

**TOWN OF CHARLOTTE COURT HOUSE  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
Monday March 20, 2023 7:00pm**

A regular meeting of the Charlotte Court House Town Council was held on Monday, March 23, 2023, at 7:00 pm. Vice-Mayor Andrews called the meeting to order. Council Members Andrews, Ramsey, Braxton and Michaelson were present. Mayor Watkins and Council Members Arbogast & Haskins were absent. Council Member Braxton motioned to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote: 4 ayes, 0 nays. Council Member Michaelson motioned to approve the February meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote: 4 ayes and 0 nays. Council Member Michaelson motioned to approve the February financial statement as presented. The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote: 4 ayes and 0 nays.

**Citizen Comments** None

**Thomas Jefferson Highway Sidewalk Project** Jay Brown of VDOT stated that he recently met with Council Member Ramsey and Town Clerk Karen Price to advise of changes to the project, including an increase in total cost. The original total project cost and required match were \$454,765 and \$90,953. The revised total project cost and required match are \$1,028,016 and \$223,794. Mr. Brown stated that VDOT needs to know if the Town intends to move forward with the project. If so, the pre-application would be due in mid-May and the final application due in early October. He stated that a letter from the Mayor would be required if the Town decides to cancel the project. He stated that although expenses have already been incurred, he will try to get all the match funds that were paid refunded if the project is cancelled. Mr. Brown suggested that the Town could construct the sidewalk themselves for substantially less. Melody Foster stated that the Town should consider getting estimates from reputable contractors. Council Member Braxton stated that the sidewalk is needed and that VDOT should construct it so that it is done right. Mr. Brown stated that design progress has stopped while VDOT awaits a decision from the Town.

**Wilmouth Property Easement Request** Tyler Williams reported that Surveyor Tony Trent flagged the easement location and that except for the convenience center gate which encroaches onto the easement about a foot, everything else is o.k. Council Member Ramsey stated that based on a deed from 1961, the easement only involves the parcel adjoining the convenience center lot and does not include the parcel that has access from Highway 47. Following discussion Council Member Ramsey motioned to request that the Town attorney attend the next Town Council meeting to assure that the Town is not giving more than what was originally given. The motion was seconded by Council Member Braxton and carried by voice vote: 4 ayes, 0 nays.

**Code Enforcement Officer** Council Member Andrews reported that she heard from Tony Matthews who will complete his certification in June. She stated that he will be willing to assist the Town on a part-time basis.

**Water Grant Application** Council Member Ramsey reported that a Mike Wilson of Hurt & Proffitt submitted two Preliminary Engineering Reports (PER); noting that he separated the sand filters from the other improvements/repairs. Mr. Ramsey stated after researching sand filter tanks, he doesn't think the right ones. He stated that Clay Samples created a Town water map and was working on creating an electronic copy. Mr. Ramsey motioned to move forward with the water grant application and to ask Hurt & Proffitt to combine the PERs into one document. The motion was seconded by Council Member Braxton and carried by voice vote: 4 ayes, 0 nays.

**Requests for Street Repairs** Karen Price stated that Rhonda Algeier has requested that the Town make repairs to Maple Drive. She stated that according to various plats, Maple Drive ends at the Algeier property line and that Mayor Walker has inspected the road and found it to be in satisfactory condition.

Following discussion, the Clerk was instructed to send a letter to the Algeiers and advise that the Town would not make any repairs to Maple Dr. at this time. Ms. Price stated that Mr. Heywood Thorpe complained that tree limbs and brush are encroaching onto Chestnut Lane and he requested that the Town make arrangements to have the vegetation cut back. Council Members Braxton and Ramsey both advised that they inspected the road and found that some clean-up work had already been done. The Clerk will submit a VDOT request for brush removal and send a letter to Mr. Thorpe advising of the action taken.

**Planning & Zoning Report** Council Member Ramsey reported that work continues on the Comprehensive Plan.

Karen Price reported that the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) held a public hearing on the Spencer zoning appeal and that the BZA concluded that it would request that the Town Council ask the Planning Commission to issue a conditional use permit to allow trucks & heavy equipment to be located on the portion of their property zoned Rural Residential; and to reduce the depth of the General Residential district at their property. Council Member Ramsey stated that the problem is the use of the property. He noted that personal property taxes are not being collected on the vehicles and stated that the burden of proof is on the person making the appeal. Council Member Braxton stated that the Town mishandled the violation from the outset, and that calling out a zoning violation should not have been attributed to a citizen complaint. Mr. Ramsey motioned to contact Sands Anderson and ask for a proposal for them to review the Spencer zoning issue and advise the Town how to proceed; and to set a fee limit of \$3,000. The motion was seconded by Council Member Michaelson; voice vote 2 ayes, 2 nays. Motion not carried. Mr. Ramsey motioned to dismiss the current attorney assisting with the Spencer zoning issue after the current hearing has been closed out. The motion was seconded by Council Member Andrews and carried by voice vote: 4 ayes, 0 nays.

Council Member Ramsey reported that the Historic District Review Board (HDRB) finalized revisions to the Historic District Design Guidelines and were ready to submit the draft to the Town Council for approval. Mr. Ramsey motioned to hold a joint public hearing with the HDRB on April 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. The motion was seconded by Council Member Braxton and carried by voice vote: 4 ayes, 0 nays.

Council Member Ramsey reported that Total Image Solutions did not attend the Planning Commission (PC) meeting as requested. They were sent a letter with requests including using the existing pole sign rather than installing a new one and to paint over the Fuel Freedom sign.

**Grower's Association Lease Renewal** Council Member Ramsey reported that the Southside VA Fruit & Vegetable Growers Assoc want to continue using the space at the rear of the Municipal building and so the lease must be renewed. Instead of raising the rent Mr. Ramsey proposed having the SVFVGA reimburse the Town for the entire cost of the electric bill. Mr. Ramsey motioned to extend the current lease for use of the back portion of the Town Municipal Building for \$300.00 per month, and to require reimbursement of the monthly electric bill for the Municipal building for a new twelve-month term. The motion was seconded by Council Member Michaelson and carried by voice vote: 4 ayes, 0 nays.

**Committee Reports** Grounds, Streets & Lights Committee - Council Members Andrews reported that several streetlights need to be repaired. She stated that she found a speed sign she'd like the Town to purchase and install. She inquired about progress on the Verizon cell tower. Water Committee – Council Member Ramsey reported that he accompanied Chris McCarty while reading meters and expressed a safety issue concern about him having to go back and forth across the road to get the readings in the order listed. Mr. Ramsey asked that the Clerk see if it is possible to re-order the readings.

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Mr. Ramsey reported that he met with Phil of Suez who advised that a bill for services rendered was forthcoming and would likely be over \$200K. Personnel Committee – Council Member Michaelson reported that they would meet on Wednesday, the 22<sup>nd</sup> at 4:30 pm to continue working on the Clerk/Treasurer job description. Council Member Ramsey stated that he invited Sara McGuffin, Town Manager of Amherst, VA. to provide insight on hiring a new Clerk.

**Water Operations Report** – No report.

**Clerk's Report** Karen Price reported seven water meter cut-offs for non-payment. She reported that one new business license was approved for a company installing bus chargers at the bus shop on Evergreen Road. She reported that 87% of Town taxes have been received to date. Ms. Price stated that a Nuisance Ordinance violation letter was sent to the owner of 725 Thomas Jefferson Hwy. for excessive debris and an abandoned vehicle. She reported that it was time to begin work on the FY 23-24 budget.

**Council Comment Period** No comments.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

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Debra Andrews, Vice-Mayor

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Karen K. Price, Clerk of Council