

**ROCKY MOUNT TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
FEBRUARY 23, 2009**

The February 23, 2009 special Council meeting of the Rocky Mount Town Council was held in the conference room of the Rocky Mount Municipal Building, located at 345 Donald Avenue, Rocky Mount, Virginia, at 4:00 p.m., with Mayor Steven C. Angle presiding. The following members of Council were present:

Vice Mayor Posey W. Dillon and Council Members John H. Lester, Roger M. Seale, Robert W. Strickler, and Gregory B. Walker.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Angle.

The Mayor noted that all members of Town Council except for Council Member Jerry W. Greer, Sr. were present. The Deputy Clerk noted the staff members present, being: Town Manager C. James Ervin, Town Attorney John Boitnott, Finance Director Linda Woody, and Deputy Clerk Stacey B. Sink.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Prior to the meeting, Council received the agenda for review and consideration of approval.

- Motion was made by Council Member Walker to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Council Member Strickler, and carried unanimously by those present.

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNT FOR AN EXTENSION OF TIME FOR THE PAYMENT OF 2008 REAL ESTATE AND PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES AND A RESOLUTION FOR AN EXTENSION OF TIME FOR THE 2009 ANNUAL LICENSING AND REGISTRATION OF VEHICLES

At the request of the Mayor, the Town Manager addressed the Council, stating that by vote at the previous meeting it was the intent of Council to do this. The resolution presented to Council intends to clean this up.

(Let the record show that Council Member Jerry W. Greer, Sr. arrived at the meeting at 4:07 p.m.)

The Town Manager read for the record “A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Rocky Mount for an Extension of Time for the Payment of 2008 Real Estate and Personal Property Taxes” which states:

***WHEREAS**, by resolution adopted by the Town Council of Rocky Mount at the regular scheduled meeting held on February 9, 2009, the Town Council approved an extension of time for the payment of 2008 real estate and personal property taxes without the payment of penalty and interest; and*

***WHEREAS**, in adopting this resolution, the Town Council has considered the provisions of § 58.1-3916 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.*

***THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Town Council that the time for the payment of 2008 real estate and personal property taxes without the payment of penalty and interest is extended to May 29, 2009.*

He also added that “A Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Rocky Mount for an Extension of Time for the 2009 Annual Licensing and Registration of Vehicles” contains similar language.

The Mayor advised that he needed a motion.

- Motion was made by Council Member Lester to approve both resolutions as presented for extensions of payment for 2008 real estate and personal property taxes and 2009 vehicle registrations until May 29, 2009 without penalty or interest, with motion on the floor being seconded by Council Member Greer. There being no further discussion, let the record show that the motion on the floor passed unanimously.

REQUEST OF FERRUM COLLEGE AGRICULTURE CLUB FOR TOWN ENDORSEMENT AND OFFICIAL SPONSORSHIP OF AGRICULTURE DAY FESTIVAL TO BE HELD AT THE ROCKY MOUNT FARMERS’ MARKET

The Town Manager addressed the Council, stating that in the packet was a proposed schedule for an “Agriculture Day/Farmer Appreciation Day” by the Ferrum Agriculture Club. Ferrum College will not allow the Club to hold this event unless it is endorsed and sponsored by the Town. The basic reason for this is that if it is an official Town event, it will be covered under the recreational immunity program and under the insurance. He thinks this a fantastic opportunity and the students involved have a lot of enthusiasm and zeal for keeping farm heritage alive. It is scheduled for Saturday, March 21, 2009 from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

Council Member Walker asked for clarification of the exact request. The Town Manager confirmed that the specific request is for the Town to partner with them and to sponsor the event so it will be covered under the Town’s liability insurance.

The Town Manager confirmed to the Mayor that there is no request for funds.

- Motion was made by Council Member Lester to approve the request of the Ferrum College Agriculture Club for endorsement and sponsorship of the event. He further stated that as a tag-on to this motion he would like to ask Ferrum College to please consider again the Town's request for a bluegrass music program at Ferrum College, as previously submitted, with motion on the floor being seconded by Council Member Strickler. There being no discussion, let the record show that the motion on the floor passed unanimously.

BRIEFING BY THE TOWN MANAGER ON THE IMPACT OF THE RECESSION ON THE FY2010 BUDGET PROJECTIONS

The Town Manager asked for Council's indulgence as he would like also address additional items that are related. He and the Finance Director have finished some initial passes at looking at revenue and expense projections. Current year revenue appears to be down approximately ten percent. Next year's revenue is expected to continue that trend so there could be a twenty percent difference between FY2008 and FY 2010 revenues. This makes it a challenge for the Town to continue delivering the services that it has been delivering, not impossible, but it will make for a difficult budget year. He wants to brief the Council on where staff is going with this. He has asked each of the departments to conserve, conserve, conserve and it has had an impact. The expenses for this year are fourteen percent below the expected so the departments are doing a good job. What this is likely to mean is that:(1) staff will not get any increase this year, as there will be no room for that in the budget; and (2) any increase in medical insurance will be passed on to those who subscribe, and if it is a family plan then it will be a bigger increase. This will also eat into the capital program. Staff's response is to focus on what we already do great. There will not be a lot of new equipment and currently the plan is not to have any. The Town will continue meeting the day-by-day service needs to the extent that it can while also providing a balanced budget. His intent is get the employees together for a meeting to go over some of these items now so that employees can make decisions in their own families and households with this coming down the pipe.

The Mayor questioned when the new figures for health insurance would be available with the Finance Director confirming they would be available mid-April.

The Town Manager advised that he wants to push the agenda to take care of and conserve the Town has. The Town is in excellent financial shape and as he and the Finance Director work through the budget is the intent to balance the budget without dipping into reserves. He also advised that he and the Assistant Town Manager have been able to get a lot of capital expenditures met by outside agencies. He wanted to share these projections with the Council, as there will be significant reductions in the budget; however, the plan is not to impact services.

The Town Manager continued, stating that one of the other issues he wishes to address is that some of Council may have read an article in the paper regarding intentions to close the local Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) office. This is a true story. The Rocky Mount VDOT office is slated for closure. There will be a public hearing on March 10, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. at Northside Middle School. He and Franklin County Administrator Rick Huff plan to rent a van to bring a consolidated group of Council and Board members to the hearing. He and Mr. Huff plan to speak and he would very much like Council's support to speak on the efficiency and desirability of the local VDOT office. He and Mr. Huff plan to pen a letter and an aggressive telephone campaign, and he further added that if the Town has to go through the Bedford or Salem VDOT offices for plan approval, it will cripple the Town. The Town has two projects on the street and is doing more than any other locality right now, but it is the local office that is slated for closure.

The Town Manager confirmed with the Finance Director that the first budget worksession is scheduled for the last week in April.

The Mayor asked for an update on Town Clerk Pat Keatts, who is currently on medical leave. The Town Manager advised that she is doing well, and the Deputy Clerk advised that she has visited with her and also delivered a gift basket to her on behalf of Town Council and staff.

CLOSED MEETING

At approximately 4:20 p.m., motion was made by Council Member Lester to go into Closed Meeting, seconded Council Member Seale, and carried unanimously to discuss the following:

- Section 2.2-3711(A).1 – Discussion, consideration or interviews of prospective candidates for employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of any public body (Town Manager).
- Section 2.2-3711(A).7 – Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body; and consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

At 5:25 p.m. motion was made by Council Member Lester to come out of Closed Meeting and to reconvene the meeting back into open session, with motion on the floor being seconded by Council Member Strickler and carried unanimously.

CERTIFICATE OF CLOSED MEETING

Whereas, the Town of Rocky Mount Council has convened a Closed Meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

Whereas, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia required certification by this council that such Closed Meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Rocky Mount Town Council hereby certifies that, to the best of each members' knowledge: (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under this chapter and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the meeting of the public body.

Steven C. Angle, Mayor

- Motion was made by Council Member Lester certifying that: (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under this chapter was discussed; and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the meeting of the public body. Motion was seconded by Council Member Greer. The Mayor swore to adopt the motion on the floor by Council Member Lester that this was all that was discussed as defined in Section 2.2-3412 Code of Virginia. Voting yes were Vice Mayor Posey W. Dillon, Council Members Jerry W. Greer, Sr., John H. Lester, Roger M. Seale, Robert W. Strickler, and Gregory B. Walker.

The Mayor reported that no action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5:28 p.m. motion was made by Council Member Walker to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Greer and carried unanimously.

Steven C. Angle, Mayor

ATTEST:

Stacey B. Sink/Deputy Clerk

/sbs