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INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Pastor Shorty Wolfe.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jeff Irvine called the meeting to order with the following members present: Mayor Irvine; Vice Mayor Burdette; Councilwoman Laudermilk; Councilman Carl (Shorty) Wolfe; Councilwoman Debbie Laudermilk; Councilman Benjamin (Ben) Nicely. Also present was Town Manager Charles (Chuck) Unroe and Town Attorney Mike Lockaby.

CONSENT AGENDA

| | | |
|---------|-----------------|---------------|
| Minutes | Council Meeting | June 11, 2024 |
| | Called Meeting | June 25, 2024 |

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the minutes for June 11, 2024, and the minutes for June 25, 2024.

Motioned to approve: Councilman Wolfe
Seconded by: Councilwoman Laudermilk

Councilman Nicely: Yes
Councilman Wolfe: Yes
Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes
Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes
Mayor Irvine: Yes

ACTION ITEMS

1) Department Reports

- Code Enforcement-Unavailable
- Police Department
- Public Works
- Library
- Water Plant
- Fire Department

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the reports as submitted and written.

Motion to approve: Councilwoman Laudermilk
Seconded by: Councilman Wolfe

Councilman Nicely: Yes
Councilman Wolfe: Yes
Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes
Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes
Mayor Irvine: Yes

2) Request of Alleghany Highlands Arts and Crafts Center

- On behalf of the Arts Community Celebration planning team, Ms. Baker is requesting the closure of two portions of Commercial Street and Church Street. On Commercial Street, the block of Ace Hardware; On Church Street, the block of Clifton Forge School of the Arts. This closure is for the purpose of using these two roads for the Art Market during the two days of the Arts Community Celebration. The date of this event is Friday, September 20th from 3 pm-9pm, and Saturday,

September 21st, from 10 am-5 pm. Thank you for your help to make this 5th Annual Arts Community Celebration the best year yet!

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the request.

Motion to approve: Councilwoman Laudermilk

Seconded by: Councilman Nicely

Councilman Nicely: Yes

Councilman Wolfe: Yes

Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes

Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes

Mayor Irvine: Yes

3) Appointments

- Industrial Development Authority/Economic Development Authority-Mr. Ron McConnell has submitted a letter of intent and resume to fill the vacancy on the Industrial Development Authority/Economic Development Authority. The term is effective immediately and expires December 31, 2025.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the request.

Motion to approve: Councilwoman Laudermilk

Seconded by: Councilman Nicely

Councilman Nicely: Yes

Councilman Wolfe: Yes

Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes

Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes

Mayor Irvine: Yes

4) Ordinances

- To conduct a second reading of an ordinance amending and reenacting chapter 2, article V., division 2 of the code of the Town of Clifton Forge, of 2015, as amended, changing the

name of the Industrial Development Authority of the Town of Clifton Forge, Virginia, to the Economic Development Authority of Clifton Forge, Virginia.

RECOMMENDATION: Waive the second reading and approve the ordinance.

Motion to approve the ordinance and waive the second reading:

Councilman Nicely

Seconded by: Councilman Wolfe

Councilman Nicely: Yes

Councilman Wolfe: Yes

Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes

Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes

Mayor Irvine: Yes

- To conduct a second reading of an ordinance repealing, amending, and readopting ordinances relating to erosion and sediment control for the Town of Clifton Forge, Virginia.

RECOMMENDATION: Waive the second reading and approve the ordinance.

Mr. Unroe requested the Council to table this item due to new information received very recently.

Motion to table the ordinance until the following meeting:

Councilman Nicely

Seconded by: Councilman Wolfe

Councilman Nicely: Yes

Councilman Wolfe: Yes

Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes

Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes

Mayor Irvine: Yes

5) Public Hearing

- To schedule a Public Hearing to receive citizen input on the amended 2024 Comprehensive Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: Schedule the Public Hearing for the next regular meeting on Tuesday, August 13th, 2024.

Motion to approve holding the Public Hearing on August 13, 2024:

Councilwoman Laudermilk

Seconded by: Councilman Nicely

Councilman Nicely: Yes

Councilman Wolfe: Yes

Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes

Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes

Mayor Irvine: Yes

MANAGER'S COMMENTS

- Mr. Unroe advised that Caleb is set to begin livestreaming Town Council meeting next month.
- The new website went live today, and everything has been updated, such as minutes, boards and commissions, and a link for customers to make their utility payments.
- Crosswalks-The town has a commitment from a company who owes them several crosswalks. This Friday, they will be painting three new crosswalks. Once finished, they will start fixing the current crosswalks in need of repair. Mr. Unroe advised they were thinking of painting the crosswalks green if the code allows.
- Letter from Historic Masonic Theatre-Dated June 27, 2024, the letter expressed gratitude for being able to hold the STARRS performance at the theatre once again. The Town contributed an additional stipend of \$1300.00 along with the City of Covington to enable the theatre to hold the STARRS program. The program (Special Talent Artist Review and Showcase Program) promotes self-expression and community engagement. The group has grown from ten performers to 30 talented individuals.

- Sidewalk repair-The sidewalks are being repaired on the 300 block of Pine Street. Some large Maple trees may have to be removed due to their roots damaging pavement and sidewalks.
- Bike rack-The bike rack in Downtown Clifton Forge was donated from the Friends of the Blue Ridge. It was purchased using a grant and did not cost the Town of Clifton Forge anything.
- Code Enforcement-Interviews for this position will be held on Wednesday and Thursday of this week.
- Social media-There have been several inaccurate statements regarding the Town. There was a question of why the Town was funding the library. The Town and Clifton Forge owns and operates the library. The line item for the library has been in the budget for years. Clifton Forge does not donate to the Alleghany Highlands Regional Library because it is funding its local library. The Clifton Forge Public Library has a huge service area and is not a regional library. It is considered a department of the town.
- Muni code tax and water rates-The current rates have been sent to Muni code and will be updated as soon as Muni code does so.
- Green Pastures Restoration-Green Pastures is owned by the National Forest Service and comes under the jurisdiction of Douthat State Park management. Mr. Unroe has a signed application from the park's owner, as well as from the local and upper management of the state park system. Clifton Forge is a stakeholder's group to serve as advisors for the entire process. The Town is the fiscal partner managing the grant. This project is not costing the Town of Clifton Forge anything. Mr. Unroe went on to talk about the history of Green Pastures and read a letter from MAAV.
- Joan Vannorsdall, a Clifton Forge resident and member of the Green Pastures Association, explained that Mr. Unroe's focus was to take advantage of the grant opportunity when it became available. Chuck zeroed in on Green Pastures, and Ms. Vannorsdall said she is proud of him for doing so.
- Mayor Irvine inquired about the five million dollars that was earmarked for the revitalization of Green Pastures and wanted to know who to contact to make it happen. Mr. Unroe told him to contact his delegates and those higher, as well as the manager at Douthat State Park.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Mrs. Jenny Oeltjen, 808 Acacia Avenue, expressed her concern over 15 businesses on Riverside Avenue closing within the past ten years. She said that Livy's Closet celebrated ten years on Saturday, and no one supported her. She stated that if we don't support and value current businesses, they will be gone. It is important to support and value businesses on Ridgeway to keep the town going.
- Ms. Sandra McHenry, McCormick Boulevard, spoke on Hike the Forge in July. July is National Parks and Recreation Month. There are four different trails to take, and if an individual hikes all four of them, they are given a token made by Four Moons Designs. Ranger Hannah will be at the Parks and Trails meeting to be held at Smith Creek with a special animal friend, and everyone is welcome to attend. Mr. Mac Beard will be doing a history walk tomorrow, which is free and open to the public. It will be rescheduled if it rains. Ms. McHenry thanked Clifton Forge and the Public Works Department and the Parks and Trails committee for maintaining the trails
- Ms. Joan Vannorsdall spoke of a book, "What's Your Story?" that is debuting on Monday July 15th, at 7:00 p.m. at the Historic Masonic Theatre. This edition will be based on the arts in Clifton Forge. It has amazing photography by Chuck Almaraz.

Council Comments

- Councilwoman Laudermilk thanked all four people for coming. She spoke of the Police Department, saying that the crime rate had gone way down within the past year. She says this is due to the police patrolling and doing their jobs. She expressed her appreciation to them for doing such a great job. She told Chuck she was proud of him for a job well done on all the projects. She expressed her excitement for the STARRS program to be held at the theatre. Ms. Laudermilk apologized to Mrs. Oeltjen for missing her birthday. She congratulated her for being part of the town for ten years. She also said that people needed to hike the forge, as there were beautiful facilities.

- Councilman Wolfe said STARS is a fine program. He stated that he would check out the new website as soon as his wife told him how to get on it. He said the Green Pastures is a great historical marker and that his friends loved that place. He said that people from out of town would come visit and thanked Council for everything.
- Councilman Nicely congratulated Jenny Oeltjen on ten years. He said he is personally involved with STARS and was happy the program was moving back to the theatre, as it made the individuals really feel like stars on that stage. Their next performance is on August 25th. He expressed his surprise at having Lorrie Morgan visit the theatre. He commented on Fridays in the Forge, saying there were way more people there this year than last. He told Chuck that he was kicking it as Town Manager.
- Vice Mayor Burdette expressed his surprise and approval at having Lorrie Morgan sing at the theatre. He said that the revitalization of Green Pastures will lead people into Town. He thanked everyone for attending tonight. He expressed his thanks to Jenny Oeltjen and congratulated her and wished her continued success. He spoke on Hike the Forge and said he had walked all the trails when he was younger. He went on to say that the book series was awesome and that he had taken trips to the Arts and Crafts Center as a child. He thanked the volunteers for the revision of the Comprehensive Plan. He went on to thank Mr. Unroe and Public Works for working at East Ingalls Street to remove overgrowth at the intersection. He advised Chuck to try to ignore social media.
- Mayor Irvine thanked everyone for coming. He said that it was a great job on the website. He thanked Main Street for a wonderful July 4th event, saying that the Clifton Forge fireworks were awesome. He spoke of the Rock house at the cemetery and how beautiful it is now. He thanked Mr. Unroe and Mr. Wolfe for their role in making the repairs. He expressed a personal apology to Mrs. Oeltjen, stating that it was his job as Mayor to come by. Mr. Irvine said the Fridays in the Forge was great, one of the best we've had yet. He is going to work to get additional funding for the revitalization of Green Pastures. He finished by saying that he hopes everyone has a great month.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

CLOSED MEETING

Town Council will convene in closed meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(3) to discuss the disposition of property on Main Street and the acquisition of property near the C & O Heritage Center, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of a public body.

The Town Council will convene in a closed meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A) (8) to receive consultation on specific legal matters related to potential city liability.

Motion to approve: Councilman Nicely
Seconded by: Councilwoman Laudermilk\

Councilman Nicely: Yes
Councilman Wolfe: Yes
Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes
Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes
Mayor Irvine: Yes

MOTION TO RECONVENE OPEN MEETING

I move that the Town Council end its closed meeting and reconvene its regular meeting.

Motion to approve: Councilwoman Laudermilk
Seconded by: Councilman Wolfe

Councilman Nicely: Yes
Councilman Wolfe: Yes
Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes
Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes
Mayor Irvine: Yes

CERTIFICATION FOLLOWING CLOSED MEETING

I move pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3712(D) that the Town Council certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered during the closed meeting.

Motion to approve: Councilwoman Laudermilk
Seconded by: Councilman Nicely

Councilman Nicely: Yes
Councilman Wolfe: Yes
Councilwoman Laudermilk: Yes
Vice Mayor Burdette: Yes
Mayor Irvine: Yes

ADJOURNMENT

UPCOMING EVENTS

HISTORIC MASONIC THEATRE

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---|
| July 11 th | 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m. | The Curtain Call Kids' Music Camp Rehearsal each Thursday for four weeks; August 8 th -Performance |
| July 19 th | 7:00 p.m. | Lorrie Morgan |
| July 20 th | 11:00 a.m. | Tour the Theatre |
| July 26 th | 6:00 p.m. | Fridays in the Forge |
| August 10 th | 7:00 p.m. | Movie: Boys in the Boat |

Clifton Forge Downtown Market-Every Thursday from 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Hike the Forge starting in July; Call (540) 862-2000 or email cliftonforgemainstreet@gmail.com for more information.