

The Richlands Town Council held a regular monthly meeting in the Richlands Council Chambers on July 13, 2021 at 6:00 pm with the following present:

Mayor: Rod D. Cury
Town Manager: John O'Daniel
Town Clerk: Connie Allen
Council Members: Mary Ann Strong, Mike Street, Richard Brown
Council Members Absent: Logan Plaster, Doug Ratliff, Jeff Hurst
Town Attorney : Bob Altizer

Mayor Cury opened the meeting.

Corey Whited gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Cury – Ladies and Gentlemen of the audience unfortunately tonight we do not have a quorum, so I am going to rearrange the agenda, we can't approve it but I can rearrange it because we can't take a vote on anything. We can hear the public speakers and unscheduled public comments. If you wish to have your comments heard by full Council we will have another Council meeting. We have not decided a date; we just learned we were not going to have a quorum. If you prefer not to speak tonight and want to speak a full Council you may ask that your talk be delayed until the next Council meeting. If you want to speak now you may absolutely do that.

Mayor Cury - I am very glad to be back to Council, I have been a little bit incapacitated due to my knee surgery, that you very much for all your concerns it means a lot to me.

Mayor Cury - I am going to rearrange the agenda myself and I hope Council will approve with a nod, we can't vote, I hope you are OK with what I am going to suggest.

Mayor Cury - Additions/Deletions to Agenda – Approval of the Minutes – Appointment of Town Attorney - We have to have a quorum to vote on these items. "Scheduled Public Comments" - at this point I am going to ask for anyone who wants to speak tonight for "Unscheduled Public Comments" to please say your name. Rusty Hess, Morgan Earp, Kelly Stanley, Jason Herndon, Robert Hicks, Joe McCracken, and Laura Mollo These are three (3) minute segments. Derek, Connie told me you were inadvertently left off of the five (5) minute "Schedule Public Comments", I have added you.

Mayor Cury - "Scheduled Public Comments"- Mike Osborne and Michael Horn are not present. Mary Ann you may want to see if they want to reschedule. We have Wanda Lowe and Derek and Maria White. Under "Unscheduled Public Comments" we have Rusty Hess, Morgan Earp, Kelly Stanley, Jason Herndon, Robert Hicks, Joe McCracken, and Laura Mollo.

Mayor Cury – In order to facilitate things, I am going to move the agenda to accommodate people who have time constraints tonight. The first one I would like to speak will be Delegate Will Morefield, Recognition of First Responders – Matt Whited and then the Richlands Garden Club. We want to scratch Flood Taskforce; Shea Cook will not be speaking tonight. We have Council Member Reports, Mayor's Comments, Attorney's Comments, and Manager's Reports. The members of the audience will know, because we don't have a quorum, you are welcome to speak on any issue but we cannot address anything formally because we don't have a quorum. I hope you respect that as the protocol and the right way to do things. Our Attorney Mr. Altizer has helped me to understand that.

Mary Ann – We need to also recognize Ramp-Up.

Mayor Cury – Delegate Will Morefield, Recognition of First Responders, Recognition of Ramp-Up Richlands Garden Club. Mary Ann, Richard, Mike are you good with what we are doing? Ok, great ladies and gentlemen sorry for the inconvenience but we are doing the best we can.

Mayor Cury - Delegate Will Morefield are you present? Please come up, we are so welcome to have you.

Delegate Will Morefield, Thank you Mayor and Members of Council, if it is OK I would like to ask Senator Hackworth to come up here with me. As you all know, I believe it was at the February Council Meeting we read a Resolution commending the Foreman's Section House honoring those who were involved and all the hard work in preserving our history. We all know that preserving history is extremely important. We learn from the past so I think we have an obligation as elected officials whether be at the local level or at the state level to make every effort to preserve history. We could not be more honored today along with Senator Hackworth and I am sure he will have a few words to say, to present a joint Resolution commending this effort. As I mention we read the full Resolution in February if you don't mind we would like to just make the presentation and get a photo with the Mayor and Councilmembers.

Senator Hackworth - I always call it the Railroad House. I remember the first day I walked into the Section House, it was pretty rough, ivy was growing on the walls you could see the ground and the sky standing at the same place, it was a lot of people that worked very hard and some are here today. We want to thank the Town of Richlands, Council Members and everyone who had a part in making this a reality, definitely perseverance, which is a word that comes to mind in making this happen. I think it has been twelve (12) years. Now we can drive by and see a piece of history that has been preserved and it is a beautiful building for the Town of Richlands and we are so thankful to have a part in that. Thank you.

Delegate Will Morefield - Mr. Mayor and Members of Council tonight we are happy to present this joint Resolution. (Picture taken)

Mayor Cury - Thank you Will and Travis we really appreciate it. Delegate and Senator, we will always know you as Will and Travis you are part of history and you will be written about for years and years and that is what it is about. Thank you. Unfortunately Delegate Will Morefield's wife was unable to make it, we invited her. I would like to recognize Angel, Angel please stand up, she is part of the team. Thank you all. You are welcome to stay but if you have other things to do I totally understand.

Mayor Cury - I would like to recognize the Section House Board Members that are here at the moment, we had some that could not be here tonight. Lynna Mitchell, Greg Horn, Corey Whited, Eleanor Arms, Donna Altizer and Gaynell Thompson, we had several members who could not be here. Thank you so much for all the work it has been a true labor of love. We are very grateful for you and for the support of this Town and for everything that goes on here it is a team effort and that is what it takes. No matter what the project is, it is everyone pulling together. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your work. Two (2) members who could not be here are critical to the success to this Martha Hurst and Mary Lawson who have been with us from August 2010.

Mayor Cury - I have heard nothing but heroic deeds that our First Responders have done, I am incapable of describing the work that you do it is beyond my capability. I will turn this over to Matt Whited to tell us about your efforts and your deeds.

Matt Whited - I want to say thank you to the Town Manager, Mayor and Town Council for allowing me to present these recognition awards this evening. EMS called information on Friday June 25, 2021 around 5:17pm, a "911 Call" was placed for elderly 79 year old female who had passed out and then stopped breathing with no pulse at Grants Supermarket. There was a bystander citizen who started CPR, the female then started breathing and then stopped again, and the bystander started CPR again. Richlands EMS paged at 5:18 and enroute at 5:19pm, three (3) Richlands Police Officers on scene assisting, 5:19 Richlands EMS Unit on scene. Richlands EMS paramedic unit on scene working this cardiac arrest for 20/25 minutes then transported to CMVC-ER after arrival, there the patient was stabilized and transferred to Roanoke Hospital on Vent-ICU. A few days later she was taken off the vent and moved to a regular room sitting up and eating. This information came from a family member of the patient; they also sent us a photo of her. A few days later she had open heart surgery and is recovering well, she was released to go home on July 7. After talking with the family this is nothing but a big miracle and the right people in the right place with the right training and equipment at the right time. I want to say I am very proud of everyone involved in this EMS call. They did an outstanding job. This is what it is all about, everyone working together for a better outcome. I have seven (7) awards to give

out tonight. There are two (2) that could not be here, Terry Collins the citizen from Buchanan County and Patrol Officer Charley Dupree she is on vacation this week. I will get the Assistant Captain to come up and help me present the awards. Awards presented and pictures taken of the following: Patrolman Michael Tiller – RPD, Patrolman Brandon Ward – RPD, Lt. Scott McCormack – Fire Fighter/Paramedic, Lt. Joshua Salyers – Fire Fighter/Paramedic. (Group picture taken).

Matt Whited – Richlands Fire-Rescue was awarded July 1, 2021 for four (4) Zoll X Series Cardiac Monitors thru the Virginia Office of EMS – RSAF Grant. This grant is for 80/20 funding, the total grant \$150,841.60. The remaining 20% will be matched from funds paid by Ballad Health which is zero cost to the Town of Richlands. This will replace four (4) older Phillips MRX Cardiac Monitors in which we have had in service for eight (8) plus years which now are unable to be repaired or parts replaced due to newer cardiac monitors been manufactured. We hope to have these new Zoll X series cardiac monitors ordered and in service on the ambulance units soon. This is great news for our EMS Agency. This makes Richlands Fire-Rescue receiving 1.1 million dollars in grant funds in the past sixteen (16) years.

Mayor Cury - Matt before you go sometimes we have these recognitions it is so easy for people to accept, to applaud and walk off, it is not the end of it. What you are doing will last a lifetime it is part of the memory of people. The people you helped will never forget you or your crew or be recognized. It is part of the Arc of History, it is very long and it last way beyond us and I thank you.

Mayor Cury – Recognition of Ramp-Up Richlands – I know some of these people, I am smiling at a young man that I know and I am proud that he is here. I will turn this over to Town Manager John O’Daniel.

John – As many of you know we had a Summer Fest event a couple weeks ago, very well attended and I have only heard positive things about the event. I thought it would be appropriate to recognize Ramp-Up for all the hours, time and effort they put in to making it a success. The ones that were not able to attend were Amanda Elswick, Bethany Elkins, Hunter Brown, and Jordon Collins. Andrea Perkins, David Joyce, Devin Vandyke and Braden Cordle are here.

Mayor Cury - Please come forward to be recognized and speak your words.

Devin - We all worked really hard on it and were glad it was a success.

Mayor Cury - You are representing a larger group that put their time and efforts into the festival that we need and carry on a tradition. I thank you very much. Andrea I know I have not worked with you but understand that you are really good. I had Devin as a student and he was very smart, intelligent and a lover of history. Thank you and please come and take a picture.

Mayor Cury - The next group will be the Richlands Garden Club – Donna Altizer

Donna - We do have some of the ladies here that are part of the Garden Club and I would like for all of them to stand, they are great ladies. They all work hard and we make a really great team. I am the new President for 2021-2023, I want to come and give a small presentation of what we do in the Town of Richlands. It is also our 60th Year Anniversary. (Slide Presentation presented)

Mayor Cury - Can you identify some of the people in the last picture.

Donna – Eleanor Arms, Tracey Wright, Earlene Butcher, Margaret Dye, Kathy Mitchell, Mary Sue Whitt

Mayor Cury - I want to say thank you to all the Garden Club Members for what you have done this year and all the previous years back to 1960. It is Clubs like this and groups like Ramp-Up, Section House Committee, EMS, people working together to truly make this a great place to live. On behalf of the Council and myself and those who are not here I want to say thank you to the Richlands Garden Club. (Picture taken).

Mayor Cury - I just want to reiterate how moved I am with the positivity that surrounds us in all these groups. All the wonderful groups that do things in Richlands are here. This is just a sampling of the interest in making this Town a really good place to live.

Mayor Cury - "Scheduled Public Comments" – Wanda Lowe

Wanda Lowe – 292 Plantation Drive – I am here to talk about the water problems I have been having for one (1) year now. I have appealed the Town to come up. The Town Manager and George West have been there, George and Hobert Lester had discovered that the neighbor directly behind me had ran his drain pipes from his guttering to each side of his house, he just laid them on top of the ground and I am getting the bulk of it. When we first flooded I contacted him he came down, he dug a little ditch across the back but it still was not enough to hold the water it continues to come. I have flooded three (3) times in the last two (2) weeks we have had some extremely heavy rains. We had concentrated so much on one (1) neighbor, so I decided I would go out and explore and see what was going on with everything I have discovered four (4) neighbors behind me has the artificial channeling which is guttering, downspouts or whatever you might have to guide your water I am catching it from all of them. The way the land lays I get everyone's run off. I want to thank the Council I sent a video last week to everyone but Richard. I did not do that purposely I did not have your number that is why I brought you pictures tonight. I am thankful to the Councilmembers who responded to me, thank you Mary Ann. She responded that night she called and talked to me and she came over and looked at my problem. That told me she really cared. Mayor I didn't bother you because I knew you were sick, but I have pictures for you too. I am appealing to the Council and to the Town Manager to do something to try to alleviate the problem; this problem has expanded beyond what it started. I have called Richmond and spoke to the Soil Conservation Department and to the Department of Erosion, I have talked to every official I can in Richmond I could. I have videos and pictures of when I have flooded. I have witnesses and I have done everything that I can possibly do to try to alleviate this. My recommendation that I got from the Town of Richlands was to sue my neighbor, I personally do not want to sue my neighbors. I have to live there, my husband and myself are in our 70's and my husband is very ill, we don't want to take on a fight right now. If we were younger we might do that but I don't want to fight with them. I didn't feel like that was the right recommendation, he felt like the Town was not responsible. There is no drainage between the two (2) streets, my neighbors have nowhere to send their water, I get all the run off. They need somewhere for that water to go, I told the Town Manager and George West at the same time that I was willing to give right of way to the Town of Richlands to come across my property to put in ditches or pipes whatever it takes to save my home. Right now my house has water under it, it has washed out my foundation and it is around my heat pump. I have had to have gravels brought in to try to build around the heat pump to keep it out of the water. All my landscaping in the back is gone it is right down to the rocks. Mary Ann saw it. I can't fix it because the problem is not fixed and can't continually keep doing it. I am appealing to you all please take time and maybe get an engineer to come over who is actually qualified to look at it and make suggestions. I have a fence up I am willing to take the fence down and give the town plenty of room to dig a ditch.

Mayor Cury - Your time is up; do you have a closing statement?

Wanda Lowe – I know you can't vote on anything tonight I am asking tonight to please look at the video and pictures and try to help us.

Mayor Cury - Do you have a number that we can contact you?

Wanda Lowe – I will give my name, phone number and address to whoever is interested.

Mayor Cury – Can you give to the Town Manager that is all we can do tonight.

Richard - I do have a question for you Wanda. You mentioned something in your initial statement that you have had these problems since July of last year. What changed, I know you have lived there for years?

Wanda Lowe – It started in July/August then the weather got dryer and we didn't have all that water like we did in the Spring and Summer. Same as this year it started in February and now influx of rain again.

Richard - You have lived there for many years, correct?

Wanda Lowe - My mother owned the property in 1989 and I have been there since 2008 and we have never had a water problem. I think when the water washes off the land you get ruts, I gave you pictures. If I could fix with suing one (1) neighbor I probably would I am wore out with it. It will not fix it. I am out of answers. Any help would be appreciated.

Mary Ann- I did discuss a couple of ideas, I talked to Town Manager and Wanda and I met today. When we do meet again we do have an idea might want to explore.

Mayor Cury - "Scheduled Public Comments" – Derek and Maria White

Derek White – Our mission here is simple we just came to say "Thank You" for the support that we had from the Town and the community and that is on the behalf of my brother, Maria and Brooklyn Sports, Team Quantum RBC. Thank you for "Chasing the Wild Boar", the name of the event, the outpour that we got from the community was phenomenal we are greatly indebted and it was an awesome time for us. I can't say how much I appreciated EMS, Police and the County. We have a list that is really long we are really grateful for all the support that we received.

Maria White - I want to add to what Derek was saying we received a lot of positive comments, the event was very safe, cyclists said they felt safe, again to having Chief Gilbert, the Police Department and EMS we had a great support system there they were there with us and made sure the cyclists were safe on the road, they really appreciated that. They loved our roads, they said they were very well maintained, one of the coaches of the cyclist team that he raced in Belgium said it reminded him a lot of the roads in Belgium, I thought that was a nice complement.

Derek White - The teams went on to compete nationally some are in Europe, Belgium and other countries, we had two (2) National Champions that were here. I think Mary Ann met both of those girls. Sam Boardman almost did it he was out front on a long race. Everyone liked it everyone had a good time. We had 22 States, not too bad in the center of the friendly circle, also from District of Columbia and at least two (2) other countries represented were Canada and Ireland.

Mayor Cury - I love it, that is so great Derek and Maria, thank you. I thought it was great; I didn't get to see much of it because they were going too fast. I was driving and I had bicyclist beside of me, I think what you are doing is civic and may I ask you come forward and have your picture made with Council. I would like our Chief of Police to come and be part of the picture.

Derek - There is a new law on the books for cyclists that comes into play on July 1 in VA; you need to make sure when you are changing lanes if you do not have enough distance in your lane to give the cyclist three (3) feet, we can ride two (2) cycles wide so crossing the double yellow line is actually what you are required to do if you don't have enough space to cross adequately in your lane.

Richard - The event was very well organized, I appreciate that. Do you have any numbers as far as economic impact?

Derek White - We had about 348 registrations, probably around 900 people for three (3) days what I am estimating, around 150 cyclists but many had parents because they were juniors, coaches, chiefs or other team staffs, possible impact of quarter of million for our area for the three (3) day event. I know a couple cyclists dropped \$5000 for two (2) B & B in Abingdon.

Maria - Not only did we help our businesses and hotels in the area they also went outside the area which helped other businesses Bluefield, Tazewell and Abingdon and other areas. We tried to spread out a little bit and help our neighbors as well.

Mayor Cury - What we do affects others, it is a good thing.

Mary Ann – Seth White talked to me about the economic impact I think he was talking about the whole surrounding areas and compared with some numbers with Back of the Dragon, he thought it may have been around half million. Two (2) things that you didn't mention the Olympic Coach was there and the gentlemen who won the 60 minute thru town he was on the Olympic team right?

Derek White – Right

Mary Ann - I thought that was real impressive to have a Coach of an Olympic in our little town.

Mayor Cury - Are they in Japan now?

Derek White - I don't know I have not followed it that closely.

Mike - Do you have a date for next year?

Derek White - We did get a shout out on the television as well as the nationals they mentioned our race in Richlands, pretty good for the community.

Mayor Cury - We are so overwhelmed by all the civic support tonight and yours just adds more icing to it. Thank you.

Mayor Cury - Next year instead of Public Speaker put under Recognition.

Mayor Cury – “Unscheduled Public Comments” – Rusty Hess – “No Show”

Mayor Cury – “Unscheduled Public Comments” – Morgan Earp

Morgan Earp – 1618 6th Street – I come before you today to speak to Council and to the public about an experience I had while I was at college. I went to Ferrum College where we had the saying not self but others, with the underlying principal that we had, you give your best foot forward you go out of your way to help somebody in need without expecting anything in return. I graduated from Ferrum with a Political Science Degree and with a minor in Sociology. As I come back to my lovely little town which I love it here, I have been here all my life there are concerns that I do have with my investigations or experience per say there is a great divide in this Town that needs to come together from that division. I believe not just Council but as a public as a whole should come together. I have seen a lot of recent events but I don't believe that is enough to bring people together. I believe there should be more action more what pertaining to civilians that pertain to this Town's need. I know with this effort we can put our best foot forward and learn from the principle not self but others. That is really all I had to say. This is my first time here and I really appreciate it and first time public speaking. I will give you a little background, I should have started with that first, while I was here in this Town I was one of the founding members of the History Club at the High School and from there I have learned from Mayor Cury to preserve to learn and to expand from our past and to make change from what we learn. I also carried that on to Southwest. My closing statement is this; even though the pressure that is going on in this Town with the Council and the people I feel we can defuse this and more cooperating together.

Mayor Cury - Morgan thank you very much for the compliment. I have tried my best to impart the very little wisdom I have. I want to tell you something about nerve, I have had them many times in my life and the worst was I was in a speaking contest in high school and I was reading a speech from General Douglas McArthur in Roanoke Virginia, I had it memorized I knew it and could speak as well as anybody but my knees were shaking so terribly that I came in last place but there is hope, you are fine. The last thing nerves and tears are sacred to the human being. Thank you.

Mayor Cury – “Unscheduled Public Comments” – Kelly Stanley

Kelly Stanley – 1905 5th Street, Mine is trivial compared to everyone else but I have been beating the same horse for over two (2) years, the alley beside of my driveway, I take care of part of the alley, we mow it and take care of it. As soon as you turn in the alley there is a huge hole and very deep. Mayor Crawford was supposed to fix it twice and it is still just getting deeper. They don't like it when I fix them, I am begging for someone to come and fix the hole, it is bad. When I turn in to go to my drive way if you don't skip it you are going to hit it. Jerry just replaced part of his vehicle because of hitting that hole. It is an awful thing, they fix everything else.

Mayor Cury - I wish I could help you but right now but we are in a position where we can't direct anything. I do have a suggestion, if you will leave your number with the Town Manager he might be able to get in touch with you and work from that angle until Council will be able to help.

Kelly Stanley - I have left several messages with the manager, I have sent emails about it and pictures, I don't know what else to do, my next recourse is to go out there and fix it myself. My patching stays theirs don't, I don't know what else to do. I will give you my number at this time.

Mayor Cury - Thank you Kelly

Mayor Cury – “Unscheduled Public Comments” – Jason Herndon

Jason Herndon – I am from Cedar Bluff and 1201 Iron Street is my business address, we are a small family owned business, McClure Concrete. I represent the third/fourth generation and we operate in five (5) counties. I want to ask the Council; I know the budget times that you guys are going thru are pretty strenuous. I would really like for you to reconsider and recall your vote to raise our electrical and utility expenses along with the vehicle taxes. The businesses in this community are suffering just as bad as the Town budget. Probably why the Town budget is because our sales volume and other business has lost business, we have lost 40% to 50% in sales production in the last three (3) to five (5) years. We are just barely working above our margins now; our business license is based upon our sales. I know you are getting 40% to 50% less from what you were getting from me five (5) years ago, we consume water and electric. The electric rates right now are probably some of the highest compared to other Towns we work in. Our unit charge on electricity, since our volumes are down changes our offset roughly 25% already, before we go into the next cycle where you are proposing 20% to 25%. I know you have to find a creative way to create revenue we all come up with different ways we have to do that. Hopefully you can find a way you could do that without putting the burden on your town businesses. At some point businesses are leaving the town to work in the county and cutting their tax rates in half and not paying town property taxes and at some point it may be something we have to look at. We look at a ten (10) to twelve (12) rebuild cycle on production facility it could reach the point it has to be at a place on maintenance schedule we are near that. If we go to 24% on electric rates, to dumpster fees to water rates instead of doing a shutdown repair and replace to work in Richlands would it be more affordable for us to move to the county and not lose production while we are in the prepare process. I looked at the Towns 2021 financial statements and you all have some issues, it is not going to take an MBA to know you need to get some revenue in the Town, just find a creative way so you don't have to put the burden on the business in the community. I am all for helping the community help us business helps the community.

Mayor Cury – Your business is very civic, thank you Jason.

Mayor Cury – “Unscheduled Public Comments” – Robert Hicks

Robert Hicks – 311 Plantation Drive and this is my wife, Teresa. I have some pictures I would like for you to see. (Passed out pictures). We live almost directly across from Wanda Lowe and all the water that is coming from behind her house and down thru her yard is actually coming across the road into our yard. It is washing my driveway out and bringing all the debris down in my yard, washing my garden out it is ruining my driveway where all that water is coming down. The pictures were taken ten (10) minutes after one of the heavy rains. The water is a bigger problem while it is raining than what is in the pictures.

I know her yard is terrible and all that comes to our property, we would like to have something done about it.

Mayor Cury – I am sympathetic as you know the Council cannot take any action tonight. I would ask you to leave a contact number with the Town Manager so he can contact you. They are still looking at the pictures.

Mary Ann - Wanda did show me your property, helps me to visualize.

Robert Hicks - We appreciate your time.

Mayor Cury - "Unscheduled Public Comments" – Joe McCracken

Joe McCracken – 1411 Jewell Street, I also want to speak on drains, ditches and water problems that we have had for several years on my street. I think you all know about it. I have called Councilmembers, Mary Ann, Richard, and John. John came over today we walked it over and looked at it, I don't know if we are going to get anything done or not. John may have something to say about it.

John - I don't have anything to say at this time, I looked at it on the map and I am going to go back to see if I see anything differently.

Joe McCracken - We did talk about it in Council. Richard you remember what I am talking about, digging the ditch a little deeper to keep it from coming across the road and from blocking the traffic from coming in out of the apartments. The little pipe that is run into the big pipe, I know money is tight I say take the little pipe out and leave the ditch open down by the railroad. It is not railroad property it is the Town's property, it is Ingersoll-Rand's property which the Town has access to. I want to thank John for coming over today and taking time to walk with me so I could show him the problem.

Mayor Cury - I just want to add one thing people who I see coming up here, Joe, Diana both of these people and Gaynell have served on Council, sometimes we perceive as people complaining but they are being real with their problems and given much to the Town. I just want to recognize these people; Jan has given much to the Town. Everyone has a place and a time and I want to recognize them, thank you very much.

Mayor Cury – "Unscheduled Public Comments" – Laura Mollo

Laura - 262 Linwood Drive – I didn't plan on being here tonight, my husband and I were out of town visiting family in Arizona and we actually just stepped off the plane and came here. I have something to share with you guys. While we were there my kids got to enjoy their recreation area, they have four (4) or five (5) beautiful parks, catch and release fishing pond they have a train that goes around the park the recreation has a rock climbing wall, air hockey tables, arcade games, four(4) or five(5) basketball courts, I mean it is incredible. While my kids were enjoying this they said to me, mommy why can't we do this in Richlands. Why can't we have this in Richlands? I thought this is a lot of questions that citizens are asking you guys. I brought a suggestion to you that if you would not take Council insurance that we could put in a splash pad in and that would be a start to what is going on in more successful communities. I looked at the budget for this community and their Recreation Department and the things I just described to you; the train that goes around the park is free for the kids to ride and everything in the Rec Department. They run on a budget that is almost \$200,000 less than our recreation budget. Once again I am asking you to get rid of your Council insurance let us have a splash pad and see the morale it is going to bring to this Town and the improvements to put the citizens first. Citizens first and self-last and let us make these improvements to make the children of Richlands have the same experience like more successful communities.

Mayor Cury - I need to ask for a 10 minute recess.

Mayor Cury – "Council Member Reports" - Mary Ann Strong

Mary Ann – Thank you Mayor and it is good to have you back. Several groups were recognized tonight. I just wanted to say the first time I went across the bridge I saw the hay racks; they are so beautiful it makes a huge difference in our Town. I personally want to say how much I appreciate the Garden Club ladies. When you were showing the video and the question was asked, “Was that the Police Department?”, I had no idea the magnitude what it takes with the Christmas decorations. I am glad that Derek and Maria White came because that event was huge for our Town and also Ramp-Up Richlands Summer Fest, I thought was phenomenal. I spoke to each and every vendor that day and they were all extremely pleased with sales that they had and looking forward to next year and the event at Coal Town Taps later that evening, thank you Blake Ray. It was a great family atmosphere with lots of kids in the street and as far as I know everything went very well. It was a great time in Richlands. I love positivity and tonight’s meeting has mostly been that. Another big event that just ended about 12:30pm today was the Richlands Little League hosting the 8/9 and 10 year old State Baseball Tournament. That was a huge economic impact for our community. There were sixteen (16) teams in that event. They all came to the Town last Thursday and none of the teams were eliminated until yesterday. It is true like “Chasing the Wild Boar” they had to stay in hotels as far away as Bristol and Princeton, hopefully in 2023 when we host the even bigger 11/12 year old major Baseball Tournament we will be able to house more people here for more economic development and bring us more opportunity for that. I just want to say thank you to Mark and Cynthia Gillespie the President of the Little League. I always get in trouble when I mention names but Mark and Cynthia and many other volunteers like Joe and Megan Smith, Jim and Jennifer McGhee, they have lived at the complex. I also want to thank our Town Manager who volunteered his time in working the press box along with Councilman Street. It is good to see people giving back. I mingled with a lot of the teams but unfortunately our local teams, Richlands did not have a team but ours was Abingdon and Tazewell. All the teams away from here was a little upset in the beginning like in 2016 but they all said our hospitality made up for all of that. I can’t imagine the revenue that was raised with all the restaurants in Town. I learned something today, even the Post Office Master told me that she benefited, out of town people had to ship several items, and she was aware of it and thankful. Rec Commission will meet next Monday, July 19 at 6:00pm at the Rec Park. I want to recognize Jessica Reynolds Lawrence and Dave Ascue and all the lifeguards they are doing a phenomenal job, go over there sometime. Tuesday night when I was playing pickle ball the courts were full outside and people were walking the complex, softball field was being used, people in weight room and people shooting basketball. A year ago this was just a dead place, I encourage you to go over there and look at all the activity. We have a wonderful Rec Park with great facilities and extremely hard working staff. The last thing I want to say a big event you don’t want to miss is this Friday 8:00pm at the Rec Park. Rocky Hill has organized a team called God’s Rock Stars he had his first game back in June. These are handicapped children that would never get the opportunity to play in a state tournament just like we hosted. There are some in wheel chairs they all have an angel a volunteer that have paired up with them. You can go on the Richlands Recreation page and watch the video from the one in June. If you don’t need some kleenex, there is something wrong with your heart. This Friday those kids get to play under the lights you don’t have to come over and be an angel you can come and sit in the stands. They love to hear people clapping; it would do your heart really good. I hope to see you all on Friday night at the Rec Park fields at 8:00pm.

Mayor Cury - Thank you that sounds very exciting everything you talked about, I am looking forward to these events.

Mayor Cury - “Council Member Reports” - Logan Plaster

Mayor Cury - Logan contacted me and said he would not be here but he emailed his statement and ask me to read it. (Read email from Logan Plaster)

Mayor Cury – “Council Member Reports” – Richard Brown

Richard – The Front Street Bridge I noticed some wood decking boards that was replaced, is that correct? What is the long term plan for that fix?

John - I believe that is one of the bridges that V-DOT is going to replace, it has been pushed back. I guess VDOT has other priorities but on their list.

Richard - Is it made safer with the replacement of the decking boards?

John – I would think so, I have not been out there myself to see which ones they replaced.

Richard - Mary Ann had mentioned on the day of the Summer Fest and Coal Town Taps event several people walked back and forth, I had several complaints about the loose boards and the safety of that. I assume that was fixed after that.

Richard – John, I had spoken to you earlier today, you may want to elaborate as far as the Town Hall, it is still kind of on lock down with Covid restrictions with ringing the doorbell and one (1) customer at a time, I think we need to look at opening it up, and you said maybe the first of next month.

John – First of next month.

Richard - I just wanted to make it publicly known.

Richard – We received an email on June 23 from Charles Browning concerning DMV Select Services (read email). Mayor Crawford had actually started that a couple years ago, John did they reach out to you?

John – Yes and I met with them.

Richard - I know we can't take any action tonight and you are going to speak about the drive-thru piece, I don't know what it looks like on that but I think it would be a great benefit for the citizens to have a DMV here in Town if that is possible, it would be great to incorporate the drive-thru piece with it.

Mayor Cury – “Council Member Reports” – Mike Street

Mike – I think the DMV would be pretty cool too. I think it would be limited to some things. Point Broadband, we do have a proposal in hand we will be scheduling some time to work thru that proposal and look at it, there has not been any evaluation of that proposal and what it looks like. We just need to take a look and see if it is feasible and what it includes. The ball is in our court now, we are going to take a look at it and see what we can do, and it is going to be something awesome for the Town of Richlands. We can't really make any changes or talk about what we want to do in the Charter. I have given my changes to John as far as what I would like to change as we go toward that. My changes include term limits, two (2) terms, one (1) term off and a following term for a total of twelve (12) years. There is a maximum you can serve on Town Council. I believe that is completely fair and keeps us very open minded and gives people a good opportunity to make change. I will be pushing forward with that. I will also be pushing forward with a Mayor change, giving the Mayor the ability to vote on any tie for any issue and for resolutions and ordinances. I think it needs to be clearly defined. I think the Mayor is entitled to that role and that responsibility instead of trying to add a member of Council to take away the power of the Mayor. I think the Mayor is there for a reason if there is a tie amongst Council, I feel the Mayor is what we need in order to get a “yes” or “no” and that is what the Mayor is there for. Those are the two (2) changes I have given to John. The next process is look thru other Councilmember changes. We can't do anything tonight but we can take the changes and look thru them because this is a big deal, we want to keep those changes minimal because it is a Charter and that is something you don't change often, I think it is absolutely necessary. I have sent those and look forward to go thru those with you John. I mentioned at the last meeting I wanted to do a three (3) days Kids Weekend and I am happy to announce that we have organized that and have that structured in a way that we are going to make it a “Back to School Bash Weekend” for the kids in Richlands. We are so excited I have some great help; I have Jessica Reynolds Lawrence, Andrea Perkins and Jerry Gilbert. I would not be able to do this without them. It is getting contagious and people want to get involved and it is wonderful. I will be sending out a full itinerary. Jessica has been nice enough to use the Rec Parks Facebook Page in order to get the word out. We have created our flyer as well we are going to be sending out a full itinerary as

well as a donation letter. What we are trying to do is really making an impact on the kids and the community. I say community it is not just Richlands. Our goal is to provide back packs and school supplies up to 1500 kids. Any kid that shows up is going to leave with a back pack and school supplies. We are really pushing for it; I have not been turned down a single time that is an awesome feeling. I can say this when it comes to the kids we really step up. I am so proud of the involvement that I have so far. Friday night is going to be Drive-in Movie where kids are going to be able to decorate boxes like cars and have popcorn and a slushy, Saturday they will have water games and bouncy houses and we are getting the emergency services involved doing a touch event where kids can actually get into the vehicles to see what they are about, get the police involved. It is going to be an awesome event. We have a ton of local churches involved to volunteer, the food is free and everything. SRO officers have graciously agreed to supply the food on swim day on Sunday. Saturday Ramey Richlands and Grants will provide a hot dog to every kid that shows up. It is a wonderful thing something we are really proud about. I wanted to make this public; we need money and lots of it. We are trying to raise as much as we possibly can, we are going to be sending out donor letters for people to donate. We will be reaching out to most businesses in the community for help. The response I have gotten so far has been incredible, I am going to make it official and have a letter, and some businesses need that. The letter will be completed tomorrow and start sending out. If you know of anyone who is willing to donate we are willing to take the money and put toward a good cause. We are partnering with communities and schools. Every penny that is spent on school supplies that is left over will be put into our schools. It says in this community that is what is important to me. I am really pumped about it. We meet every week if anyone wanting to donate their time and services I will take that. I want to reiterate on the Little League Program how wonderful they were organized this past weekend. I spent my entire childhood in Little League that is what I lived for; it was for Little League Baseball and my brother after me. I am very passionate about that and I was happy to see over a thousand people there every day. It was wonderful to see the impact on these kids' lives; these kids may not ever get to do that again, to see that and witness and volunteer and bring John along. John was there every day, that shows he wants to help in the community and I appreciate that John. It was a good time I enjoyed helping and seeing all the kids enjoy and all the cheering it took me way back. I also think that we have a bunch of athletics although we didn't have one this tournament we did have some representation this year. It will be the 11/12 year old boys. They will go to Indiana in a couple of weeks to represent Richlands as well as two (2) girl teams 9/10/11 year olds and 11/12 year olds both went to State this year. We have some talent coming up that is awesome. They both fell short but both in the final four. One of them finished in the top 2, we are really proud of them and give them a shout out. Summer Fest, we all had great things to say didn't hear any bad things. I thought it was fantastic can't wait until it continues to grow and get bigger.

Mayor Cury - You are suggesting changes do you have a copy that you can share with Council?

Mike - I think John is going to be sending a copy of all the changes.

John - I have a copy if you would like one.

Mayor Cury - I think everyone should get it so we can look over it.

Mike - I think that was the plan, we were going to discuss everything that was altered. If you have a change to make, he put it all together and highlight what that change would be.

Mayor Cury - John you can send by email. I think all the members should have it, it is a good thing.

Mike - Any changes I made they are editable let me know.

Mayor Cury - "Mayor Comments"

Mayor Cury - I have been home for a while and I want to thank everyone for their concerns and messages, it means a lot. I had a call from CH Wallace he is the Mayor of Honaker, Connie he said he had worked with you previously, I want to pass this on to Ramp-Up & Andrea, John, if she could contact Mayor Wallace I have his number, what he is trying to do he said previously Connie provided him the

schedule of events so they don't have conflict with the Richlands events. John I will give you his number and you can give to Andrea so she can send a list of our events. We received an email about a Boy Scout request I tried to think of a lot of things but did you guys come up with anything? I think they were very interested in Rec Park, things to try to help the Scouts achieve some of their awards.

John - We have not come up with anything that is feasible and not costly.

Mary Ann - Rec Commission meets Monday night we can talk again to see if there is anything we can do, maybe at the access point.

Mayor Cury - I was thinking about that as an idea for them Mary Ann but that will be under the Rec's domain. It has to be something they can do and do at a reasonable cost. I just wanted to mention they are requesting some help. Boy Scouts is an excellent organization.

Mayor Cury - John had sent an email to Logan and myself on June 22. It says I have attached to preliminary options for the drive-thru, the first option is smaller and is essentially is just a tube system that would be located at the sidewalk. The second option is a similar system with a canopy. Option #1 would be much cheaper \$15K to \$20K less and I think would be less noticeable when taking in to account the aesthetics of the building compared to building a canopy on the side of the building. What are your thoughts? I replied this, "I have looked at the designs that were submitted let me sleep on it a few days and I will get back to you". Frankly, I have not had an opportunity and John I want to apologize. My thoughts and I talked to Logan about this we were presented with "Design A" and "Design B", both are very nice they have different aesthetics of the building. There are questions I had that I don't know how to answer like traffic patterns on how they pull into these things. Drive-thru seems to catch on and as they do they will catch on. I just wondered about the traffic flow around the Town Hall for example if you go to the bank drive-thru on a busy day it can be backed up into the street. I don't know that would happen I am just trying to foresee the future. That being said my particular thought was this is something that is greater than two (2) Councilmembers, and he said the whole Council needs to be part of so we all have a stake in it and put thought into it and I know we need to do it relevantly quickly so we don't lose this money. John I would suggest since we are going to have another meeting sometime soon maybe you could distribute those plans to all the members of Council and we can discuss it at the meeting as a whole. I think it is more profitable and more invested in it rather than just two (2) people doing this and we all have a stake in it. It is a wiser decision. That is my thought and hope the Council will go with me on that.

Mayor Cury - I have had several calls at home from concerned citizens, John I have spared you I was lax, but I will get them to you. I know you are doing everything you can do and I will try to get to you in a day or two. It helps if you can work directly with them to solve those issues.

Mayor Cury - I had several Veterans to contact me about the role of the Town for Memorial Day. I think we had the Flags up and on Flag Day and they were hoping there could be more, it is hard to do everything all the time with limited number of volunteers and resources and I did not say that to them. I want to take this opportunity to recognize Memorial Day and what it is. Memorial Day is a National holiday established by the Federal Government to recognize people who have soldiers, sailors' or airmen who have given their life for their country. It is not Veterans Day it is in November. I hope we can take a moment right now as Council a moment of silence to recognize all those people in this Town and this Country who have died and give the ultimate sacrifice, "Moment of Silence" please. It is a small token to recognize them in such a way but they are very deserving. I recently talked to a family from Jewell Ridge and they were describing great uncles whose families were demolished in War War II it really comes home when you think about it. Flag Day is June 14 it is a general day has a special meaning but I am going to jump to July 4, they ask me to talk about these things as a Mayor and a member of the governmental body. Independence Day, July 4 is a whole lot of fun, I was not able to enjoy like I normally do, you have heard your whole life we have hamburgers, hot dogs and all that behind it is a greater meaning of Freedom. In 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was adopted by Congress the Continental Congress we were declared independence from tyranny. I want you know something, when we declared Independence in Great Britain not everybody in the colonies was on board, they were

divided it was not a big group, about getting free there were thousands and thousands that wanted to stay loyal to the British government. I think it speaks to the fact that we are always divided but some way we have been united until this very day to have a country, we find this way and we find this path. Morgan you were talking about it and we talk about it all the time that is why history is so important it is proof that we have overcome this division. There is another reference I will make and it is important for us to remember as citizens of this Town and this country, tomorrow is July 14 it is French Independence Day that does not mean a whole lot to us except it was in 1789 and that is just a few years after 1776 and the French Revolution was absolutely influenced by the desire for freedom from America. The liberties that we fought for spread to France and if you think that is the end of it and to the French Monarchy it isn't, look at Cuba today people in Cuba are wanting their freedom for the tyranny they have suffered. When we treasure American Freedom we treasure something truly unique and it is ours and we must protect it always. I speak to the Veterans who spoke to me about liberty and freedom and what a valuable thing it is and it is so easy to slip thru our hands. Let us hold on to this dear people of Richlands.

Mayor Cury – “Attorney Comments” – Bob Altizer

Bob - I will take just a moment to report to Council that you are aware some citizens of the Town filed complaint against the Town of Richlands and individual members of Council, Mayor and the Town Manager regarding the adoption of the Tax Ordinances and the physical budget on June 21. That lawsuit was filed on 29 of June for 11:00pm, a copy of that complaint was put on my desk the following morning at 9:00am; the Town was served on that day June 30. In the lawsuit they were seeking temporary and permanent declaratory relief and injunctive relief regarding the budget and for tax ordinances. They were requesting that it be declared null and void and the court enjoined the Town from enforcing those ordinances and budget and the court enjoined both temporary and permanently from allowing the ordinances to go into effect and award attorney fees. They give us a notice on a hearing for temporary injunction on 2:00pm that afternoon on June 30. On behalf of the Town, myself and law partners we got our heads together and information working with John and we appeared in court that afternoon at 2:00pm. The court took evidence and considered the filings and the exhibits, the Statutes and the Charter, after reviewing that certain findings and certain holdings basically the finding of the courts the requirements for the adoption of the budget and the tax ordinances were properly carried out and compliance with state code and with the Charter of the Town of Richlands and was denied the temporary junctive relief that the complaints were seeking. An order reflecting the courts findings and rulings is being compared and currently with the attorneys of the complaints for their review and hopefully we will be getting that order in fairly soon. The serve on the Town was on June 30 we have 21 days to answer that complaint. I have checked with John and your liability carrier for the Town is considering what coverage is available and who is covered and I think that is being worked out; the attorney is going to be provided to defend this lawsuit going forward. That is where it is and I wanted to report to Council about that.

Mayor Cury - Thank you Mr. Altizer we greatly appreciate you.

Mary Ann – I would like to comment on the lawsuit I wonder and I am not asking you to answer right now Mr. Altizer but the citizens that may be part of that should think about what the legal fees are costing the Town of Richlands, three (3) attorneys in court that day and continue to have to work, just a statement I would like to make. In closing I was blessed to attend a prayer breakfast this past Saturday morning at the Tabernacle, it does not matter to me Republican, Democratic or Independent or what party you are but there happened to be Republican candidates, I wrote down a quote from Winsome Sears spoke it made me really think about our Town she said “Rome was pulled apart from within not from without”, we have all heard tonight and I compliment Mr. Earp for his excellent speech, he may have been a little nervous but I thought everything he had to say pertained to our Town. Also as Winsome Sears said she is really tired of division.

Mayor Cury - “Manager’s Reports” – John O’Daniel

John – Most of the items I will put on hold until the next Council meeting.

Mayor Cury – In your report “a” thru n” we will hold. We can’t have executive session. Is there any other business to come before the Council?

Mary Ann - I do have a question, I knew that Councilman Hurst could not be here because of a family matter and Councilman Plaster sent an email with a very thorough report, was there any report or notice of why Councilman Ratliff was not present?

Mayor Cury - I don’t know Mary Ann, I did not know that he was not going to be here, Mike you may want to elaborate on that.

Mike - I got a text from Jeff Hurst saying that he received a text from Doug at 5:59pm.

Mary Ann - We have spoken a lot recently about attendance and there are things that come up and I pray it is not a family emergency with Councilman Ratliff but if that is not the case I think it is very inconsiderate and disrespectful when you get last minute notice therefore you cannot conduct a meeting. We all have to schedule a time to meet again in the near future.

Mayor Cury - I will add one thing, in reading the minutes the meeting on June 14 the discussion to zoom there was no motion to put that into effect. It might be that Council may want to rethink, that may have an opportunity maybe to as Logan could not be here physically or Jeff or Doug. It is something we may want to reconsider it is my thinking but we can’t do it tonight.

Mayor Cury - I was hoping we could Recess the meeting and I will need your help Mr. Altizer, perhaps on June 20 at 6:00pm.

Richard - Are we going to look at Recessing without taking additional public comments just completing what was left on the agenda?

Mayor Cury - My impression but will have to refer to the attorney to make sure we are handling correctly, Mr. Altizer can you take a minute to make sure we are handling correctly? We are talking about the agenda we have been working on tonight. Can we Recess this meeting properly until next Tuesday and continue where we left off?

Bob - Give me an opportunity to research that, I think you can call a “Special Called Meeting” by the Mayor or three (3) members of Council according to the Charter. You really didn’t have a meeting tonight because you didn’t have a quorum. The Charter provides for at least one (1) regular meeting per month. Let me get with John so we can give the proper notice for “Special Called Meeting”. You can always have a “Special Called Meeting” and consider these things on the agenda for today as long as you give the proper notice and you have given a notice of at least three (3) working days.

Mayor Cury - I just want to make sure as the Mayor running this particular meeting that we are handling in the balance of the law. I want to thank you for your careful consideration.

Richard - It is my opinion that we can’t Recess this meeting but it is technically not a meeting, would it be better to have a “Special Called Meeting”.

Bob - My thinking it would be better to call it a “Special Called Meeting” and give notice of all the things you are going to consider in that “Special Called Meeting” and that would be the things you had on the agenda today. You can do anything in a “Special Called Meeting” that you do in a regular meeting.

Mayor Cury - We received public comment.

Bob - I think as far as the ordinances are concerned the advertising is going to start tomorrow and giving a public hearing on those ordinances for August 10; the public hearing will be on August 10.

Mayor Cury - If they want to speak on drain pipes can they speak again.

Bob - I think the "Special Called Meeting" is for things noted for the "Special Called Meeting".

Mayor Cury - I just want to be clear about it we have people here that have spoken on these issues and I did not want to mislead anybody. I just did not want any misunderstanding and be clear on what we can do.

Bob - The Charter also calls that "Special Called Meetings" called by Mayor or any three (3) members of Council and prescribe given the method there of provided that the notice of each special shall contain a statement of the specific item or items of business to be transacting and no other business shall be transacted a such meeting except by unanimous consent of all the Members of Council.

Mayor Cury - That clarifies it and that is what I was really looking for.

Mike - Based on what you are saying we can go ahead and schedule a "Special Called Meeting" now if we like.

Mayor Cury - We need a meeting.

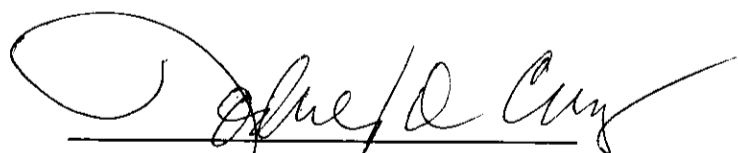
Richard - Can we call the meeting to take Items 4, 5, 6, 12 and 13 can we advertise that way? Those are the items that we did not cover on the agenda.

Bob - You can't address tonight because you didn't have a quorum but you can have a "Special Called Meeting" to cover those issue provided that you provide the proper notice that the items are going to be consider and acted on at that time.

Mayor Cury - It makes it very clear and the public is aware what we are trying to do properly, any questions? John I will get with you and sign the document and get the agenda correctly. I want to thank everybody for coming tonight and all your concerns while some things seems to be complaints we all have them, with that so much civic output it far outweighs the negative and even the negative is meant to help that is what it is about. Negatives if you turn them right it is positives. Thank you. Meeting is over.



Connie Allen, Town Clerk



Rodney D. Cury, Mayor