

Mayor D. Dwayne Tuggle called a regular monthly meeting of the Amherst Town Council to order on October 11, 2017, at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall at 174 S. Main Street. Council members Kenneth S. Watts, Kenneth G. Bunch, and Mark A. Stinnett were present with Council member Andra Higginbotham joining the meeting at the start of the closed session. Council Member Rachel A. Carton was absent. Interim Town Manager Peter Huber, Town Attorney W. Thomas Berry, Office Manager Tracie Wright, and Interim Police Chief Greg Harler were present.

Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was followed by an invocation given by Kenneth S. Watts.

Mayor Tuggle opened the floor for citizen comments.

Mr. Clifford Hart, 219 Garland Avenue, Amherst, VA, came forward to commend the Town and VDOT for the new pavement and markings along Main Street and Route 60. He also asked if white lines demarcating individual parking space were going to be painted and whether there would also be “share-the-road” markings to go with the bike lanes. Mayor Tuggle responded that white lines demarcating parking spaces would be the responsibility to the Town and that “share-the-road” would likely be designated through additional signage.

Mr. Bunch made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Stinnett, and carried 3-0-2 to approve the minutes from the September 13, 2017, and September 27, 2017, meetings. Messrs. Watts, Bunch, and Stinnett voted “Aye.” Mrs. Carton and Mr. Higginbotham were absent.

Mr. Watts made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Stinnett, and carried 3-0-2 to approve the letter transmitting the requested charter changes to state legislators representing the Town of Amherst. Messrs. Watts, Bunch, and Stinnett voted “Aye.” Mrs. Carton and Mr. Higginbotham were absent.

Interim Town Manager Huber reported that there was not a quorum at the October 4, 2017, Planning Commission meeting but that the Commission heard comments from citizens regarding the proposed rezoning of 4.92 acres of land at 258 S. Main Street from B-2 to CBD. While the Commission could not take any official action at the meeting, the matter would be placed on its November 1 meeting agenda for the purpose of making a recommendation to the Town Council. In addition, staff has advertised a public hearing on this matter at the November 8, 2017, Council meeting.

The Town Planning Commission will also hold a public hearing at 7:30 PM on November 1, 2017, in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall at 174 South Main Street. The subject of the hearing is a proposal by Waukeshaw Development, Inc., to rezone 7.17 acres of land at 140 Union Hill Road (TM#s 96A7 A 26-29) otherwise known as the Old Mill Property, from General Residential District R-2 to B-2.

Council reviewed correspondence and reports noting that the public safety committee was working on an events policy, that the finance committee was working on a donations policy, that the utilities committee would be working with the Town Engineer to develop a wholesale rate for the treatment of sewer from Sweet Briar College, and that the personnel committee would be reviewing applications for Town Manager following the October 25th review date.

Mr. Stinnett made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Watts and passed 3-0-2 with Messrs. Watts, Bunch and Stinnett, voting “Aye” and Mrs. Carton and Mr. Higginbotham absent, to approve the requests that

the Town support the 2017 Annual Ray Puckett Lions Club Christmas Parade scheduled for Friday, December 2, 2017, on or about 6:30 P.M. subject to the following understandings:

- The Town staff would apply for the required VDOT permit that would allow the parade to “form up” on N. Main Street and proceed through the traffic circle and along S. Main Street to the library on that evening;
- That not less than five other law enforcement officers would contribute assistance to Town police and public works employees in providing traffic control for the event; and
- That the Town of Amherst would provide the usual nominal support such as posting entry forms and parade lineup information on the Town’s web site and otherwise encouraging participation and enjoyment of this traditional community event.

Routing options for a proposed trail connecting Sweet Briar College with the Town were briefly described with the consensus being to use existing easements and right-of-ways with the development of infrastructure such as lights, paving and other amenities to come later through grants. Office Manager Wright reported that auditors from Davis Doyle & Hilton had requested an extension in the completion of the audit report but that they had not responded to a call confirming presentation of their audit of the Town’s FY17 financial records at the November meeting.

Interim Town Manager Peter Huber gave oral reports on a proposed application for \$300,000 through the Go Virginia initiative to address regional workforce development issues with plans to include endorsement of the application on the November 8, 2017 agenda pending further information. It was noted that other matters for consideration by Council at the November meeting included the public hearing on rezoning the property at 258 South Main Street, scheduling a rezoning hearing for the Old Mill property, and planned presentation of audit report.

Mayor Tuggle opened the floor to citizen comments. No comments were made.

Following brief discussion Mr. Watts made the following motion, which was seconded by Mr. Brunch and carried 3-0-2 with Messrs. Bunch, Stinnett and Watts voting in favor and Mrs. Carton and Mr. Higginbotham absent: I move that the Town Council grant December 26, 2017, as a paid holiday for all Town employees and that the Town of Amherst Personnel Policy be amended to grant Christmas Eve as a holiday for Town employees and that Columbus Day be deleted as a holiday in exchange with the goal of allowing Town employees to spend more quality time with their families during the holiday season.

Mayor Tuggle commended the following for their work to improve the Town of Amherst:

1. Young Men of Valor for their work in cutting brush from the Pitsenbarger property at the corner of Millner and Washington streets;
2. VDOT staff for all the new pavement and markings on Main Street and Route 60 east with particular appreciation for the improvement to the Food Lion shopping center;
3. The Amherst County Sheriff’s office for including Dante Robinson as part of all debriefings and support following the wounding of a County Deputy;
4. An unknown young male passer-by who helped Ms. Sally Mock following a fall at the Town Hall.

Mr. Bunch made the following motion, which was seconded by Mr. Stinnett and carried 3-0-2 with Messrs. Bunch, Stinnett and Watts voting in favor and Mrs. Carton and Mr. Higginbotham absent: I move that the Town Council convene in closed session for discussion, consideration, or interviews of

prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body per the exemption at §2.2-3711A.1 of the Code of Virginia, as it relates to the hiring of a police chief and §2.2-3711A.7 of the Code of Virginia, as it relates to consultation with legal counsel regarding the preservation of existing growth area boundaries.

Mr. Bunch made the following motion, which was seconded by Mr. Stinnett and carried 4-0-1 with Messrs. Bunch, Higginbotham, Stinnett and Watts voting in favor and Mrs. Carton absent: I move that the Town Council return to open session.

Mr. Bunch made the following motion, which was seconded by Mr. Watts and carried 4-0-1 on a roll call vote with Messrs. Bunch, Higginbotham, Stinnett and Watts voting in favor and Mrs. Carton absent certifying that to the best of each councilors' knowledge that (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Title 2.2, Chapter 37 and §15.2-2907 of the Code of Virginia and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed session was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the session.

By consensus Council asked that Interim Town Manager, Pete Huber obtain pricing for the installation of additional lighting along the side of Town Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:40 PM on a motion by Mr. Higginbotham, seconded by Mr. Stinnett.

D. Dwayne Tuggle
Mayor

Attest: _____