

City Council Work Session

Tuesday, April 19, 2011

6:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers – Rouss City Hall

PRESENT: Councilor Evan Clark, John Hill, John Tagnesi, Les Veach and John Willingham; Vice-President Art Major; Vice-Mayor Milt McInturff; Mayor Elizabeth Minor (8)
ABSENT: President Jeff Buettner (1)

Vice-President Major called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Items for Discussion:

Presentation: Planning Commission – Nate Adams, Chairman

Presentation: Planning and Zoning & Building Inspections – Tim Youmans & Vince Diem

Mr. Adams, Mr. Youmans and Mr. Diem collectively presented the Annual Report for the Planning, Zoning and Inspections Departments, as well as the Planning Commission Report and the outline for the Comprehensive Plan.

Council had questions regarding the migration to form-based code and the increase in rental property inspections.

Mr. Diem explained that they are working with a consultant firm to look at the Ward Plaza and the North End of town for redevelopment. Their suggestions will assist in re-writing certain portions of the Zoning Ordinance in interest of promoting new urbanism and form-based code. A draft Ordinance chapter should be received within 30-45 days; however they were given until 2012 to complete their work. He stated that he will keep Council informed in the process.

As far as rental housing, Mr. Diem explained that 2010 was busy due to certificate renewal, which has to be done every four (4) years. Improvements have definitely been made and pictures taken by the inspectors prove it.

Voter Ward Redistricting – Tim Youmans & Joyce Braithwaite

Mr. Youmans and Ms. Braithwaite gave a presentation on voter ward redistricting, giving some suggestions on how it could be done in order to meet the requirements.

Vice-President Major suggested that a panel be formed to address this issue. He stated that the voters in the affected areas should be the ones to choose, since they are the ones that will be affected.

He asked that the item be placed on the April 26th Agenda.

Events Coordinator – David Smith, Lauri Bridgeforth, Karen Helm
OTDB

David Smith gave an overview on how the selection process for an Event Coordinator was conducted. Out of three (3) options they recommended the City go with USA Sports because they are already involved with many events held in Old Town and they are well connected in the metropolitan area which could help bring in more tourists.

After some discussion, Council decided not to make a decision at that time. They asked to see a sample calendar for the year, showing what types of events the organization would be able to provide. Councilor Hill asked that events geared strictly toward teenagers be included.

School Renovation Funding Options – Mary Blowe

Ms. Blowe presented 3 options for \$20 million in General Obligation Bonds for school renovations. She recommended option 3 to allow flexibility until 2015 to pay interest only until the debt service drops off a bit.

R-2011-15: Official Intent to Reimburse Expenditures with Proceeds of a Borrowing – Mary Blowe

Ms. Blowe stated the amount would be a maximum of \$20 million based on figures from the schools representatives.

Councilor Veach moved to forward the resolution to Council. *The motion was seconded by Mayor Minor then unanimously approved by voice-vote.*

Pay Adjustment Options – Mary Blowe

Mrs. Blowe presented the pay adjustment options. One (1) was for a pay increase and two (2) were bonuses. She recommended that the City go with the pay increase. There will be a huge tax on a onetime payment and people seem to forget they got a bonus two (2) years down the road. The budget is set up to sustain the increase for two (2) years.

City Manager O'Connor added that the money will come from positions that were eliminated permanently. The budget plan includes all cost and impact fees on each employee including VRS.

Council agreed that the pay increase was the best option. It will be built into the coming budget.

FY 12 Budget Update – Mary Blowe

Telephone System Update – Perry Eisenach & Mary Blowe

Mr. Eisenach gave an update on the telephone system. The current system will have to be replaced because it is outdated and is not supported by the manufacturer. Integrating all other buildings into the system will save \$500 a month on phone bill. The upgrade would pay for itself in four (4) years.

Councilor Clark made a motion to approve the telephone upgrade. Councilor Willingham seconded the motion and was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Valley Avenue Tree Update – Perry Eisenach and Kevin Mckew

Mr. Eisenach gave an update on the Valley Avenue project. Advertising for construction bids start next week so the sidewalk replacement should be in June. The plan is to remove 32 trees and then replant 80 cherry trees that will not grow tall but will have larger canopies. Modifications will be done around the existing newly planted trees.

Kevin McKew presented Handley's master landscaping plan that falls in line with the City's plan for tree removal. It showed 17 existing trees to be removed in front of Handley to make room for new plantings and a decorative sidewalk. The Garden Club of Virginia designed and is funding that portion of the project.

Report of Liaisons

Councilor Willingham announced that the Shenandoah Valley Electric Coop would be meeting to elect their representative next week.

Councilor McInturff announced that the IT Committee is close to being ready. It has been a struggle coordinating with everyone's schedule but Tom Lloyd is working it out.

Hardcopy reports were submitted by the Police and Fire and Rescue Chiefs for review.

Adjourn

With nothing further to discuss, Vice-President Major adjourned the meeting.