

The Richlands Town Council held a regular monthly meeting in the Richlands Council Chambers on May 9, 2017 at 7:30pm with the following present:

Mayor:	Jannis White
Town Manager:	Tim Taylor
Town Clerk:	Connie Allen
Council Members:	Mary Ann Strong, Vickie England Rick Wood, Rod Cury, Larry Johnson, Doug Ratliff
Town Attorney:	Brad Ratliff

Mayor White opened the meeting.

Brad Ratliff gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor White - Do we have anyone who would like to speak that is not on the agenda? I have added Ernest Edgell.

Mayor White - Do we have any other additions/deletions to the agenda?

Tim Taylor – Need to add “Closed Session” to discussion Personnel Issues.

Brad - Code 2.23711 (a1)

Mayor White - Any other additions or deletions to the agenda? If not, do we have a motion to approve the agenda as amended? Mary Ann made the motion, Vicki seconded the motion.

Mayor White - We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries 6/0.

Mayor White - Are there any corrections, additions or deletions to the minutes? Distributed to you are the April Council Meeting minutes and two (2) Budget Work Session Meeting minutes dated April 19 and May 2.

Mayor White - Do I have a motion to approve all three (3) sets of the minutes as presented?

Larry - I make a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Rick seconded the motion.

Mayor White - We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries 6/0.

Mayor White - “Scheduled Public Comments” – Reminder - There is a “Five Minute Maximum”. Raymond Arnold, 309 Bower Avenue will speak first.

Raymond Arnold - 309 Bower Avenue - We have “Bear” issues in our area. I am asking Council to put a bear proof dumpster at the top of the hill. All the neighbors agree. I had a bear come into my house thru my back door. I have a 2yr. old son; I don’t want to take any chances. It would be easier for the town to pick up at the top of the hill.

Rod - What is entailed with this?

Tim – Mr. Arnold came to see me but we don’t have a policy to put a dumpster in a residential area. Mr. Arnold has agreed to pay for the dumpster, which is a lot of money. Dumpster comes in different sizes. We do put dumpsters in multi-family areas, which include apartments and mobile home parks. We encourage these areas to have a dumpster and have someone responsible for the dumpster. If the roads are not designed to pick up garbage, it breaks up the pavement. We encourage not adopting a

policy, but could make sense in certain areas. It also creates issue with people coming out of town and dumping garbage.

Doug - Would this be an exception?

Tim – I will look at it and think about it before I do anything, a lot of things involved.

Mayor White - Asked the Street Committee to look at the area.

Tim - If we are going to consider this, we need to look at the area.

Raymond Arnold- There is a spot for the dumpster. The town gets \$60 from the residents already. Come and talk with the neighbors.

Rick - How many bears are in your area?

Raymond Arnold – There are several bears; the bear that came to my door was a big bear.

Doug - What is the cost of the dumpsters?

Tim - Dumpster cost is approximately \$500 to \$600 dollars each. Someone must be responsible for putting the rods back in, if not, the bears will come more often than before. We need to talk about the details.

Raymond Arnold - I have already explained to the neighbors that the dumpster should stay locked at all times. We are trying to clean up the area.

Doug – Ask Tim to look at the area, and give some thought.

Tim - We will be there at approximately 10:30 or 11:00, please be there when we come to check out the area. We will talk about the pros and cons.

Mary Ann - I had a conversation with Chief Dorton recently about the dumpster at my town houses on Ratliff Street. The problem is the majority of my tenants will not put the lids and the rods back in. The town went to the expense to bring the dumpster and now the rods are missing. If there are a lot less people, they may adhere to the process and how it works. We have not been very successful with the dumpster.

Raymond Arnold - I guarantee it will be locked. I personally will make sure the dumpster is locked.

Tim - General rule in most places, if you take the food source away, and the bears will leave.

Mayor White - Dr. Glenn Harrison

Dr. Glenn Harrison – I came to thank Council for doing the right thing on fluoridating the water. During the discussions in the last several months there were a lot of pros and cons. We didn't talk much about the community. Approx. ten years ago I had a 16-year-old girl come to my office to have her wisdom teeth removed. I had to explain the process; she had never had an injection, filling or cavity before. That didn't happen 30 years ago; It happens once a week now. The reason is because the water has fluoride. Fluoridated water decreases tooth decay in kids 25%. Out of seven (7) kids, one (1) will be 20 years old without any cavities. This did not happen before; it happens now because we have fluoridated water. It impacts the children in this community. Fluoridated water makes a difference. I appreciate what the Council has done.

Doug – What is your specialty?

Dr. Glenn Harrison - Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Doug - Do you have a specialty in the heart and other parts of the body?

Dr. Glenn Harrison - Everything below the eyes and above the chin.

Doug – You are not a heart doctor. If I have someone with a heart problem or arthritis problem I would not come to you. I come to you for my teeth.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - The first two years of dental school is the same as in medical school.

Doug - I have several doctors that do not share your opinion. I have copies of documents that I can share with you. They are against fluoride. I also have a letter from Cedar Bluff Town Council that unanimously voted not to add fluoride to the water.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - In the past three months we have had a political discussion about fluoride. Everybody picked articles that supported their position. That is how politics works.

Doug - You have your opinion, and other people have their opinion. Who is to say who is right? People agree and disagree with you. I am not going to take a chance of medicating the whole population for something we think helps. That is my position.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - We know that fluoride helps.

Doug - I have articles that dispute what you say.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - We are having a political discussion right now; you have a point of view and you have articles that support your point of view. That is how politics works. This is science; science does not work like that.

Doug - This is science, studied articles on fluoride. (Read points from articles). I don't agree with your position.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - Your opinion is based on information you have found in articles. Science looks at all the articles and sifts thru the articles.

Doug - Ok, what are you doing, you have articles that support your opinion.

Dr. Glenn Harrison – National Cancer Institute - Shared information from several articles and studies. Recommended levels of fluoride does not cause harm to anyone.

Larry - What is the base line part per million they use for fluoride?

Dr. Glenn Harrison - 1 part per million – This was 26 different studies.

Doug - The recommended level is .6 or .7, Commented on other articles about fluoride.

Rick - The only problem I have is "Poison Symbols" written on the bags. Poison is poison; don't matter how much or how little.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - Apple Juice has arsenic in it.

Rick - Apple Juice does not have "Poison Symbols" written on it.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - But it does have arsenic in it. Apples seeds have high concentration of arsenic in it. This is a concentration that has no effect whatsoever on health, very small dose. Read other articles from National Cancer Institute. The dose is what makes the difference in fluoride.

Doug - How can you take in account the fluoride in the food you take in every day? Fluoride is in everything we eat. How can you get the right dose?

Dr. Glenn Harrison – What happens is a lot passes through. The 0 .7 per million parts water includes what is expected in the diet and takes that into account. If we take fluoride out of the water, I will get more business but I would rather help people.

Doug – Thru the years they have slowly changed the dosage. It was .5 several years ago. Why do they keep changing?

Dr. Glenn Harrison - The dosage changes because kids are getting fluoride in their toothpaste, more on the surface. If you take fluoride out of the water my business will increase.

Doug - If we take out fluoride, I would like to know how your business is doing in couple years.

Vicki - It is my understanding that fluoride has been in the water for 30/40 years. The machine broke and that is the only reason we don't have fluoride in the water today. Am I correct or am I wrong? We have only been without fluoride for five (5) or six (6) months. If the machine had not broken would we still have fluoride in our water?

Doug - If we still had fluoride in the water, I would bring the issue up.

Rod - As far as I am concern, fluoride is helpful. First time the issue came up in the council meeting I looked at the pros and cons. I did some research and read articles from Dr. Mercola; he has a website.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - I have read his articles, this is a scam, makes his living on controversy and scaring people.

Doug - He is a doctor; I don't think it is a scam.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - I said I was suspicious that it was a scam. Don't know that much about him. He only uses negative information, articles that suit his opinion.

Doug - How do we know that he is not right? My dentist is against fluoride in the water.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - No proof of what he states. I have studies done by organizations over 75 years, not an opinion.

Doug - I have a different opinion from you.

Mary Ann –I recently spoke to Dr. George J. Farrell at Clinch Valley Medical Center, he said he had written a letter to Tim on support of fluoridated water, dated February 13. He stated (5) facts for the basis of their support. Item No. 4 states “Safe and effective for 70 years, the best scientific evidence consistently indicates that community water fluoridation is safe and effective. It has been endorsed by numerous U.S. Surgeons General and more than 100 health organizations recognize the health benefits of water fluoridation including the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization, the American Dental Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics”. Our hospital supports fluoridated water. Only other comment I have, I spoke to Dr. Musick and a Pediatric Dentist and they both said they care about their patients and adding fluoride to the water is the best option. We want to do what is right for our patients. As in the same comment of Dr. Glenn Harrison, if fluoride is not in the water we gain business but we care more about our patients.

Doug – The Council is voted in by the people to serve and do what the people want. Last month we had a petition with 600 signatures from the community that did not want fluoride added to the water.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - I thought you were voted in to do what is best for the community.

Doug - We are here for both.

Larry - Which age group is fluoride most important?

Dr. Glenn Harrison – Young age, once they become toddlers their teeth are forming. From ages 1 ½ to 2 years and on makes a big difference in children. Fluoridated water makes a difference, makes teeth harder.

Larry – You are saying up to ages 6 – 7? Parents teach kids to brush and take care of their teeth.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - Teeth form to age 15, fluoride makes a difference. Some parents don't teach their children to take care of their teeth. (Read information from another article)

Mayor White - Do you think fluoridated water combats the soft drinks that kids drink that are full of sugar?

Dr. Glenn Harrison - It does help.

Rod - Does good dental health contribute to whole health, such as good heart health?

Dr. Glenn Harrison - Absolutely

Doug - Are you familiar with studies between the US and England? They found no difference in cavities between the US and England. England does not use fluoride.

Dr. Glenn Harrison – No but I have seen a couple of UK studies.

Tim - Are there any difference in natural fluoride and what is being added?

Dr. Glenn Harrison - It is just balancing the fluoride in the system.

Doug - With the natural fluoride and what we eat, people are getting the dosage needed. Fluoride works topical not internally.

Dr. Glenn Harrison - Not true, that is why it is important to kids building teeth. Once they are adults it does work topical.

Doug – Kids ages 1-6 get an overdose of fluoride. Once kids reach age of six (6), fluoride is provided by schools. Letters are sent home to parents for permission.

Mary Ann - Does Tazewell County offer this program?

Audience - Yes

Mary Ann - One of my teacher friends said they have the right to refuse.

Doug - That is their choice.

Mary Ann - Are we going to take a 5 year olds opinion?

Mayor White - Asked someone in audience if a note is sent home to parents from the school.

Audience - The parents check "Yes" or "No" and send back to school.

Mary Ann - Where do we stand on equipment purchase?

Tim - Quotes out for equipment. We must try and get (4) quotes. We can buy equipment possibly next week.

Mary Ann - I hope so, we voted on this in February.

Tim - It does take time.

Mary Ann - I am getting a lot of criticism; people think we are not going to add the fluoride. What is our population?

Tim – Water goes to over 10,000 people.

Mary Ann - We have a petition for 600 people not to add fluoride.

Doug - We have another 1000.

Mary Ann – 1600 people versus 10,000 people

Doug - We got 600 signatures in two (2) weeks, could get more.

Rod - Some people don't fully understand what they are signing.

Doug - The petition was clearly written.

Larry - I was the only one that was not here when you voted on adding fluoride to the water. My view, I don't care one way or the other. I had no intention of bringing the issue back up again. Then the petition came out and people started questioning me about it. I thought I owed it to them to research myself. I did not get the opinions from anyone on the Council or Doctors on what had been said. In my research our average naturally is .3 parts per million. From the ADA website, birth to six months they recommend "0" supplementation, that is if you have naturally .3 to .6. From 6 months to 3 years they recommend "0" supplementation. It is not until they are 3 –6 years old that they recommend .25, which is very little. Ours fluctuate from .2 to .4 and average of .3. Do you agree with the ADA website? I make a motion that we do not add fluoride to the water.

Rick - Second the motion

Mayor White - We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of not fluoridating the water say yes. All those oppose say no. "No" – Vicki, Mary Ann, Rod "Yes" - Larry, Rick, Doug.

Rod – I believe it would be a mistake not to add fluoride to the water.

Mayor White –The vote is in my court. I have tossed this issue around, if I am going to error on side of caution, I must say "Yes". You can your repair teeth, but if we don't know for sure what it is doing to the body, I question that.

Rod - Thank you Dr. Harrison

Dr. Glenn Harrison - You all have a safe drive home tonight. That is the "Risk". You are a million times more likely to get killed on the way home than by fluoride in the water

Mayor White - "Unscheduled Public Comments" - Ernest Edgell

Ernest Edgell – 183 Terry Drive - First question I have, does the bottled water have fluoride?

Yes

Mary Ann - Most low income families don't buy bottled water; they drink mountain dew.

Ernest Edgell - I am here to ask the Council and the Police Department to do something about the speeding and cell phone use. I am asking the Town to radar in the Hidden Valley area. My neighbor's daughter was almost hit by someone passing a school bus. I live in Hidden Valley on Terry Drive; there are five (5) neighbors that have authorized me to ask for the Town to radar in that area.

Tim - Are you just talking about the Hidden Valley area?

Ernest Edgell – Yes, the Hidden Valley area and in town. My grandchildren get off the bus in a parking lot in Richlands. People fly thru that area and pass the bus.

Tim - Is there a street that the issue is worse?

Ernest Edgell – The two straight stretches are Terry Drive and Cresswood. When I was walking today, two cars passed me, neither one stopped at the stop sign at the end of the street. Someone is going to get hurt. Neighbors said I can use their name and house numbers. House numbers are 183, 229, 228, 207, and 206.

Tim - Bus drivers should have strong direction on what to do.

Audience - Small kids get off school bus, people pass school bus while kids getting off bus. My wife went to school to report this.

Ernest Edgell - Writing tickets would help.

Tim - We must catch them first.

Ernest Edgell - If you don't come up there you can't catch them. You can park in my drive way or at the end of the street.

Tim - Will try and work on the issue.

Mayor White – Council Member Report – Rod Cury

Rod - Richlands Women Club is the oldest civic club in the town. They just had a celebration, which I did not get to attend.

Mayor White - I went to do a Proclamation for them.

Rod - I would like to have a "Resolution" to honor the Richlands Women Club, if it pleases the Council. I would like to ask Brad if he could write a "Resolution" to honor them. They could appear at the next Council meeting to accept. They have done a tremendous job for our town. They have been in existence in the Town of Richlands for 85 years, they are all volunteers. A very deserving Resolution, if Council agrees.

Mayor White - Brad, can you write the Resolution?

Brad - Yes, I will prepare the Resolution.

Rod - The Planning Commission has not met. We have not had our chairman, Richard Brown, who normally calls members to see if we have any issues. There have been no issues to discuss recently. Our next scheduled meeting is the first Tuesday in June. I am pleased to see the Section House beginning. I appreciate the support of the Council and the Citizens of the Town.

Mayor White - Council Member Report – Vicki England

Vicki - Rick and I are going to look at a street tomorrow that someone talked to me about. There are some issues regarding the street.

Mayor White - Council Member Report – Rick Wood

Rick - 119 Randall Drive, Fred Dye, Dust Problems - Gravel road in front, it is a private road. Are the town limits passed that?

Tim - Town Limits approximately to top of the mountain. Part of the road is out of town limits.

Mayor White – Council Member Report – Doug Ratliff

Doug – Gas - Can we get update on what progress they have made?

Tim - Yes, will send letter out to them.

Doug – Town Plan - We have completed the first phase; can we proceed to the second phase?

Tim - Once the budget is approved, we can start working on the second phase. We will need to start scheduling meetings when the Council is available.

Mayor White - Council Member Report – Larry Johnson

Larry – Property on Kent’s Ridge Road behind Don’s Apts. - The abandoned structure is almost torn down. Harvey Claypool – Lake Park - Bragged on Street Department for sweeping Lake Park, best it has every looked, he appreciated it.

Mayor White - Council Member Report - Mary Ann Strong

Mary Ann – The Recreation Committee met on April 17, had a great meeting and lots of great ideas. Pleased that the “No Smoking Signs” are up at Critterville and the “Designated Smoking Areas” are well marked. Appreciate George, Fred and everyone who helped with getting the signage up. We need to educate people on smoking in the designed smoking areas. We have a seat on the Recreation Commission that needs to be filled. I would like to appoint Brandon Breeding to be on the Recreation Commission. I am making that in form of a motion.

Rod - I second the motion.

Mayor White - We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries 6/0.

Mary Ann – The Rec Commission met the third Monday at 7:00 pm in conference/classroom upstairs. I encourage anyone with ideas or questions to meet with us. I would also like to congratulate the Women’s Club for their 85th Anniversary. I apologize; I didn’t receive my invitation to attend the celebration. Tim, do we have a box at the Town Hall where I need to come and get mail?

Tim – We will get the mail to you when we get it.

Mary Ann – Must have been a communication breakdown. Members of the Women’s Club were disappointed I did not attend. The new signage looks good, better presentation when you enter our Town. I would also like to mention that two (2) teachers from Richlands were awarded special awards at the School Board Office last night Vicki Hearl –Teacher of the Year -K-2nd grade, Terry Mosley – Tazewell Middle School, Middle School Teacher of the Year Both ladies live in our town, they deserve to be publicly recognized.

Doug - I have a nice piece of equipment I would like to donate to the Rec. Park. Worth about \$5000-\$6000 dollars, it has several stations on it. Fred, you can come and look at it any day after 8:00 pm.

Fred - Yes, when would be a good time.

Mary Ann - Thank You Doug, would be great addition to have and a nice donation.

Mayor White - Does anyone have any questions on Supervisor Reports?

Mayor White - Tim, will you explain the Certificate of Resolution – Section 125 Cafeteria Plan

Tim - Annual requirement by IRS, pretax on payroll deduction, 125 Cafeteria Plan

Mayor White - Do we have a motion to adopt the 125 Cafeteria Plan? Mary Ann made the motion, Rick seconded the motion.

Mayor White – We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries 6/0.

Mayor White - We had an employee to retire last week, Ralph Ray, not sure how many years he had with the Town, but has worked for the Town many years.

Audience - He had 40 years, 7 months and 8 days of service.

Mayor White - I would like to commend him and recognize him tonight for his service to the Town and to “Thank Him”. Let’s give Ralph Ray a big hand. (CLAPPED)

Tim - We are having a celebration for him along with other employees.

Mayor White - Is the sidewalk still in the budget for 4th Street and Rockbridge around the Tabernacle Church?

Tim – The sidewalk is still in the budget. Once we get the paving out of the way and have breaks in between the Section House we can do some other work. It will be complete this year.

Mayor White - What about the lighting?

Tim –That is considered a residential area and must meet VDOT residential standards. I will make sure nothing has been removed.

Mayor White - They are talking about the fancy lighting.

Tim - That is not in the budget.

Mayor White – Brad, do you have anything?

Brad - Confirmed with Mr. Taylor the annual ordinances including the budget will be prepared for the next Council Meeting.

Mayor White – Manager’s Report - Tim

Tim – Authorization to Pay Bills - Check register distributed. Couple of large ticket items I wanted to bring to your attention. Check 55802 – Blue Ridge Power Agency – \$16,324.78- Project Work - Not a normal monthly bill. Check 55808 – Carolina Meter & Supply Co. - \$36,288.00, budget amount for new water meters/wireless – 80% complete. Check 55863 – Snap-On Industrial \$24,056.19 – investments in software/hardware to work on the entire fleet line.

Mayor White – Can vendors pay for Events by credit card?

Tim - Yes, pay thru the Finance Office.

Doug - How is the new system working?

Tim – Still struggling, the transition was rough. We are getting better but still working on taxes and payroll. We hope to be more efficient.

Mayor White – Do we have a motion for Mr. Taylor to pay the bills? Rod made the motion and Larry seconded the motion.

Mayor White - We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those oppose say no. Motion carries 6/0.

Tim - Section House Project - We have met twice, first was a preconstruction meeting and the second was an informative meeting. We will get the utilities working so they can function. Section House committee is engaged and the students are very interested in helping with the project. I visited all the business areas who it may affect, everyone excited.

Tim - Budget - Brad will have all the ordinances prepared for next council meeting. I would like to get the Strategic Planning meetings started; I think it is a good approach. The Comprehensive Plan brought out a lot of things we can start to work on. We need to identify what we want to do and focus on a propriety list as a group or sub groups. Hope to have budget finalized by next council meeting. The rate approval will affect the middle of July bills. Everything is on line if anyone has any questions, you can direct to website.

Tim - Paving – Hope to finish by end of June. We have a lot of tonnage not sure if it will be complete by end of June. We want to maximize the rate of \$65 per ton.

Tim - I want to recognize the Richlands Garden Club for the signs they put up.

Mayor - Letter from tenants and merchants on Eldridge Brown Building Section wanted to thank George West and Street Department for insulation of the trash cans on their street. They appreciated very much. Do we have most of the trash cans on the streets now George?

George - Still have a few more to install.

Mary Ann - I would like to thank the Cornerstone Church for the wonderful service on National Day of Prayer; I appreciate the Pastors and the church. I also received email from Ginger Branton concerning a presentation she attended at Virginia Tech on radon testing. Virginia Tech will do the same presentation for Richlands, and I think it would be worthwhile if it is pleasure of the Council.

Vicki - They did come to my place of business.

Mary Ann - It goes along with our Comprehensive Plan that we make public health a priority. Susan West at Virginia Tech offered to do the presentation for the Board of Supervisors and Town of Richlands. Mr. Taylor would need to contact her.

Tim - If it is the Council's pleasure we can have it here. We need to make sure we have good attendance.

Mary Ann - I think Ginger would assist; I will talk to her about it in our meeting tomorrow.

Rod - Received letter from Richlands High School Project Graduation requesting donation/contribution from the Town of Richlands. (Rod read portion of the letter). They work hard to provide a safe environment for the seniors after graduation. For a token of support from the Town of Richlands, I would like to make a motion that we donate a \$100 to Project Graduation. Rick seconded the motion.

Mayor White - We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those oppose say no. Motion carries 6/0.

Mayor White - Does anyone have anything else before we go into closed session? Do I have a motion to go into closed session to discuss 2.23711 (A1)? Rod made the motion, Larry second.

Mayor White - We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those oppose say no. Motion carries 6/0.

Mayor White - Do we have a motion to come back in to open session? Mary Ann made the motion, Rod second the motion. All those in favor of the motion say yes, all those that oppose say no. Motion carries 6/0.

Mayor White - Do all members agree the only item discussed was Personnel, Section 2. 23711 (A1)
Vicki – Yes, Rick – Yes, Doug – Yes, Mary Ann- Yes, Larry – Yes, Rod – Yes

Mayor White - Do we have a motion to adjourn?

Larry – I make the motion to adjourn, Rick seconded the motion.

Mayor White - We have a motion and a second, all those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Motion carries 6/0.

Jannis White, Mayor

Connie Allen, Clerk