

Appalachia Town Council Meeting
January 18, 2018

The Council for the Town of Appalachia met in regular session on January 18, 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: Bob Hartley, John Tull, Chase Christian, and Ted Collins were present. Ruth Ann Royd was absent.

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

Minutes: John Tull made the motion to approve the Regular and Special Called meeting minutes from November 16, 2017, and December 13, 2017, seconded by Bob Hartley. All were in favor.

Agenda: Ted Collins made the motion to approve the agenda with moving closed session to after the Engineers Report, seconded by Chase Christian. All were in favor.

Presentation: The Central Appalachia Climber Coalition came before council with a Memorandum of Understanding. They are interested in gaining permission to climb the rock cliffs below the dam on Bens Branch. The area is about 120' x 200 yards long just off the road. They already have a MOU with the City of Norton for climbing Flag Rock. The town's insurance company has no problem with our signing this MOU. This is set up to allow for public use. It will be a way to get other to come in from other areas. It is not unheard of for climbers to travel over four hours to climb. The group said they have an area in the Gorge that they climb and have signs posted. They would even be able to apply for grants to help with maintenance and upgrades to the area. John Tull also informed the group that there are other rock formations around the town that they may be interested in and to tie them into the other trails around town. There was no vote taken, but they would continue to consider the proposal.

Committee Communication to Council:

Cemetery Committee: No report.

Moving Appalachia Forward: Susan Barnette reported that several of their members had been in the caboose. They have cleaned and painted the inside but there is still some work to be done. They had funded the supplies and manpower. They are also working on how to move the one

room school to the area across from the trail head. They want to have everything in place for when the weather breaks. They have a planning session on Monday at 1:00. She also thanked the town for the manpower in decorating for the Christmas season. Chase informed Susan that the one room school house is 18' tall and the foundation that is on site will hold the structure with no problem.

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

Planning Commission: Brian Falin appeared before council with just a quick update. They approved the comprehensive plan at their December meeting at which time council also approved the plan. Frank Kibler informed Brian that the application process for downtown revitalization had not opened-up yet for this cycle. Their next meeting is scheduled for February 7 at 5:30 in council chambers. as no meeting in January. The meeting would be a conversation of what needs to be done in updating downtown. They are almost certain that they will receive a grant when the time comes. He invited all to come to the meeting.

Public Safety Committee: No meeting.

Special Projects Committee: Travis Anderson reported on the 2017 year as excellent. He reported that 2018 should be even better, as it will be the 40th anniversary of Coal Railroad Days, 80th anniversary of the Post Office, and 90th anniversary of The Towers. We are going to make this a large event this year. We have taken a break for the last month due to the work from August thru December. Our next event will be for Easter. Our goal will be sponsorship of our events. We have been amazed at what we have been able to do without a lot of money. Falin appeared for Travis Anderson. The trunk or treat event was held the weekend before Halloween. There was over 700 to attend. The next two events will be the Tree Lighting/Parade and the Santa Social.

Tourism Committee: Sharon Hatfield reported that she has been working with Michael Wampler to update Appalachia on the county's website. The update was complete but had not yet made it onto the internet. She reported that the Cultural Arts would be added to the Crooked Road Music Trail. She has been attending the Marketing Meetings at the Heart of Appalachia and the Chamber of Commerce meetings. She found out that no one has represented Appalachia on these committees in several years. Comments from Kitty at the Heart of Appalachia is that our webpage needs to be updated. A lot of the towns around us use WIX. The cost is \$80 per year. It is easy to add and delete things on the web page. Sharon was urged to get in touch with Eric Rainey, the IT person for the town.

Miners' Memorial Wall: Ted Collins had spoken to Susie Richardson. She was working on getting more bricks for the miners' wall.

Veterans' Memorial Wall: No report.

Citizen Communication:

Jodi Orndorff, Woodland Acres: She appeared before council concerning the possible timbering above her house. The Town Manager has visited her and her husband to make them aware of the possibility. She is concerned about the possible run off and erosion. She was informed that the land is owned by the Town of Appalachia and of the 700 acres, only 300 would be available to timer. There will have to be a least 2 public hearings before anything could move forward. She knows that there will be a problem with the water run-off. She is also worried about the Benge Trail. The Town's biggest concerns are the safety of the reservoir and the residents that might be impacted. She brought up some other concerns. She was asking for increased police patrol, due to extra trash being dumped in the area. She also noticed people coming into the area and throwing their garbage out and down the bank. She was informed to report it to the town for possible prosecution. The county would go thru it to look for identification. She does keep down tag numbers of strange cars in the neighborhood. The upkeep of their road was brought up again. The town is not responsible for that road into Woodland Acres. The area in front of the cemetery is now getting worse. At one time, the neighbors in the neighborhood go together to put down gravel. Chase said that if there was timbering, the loggers would have to rebuild the road. She just did not understand how the logging trucks would be able to get up into the area. She asked if she had damage due to the logging, who would be responsible. The loggers would have to have insurance to cover the damages.

Amanda Williams, Postmaster, Appalachia Post Office: She appeared before council to inform that that as of December 14, 2017, the Appalachia Post Office was approved for the National Registry. They would not finalize the process until they got in touch with the town. She asked if the Town would be willing to get on the list with the Post Office as a historic district. This would open the town up for grants. The Town Manager had received some information from Gary Bush. The Town had not received the letter yet. By being on the registry, it is harder to close the building. There are grants to keep the buildings as original as possible. The mural in the post office is worth at least \$200,000. There are original pictures and blueprints in the basement of the post office from 1938 of the building of the post office and of the town.

Travis Anderson, Brian Falin and Chris Williams, Appalachia residents. The trio appeared before council to ask for a committee to be established to deal with the historical aspect of the town along with the trail and future trails the town may have. They think some of the citizens would be interested in the trails and be willing to help create more trails and help with the upkeep, taking some of the burden off the town. They could also work with other groups such as the rock climbing group that spoke earlier in the night. **Ted Collins made the motion to set up a committee called the Appalachia Historical and Trailheads Committee (AHTC). John Tull seconded the motion. All were in favor. Mayor Collins made the motion to appoint Brian Falin, Travis Anderson and Chris Williams to be on the committee. Chase Christian seconded the motion. All were in favor.** Fred gave them the first chore, which would be to link up the Powell River Trail to the Roaring Branch Trail, along with the George Washington Rock.

Travis Anderson, Appalachia Fire and Rescue: Travis appeared on behalf of the Fire and Rescue Department. He was asking for a part of the parking lot at the high school to be recognized as a permanent landing zone for helicopters. He would see that there would be lighting and portable fencing in place. FAA would then recognize it. Appalachia would be the

only town that would have such a zone. Travis would be able to obtain the money. Mike Abbott said that he would need to get permission from the county, as they are the official owner of the parking lot. The spot would be 100' x 100'. There are a few other locations in town that can be used as a landing zone: the football field, Island Park, and Bullitt mine complex. There would be ground breaking for the medical center soon at the other end of the parking lot. The Town Manager has a final question for Travis before he left, and it was does the rescue squad have oxygen masks for animals. The answer was yes/no. They use what they have, a neo-nat mask and have used them in the past. There was someone that would be willing to donate toward the cost.

Bernice Scalf, Blondell Avenue: She appeared before council regarding her fossil collection. It consists mostly of plant fossils. She would like for there to be a museum in the town to showcase the collection.

Engineer's Report: Patrick McKinney and Jeff Cochran, The Lane Group

Ben's Branch: Jeff reported this project is in a holding pattern. They are seeking funding for the environmental report. Will not be able to seek project funding till the report is complete.

Powell River Trail: Jeff reported the project was substantially complete. There are 5 or 6 small items still left.

System Infiltration / Inflow: Jeff stated this will be coming off the list too.

PSA Projects:

Osaka & Roda Sewer – Phase I: Jeff reported this project is done.

Stonega Sewer – Phase II: Jeff reported this will close out soon. The pump station is complete and running. This project is 80 to 85 percent complete. In about 2 weeks, customers will be hooked up. Flow should be expected in about 45 days. This flow will be metered, and PSA will be billed.

Comprehensive Water System Improvements Phase I - Water Storage Tanks: Patrick reported they still had one item to address on RD's Letter of Conditions and working with town to address the item. The town will need to update their water budget.

In-Town Improvements: Patrick said LENOWISCO is looking at seeking funding for this project in March 2018 for the Old Bottom community. It will not address all the lines but about half. Above Brown Street is the general area. It will be a phased-out project. One million is the max amount that can be submitted.

Water Meter Replacement Project – Phase I: Patrick reported the town has about 90 to 100 to be installed.

Water Meter Replacement Project Phase II: Patrick had submitted the plans and specs for this project to the Health Department. This will allow the town to get an additional 250 meters to complete the system. They still have the environmental compliance pending.

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

Chase Christian made the motion to approve the bond issue of \$114,000. Bob Hartley seconded the motion. Roll Call: Bob Hartley, Yes; John Tull, Yes; Ruth Ann Boyd, Absent; Chase Christian, Yes; and Ted Collins, Yes.

Closed Session: Bob Hartley made the motion to go into closed session under 2.2-3711A (3) and (7). John Tull seconded the motion. All were in favor. Fred Luntsford, Mike Abbott, Yvonne Isom, Todd Jessee and Mark Quillen joined the council members in closed session. Closed session began at 6:40 PM. Patrick McKinney was asked to join later.

Council returned to council chambers at 8:05 PM. A straw vote was taken to go back into open session. Ted Collins made the motion accept the certification. John Tull seconded the motion. Roll Call: Bob Hartley, Yes; John Tull, Yes; Ruth Ann Boyd, Absent; Chase Christian, Yes; and Ted Collins, Yes. There following action was taken.

John Tull made the motion to authorize the Town Manager to negotiate increasing an existing loan at Miners Exchange Bank up to \$54,000 for sewer repair and additional telemetry in Imboden and Cold Spring Drive. Bob Hartley seconded the motion. Roll Call: Bob Hartley, Yes; John Tull, Yes; Ruth Ann Boyd, Absent; Chase Christian, Yes; and Ted Collins, Yes.

Ted Collins made the motion to accept the donation of the Gus Martin land across from the trail head from Gus Hill Rentals. John Tull seconded the motion. Roll Call: Bob Hartley, Yes; John Tull, Yes; Ruth Ann Boyd, Absent; Chase Christian, Yes; and Ted Collins, Yes.

Chase Christian made the motion to set a public hearing on the possibility of a timber sale in the area around the reservoir before the next meeting at 4:45 PM on February 15, 2018 in Council Chambers. Ted Collins seconded the motion. Roll Call: Bob Hartley, Yes; John Tull, Yes; Ruth Ann Boyd, Absent; Chase Christian, Yes; and Ted Collins, Yes. Mike Abbott will draw up the information that needs to be advertised.

Old Business:

- None.

New Business:

- None.

Administrative Concerns:

Town Clerk – Yvonne Isom gave an update on the certificates of deposits the town has. She also discussed how the 2017 taxes has been coming in for the year. She said that she had only had two people that did not like the sticker. She still has a lot of tax tickets coming back with bad addresses and she was working on trying to find those people. Delinquent notices would be going out next month with a notice of we would be using all avenues in our power to collect.

Town Manager – Fred Luntsford commented on the cold and the severe weather and commended the town’s crew for all their hard-work in keeping the water and sewer flowing and streets cleared. Even the office staff have gone above and beyond in keeping everything going and trying to get ahead when they can. VRWA would be coming the next day to help with leak detection. The group that was looking at the red dog site has been there and collected samples. He would be getting back in touch with an approximate value of the site.

Town Attorney – Mike Abbott has nothing to add other than he gets a lot of phone calls because his cell phone number is listed as a contact.

Council Communication:

Chase Christian: Chase reiterated what Fred had said regarding the employees. He was also pleased with this night’s meeting. He was pleased with people stepping up and volunteering their time. His goal is to work to get our debts down, maintain growing the town and being responsible for the future of the town.

Bob Hartley: Bob thanked all for all their hard work. He was encouraged by tonight’s meeting and thought it was the best in a long time.

John Tull: John just wanted to echo what the others had said. The rock climbing group may spur on others to come to the area. He noted that the Appalachia Service Project was looking at staying at the gym again this year when they come to the area to work on homes. He also asked about grants for new police cars. The Town Clerk said that the Chief was working getting on the list for a grant or possibly in the direction that the Public Works department went with vehicle leasing.

Ted Collins: Ted reiterated what everyone had already said. He also appreciated the meeting.

There being no further business, **Mayor Ted Collins adjourned the meeting.** Meeting ended at 8:24 PM.

Mayor Ted Collins

ATTEST:

Town Clerk