

TOWN OF GROTTOS
JOINT PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA
TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION

January 8, 2024

1. Call to Order/ Mayor calls JPH to order.
2. Joint Public Hearing Regarding the Following: request for a Conditional Use Permit at 402 Augusta Avenue for a Child Day Care in a B-1 zoning
3. Speaking **FOR** the request.
4. Speaking **AGAINST** the request.
5. Questions by Town Council or Planning Commission Members.
6. Mayor to close public hearing. (turn meeting over to Planning Commission)
7. Discussion and possible vote for a recommendation by Planning Commission Members regarding a request for a Conditional Use Permit at 402 Augusta Avenue for a Child Day Care in a B-1 zoning
8. Adjournment.

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA
January 8, 2024

CALL TO ORDER – MAYOR PLASTER

CALLING OF THE ROLL BY THE CLERK

WELCOME CITIZENS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – MEETINGS OF DECEMBER 11, 2023

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (PUBLIC COMMENT)

REPORTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES:

Finance – Council member Raynes, Chair

1. Approval of Financial Reports

Water and Sewer – Council member Bailey, Chair

Ordinance, Health, and Property – Council member Kohl, Chair

1. Recommendation regarding the Conditional Use Permit for 402 Augusta Avenue for a Child Day Care in a B-1 zoning.

Streets and Street Lights – Council member Justis, Chair

Parks, Recreation and Public Facilities – Council member Chittum, Chair

Special Events - Council member Leeth, Chair

Personnel, Fire and Police Protection – Mayor Plaster, Chair

1. Approval of 2024 Officers for the Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department

STAFF REPORTS:

Town Manager

Town Attorney

Treasurer

Assistant to Town Manager

Chief of Police

Public Works Director

Recreation and Tourism Director

NEW BUSINESS

1. Reorganization of Council
 - a. Election of Vice Mayor
 - b. Setting of Meeting Schedule and Inclement Weather Policy
2. 2024 Committee Assignments
3. Consideration – Code of Conduct and Ethics for the Members of the Grottoes Town Council

OLD BUSINESS

ADJOURN

Rules for Public Hearings

- Anyone wishing to speak must have signed-up to speak (before the hearing starts)
- The Council/Commission/Board will hear up to 3 speakers from each side (FOR/AGAINST)
- Each Speaker shall be limited to **3 minutes**, whether speaking on behalf of a group or as an individual
- Repetitive testimony is discouraged
- All comments shall be directed to the Town Council. Debate is prohibited.
- Mayor/Chairman shall have the authority to end a presentation that violates these rules.

December 11, 2023

A work session of the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, December 11, 2023, at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of December 11, 2023, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Michael Helm, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Town Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Assistant Director Tyler Breeden, Parks Director Austin Shank and Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

Council member Leeth made a motion to amend the agenda to change the order of the items for discussion. He wants to move the pool committee update and discussion before the discussion of a pool lease agreement. Council member Justis second the motion. The vote carried by a vote of 6-0, voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; RAYNES - AYE; KOHL – AYE; LEETH – AYE.

Mayor Plaster said the first item on the agenda is the comprehensive plan agreement update. Manager McAlister said that Gleamer Sullivan and herself met with Director, Bonnie Reidisel and staff members from the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) on November 30, 2023. She said they discussed what needs to be done to update the Town's comprehensive plan. She said they drafted an agreement based on the work that needs to be done to complete the update. Manager McAlister said the CSPDC will be taking the lead on updating the plan. She said the CSPDC first item would be a training session for the planning commission and town council on how all this will work. She said the planning commission has a comprehensive plan committee but with this update we will use all planning commission members to get this project completed. Manager McAlister said she just needs to know if the council is ready to move forward on the agreement with the CSPDC. Council agreed to move forward with the agreement and with updating the plan. Mayor Plaster stated that she will also serve as a Comprehensive Plan Committee member.

Mayor Plaster said the next item on the agenda is the Council's Citizen Pool Committee update and discussion. Council member Kohl said the pool committee met and he brought up the suggestion of the town leasing the pool to the committee to operate. He said that at this time, the committee is not prepared to do that. He said they have many ideas on raising money to repair the pool, but they need to make sure council agrees to reopen the pool if the funds are raised for the repairs. Council member Kohl asked pool committee chair Maite Taylor to give council an

update of the previous committee meetings. Maite Taylor informed the council that the committee has filed all the paperwork required for the nonprofit status. She said the committee explored the idea of leasing the pool, but they feel it exceeds their current organizational capabilities. She did say this is maybe something they would consider in the future. Ms. Taylor said the engineering report shows there are no catastrophic or concerning voids that would deem the pool unsafe. She asked the council to commit to reopening the pool if the committee raises the funds for the repairs. Ms. Taylor said they have sponsors that are willing to help them financially, but they need a commitment from council before sponsors will donate money towards the repairs. She requested the council to consider raising a motion to commit to the repair and reopening of the Grand Caverns pool, contingent on the Grottoes Pool Preservation Foundation successfully raising the funds for the repairs. Ms. Taylor said she feels this will solidify the community's commitment and allows the non-profit to continue their corporate sponsorship fundraising efforts. Council member Kohl said he feels this is a great partnership for years to come to also assist with upgrades around the pool area. Council member Leeth asked if the committee was going to raise money to help offset what the pool loses. Mayor Plaster said if we are going to allow the organization to raise money, we have to agree to open it. Manager McAlister said the pool would have to be added back into the budget. She also suggested having a phased site plan with a cost estimate completed. She noted that a project of this scope and contingent on funds raised, weather and contractor availability would take a couple years to fully complete. Council member Kohl made a motion, seconded by Council member 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 that if sufficient funds are raised the town will commit to repairing the pool and have it operational at the next available season.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the work session at 6:58 p.m.

December 11, 2023

A regular session of the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, December 11, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of December 11, 2023, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:06 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, Parks Director Austin Shank, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Assistant Director Tyler Breeden 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 – ABSTAIN; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, LEETH – AYE; the Council approved the minutes from the meetings on November 13, 2023, as presented.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)

Barry Gibson addressed the council concerning the pool and stating that the citizens committee cannot move forward if the council does not commit to opening the pool if the committee raises the money to repair the pool. After reading his statement Mayor Plaster informed Mr. Gibson that the council just had discussion with the pool committee and that Council voted unanimously to open the pool, at the next pool season, once the money was raised and the repairs are completed.

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 November.

WATER AND SEWER – no report

ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY – no report

STREET AND STREET LIGHTS – no report

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES – Council member Chittum stated that he was glad council agreed to get the pool open but would still like the committee to explore the idea of leasing the pool from the town.

Council member Kohl thanked the council for the support to open the pool if the funds are raised.

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth said the Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting was very successful and well attended. He said the home decorating contest is Monday, December 18th starting at 7:00 p.m.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – Mayor Plaster reminded council of the staff employee luncheon on Friday, December 15, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.

STAFF REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER. Manager McAlister informed the council that Smith Paving will begin street milling and paving on December 18th along a portion of Dogwood Avenue.

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 or questions from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments or questions 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. Director Shank said they have completed two weekends of Caroling in the Caverns and there is one left to go. He said this is the last year of the Grottoes Ruritan's assisting with this event and that the caverns staff will continue to hold the event. Director Shank said the next item he is excited about is a new event that the staff is hosting for nine weeks in the cave called Subterranean Sound. He said this will require advance ticket purchase and only 75 tickets will be sold for each event. Director Shank said he feels this will be a good revenue source during the slower time at the cave. He thanked the council for supporting his new employee model which allows them to host these events to generate more money without having to depend on other departments or volunteers to help. Director Shank said they have received a good response for the Ranger II position, which he hopes to extend an offer within the next week. He also informed the council that the giftshop renovations will begin in January 2024.

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Plaster said we have an application for conditional use permit. Clerk Morris said we received an application from Richard and Ashleigh Muttai for conditional use permit for a child day care at 402 Augusta Avenue. She stated that the property is zoned B-1 and a child day care is listed as a conditional use in the B-1 zoning. Clerk Morris said the planning commission reviewed the request and recommended council set a joint public hearing, which is the only action that needs to happen tonight. Mayor Plaster asked if the council was prepared to make a motion to set a joint public hearing for the next council meeting. Council member Leeth replied so moved. Council member Justis seconded the motion. The vote carried by a vote of 6-0, voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; LEETH – AYE

OLD BUSINESS – none

CLOSED SESSION - On motion by Council member Bailey, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; LEETH – AYE; the Council recessed the meeting from 7:28 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., for a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)1 of the Code of Virginia for matters relating to personnel.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Bailey, and carried by a vote of 6 to 0, voting recorded as follows: CHITTUM - AYE; BAILEY – AYE; JUSTIS – 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. T. Leeth; so certified, M. Kohl; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified, J. Justis; so certified, J. Bailey; so certified, E. Chittum, so certified.

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Mayor

Clerk

TOWN OF GROTTOS CONDITIONAL (SPECIAL) USE PERMIT

APPLICATION CHECKLIST: Before this application can be accepted for processing, the applicant must submit the following:

- A. Complete the application in full and sign. (If not landowner, the landowner must also sign).
- B. Enclose sketch as required in application. The sketch must be to scale and no larger than 8-1/2" x 11"
- C. Please contact the Assistant to the Town Manager (249-5896) for appointment to review the completed application.

If application is not complete, it will not be accepted.

APPLICANT: Ashleigh Muttai / Richard Muttai
Circle if: owner purchaser other

MAILING ADDRESS: 1111 Scruggs Lane Daytime Phone: 267 236 8478
Grottoes VA 24441 Ashleigh Muttai
City/Town State Zip Contact Person

EMAIL ADDRESS: ashleighmuttai@gmail.com

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 402 Augusta Ave

USE APPLIED FOR: Child Day Care

PARCEL INFORMATION: _____

ACREAGE IN PARCEL: .1570 ZONING: B1

TAX MAP NO: 160D4-8-22D ACREAGE IN REQUEST, IF NOT WHOLE PARCEL: _____

SIZE AND HEIGHT OF EXISTING OR PROPOSED BUILDING: 6,534 square feet 1 story

REQUIRED INFORMATION

Section 15.2-2284 of the Code of Virginia states that, "Zoning ordinances and districts shall be drawn and applied with reasonable consideration for the existing use and character of property, the comprehensive plan, the suitability of property for various uses, the trends of growth and change, the current and future requirements of the community as to land for various purposes as determined by population and economic studies and other studies, the transportation requirements of the community, the requirements for airports, housing, schools, parks, playgrounds, recreation areas and other public services, the conservation of natural resources, the preservation of flood plains, the preservation of agricultural and forestall land, the conservation of properties and their values and the encouragement of the most appropriate use of land throughout the locality."

Please answer the following questions and where required, attach additional information to this application. The information provided will be reviewed by Town staff in their analysis of your request.

An application for a conditional use permit shall be considered incomplete when an applicant fails to provide the following required information.

A. Are there any historical features, listed on a national or state registry, located on the property? If so, please provide documentation. no

B. Are there any wetlands or sinkholes, as delineated by a professional engineer, located on the property? If so, please provide documentation. _____

C. Are there any known cemeteries located on the property? no

D. Explain in detail your proposal, hours of operation, number of employees, customer trips expected, etc.
Child Day Care 8am - 4:45m 6-7 employees parent/care giver of child will come twice daily
Monday - Friday

If the applicant wishes to offer any conditions for this special use request, please provide a copy of the of those conditions signed by those property owners listed on the deed of ownership.

FURNISH ON 8 1/2" X 11 PAPER, ONE (1) COPY OF A DRAWING SHOWING:

- (1) Size and shape of parcel of land where use or building is to be located.
- (2) Location of use of proposed and/or existing buildings—distance from streets and from adjoining property.
- (3) Size and shape of proposed and/or existing buildings.
- (4) Access to and from property.
- (5) Any planned screening or landscaping.
- (7) Number and location of off-street parking spaces.
- (8) Specify proposed use of area (if not contained in building).


Applicant Signature

Landowner's Signature
(if different from applicant)

NOTE: ALL APPLICANTS OR LANDOWNERS MUST SIGN THE APPLICATION

*****FOR OFFICE USE ONLY*****

FEE: \$200.00 _____

DATE REC: 11/20/23

TAXES PAID 2021

HEARING DATE: 1/8/24

APPROVED / DENIED

gravel road

grass

adult table
Bathroom
Cabinets
Keeping
vs.
Trash can
Cubby/coat rack area
boffer on wall

utility room

12ft X 38ft storage room

closet

Circle Time/learning

File Cabinets for
Activities

Chalk/white board

Shelving/corridors
for school supplies

Table for
5 yr olds

chair

table for
3 yr olds

table for
4 yr olds

table for
2 yr olds

31ft X 49ft
School room

Meal Area
table for
2 yr olds
table for
3 yr olds
table for
4 yr olds
table for
5 yr olds

Lotting Cage

sick area
employee/director
office 2ft X 10ft

parent walk way

Vacant building

pavement walk way

Entrance on
Augusta Ave
462 Augusta Ave
6400 sq ft building

machine parking lot

machine parking lot

back of vacant building

back of #102 Augusta Avenue

Bathing Cage

gravel road

gravel road

← 30 ft →

900 sqft fenced in outdoor play area planning to lease from field owner

↑ 30 ft ↓

Open grass field

Grottoes Volunteer Fire Department

2024 Officers:

Fire Chief - Andrew Holloway

Assistant Chief - Jeff Morris

Captain - Ben Brown

Lieutenant - Donald Simmons

Lieutenant - Hunter Garrison

President - Linda Kegley

Vice President - Megan Roach

Secretary - Rebecca Acker

Chaplin – Connie Morris

Historian – Jeanne Kirby

Board Members:

Kevin Campbell

Timmy Morris

Steve Kegley

Wanda Rittenhouse

Jeff Morris

Josh Holloway



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Stefanie McAlister, Town Manager
DATE: 4 January 2024
SUBJECT: Staff Report

1. Comprehensive Plan Update

Following the December council meeting an agreement was entered into with the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission for an update to the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Through this agreement the town is retaining the services of the CSPDC and its staff to lead the development and update of its plan which will reflect a community vision for the next 20 year and will establish goals, recommendations, and strategies to achieve that vision. The time period for this service will begin on January 30, 2024, and continue for approximately 12- 18 months. The cost of the service is \$30,000.

On January 30, 2024, at 7PM, during the regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission, staff from the CSPDC will be on-site to hold a "Comprehensive Planning 101" course which will serve as the project kickoff meeting. Please make plans to attend that meeting.

2. 3rd Well Project

As previously discussed with the council and based on our desire to work toward bringing the 3rd well owned by the town into the current water system, I have engaged the services of our contracted engineer, Rob Mangrum to begin work on the project. The scope of his work includes the survey, design, VDH permitting, VDOT permitting, coordination with County and construction phase services for the Well House 3 and Transmission Main Project. The to be constructed/purchased well house will be a precast building with necessary electrical controls and piping. The well will be designed to operate in unison with the existing controls of wells 1 and 2. This phase of the project totals \$29,340.

3. Performance Evaluations

Town staff leadership and supervisors are in the process of completing performance evaluations for all employees. Evaluations are completed by the supervisor, reviewed by the respective department head and then by the town manager. After those reviews, the evaluation is discussed with the employee and signed as received. This process will be completed by January 19th. Council members can contact me if they would like to review any evaluation.

Treasurer's Staff Report

January 2024

Audit

We are still in the process of filling FY21 audit requests such as providing reports, pulling samples and answering standard procedure questions. I will have a better timeline to report next month as to the expected completion of FY21 and getting the FY22 scheduled.

Maximum Investment Sweep Account

We have received two interest payments since entering a sweep account with Atlantic Union Bank. The month of November totaled \$8,874.67 and the month of December totaled \$8,701.97. Both months were at an interest rate of 2.40%.

Taxes

Both real estate and personal property bills have been mailed. Taxes are due February 5th. This is the first year that we are offering card payments to residents online and in the office. We are expecting an easy transition with this this process. All payments can now be made by card and online.

RE Tax bills printed and mailed: 4,214
Total Billing Amount: \$302,434.32

PP Tax bills printed and mailed: 2,411
Total Billing Amount: \$180,021.84

Utility Billing

Billing Period: 10/15/2023 – 12/15/2023
Total Billing Amount: \$192,192.42
Billing Date: 1/5/2024
Due Date: 2/5/2024
Number of Bills Generated: 1380
Number of Bills Printed: 1013
Number of Bills Emailed: 367

Accounts Payable

Number of December Checks: 64
Total December AP Expense: \$138,809.10



Land Development Staff Report January 2024

Zoning Permits issued (December 2023)

- 6 Permits
 - 3 Single-Family
 - 0 Town houses
 - 3 Fence

2023 total to date

98 Total Permits
2023 Total Dwellings
 18 Single-Family
 14 Townhouse units

Forest Station - (21st Street) – Construction continues on the first group of six townhouses. The developer has successfully completed the 12” water connection.

Cherry Street Townhouses - Construction continues on the Cherry Street Townhouses.

R-7 Area East of Cherry Avenue – Single family residential development continues, and the developers continue to run all service lines and construct the roads to state standards. Active construction continues along 16th Street and 14th Street.

Shady Creek – The developer is working on a contractual agreement with Ryan Homes. If this agreement happens construction on the next phase will begin spring of 2024. Site plan review has been completed and approved by town staff and all departments at Rockingham County for Phases 3-7. The developer has obtained the easements for the left turn lane off Eastside Highway, which must be completed before phase 6 (townhouses) can begin.

402 Augusta Avenue - Conditional Use Permit – A copy of the application was included in last month’s packet. At the December meeting a joint public hearing was scheduled for January 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. The applicant has applied for a conditional use permit for a child day care at 402 Augusta Avenue which is zoned B-1. Per the Grottoes Town Code, a child day care is listed as conditional use in the B-1 zoning. The applicant is aware this property does not provide a grassy play area and they have arranged a grassy play area from an adjoining property owner. They have been working with state licensure requirements to make sure the property is in compliance and that all required inspections will be done through Rockingham County.

700 Dogwood Avenue – Construction has started at 700 Dogwood Avenue for the approved conditional use permit with building containing a commercial front and a two-family residential back.

Respectfully submitted:
 Tara Morris, Assistant to Town Manager

Grottoes Police Department

Staff Report

January 2024

Staffing

	Authorized	Filled	Vacant
Chief	1	1	0
Administrative Asst.	1	1	0
Sergeant	1	1	0
Officer	4	2	2

Ofc. A.G. Elmore resigned as of January 4, 2024. He has decided to return to the Rockingham County Sheriff's office. He feels he will have greater opportunity for advancement in the Sheriff's Office.

Chief Sullivan will be working a patrol schedule to cover the vacant shifts created by the resignation of Ofc. A.G. Elmore.

Recruitment efforts are being conducted to fill the vacant positions.

Following are the calls for service, organized by category, handed by the department in 2023. They are organized by category.

Community Services:

- Business Checks- 1,736
- Extra Patrols- 5,832
- Requested Residence / Security Checks= 376
- Police services (advise/information/ other uncategorized calls)- 415
- Property Checks- 74
- Directed Patrols -27
- Special Events
 - Caverns 5k (traffic control)
 - Kids Fish Day (hosted)
 - Fireman Lawn Party (4 days of security and traffic control)
 - End of Summer Bash (security)
 - Party in the Park (security)
 - Trunk or Treat (participated)
 - Veterans Day (attended)
 - Memorial Day (attended)
 - Pedal Push or Pull Parade (traffic control and participated)
 - Christmas Parade/ Tree Lighting (traffic control)

Traffic Safety Enforcement

- Traffic Stops - 519
- Reckless Driving complaints - 10
- Traffic complaints - 88
- Traffic Control -16
- Parking Violations – 24
- Hit and Run - 10

Crimes Against Person

- Simple Assault - 3
- Domestic Assault – 14
- Domestic assault with a weapon – 1
- Scam Complaints – 13
- Brandishing – 1
- Harassment – 10
- Protective Order Violations – 3
- Sex Offense – 4
- Threats/ intimidation - 14

Property Crimes

- Attempted Breaking and Entering – 2
- Breaking & entering residential – 1 (vacant residence)
- Trespassing – 20
- Larceny- 15
- Vehicle theft – 2
- Property Damage – 10
- Fraud - 19

Crimes Against Society

- Narcotics Violation – 12
- Intoxicated in Public – 5
- Counterfeiting – 1
- Town Ordinance Violations – 96
- Disorderly Conduct - 74

Non-Criminal Calls for Service

- ECO/ TDO – 8
- Juvenile Cases – 16
- Suspicious Person – 50
- Suspicious Vehicle – 138
- Civil Matters – 24
- Welfare Checks – 56
- Cardiac Arrest – 11
- Mental Health – 16
- Unresponsive Person – 6
- Assist other Agencies – 55
- Suicide Attempts – 5
- Suicide Threats - 10
- Found property – 13
- Unknown medical emergency -3
- Unknown situation - 11

Paperwork Service

- Warrant Services (attempting to locate wanted subject) – 123
- Protective Order Services – 17
- Trespassing Notices - 13

Respectfully submitted:
Jason Sullivan
Chief of Police

January 2024

PUBLIC WORKS STAFF REPORT

Staffing	Authorized	Filled	Vacant
Public Works Director	1	1	0
Asst. Public Works Director	1	1	0
Public Works Crew Leader	1	1	0
Maintenance/Utilities Tech	4	4	0
Wastewater Treatment Operator	1	1	0
Part-Time Seasonal Laborer	3	1	2

Continued development in town will mean more roads that will be brought into our system that will need to be maintained, plowed of snow, paved, etc. Maintaining sufficient staffing levels is critical and should be evaluated periodically.

STREETS

Two rounds of leaf collection have been concluded.

Smith's Paving has worked to pave the street sections on our priority list for 2023. Striping of lines will be completed this week.

Our salt inventory is at a reasonable capacity and should last through several storms. Snow removal equipment has been prepared and serviced.

WATER AND SEWER

Septic Tanks

Staff are working a rotating schedule to get the septic tank pumping back on a consistent schedule. In the future, we will be pumping businesses in town with higher sewer usage (i.e., restaurants and convenience stores) more frequently, once a year, at a minimum. Currently there are 1,107 septic tanks in town. Besides working on a consistent rotating schedule of pumping, staff also pump tanks as requested by citizens. Of that total number of tanks, 335 (33%) have not been pumped in the last 10 years and are our priority. The EPA suggests that septic tanks should be pumped every 5 years. Since our system is designed differently than a typical residential septic tank and drain field system, pumping should not be necessary that frequently. However, the staff is working to ensure that all tanks are inspected at a minimum every 5 years, and a log citing the condition of the tank is kept.

Wastewater Plant

Currently the WWTP operates at about 75% - 80% of its operating capacity. There is a need to begin planning for the dredging of Lagoon A. Over the years sludge accumulates in lagoons and should be periodically removed. Our understanding is that this has not happened in Lagoon A. As sludge builds the capacity of the lagoon diminishes and makes the processing less tolerant of infiltration. There is much involved with a lagoon dredging project especially considering that this is a clay lined lagoon. Staff will continue to investigate how to move forward with this project.

Mr. Wolverton does great work for the town in running, complying, and maintaining the WWTP.

A.J. met with Rob Mangrum at the WWTP and they began discussing ways to make the plant run more efficiently and to look at ways to upgrade the plant in the future. Staff is in the process of getting quotes for a manhole install on Holly Ave. to place a totalizer to read the inflow of sewage. This will let us keep a record of wet and dry events and, I&I issues.

Water

Town staff in the coming months will be busy getting 2" and 8" main line valves installed to help isolate for leak repairs.

Our staff is updating the GIS map of the utilities whenever a new asset is found or is worked on.

Staff changed out the meter that is located on Well #2. The old meter quit registering and we were unable to get accurate information. We notified the health department of this swap out to ensure they are kept informed.

The staff is working with SLM Enterprises to install a totalizer in the elevated tank to read the tank level. The access point has been installed on the water tank for the probe. This will allow the pumps to cut on using tank level. They are currently cut on by line pressure which fluctuates and is hard to adjust. We will also be able to keep the tanks fuller.

New construction

The Public Works Department conducts inspections for all new water, sewer, and street installations throughout town. As we all know there is a lot of construction around town. The town staff is always looking and trying to plan on the water and sewer service increases. Glo fiber is in the process of running conduit in the alley ways around town which in turn is keeping the Town staff busy marking utilities and repairing sewer laterals. R&L construction is also in full swing of building houses on 16th.St.

VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

The department supplies preventative maintenance for the Town's equipment and vehicles, including the police department.

The new septic tank body has been received for the septic pump truck. We are scheduled for drop off of the pump truck next week 1/4/2024 to have the new tank installed. While it is out of service Cline's Septic will be on call to pump any tanks that need pumped.

PARKS AND FACILITIES

Public works staff are working with Parks & Tourism staff to get projects at both parks completed. With the hiring of Park Ranger 2s, we will be working on training these staff members to ensure that they're up to date on procedures and safety information.

12/5/2023	Maintenance	Well 2	DS,BK,TB,JP,	Replace old well meter	Replaced old well meter	Water	7 Hrs.
12/5/2023	Maintenance	700 Dogwood Ave.	JP,LR	Replace water meter	Replaced meter & setter	Water	2 Hrs.
12/5/2023	Maintenance	Garage	DS,BK	Pump truck not pumping	Worked on pump	Sewer	2.5 Hrs.
12/6/2023	Maintenance	C Street	DS,LR,JS,JP	Fill low spot install riser on valve box	Installed riser filled low spot	Water	1 Hr.
12/6/2023	Maintenance	92 Cary	LR,JS	Low septic tank lids	Installed risers to grade	Sewer	5 Hrs.
12/7/2023	Maintenance	Red Maple & Laurel Oks	DS,JP,BK	Replace old meters	Installed new Radio meters	Water	7 Hrs.
12/7/2023	Homeowner	110 6th. St.	TB,AJ	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/11/2023	Homeowner	1102 Cherry Ave.	BK,TB	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/12/2023	Maintenance	Entrance to Food Lion	BK	Stop sign down	Fixed sign	Streets	1 Hr.
12/13/2023	Homeowner	208 5th. St.	TB,JS	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/17/2023	Homeowner	Food Lion	TB,LR	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/18/2023	Homeowner	201 5th. St.	JS,LR	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/18/2023	Homeowner	306 17th. St.	BK,LR	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/19/2023	Homeowner	Food Lion	DS,LR,JS	Pump septic tank	Clogged on owner	Sewer	3 Hrs.
12/19/2023	Homeowner	201 8th. St.	JS,LR	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/20/2023	Maintenance	306 17th. St.	BK,LR	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/20/2023	Maintenance	110 6th. St.	DS,JP	Replace baffle in septic tank	Installed new baffle	Sewer	8 Hrs.
12/20/2023	Maintenance	806 11th. St.	JP,BK	Leaking meter gasket	Tightened meter	Water	.5 Hrs.
12/26/2023	Homeowner	403 5th. St.	BK,LR	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/28/2023	Maintenance	109 3rd. St.	JS,LR	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/28/2023	Maintenance	2101 Elm. Ave.	JS,LR	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/28/2023	Homeowner	805 12th.St.	JS,LR	Pump septic tank	Pumped septic tank	Sewer	2 Hrs.
12/28/2023	Maintenance	95 Grace St.	DS,BK	Septic lid broke	Replaced septic lid	Sewer	.5 Hrs.
12/29/2023	Maintenance	Grace&Augusta	DS,BK	Street sign knocked over	Put sign back up	Streets	1 Hr.

**Parks & Tourism Staff Report
January 2024**

Staffing:	Authorized	Filled	Vacant
Parks & Tourism Director	1	1	0
Parks & Tourism Assistant Director	1	1	0
Parks Coordinator	1	1	0
Park Ranger II	2	2	0
Park Ranger I	-	9	-
Park Aide	-	0	-

- Park Aide and Park Ranger I positions replace the prior terminology of Tour Guide. Previously, there were 21 authorized tour guide positions. Staff will determine employee numbers once each position type is filled. With this improved staffing structure, we anticipate needing fewer overall employees.

Revenue:

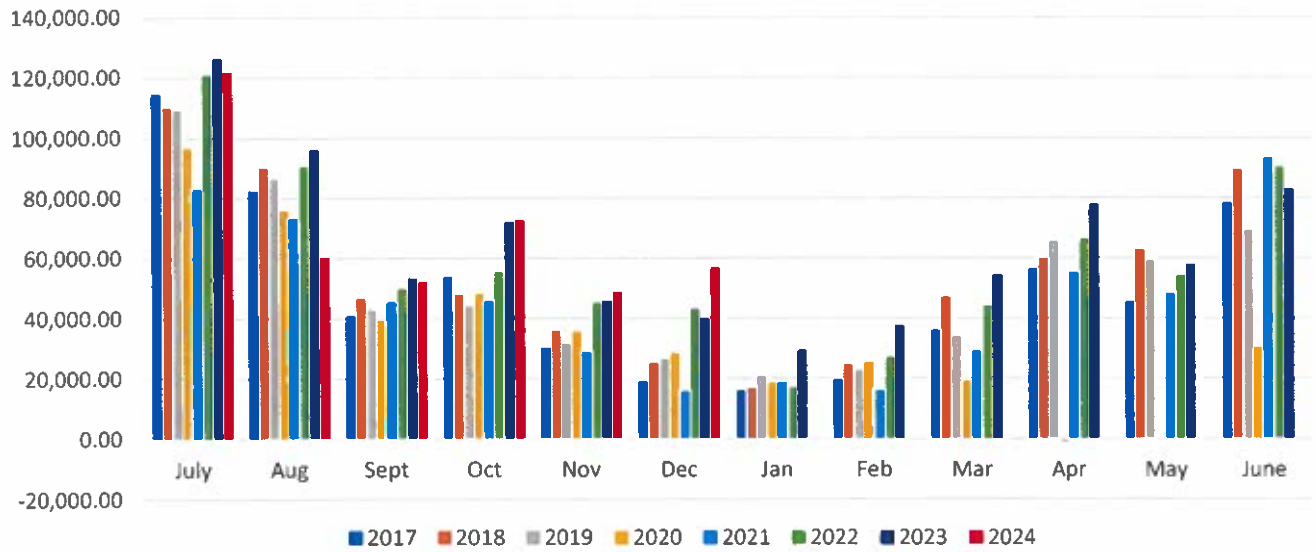
Parks & Tourism generated \$56,869.12 in revenue for the month of December. To compare them with previous years please reference the charts at the end of this report.

1. **Subterranean Sound:** The promotion of this concert series began on 12/22nd with tickets going live at 8:30 am on 12/26th, the day after Christmas. At 75 seats each for a total of 8 concerts, 2 shows sold out in less than 2 hours, 6 shows were sold out within 8 hours, presently, 7 of the 8 shows are sold out. This marked the largest single day of sales in the Parks & Tourism Department’s history; \$20,345.88 on 12/26/23. Since that time, it has been decided that additional concerts will be facilitated for the bands who are interested, which has expanded our 8 concerts to 12. This development was announced to the public on Friday 1/5th with tickets going live on 1/13th. We have no reason to expect a different result as these tickets become available. The Parks & Tourism Department has also received an outpouring of interest from other bands, recording studios, photographers, and special event coordinators as a result. Town staff will endeavor to capitalize on these opportunities and pursue additional business opportunities. Again, I want to thank both Town Administration and Town Council for their support in our staffing reorganization. We are now better equipped to attract and capture unique business opportunities.
2. **Park Ranger II positions filled.** At the discretion of the Town Manager and the Personnel Committee, the Parks & Tourism Department was able to extend two FT Park Ranger II positions. They have both accepted and will begin, together, on Tuesday, January 16th. One of these Park Ranger II’s is an internal applicant, Diana Slagell. She impressed us throughout the application/interview process, and just as importantly, throughout her time working for the Town of Grottoes. Our second Park Ranger II is an external applicant, Ms. Kelly Parkman. Ms. Parkman comes to us with a Bachelor’s in Sports & Recreation Management, through JMU, and years of experience as a tour guide with kayaking and SUP. She most recently served on the first all-women’s Conservation Corps team at Grand Teton National Park where she constructed new trails, restored habitat, and conducted scientific surveys all while camping in the wilderness.
3. **Giftshop Renovation.** A renovation project will begin during the week of 1/8 – 1/12th, for which, Grand Cavern daily operations will be closed. We’ll reopen on 1/13th and continue finishing up the renovation work during the week while business is historically slow.

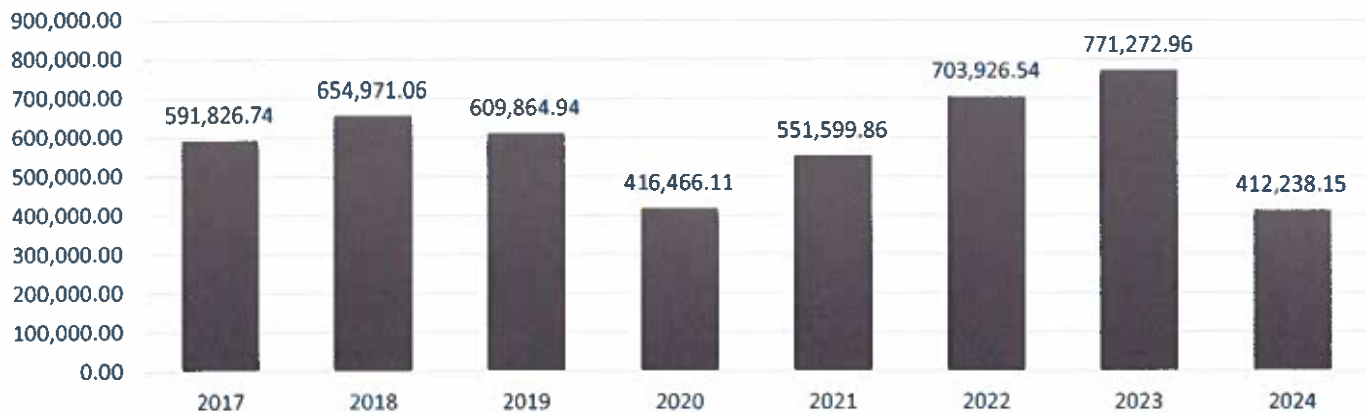
Respectfully submitted,
Austin Shank, Parks & Tourism Director

Revenue per Month by Fiscal Year

	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
July	114,666.02	109,906.75	109,049.62	96,790.05	83,045.02	121,183.39	126,333.08	121,896.53
August	82,400.00	90,052.60	86,369.02	75,955.14	73,099.04	90,498.86	95,857.62	60,252.18
September	40,864.00	46,500.01	42,753.13	39,037.34	45,294.81	49,867.95	53,129.49	52,043.89
October	53,621.00	47,728.97	44,111.49	48,171.93	45,446.76	55,187.46	71,849.43	72,362.94
November	29,960.14	35,864.01	31,040.05	35,719.21	28,575.92	45,122.38	45,510.93	48,813.49
December	19,065.81	25,078.17	26,501.92	28,439.56	15,788.80	43,131.17	39,826.13	56,869.12
January	15,989.60	16,933.85	20,391.97	18,631.61	18,618.06	17,038.43	29,243.19	
February	19,589.22	24,394.21	22,570.37	25,357.98	16,009.96	27,089.55	37,269.68	
March	35,916.00	46,890.09	33,851.06	19,130.58	28,944.34	44,157.10	54,117.45	
April	56,393.64	59,677.04	65,301.31	-777.78	55,284.51	66,405.33	77,696.74	
May	45,428.42	62,606.36	58,972.15	50.60	48,287.55	53,997.59	57,678.58	
June	77,932.89	89,339.00	68,952.85	29,959.89	93,205.09	90,247.33	82,750.64	
Total	591,826.74	654,971.06	609,864.94	416,466.11	551,599.86	703,926.54	771,272.96	412,238.15



Total Revenue



New Business
#1 b.

**RESOLUTION
#20240108-01**

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 2024

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 2024. In accordance with the Town Charter, beginning January 8, 2024, 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 October shall be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

B) Inclement Weather Policy for Council Meetings for 2024. If a meeting cannot be held due to inclement weather or for any reason as determined by the Mayor, or 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.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

Date

Town of Grottoes
2024 Meeting Dates

	Work Session 6:00pm	Town Council 7:00 pm	Planning Commission 6:00pm
Jan	8	8	30
Feb	12	12	
Mar	11	11	26
Apr	8	8	
May	13	13	28
Jun	10	10	
Jul	8	8	30
Aug	12	12	
Sept	9	9	24
Oct	16*Wednesday	16	
Nov	11	11	26
Dec	9	9	

Unless otherwise posted all Council meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall. Work session meetings will be held at 6:00 pm, prior to the council meetings. The Planning Commission will meet at 6:00 p.m. on their scheduled date. If you have any questions, please call the Town Office at 540-249-5896.

Thank you!

2024 Committee Assignments

New Business
#2

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair: David Raynes
Jo Plaster
Tim Leeth

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION COMMITTEE

Chair: Jo Plaster
David Raynes
Michael Kohl

ORDINANCE, HEALTH AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Chair: Michael Kohl - Planning Commission Liaison
Joshua Bailey
Eddie Chittum

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

Chair: Tim Leeth
Jim Justis
Jo Plaster

WATER & SEWER COMMITTEE

Chair: Joshua Bailey
Eddie Chittum
Tim Leeth

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Chair: Eddie Chittum
Jim Justis
Michael Kohl

STREETS AND STREET LIGHTS COMMITTEE

Chair: Jim Justis
Joshua Bailey
David Raynes

**RESOLUTION
20240108-02**

A RESOLUTION TO REAFFIRM AND ADOPT A CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE GROTTOS 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 8th day of January 2024, the following Code of Conduct and Ethics, including Conduct and Ethical Standards, are hereby reaffirmed, and adopted:

GROTTOS 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 trying 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.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL

Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

Date

Jo Plaster, Mayor

David Raynes,

Tim Leeth

Michael Kohl

Jim Justis

Joshua Bailey

Eddie Chittum