

FEBRUARY 12TH, 2024 MEETING MINUTES

A meeting of the Rich Creek Town Council was held on Monday, February 12th, 2024, at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, located at 250 Old Virginia Avenue, Rich Creek, Virginia, with the following individuals present:

Roger Jones, Mayor
Mark Clemons, Council
Mervin Swartout, Town Manager
Warren Wilson, RCVFD

Stuart Helm, Council
Darlene French, Council
Debbie Morris, Asst. Clerk
Helen Swartout

William Kantsios, Council
Joyce Crawford, Council
Steve Buckland, Police Chief

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Jones opened the meeting followed by the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 8TH, 2024 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Kantsios moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2024, meeting, and the motion was seconded by Mrs. French. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following voting YES: Mrs. French, Mr. Kantsios, Mr. Helm, Mr. Clemons and Mrs. Crawford.

RICH CREEK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT-Warren Wilson

The January Treasurer's & Activity Report was reviewed. Mr. Wilson provided a cost comparison of original purchase price and replacement cost, of the trucks, equipment, and firefighting apparatus. He said the department has three new members, who transferred from the Glen Lyn Fire Department.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

OLD BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON THE RICH CREEK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Swartout reported the next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 6PM.

B. UPDATE ON THE NEW FIRE HALL

Mayor Jones reported the third-party review has been completed and the Giles County Building Department is reviewing the documentation.

C. CONSIDERATION OF LAND EASEMENT FROM UNITED HYDRAULICS

Mr. Swartout reported United Hydraulics is not interested in extending the proposed land easement over the proposed 10 years. He said Mr. Eric Gentry will verify the town's property lines for an estimated cost of \$500-\$800. After some discussion, **Mr. Helm moved to approve the survey, to confirm the town boundary line with United Hydraulics and the motion was seconded by Mr. Clemons. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following voting YES: Mrs. French, Mr. Kantsios, Mr. Helm, Mr. Clemons and Mrs. Crawford.**

D. UPDATE ON THE LEAD & COPPER SURVEY GRANT

Mr. Swartout said there were two Request for Proposals (RFP) received, however one of the RFPs was rejected due to being received after the 2:00 PM deadline. He said the one valid RFP was submitted by CHA Consulting Inc. Mayor Jones called Mr. Stevie Steele (CHA) to ask when a contract could be initiated, and he said he would send the contract over via email this evening. Mr. Steele said his company will identify what type of service lines are on both sides of the water meter and explained if there are any funds left over from the grant, the funds can be used towards the purchase of equipment that may be needed to work more efficiently. He said Council can approve the contract at their next meeting and he will contact Mr. Swartout, prior to the meeting, to review the contract.

E. DISCUSSION & APPROVAL OF THE EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL POLICY-HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The following change to the Employee Personnel Policy was presented for approval:

➤ **Holidays**

It is the policy of the Town of Rich Creek to follow the Commonwealth of Virginia Holiday Calendar, as set annually by the Governor.

On April 10, 2023 the Rich Creek Town Council approved the reinstatement of Good Friday, and during a regular meeting of Council on January 8, 2024, this holiday schedule was confirmed.

Council approved the policy change.

F. DISCUSSION & APPROVAL OF THE WATER LEAK POLICY

Mr. Helm asked about the possibility of upgrading the current system by installing antennas on towers so the water meters can be read from the office. The policy was reviewed, and **Mr. Clemons moved to approve the Water Leak Policy, to include a 25% leak loss charge and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Crawford. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following voting YES: Mrs. French, Mr. Kantsios, Mr. Helm, Mr. Clemons and Mrs. Crawford.**

NEW BUSINESS

A. SET DATE FOR SPRING CLEAN-UP WEEK

Mrs. Crawford made a motion to purchase 50 bags of mulch, to place in the islands on Main Street and the motion was seconded by Mr. Kantsios. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following voting YES: Mrs. French, Mr. Kantsios, Mr. Helm, Mr. Clemons and Mrs. Crawford. Mr. Helm asked for an update on VDOT maintaining the side street mowing and Mr. Swartout reported the Town of Glen Lyn has a side mower attachment Mr. Howard Spencer has agreed to loan it to the Town for the town employees to mow along the side streets. He said Mr. David Trump (VDOT) has agreed to supply the Town with weed killer to maintain the week growth along the side streets. Mayor Jones provided Mr. Swartout the contact information for Mr. Charlie Mullins, regarding the community service litter collection along the roads. **Mr. Helm moved to approve the week of April 15-19, 2024 for Spring Clean-Up Week and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Crawford. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following voting YES: Mrs. French, Mr. Kantsios, Mr. Helm, Mr. Clemons and Mrs. Crawford.**

B. CONSIDERATION OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE RICH CREEK & PEMBROKE POLICE DEPARTMENTS, REGARDING THE USE OF PEMBROKE'S K-9 UNIT

Mr. Kantsios moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Rich Creek and Pembroke Police Department's K-9 Unit and the motion was seconded by Mrs. French. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following voting YES: Mrs. French, Mr. Kantsios, Mr. Helm, Mr. Clemons and Mrs. Crawford.

C. REVIEW OF THE RICH CREEK LION'S CLUB/GENTRY'S LANDING FY2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Kantsios asked if the employee identified in the report was working for the Town when the mowing was performed at the campground and Mayor Jones said the Town has always provided the equipment and the Rich Creek Lion's Club pays the employee for the service and the employee performed the job on his off-duty hours.

D. CONSIDERATION OF PURCHASING COMMERCIAL GRADE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS FOR THE BRIDGE

The Town Clerk presented information for the purchase of commercial grade greenery and additional decorations for the bridge. She explained the items suggested are on sale and if the items are purchased now, it will save the Town \$500+. **Mrs. Crawford moved to approve \$5000 for the purchase of the presented decorations and the motion was seconded by Mr. Helm. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following voting YES: Mrs. French, Mr. Kantsios, Mr. Helm, Mr. Clemons and Mrs. Crawford.**

E. REVIEW OF THE FY24 BUDGET VS ACTUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

There was some discussion regarding the current needs of the Town that need to be considered when working on the FY25 Operating Budget. Mr. Helm suggested Mr. Swartout solicit for quotes on a fire suppression system in the municipal building (i.e. Johnson Controls on a Symmetrix System, etc.)

Mrs. French said she has been asked if the Town will consider installing a fire hydrant near Ronnie and Thelma Fleeman properties. Mayor Jones requested Mr. Swartout look into the possibility of installing a hydrant at the location requested.

TOWN ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

CHIEF OF POLICE-Steve Buckland

January 2024 Activity Report

Accident Investigations: 1 Alarm Activations: 1 Animal Complaints: 0 Arrest: 2
Assist to Citizens: 2 Assist to Other Agencies: 1 Court Related Activities: 11
Criminal/Narcotic Investigations: 1 Disturbance Calls: 1 Fire/Rescue Calls: 2
Property/Business Checks: 82 Reports Submitted: 2 TDO Transports: 0
Bulletins Received: 4 Training Activities: 1 Town Ordinance Violations Investigated: 3

January Activity

- Runaway Juvenile/B&E Woodland Road
- Bomb Threat Pizza Plus
- Suspicious Person Dollar General & Riverside Drive
- Stolen Auto/B&E Cherry Avenue
- Suspicious Person/Attempted B&E Smith's Super Aid Pharmacy
- Felony Child Endangerment Budget Inn motel

PSA REPORT-Mark Clemons

Mr. Clemons reported there has been some discussion of an increase in the solid waste rates and no current plans for a water rate increase.

Mr. Helm asked Mr. Swartout to ask Mr. Stevie Steele what would be involved for the Town to acquire an additional water storage tank (i.e. a study, cost analysis, grant application, etc.) He requested he ask if the any funds left from the \$100,000 Grant can be used towards the purchase of an additional water storage tank or a camera for inspection of the current water storage tank. After some discussion, **Mr. Helm moved to approve the CHA Consulting Inc. contract and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Crawford. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following roll call Vote: Mrs. French, YES; Mr. Kantsios, YES; Mr. Helm, YES; Mr. Clemons, YES; and Mrs. Crawford, YES.**

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT-Mervin Swartout

- December water loss: 10%
- Mr. Swartout said Mr. Eric Gentry's quote to survey the property line at the new fire department site would be between \$500-800
- The PSA continues to work on calibrating the Rich Creek meter connections.
- The position in the public works department is still vacant.

\$2,500 donation to be received from Mountain Valley Pipeline, for the new fire department project. Mr. Swartout said he spoke with the pipeline project administrator, and he reported most of the employees will be gone mid-2024. He said he has not moved forward with the campground plans, after speaking with the administrator. **Mrs. French made a motion to hold off on the plans of creating camping sites, at this time, and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Crawford. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following voting YES: Mrs. French, Mr. Kantsios, Mr. Helm, Mr. Clemons and Mrs. Crawford.** Mr. Swartout said the Walgreen's property has sold and will be used as a tire shop. He said Mr. Kevin Wiley of United Hydraulics has investors who are interested in purchasing other Rich Creek properties and they plan to contact some of the current property owners, to see if the property is for sale.

- The new lawn mower has been purchased, with the cemetery fund paying ½ of the expense.
- Two Flock cameras have been installed and are in operation to assist with missing people, stolen vehicles, etc.
- Wintergreen Apartments have no vacant rooms. There was some discussion regarding the Giles County Head Start program closure this year. Mr. Swartout will contact Mr. Joe Fortier and the Department of Housing & Community Development to find out the status of Rich Creek's contract and obligations.

- The generators located at the Rich Creek Pump Station and Glen Creek Sewer Treatment Plant have been serviced.

Mr. Swartout asked if any members are interested in a Freedom of Information Act refresher course and Council agreed he forward them the information.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance as of January 1, 2024	\$320,798.81
Receipts	144,691.53
Expenses	<u>104,368.55</u>
Balance as of January 31, 2024	\$361,121.79
Balance as of January 31, 2023	\$403,766.32

CERTIFICATE OF ZONING COMPLIANCE ISSUED

611 Woodland Road New front porch/roof construction

PAYMENT OF THE BILLS

Mr. Helm asked about the high-lift invoice and Mr. Swartout said some maintenance was performed on the unit because there is a lot of sway and Mr. Jones said the movement is normal. **Mr. Kantsios moved to approve payment of the bills, presented in the amount of \$49,096.58, and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Crawford. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following roll call vote: Mrs. French, YES; Mr. Kantsios, YES; Mr. Helm, YES; Mr. Clemons, YES; and Mrs. Crawford, YES.**

APPOINTMENT

Mrs. French moved to approve the appointment of Mr. Gary Thompson, to serve the remaining term of Mr. William Kantsios on the Rich Creek Planning Commission (Term expiring August 2025) and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Crawford. The motion was approved unanimously (5-0) by the following voting YES: Mrs. French, Mr. Kantsios, Mr. Helm, Mr. Clemons and Mrs. Crawford.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Offices will be closed on Monday, February 19, 2024 for George Washington Holiday.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Helm moved that Council convene in Executive Session for personnel matters, as allowed by VA Code §2.2-3711, A1, Personnel, to discuss the public works, administration, and police departments and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Crawford. Approved unanimously (5-0) by the following roll call vote: Mrs. French, YES, Mr. Kantsios, YES; Mr. Helm, YES; Mrs. Crawford, YES; and Mr. Clemons, YES.

Mr. Helm moved to return to Regular Session and affirmed that the only thing discussed in Executive Session was personnel matters, as stated in the motion and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Crawford. Approved unanimously (5-0) by the following roll call vote: Mrs. French, YES; Mr. Kantsios, YES; Mr. Helm, YES; Mrs. Crawford, YES; and Mr. Clemons, YES.

It was agreed that Mr. Swartout edit the employee job descriptions and Mr. Swartout stated he has already edited all job descriptions to say an employee is not required to attend the town council meetings, unless needed or by request.

Mayor Jones asked the Town Clerk to order new signs for Woodland Park, to list the park hours of operation (May 1st - September 30th).

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Roger Jones, Mayor

Pamela Kantsios, Town Clerk

