

Mayor D. Dwayne Tuggle called a regular monthly meeting of the Amherst Town Council to order on March 14, 2018, at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall at 174 S. Main Street. It was noted that a quorum was present as follows:

P D. Dwayne Tuggle	P Kenneth G. Bunch
P André Higginbotham	P Mark A. Stinnett
P Kenneth S. Watts	P Rachel A. Carton

Town Manager Sara E. Carter, Town Attorney W. Thomas Berry, Office Manager Tracie Wright, Clerk of Council Vicki K. Hunt, Police Chief Robert A. Shiflett, II, Lead Water Treatment Plant Operator Becky Cash, Lead Sewer Treatment Plant Operator Gary Williams, and Utilities Foreman Charles Thompson, were present.

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

Mayor D. Dwayne Tuggle opened the floor for citizen comments. No comments were made.

Joyce Hoffmann, President, Linda Gurtler and Marliese Wurth were present on behalf of the Village Garden Club to request financial assistance for proposed repairs to the traffic circle. Town Manager Carter and Utilities Foreman Thompson were directed to assist the Garden Club to obtain good-better-best options and estimates for the project to present to Council. Mr. Watts commended the Garden Club on the contributions it has made to the traffic circle and thanked the members for their hard work.

A request that the Town support the Amherst County Chamber of Commerce Cruise-In Event was received. Tim Ware, owner and operator of Ware House Antiques, was present to speak in favor of the event and to answer questions.

After some discussion, Mr. Bunch made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Higginbotham and carried 5-0 that the Town of Amherst endorse the Amherst County Chamber of Commerce Cruise-In event scheduled for April 28, 2018, (with a rain date of May 5) as being a positive activity that provides community recreation and promotes business traffic in downtown Amherst subject to the following understandings:

- The event sponsor is responsible for contacting all adjacent property owners and tenants and working with each to ensure minimal disruption to the neighborhood,
- Use of Town parking lots at the end of E. Court Street and at 174 S. Main Street and Town bathrooms at 174 S. Main Street for the event is approved,
- The event sponsor will reserve four spaces at 174 S. Main Street for the Amherst Police Department,
- The Town will sponsor an application for VDOT to close E. Court and Goodwin Streets from 4 PM to 8:30 PM on the evening of the event,
- The Town will loan event sponsors available traffic barricades, cones and trash cans for use during the event,
- The Town will provide the usual and customary non-financial promotional assistance (posting fliers, Facebook promotion, word of mouth, etc.),
- The event area will be monitored by the Town of Amherst Police Department,

- The event sponsor will provide the Town an insurance certificate naming the Town of Amherst, its officers and employees as an additional insured, and
- The Town of Amherst contribute \$500.00 to defray the cost of the band for the event.

Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Higginbotham, Watts, Bunch and Stinnett voted “Aye.”

Mr. Stinnett made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Bunch and carried 5-0 to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2018, meeting. Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Higginbotham, Watts, Bunch and Stinnett voted “Aye.”

Mr. Bunch reported that the Planning Commission held a duly advertised public hearing on the proposed new sign ordinance at its meeting on March 7, 2018, voting 3-1-3 to recommend to Town Council that the draft sign ordinance be adopted as presented with two changes, and that additional changes may come forward to the sign ordinance at a later date.

After some discussion, Mr. Higginbotham made a motion that was seconded by Mr. Bunch to set a public hearing at its meeting on April 11, 2018, on the proposed new sign ordinance as presented with two changes. The motion failed 2-3 with Messrs. Higginbotham and Bunch voting in favor and Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Stinnett and Watts voting against. Town Manager Carter was directed to send the sign ordinance back to the Planning Commission for further review.

Office Manager Wright was directed to forward the list of liens on properties for past due utility charges to Town Attorney Berry for review. Further discussion was deferred to the April meeting.

Mrs. Carton, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported that Suny Munk on behalf of Second Stage has delivered detailed information and a report on her group’s activities regarding the use of a proposed Town donation of FY19 monies to that organization in support of an arts challenge grant.

After discussion, Mr. Watts made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Bunch and carried 5-0 to authorize the Town Manager to sign the documents required to support Second Stage’s application for a Virginia Commission for the Arts Local Government Challenge Grant with the Town’s contribution not to exceed \$2,500 in FY19, subject to the understanding that Second Stage continues to supply the Town with all applicable receipts that applies to use of Town monies. Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Higginbotham, Watts, Stinnett, and Bunch voted “Aye.”

Town Manager Carter was authorized to offer an extension of the water agreement ending June 30, 2018, to Sweet Briar College with an extension to June, 2020.

After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Watts which was seconded by Mr. Higginbotham and carried 5-0, to adopt the following personnel policy changes as recommended by staff:

Personnel Manual Changes

- a. Changes to the FOIA policy, incorporating a reference to compliance with State FOIA standards.
- b. Changes to the Substance Abuse policy, allowing the use of random drug and alcohol testing.
- c. Inclusion of the Police Residency policy into the Personnel Manual, with a change to allow additional time for new officers to meet the standard.

Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Higginbotham, Watts, Bunch and Stinnett voted “Aye.”

After discussion, Mr. Stinnett made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Carton and carried 5-0 to approve moving outsourced grass cutting services to in-house operations and expenditure of funds for related necessary equipment (zero turn mower, weed-eaters), part-time personnel, and fuel cost as recommended by staff. Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Higginbotham, Watts, Bunch and Stinnett voted "Aye."

After some discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Watts which was seconded by Mr. Bunch and carried 5-0 to approve the execution of a Statement of Understanding between the Town of Amherst and Sweet Briar Institute pertaining to the Town-College sewer use Agreement dated April 17, 1972. Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Higginbotham, Watts, Bunch and Stinnett voted "Aye."

After some discussion, a motion was made by Mrs. Carton which was seconded by Mr. Stinnett and carried 5-0 to approve health insurance policy plans as recommended by staff. Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Higginbotham, Watts, Bunch and Stinnett voted "Aye."

Mayor Tuggle reported that the employee picnic is scheduled for May 5, 2018, at the Presbyterian Church on North Main Street under the pavilion. Utilities Foreman Thompson was asked to remove the felled tree on the property.

Town Manager Carter recognized Mattie Nicholson, Sweet Briar Intern, and presented a power point presentation on her preliminary work on a new look for the Town's website.

Mayor D. Dwayne Tuggle opened the floor for citizen comments.

Chase Robinson of Native Landworks, also known as Mallard Services, came forward to present his evaluation and proposal for improvements to the traffic circle including installation of an inner and outer irrigation system, brownstone pavers and new sod.

Tim Ware came forward to recommend that the Town utilize Brockman Industrial Park by development of bike trails and a recreation park.

At 9:12 PM Mayor Tuggle recessed to closed session.

At 9:21 PM, Mr. Watts made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Higginbotham and carried 5-0 with Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Higginbotham, Watts, Bunch and Stinnett voting in favor: I move that the Town Council convene in closed session for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body per the exemption at §2.2-3711A.3 of the Code of Virginia.

Mr. Watts made the following motion which carried 5-0 with Mrs. Carton and Messrs. Higginbotham, Watts, Bunch and Stinnett voting in favor: I move that the Town Council return to open session.

At 9:58 PM, Mr. Watts read the certification, that the Town Council certify 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. The motion passed 5-0 via the roll call method with Mrs. Carton and Mr. Higginbotham, Watts, Bunch and Stinnett voting “Aye.”

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned on a motion by Mrs. Carton seconded by Mr. Stinnett at 9:58 P.M.

D. Dwayne Tuggle
Mayor

Attest: _____
Clerk of Council

DRAFT FOR APPROVAL