

**MINUTES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
IN REGULAR SESSION
January 10, 2012**

A regular session of the Winchester Common Council was held on Tuesday, January 10, 2012 in the Council Chambers, Rouss City Hall. President Jeffrey Buettner called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

PRESENT: President Jeff Buettner; Councilor Evan Clark, John Hill, John Tagnesi, Les Veach and John Willingham; Vice-President Art Major; Vice-Mayor Milt McInturff; Mayor Elizabeth Minor (9)
ABSENT: None (0)

INVOCATION – Father Stanley Krempa of Sacred Heart Catholic Church delivered the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Mayor Minor led the citizens and councilors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 7, 2011 Special Meeting, November 15, 2011 Work Session, November 22, 2011 Work Session, December 13, 2011 Regular Meeting, December 20, 2011 Work Session and December 27, 2011 Work Session

Councilor Willingham moved to approve the minutes as presented. *The motion was seconded by Vice-President Major then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

Mayor Minor presented her Annual Report for 2011. (Attached to the minutes)

REPORT OF THE CITY MANAGER

Interim City Manager Craig Gerhart stated he did not have a report to present.

REPORT OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

City Attorney Anthony Williams stated with regard to item R-2011-70, he spoke with John Anzivino since this was last discussed in the work session and his company has agreed to honor the aggregate \$1000.00 overall reduction that they had proposed when the RFP was originally under consideration. The contract you have in the package has been revised to reflect it. They also asked that we revise the resolution to reflect they have an office rather than a headquarters in Virginia.

PUBLIC HEARINGS**O-2011-54: Second Reading – AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS FOR NECESSARY EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF WINCHESTER, VIRGINIA FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2012**

William Moreland, Chief of South End Fire Company, stated on behalf of South End Fire Company he wanted to say thank you for the support the City is giving them. He also thanked the citizens for their support. He stated over the past month, the company has received a lot of phone calls and has had people coming by the fire house expressing support and wanting them to continue to be a part of the community. It has been a very difficult time for the company over the past couple of years. This request is not what they wanted to do but what they had to do. They want to maintain the mission of the department to continue to serve the citizens of Winchester like they have for over 120 years. He stated he personally wanted to thank Mr. Gerhart and hopes whoever takes his place shows the same support he has shown to the fire and rescue systems. He also wanted to thank the Winchester Fire and Rescue command staff, the Council for their support, and lastly, the citizens. He stated their mission is to maintain the service they have given over the last 120 years and they want to continue to do that. They realize this is going to be a long road and it is not the fix to their problems but it is a start. They have identified what they need to do to keep it.

No further citizens came forward to address Council concerning this issue and the President declared the public hearing closed at 7:19 p.m.

Councilor Willingham moved to adopt O-2010-54. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Clark then adopted by the affirmative roll-call vote of a majority of all members of the Common Council, the ayes and nays being recorded as shown below:*

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Councilor Clark	Aye
Councilor Hill	Aye
Vice-President Major	Aye
Vice-Mayor McInturff	Aye
Mayor Minor	Aye
Councilor Tagnesi	Aye
Councilor Veach	Aye
Councilor Willingham	Aye
President Buettner	Aye

CU-11-630: Conditional Use Permit - Request of DBL Holdings, LLC for a conditional use permit for a two-family dwelling at 386-388 Charles Street (Map Number 174-01-Q-27) zoned Limited High Density Residential (HR-1) District.

No citizens came forward to address Council concerning this issue and the President declared the public hearing closed at 7:20 p.m.

Vice-President Major moved to approve CU-11-630. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Veach than unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No citizens came forward to address Council and the President declared the public hearing closed at 7:20 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

AGENDA

O-2011-55: First Reading – AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE AN APPROXIMATELY 1.0 ACRE PORTION OF LAND AT 110-140 KEATING DRIVE (*Map Number 149-01-6*) FROM LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (LR) DISTRICT WITH CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENT (CE) DISTRICT OVERLAY TO RESIDENTIAL OFFICE (RO-1) DISTRICT WITH CE DISTRICT OVERLAY. The Comprehensive Plan calls for medical and general office uses on the periphery of the Medical Center District. **RZ-11-669**

R-2011-70: Resolution – Authorizing the termination of the City’s contract with the Mercer Group and the execution of an agreement with Springsted, Inc., for completion of the City Manager search

Vice-President Major moved to approve R-2011-70. *The motion was seconded by Mayor Minor then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Announce the resignation of Nikolette “Niki” Wilson as a member of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board effective July 11, 2011. Ms. Wilson was serving a three year term expiring June 30, 2012.

Motion to appoint Eric Campbell as a member of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board for an unexpired term ending June 30, 2012

Councilor Willingham moved to approve the appointment of Mr. Campbell. *The motion was seconded by Vice-President Major then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Motion to appoint Bill Pifer as a member of the Winchester Regional Airport Authority for a four year term expiring June 30, 2015

Vice-President Major moved to approve the appointment of Mr. Pifer. *The motion was seconded by Mayor Minor then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Motion to appoint Mary Blowe as a member and Craig Gerhart as an alternate member of the Juvenile Detention Commission for four year terms expiring December 31, 2016

Councilor Willingham moved to approve the appointments of Ms. Blowe and Mr. Gerhart. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Hill then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Motion to direct the Clerk of Council to prepare a Certificate of Appreciation for Nikolette “Niki” Wilson for her service as a member of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board

Councilor Willingham moved to approve the Certificate of Appreciation for Ms. Wilson. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Veach then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Motion to direct the Clerk of Council to prepare Certificates of Appreciation for Nate Adams and Kevin Talley for their service as members of the Planning Commission

Vice-Mayor McInturff moved to approve the Certificates of Appreciation for Mr. Adams and Mr. Talley. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Willingham then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Motion to direct the Clerk of Council to prepare a Certificate of Appreciations for Hunter Hurt for his service as a member of the Board of Zoning Appeals

Vice-President Major moved to approve the Certificate of Appreciation for Mr. Hurt. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Willingham then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

EXECUTIVE SESSION: MOTION TO CONVENE IN EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO §2.2-3711(A) (1) OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF INFORMATION REGARDING THE SUBJECT OF THE EMPLOYMENT, ASSIGNMENT, APPOINTMENT, AND PERFORMANCE OF SPECIFIC PUBLIC OFFICERS APPOINTEES, AND EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF WINCHESTER INCLUDING THE APPOINTMENT OF OR PROSPECTIVE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO CERTAIN BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS, AND PURSUANT TO §2.2-3711(A)(7) OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING LEGAL ADVICE AND STATUS UPDATE FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY AND LEGAL CONSULTATION REGARDING THE SUBJECT OF SPECIFIC LEGAL MATTERS REQUIRING THE PROVISION OF LEGAL ADVICE BY THE CITY ATTORNEY AND MATTERS OF ACTUAL OR PROBABLE LITIGATION AND PURSUANT TO §2.2-3711(A)(3) AND (6) FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION OR CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBJECT OF THE ACQUISITION OF AN INTEREST IN REAL PROPERTY FOR A PUBLIC PURPOSE AND FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT OF INVESTMENT OF PUBLIC FUNDS WHERE BARGAINING IS INVOLVED, AND WHERE IF MADE PUBLIC, THE

BARGAINING POSITION OR FINANCIAL INTEREST OF THE CITY WOULD BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED.

Councilor Willingham moved to convene into executive session at 7:24 p.m. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Tagnesi then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Councilor Willingham moved to reconvene in open session at 9:36 p.m. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Veach then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Upon returning, each member certified that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were discussed during the closed meeting, and that only those public business matters identified in the motion which convened the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered during the closed meeting.

A roll call vote was taken, the ayes and nays being recorded as shown below:

MEMBER	VOTE
Councilor Clark	Aye
Councilor Hill	Aye
Vice-President Major	Aye
Vice-Mayor McInturff	Aye
Mayor Minor	Aye
John Tagnesi	Aye
Councilor Veach	Aye
Councilor Willingham	Aye
President Buettner	Aye

Vice-President Major moved to add the following items to the agenda: Approval of recommendations of the Community Safety Committee and the Extension of the City Manager's Employment Contract. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Willingham then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Vice-President Major moved to approve the recommendations of the Community Safety Committee regarding the Police Chief's application for suspension of the Taxi Driver's Permits of Richard R. Cadmus, Jr. and Kayode O. Alabi. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Clark then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Vice-President Major moved to direct the City Attorney to prepare an addendum to the City Manager's Employment Contract to provide for his continued employment to the end of April and incorporate provisions for the preservation of his VRS benefits and authorize the President of Council to execute same. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Willingham then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Major moved to adjourn at 9:38 p.m. *The motion was seconded by Councilor Willingham then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Kari J. Van Diest
Deputy Clerk of the Common Council

2011 MAYOR'S REPORT

1/10/12

2011 was anything but ordinary for the City of Winchester, and I am excited to tell you about the hard work and accomplishments made this past year. It was definitely exciting to be named one of the top two friendliest towns in Virginia by Blue Ridge Country Magazine and also one of the top 10 best places to retire in the U.S. by A.A.R.P. With these two designations, Winchester has been receiving the national attention it deserves!

This past year, we had to say good bye to City Manager, Jim O'Connor, and hello to Interim City Manager Craig Gerhart. Craig has been a joy to work with and his wealth of knowledge and personable demeanor has brought much more to this organization than any of us ever imagined. Thank you Craig for seamlessly stepping in and treating our community like your own.

Teamwork always plays an important role in our every day operations. For instance, the City's Community Response Team, which is a collaborative effort of the Winchester Police Department, Office of Zoning, Commissioner of the Revenue, Treasurer, Public Works, Economic Development Authority, Parks and Recreation, the Winchester Board of Education and several others, have joined together over the past year to address community blight, neighborhood stability, and troubled youth. Some of the C.R.T.'s major accomplishments include increased compliance among businesses which added an additional \$150,000 in revenue; a drop in shoplifting crime by 13% since 2009; removal of several blighted properties; closure of two boarding houses; and so much more. The Community Response Team has been so effective this past year that they were awarded the 2011 Virginia Municipal League Achievement Award. There are only more great things to come from this team in 2012!

The Police Department's Timbrook Youth Reporting Center completed its first full year of operation. Through the efforts of staff and many community partners, one participant, who previously had no school credits, recently passed his GED. Several other participants have found jobs and two have successfully returned to high school. This Youth Reporting Center is making strides in getting troubled kids off the streets while helping them achieve a better quality of life and brighter future.

The Winchester Fire & Rescue Department is always available to help! Firefighters collected over seventeen thousand dollars for MDA, installed 283 free smoke alarms and 102 car seats, all while responding to 5,541 incidents and completing almost 15,000 hours of departmental training. I'm so proud of all our career and volunteer firefighters. Keep up the great work.

Zoning and Inspections continues to aggressively address the community's concerns related to residential overcrowding, spot blight abatement, historic preservation and code compliance. The department also received two grants this year – one to assist

with developing a form-based code that will encourage mixed-use development of several properties in need of redevelopment and also to conduct a historic district survey. The historic district survey was published in 2011 and offers a comprehensive description and color photos of each property surveyed.

Another glowing accomplishment this past year involves teamwork, collaboration and a desire to help others succeed in life. The Winchester Department of Social Services worked closely with Lord Fairfax Community College and Our Health to bring a career readiness and college prep program to downtown Winchester. This important program targets non-traditional students who might otherwise not pursue post-secondary education by getting them ready to take the next step.

Also, during 2011, the Winchester Department of Social Services was cited by the state as a top performer for its implementation of best practices in family engagement. In addition, Winchester Social Services successfully found “Forever Families” for 5 children who were abused or neglected.

The City’s Commissioner of the Revenue’s office is continually working toward streamlining processes and improving customer service. In 2011, the Commissioner’s office began processing weekly downloads of D.M.V. data, which will help reduce costs and improve billing accuracy while helping more tax payers avoid late filing fees. In addition, the Commissioner’s office has experienced a reduction of meals tax filing and payment delinquency from 25 percent to between 4 and 7 percent. The Treasurer’s office has also received accreditation from the Treasurer’s Association of Virginia for the 6th year in a row.

More good news continues in Old Town Winchester. In 2011, Winchester became the first city in the Virginia Main Street program to eclipse the 100 million dollar mark in private investment downtown. The Virginia Main Street program recognized the City and the Old Town Development Board for creating a positive environment for private investments and revitalization projects. The Old Town Development Board also began working with the City’s Public Services division to solicit feedback on new streetscape designs and enhancements for the 2013 Loudoun Street Mall construction project. I have a feeling that Old Town will be even beautiful than ever following the project.

Our City Public Services Division is always working hard to improve Winchester’s infrastructure ensuring our residents and businesses have a strong and healthy future. Results for the 2008 citizen’s survey identified sidewalk improvement as a high priority. In response to these concerns, new sidewalks were constructed on Valley Avenue between Handley High School and Bellview Avenue while sidewalk work continues on Millwood, South Loudoun, Woodstock Lane, and Purcell.

More utility infrastructure improvements began this year on Highland Avenue which will replace the water, sewer, sidewalks and streets in a large area in the city’s north end. We look forward to the completion of this project next year which should bring residents improved water pressure and stable utilities for decades to come.

Also this year, Public Services installed new pedestrian way finding signs in Old Town Winchester to assist pedestrians and motorists in finding important locations downtown. In addition, new signs were installed at the transit bus stops. These signs include route maps and stop information for users. Next time you need to travel downtown, I encourage you to utilize the City's WinTran system. It will not only save you money but it's better for the environment too.

Three of the Old Town autoparks received some new technology equipment this year. All four autoparks are now automated and open 24/7. Now parking downtown is even more convenient!

The City's Planning Department worked tirelessly with the Planning Commission and other City staff to complete the new Comprehensive Plan. This extensive document will guide the City toward its vision of becoming a city of choice to live, work and visit. Being a beautiful, sustainable and successful community is something all City departments strive toward. And with the help of our citizens, economic partners and volunteers, the City is going to continue to thrive.

One great example of the community coming together was during the 2011 Cal Ripken 10-Year-Old World Series held in Jim Barnett Park last August. This national baseball tournament attracted teams and fans from across the United States to Winchester for approximately 10 days. Local businesses stepped forward and donated funds, services and materials needed to give these visitors a proper Winchester welcome. Nearly 300 volunteers contributed 2,850 hours to support the event and everyone had a blast! Not to mention the Winchester team made it all the way to the championship game! The economic impact on the Winchester community was estimated at approximately \$771,000.

Winchester Parks & Recreation also offered the community many exciting programs and events this past year such as the free Summer Concert Series at Christianson Familyland and the Salsa Fest which raised over four thousand dollars for WINC Chain of Checks. Winchester Parks & Recreation also partnered with Old Town Development Board and local organizations to bring the Shenandoah Moonlight Ball, the outdoor Movies on the Mall series and the Christmas Parade to Old Town. I am so grateful that the City is able to offer the community so many free, family-friendly events.

Another event for which I am grateful is the International Children's Festival - another free community event which exposes area children to the world around them through interactive country exhibits, food and live cultural entertainment. The turn out this year was fantastic despite the unusual cold and wet weather and over 1,500 people traveled to 20 countries. The colors, the laughter and the young eyes wide with enthusiasm for learning make this event one of my favorites.

Speaking of learning, the City's INSIGHT Citizen's Academy graduated 18 local residents after 12 weeks of facility tours, in-depth discussions and exciting activities.

INSIGHT offers residents a behind-the-scenes look at City government operations while explaining not only how, but *why* we make the decisions we do. I highly recommend this program to all those who live or work in Winchester. It is definitely worth the time.

The City is always looking for ways to improve communication with the public and the City's new Public Information Office is working toward increasing transparency and the availability of information for the community. In 2011, the City launched its very own informational television channel on cable channel 20, which moved to channel 6 last week. On this channel, you will find important information about staying involved, deadlines, schedule changes, events, news, and so much more. You can even watch regular council meetings live on channel 6 every 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 pm. The channel is forever evolving and we are excited about the opportunities this new communication tool provides. Keep checking the channel for up-to-date information you need to know.

Don't forget about the City's informative bi-weekly electronic newsletter, City News. If you'd like to know more about City services, projects, events and programs, subscribe online at WinchesterVA.com. And to stay even more connected, follow the City of Winchester on Facebook and Twitter. There's always something exciting happening!

The City also launched a new online job application system last fall. Job seekers can now apply for vacant City positions and track their application online from any computer with an internet connection. This online system is not only good for the environment as it allows us to eliminate paper applications, but it also makes applying and hiring easier and more accessible for everyone involved.

As we have begun the budget season for the next fiscal year, I must mention that the City received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial reporting for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2011 and the City's Bond rating was upgraded from Double A to Double A Plus. If you aren't familiar with the rating system, Double A Plus is the second strongest rating level possible.

Even in a slow economy, the City takes every precaution to handle all business ethically, efficiently and with the community's best interest in mind. For more information about the City's budget and budget adoption process, look over the new Budget in Brief released last year. This Budget document is an easy to follow citizen's guide to the City's finances and can be viewed on the City's website or in the Finance offices.

The accomplishments I've mentioned tonight are only a fraction of what the City has achieved over the past year. I couldn't possibly mention all the staff awards, thank all the volunteers, and state all the steps forward made in 2011, but it is obvious that the City is strong, advancing and working hard for this community. I am so proud to be the Mayor of one of the most friendliest places in Virginia and I look forward to serving and working along side this organization and many community partners as we collaborate for a brighter future for all.