

July 8th, 2024

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

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of July 8, 2024, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:06 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, Interim Town Manager Joseph Paxton, Deputy Clerk Jennifer Whetzel, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

FY 23-24 Budget Amendment.

Interim Town Manager Paxton explained to council that this amendment was to account for the COVID funds (ARPA) spent during the FY23/24 budget year.

There were no questions from Council regarding this matter.

Parking – Lil Gus’ Restaurant.

There were several matters related to the parking issue. Police Chief Sullivan first discussed the car show that is expected to be held the last Saturday or Sunday in August. He requested the approval of Council to close Dogwood Ave. in front of the business between 7th and 8th streets for the event. Chief Sullivan stated that the road closure will permit fire and rescue apparatuses in that area.

It was the consensus of Council that the road closure be permitted; however, Council requested to be notified in advance when a date has been established.

Chief Sullivan then discussed the issue related to day-to-day parking concerns in the area in front of the restaurant. Allowing larger vehicles to park in this area is a safety concern. An issue has arisen in district court when the police department has enforced limiting such vehicles from parking in this area by issuing a ticket. The judge has stated that it is not clear that which vehicles are prohibited. Chief Sullivan recommended to council changing the signs to read include the vehicle types that are not allowed (ex. SUV’s, crossovers, trucks), as well as those allowed. He stated the new signs would be about \$112.95.

After some discussion regarding the safety issues involved, Council concurred that the new signage should be used. It was also noted that additional striping of the parking area will be used to further clarify where vehicles are allowed.

Shrekhise Kill Permit.

Chief Sullivan noted that Shrekhise has obtained the permit, which adheres to the rules established by DWR. He noted that they can only hunt 1 hour before sunset and 1 hour after daylight. The hunter is required to be 10 ft above ground when shooting. The permit allows up to 25 deer to be killed, and is valid from 6/10/24-9/28/24.

No action was necessary by Council on this matter. There was further discussion regarding amending the town ordinance to allow the Police Chief to allow the discharge of firearms within town. This matter will be referred to the Ordinance Committee for consideration and recommendation to Council.

Work Session for Council.

Interim Manager Paxton requested Council set a work session prior to the next regular meeting date in August to meet with representatives from the Berkley Group to review the search process to fill the vacant Town Manager position and begin development of the profile for the recruitment.

Mr. Paxton also asked Council to discuss at this work session the recommendations provided in June from the wastewater study from Mangrum, and consider action to authorize the projects outlined in the report to move forward.

There was considerable discussion about a date, but the consensus was to meet on Tuesday, July 30, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. for these matters.

At 6:40 p.m. Mayor Plaster adjourned the work session.

July 8, 2024

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

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of July 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, Interim Town Manager Joseph Paxton, Deputy Clerk Jennifer Whetzel, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Councilmember Raynes, seconded by Councilmember Kohl, and carried by a vote of 6-0, voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; Leeth - AYE the Council approved the minutes of the work session and regular meetings on June 10, 2024 and the special meeting on June 17, 2024.

At 7:01 pm the session was recessed by Mayor Plaster and called upon the Planning Commission to call its meeting to order for the scheduled joint public hearing.

At 7:02 pm Chair Dylan Knicely called the Planning Commission to order.

ATTENDANCE: Brooke Haas, Jean Stoll, Rene Ehlenfeldt, Dylan Nicely, and Maite Taylor.

At 7:03 pm Mayor Plaster opened the joint public hearing for public input regarding the rezoning request block 523 lots 18-26 from R1 to B1.

Speaking FOR: Gleamer Sullivan stated that the #1 request from residents on the Comprehensive Plan Survey was the need for a fast-food restaurant. She requested the Planning Commission recommend approval of the rezoning request.

Speaking AGAINST: none

Council comments: none

At 7:04 pm Mayor Plaster closed the public hearing and referred it to the Planning Commission for a recommendation.

Chair Nicely requested a motion for the proposed rezoning.

On motion by Commissioner Ehlenfeldt, to recommend approval to rezone block 523 lots 18-26 from R1 to B1, seconded by Commissioner Stoll, and carried a vote of 5-0. Voting was recorded as follows: HAAS – AYE; STOLL – AYE; EHLENFELDT – AYE; NICELY – AYE; TAYLOR – AYE. Motion carries.

At 7:05 pm Chair Knicely declared that the Planning Commission was adjourned.

At 7:05 pm Mayor Plaster opened a public hearing for the following matters

Sentel Franchise Agreement - to consider an uncodified ordinance to establish a franchise for Shenandoah Cable Television, LLC.

There was no staff presentation on the ordinance

Speaking FOR: none

Speaking AGAINST: none

Council comments: none

2023-2024 Budget Amendment – for the FY2023-2024 Budget to amend the budget to include previously received federal ARPA-SLFRF funds.

There was no staff presentation on the ordinance

Speaking FOR: none

Speaking AGAINST: none

Council comments: none

Mayor Plaster adjourned the public hearing and called the regular session back to order at 7:08 pm

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Jean Stoll addressed the council requesting they consider police enforcement on 21st. Street for speeding on that road heading to and from the new townhomes being built at the end of the street. She stated it was dangerous for kids playing along that road.

Megan Moats signed up to speak and her husband Demane spoke instead. He addressed Council concerning traffic along 2nd Street, especially in front of his house at 88 2nd Street. He stated the road is super busy and he requested assistance in stopping speeders and wreck less drivers by installing safety measures such as speed bumps and/or guardrails in that area on the turn.

Artem Moiseyenko spoke next and expressed a concern that he be allowed to construct and sell as individual homes duplexes at the end of Aspen Avenue. His concern is that the current

ordinance requires 62.5 feet of street frontage for each separate lot and because of constraints from an adjacent street and a town alley there is only 60 feet per lot, if sold separately.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:

FINANCE – On motion by Councilmember Raynes, seconded by Councilmember Justis, 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 June 2024.

On motion by Councilmember Raynes, seconded by Councilmember Justis, 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 FY 23/24 Budget Amendment.

WATER AND SEWER – no report. Council member Bailey stated they would be having a meeting soon.

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY –

SHENANDOAH CABLE TELEVISION ORDINANCE AND FRANCHISE AGREEMENT

On motion by Council-member Kohl, to approve the uncodified ordinance establishing a franchise for Shenandoah Cable Television, LLC and to accept the franchise agreement submitted by Shenandoah Cable Television, LLC., 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.

**AN UNCODIFIED ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH
A FRANCHISE FOR
SHENANDOAH CABLE TELEVISION, LLC**

This Uncodified Ordinance shall establish and grant to Shenandoah Cable Television, LLC, a Virginia limited liability company (“Shentel”), a Cable Franchise, pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-2100, *et seq.*

RECITALS:

- A. That the following Uncodified Ordinance is hereby adopted:
- B. That Shentel intends to install a Cable System in the public rights of way (defined as lands owned or controlled by the Town of Grottoes, Virginia (“the Town”) in which the Town has a property interest and only those rights which the Town has the undisputed right and power to grant easements) within the Town for the purpose of providing Cable service, the terms and definitions of which are more fully set forth in the Franchise Agreement dated the 8th day of July, 2024.
- C. That the Franchise is authorized by this Ordinance enacted by the Town Counsel of Grottoes, Virginia in the manner provided by Virginia Code § 15.2-2100, *et seq.*

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF
GROTTOES, VIRGINIA AS FOLLOWS:**

- 1. The Recitals above are adopted and incorporated herein.

2. The mutual covenants and terms set forth in the Franchise Agreement dated the 8th day of July, 2024, by and between the Town of Grottoes, Virginia, a municipal corporation and Shenandoah Cable Television, LLC, a Virginia limited liability company (“Shentel”) are hereby adopted and made a part of this Ordinance, a copy of said Agreement is attached.

3. The Town reserves the right to enforce the Franchise Agreement, including its termination should Shenandoah Cable Television, LLC (“Shentel”), fail to meet its obligation or fail to correct any defaults in its performance of the obligations as set forth in the Franchise Agreement.

4. The Town Council has determined the Franchise and the Agreement are in the best interest of the citizens of the Town.

5. This Ordinance shall become effective upon its passage.

6. The Mayor and Town Manager, either of whom may act, are hereby authorized to take any actions reasonably necessary to effectuate this Ordinance.

Ordained this 8th day of June, 2024.

REZONING REQUEST – BLOCK 523 LOTS 18-26 FROM R1 TO B1

On motion by Councilmember Kohl to accept the Planning Commission recommendation and rezone Block 523 lots 18-26 from R1 to B1; seconded by Councilmember Raynes, and carried by a vote of 6-0, voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS- AYE; RAYNES - AYE; KOHL – AYE; LEETH – AYE.

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – no report

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth stated that there would be *Bluegrass in July* every Friday in July at John E. Painter Park. The GVFD Law Party will be held August 1st-3rd. He also thanked everyone for their help with this year’s *Party in the Park* event.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster thanked everyone for working together and recognized Interim Town Manager Joe Paxton.

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. No report.

ATTORNEY. No report

TREASURER. Treasurer Danner noted that once final end of year adjustments are complete, a final FY23/24 Budget vs Actual report ending June 30, 2024 will be provided to Council.

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. The Interim Town Manager added that we have hired three new Public Works employees.

RECREATION AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. A written report was provided. Parks and Tourism Director Austin Shank stated that the building permit for the Blue Ridge Heritage monument has been approved by Augusta County and work should begin in the next several weeks. He also noted that the South River Watershed Coalition would be unveiling a new wayfaring sign on July 20th at 2:30 and invited Council to attend.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business

OLD BUSINESS

The item for consideration of Council was removed by the person requesting the action.

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