

The Richlands Town Council held a regular monthly meeting in the Richlands Council Chambers on December 8, 2015 at 7:30 pm with the following present:

Mayor:	Jannis White
Town Manager:	Tim Taylor
Town Attorney:	Brad Ratliff
Town Clerk:	Julie Cordle
Council Members:	Joe McCracken, Frances Meadows Mary Ann Strong, Rod Cury, and Larry Johnson
Absent:	Doug Ratliff

Mayor White said the council has some things that they need to take care of from the last meeting. She asked for a motion to adjourn from the November meeting. Joe McCracken made a motion. Frances Meadows seconded the motion. Motion Carries 5/0

Mayor White called the meeting to order.

Mayor White gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor White asks if there were any corrections, additions, or deletions to the minutes.

Frances Meadows asks for a correction on page 7 for her misspelled name from Francis.

Does anyone else have any corrections, additions, or deletions? If not do I hear a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Rod Cury made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mary Ann. Motion passed 5/0.

Mayor White- We are going to back up one on the additions and deletions to the agenda. Do we have anyone that would like to speak that is not on the agenda? If not, we did make one change on the agenda. We moved #6 up to the top. Do we have any other things that we need to add? Mayor White added Brian Beck to the unscheduled public comments. Mayor White- Do I hear a motion to approve the agenda as amended? Rod Cury made motion. Joe McCracken seconded the motion. Motion Carries 5/0

Mayor White- We are going into closed session. We need a motion to go in to closed session per Virginia code 2.2-3711 A 5 for legal advice. Frances Meadows made motion. Rod Cury seconded motion. Motion Carries 5/0

Mayor White asks for a motion to return from closed session. Rod Cury made motion. Joe McCracken seconded the motion. Motion carries 5/0

Mayor White- Do all members affirm that the only business discussed was that for which we went in to closed session, Section 2.2-3711 A 5. All members affirmed.

**Scheduled Public Comments:**

**Unscheduled Public Comments:**

Brian Beck- Thank you for the opportunity to come and speak to you. I'm here representing three LEAD graduated classes of Tazewell County. We are trying to move forward with submission to promote some opportunities for ourselves. I'm here to see if there is any interest and to see what level of support we have from you. What we are proposing is to join forces with the town committees in support of the freedom festival, parades, and the events that are already occurring. This would take pressure off the staff that is doing most things. Also, we want to ask for permission to pursue some things that are not currently taking place. Possible events are an outdoor community movie night the proposed location would be out or around the police department. A BBQ or chili type cook off event with the ability to consider a beer vender at that event. A safety day to bring awareness and to meet with local law enforcement and the people in the community. A spring cleanup day with an endorsement letter provided by the committee that would advocate for downtown business owners that have vacant or storage use commercial buildings that would allow art students and volunteers to paint windows,

provide art work posters to hang on the inside. Dr. Willis has turned the winter honey festival over to my wife. She is trying to secure the police department for this event. We are already behind on this festival. There is going to be a meeting tomorrow in my office to see what kind of committee support we have. This is a last effort to salvage this event. We want you to consider this proposal and to see what level of support that we will get such as, financial or at least law enforcement for these events. Our agency, Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens has over 200 employees. We are over the Four County Transit. If you have not heard what we are doing I am going to leave you a brochure of what our agency is involved in.

Rod Cury- Brian, I would just like to say, thank you for coming and representing the LEAD program. I think it has been a wonderful thing for our region. I certainly cannot speak about financial support although that is something we definitely can consider. I like the idea of having more citizens involved in the things that Mayor White along with Karen and others have single handedly managed the freedom festival. I think extra committee support is great! I think that it's important that you are involved. The Section House is something else that we are going to need assistance with from the community. I think this house is another thing that you are going to need to add to your list. We are not ready yet but we are going to need community help. The town should support all of these things. These are all town activities and town events that make a difference in all of our lives. I am so supportive of what you are saying.

Joe McCracken- The honey festival I attended last year seemed to be a good success. I am also in support of the safety day, the BBQ and the movie night.

Brian Beck- I can get more information about the national night out. I think Galax put together a promotional feature on you tube and actually won \$8,000 for their participation. They didn't spend that much and had a lot of donations. Churches got together and provided hot dogs and had school supplies.

Mayor White- Brian, we have invited you to the meeting the Thursday after the council meeting in January. Brian- Someone from the agency will be there. I will leave some copies of our annual reports with you. Mayor White-Thank you, Brian.

#### **Council Reports:**

##### **Rod Cury:**

I want to thank everyone who was able to come to the planning commission's public meeting on our comprehensive plan in conjunction with the Community Planning Partners. I don't know what the percentage of the return was on the flyers that we had sent out. If you get a ten percent return your flying really high. I think that is important for all of us to know since we have been talking about mailers. There were a lot of interesting discussions that came from it. There were discussion boards where you could list what you thought was the most important thing in different areas of the community. I think they are going to take this back and compile a list to give us. Is that right Tim?

Tim Taylor- I think we have got 138 responses on paper. They had a little problem with their link. They are going to have a different approach tomorrow. It will be on the web page. If you go to the web page for the town you will see an icon that will take you to an off sight link that has a fillable form for a survey. You can answer the questions; it is anonymous. It will be submitted and counted just as if you submitted a paper copy. That's an easy way to do that. You won't have to come over to the town hall or worry about mailing it. The beauty of doing a third party survey link is we have no idea where the survey comes from or who done it.

Rod Cury - Thank you, Tim. I do have one more thing. Brian, I had a conversation with Robert Jesse, he used to work for the teen center. He had an idea that I will share with you. You might want to take it up with the LEAD program. I thought it was a positive idea and I can certainly introduce you to Robert.

##### **Joe McCracken:**

Matthew at the Communication Café has opened a new business. He has asked me to pass along the information to the police officers if they would like to stop in and get a cup of coffee it will be free of

charge to them. It is located at 105 Suffolk Avenue. Matthew is the owner and I would like to welcome him to Richlands. I also have a report of the crosswalks in town. I would like for Frank Dorton the police chief to elaborate on how the drivers should precede a crosswalk.

Frank Dorton- The state law says that if a pedestrian is at a crosswalk then they have the right away and the vehicles have to stop.

Joe McCracken- The complaint was that vehicles are not honoring the law and pedestrians are coming very close to being run over.

Frank Dorton- The crosswalk at the library?

Joe McCracken: Yes, the crosswalk at the library. Also, speeding in town needs to be checked. I have had complaints about the speeding. I got a report about the house at Big Creek that's about to fall in the road. It is in definite need of removal or its going to fall in the road. It's in town just across the railroad tracks at Big Creek crossing on the left. I had a complaint about speeding on Daw Road. It has no speed limit signs. They are asking for at least one speed limit sign and they want the speed limit to be 25mph.

Tim Taylor- We can check on getting the speed limit to 25mph on Daw Road. We will check the code.

Frank Dorton- I think it would at least have to be 35mph. I will have to check the code to see what it should be.

Joe McCracken- The people that complained have thought about 35mph also, but he said it was really dangerous to drive at 35mph. Mary Ann, Tim and I have discussed putting a mirror at Floyd Street and Front Street. We agree that we need to put a mirror there so that people can see coming up the road. It's a very dangerous intersection there.

Tim Taylor- We will go ahead and get that ordered.

Joe McCracken- Please be sure that you don't only rely on the mirror because they are deceiving. You can't tell what side of the road that the vehicle is traveling on.

I had a couple of calls concerning the lights at critterville. Right now there are no lights. I would like to have an open discussion as to what we need to do. Maybe we need a time frame for the lights through the winter months only at critterville.

Larry Johnson- I would think the hours of 5:00 p.m. until 8:30 or 9:00 p.m. That will give the people that work late time to get their walking finished.

Mayor White- Can you set those lights on timers?

Tim Taylor- We will have to investigate that because most street light comes off a lighting panel. So we will have to look at that. We can turn them on for now until we can figure something out.

Joe McCracken- I would like to have a little police patrolling. The word I'm getting is that people would like to see the police patrolling over their around dusk or after.

Frank Dorton- I can assure you that we are over there quiet often.

Joe McCracken- The old house on Floyd Street which is next to Little Man's Auto is ready to fall in the road. The whole back of the house is off and hanging.

Mary Ann- I know that Tommy Short oversees that; he is the one they pay the rent to. There are some sisters in Tazewell that owns the lot but I don't know if they own the house too.

Joe McCracken- It's in bad need of repair, fenced off or tore down because it could fall on somebody walking down the street at any time.

**Frances Meadows:**

The one thing that I am still concerned about is if anyone has gotten in touch with Mr. Tackett's son.

Tim Taylor- We are working on it. All trailer parks are being worked on. We have talked to them but I don't think they did anything.

Frances Meadows- What can we do besides cutting the electricity off? It's a safety issue.

Frank Dorton- He has been charged with a violation and the court date is pending.

Tim Taylor-If it's a safety issue than all we can do is cut it off.

**Larry Johnson:**

First, I want to thank everyone for participating in the Christmas parade along with the Police Department, Fire Department and Rescue personnel. I think Santa Clause this year was Jimmy McDonald from First Sentinel so if you know him be sure to give him a hard time. I want to thank Mary Ann, Frances and Mayor White for participating in it. I want to thank Jimmy Sawyers; he showed up and worked the entire time with Angie. I think he was beat by the time he left.

I want to bring up the school events. Right now we are charging the school for police protection during a school event. Is this not part of our responsibility?

Tim Taylor- When they want additional service we charge them. Is that right Frank?

Frank Dorton- We don't charge for any sport events unless its play offs and then that money is paid by Virginia High School League and not the school. The only charge we have done is to the band and they wanted specific stuff done including road closings.

Rod Cury- Frank, what did we charge the school's band? Frank- I think it was \$800.00 because they wanted four people for an eight hour shift which is all overtime. They wanted the roads closed and traffic rerouted on Tornado Alley. If they hadn't requested that, we could have done it with a lot less people.

Rod Cury- They do participate in the parades and I'm just trying to think about what we give and what we get.

Mayor White-The band has to pay a driver out of their funds to bring them to the parade and I feel bad that we ask them to come and don't pay them for their services.

Joe McCracken- We can trade out things for things to help one another. We should help them anytime we can and vice versa.

Tim Taylor- If the principle thought that there was some need for us to be there then we would be there and we wouldn't be charging them for anything, but these little special deals just because they don't want the road traffic might be an issue. Why don't you work on a policy and talk to the school to see what the normal need would be? I really don't mind doing that.

**Larry Johnson:**

Also, I appreciate Brian for coming in and offering to speak to us about the LEAD program. I will tell you that I wish you luck. There is always a lot of verbal support but not much help so anytime we can help in any way let me know.

**Mary Ann:**

Larry has already mentioned all the various people and organizations that need to be thanked for being in the Christmas parade but I also want to express my appreciation to them and to Angie Johnson who organized the parade. It takes a lot of time and effort to organize the parade. I wanted to mention Matthew Horn, who recently opened the Communication Café. I think it takes a lot of courage to open a business right now with Huddle House just opening and the economy like it is. It was especially nice that he was open during and after the parade Sunday. I encourage people to drop by the café and try some coffee, hot chocolate or whatever you like. I also want to thank Brian Beck for coming tonight. I know from experience what Larry was saying about having more talk than help but I truly think the people from the LEAD program are unique and special and I think you will see a lot more action than just talk. I

appreciate their enthusiasm and willingness to help us. I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and ask that you keep Christ in Christmas. Thank you.

**Mayor White:**

I would like to thank Larry and Angie Johnson for coordinating the parade and for all those that participated in it. We had a great time, great turn out and good success. It was a good day and nice weather for it.

**Department Head Reports:**

Mayor White asks if anyone had questions for any of the department heads.

Mary Ann - Is 48 speeding tickets more than normal? People are asking that it be monitored more closely so it appears that it is.

**Brad Ratliff:**

Gene Hearl dropped off a deed to the town and the good folks at the Food Pantry have donated a piece of property to the town. We have prepared a deed and Mr. Hearl and the other trustees will have to stop by and sign the deed. We think we have identified the parcel of land on the map.

Joe McCracken- How much property is that Brad?

Brad Ratliff- We don't know there is no survey. The property originated from Jeff Cantrell investments.

Tim Taylor- I believe it will be beneficial for us to take the property.

Mayor White- We need a motion to accept the property. Joe McCracken made motion to accept. Frances Meadows seconded the motion. Motion carries 5/0

Tim Taylor- Brad are we looking into the property Mr. Young is wanting?

Brad Ratliff- Yes. I will look into that.

**Manager's Report:**

Tim asks members to look at the monthly check register and monthly bills so that he can answer questions that council may have.

Check # 52710 to Brenntag Mid-South is for the water treatment plant

Check # 52733 to Foam Works LLC is for part of the roofing that we put on the Recreation Park.

Check # 52749 Lusk Disposal Services Inc. That is a company that picks up containers for the Town that we can't handle.

Rod Cury- Tim what is check # 52753 Morton Salt Inc.

Tim Taylor- That is the salt for the roads.

Rod Cury- What is check # 52766 Rio Grande Fence Company Inc.

Tim Taylor- That's the substation fencing.

Joe McCracken- What is check #52775 Speedy Lube Inc.

Tim Taylor- That is where the oil was changed for the drug task force vehicles.

Mayor White - Check # 52740 Hill Studio P.C.

Tim Taylor- The check is for services that were performed under contract on the Section House.

Joe McCracken- Once the Section House is completed it will be owned by the Town of Richlands.

Rod Cury- The town will be given a one million dollar project when the house is finished.

Mayor White- Does anyone else have any questions on the checks?

Frances Meadows- I make a motion that we pay the bills.

Larry Johnson- I second the motion.

Mayor White- Motion carries 5/0

Tim Taylor- The only other thing I would like to bring to councils attention is the comprehensive annual financial report. The audit has been completed and was filed on time. It is being printed and you will get a copy of that as soon as we get them. Normally we have them in December.

Joe McCracken-Remember the annual Christmas dinner on December 13, 2015 at 2:00 is being held at the Police Department.

Frank Dorton- We will be taking about 120 kids shopping for Christmas. You are welcome to come and take a child. We will take part of the kids to Magic Mart on Saturday at 7:30 a.m. and the others to Wal Mart on Sunday at 7:30 a.m.

Mayor White- Just a reminder to council to turn in your economic interest statements by the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month. I wish everyone a wonderful Christmas.

Mayor White -Do we have a motion to adjourn?

Rod Cury made motion to adjourn. Mary Ann seconded the motion. Motion carries 5/0

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Jannis White, Mayor

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Julie Cordle, Town Clerk.