

Town of Strasburg

SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE PUBLIC

LIMITED IN PERSON ATTENDANCE WILL BE ALLOWED FOR THE JUNE 14th, 2021 MEETING. PLEASE UTILIZE OUR LIVESTREAM BY ACCESSING THE LINK BELOW

<https://www.strasburgva.com/bc/page/meetings>

To make public comment please submit to:

comment@strasburgva.com

by 4:00 p.m., Monday, June 14th, 2021

Town Council Work Session

Strasburg Town Hall
174 W King St
Strasburg, VA 22657

Monday, June 14th, 2021
7 p.m.

Town Council Members:

Brandy Hawkins Boies, Mayor
Ken Cherrix, Vice Mayor
Dane Hooser
John Massoud
Christie Monahan

Taralyn Nicholson
Emily Reynolds
Doreen Ricard
Paul Weaver

Staff Contact:

Jay McKinley, Interim Town Manager



Agenda

Please, silence all cellular devices. Thanks.

***Town Council Work Sessions are typically used for general discussion on matters pertaining to the Town. Formal actions are taken during Town Council Meetings unless otherwise notified.**

Call to Order –Mayor Brandy Boies

Citizen Comments on non-agenda items:

Action Item:

1.) Approval of Minutes

Description: Minutes of the June 1st, 2021 Town Council Work Session

Staff Contact: Amy Keller, Clerk of Council

Discussion Item:

1.) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Description: Staff will provide information on ARPA from data received to-date.

Staff Contact: Jay McKinley, Interim Town Manager

Support Materials: Presentation

2.) Borden Mowery Road Extension Project

Description: Staff will provide an update on the project.

Staff Contact: Jay McKinley, Interim Town Manager

Support Materials: Presentation

Old or unfinished business

New business:

Closed Meetings:

- Pursuant to Code of Virginia § 2.2-3711(A)(3) 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. The subject of the closed meeting is to discuss Right-of-Way acquisitions for the Borden Mowery Road Extension Project.
- Pursuant to Code of Virginia § 2.2-3711(A)(1) 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. The subject of the closed meeting is to allow the consultant to update Council on the search for a town manager.

Adjournment

MINUTES OF THE STRASBURG TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 1st, 2021 AT 7 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE STRASBURG TOWN HALL.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Boies, Vice Mayor Cherrix, and Council Member Hooser, Council Member Massoud, Council Member Monahan, Council Member Nicholson, Council Member Reynolds, Council Member Ricard, and Council Member Weaver.

Mayor Boies called the Work Session to order.

Citizen comments on non-agenda items:

Presentation:

Jenna French, Shenandoah County Director of Tourism and Economic Development, was present to give an update on economic development work through Shenandoah County. She gave an overview of the Economic Development Strategic Plan which was adopted in early 2020, and other economic development interests. She stressed that there must have increased collaboration between Shenandoah County and the towns in the county. Strategic Plan goals were shown. It was noted that properties need to be more competitive to attract businesses and the sites need to be building and site ready. **Ms. French** said that she works with **P&Z Administrator Pambid** on development and the zoning is often discussed. They are working on a regional approach for workforce development, attraction, and retention.

Vice Mayor Cherrix said that many companies are waiting too long to hire people. The process is too long.

Opportunity sites were shown on a map.

Council Member Nicholson asked what has been done for just Strasburg in the past six months. **Ms. French** said the IDA has invested a lot in the Business Park to make the sites pad ready. A grant received also has helped bring attention to Strasburg and the Windcrest property. Rev-up is going to be starting up soon and the small business grant.

Council Member Nicholson asked how **Ms. French** would decide which area to market. **Ms. French** said each request is very detailed and they keep a spread sheet on what is available and what is being asked for. The sites are chosen by what is needed by the business.

Council Member Nicholson asked if a report could be given periodically to let Council know why the community was not picked. **Ms. French** said they try to get this information, but it is rare as to why the site was not chosen. She said she can communicate quarterly updates how many times sites were pitched.

Mayor Boies said one thing that has been told to us is to get Borden-Mowery Drive completed.

Ms. French said many industries are looking for sites with more than 100 acres. We need to focus on smaller or medium sized businesses. When compiling data on the properties, they consider the capital investment, number of jobs, and wages.

Mayor Boies would like to have **Ms. French** come or report quarterly on this topic and also the marketing and tourism efforts. **Ms. French** discussed the individual tours that are being offered to visitor center personnel to find out more about things happening in the area through the Faces of Tourism. **Mayor Boies** said it is amazing how many people actually visit the places in town. She would encourage businesses to stay open on Sunday.

Council Member Hooser asked what we can do as far as keeping young people here. **Ms. French**

said they are working a lot with the school system and LFCC. It will not be an overnight fix, but they are trying to make young people aware of the careers that are available in the community. She spoke of an effort with the schools and the private sector. **Vice Mayor Cherrix** feels more vocational schools need to be added.

Action Item:

1.) Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the May 17th, 2021 Work Session were approved as presented.

Discussion Item:

1.) Strasburg Rotary Club Grant for the Town Park

Description: Mary Ruth Follett will be in attendance to discuss ideas for using a grant given by the Rotary Club.

Vice Mayor Cherrix said we were approached by the Strasburg Rotary about making some ADA changes to the park near the Rotary Shelter.

Mary Ruth Follett, President of Strasburg Rotary, said she has spoken to **Vice Mayor Cherrix**, **Mayor Boies**, **Interim Director of Community Development Hilton**, and **Park and Pool Manager Leigh**. Rotary can apply for matching grants. They did work to their shelter two years ago, and they have built an ADA picnic table and thought this might be a good year to bring in some ADA additions to the playground since the town is putting in some ADA play equipment. They thought of putting in some pavers and some equipment which could bring some arts to the park. Pictures were shown and the equipment is extremely expensive so they cannot match for all of these, but she thought it might be a good way to get other community organizations involved. The grant will be submitted in July, and the project must be completed by May 2022. If the town has had a plan for this then they could start that journey. She has a contact, so she does not have to start from the bottom.

Mayor Boies explained this would normally go to the Rec/Parks/Trails Committee but because of the grant deadline, it is being brought to the Work Session.

Ms. Follett said **Park and Pool Manager Leigh** has always had a dream for this. **Int. DofCD Hilton** is very supportive. **Vice Mayor Cherrix** said he has been working on getting something like this. He showed where he would like to expand out with more ADA equipment. **Ms. Follett** showed where she would like to put this.

Mayor Boies asked if there was any problem with letting the Rotary Club do this and if it is acceptable to the town. It might have to be a long term plan. Once the grant is approved, Rotary cannot have the town come back and say this cannot happen. **Vice Mayor Cherrix** said we need to have the town give the okay to this. **Ms. Follett** said they also need to know the feasibility of the town's maintenance aid in the installation. She thinks organizations would like to have their names associated with this.

Int. DofCD Hilton said they have funds to help with this in the Community Development Department and she feels we should support this.

Vice Mayor Cherrix said he talked to **Int. Town Manager McKinley** about this and it was thought this could be done by Public Works. He asked if this needed to go back to the committee or just support this. He thinks this would attract a lot more people to the park.

Ms. Follett said they have never been denied on their grant applications.

Council Member Reynolds said she thinks this is a wonderful idea and asked about the location. **Int. Town Manager McKinley** answered that we do not have to decide tonight where it will go, and **Council Member Nicholson** agreed. **Council Member Ricard** said it does not sound like

there is a factory that has it ready-made things, and **Ms. Follett** said there is a catalog that you can select from. There are standard pieces.

Mayor Boies said she went to Rockland Park and recommended that the Rec/Parks/Trails visit this park. This would allow all to see a vision of what our park can look like.

Staff will work with Rotary on the MOU.

2.) Reimbursement Resolution

Description: Discussion on the adoption of a reimbursement resolution to fund Right-of-Way purchases.

Int. Town Manager McKinley said we are still in the ROW acquisition phase. We do not have any way to purchase ROW. We need a reimbursement resolution to allow for us to get funding now and pay it back with the loans for the extension.

Council Member Hooser asked where we need ROW. **Int. Town Manager McKinley** said there are three parcels, but he does not want to get into this in an open meeting as we are still in negotiations.

Council Member Reynolds said this resolution would be so we can purchase the land now and then be reimbursed. **Int. Town Manager McKinley** said it is a 50-50 grant with VDOT so we would get the 50% from VDOT and we can then ask Virginia Resources for our share of the reimbursement.

Int. Town Manager McKinley said this would give us the ability to go back 60 days and use it for any spending we have done.

Council Member Monahan asked if we are sure we will get reimbursed by VDOT and **Int. Town Manager McKinley** said he is highly sure we will.

Vice Mayor Cherrix asked how long we would be in the ROW phase and **Int. Town Manager McKinley** said we have one that we are ready to move on, a second on setting the price, and then another that is pushing back hard.

This will be on the agenda for next week's Council meeting. **Mayor Boies** asked for all to call either her or staff with questions. **Vice Mayor Cherrix** said this looks like backdoor shady deals when we have phone calls. **Mayor Boies** said there are absolutely no shady deals!

Council Member Reynolds said she has no questions.

3.) FY2021 1% COLA

Description: Consideration of the deferred 1% cost of living increase for the FY21 budget year.

Int. Town Manager McKinley said a 3% increase was approved in the FY2021 budget. The budget was amended, and a 2% COLA was given back and administered in January; the 1% was not approved at that time. **Former Town Manager Pearson** had laid out the monthly revenue through April for Council and **Int. Town Manager McKinley** said revenue has continued to come in as expected. Real estate and Personal Property taxes look low, but that is because the due date has not arrived. A chart showed that revenues are increasing, and staff recommends approval of this 1% retroactive lump-sum payment for FY21.

Council Member Massoud said this would be approximately \$40,000. We have about 60

employees and 20 are law enforcement. He asked if there was any interest in having this only go to the public safety employees.

Vice Mayor Cherrix said the discussion was to either do this for all or nobody.

Council Member Hooser said it should be across the board.

No one else was interested in this idea.

Vice Mayor Cherrix said he is not sure about this as he is still waiting for the bottom to drop out.

Council Member Massoud said he thinks people are seeing a light at the end of the tunnel. He would prefer it be law enforcement only, but he is not going to stand in the way of law enforcement, too, getting a raise with this increase.

Vice Mayor Cherrix said the 3% was agreed upon by the entire Council and this was held back until now. **Int. Town Manager McKinley** said it was approved at 2% and if revenues continued to look good, it was to be brought back for discussion.

Council Member Massoud said he thought it was a 4 to 5 percent raise, and it was not. Staff will look back at minutes to see if the number was ever this amount.

Council Member Nicholson said it was discussed in January. We are only looking at the 1% at this time.

Vice Mayor Cherrix asked what was approved and only the 2% was approved. **Mayor Boies** said the question is if we are going to pay out the 1% that was postponed in January.

Council Member Reynolds said she is comfortable with passing this 1% COLA increase.

This will be voted on at the June Council meeting.

Old or Unfinished Business:

Vice Mayor Cherrix asked when the electronic meetings will actually end, and **Int. Town Manager McKinley** said this would be the last one for the Town of Strasburg. We will not have electronic participation, but you will be able to view it with a slight lag. We will be broadcasting the meeting, but without participation by people viewing online.

Mayor Boies asked if Swagit is not working, will we still broadcast on ZOOM and **Int. Town Manager McKinley** said he does not think we will. It is felt that the Swagit platform will work for the town.

Vice Mayor Cherrix asked about the 4th of July Celebration. **Int. Town Manager McKinley** said we will have the same activities as in the past with the exception of the Car Show; the person who headed up this has stopped doing it.

Juneteenth will be honored next Tuesday at the Town Council meeting. **Marquetta Mitchell** will give a presentation on the significance of the day in history.

New Business:

Being no further business, the work session adjourned at 8:44 p.m.