

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

July 3, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Town Council of Drakes Branch was held on Monday, July 3, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, located at 4801 Drakes Main Street, Drakes Branch, Virginia.

Mayor Phillip D. Jackson called the meeting to order and Mary Sands, Clerk recorded the minutes. Members present were as follows: Deborah Kennedy (entered the meeting at 7:01 p.m.), Vice-Mayor Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson were all present at 7:00 p.m. Absent: James K. Gregory. Peery Well Sr. delivered the invocation and Mayor Jackson led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Eugene Wells Jr., to approve the minutes to the last Regular Meeting, Public Hearing & Special Meeting, was passed on a voice vote of 5 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Account Balances with The Bank of Charlotte County were as follows:

General Fund	\$686,750.82
Water/Sewer	124,576.56
Debt Service Reserve	42,936.36
TOTAL	\$854,263.74

On a motion by Deborah Kennedy, seconded by Noah Davis, to pay the bills, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance – Mayor Jackson said they are still looking into the LGIP Program.

Water/Sewer – Peery Wells Sr. reported that the town did get a meter in at the sawmill and the fire hydrant replaced. Mayor Jackson reported other work that was done to include water/sewer work to Doug Wilmouth’s shop, water connection to the Westpoint Stevens’ sewer pump station and that water lines will be installed to the Saxkey and Bob White pump stations in the near future. He also said that a fire hydrant on mill hill will be replaced with one we already have.

Streets – Charles Errickson reported that the Proctor Street sign at the intersection at Isabella is unreadable and the reflection is not working. The Clerk will report this to VDOT. Peery Wells Jr. reported a crosswalk sign on Proctor Street that’s laying on the ground. Deborah Kennedy reported the streetlight that is still going off and on at the Baptist Church.

Museum – Deborah Kennedy said the museum is still leaking form the very top where the vegetation and gutters are, which is causing water on the floor.

Buildings & Grounds – Mayor Jackson said he and the clerk spoke to the company that Mr. Gregory contacted about the lock, and since he isn’t at the meeting, it was tabled until next month for further discussion. Deborah Kennedy said the closet is still being locked when access is needed. After discussion, it was decided to have the town disable the lock.

Personnel – The Committee met with the personnel, with no issues reported.

Grant – Mayor Jackson said the town will have a conference call with the lawyer and CRC about some of the title searches for the FEMA/VDEM grant project. He said there are liens on the Bunn property

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and none on Mr. Mittleman's or Jimmy C. Hudson's. He and Noah will meet with them to offer purchasing each of their buildings/land. He said Charlie's grant was approved for police supplies. He also reported that Fortiline will be coming this week to deliver the water meters which will be stored in the old Municipal Building and a kick-off meeting will be held later this month. An informational sheet will be hand delivered to each water resident so they will be informed of what is being done. Mr. Jackson also said he talked to the newspapers and they will run this as a story as opposed to an ad, so that will save the town some money.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Already previously addressed.

NEW BUSINESS:

On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Peery Wells Sr., to allow Ari Jones to use the Municipal Building, July 29th for a book signing, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

Mayor Jackson asked the clerk to read the bids received for repairing the Ladies Club Building and Museum Building. The town received a bid for the repair of each building from one person. Mayor Jackson said he sent out the bid request to about six people, and no one else responded. After discussion, Council felt that the town should advertise this in both newspapers for two weeks, to see if we would receive additional bidders, with the deadline being August 4th at 2:30.

On a motion by Peery Wells Sr., seconded by Charles Errickson, to allow Mayor Jackson to explore the feasibility of having an employee retirement plan, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

Mayor Jackson passed around the written request from Garland Hamlett Jr. concerning the Hometown Heroes Banner Program. There was discussion of the past issues with the town's banners that were put up and due to them tearing, brackets breaking, getting hit by trucks etc., the council voted to take them down. However, the council felt that more information is needed from Mr. Hamlett, so this was turned over to the Street Committee to talk with him and come back next month with a report.

Mayor Jackson explained the air conditioning issue with the mini-splits units that had a surge and damaged them. To repair them, add a surge and add an annual fee for the service warranty to have them inspected, would cost a total of \$1,290.43. He said the parts are under warranty but not the labor, but the representative has to verify the warranty with the company. Mr. Jackson also asked Noah if he thought the Fire Department would agree to paying ½ of the annual fee for the inspection and he said he didn't think it would be a problem. On a motion by Deborah Kennedy, seconded by Peery Wells Sr., to get this fixed, and include the 1-year service warranty, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

Deborah Kennedy discussed the pavilion saying if the town employees will measure the distance between the poles at the pavilion, the Farmers Market will purchase coverings if the town will put them up for them to use in the winter.

On a motion by Peery Wells Sr., seconded by Deborah Kennedy, to table the Planning Commission's proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance, to give everyone time to review it, and make recommendations for the next meeting with the updated revisions that were discussed during this meeting (which the Planning Commission will provide to the town council), was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah

Kennedy, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

CLOSED SESSION:

On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Deborah Kennedy, that the Drakes Branch Town Council convene in closed session under **Section 2.2-3711(A)(3) and (A)(19)** of the Code of Virginia for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

RETURN TO OPEN MEETING:

On a motion by Deborah Kennedy, seconded by Peery Wells Sr., to Return to Open Session, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

On a motion by Deborah Kennedy, seconded by Noah Davis, to adopt (Exhibit A), was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Peery Wells Sr., and passed on a voice vote of 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.



Phillip D. Jackson, Mayor



Mary Sands, Clerk

EXHIBIT A

Certification Resolution of Closed Session

WHEREAS, this Drakes Branch Town Council convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provision of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Drakes Branch Town Council after such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Drakes Branch Town Council hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act were heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting to which this certification applies; and (2) only such public business which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting to which this certification applies.