

## COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**September 5, 2023**

Due to the Labor Day Holiday, the Regular Meeting of the Town Council of Drakes Branch was held on Tuesday, September 5, 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, James K. Gregory, Vice-Mayor Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Mayor Jackson delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Deborah Kennedy, to approve the minutes to the last Regular Meeting was passed on a voice vote of 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

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

General Fund	\$518,298.25
Water/Sewer	177,813.18
Debt Service Reserve	42,947.12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$739,058.55</b>

On a motion by Eugene Wells Jr., seconded by Noah Davis to pay the bills, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, James K. Gregory, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Finance – Mayor Jackson said the town has opened up an account through the LGIP Program and deposited \$140,012.12. (This was from the town's two CD's). He said he is looking at putting in more money especially some of the SLFRF funds, but we will add as much as we can to get as much interest as possible.

Water/Sewer – Peery Wells Sr. said James Webb told him they are working on the new meters on Marshall Street today and may finish all the ones in town next week. Mayor Jackson said they will probably come back and do the odd size meters later, and he said Fortiline will have a meeting with us on the 15<sup>th</sup> of this month.

Streets – Charles Errickson said he spoke with Butch Hamlett who had requested the banners, but provided him no additional information other than that the town could call other localities. On a motion by Deborah Kennedy, seconded by Charles Errickson, that we don't install the banners we discussed, was passed on a voice vote of 6 Ayes, 0 Nays. Charles went on to say that he will take pictures of the street signs that are not readable so they can be reported.

Museum – Mayor Jackson said the contractor plans to start working on the museum next week.

Buildings & Grounds – Eugene Wells Jr. said the committee looked at the facilities and rental fees to make recommendations for increases for renting the Municipal Building and the Pavilion. He reviewed the prices and discussion followed. It was stated that the Amateur Radio Club would no longer be exempt from paying and the Bloodmobile will continue to be exempt. On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Eugene Wells Jr., to accept the prices as presented, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, James K. Gregory Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote. It was recommended that a contract be brought

back for the council to review for renters to sign. As stated last month, all the changes will be effective Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> of next year.

Personnel – The Committee met with the personnel, saying issues will be discussed later in Closed Session.

Grant – Mayor Jackson said that Giles is working on the sign for our new building and he explained where it will be placed. He said once we close on that grant and get the money from that, we can deposit it into the LGIP account. On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Peery Wells Sr., to move forward with purchasing The Charlotte Gazette building to include the closing costs, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, James K. Gregory Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote. Mayor Jackson said they will then clean that building out and keep what we want out of the old Municipal Building, auction off what we don't want, so it can be demolished hopefully in January. He recommended that where the hill is, to be used as green space with flowers and trees planted and landscaping done at no cost hopefully through another grant that we could apply for.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

The Planning Commission's proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance was reviewed by Council, with recommended changes discussed. This will be revisited by the Commission.

On a motion by Charles Errickson, seconded by Peery Wells Jr., to pay for the study for getting into the VA Retirement System, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, James K. Gregory Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

The Clerk explained that she and Mayor Jackson have been reviewing the billing software proposals from three different companies and they are both overwhelmed by the information as presented. After further discussion, she said she will send all the information to each of them and Roscoe Eubanks Jr., who was in the audience and felt he could provide some information. She will also reach out to Fortiline for further possible clarification as well. Due to the need to select a company as soon as possible, on a motion by Deborah Kennedy, seconded by Eugene Wells Jr., that the Finance Committee meet and the Water/Sewer Committee meet (each separately) and they evaluate and select a company and approve it, so the town can proceed, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, James K. Gregory Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Deborah Kennedy, to allow April Adams to use the Municipal Building, as per her letter for a birthday party, was passed on a voice vote of 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

On a motion by Deborah Kennedy, seconded by Peery Wells Sr., to donate \$100 to the Charlotte County Christmas Parents Program, was passed on a voice vote of 6 Ayes, 0 Nays.

Mayor Jackson gave an update from Rogers Air Conditioning on the units in the building needing repair.

#### **CLOSED SESSION:**

On a motion by Deborah Kennedy, seconded by Noah Davis, that the Drakes Branch Town Council convene in closed session under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1) to discuss personnel concerning

hiring, and pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(3) for discussion or consideration of the disposition 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, and pursuant to 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

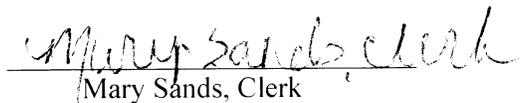
**RETURN TO OPEN MEETING:**

On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Deborah Kennedy to Return to Open Session, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: Ayes: Deborah Kennedy, James K. Gregory, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 6 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, James K. Gregory, Peery Wells Sr., Noah Davis, Eugene Wells Jr. & Charles Errickson. Nays: None. Motion carried 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, by a unanimous vote.

On a motion by Noah Davis, seconded by Deborah Kennedy, and passed on a voice vote of 6 Ayes, 0 Nays, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 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.