

Town of Clintwood
Town Council Meeting
248 Clintwood Main Street – Clintwood Town Hall
January 9, 2024
6:00 p.m.

Record of Attendance:

Council Members:

Danny Lambert – Mayor
Ron Kendrick – Vice Mayor -Arrived at 6:20 p.m.
Doris Rife
Talbert Bolling
Jim Childress – Absent
Andy Rose

Others Present:

Susan Wood-Town Attorney
Judy Steele – Clerk
Chief Rick Mullins

Citizens: Jeremy Fleming, Rachel Stallard, Pierceton Hobbs, Rachel Stallard

Mayor Lambert called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silent prayer. Mayor Lambert welcomed Andy Rose to the council. He was selected by the town council to replace Shelly Mullins on the council.

Agenda Item - Approval of December 19, 2023 minutes

Motion was made by Councilman Bolling and second by Councilwoman Rife to approve the minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item – Additions to the Agenda

Mayor Lambert said he wanted to add renewal of the contract with Lane Engineer. That will be Agenda item #9.

Motion was made by Councilman Bolling and second by Councilwoman Rife to approve the agenda with the additions. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item – Appointment to Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals

Motion was made by Councilman Rose and second by Councilwoman Rife to appoint Christopher Thomas Fleming to the Town of Clintwood Planning Commission. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Bolling and second by Councilwoman Rife to table the appointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals until the next meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item – AirMedCare Renewal

Motion was made by Councilman Bolling and second by Councilwoman Rife to renew the AirMedCare Coverage. Motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item - Workshop for FOIA Training

Greg Baker, town attorney, has requested to do a FOIA training with the council and asked the council to set a date for the workshop. The workshop was set for January 29 at 6 p.m.

Derelict Buildings:

Mayor Lambert said that in the packet there is some information on burned out houses in town that he would like to review before the next meeting. There is a house across from the Chevrolet Garage, one on Market Street, and one on Little Doc Hollow. He asked Susan if the ordinance is saying you first must determine if it is a derelict building and Susan replied yes, and the council has the authority to do that because it has not been hooked up to water or sewer for over a year without going thru the building inspector, the council can declare derelict and Susan replied yes. Susan said that it also says that it might endanger the public's health, safety, or welfare and for a continuous period in excess of six (6) months it has either been vacant, building inspector has deemed it derelict, and not lawfully connected to electric service from a utility service provider. It is not all those things, but it can be any combination of those things or one of those things. Susan said she needs addresses, and the council gives her the authority to send out the letters in accordance with the ordinance that has been adopted. Mayor Lambert asked the council if they want to act on it tonight.

Motion was made by Councilman Bolling and second by Councilwoman Rife to authorize Susan Wood to send out letters on the ones we know of as being a derelict building. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Bolling asked what is the repercussion of a person that don't comply and Susan said they are to give the town a plan within ninety (90) days with what they plan to do as whether they plan to fix the building or tear it down. If they do not follow through then there is a series of things the town can do such as demolish the property, but then you have to do certain things through taxes to have a lien on the property and there are civil things in court. It is a long process when you start to see it all the way through.

Ron Kendrick arrived at the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Agenda item: Lane Engineering Contract Renewal

Mayor Lambert said the town could renew them for another year without any public advertisement. Councilman Bolling said they have been a great partner to work with.

Motion was made by Councilman Bolling and second by Councilwoman Rife to renew Lane Engineering's Contract for another year. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business- none

Citizens Comments-

Pierceton Hobbs said that him and Rachel was on the Board of Patchwork Kinsfolk and have been doing various projects. They have been looking for office space in town. They have been receiving some grant money. They looked at the Cumberland Museum, but it is in bad shape. Rachel Stallard said she noticed that the Historical Society had moved into the field house, and she asked what is going to happen with their building. She had heard someone say there is flooring issues. Mayor Lambert said that the floor joists are completely rotted, and all the flooring must come up and new joists be put in. The council will have to see if it is more feasible to do the work on it or demolish it. Rachel suggested letting them look at the space to see if would work for them. Pierceton asked if they had any idea money wise what it would take, and Mayor Lambert said not really. There is someone in front of them that has asked for it. It is the Quilters Association. Councilman Bolling asked how often they would want to use it and Rachel said seven (7) days a week. Rachel said they were a cultural and community organizing and art collective. As often as they could, the would use it to put on art shows, have exhibits, and art classes. As frequently as they could use the building, they would use it. Pierceton said they were a nonprofit 501© 3. Mayor Lambert asked if they had money available to rent. Rachel asked if they fix the floors could they get rent in kind. Mayor Lambert said that would be a council decision. Rachel asked if they could see the building and he said that he would be looking at it this week and they could look at it then. He said the Thrift Store building will be empty and may be a possible space. Mayor Lambert said he would think about any other options. Rachel said they have good plans and ideas and some good lines on grants. They are committed to what they are doing and any place in town would be wonderful. Councilman Bolling asked what their organization do. Rachel said that they are the group for all the people that are a little bit different and not like everybody else. They are for most of the marginalized folks in the area. They create safer spaces for people to come into. They just recently put on a LBGQ health event and partnered with Virginia Rural Health; an organization based out of Blacksburg. They paid the full \$400 rental fee for the Jettie Baker Center. The event was catered by Pig n Out at \$1,000 and they gave out gift cards. Councilwoman Rife said they probably need to see the building first to see if it would be right for them. Pierceton said a lot of towns work with partner organization that have a 501©3. They would like to do some art projects in town. He does some grant work and search.

Rachel said several months ago they had a town hall at the Jettie and only three people showed up. One of the things they talked about was how to get money here. What is missing is what will bring people in, and she does not think there has been a full-scale approach to using art in conjunction with tourism to bring people to your area. She thinks they can leverage that and leverage what their collective artist does to make an impact in that department. Mayor Lambert asked them to leave a phone number and when he goes up there, he will contact them to look at it.

Reports and Communications:

1. Town Attorney - Susan Wood said everything has been done for the special election and and the paperwork has been filed and the judge has signed off on it.

2. Councilmembers-

Doris Rife - She thanked all the employees for the great job they do, the police officers and Sheriff Fleming, and the councilmembers for the good job they do. She welcomed Andy Rose to the council.

Talbert Bolling - He echoed what does Doris said. He said today was National Law Enforcement Day and expressed his appreciation for their service. Regarding a webinar that him and Mayor Lambert watched, he thinks that collectively as a council they may want to look at a grant for a fitness center, but you are limited to the footprint to what they wanted you to do. It was for places to do outside exercises. He would like the council to get with Chris at Lane Engineering to see what would fit on the field and compliment the Splash Pad and the proposed basketball and pickle courts to be installed. Personally, he thinks a swimming pool would be nice there. Rita Surrat has looked into it and there is an abandoned mine land economic revitalization program. We are a year behind on the grants and he would like to pursue them now so that construction can be started by 2024. In talking with Cumberland Plateau there are some funds remaining from the parking lot and paving and he thinks Phase II will be the basketball and pickle ball courts and the remainder of the money will be to start those with. He would like that included in the drawing and see how much will be left. AETNA has a grant of \$50,000 toward a fitness center, but you would have to come up with the difference because the center would cost about \$155,000. Wise has one at the airport and he wants to go over and look at that one. If this is done, the application must be in by the end of February. Councilman Bolling welcomed Andy to the council.

Ron Kendrick - He welcomed Andy to the council and apologized for being late. He asked about the status of the overtime for the police officers that has been on the table for the last couple times that they had met. Mayor Lambert asked if he was talking about overtime for coming out to fill in for someone that is off. He said that we have determined that does not

qualify as overtime. Ron asked who we were, and Mayor Lambert said that him and Judy had looked it over with the town attorney, Greg Baker, about filling in for a shift. He said the police officers are different because the police officers must cover seven (7) days a week whereas the other employees work five (5) days a week. The only thing he knows to do with Kendall off is to take the number of hours and number of officers and cover the best they can. He got a call from Councilman Bolling, and he reviewed the schedule with him and on one day Chris came out on 6 a.m. and worked his ten (10) hours and Councilman Bolling asked him to speak to Chief Mullins about coming out later and working later at night because more coverage is needed at night. He said they are in a bind with missing an officer right now and just need to work things out the best they can for right now. The sheriff has two officers on all night and there are state troopers during the day. He knows you need to have an officer seen as much as possible, but in these circumstances, we need to fill in the best you can. Chief Mullins said the thing about it is that law enforcement is proactive rather than reactive. If you start cutting your shifts down and not having someone here is when you are going to start having your issues with B & Es and everything else. This past Saturday morning Officer Turner had three or four calls before noon, Mayor Lambert said then they could call the officer out if no one was here or if the sheriff does not have an officer in town and if you notify dispatch, you will have someone on from 12:30 a.m. until 10:30 p.m. if there is an incident. The State Police has to cover a traffic accident no matter where it is at. The town is part of the county and the state. He said there are two state troopers in town everyday and is glad to have them use the town's office space. It is an advantage to have them here. Chief Mullins said they would do what the council wants, and he is just saying if you start cutting back then that is when you are going to start having problems. Councilman Kendrick said he thought there is a good cooperation between all three departments and they all help each other, but the thing about it is everybody is shorthanded. He is not in favor of reducing the shifts. He asked regarding the overtime is it over forty hours a week. Judy Steele said if they work actual forty hours not counting holidays, vacation, or sick time is counted as overtime. Councilman Kendrick said he thinks anything over forty hours should be compensated and Mayor Lambert said it was compensated. Judy Steele said if they get called out to work after they go home then they get paid overtime. She said she thought the question was if they are scheduled to work extra hours to fill in for Kendall then would that be considered overtime. She said if it is actual work hours and goes over forty hours then they would get paid overtime. Mayor Lambert said filling in for an officer is not actually an emergency call out. It is just a seven day a week schedule. Councilman Kendrick said he just wants to be fair with all employees and Mayor Lambert suggested that he come in and look over the time sheets and if he doesn't think they have been treated fairly then it can be brought up. Councilman Kendrick said he would do that and bring back it to the table at the next meeting if it needs to be.

Andy Rose – He thanked everyone for their vote of confidence by putting him on the council and he looks forward to serving with them over the next year.

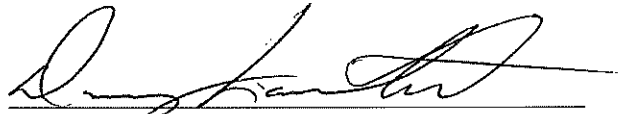
Mayor Lambert - All the Christmas decorations are taken down. The Lyall Ridge Water Project

is complete except for the extension if there is any money left over. There is a meeting with Chris Mullins, Lane Engineering, and Mike Boyd to see if the extension can be completed. He has had a meeting with Lester Hill and Jim Porter with AEP about how dark the intersection is in the roundabout. Jim Porter is a lighting expert, and he took measurements, and is supposed to send a plan back and a cost estimate to light up the intersection. He will then go to Food City to see if they will help the town with the cost. He has spoken to Ben McFall on the Baker Ridge water line project, and he has scheduled that project to begin in March. He believes Food City is to open in their new location in February.

Mayor Lambert asked for any other comments and hearing none he asked for a motion to recess.

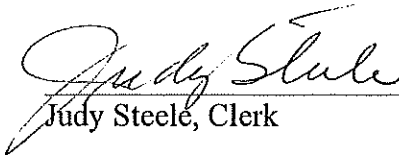
Motion was made by Councilman Bolling and second by Councilwoman Rife to pay the bills, the overtime, and recess the meeting until January 29 at 6 p.m.

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Danny Lambert, Mayor

Attest:



Judy Steele, Clerk