

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE WYTHEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2004, AT 7:00 P.M.**

Members present: Trenton G. Crewe, Jr., Jacqueline K. King, John W. Jones, Jr., William B. Weisiger, H. Judson Lambert

Members absent: None

Others present: Town Manager C. Wayne Sutherland, Jr., Town Clerk Sharon P. Hackler, Town Attorney Robert P. Kaase, Patrol Officer Chris Irvin, Stephanie Porter-Nichols with Wytheville Enterprise, Allison Irvin, Brent Dicker, Bill French, Joe Leagans, Dale Waddell, Ruth Bowman, Casey Newman, Jonathon Bridges, Sherry Cressell, Lynn Lyons, Nicole Rakes, Mary Johnson, Crystal Austin, Kim Bentley, Alice Crigger, Kathy Whalen, Kim Hite, Stacy E. Thomas, Agnes Eades, Jennifer Jones

RE: CALL TO ORDER, QUORUM, INVOCATION, PLEDGE

Mayor Crewe called the meeting to order and established that a quorum of Council members was present. The invocation was given by Councilman Jones followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice-Mayor King.

RE: CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Crewe presented the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of October 25, 2004. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilman Weisiger to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of October 25, 2004. Mayor Crewe inquired if there is any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: Trenton G. Crewe, Jr., Jacqueline K. King, John W. Jones, Jr., William B. Weisiger, H. Judson Lambert. Against: None.

RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD

Mayor Crewe advised that he thinks most of the audience is composed of the Leadership Development program from the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce, and the Council is glad to have the participants in attendance. He inquired if there are persons present who wish to address the Council during Citizens' Period. Mayor Crewe noted that the Council always has a Citizens' Period on their agenda, and the Council will be glad to hear from anyone who would like to address them. There being no one who desired to address Council during Citizens' Period, Mayor Crewe proceeded with the agenda.

RE: OLD BUSINESS

Under Old Business, Town Manager Sutherland reported the following:

1. The Blue Ridge Regional Travel Association had their annual meeting this year, and Jeanette Wood was awarded the individual award for the year for her efforts in tourism. Mrs. Wood is to be congratulated for this award.
2. In terms of other tourism related announcements, the Town learned today that the Virginia Tourism Commission has released its list of the top 15 tourism communities in Virginia. This was based on exit interviews, etc. that they did with tourists who traveled through the State. They surveyed 5,000 people, and they named 15 cities as the top tourism cities in Virginia. Roanoke and Wytheville were the only areas west of Charlottesville that were on this list, so it was quite an accomplishment.
3. In their first month of operation, the Regional Visitors Center had 2,023 visitors during the month of October. Town Manager Sutherland noted that he was not sure that the Visitors Center signs were up for the full month of October. Mayor Crewe stated he did not think the signs were up for the full month of October.
4. The Virginia Municipal League Legislative Day will be February 3, 2005. This will provide the Council with ample time to check their calendars to see if they would like to attend this meeting.
5. Mayor Crewe stated he is glad to announce that as a part of the tourism conference, the Town of Wytheville was awarded the Blue Ridge Travel Association

Government Award for the year 2004. They cited the fact that the Blue Ridge Travel Association has an almost 20 year history of bringing businesses and communities together as regional partners, and Wytheville was one of the founding members of the organization and continues to be a partner in those efforts. He noted that in 2000, it became apparent a new Regional Visitors Center would be needed, and Wytheville filled that need and dedicated the beautiful, new Visitors Center that has already welcomed several thousand visitors as everyone just heard. Mayor Crewe advised that they go on in the quote with the information that states, "The Town of Wytheville has been an excellent example of being a regional partner. Through the years, they have allowed Town staff to be active members of the association and contributed financially each year to memberships and sponsorships, and the latest undertaking being the Visitors Center. Partnering for the creation of a new Regional Visitors Center has meant several hundred thousand dollars in financial commitments for the construction and continued operation as well as countless hours of staff time in the organizational management of the facility." Mayor Crewe summarized that the Blue Ridge Travel Association presented the Town of Wytheville with a 2004 Government Award. He noted he has the plaque if anyone would like to see it, and Town staff will be displaying it in the very near future. Mayor Crewe summarized that this is another award that recognizes the Town's tourism efforts.

RE: BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Vice-Mayor King, reporting for the Budget and Finance Committee, stated that over the past couple of months, the Committee has discussed the Town's current water and sewer charges, particularly, with reference to the Council's action during the budget development process where they noted their intent to impose a 3 percent per year water/sewer rate increase to be implemented over the upcoming five years. Vice-Mayor King indicated that as the Committee has noted several times in their recent reports, the improvements made to this system and the increase in operational expenses have resulted in lack of revenue to adequately support the system. She stated that to address this issue, the Committee now believes it is required that the rate increase to be effective January 1, 2005, must be more than the originally anticipated increase. Vice-Mayor King remarked that as such, the Budget and Finance Committee would recommend the following increases be approved by the Council. She stated that first, effective January 1, 2005, the Committee would propose that charges for consumption of water and sewer be increased by 10 percent. Vice-Mayor King noted that they would hope that the Town can impose future rate increases so that the Town can continue to honor the anticipated 15 percent rate increase over the next five-year period. She explained that obviously, the Committee will have a better picture of revenue and expenses later in the budget year. Vice-Mayor King stated that secondly, the Committee would propose that all water and sewer connection fees be increased by \$750 for each of the categories within those schedules. She noted that these fees, of course, would only be applicable to new connections to the system. Vice-Mayor King advised that as a part of the connection fee, the Committee also would recommend that for developments where multiple dwelling units will be located that there be imposed a \$2,500 availability fee for each unit beyond the first dwelling unit. She noted that under this arrangement, the developers will determine if they would prefer to install a master meter for the entire development project or if they would prefer to have individual meters to all dwelling units beyond one. Vice-Mayor King stated that these fees are equitable because an additional dwelling unit places the same burden on the Town's system as does an individual household, and, necessarily, needs to contribute to the expenses associated with the system. She noted that the Committee would recommend that the increases for connections and the imposition of the availability fee be made effective December 1, 2004. Vice-Mayor King advised that thirdly, the Committee would propose that fees for "off and on" charges be doubled. She noted that very often, these off and on activities are conducted after normal working hours, and the current fees do not even cover the additional payroll involved for performing these activities. Vice-Mayor King stated that likewise, the Committee would recommend that these fees be increased on December 1, 2004. She remarked that the Committee would note that the Town is desirous of maintaining its utility fees at the lowest cost possible. Vice-Mayor King advised, however, that as everyone knows, the cost of construction, materials and labor continues to escalate, and, while the Town wants to operate its system as frugally as possible, the Town must generate sufficient revenues to meet its expenses. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilman Jones to increase the charges for water and sewer by 10 percent each effective January 1, 2005; to increase the water and sewer connection fees by \$750 each and to impose a \$2,500 availability fee for multiple dwelling units for each unit beyond the first dwelling unit to be effective December 1, 2004; and to double the current fees for off and on charges effective December 1, 2004. Mayor Crewe noted if he understands correctly, the motion has three parts and that January 1, 2005, consumption fees increase by 10 percent for water and sewer each, the second part is that connection fees for both water and sewer increase by \$750 each on December 1, 2004, and that there be a \$2,500 availability fee for multiple dwellings effective December 1, 2004, and the third part would be to double on

and off charges effective December 1, 2004. Mayor Crewe inquired if there is any discussion on the motion. Councilman Weisiger inquired as to the current amount of the on and off charges. Town Manager Sutherland answered that it depends on the time of day. He noted that in the daytime, it is \$10, and after hours, it is \$20. He noted there are a couple of variations, but he believes the Council is discussing going from \$10 to \$20 for the daytime, and from \$20 to \$40 for after hours. Mayor Crewe inquired if there is any other discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: Trenton G. Crewe, Jr., Jacqueline K. King, John W. Jones, Jr., William B. Weisiger, H. Judson Lambert. Against: None. Mayor Crewe noted that these fees will become effective December 1, 2004, and January 1, 2005.

Vice-Mayor King also reported that the Town has received a letter from the Agape Food Pantry seeking the Council to exonerate the real estate taxes for the building they occupy on West Main Street. She remarked that the Agape Food Pantry provides food items to needy families and operates almost completely on local donations. Vice-Mayor King noted that the building they occupy is being donated for their use without any rental payments. She advised that the Committee believes that the Agape Food Pantry serves a worthwhile purpose in the community, and it would be the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee that the Council make a donation to the Agape Food Pantry in the amount equivalent to the real estate taxation. Vice-Mayor King stated that the amount of the Agape Food Pantry's real estate taxes for this year is \$76.95. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilman Jones to make a donation in the amount of \$76.95 to the Agape Food Pantry, which is the amount of their real estate taxation. Mayor Crewe inquired if there is any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: Trenton G. Crewe, Jr., Jacqueline K. King, John W. Jones, Jr., William B. Weisiger, H. Judson Lambert. Against: None. A copy of the Budget and Finance Committee report is attached and made part of these minutes. ([Attachment](#)).

RE: PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT

Councilman Lambert, reporting for the Public Works Committee, reported that recently, the Committee received an inquiry seeking to restrict parking on Main Street between 5th and 7th Streets to a 2-hour limit. He noted that currently, the 2-hour parking limits on Main Street extend from 6th Street to 5th Street. Councilman Lambert advised that the Committee has reviewed this inquiry and finds that virtually all of the commercial establishments on East Main Street between 5th and 7th Streets have off-street parking facilities. He indicated that there are also several residences along Main Street who do not have any off-street parking. He advised that in reviewing the matter, the Committee does not believe that current conditions warrant these new restrictions, and, therefore, it would be the recommendation of the Committee that the Council not restrict parking in this area at the present time. Councilman Lambert stated that the Committee does think, however, that commercial establishments in this area would be well served to install directional signs noting that they have off-street parking available to their customers. Mayor Crewe noted that this basically maintains the status quo, and he does not think the Council needs to vote on anything because the Council would not take action except recommending that the business owners erect their directional signs. He inquired if the Committee would like to send a letter or take some action in that regard. Town Manager Sutherland noted that Town staff will send a letter to the business owners. Mayor Crewe summarized that there is no action required of Council unless someone disagrees.

Councilman Lambert also reported that at the last meeting of Council, a concerned citizen inquired about the practice of the Town to dispose of brush and leaves collected in the pick up programs by burning these materials at the old landfill. He stated the Committee has begun a review of the Town's current practices and, has, in fact, been making contacts with other communities to determine the procedures they use in the disposal of brush and leaves. Councilman Lambert indicated that thus far, the Committee has found that communities are doing a variety of things, though many communities continue to dispose of their brush by the use of fire. He stated there are a number of alternatives available, such as chipping the materials, mixing chippings with sewage sludge, creating mulch, etc., but all of these are relatively expensive to operate and would require additional equipment and labor. Councilman Lambert noted that the Town has also been made aware of certain devices that are used where burning programs are conducted. He stated this equipment essentially involves the use of a rather large fan unit that intensifies the burning of the brush to the point where it minimizes any smoke that is generated by the burning. Councilman Lambert indicated that the Committee has asked the Town's Public Works Department to gather information about this type of equipment. He stated the Committee would note, also, that the Town plans to contact other communities, but has found that some communities limit the amount of brush they collect while some communities impose a charge for the collection of brush. Councilman Lambert noted that the Committee thinks the Town's brush/leaf collection program is one of the most valued

services to the citizens and would not want, in any way, to limit this program. He stated that in any event, the Public Works Committee will continue to study the alternatives that the Town has available for the disposal of brush and leaves. Mayor Crewe noted that at this point, the matter is under study and no action is required of the Council. A copy of the Public Works Committee report is attached and made part of these minutes. ([Attachment](#)).

RE: APPOINTMENT – RECREATION COMMISSION YOUTH MEMBER

Mayor Crewe stated the next agenda item is consideration of the recommendation of the Recreation Commission regarding the appointment of a youth member for the 2004-05 school year. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilman Weisiger to appoint Mr. Cameron Peel as the youth member to the Recreation Commission for the 2004-05 school year. Mayor Crewe inquired if there is any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: Trenton G. Crewe, Jr., Jacqueline K. King, John W. Jones, Jr., William B. Weisiger, H. Judson Lambert. Against: None.

RE: APPOINTMENTS - RECREATION COMMISSION

Mayor Crewe stated the next agenda item is the notification of appointments to the Wytheville Recreation Commission to fill the expiring terms of Mr. Alan Wilder, Mr. Danny Sowers, and Ms. Kelly Sisti whose terms expire December 31, 2004. He noted the Council can defer the appointments, and the Council will receive the recommendation from the Recreation Commission at a later time. Mayor Crewe advised that all three members are eligible for reappointment. He noted that unless someone wants to move quickly, he thinks the Council should await recommendation from the Recreation Commission. Vice-Mayor King stated she agreed. Mayor Crewe noted that this was for informational purposes, and no action will be taken at this meeting.

RE: APPOINTMENTS – WYTHEVILLE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Mayor Crewe stated the next agenda item is the notification of appointments to the Wytheville Industrial Development Authority to fill the expiring terms of Mr. Lewis Shelton and Mr. Jimmy Smith whose terms expire December 12, 2004. He noted that Mr. Smith is eligible for reappointment, but Mr. Shelton is not eligible. Mayor Crewe advised that anyone who is interested needs to submit an application for consideration. He noted that the Council can make the appointments at this meeting or they can wait until the last meeting of November or the first meeting of December if they do not have any action that needs to be taken. Mayor Crewe reiterated that their terms expire December 12, 2004. He inquired if the Council desired to take any action on these appointments at this meeting or defer the appointments. Vice-Mayor King stated the Council could also wait to make these appointments. Councilman Lambert stated he agreed, and that other people may come forth who desire to serve on the Authority. Mayor Crewe noted that there are no motions for nominations, so this does not require action at this meeting.

RE: CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY

Mayor Crewe stated the next agenda item is to set a date for a public hearing to consider renewing the Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity during 2005 for Premier Taxi Service, LLC for the operation of taxicabs, and LifeCare Medical Transports, Incorporated, Blue Ridge Medical Transport, Incorporated, and Guardian Ambulance Service for the operation of public vehicles. He noted the Town can meet the advertising requirements and conduct the public hearing at the December 13, 2004, meeting. Mayor Crewe inquired if anyone has any problems with holding this public hearing at the December 13, 2004, meeting. It was the consensus of the Council to schedule a public hearing for the December 13, 2004, Council meeting to consider renewing the Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity during 2005 for Premier Taxi Service, LLC for the operation of taxicabs, and LifeCare Medical Transports, Incorporated, Blue Ridge Medical Transport, Incorporated, and Guardian Ambulance Service for the operation of public vehicles.

RE: HACKLER MASTER MUNICIPAL CLERK DESIGNATION

Mayor Crewe advised that he has one announcement that he would like to make sure the Council hears about. He noted he has received a letter that Town Clerk Sharon P. Hackler has, through the International Institute of Municipal Clerks, obtained the designation as a Master Municipal Clerk. Mayor Crewe stated that there are only 333 such clerks in the entire world, and he has the information about the courses that she had to take and what she went through. He noted that she has now completed the third level of the International Institute of Municipal

Clerks Master Municipal Clerks Academy and has put forth exemplary performance as a municipal clerk at the local, state, national, and global level. Mayor Crewe indicated that in order to obtain this, Town Clerk Hackler had to demonstrate her knowledge, abilities, and professional accomplishments, and be proactive in problem solving, planning, communicating, facilitating, and otherwise work effectively as a vital member of the local management team. Mayor Crewe noted that on behalf of Council, he would like to commend Town Clerk Hackler. He stated that the Council appreciates all of her hard work, and her efforts have paid off. He noted he thinks Town Clerk Hackler needs to be congratulated. Vice-Mayor King noted that the Council is proud of Town Clerk Hackler.

RE: MOUNT ROGERS MEETING

Vice-Mayor King advised that she attended a Mount Rogers meeting in Marion last Thursday evening, and the purpose of the meeting was to select a new executive director to replace Mr. Tom Taylor. She stated that Mr. David Barrett was appointed as the new executive director.

RE: VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

Vice-Mayor King noted that she would like to remind everyone to come to the Veterans Day Ceremony on Thursday, November 11, at 11:00 a.m. at Withers Park. She advised that if it rains, the ceremony will be held at the Wytheville Community Center. Mayor Crewe advised that he hopes the ceremony will be held outside.

RE: WYVE RADIO

Councilman Weisiger inquired as to what time he had to be at the radio station. Town Clerk Hackler noted that he would need to be at the radio station at 8:00 a.m. Mayor Crewe explained that Councilman Weisiger would need to arrive at 8:00 a.m. in order to be on the air at 8:15 a.m., and Mr. Gordon would open the door at 8:00 a.m. Vice-Mayor King indicated that everyone that has been on the radio has done well. Mayor Crewe remarked that he thinks the Town employees who have participated have done well.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Crewe inquired if there are any questions from the participants in the Chamber of Commerce Leadership Development program. There being none, he thanked them for attending the meeting. There being no further business to be discussed, a motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to adjourn the meeting. (7:25 p.m.).

Trenton G. Crewe, Jr., Mayor

Sharon P. Hackler, MMC, Clerk of Council

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

NOVEMBER 8, 2004

1. Over the past couple of months, our Committee has discussed our current water and sewer charges, particularly, with reference to our action during the budget development process where we noted our intent to impose a 3 percent per year water/sewer rate increase to be implemented over the upcoming five years. As we have noted several times in our recent reports, the improvements made to this system and the increase in operational expenses have resulted in lack of revenue to adequately support the system. To address this issue, we now believe that it is required that the rate increase to be effective January 1, 2005, must be more than the originally anticipated increase. As such, our Committee would recommend the following increases be approved by the Council. First, effective January 1, 2005, we would propose that charges for consumption of water and sewer be increased by 10 percent. We would hope that we can impose future rate increases so that we can continue to honor the anticipated 15 percent rate increase over the next five-year period. Obviously, we will have a better picture of revenue and expenses later in the budget year. Secondly, we would propose that all water and sewer connection fees be increased by \$750 for each of the categories within those schedules. These fees, of course, would only be applicable to new connections to the system. As a part of the connection fee, we also would recommend that for developments where multiple dwelling units will be

located that there be imposed a \$2,500 availability fee for each unit beyond the first dwelling unit. Under this arrangement, the developers will determine if they would prefer to install a master meter for the entire development project or if they would prefer to have individual meters to all dwelling units beyond one. These fees are equitable because an additional dwelling unit places the same burden on our system as does an individual household, and, necessarily, needs to contribute to the expenses associated with the system. We would recommend that the increases for connections and the imposition of the availability fee be made effective December 1, 2004. Thirdly, we would propose that fees for "off and on" charges be doubled. Very often, these off and on activities are conducted after normal working hours, and the current fees do not even cover the additional payroll involved for performing these activities. Likewise, we would recommend that these fees be increased on December 1, 2004.

We would note that we are desirous of maintaining our utility fees at the lowest cost possible. However, as everyone knows, the cost of construction, materials and labor continues to escalate, and, while we want to operate our system as frugally as possible, we must generate sufficient revenues to meet our expenses.

2. We have received a letter from the Agape Food Pantry seeking the Council to exonerate the real estate taxes for the building they occupy on West Main

Street. The Agape Food Pantry provides food items to needy families and operates almost completely on local donations. The building that they occupy is being donated for their use without any rental payments. We believe that the Agape Food Pantry serves a worthwhile purpose in the community, and it would be the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee that we make a donation to the Agape Food Pantry in the amount equivalent to the real estate taxation. The amount of their real estate taxes for this year is \$76.95.

Jacqueline K. King

John W. Jones, Jr.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT

NOVEMBER 8, 2004

1. Recently, our Committee received an inquiry seeking to restrict parking on Main Street between 5th and 7th Streets to a 2-hour limit. Currently, the 2-hour parking limits on Main Street extend from 6th Street to 5th Street. We have reviewed this inquiry and find that virtually all of the commercial establishments on East Main Street between 5th and 7th Streets have off-street parking facilities. There are also several residences along Main Street who do not have any off-street parking. In reviewing the matter, we do not believe that current conditions warrant these new restrictions, and, therefore, it would be the recommendation of our Committee that we not restrict parking in this area at the present time. We do think, however, that commercial establishments in this area would be well served to install directional signs noting that they have off-street parking available to their customers.
2. At the last meeting of Council, a concerned citizen inquired about the practice of the Town to dispose of brush and leaves collected in the pick up programs by burning these materials at the old landfill. Our Committee has begun a review of our current practices and has, in fact, been making contacts with other communities to determine the procedures they use in the disposal of brush and leaves. Thus far, we have found that communities are doing a variety of things, though many communities continue to dispose of their brush by the use of fire. There are a number of alternatives available, such as

chipping the materials, mixing chippings with sewage sludge, creating mulch, etc., but all of these are relatively expensive to operate and would require additional equipment and labor. We also have been made aware of certain devices that are used where burning programs are conducted. This equipment essentially involves the use of a rather large fan unit that intensifies the burning of the brush to the point where it minimizes any smoke that is generated by the burning. We have asked our Public Works Department to gather information about this type of equipment. We would note, also, that we plan to contact other communities, but have found that some communities limit the amount of brush that they collect while some communities impose a charge for the collection of brush. We think our brush/leaf collection program is one of the most valued services to our citizens and would not want, in any way, to limit this program. In any event, our Committee will continue to study the alternatives that we have available for the disposal of brush and leaves.

William B. Weisiger

H. Judson Lambert