

April 8, 2024

A work session of the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, April 8, 2024, at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of April 8, 2024, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Michael Helm, 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 for discussion is a request for lot line revision. Clerk Morris said we received a request for lot line revision from Josh Holloway. She said the property is located on Edgewood Street and is zoned B-3, which allows business and residential. Clerk Morris said the property meets all the code requirements for a buildable lot. She said the lot with his house is still over 20,000 square feet and the lot he wants to subdivide is over 14,000 square feet. Clerk Morris said the town requires 12,000 square feet and 100 foot of road frontage, which both lots have. Manager McAlister added that the planning commission reviewed the request and recommended it to the council for approval. Clerk Morris said this is on the regular meeting agenda under new business.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the FY25 draft budget discussion. Manager McAlister said she had met with the Finance Committee to review the budget and discuss some shortfalls within the water and sewer funds. Manager McAlister reviewed the proposed FY24-25 budget with the Council. She said the committee agreed that the water and sewer base rates would need to be increased. Manager McAlister said the water and sewer base rates have only increased once since 2011. She said the Finance Committee suggested raising the meals tax to 6% and the cigarette tax to \$0.30 per pack. Council member Bailey asked why we weren't doing a cola and merit-based raise, like he suggested last year. Manager McAlister said no guidelines or goals toward working for a merit-based raise have been established and suggested that if the council wants to establish a merit-based system, perhaps the personnel committee could work on that. Mayor Plaster said the personnel committee will meet to establish these for next year if that's the direction council wants to go.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

April 8, 2024

A regular session of the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, April 8, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of April 8, 2024, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked for a roll call.

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

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Michael Helm, 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 5-0-1, voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – ABSTAINED; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; Leeth - AYE the Council approved the minutes of the March 11, 2024, meetings and vote of 6-0, voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; Leeth - AYE for the meeting on March 20, 2024. Council member Justis abstained from the March 11, 2024 meetings due to being absent.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Scott Sacra addressed the council with concerns to the FY25 proposed budget. He said he doesn't like the 5% across the board for raises. He said it should be merit based because some people may not deserve that much of a raise. He said he doesn't feel the town should increase the water and sewer base rates by 20% and give the employees a 5% raise. Mr. Sacra said he feels that the residents should be able to opt out of trash collection and that he would be glad to take his trash down to the county site.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Leeth and carried by a vote of 6-0, voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS- AYE; RAYNES - AYE; KOHL – AYE; LEETH – AYE, to approve the financial reports for the month of March 2024.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – no report

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – Council member Justis said the streets committee met and will be installing stop signs on Forest Avenue at 10th Street in May

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth said Chief Charlie’s Kids Fish Day will be on May 4, 2024 and the committee will be meeting in April to work on the Party in the Park that is scheduled in June.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster said the personnel committee will be meeting to set guidelines and goals for merit base raises.

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. Manager McAlister said her report was the draft budget and executive summary and it was reviewed at the work session.

ATTORNEY. No report.

TREASURER. Treasurer Danner said the 2021 audit is almost complete. She said she is waiting for the final checklist.

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. Public Works Director Hummel said they have been installing the new radio read meters and have approximately 100 installed. He also said they will have training on the system on April 24th.

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

Lot Line Revision – Council member Leeth made a motion to move forward the request from Josh Holloway for lot line revision. Attorney Helm asked Council member Leeth to amend the motion to approve or deny. Council member Leeth amended the motion to approve the request for lot line revision from Josh Holloway. Seconded by Council member Justis and carried by a vote of 5-0-1 voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM – AYE; BAILEY – ABSTAINED; JUSTIS- AYE; RAYNES - AYE; KOHL – AYE; LEETH – AYE. Council member Bailey abstained due to the property being owned by a family member.

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.