

July 11, 2022

A regular session of Town Council of the Town of Grottoes was held on Monday, July 11, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grottoes Town Hall, Grottoes, Virginia.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Plaster called the regular session of July 11, 2022, of the Grottoes Town Council to order at 7:01 p.m. Mayor Plaster asked for a roll call.

**ATTENDANCE:** Council Members present: Jim Justis, Joshua Bailey, Mark Sterling, David Raynes, Tim Leeth, and Michael Kohl.

Other Town Officials present: Attorney Nathan Miller, Town Manager Stefanie McAlister, Treasurer Rhonda Danner, Public Works Director A.J. Hummel, Parks/Tourism Director Austin Shank, and Police Chief Jason Sullivan. Clerk Tara Morris was absent.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion by Council member Raynes, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; the Council approved the minutes from the meetings from the work session and regular meetings on June 13, 2022.

### **PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND CLAIMS (public comment)**

Scott Sacra addressed the Council regarding a concern he had from the last council meeting. His concern was around the sale of land owned by the Town, and his perception that the Town's Mayor was a party to the sale. He said council voted with no questions asked. He feels they should have had another realtor sale the land. Mr. Sacra said he has nothing against the mayor and knows she is a real estate agent but feels the town should have used another realtor to sale land the town owns. Mayor Plaster responded and said for the record, she "did not prepare the contract, was not in charge of the contract and not in charge of the sale". She stated that as mayor she signed the contract based on the favorable vote of the council to execute their decision. Mr. Sacra thanked her for clarifying and said he feels that should have been said at the public hearing to assure there were no misperceptions.

### **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEE:**

**FINANCE** – Council member Raynes made a motion, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to approve the financial reports for the month of June.

**WATER AND SEWER** – no report

**ORDINANCE, HEALTH, AND PROPERTY** – no report

**STREET AND STREET LIGHTS** – no report

**PARKS, RECREATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES** – no report

**SPECIAL EVENTS** – Council member Leeth announced Friday night bluegrass during July in Painter Park. Also happening in Painter Park is the Grottoes Cardinals baseball games. Council member Leeth said on Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup> the town will be hosting the First Annual First Responders Ceremony at the Grottoes Fire Department from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm.

**PERSONNEL, FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION** – Mayor Plaster followed up on the First Responders event and said that the invitation will be going out this week and she is working on the itinerary.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

TOWN MANAGER. Manager McAlister said she wanted to discuss the recently lined parking area along Dogwood near the 8<sup>th</sup> Street intersection. She advised council that after the paving and painting was accomplished there was an extra area of pavement that could be used to accommodate two additional parking spaces. She recommended that council take action to approve the additional spaces. Council discussed the parking area project and the adjacent business. After much discussion Council member Kohl made a motion to add two more parking spaces on the south end of the newly lined parking lot. Council member Sterling seconded. In discussion Council member Bailey said he is not in favor of putting any more money into this project. The motion carried by a vote of 4-2, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – NAY; KOHL – AYE; to have 2 additional parking spaces installed.

ATTORNEY. No report

TREASURER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

ASSISTANT TO TOWN MANAGER. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

POLICE CHIEF. Chief Sullivan mentioned in his staff report that he included pricing for a second radar sign, which is at a reduced rate if two signs are purchased together. He said with the discount of the second sign, he wanted to see if council wanted to go forth with purchasing two signs now verses purchasing one now and one later.

There was a motion by Council member Justis, seconded by Council member Sterling. In discussion Council member Kohl asked about the warranty. Chief Sullivan said it has a 2-year warranty and after that time, if something happens to it, they will repair it for a cost. The motion

carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to purchase two radar signs not to exceed \$7,200.00.

PUBLIC WORKS. A written report was provided. There were no additional comments from staff and no questions or comments from Council members.

PARKS AND TOURISM DIRECTOR. Parks Director Shank informed the council that the Blue Ridge Heritage group will be coming to the August meeting to bring a mock-up of the memorial that was approved to be placed at Grand Caverns before the pandemic hit.

Parks Director Shank’s second item was to ask where council wants to install the bike repair station. He said the original plan was to install it near the old jail at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Aspen Avenue. Parks Director Shank said with the approval of the bike route going down Dogwood Avenue it was mentioned that town hall may be a better location. He suggested the grass area at the north end of the parking lot near 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

On a motion by Council member Leeth, seconded by Council member Justis, and carried by a vote of 5-0-1, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – ABSTAIN; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE; to allow the bike repair station to be installed at the town hall adjacent to the parking area and 7<sup>th</sup> Street per Mr. Shank’s recommendations.

**NEW BUSINESS** – Council member Sterling brought up the enforcement of the inoperable vehicle ordinance and made a motion to change our code to match the state code 15.2-901. Manager McAlister said the town code penalties currently reflect state code and therefore already states that three civil penalties in a 24-month period, can result in a class 3 misdemeanor. After discussion Council member Sterling withdrew his motion.

Council member Sterling made a motion to have staff and the attorney look over town code and use follow state code regarding violation enforcement. Manager McAlister asked him if he wants that review of the entire code or just the chapters he referenced in his discussion, which were Chapter 53, Inoperable Vehicles and Chapter 117, Nuisances. It was clarified that only chapters 53 and 117 are to be reviewed for compliance with State Code. Council member Bailey seconded the motion, and it carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

Manager McAlister said she wanted clarification on the “extra space” in the parking lot along Dogwood Ave near the 8<sup>th</sup> Street intersection. Council member Jim Justis amended the previous motion to paint two additional parking spaces, by including, that the dead space of extra pavement be stripped off to indicate no parking. Council member Raynes seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 4-2, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – NAY; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – NAY; KOHL – AYE.

**OLD BUSINESS** – Council member Bailey made a motion to reconsider the approval of minutes for the work session on June 13, 2022. Council member Justis seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

Council member Bailey made a motion to amend the minutes for the June 13, 2022 work session in the discussion of the Grand Caverns pool. He said none of the leak quantities that he stated during the work session were put in the minutes; only that he didn't agree with opening the pool. He said he would like his comments that we were losing 24,000 gallons a day, 720,000 gallons a month, 4.3 million gallons in 6 months, and 96 thousand cubic feet of water in one month and that the water has to be going somewhere. Council member Bailey said he would like his calculations added to the work session minutes. Council member Justis seconded the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0, vote recorded as follows: JUSTIS – AYE; BAILEY – AYE; STERLING – AYE; RAYNES – AYE; LEETH – AYE; KOHL – AYE.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Plaster declared the meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Attest

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk