

Appalachia Town Council Meeting  
**February 15, 2018**

The Council for the Town of Appalachia met in regular session on February 15, 2018 in the Council Chambers located at 508 West Main Street at 5:00 PM. Mayor Ted Collins called the meeting to order.

Mayor Ted Collins led the pledge of allegiance. John Tull led the invocation.

**Roll Call:** Ruth Ann Boyd, John Tull, Bob Hartley, Chase Christian, and Ted Collins were present.

Town Manager Fred Luntsford and Town Clerk Yvonne Isom were present. Town Attorney Mike Abbott was absent.

**Minutes:** Chase Christian made the motion to approve the Regular and Public Hearing – Bond Issue meeting minutes from January 18, 2018, seconded by John Tull. All were in favor.

**Agenda:** Ted Collins made the motion to approve the agenda with removing Climbing Management MOU from the Presentation section, seconded by John Tull. All were in favor.

**Presentation:** None.

**Committee Communication to Council:**

**Cemetery Committee:** No report.

**Moving Appalachia Forward:** Susan Barnette reported that they had purchased a stove for the caboose at the trail head. The carpet was donated. She was working on getting items from the coal museum, some that she had donated in the past. She mentioned that the trash cans seemed to be overflowing. She was told that they are on a schedule for pickup each week on Monday and Friday, they also go down the trail. Chase told council that he had been down to the caboose and had carried it in. Everything looks great but the roof at the canopy has some issues. Water is now getting in and running down the walls. He has also gone to Lowe's and bought some heavy-duty locks. He also provided the OSB for the model railroad group to set up the track.

**Parks and Rec:** Written report was provided in council packets.

**Planning Commission:** Susan Barnette appeared before council in the absence of Brian Falin who could not be there. They had met the week before and discussed the projects they would be working on in downtown. Their next meeting will be April 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM. Out of the last meeting they ask council to work with VDOT to install crosswalk and other safety measures for the area of the trail head. They expect as the weather warms up, there will be more people in that area with parking on the other side of the road from the trail head.

**Public Safety Committee:** Robert Anderson reported on their meeting earlier that day. He spoke about the CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) program that they would like to bring to the town. This team would help alleviate pressure off the EMS, so they could work optimally during times of emergency. It works thru FEMA. They are there to assist; they are volunteers in the community. More information can be found with a Google search of CERT. The fire, police and public works will be heading up the team. The fire department would do the initial training. They are also in the planning stages of getting their disaster plan updated. They will also work on getting the shelter updated with a generator. There is money out there thru grants. Our local shelter was ready to receive people during the last flooding event. The county should help with getting a generator for the high school as it is recognized by the county as an official shelter.

**Appalachia Historical and Trail Head Committee:** Travis Anderson reported they had met with the local forest ranger in Norton. They have no money to put toward upkeep of any of their trails. They informed her that they would adopt the Dark Hollow Trail. Hand tools will be used for cleaning up the trail. We told them we would like to connect our trail into the Roaring Branch Trail. They would start on this soon and ask for any volunteers to help. They will use gravity in their favor, beginning at the top and working toward the bottom. Amanda at the Post Office has everything done for getting the Post Office registered.

**Special Projects Committee:** Travis Anderson reported this year there will not be an Easter Egg Hunt, but instead an Easter Fest on March 25<sup>th</sup> beginning at 2, with a concert at 6PM. It would be based on our Trunk or Treat where there would tables set up, bounce houses, and a concert. This will be an inside event. The auditorium will be used for the concert. "The Call" will be providing the entertainment. They will also be performing on Wednesday night for Coal Railroad Days. The committee has already started on Coal Railroad Days, with us having to turn away vendors and performers. Chase asked if the committee would be honoring the Post Office and the Towers. The committee will be incorporating this anniversaries into our advertising and souvenirs. There will be a special label for the wine bottles this year. The concrete wall downtown is also in the plan on getting a facelift. The committee is working on trying to get it painted honoring the people that have made a name and made the town proud. Chase said that he had a picture of the Towers that had red, white and blue banners on the building. Travis said that they have plans to light up the building with LED lights and putting a flag pole on top of the towers with a large American flag. Ted asked if the work on the wall would be finished by August. Travis said they the group hoped to.

**Tourism Committee:** Sharon Hatfield reported that the Wise County and Appalachia's pager would be updated in three months. They would be removing Nancy's Kitchen and Peggy Castle from the site. They would add the Powell River Trail, the model railroad and the Cultural Arts

along with expanded coverage of Coal Railroad Days and the Fall Fling. She had lunch with Michael Wampler who had ideas of how to promote the town. She wants to invite him to speak with council. He will help design a brochure for the town and will pay for the printing. He suggested that we should bring events to the auditorium as it is a large asset that the town has. She mentioned that there were problems with the auditorium. She thinks that there needs to be a new sound system purchased. She attended the Heart of Appalachia marketing meeting. There have been three weekends developed as a Flash Friday contest, for people to win a weekend. It will start on June 22. Appalachia will be featured in the Heart of Appalachia and on their web page. The tourism group are remapping all the trails. They will be sending out drones and uploading the videos. Chase asked why they took off Peggy Castle information. Sharon said that Peggy's information took up almost one-sixth of their allotted space, so without deleting it, there would not be enough room to add the trail and other points of interest in the town. Heart of Appalachia will do a website with links to our page.

**Miners' Memorial Wall:** No report.

**Veterans' Memorial Wall:** Travis Anderson reported in the absence of Susie Richardson. They are looking at putting up new lighting. Robert Anderson has agreed to help to cut down of the cost. They are also looking at putting in a water fountain with a flag poles honoring every branch of military services. Larry Williams has contacts that may be able to help with the finances. It will not be huge, but nice. They are also trying to get the moving wall to come to Appalachia. The last time it was in the area, was almost 30 years ago in Big Stone Gap. If they can get it, they would put it at the high school.

### ***Citizen Communication:***

**Brad Mathisen, Norton:** He was there as a follow up to the climbing MOU. He was informed that that topic would be discussed later in the meeting.

### ***Engineer's Report: Patrick McKinney, The Lane Group***

**Ben's Branch:** Patrick reported they were finishing up the PER at this time. Once complete, it will be submitted to DCR and RD for review and approval.

**Comprehensive Water System Improvements Phase I - Water Storage Tanks:** Patrick reported they are working with the town to address one final item. Once addressed, they will be able to advertise for this project.

**In-Town Improvements:** Patrick said LENOWISCO is looking at submitting a grant application in March.

**Powell River Trail:** Patrick reported the project was complete pending a few close out items. These will be addressed when the weather breaks. Patrick will look to see if there is any money that could be used to address the roof on the caboose at the trail head. Chase asked about the

split rail fence. Patrick said it would be installed as soon as the weather cooperated. They would also be looking at adding steps or stepping stones to the area of the trail where people are going thru the grass and shrubbery instead of walking further to use the steps at the start of the trail.

***System Infiltration / Inflow:*** Patrick stated the ER and PER are both approved. They will now wait for he consideration of a funding offer.

***PSA Projects:***

***Stonega Sewer – Phase II:*** Patrick reported they expect this to be completed in April. Hookups are expected to begin in the next week.

***Water Meter Replacement Project – Phase I:*** Patrick reported the town continues the installation of the meters.

***Water Meter Replacement Project Phase II:*** Patrick said they are still waiting on the environmental compliance that is still pending.

***Roda & Osaka Waterline Replacement:*** Patrick stated they were seeking funding for the environmental and PER.

Chase Christian asked if we sent a letter to our representative in Washington about the need for financial help with the dam. Ted Collins asked if could get some power behind the caboose when this part of the project comes around.

***Closed Session:*** None.

***Old Business:***

- ***Climbing MOU:*** The climbing MOU that was discussed at the last meeting was include in council packet. This was revised by our attorney and VACORP, our insurance carrier. There were only two changes. Ted Collins said he had read it all the way thru and it had answered any questions he had. John Tull had a question under responsibilities. There is nothing about the wayside/parking. It will be tight parking and we have town vehicles that travel in and out of the area. Brad said they would deal with this as the climbers’ organization and would work with the town with the town’s desires of how they want parking. There is a police department firing range in the area that is in the process of being revamped. He just wants to make sure that the road remains clear. Brad’s suggestion would be to give it a year to see what the usage will be. If the town has any issue, Brad is more than willing to work with the town with any problems. If the MOU is passed, the next step will be for the climbing organization to provide the town with a certificate of insurance and fulfil the things on the MOU. They will install permanent anchors on the top of the rock. There is only a small group that would

perform this along with developing the routes to the climbing area. The spring and fall is the optimal times for climbing. There will probably not be a lot of traffic for the first year. **Ted Collins made the motion to accept the MOU contingent upon their acceptance of the MOU and allowing Fred Luntsford to sign on behalf of the town. Bob Hartley seconded the motion. Roll call: Ruth Ann Boyd, YES; John Tull, YES; Bob Hartley, YES; Chase Christian, YES; and Ted Collins, YES.** The paperwork should be finalized within the next two weeks.

- **Timber Sale:** Fred Luntsford had been in contact with Virginia forester Bill Miller. He said that if anyone timbered the area, they would have to follow the best management practices document. He also talked with a forester out of Wytheville that Bob Hartley knew. He deals with all the loggers and consultants in the area, his management decided it would be best not to come to the meeting. He did provide a lot of valuable information. His best piece of advice was to hire a consultant. A consultant would take the project from A to Z. He would make sure all the rules and regulations were adhered to and would do what we wanted regarding what we wanted to see done, such as paving, etc. This expense would come off the top of the revenue that we would realize from the sale of the timber. Council would need to decide if they wanted to proceed. The next step would be to allow the Town Manager to get in touch with various consultants to meet with council. They would come to a council meeting to discuss in front of everyone. Consultants fees are normally 10% of the revenue generated from the sale. He would also determine the value of the timber, contracts, everything. **Ted Collins made the motion to allow the Town Manager to contact at least 3 consultants to speak to council to tell us what we need to do, what they can do, what we can do, if there is no cost. Chase Christian seconded the motion. Roll call: Ruth Ann Boyd, YES; John Tull, YES; Bob Hartley, YES; Chase Christian, YES; and Ted Collins, YES.**

### *New Business:*

- **Landing Zone:** Travis Anderson did some research and since it is not commercialized, we would not have to meet the strict FAA regulations. We just have to follow the FAA guidelines on measurements and painting markings. It will be used for medical, but it will not deter others from using it. It will be the same set up as at the local hospitals. Travis has connections that are willing to help with the lighting and fencing. We will be the only town with a designated medical helipad. Travis will have to get county approval since it is county property. They just need to be informed of what we are going to do with the property. Chase asked what was going to be done with the junk currently in that location. The trash can will be getting a new home. The Humvee will be moved to another location, as it can not be sold. Chief Joyner is working on a plan to dispose of the Humvees. There will be fencing, so that no one will be blocking access. Travis also brought up the med flight insurance that is offered on a town

package. The citizens can vote on it. Just one flight will cost upward of \$15,000. The city of Whitesburg offers this plan to their citizens. Air Methods covers all 50 states.

**Ted Collins made the motion to approve the landing zone in the parking lot at the high school. Bob Hartley seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

Chase Christian left the meeting at 6:17 PM.

***Administrative Concerns:***

**Town Clerk** – Nothing.

**Town Manager** – Fred Luntsford commented on the new website. It has been contracted with a company out of Lee County, Appalachian Life. There will be a virtual walk on the trail. The initial cost will be \$500, and \$150 maintenance for each year thereafter. The previous weekend storm and flood has caused some damage. The town crew discovered we were losing water at the Inman tank. It could mean that there is a creek crossing repair. This is more than our crew will be able to handle. The culvert at Woodland Acres also has been impacted. Those two items have been sent to the county to the governor. There is hope that we might be able to get some help with getting them repaired. There will be a few loads of the mill material taken to Woodland Acres to help with the repair of their road. David Flanary will use his equipment to spread the material. Jodi Orndorff asked questions regarding the dam, specifically if it is inspected and if there is someone up there all the time. They also asked about the shooting range as the only time it seemed to be used was on Sunday. The Town Manager had also been approached by someone who lives in Inman about a small piece of property that has a utility pole sitting in the middle of it. It is triangular shape next to the creek. If council wants to sell it, it would have to be advertised for sale and then offered for sale. He is interested in putting a building on it to house tools and such. It is almost worthless but is willing to give something for it because he can use it. Ted asked about the water leak in Inman. The water leak is critical, but they are making things work. Todd Jessee said the leak is about 76,000 gallons per day. It amounts to about 19% of water loss per day. The repair could be between \$50,000 to \$80,000, depending on where the leak is.

***Council Communication:***

**Bob Hartley:** Nothing.

**John Tull:** John that Robert will be looking at the dam emergency plan. He was also impressed with Robert's presentation. ACAC will be having a benefit singing on the upcoming Saturday, along with open mic on Tuesdays.

**Ruth Ann Boyd:** Ruth Ann wanted to commend the Appalachia Fire and Rescue. She had no idea of just how up to date and capable their service is. They were there within minutes of her need along with police back up. Everyone agreed on how proud they were of our EMS services.

**Ted Collins:** Ted agreed with everything that had been said. He was out of town when the last storm went thru. His sister called asking when she should evacuate. He told her that the Fire Department would come and let her know. Travis Anderson spoke of the protocol they follow for such emergencies as a flood situation. Due to the sewer line update, it has helped with the flow of the river.

There being no further business, **Ruth Ann Boyd made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Bob Hartley. All were in favor.** Meeting ended at 6:42 PM.

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Mayor Teddie Collins

ATTEST:

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Town Clerk