

April 12, 2021

A work session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, April 12, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the work session of April 12, 2021 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 5:06 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, Michael Kohl. Absent Council member C.W. Stephenson.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Clerk Tara Morris, Interim Town Manager Joe Paxton and Town Attorney Nathan Miller.

CLOSED SESSION

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Sterling, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, the Council recessed the meeting from 5:06 p.m. to 6:58 p.m., for a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)1, for the discussion of candidates for the Town Manager position.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council returned to open session.

Mayor Plaster read the certification of the closed session to the best of your knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711(A)1, of the Code of Virginia, as only such public business matters that were identified in the motion by which a closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting. Attorney Miller took a roll call. J. Justis; so certified, M. Sterling; so certified, T. Leeth; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified, M. Kohl; so certified, J. Plaster; so certified.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

April 12, 2021

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, April 12, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of April 12, 2021 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:05 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked Clerk Morris for a roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, and Michael Kohl; Council member absent: C.W. Stephenson.

Other Town Officials present: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Interim Manager Joseph S. Paxton, Assistant to Town Manager and Town Clerk Tara Morris, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Interim Parks/Tourism Director Tracey Collins, Director of Public Works AJ Hummel, and Interim Police Chief Jason Sullivan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, the Council approved the minutes from the meetings on March 8, 2021 and the special meetings of March 18, 2021 and March 29, 2021.

RECESS

Mayor Plaster recessed the regular meeting at 7:07 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Mayor Plaster called to order the public hearing for an easement by the Town over and through real property owned by the Town of Grottoes, known as Railroad Alley and Birch Avenue.

Interim Manager Paxton said this is to allow for utilities to be run in the alley and for a dumpster pad to be constructed in Birch Avenue.

Mayor Plaster said no one signed-up to speak and asked if Council had any comments, no comments were made. Mayor Plaster adjourned the public hearing at 7:09 p.m.

Mayor Plaster called to order the public hearing to amend the FY20-21 Budget for the receipt and expenditures of COVID-19 Cares Act funding, and receipt of local revenues and public work expenditures.

Interim Manager Paxton explained that we needed to make this adjustment due to the Cares Act funding the Town received and expenditures of that money. Mr. Paxton said with all the growth in town the local revenues needed to be adjusted along with the expenditures for public works.

Mayor Plaster said no one signed-up to speak and asked if Council had any comments, no comments were made. Mayor Plaster adjourned the public hearing at 7:12 p.m.

Mayor Plaster called to order the public hearing for amending the Grottoes Town Charter to update the language and to improve consistency with the Town Code and policies.

Melissa Mays addressed the Council saying her concern is with Chapter 113 Noise. She is concerned with the loud music at Lil Gus' and said she lives two blocks away and can hear the music in her house. Ms. Mays said she feels this is too loud and asked the Council to address the issue. Mayor Plaster thanked her for coming tonight.

Mayor Plaster asked Council if they had any comments regarding amending the charter, no comments were made. Mayor Plaster adjourned the public hearing at 7.22 p.m.

Mayor Plaster reconvened the regular meeting at 7:22 p.m.

PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS

There was no one

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

FINANCE – On a motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve the accounting procedures and related policies.

Town of Grottoes Accounting Procedures

Small Purchase Policy

The intent of this policy is to provide structure for the “small purchases” made by the Town.

Any purchase not exceeding fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) may be acquired with small purchase procedures; provided, however, that contract requirements shall not be artificially divided so as to constitute a small purchase under this section. Procedures to be used when purchasing under this section are as follows:

(1) Purchases of less than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) but more than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000.00). Any purchase estimated to cost less than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) but more than twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000.00) shall be made by sealed bid. All purchases shall be awarded based on the lowest responsive and responsible bid. The

Town shall solicit bids by direct mail request to prospective vendors or suppliers or by telephone inquiry and post the bid on the Town's website and a bulletin board in the Town Hall. The Town shall keep a record of all bids submitted in competition thereon, and such records shall be open to public inspection.

(2) Purchases of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or less.

a. Except as hereinafter qualified, any purchase estimated to cost twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or less may be made by methods other than sealed bids. All purchases shall be awarded based of the bid or quote most advantageous to the Town. The Town shall solicit bids or quotations by direct mail request to prospective vendors or suppliers or by telephone inquiry. Reasonable efforts shall be made to obtain a minimum of three (3) quotations for each purchase.

The purchasing agent shall keep a record of all purchases and the quotations submitted, and such records shall be open to public inspection.

b. Purchases of less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) shall be exempt from competitive bidding procedures.

Accounts Payable Procedures

In accordance with the Town Charter, Council is authorized to "expend the money of the Town for all lawful purposes." Council hereby authorizes the Treasurer to make the timely payment of all accounts payable and payroll within the appropriations authorized by Council. Prior to the release of payments, the Treasurer shall review a list of all such payments with the Finance Committee Chair or Mayor, or in the absence of both, the Town Manager. Such review shall occur in a timely manner to permit the payment of bills by the Town to avoid charges for penalties and interest for late payment, and to take advantage of prompt payment discounts.

A copy of all payments made by the Town shall be provided to Council for their information at the regular meeting of Council the following month.

Purchase Orders

Purchase orders are used in an accounting system to authorize a purchase in advance of the receipt of the material or service, and to encumber funds for items that may require an extended delivery or that have multiple payments to ensure funds are available when the item is received or used.

Purchase orders are required for the purchase of materials or services exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

Department Head review and approval of payments

Department heads are expected to review, approval and assign the appropriate accounting category for all bills charged against the budgets for which they have operational responsibility. Such approval shall occur in a timely manner to permit the payment of bills by the Town to avoid penalties and interest, and to take advantage of prompt payment discounts.

On a motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve the financial reports.

WATER AND SEWER – Interim Manager Paxton informed the Council that he will be meeting this week with the consulting engineer on the water study.

ORDINANCE, HEALTH AND PROPERTY - On a motion by Council member Sterling, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, the Council approved the amendments to Chapter 22 – Police Department of the Grottoes Town Code.

Chapter 22

POLICE DEPARTMENT

[HISTORY: Adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Grottoes 2-3-1970 as Title 23 of the 1970 Ordinances of the Town of Grottoes. Amendments noted where applicable.]

§ 22-1. Composition of Department.

The Police Department shall consist of a Chief of Police and such members as shall be provided by the Council.

§ 22-2. Duties.

The Council shall require the performance by the Police Department of any duties deemed necessary to the efficient operation of the Police Department.

§ 22-3. Reserved

§ 22-4. Reserved

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§ 22-5. Reserved

§ 22-6. Reserved

§ 22-7. Reserved

Council member Sterling referred the Charter changes to the Town Attorney to submit to the Town's legislative delegation for approval at the 2022 General Assembly session.

On a motion by Council member Sterling, seconded by Council member Raynes, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to set a joint public hearing for a request of conditional use permit. The hearing will be May 10th, the next regular Council Meeting.

STREETS AND STREET LIGHTS – Interim Manager Paxton informed the Council that he has provided a list for paving to the Town's paving contractor and is waiting to get pricing to bring back to the committee.

PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES - Interim Tourism Director Collins notified the Council that the park will be restarting the Summer Market. Ms. Collins said the Market will run seven Saturdays throughout the summer and there is very little cost to operate.

Interim Manager Paxton informed the Council that Michelle Tucker accepted the Pool Manager position and will start on April 26, 2021.

SPECIAL EVENTS – Council member Leeth said the first date for the Summer Market is June 5, 2021.

PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION – On a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve the revisions to the sick leave policy.

13.2. Sick Leave

Regular full-time employees accrue and accumulate eight (8) hours of sick leave for each full month of active employment with the Town. Sick leave is accrued at the end of each month of employment.

An employee does not accrue sick leave hours if on leave of absence without pay, or if the employee is absent from work for a period of more than twelve (12) consecutive weeks.

- A. An employee may use sick leave when unable to work the required number of hours in the workweek due to illness, injury, death in the immediate family, health problems, pregnancy, and childbirth. Employees may also use sick leave for medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside work hours. Employees must notify their immediate supervisor as soon as possible to request the use of sick leave.
- B. A physician's certificate may be required by a department head or immediate supervisor at any time as evidence of illness or scheduled medical appointment before compensation for sick leave is granted.

C. When it becomes evident an employee is unable to work for an extended period (three (3) or more consecutive working days), the employee must furnish the department head or supervisor with a written statement from his/her physician. This statement shall include the:

1. Nature of the employee's condition.
2. Expected date on which the employee will be able to return and perform normal work duties (in cases where applicable); and
3. Approximate anticipated date of medical release by the physician.

D. The above medical statement shall also apply when an employee is unable to work for an illness in their immediate family. An immediate family member shall be defined as spouse, parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, grandchild, sibling, stepsibling, and any relative living in the employee's home or has guardianship over.

E. Employees on approved sick leave will be paid at the regular rate not to exceed 40 hours per week.

F. Employees who receive compensatory time must use compensatory time before sick leave is used.

G. Upon retirement, employees employed for a minimum of five (5) years of continuous employment with the Town are eligible to receive a lump sum payment of accrued unused sick leave hours. The lump sum payment is based on twenty-five (25) percent of the accrued unused sick days up to a maximum amount based on the number of years of service an individual has with the Town, as follows:

Years of service	Maximum Payment
5 up to 10	\$750.00
10 up to 15	\$2,000.00
15 up to 20	\$3,500.00
20 or more	\$5,000.00

On a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to change minimum wage from \$7.75 to \$9.50 on May 1, 2021 as mandated by state law.

STAFF REPORTS:

Interim Manager – Interim Manager Paxton said with the change of job titles and duties the council needs to appoint a Deputy Zoning Administrator and a Deputy Clerk.

On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to appoint Tara Morris as Deputy Zoning Administrator and Kim Clark as Deputy Clerk.

Interim Manager Paxton informed the Council that the rate of growth in the Shady Creek Subdivision and throughout the town continues at a high rate, and there is a possibility of needing additional maintenance staff. Assistant to Town Manager Morris added that nine zoning permits have been issued so far this month in Shady Creek.

Attorney – Attorney Miller informed the Council that he is working on the “quick take” condemnation procedure for railroad alley, and once the survey and appraisal are complete, a public hearing will be held.

Attorney Miller said he is working on the facilities agreement for the use of the town hall. A public hearing will be held on May 10th for this agreement.

Treasurer – no report

Assist to Town Manager – no report

Chief of Police – no report

Public Works Director – no report

Recreation and Tourism – no report

NEW BUSINESS

On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve the easements known as Railroad Alley and Birch Avenue.

On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to name the pond at Mountain View Park - Lawhorne Pond.

**Resolution Establishing
Lawhorne Pond at Mountain View Park**

WHEREAS, Charles K. Lawhorne served as Chief of Police for the Town of Grottoes from June 14, 1991 until October 1, 2004; and,

WHEREAS, in May 1995, Chief Lawhorne, working with the Mayor and Town Council, established a fishing day for the Town's youth at the pond located in Mountain View Park; and,

WHEREAS, the Police Department, under Chief Lawhorne's direction, received thousands of dollars of donations over the years to support this effort of providing a free outdoor event for children, further supporting positive interactions with the Town's Police Department for our community; and,

WHEREAS, *Chief Charlie's Kids Fish Day*, as it became known, continued each year until Spring 2020 and 2021, when the COVID-19 pandemic prevented public gatherings and cancelled the event; and,

WHEREAS, Council looks forward to reinstating this event in 2022.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Grottoes Town Council hereby names the pond in Mountain View Park, **Lawhorne Pond**, in appreciation of the dedication and commitment to the children and citizens of the Town of Grottoes shown by former Chief Charles Lawhorne; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council thanks former Chief Lawhorne for his service to our community.

On a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Leeth, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to extend the contract, pursuant to the existing contract with the Berkley Group and Joe Paxton, which is set to expire on April 15, 2021.

OLD BUSINESS

On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 5 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve Milstead's Final Plat for the 12th Street Townhouses.

Mayor Plaster adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

April 15, 2021

A Special Meeting of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Plaster called the special meeting of April 15, 2021 meeting of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 5:30 p.m. The special meeting was called by Mayor Plaster for the discussion related to banners/signs for 2021 high school. Mayor Plaster requested roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, Jo Plaster, Michael Kohl. Council member absent: C.W. Stephenson.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller, Interim Manager Joseph S. Paxton, and Deputy Clerk Kim Clark.

Mayor Plaster asked consideration be given to purchase banners/signs for the 2021 high school graduates of Grottoes, as done for the 2020 graduates. Last year, Council members donated their pay for one quarter towards the purchase. Mayor Plaster will get prices for this year.

Council member Leeth made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a 4-0 vote: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to offer banners/signs to 2021 high school graduates for Grottoes’ students and to have the cost covered by Council donation of one quarter’s salary.

CLOSED SESSION

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Kohl, and carried by a vote of 4 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council recessed the meeting from 5:38 p.m. to 6:23 p.m., for a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711.A(1), Code of Virginia, subparagraph (1) regarding the discussion and consideration of prospective candidates for the Town Manager position.

On motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Sterling, and carried by a vote of 4 to 0, voting recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council returned to open session.

Mayor Plaster read the certification of the closed session – “to the best of your knowledge that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711(A)1 of the Code of Virginia, as only such public business matters that were identified in the motion by which a closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting”. Interim Town Manager Paxton took a roll call. J. Justin; so certified, M. Sterling; so

certified, T. Leeth; so certified, D. Raynes; so certified; so certified; J. Plaster; so certified; M. Kohl, so certified.

ADJOURNMENT.

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

April 19, 2021

A Special Meeting of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Thursday, April 19, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER

In the absence of Mayor Plaster, Vice Mayor Raynes called the special meeting of April 19, 2021 of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 5:28 p.m. The special meeting was called by Mayor Plaster with the intention to appoint the next Town Manager. Vice Mayor Raynes requested roll call.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present: Jim Justis, Mark Sterling, Tim Leeth, David Raynes, Michael Kohl. Mayor Jo Plaster and Council member C.W. Stephenson were absent.

Other Town Officials present were: Town Attorney Nathan Miller and Deputy Clerk Kim Clark.

Drew Williams, with The Berkley Group, spoke on the experience of having the opportunity to find a new Town Manager. This task normally takes six months to complete but was completed in two months.

Karen Edmonds, also with The Berkley Group, thanked the team for their efforts in finding a new Town Manager. There was a nationwide search, resulting in 32 applications being received. There were nine virtual interviews conducted, which lead to five persons being selected for an in-person interview. Karen then gave background information on and introduced Stefanie McAlister.

Ms. McAlister expressed her excitement for the opportunity.

Nathan Miller provided Council with an employment agreement to engage Stefanie D. McAlister as Town Manager effective May 10, 2021.

Council member Kohl made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a 5-0 vote: JUSTIS – AYE; STERLING – AYE; LEETH – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; KOHL – AYE, to approve the employment agreement and appoint Stefanie D. McAlister as Town Manager of Grottoes effective May 10, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT.

With further business, Vice Mayor Raynes declared the meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.