

**10 Robertson St.**  
**Regular Meeting Number 10 of Radford City Council, F.Y. 2017-2018**

**The New River City**  
**February 12, 2018**  
**Radford, Virginia**

The regular meeting of the Radford City Council was convened at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 10 Robertson Street, Radford, VA. The Mayor of the City, Dr. Bruce Brown was present and presiding. Other members of City Council present were Mr. Robert Gropman, Dr. Richard Harshberger, Mr. Daniel Keith Marshall, and Mr. David Michael Turk.

Others present were as follows:

Mr. David Ridpath, City Manager

Mr. Don Goodman, Chief of Police

Ms. Melissa Skelton, Deputy City Clerk/Community Development Director

Mrs. Jenni Wilder, City Clerk

Clerks Note: Mr. David Michael Turk was out of town for business and participated remotely.

**ACTION:** Dr. Harshberger motioned to allow Mr. Turk to join the meeting remotely, Mr. Marshall seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, led by local Veterans, Jim Henagar led the invocation.

**MINUTES APPROVALS:** On a motion by Dr. Harshberger and seconded by Mr. Marshall that the minutes for the January 22, 2018 Regular Meeting were approved as presented.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

**SUBJECT: Resolution – Joseph Yost Recognition**

**SUMMARY:** Joseph Yost has served as our City Representative to the House of Delegates since 2012. He has championed projects that support our schools, Radford University, economic development and community well-being. The Resolution recognized Joseph's dedication to public service and his support of Radford

**ACTION:** Mr. Gropman moved to approve and adopt the resolution as presented, Dr. Harshberger, seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

Mayor Brown shared two new initiatives in the City of Radford. The first is that there will be hiring of a new Economic Development Director, who will take a proactive approach in recruiting businesses to Radford. The second announcement is that Council has hired a new City Attorney, the firm Sands Anderson is starting this month and will be at the second meeting of each month.

**REPORT: New River Community Action – Terry Smusz and Gena Rhea**

**SUMMARY:** New River Community Action is an organization that helps families become self-reliant through a variety of programs designed to alleviate poverty. The Executive Officer, Terry Smusz provided a report on their progress and plans for the coming year. Gina Rhea also spoke as the City of Radford representative to the Board.

**SUBJECT: Resolution – New River Gardens Apt I**

**SUMMARY:** Renovations of New River Garden Apartments located on Jeffries Drive is planned for later this year. The owner, GEM Properties, is planning a substantial renovation of the units that include new roofing, painting, windows, parking area upgrades, as well as kitchen, bathroom and HVAC improvements. Jen Surber, presented an overview of the project and clarified that the funding is through VHDA not VHCD. The development is recognized as a revitalization area, but required a formal local resolution for the scoring criteria by VHDA.

**ACTION:** Mr. Marshall moved to approve and adopt the resolution as presented, Dr. Harshberger, seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

**SUBJECT: Resolution – Amend FY 2018 Rate Resolution**

**SUMMARY:** The F.Y. 2018 Budget is supported with utility rates and fees that are adopted by Resolution with the annual budget. An amendment to the Resolution is necessary to accommodate fee changes related to EMS. The amendments are as follows:

- Increase transport fees for Basic Life Support from \$450 to \$550
- Addition of Basic Life Support charges for non-transport responses for testing and monitoring are needed at \$110
- Increase the Advanced Life Support charge for non-transport responses for EKG, testing and monitoring to \$210

These fees are based on response expenses, are competitive with surrounding agencies and within the collections permitted by Medicare and private insurance companies.

**ACTION:** Mr. Gropman moved to approve and adopt the resolution, as presented Mr. Marshall seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

**SUBJECT: Resolution – Employee Retirement Incentive Plan**

**SUMMARY:** In June 2017, an Employee Retirement Incentive Program” was offered to employees who qualified for retirement as of June 1, 2017. The program provided “Health Insurance” coverage only. The Resolution expands the program to include dental coverage under the same conditions as provided under the original program. Program coverage is for up to five years, employee only and for the seven employees who took the incentive. Dental insurance is through Delta Dental and is the “low” plan option.

**ACTION:** Mr. Marshall moved to approve and adopt the resolution as presented, Dr. Harshberger seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

John McCandlish: Thanked Council for their service to the City. Mr. McCandlish stated he is not sure, how long cutting costs can continue and if it will serve our City well. Radford has quality services and citizens should be willing to pay for the costs associated with those services. A real estate tax increase might be necessary to maintain services and increase revenue as needed to fund the expenses for the City; it is the responsible thing to do.

Mr. Alderman thanked Mayor Brown for his years of service to Radford. Mr. Alderman gave special thanks for Council keeping all citizens in mind when making the budget and for always taking care of Radford’s children. Mr. Alderman stated some facts that show how hard it is for Radford to provide services and keep a balanced budget, but gave thanks to Council for always being accessible and thinking of everyone when setting rates and making budget decisions.

Chief Goodman read letters from Mrs. Hayes’ third grade class, which thanked the Police Department for their selfless service to our community.

Chris Smith came to express concern about the increased fees for EMS and worries about the impact that will have on students and citizens. He does not want anyone to question whether he or she should call 911 because of fees. Mayor Brown replied the we will look into your concerns, get your name and address and respond.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**SUBJECT: Ordinance # 1699 Zoning Amendment to Conservation District**

**SUMMARY:** The Planning Commission requested that section 120.1 -23 (1) of the Zoning Ordinance be amended to permit “Recreational Vehicle Parks” within the Conservation District with an approved Special Use Permit. The amendment would complement outdoor development planning and tourism efforts. A Public Hearing was held on January 8, 2018 with no comments. The Planning Commission considered the Ordinance at its meeting and public hearing on February 5, 2018. The Planning Commission approved the Ordinance and has recommended City Council approval.

**ACTION:** Mr. Gropman moved to approve Ordinance #1699 on the first reading, Dr. Harshberger, seconded the motion. The second reading will be held on February 26, 2018.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown  
NAYES: None-0

**SUBJECT: Ordinance # 1700 Fire Truck Leasing**

**SUMMARY:** City Council authorized the City to purchase a new fire truck at their August 8, 2016 meeting. The truck has a 75’ ladder and 750 gallons of water storage capacity. The scheduled purchase replaces a twenty-four year old pumper truck and is essential to fire protection and maintaining a strong ISO rating. The truck was ordered in September 2016 from Atlantic Emergency Solutions. Radford University contributed \$300,000 towards the down payment on the \$882,987 cost. The old truck had a \$22,000 trade-in value. The remaining balance was programmed in the budget as a capital lease at a rate of 3.85% for a term of 9 years. The finance company, Wells Fargo, requires a Resolution to complete the lease application. The truck is expected to provide 25-30 years of service.

**ACTION:** Dr. Harshberger moved to approve Ordinance #1700 on the first reading, Mr. Marshall seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown  
NAYES: None-0

**ACTION:** Mr. Gropman moved to approve and adopt Ordinance #1700 on the second reading, Mr. Marshall seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown  
NAYES: None-0

**SUBJECT: Request for Joint Public Hearing – Special Use Permit**

**SUMMARY:** The Planning Commission received a request from Rohit Sansoa to convert the second level of his property at 212 Third Avenue into apartments. The property is zoned B-3,

Business District, and requires a special use permit for residential uses above the first floor. The building is currently vacant and was the location of former Health Department. The main floor would be for a commercial use, as required.

**ACTION:** Dr. Harshberger moved to schedule a Joint Public Hearing with the Planning Commission on March 12, 2018 Mr. Gropman, seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

**CITY MANAGERS COMMENTS:**

Mr. Ridpath stated the Commissioner of Revenue's Office has a Small Business Development Start up computer in their office and the City is hoping to get one set up in the Library. The City is partnering with the Regional Commission and the other New River Valley localities for a Go Virginia grant to have the Small Business Development Center return to Radford. The City is also working with the Regional Commission to do a housing study for Radford.

**CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Mr. Turk said that today has been a good say looking at different schools and he looks forward to tomorrow.

Mr. Marshall stated that over the last month he has had conversations with the police department and wants to propose a change to the work rules.

**ACTION:** Mr. Marshall made a motion to make an overall change in policy to move officers from the 171 rule to the 160 rule, effective May 15, 2018, Mr. Turk seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

Mr. Marshall stated that he knows there might be a slight uptick in overtime costs due to the change, but believes this will make officers pay more competitive and he personally would support additionally funding if he sees an uptick in those costs. Mr. Marshall also stated that he wants this to be as budget neutral as possible.

There was discussion by City Council members, Chief Goodman and City Manager, Mr. Ridpath. Chief Goodman and Mr. Ridpath stated there will be an uptick in costs but they will know more in the next 30 days and this will do more to fairly compensate officers.

Mr. Gropman addressed the Roanoke Times Article and stated Council is working on a course, correct for Radford in terms of Economic Development and Radford will never revert to a town status. "Mt colleagues on Council and many in the entire City are working very hard so that reversion will not be an issue in Radford's futures. I have no doubt the wind will be behind us and fill our sails once again.

Dr. Harshberger stated he is going to give a factoid at each meeting and this meeting factoid is Radford's school system graduated 96.7 percent of students, which is the highest in the state.

Mr. Marshall addressed the Roanoke Times article stating the article had political motivation and Radford would never revert to a town. The budget has been strong, the City has built reserves for the tough times, and while we have had to use those, he believes things are starting to look up this year. Mr. Marshall stated that as council members, they have to make decisions for everyone not just for one group and while they might make decisions not everyone agrees with, they are honest decisions. Mr. Marshall ended by saying that Radford City is strong and we are a proud group of bobcats, the future is looking bright.

Mayor Brown stated the Roanoke Times article was an unfair depiction of Radford and some basic editing would have gone a long way to correct false statements. Radford has not raised real estate tax since 2008 and it might be time to do something about it, it has an impact on the overall budget. Mayor Brown also stated that articles and social media posts have impacts on attracting businesses to Radford and people need to be aware of the impact of what they are saying. Mayor Brown also stated no one comes to budget meetings and citizens can come and get involved in the making of the 6 million dollar budget.

Mr. Marshall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m., seconded by Dr. Harshberger.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

Jennifer G. Wilder, Clerk of Council