	
10 Visit Pass	\$35.00	
Pool Party Rental Fee	\$150.00	50 Person Maximum Capacity

Public Works Labor Charges:		
Mowing Fees	\$100.00	Per Hour (Minimum \$100.00)
Removal of Junk	\$60.00	Per Hour (Minimum \$50.00)
Trash Collection:		
Regular Rate	\$29.50	Bi-Monthly
Additional Trash Can	\$1.50	Per month charge
Water & Sewer Fund:		
Water Account Deposit	\$75.00	
Sewer Account Deposit	\$75.00	
Service Reconnection Fee (Regular Hours)	\$35.00	
Service Reconnection Fee (After Hours)	\$70.00	
WATER RATES:		
Base Rate (Based on 2,000 Gallons of Usage)	\$21.36	Bi-Monthly
Rate per 1,000 Gallons of Consumption	\$2.08	Bi-Monthly
Standpipe Fees	\$13.20	Per Load (Plus Base Water Rate)
Senior Citizen Reduction	\$2.25	Bi-Monthly
Meter Testing	\$5.00	
SEWER RATES:		
Base Rate (Based on 2,000 Gallons of Usage)	\$49.21	Bi-Monthly
Rate per 1,000 Gallons of Consumption	\$3.88	Bi-Monthly
Senior Citizen Reduction	\$2.25	Bi-Monthly
Septic Tank Pumping	\$300.00	Per Pumping (If Not on Municipal System)
WATER CONNECTION FEE:		
Residential	\$4,500	
Commercial	\$4,500	
SEWER CONNECTION FEE:		
Residential	\$4,500	
Commercial	\$4,500	
ONLINE PAYMENT FEE:		
Transaction fee	2.5% + 0.30	Per transaction (E-checks \$1.50 flat)
Online Convenience fee	\$1.00	Additional to transaction fee per Online Transaction

WATER AND SEWER – Council member Bailey stated that the water and sewer committee met and discussed the water study done by Mangrum Consulting. He said they also discussed the comprehensive study that the public works department submitted that included our most troubled areas. Council member Bailey said the committee has decided to proceed with the recommendation from public works department.

On a motion by Council member Bailey, seconded by Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to spend \$770,000.00 on water line replacement and \$230,000.00 on radio read water meters, which have been allocated to the water fund from the American Rescue Plan Act.

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – no report

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – Council member Sterling made a motion for the Town to open the Grand Caverns Pool. Seconded by Council member Justis. Council member Bailey commented and said he feels the town has done its due diligence to make sure the pool is safe but still doesn't feel comfortable voting in favor of opening the pool. Council member Leeth amended the motion to include having staff develop and carry out a plan for visual inspection of the pool and surrounding concrete. Council member Justis seconded the amendment. The motion carried by a vote of 4 to 2, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – NAY; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth announced the Memorial Day ceremony, and the Grottoes Fire Department Lawn Party and Town of Grottoes Party in the Park were successful events. He also announced the following upcoming events: Friday Night Bluegrass begins July 1st; Push, Pedal, Pull Parade is on July 4th; First Responders Day is on July 30th and not to forget Cardinal Baseball games.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster said they will be checking about insurance options and will be meeting with the finance committee.

STAFF REPORT

TOWN MANAGER. Manager McAlister noted the zoning violations items on her staff report and informed Council that staff will be working with the Ordinance Committee to formalize the process based on existing Town Code language.

ATTORNEY. Attorney Miller said he has nothing to report but said he would be happy to answer any questions.

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PARKS AND TOURISM. Parks Director Shank said he would like to use \$13,500.00 of his remaining FY22 budget for the first phase of installing high speed internet to the cave entrance building.

On a motion by Council member Sterling, seconded by Justis, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to install the first phase for high-speed internet to the cave entrance building not to exceed \$13,500.00.

Park Director Shank said he wanted to point out to council that they still have 10 vacancies for tour guide positions at the park.

NEW BUSINESS – On a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Raynes, and carried by a vote of 5 to 1, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve the contract and authorize the mayor to consummate the agreement. Council member Bailey said he does not feel the town should sale any property and could not support the motion.

OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

July 11, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, July 11, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of July 11, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:01 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, David Raynes, Tim Leeth, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan. Clerk Tara Morris was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the minutes from the meetings from the work session and regular meetings on June 13, 2022.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Scott Sacra addressed the Council regarding a concern he had from the last council meeting. His concern was around the sale of land owned by the Town, and his perception that the Town's Mayor was a party to the sale. He said council voted with no questions asked. He feels they should have had another realtor sale the land. Mr. Sacra said he has nothing against the mayor and knows she is a real estate agent but feels the town should have used another realtor to sale land the town owns. Mayor Plaster responded and said for the record, she "did not prepare the contract, was not in charge of the contract and not in charge of the sale". She stated that as mayor she signed the contract based on the favorable vote of the council to execute their decision. Mr. Sacra thanked her for clarifying and said he feels that should have been said at the public hearing to assure there were no misperceptions.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the financial reports for the month of June.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – no report

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth announced Friday night bluegrass during July in Painter Park. Also happening in Painter Park is the Grottoes Cardinals baseball games. Council member Leeth said on Saturday, July 30th the town will be hosting the First Annual First Responders Ceremony at the Grottoes Fire Department from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster followed up on the First Responders event and said that the invitation will be going out this week and she is working on the itinerary.

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. Manager McAlister said she wanted to discuss the recently lined parking area along Dogwood near the 8th Street intersection. She advised council that after the paving and painting was accomplished there was an extra area of pavement that could be used to accommodate two additional parking spaces. She recommended that council take action to approve the additional spaces. Council discussed the parking area project and the adjacent business. After much discussion Council member Kohl made a motion to add two more parking spaces on the south end of the newly lined parking lot. Council member Sterling seconded. In discussion Council member Bailey said he is not in favor of putting any more money into this project. The motion carried by a vote of 4-2, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – NAY; KOHL – AYE; to have 2 additional parking spaces installed.

ATTORNEY. No report

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. Chief Sullivan mentioned in his staff report that he included pricing for a second radar sign, which is at a reduced rate if two signs are purchased together. He said with the discount of the second sign, he wanted to see if council wanted to go forth with purchasing two signs now verses purchasing one now and one later.

There was a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Sterling. In discussion Council member Kohl asked about the warranty. Chief Sullivan said it has a 2-year warranty and after that time, if something happens to it, they will repair it for a cost. The motion

carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to purchase two radar signs not to exceed \$7,200.00.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. Parks Director Shank informed the council that the Blue Ridge Heritage group will be coming to the August meeting to bring a mock-up of the memorial that was approved to be placed at Grand Caverns before the pandemic hit.

Parks Director Shank’s second item was to ask where council wants to install the bike repair station. He said the original plan was to install it near the old jail at the corner of 3rd Street and Aspen Avenue. Parks Director Shank said with the approval of the bike route going down Dogwood Avenue it was mentioned that town hall may be a better location. He suggested the grass area at the north end of the parking lot near 7th Street.

On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5-0-1, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – ABSTAIN; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to allow the bike repair station to be installed at the town hall adjacent to the parking area and 7th Street per Mr. Shank’s recommendations.

NEW BUSINESS – Council member Sterling brought up the enforcement of the inoperable vehicle ordinance and made a motion to change our code to match the state code 15.2-901. Manager McAlister said the town code penalties currently reflect state code and therefore already states that three civil penalties in a 24-month period, can result in a class 3 misdemeanor. After discussion Council member Sterling withdrew his motion.

Council member Sterling made a motion to have staff and the attorney look over town code and use follow state code regarding violation enforcement. Manager McAlister asked him if he wants that review of the entire code or just the chapters he referenced in his discussion, which were Chapter 53, Inoperable Vehicles and Chapter 117, Nuisances. It was clarified that only chapters 53 and 117 are to be reviewed for compliance with State Code. Council member Bailey seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

Manager McAlister said she wanted clarification on the “extra space” in the parking lot along Dogwood Ave near the 8th Street intersection. Council member Jim Justis amended the previous motion to paint two additional parking spaces, by including, that the dead space of extra pavement be stripped off to indicate no parking. Council member Raynes seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 4-2, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – NAY; KOHL – AYE.

OLD BUSINESS – Council member Bailey made a motion to reconsider the approval of minutes for the work session on June 13, 2022. Council member Justis seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

Council member Bailey made a motion to amend the minutes for the June 13, 2022 work session in the discussion of the Grand Caverns pool. He said none of the leak quantities that he stated during the work session were put in the minutes; only that he didn't agree with opening the pool. He said he would like his comments that we were losing 24,000 gallons a day, 720,000 gallons a month, 4.3 million gallons in 6 months, and 96 thousand cubic feet of water in one month and that the water has to be going somewhere. Council member Bailey said he would like his calculations added to the work session minutes. Council member Justis seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

August 8, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, August 8, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of August 8, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:01 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Mayor Jo Plaster, Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Tim Leeth, David Raynes. ABSENT were Council members Mark Sterling, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster said the first item for discussion is ordinance review for Chapter 53 and Chapter 117. Manager McAlister gave a presentation to council that included a summary of each code chapter (53 – Inoperable Vehicles | 117 – Nuisances), details about the violations and penalties associated with each chapter, and a discussion on enforcement. One of the items Council discussed in detail, was alignment of town code with state code in the area of penalties for violations. It was discussed that Chapter 53 is already in alignment, however Council wants more specific language inserted into Chapter 117 regarding penalties. Therefore on a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Bailey and carried by a vote of 4-0, voting recorded as follows; JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; to have the town’s staff and attorney draft the penalties section of town code chapter 117 according to State Code § 15.2-901.4(D) allowing a third violation within a 24 month period to be a Class 3 misdemeanor.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the stop sign placement at 8th Street and Dogwood Avenue. Chief Sullivan said that he included some pictures he took of the view from the stop sign’s current location. He said with the location of the sign location and the parking in front of the building the view is obstructed and feels the sign needs to be moved closer to Dogwood Avenue for safety at this intersection. Council agreed that this is blocked and asked if we should put the painted stop bar to help draw attention to it. Chief Sullivan agreed to adding the stop bar. Council member Bailey said he wanted to go on record saying that he feels we should try enforcement of the restrictions already in place before we keep changing them. Mayor Plaster asked if we needed a motion to move this stop sign. Attorney Miller said that he didn’t feel a motion was needed just a consensus of Council. Mayor Plaster confirmed a majority consensus from council to move the stop sign.

Mayor Plaster gave an update on the sign for John E. Painter Park. She said we got the grant from Rockingham County that we were going to use toward updating the sign at the parks and town entrances. Mayor Plaster said we will be getting bids for the stonework and sign work and hoping that we can get this project ready to be installed by spring.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the work session at 6:54 p.m.

August 8, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, August 8, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of August 8, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:01 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, David Raynes, Tim Leeth, and Michael Kohl. ABSENT: Council member Sterling.

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the minutes from the regular meeting on July 11, 2022.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Eddie Chittum addressed the Council asking if the council would consider assisting the fire department with the cost to have rides for the kids at the lawn party. He said Ms. Wanda told him they didn't have the money to get rides for the event. Mayor Plaster said the town is working in conjunction with the fire department on the lawn party. She said the town assisted with the fireworks, music, and the inflatables. She said she was under the impression that the ride company wasn't available for the event or was no longer operational but said that the committee will be back in contact with the fire department.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the financial reports for the month of July.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – no report

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth announced the Jameson Lam Blood Drive is August 13th at the Rescue Squad, The Summer Bash Raffle is August 26th & 27th at John E. Painter Park and the town is working with the fire department on this event. Council member Leeth said the fall community yard sale is on September 10th.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster commented on the First Responders Event and stated it was a very successful event and said we know of some things to add or change for next year. She said this will be an annual event.

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ATTORNEY. No report

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. Chief Sullivan informed the council that he received a Grant from the Department of Health and the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police for Narcan. He said that EMS already carries Narcan, but this is for officer safety but can be used for pedestrian use if needed. Manager McAlister said there was an incident that powder was blown into the officers faces when they approached a suspect. She said she feels this is something the officers should have on hand for emergency situations.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. Director Shank pointed out a couple items from his staff report. He said first is staffing at the caverns. He has talked with the current staff, and they agreed to work increased hours per week to eliminate the other approved positions for hire, to guarantee them hours. Director Shank stated the other item he wanted to point out is the working relationship that they have developed with Dr. Ángel A. Garcia, Assistant Professor of Geology and Environmental Science at JMU. He said Dr. Garcia is interested in working with Grand Caverns and feels this collaboration would be a great opportunity for both Grand Caverns and JMU.

NEW BUSINESS – Timothy Motsch addressed the Council and said they had come before council about two years ago asking to place a monument in Grand Caverns Park for the Blue

Ridge Heritage Project. He said they met with Austin Shank and Stefanie McAlister a few weeks ago and feels they have found a great location in the park to install the monument. Bill Henry addressed the council to give them some background on the Blue Ridge Heritage Project and what they do. He said many years ago when the Shenandoah National Park was built many people lost their homes. He said the committee formed to help memorialize all the people that lost their homes by constructing a memorial in each county. He said this monument would be for Augusta County and all memorials are the same at all locations just the construction may be different. He said they use a rock/stone chimney to represent what was left of the homes because they were either torn down or burnt. Mr. Henry said they are asking for Council's support to proceed with the project in the Grand Caverns Park.

Council member Leeth made a motion to proceed with the Blue Ridge Heritage Project. Council member Bailey seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 5-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to adopt the proclamation to recognize

On a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 5-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to adopt the proclamation to recognize September 17th – 23rd as Constitutional Week.

Constitution Week 2022

WHEREAS: It is the privilege and duty of the American people to commemorate the two hundred and thirty-fifth anniversary of the drafting of the Constitution of the United States of America with appropriate ceremonies and activities; and

WHEREAS: Public Law 915 guarantees the issuing of a proclamation each year by the President of the United States of America designating September 17 through 23 as Constitution Week,

NOW, THEREFORE I, Jo Plaster, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the Town of Grottoes do hereby proclaim the week of September 17 through 23 as

CONSTITUTION WEEK

and urge all citizens to study the Constitution and reflect on the privilege of being an American with all the rights and responsibilities which that privilege involves.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the Town of Grottoes to be affixed this 8th day of August of the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-two.

OLD BUSINESS – none

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

September 12, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, September 12, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Mayor Raynes called the work session of September 12, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes and Michael Kohl. ABSENT were Mayor Jo Plaster.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Manager McAlister said the change have been made to the Chapter 117 - Nuisance, section 117-5A violations and penalties. She said this section now reads like the state code. The first reading has been placed on tonight's meeting agenda to move forward with amending the violation and penalties section in the Nuisance Chapter.

Manager McAlister said we have received three requests for land purchases. She said she will go through all of them, and council can discuss how they want to proceed. Manager McAlister said the first request is from Tom Tourje. She said he purchased two buildable lots on Riverside Avenue and the conservation land behind those lots to the river. Manager McAlister said between his two buildable lots is a 20' alley. She said he is wanting to purchase the alley so that he can move his house closer to where the alley was to get out of the 100-year flood zone. Manager McAlister said that the town would retain a 20 x 25 foot utility easement in the front of the property along Riverside Avenue. Council member Justis said there is still access from 7th Street for the other buildable lot or if we ever had to access behind the property.

Manager McAlister said the next request is from Clarence Mullen. She said he purchased the house with eight lots a couple of years ago. When he purchased the house, he was unaware that the 60-foot alley went between the eight lots. He wants to build a garage but does not have the room on the property with his house. The garage cannot go on the other lot according to town code. Manager McAlister said Mr. Mullen is interested in purchasing a 40-foot by 100-foot portion of the alley so he can build the garage on his property and meet all the setbacks. She said this is similar to the portion remaining portion of the alley that just Milstead purchased from Town.

Manager McAlister said the last request is from Kenny May. She said he purchased two lots from the Rockingham County delinquent tax sale. After he purchased the property, he has it surveyed and found out that the town has a 50-foot unnamed street adjoining the lot. He brought

this to staff's attention. Up to that time we were not aware of the unnamed street and could not find any information of the street being closed or dedicated anywhere. Manager McAlister said Kenny then asked his attorney to do a title search which nothing was found, so his attorney provided him with a quitclaim deed to for the 50-foot unnamed road. Manager McAlister said she understands that he thought he was purchasing all the property but feels the town should consider selling him this property instead of giving it to him.

Council member Bailey said he thought we should consider the quitclaim deed since Mr. May thought he has already purchased the property from Rockingham County. Attorney Miller said we need to do all of them the same beings the town does not have deeds to any of the alleys or streets.

Council member Bailey said request A and C makes the most sense of any land that we have considered to sale but wants to know when this will stop.

Council member Kohl said he knows we must look at each one of these requests on a case-by-case basis but asked if we could adopt a policy that set some of our restrictions in it. He said for an example we wouldn't sale any property where we have utilities or where there could possibly be any development. He said this may help with some of the requests or would at least give staff the ability to say the council adopted a policy and your request does not meet their policy requirements. Council member Leeth liked the idea and asked if this was something the Planning Commission could work on.

Council member Justis made a motion, Council member Leeth seconded the motion, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to proceed with the next step of the land purchase for all three requests.

Vice-Mayor Raynes asked if we had enough time to go over the end of FY 22 Financial Report. Manager McAlister said she would make it quick and that all departments came in under budget. She said some line items may have been over, but some were under, and the overall funds came in under budget, except for one, which was Refuse. Manager McAlister said we knew with some changes that were made to the refuse contract after the FY22 budget was approved that this budget would be short, and you will see it was just over \$20,000.00 over in expenses. Manager McAlister asked everyone to look over the report and said if anyone has any questions to let her know or she would be glad to meet with them.

Vice-Mayor Raynes adjourned the work session at 6:55 p.m.

September 12, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, September 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Mayor Raynes called the regular session of September 12, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:01 p.m. Vice-Mayor Raynes asked for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, and Michael Kohl. ABSENT: Mayor Jo Plaster.

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the minutes from the meetings on August 8, 2022.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Scott Sacra addressed the council about the penalties section of chapter 117. He said the state code says after three violations in 24-month period you can be charged with a class three misdemeanor but when he read the minutes, he felt like the misdemeanor would be charged on the third offense. Attorney Miller said that the motion was to follow state code and we will double check to make sure the resolution for amendment follows the code. He said tonight is the first reading to amend the ordinance, but changes can be made, and next month would be the second reading and vote to amend.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the financial reports for the month of August.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – Council member Kohl announced the First Reading to amend Chapter 117 Nuisance, section 177-5A violations and penalties.

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth announced the Grand Caverns 5K race is on Friday, September 30th and the Senior Citizens' luncheon will be held on Saturday, October 15th, in person, at the fire department or by delivery.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – no report

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ATTORNEY. No report

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

NEW BUSINESS – Rick Chandler said he would like to congratulate the town on receiving the \$50,000.00 Tourism Grant from Rockingham County. He said he feels the town will be able to use this grant and was glad the county was able to offer it. Mr. Chandler also informed the council that the county is meeting Wednesday and is planning to vote on lowering the personal property tax rate from \$3.00/per \$100 to \$2.65/per \$100.00.

Council member Bailey asked about putting dead end signs up on some of these streets that dead end. He said he has received multiple complaints of people trying to turn around in the areas of 20th and 21st Streets.

OLD BUSINESS – none

ADJOURNMENT - Vice-Mayor Raynes declared the meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

October 12, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of October 12, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Mayor Jo Plaster, Tim Leeth, David Raynes and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Deputy Clerk Kim Clark, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Manager McAlister gave a brief synopsis of Ordinance Amendment of Chapter 100, Article XIX – Flood Plain Districts. There are two primary areas of the 100-year flood plain within the town. Grottoes participates in FEMA’s National Flood Insurance Program. The current ordinance is noncompliant; however, the CAV report notes that the noncompliant aspects are “minor”. It is recommended that the Town adopt the model ordinance provided by DCR, which meets the minimum FNIP requirements. This ordinance needs to be remedied by December 24, 2022 or the Town will be referred to FEMA for enforcement actions that can potentially include probation or suspension from the NFIP.

Nathan Miller expressed concerns with some of the model ordinance suggestions that have been presented. He has reviewed Staunton, Bridgewater, and Strasburg’s ordinances. He wants to be selective when using the model ordinance provided by DCR, and to assure that the model is relevant to Grottoes. He also wants to make sure who will be enforcing the recommendations and what the penalties for non-compliance would be.

Council member Justis recommended getting copies of ordinances that have been approved by DCR.

Manager McAlister said that the town indicates on zoning permits if any portion of the property where improvements are being proposed, is in the flood plain. We need to work with Rockingham County to ensure compliance, since the county issues all building permits and performs all inspections.

Council member Justis made a motion, Council member Leeth seconded the motion, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE to set a Joint Public Hearing with the

Planning Commission, regarding an Ordinance Amendment of Chapter 100, Article XIX – Flood Hazard Districts, for November 14, 2022.

Manager McAlister reviewed the 12th Street Townhomes Site Plan Amendment. Over the summer, council agreed to sell Mr. Milstead, the developer, a 40-foot by 400-foot strip of land in “Railroad Alley”. This purchase of land was needed so that Mr. Milstead could have room to add two townhouse units to the 2 rows of townhouses that were already approved in that location. An amended site plan has been submitted and reviewed by staff, as well as the planning commission on September 27, 2022. The Commission recommends approval of the amended plan to council. This will come up as an action item under New Business. Mr. Milstead has established an HOA and put in a new dumpster pad and dumpsters, resulting in the individual cans be removed. Town staff fielded quite a few phone calls from citizens who were upset because the cans were taken away.

A radar speed sign report presentation was given by Chief Sullivan. The 60-minute and 30-minute increment graphs are what the police department uses to decide when to increase patrol for speeding. Right now, the graphs are indicating a 5 mile an hour and 10 mile an hour violation. The radar signs will be placed throughout the Town, rotating to a new location every 2-weeks.

Council member Bailey questioned procedure and discussion used by council and suggested that the council become more familiar with Roberts Rules of Order. Mayor Plaster agreed everyone could use training of this nature and said it will be part of the next work session.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the work session at 6:41 p.m.

October 12, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Wednesday, October 12, 2022, at 7:03 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of October 12, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:01 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Mayor Jo Plaster, David Raynes, Jim Leeth, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Deputy Clerk Kim Clark, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the minutes from the meeting on September 12, 2022.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Scott Sacra addressed the council regarding the brush site hours. Mr. Sacra also expressed concern over the town's infrastructure and all the new housing development.

Eddie Chittum inquired about his application to be on the planning commission, that he submitted months ago. Mayor Plaster said that his request is being worked on.

Clarence Mullen III inquired about the possibility of him acquiring a 40-foot section of land adjacent to his backyard, for the installation of a garage. Mayor Plaster suggested that Mr. Mullen go to Rockingham County to find out all the building code guidelines, since his property is located in a flood zone.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the financial reports for the month of September.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – Council member Kohl announced the Second Reading to amend Chapter 117 Nuisance, section 177-5A, making the 4th violation in a 24-month period a class 3 misdemeanor. Council member Kohl made the motion, seconded by Council member Sterling, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the resolution to amend Chapter 117 Nuisance, section 177-5A Violations and Penalties.

ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 117-5A OF THE CODE OF GROTTOS

WHEREAS, the Town of Grottoes ("Town") had previously enacted Chapter 1 17-5A of the Town of Grottoes Code for the purpose of controlling and restricting nuisances which can be detrimental to the health, welfare, safety and quality of life of inhabitants of the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Town intends to amend Chapter 1 17-5A of the Town of Grottoes Code in order to include additional penalties for enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has determined that it is in the best interests of the Town to amend Chapter 117-5A of the Town of Grottoes Code.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it ordained by the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes, Virginia, to wit:

Chapter 1 17-5A (Violations and Penalties) of The Town Code of the Town of Grottoes, Virginia, is hereby amended to include additional penalties for enforcement as follows:

"In the event three civil penalties have previously been imposed on the same defendant for the same or similar violation, not arising from the same set of operative facts, within a twenty-four-month period, then such violations shall be Class 3 misdemeanors. Classifying such subsequent violations as criminal offenses shall preclude the imposition of civil penalties for the same violation."

This ordinance shall be effective from the date of its passage.

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth announced the Senior Citizens Luncheon will be this Saturday, October 15th. Prepping/loading will begin at the Grottoes Fire Department at 11:00 a.m., for deliveries and in person meals will begin at noon. Grand Caverns will be hosting the Haunted Cave, October 28-30, with a Fall Festival on October 29th. There will be a Veteran’s Day Ceremony at Town Hall on Friday, November 11th.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster requested to hear a motion to appoint Dylan Nicely to the BZA. A motion was made by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Bailey, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to appoint Dylan Nicely to the BZA.

**RESOLUTION OF THE GROTTUES TOWN COUNCIL
Recommendation of Dylan Nicely for
Appointment as a Member to
the Board of Zoning Appeals
20221012-01**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council for the Town of Grottoes, Virginia, as follows:

1. At a meeting held on October 12, 2022, the Town Council unanimously nominated and recommended DYLAN NICELY as a member of the Board of Zoning Appeals.
2. The Grottoes Town Council recommends and submits to the Circuit Court of Rockingham County, Virginia, the name of DYLAN NICELY.

NOW THEREFORE, the Town Council hereby recommends DYLAN NICELY as a member of the Board of Zoning Appeals with a term to begin November 1, 2022 ending on December 31, 2023.

The undersigned Clerk of the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes, Virginia, certifies that the foregoing constitutes a true, complete, and correct copy of the Resolution adopted at a meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes, Virginia, held on October 12, 2022, and has not been revoked, rescinded, or repealed.

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. Manager McAlister reported that the first step in the franchise agreement with Shentel/GloFiber to bring high-speed fiber product to Grottoes is to allow Shentel to place a utility cabinet. This cabinet will be placed at the short

dead end of 2nd Street off Aspen Avenue, near the old jail. The cabinet should be completed by February 2023 or sooner. Installation work should begin around the first quarter of 2023. Shentel will be responsible for notifying residents and is required to submit plans for approval before installation begins.

ATTORNEY. No report

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. Manager McAlister pointed out the Shady Creek item in the provided staff report. She stated that she met with the developer earlier in the week. The 10-inch water line from the Town's well has to be installed, as well as the installation of a turning lane on Route 340, before moving on to the next phase of development. The developer will contact adjacent land owners regarding the installation of the 10-inch waterline which begins Monday, October 17th. The developer also indicated during the meeting, that increased interest rates, material costs and labor costs will impact the ability for construction within the development to continue at the previous pace.

POLICE CHIEF. A written report was provided. Chief Sullivan announced that an offer was accepted by Steve Knight, to become Sergeant, beginning November 1, 2022. Officer Knight is presently a part-time officer with the town. There will be a pinning ceremony on November 9th, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., which will be open to the public. Chief Sullivan reported that the police department is now fully staffed, with the exception of an administrative assistant.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. Manager McAlister reported that a portion of the allocated ARPA funds will be used for our top priority of a water line replacement along Aspen Avenue and Caverns Blvd. Rob Mangrum the town's contracted engineer will be working on design, permitting and engineering needs for the project. Presently, there may be as much as a 32-week wait to receive needed water lines. Council member Leeth suggested that we order supplies for all upcoming projects, due to the extended wait time and questioned the time frame for using ARPA funds if materials are so hard to come by. Manager McAlister explained that all funds had to be allocated by the end of calendar year 2024 and spent by the end of calendar year 2026.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. A written report was provided. Director Shank announced that Lily Whitman will begin working Monday, October 17th as Parks Coordinator. She will receive 3 months of training by himself and Tracey Collins. Director Shank said that a number of tour guide positions are vacant and that he has received hardly any applications since September.

NEW BUSINESS –

Mullen Request - Council member Bailey spoke against the request from Clarence Mullen to purchase a 40-foot section of an alley between 11th Street and 12th Street. He stated that he is not in favor of selling town land. A motion made by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5-1, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – OPPOSED; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to allow the Town Attorney and Town Manager to create and negotiate a purchase agreement with Mr. Mullen.

Tourje Request - A motion was made by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Kohl. Council member Bailey commented that this makes sense to sale, but he still cannot support selling any town property. The motion carried by a vote of 5-1, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – OPPOSED; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to allow the Town Attorney and Town Manager to create and negotiate a purchase agreement with Mr. Tourje.

May Request - A motion made by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Justis. Council member Bailey asked what will be done on the other side of the property on the south side of 4th Street between Block 1, Lot 24 and Block 2, Lot 19 and spoke against requiring Mr. May to purchase the portion of land he has requested. Manager McAlister said that adjacent landowners were notified, due to the public hearing and reported that the appraisal was \$.40 per square feet = \$2,400 for the land. This does not include attorney fees or recording of deed. Council member Justis amended the motion to have the purchase price at \$1.00. Seconded by Council member Sterling. Council member Kohl felt everyone should pay appraised value for land. The amended motion failed by a vote of 2-4, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – OPPOSED; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – OPPOSED; LEETH – OPPOSED; KOHL – OPPOSED; The original motion carried by a vote of 4-2, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – OPPOSED; STERLING – OPPOSED; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to allow the Town Attorney and Town Manager to create and negotiate a purchase agreement with Mr. May.

Milstead Request - A motion made by council member Kohl, seconded by Raynes. Council member Bailey said he couldn't support the additional townhouses because he didn't feel he was aware of the project and because he didn't support the sale of the land. The motion passed by a vote of 4-2, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE STERLING – OPPOSED; BAILEY – OPPOSED; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the 12th Street Townhouse plan amendment.

OLD BUSINESS – none.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

November 14, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, November 14, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of November 14, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:01 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Mayor Jo Plaster, Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, and Police Sergeant Steve Knight.

Mayor Plaster said the first item on the agenda is the ordinance amendment to chapter 100- Flood Hazard Districts. Town Manager Stefanie McAlister said we discussed this a little at the last work session where the town participates in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program and in doing so, we are subject to undergo a community assessment visit from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Floodplain Management Team. She said during their assessment they determined several items within our ordinance that needs to be updated. Town Manager Stefanie McAlister said the attorney updated the ordinance to include the required language. He also decided to repeal Article XIX – Flood Hazard District and adopt a new Chapter 135 - Floodplain management for future updates to the ordinance due the FEMA's mandates changing.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is Chapter 160 Water and Sewer. Town Manager Stefanie McAlister said from her understanding, when she started with the town, that once the septic tank is installed and accepted it then becomes part of the town's sewer system. She stated that the ordinance in your packet is the most recent ordinance, and this is one not the one in your code book. Town Manager Stefanie McAlister said that she wants to make sure everyone agrees that the town owns these septic tanks and if they fail then the town is responsible to replace it. Council agreed that was their understanding too. She said that we have one tank with a partially collapsed lid and needs replaced. She said the quote to replace the tank is between five and six thousand dollars. Council member Bailey asked if we know if that tank failed because of negligence or just normal wear and tear. Manager McAlister said this particular tank looks like an old cistern that was turned into a septic tank, but it had been accepted into the town's sewer system. There were no obvious signs of neglect. Council member Bailey suggested that we include language in our ordinance about normal wear and tear verses negligence for a failed tank. Mayor Plaster asked that the water and sewer committee meet to discuss the water and sewer ordinance and bring back to council for consideration. Manager McAlister asked how the council

wanted to proceed with the tank that is failing and said if we are to move forward with replacing that tank, since its not a budgeted item, she would like a motion to be made. Council member Leeth made a motion to move forward with repairs not to exceed \$6,000.00, Council member Justis seconded the motion. Council member Bailey amended the motion to remove the dollar amount due to rising costs of labor and material. Council member Justis accepted the amendment, the motion carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY - AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

Council member Justis informed the Council that the Streets and Street Lights Committee met and agreed to allow the developer of the 21st Street Townhouses to grade the street, at no cost to the town in exchange for the fill dirt.

With no further business Mayor Plaster adjourned the work session at 6:26 p.m.

November 14, 2022

A joint public hearing and the regular session of the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, November 14, 2022, beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the joint public hearing of the Grottoes Town Council and the Grottoes Planning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. on November 14, 2022.

ATTENDANCE: Planning Commission Members present: Chairman Dylan Nicely, Darrel Baker, and René Ehlenfeldt and Michael Kohl.

Council Members present: Mayor Jo Plaster, Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, David Raynes, Tim Leeth, and Michael Kohl.

Mayor Plaster said the reason for the public hearing is to hear citizen comments on repealing Article XIX Flood Hazard Districts in Chapter 100 – Land Development and creating a new Chapter 135 - Floodplain Management.

Speaking for the request – None.

Speaking against the request – None

There was no discussion from Council or Planning Commission.

Mayor Plaster closed the public hearing at 7:03 p.m. and turned the meeting over to the Planning Commission.

Chairman Nicely asked the Commission if they had any comments or if they were prepared to make a recommendation.

On a motion from Commission member Kohl, seconded by Commission member Ehlenfeldt, and carried by a 4-0 vote, voting as follows: EHLENFELDT – AYE; BAKER- AYE; NICELY – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to recommend repealing Article XIX Flood Hazard Districts of the Grottoes Town Code Chapter 100 – Land Development and creating a new Chapter 135 Floodplain Management

Chairman Nicely adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of November 14, 2022 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:07 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked Clerk Morris for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, David Raynes, Tim Leeth, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Clerk Tara Morris, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, Police Sergeant Steve Knight.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY - AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, the Council approved the minutes from the meetings of October 12, 2022.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS

Eddie Chittum addressed the council stating that he wants to install a fence around the back of his property for his children to play in the backyard. He said he had Miss Utility mark the lines and Dominion and Comcast both have their lines located on his property and not in the alley. He said Dominion told him he would probably be ok, but he said he doesn't want to dig a hole for a fence over top of a high voltage electric line. He showed the Council a picture of the lines on his property. Mayor Plaster told Mr. Chittum she would get with the Town Manager and will check to see what could be done, if anything.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve the financial reports for October 2022.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – Council member Kohl announced the First Reading to consider repealing Article XIX (Flood Hazard Districts) in Chapter 100 – Land Development of the Grottoes Town Code and adding a new Chapter 135 – Floodplain Management

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – Council member Justis stated the street committee met and agreed to extend 21st Street from Cherry Avenue to Dogwood Avenue. He said the developer of the townhouse project has agreed to subgrade the street for exchange of the fill dirt. Council member Justis said the adjoining property owners have been notified and the survey has been done.

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth said the Veterans Day Ceremony was very nice and wanted to thank the students from South River Elementary School and Elkton Middle School for their participation in this event. He stated that Caroling in the Caverns is spread over a couple weekends in December. Council member Leeth said the Christmas Parade will be on Sunday, December 4th at 5:00 p.m. and immediately following the parade will be the tree lighting and then cookies, hot chocolate, and visits with Santa. He stated to make sure you have your Christmas lights on to participate in the home decorating contest that will be judged on Monday, December 12th beginning at 7:00 p.m.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster stated that we have had a busy week. She said we held an appointment ceremony for our new Police Sergeant Steve Knight, who is here with us tonight. She stated that the police department is fully staffed. Mayor Plaster said the Veterans Day Ceremony was very nice. She thanked the staff for their assistance this past week.

STAFF REPORT

TOWN MANAGER. – Manager McAlister informed the council that an offer has been made and accepted for the Administrative Assistant position in the police department.

ATTORNEY. – no report

TREASURER. - A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. - A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. - A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PUBLIC WORKS. - A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. – Director Shank said he wanted to point out that his staffing levels have changed in the tour guide positions. He now has 12 filled positions leaving 9 vacant positions for tour guides. Director Shank gave an update on the Caroling in the Caverns events. He said at the time he submitted his staff report there were 13% tickets sold and they are now at 25% tickets sold.

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Plaster said everyone received the email about the VML training that is coming up in January. She said this can be attended in person or virtually and asked for anyone interested in attending to let her or Stefanie know.

OLD BUSINESS

CLOSED SESSION - Council member Leeth made a motion, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to convene into closed session pursuant to section 2.2-3711A, Code of Virginia, subparagraph (1) regarding discussion, consideration of assignments and salaries of specific employees, and subparagraph (7) consulting with legal counsel.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council returned to open session.

Mayor Plaster read the certification of the closed session – “to the best of your knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711(A)1 and 2.2-3711(A)7 of the Code of Virginia, as only such public business matters that were identified in the motion by which a closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting”. Clerk Morris took a roll call. J. Justis; so certified, J. Bailey; so certified, M. Sterling; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, T. Leeth; so certified, M. Kohl, so certified.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the 2022 retention incentives.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to increase the pay for the four full-time officers and additional pay increase for the Chief.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to payout the over accrued vacation time due to being short staffed in the police department to the Police Chief by the end of the year.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

December 12, 2022

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, December 12, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of December 12, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:04 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Mayor Jo Plaster, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes and Michael Kohl. Council members Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey arrived late.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director AJ Hummel, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Mayor Plaster said the first item on the agenda is the ordinance amendment to chapter 100- Flood Hazard Districts. Town Manager Stefanie McAlister said we held the public hearing at the last meeting and had the first reading. Since then, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Floodplain Management Team reviewed the ordinance and recommended removing the section on small projects. Manager McAlister said that has been the only change made. Tonight will be the second reading and then council action on the proposed ordinance. She asked if anyone had any questions.

Council member Justis arrived at 6:06 p.m.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda are the land purchase contracts for Mr. Mullen, Mr. & Mrs. Tourje and Mr. May. Manager McAlister said the purchase contracts were sent to the buyer for their review and asked if the council had any questions or comments regarding the contracts.

Mayor Plaster said next is a request from Philip Smith. Manager McAlister said Mr. Smith is requesting the town give up the utility easement on the previously vacated 10-foot alleys that ran north and south in block 95. She explained to Council that the 10-foot alleys along Dogwood Avenue and Gum Avenue were closed and vacated in 1974, but the town retained a utility easement in those areas. She said the town provided services run along the streets and in the 20-foot alley that runs mid-block, behind the houses. There are no utilities in the easements. Council member Justis made a motion, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – ABSENT; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to release the 10-foot wide utility easements recorded in deed book 38 pages 424-425.

Council member Bailey arrived at 6:25 p.m.

Mayor Plaster said next on the agenda is Cherry Street Townhouses. Manager McAlister said the planning commission reviewed the plan submitted by Judy Milstead and has recommended it to council for approval. She said this plan is identical to the plan that was submitted a couple months ago by David Milstead for the 14 townhouses currently under construction in the area, and asked if anyone had any questions. Manager McAlister said this is an action item on the meeting agenda under new business.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the B-2 Plan for 700 Dogwood Avenue. Manager McAlister said that the planning commission has reviewed the plan and is recommending it to council. She said the plan is for a new storefront with two townhouses attached to the back. She said if the council likes the plan, they will need to set a joint public hearing for a conditional use permit for the two townhouses. Council member Kohl stated that he likes the plan and feels the residential will help support the business to be viable. Manager McAlister said this is an action item on the meeting agenda under new business.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is Taser Surplus. Chief Sullivan asked the council to surplus the old tasers so they can be sold and asked that the money from the sale of the taser come back to the police department to be used toward new equipment. After a brief discussion Council member Leeth made a motion, Council member Justis seconded the motion, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to sale the old tasers and use that money toward the purchase of new equipment.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda was the 2023 committee assignments. She said that she would like to leave the committees how they are unless someone has an issue. She said that many committees are currently working on projects and would like to see them complete those projects.

Mayor Plaster said the last item on the agenda is to set a Workshop date for 2023. Council discussed several dates and decided to set the Workshop for February 7, 2023. Mayor Plaster said we will start this meeting at 5:00 p.m. and plan to be done by 8:00 p.m.

With no further business Mayor Plaster adjourned the work session at 6:57 p.m.

December 12, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, December 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of December 12, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:02 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, Mayor Jo Plaster, David Raynes, Jim Leeth, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the minutes from the meeting on November 14, 2022.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Tom Tourje addressed the council stating that he was here tonight for his request to close the alley between his properties for his purchase and stated that he would be available to answer any questions the council may have.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the financial reports for the month of November.

WATER AND SEWER – Council member Bailey said the committee met and most items discussed at the committee meeting will be discussed at the workshop.

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – Council member Kohl announced the second reading to repeal Article XIX Flood Hazard Districts in Chapter 100 Land Development and adopt Chapter 135 - Floodplain Management.

On a motion by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE;

RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to repeal Article XIX Flood Hazard Districts in Chapter 100- Land Development and adopt Chapter 135 – Floodplain Management.

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth stated that the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting was one of the largest attended that he has seen.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster said last Friday we had a wonderful employee Christmas Luncheon and stated that she wanted to thank everyone again for all of their hard work throughout the year.

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ATTORNEY. Attorney Miller said that 2022 has been a good year and asked if anyone had any questions.

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. Assistant Morris said there are action items in the report that will be addressed under New and Old Business.

POLICE CHIEF. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. Director Hummel informed the council that Smith Paving will begin milling and paving starting this week.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Plaster said the first item of new business is a request from Philip Smith asking the town to give up the utility easement on the 10-foot alley that runs north and south. Mayor Plaster stated that this was discussed in the work session and the council had voted to remove the 10-foot utility easements running north and south along Dogwood Avenue and Gum Avenue.

Council member Kohl stated that the planning commission has reviewed and recommended the Cherry Street Townhouse plan to the town council for approval. On a motion by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the Cherry Street Townhouse plan.

Council member Kohl said the planning commission has reviewed the B-2 Plan for 700 Dogwood Avenue and is recommending the plan to council for approval. On a motion by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the conceptual plan and set the joint public hearing for the conditional use permit for January 9, 2023.

OLD BUSINESS – Mayor Plaster said that we have the three purchase agreements back from the attorney and the council will need to take action on.

On a motion by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5-1, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the purchase contract for the sale of the alley to Mr. Clarence Mullens.

On a motion by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5-1, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the purchase contract for the sale of the alley to Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Tourje.

On a motion by Council member Kohl, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5-1, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the purchase contract for the sale of the street to Mr. Kenny May.

CLOSED SESSION - Council member Leeth made a motion, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to convene into closed session pursuant to section 2.2-3711A, Code of Virginia, subparagraph (1) regarding interviewing candidates for the planning commission and board of zoning appeals.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council returned to open session.

Mayor Plaster read the certification of the closed session – “to the best of your knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section

2.2-3711(A)1 of the Code of Virginia, as only such public business matters that were identified in the motion by which a closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting”. Clerk Morris took a roll call. J. Justis; so certified, J. Bailey; so certified, M. Sterling; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, T. Leeth; so certified, M. Kohl, so certified.

Mayor Plaster stated that she wanted to go back to Ordinance, Health, and Properties Committee. She said we should have a roll call vote for the adoption of the new ordinance. Mayor Plaster asked for a roll call vote, Clerk Morris took the roll call vote as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE, carried by a vote of 6 to 0 to repeal Article XIX Flood Hazard Districts in Chapter 100 - Land Development and adopt Chapter 135 - Floodplain Management.

On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to appoint Mr. Wayne Chittum and Ms. Gleamer Sullivan to the Planning Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.