

**CITY OF BUENA VISTA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
APRIL 5, 2018**

The City Council for the City of Buena Vista met for a Regular Council Meeting, on Thursday, April 5, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers (2039 Sycamore Avenue).

Council Members Present:	Mayor Bill Fitzgerald
Steve Baldrige	Melvin Henson
Stanley Coffey	Daniel Staton
Lisa Clark	Tyson Cooper, Vice-Mayor

Members Absent: None.

ADG#1 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND PRAYER:

Mayor Fitzgerald opened the meeting by requesting that everyone stand and repeat the Pledge of Allegiance. Vice-Mayor Cooper delivered the opening prayer.

ADG #2 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING AND EXECUTIVE SESSION ON MARCH 15, 2018:

Motion was made by Councilman Baldrige to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2018, Regular Council meeting and Executive Session. Mr. Kearney said that Mr. Miller pointed out that Mr. Kearney stated incorrectly that the Charter had not been amended since 1952. He meant to say the current Charter has been adopted since 1952. Councilman Baldrige then motioned to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Councilman Coffey, carried by Council with the exception of Council Member Clark and Vice-Mayor Cooper who abstained.

ADG #3 RECOGNITION/COMMUNICATION FROM VISITORS:
Citizens who desire to speak on matters not listed on the agenda below will be heard at this time. Citizens who desire to speak on a specific item listed on the agenda, open for public comment, will be heard when that item is considered.

Mr. Dave Miske, 120 East 22nd Street said that he feels we should keep the insects downtown.

Chief Hartman advised Council about a fire in Buena Vista where Officer Jacob Moore saved the homeowners and their dog. Lt. Randy Chittum also assisted. He said the story has gone viral and that both officers did a great job in assisting with the fire.

ADG #4 REPORTS:

1.) Mayor:

Mayor Fitzgerald advised that he and Mr. Scudder had a good meeting at SVU. He asked Mr. Scudder to elaborate on the meeting.

2.) City Manager:

Mr. Scudder stated that SVU is planning on some serious capital improvements over the next 2 years. They are going after a USDA loan. In the next couple of weeks they will be advertising a public hearing on the funding. He opined it is quite an undertaking but it is fantastic money and he is glad they are able to take advantage of it. SVU will be making a public announcement on this in the next week or so. Mr. Scudder said it is about a \$12,000,000.00 project.

Mr. Scudder then presented a certificate of appreciation from the Buena Vista Rescue Squad to Council for all of the support that Council has given them in the past year.

We made a promise to the Dabney S. Lancaster Community College scholarship program a few years ago and that is an ongoing support mechanism. Each year our gift goes to their campaign to award students scholarships. In 2017 the foundation was able to assist the college with \$530,000.00 in funding for college programs, equipment, faculty and student grants. The college sent a letter thanking the City for their support.

Mr. Scudder announced that our Health Center, which is a federally designated health center, is going to have a ground breaking on May 4th at 9:00 a.m. on their new facility that they are going to start construction on.

Mr. Scudder advised that our local SPCA will have their annual meeting and silent auction fund raiser on April 24th from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Horse Center.

The Rockbridge Area Occupational Center will be closing after 49 years of service due to lack of funding.

Mr. Scudder said there was an article in the Richmond Times Dispatch today about the insects downtown.

3.) City Attorney:

None.

4.) Council Committee/Representative:

Councilman Coffey addressed the problem at the cemetery with the headstones. He said that citizens have come to him about how the stones at the cemetery are being moved and how they are being replaced. He said the contract was supposed to be changed and wanted to know if it has been changed.

Mr. Scudder said the contract has been changed and a copy was given to Councilman Coffey.

Councilman Coffey said he has not received the new contract. He opined if a person pays \$4000.00 for a stone and it has to be moved, he feels that person should not have to pay to have the stone set again. He said if we are going to continue to make the person responsible to have the stone reset, they should be notified. He said that he has talked to Sonny Williams who has dug 22 graves at Green Hill in six months' time. Mr. Williams said he did not have to remove a single stone to dig the grave. He said he does not know what the difference is but perhaps the cemetery workers need to talk to Mr. Williams. He said that he has met with Mr. Scudder and Mr. Ken Talley about this problem. He said that people are concerned if they have a double stone and it has to be removed for the burial of the second person that their family will have to pay to have the stone reset. They need to be told in advance if the stone needs to be reset. He then wanted to know the time-line for having the stones that have already been moved will be reset.

Mr. Scudder said all of the stones are in the process of being reset with Hartman's or when weather permits.

Councilman Coffey opined if the public knows the schedule of resetting the stones it would help. He said there has not been anyone here at our Council meetings but there has been a lot of social media going around about the stones. He said he encourages citizens to come to the Council meetings and to let Council know their needs and concerns. He suggested that we go up on the grave openings by \$300.00 to cover the cost of having the stones reset.

Councilman Baldrige stated that when he looked into this situation, one of the things that he understood was the City does not get paid anything when we move a stone for the second burial on a shared stone. The City is not getting paid anything. When people say that you have to pay to have the stone reset, the City is not doing that. It is the monument company. He does not understand why we are in the thick of this since it is the people who ordered the monument and the people who are moving the monument.

Councilman Coffey stated again that Mr. Williams dug 22 graves at Greenhill and did not have to move one stone. His point is why we should have to move a stone in order to dig the second grave.

Council Member Clark said it is her understanding that not all of the stones were moved because another burial site needed to be dug. Sometimes when you have a double stone, the monument company takes the stone up so they can dig the grave and then the monument company resets the stones. The City takes the stones up at no charge and gives the stones to the monument company who then has to reset them.

Councilman Coffey said the monument company does not have to reset the stones. This whole issue started over 1 person and that family lives out of town. He said he was not saying we should or should not move the stone. He said if we don't have to move the stone then don't move it. He said again if a family pays \$4,000.00 for a stone and it is moved, the family has to pay to have the stone reset. He said his point is why you should have to move the stone and then have it reset. He opined we need to increase the fees by \$300.00 to cover resetting the stones.

Council Member Clark said it was her understanding that not all the stones that were moved were due to having to dig another burial site. She said when you have to dig for a double burial; the monument company has to take the stone up so they can then engrave the rest of the stone. So the City takes the stone up for free; gives the stone to the monument company who then has to reset the stone.

Councilman Coffey stated that the monument company does not have to reset the stone. He said it is the responsibility of the lot owner to make sure the stone is reset.

Mr. Scudder stated that some of the monument companies already do that. They already factor the cost of resetting the stone in their original price.

Councilman Coffey said if there is a possibility that the stone will have to be moved in the future the people should be informed they are responsible for having the stone reset.

Councilman Baldrige opined that the conversation should be between the monument company and the person whose stone has been moved.

Mr. Scudder advised that we have put some extra customer service things in place. He opined there was also a lot of miss-information about the subject as well.

Councilman Coffey stated that if someone asks him a question, he feels it is his job to address the issue. He also opined that a lot of people don't know about the stones having to be reset.

Councilman Baldrige opined it has brought to light what a better procedure could be done to help inform the people of the rules. He also suggested we could let the monument company know we will reset the stones for a fee.

Mayor Fitzgerald asked Mr. Scudder to send Council a copy of what has been done to correct the situation at the cemetery.

Councilman Henson stated that a lot of the monument companies are waiting for the weather to settle down before they reset the stones.

Mr. Scudder said this has really not been an issue until 1 person saw a stone that was in the process of getting reset.

Vice-Mayor Cooper wanted to know if any progress has been made on live-streaming Council meetings.

Mr. Tom Roberts said there has been no progress made in live-streaming Council meetings.

Councilman Henson said he attended the Easter egg hunt at GMP and the kids had a very good time. He also attended an Economic Development meeting with Rachel. They are working on a regional inventory on what is available in Buena Vista, Lexington and Rockbridge County. RANA is doing very well. The pot hole at 20th Street between Magnolia and Sycamore still has not been fixed. On the 14th of April there will be a Cruise-In sponsored by the American Legion. He asked everyone to cast a vote for GMP who is competing for a \$20,000.00 grant. He then addressed a stop sign replacing a yield sign on Long Hollow Road. He

feels this would prevent wrecks from happening there. He also thanked Officer Moore and Lt. Chittum for the great job they did handling the fire at 470 Linden Avenue. He said they may need a fire hydrant in that area to help fight future fires.

Council Member Clark stated that Council had talked about replacing signs within the City such as stop signs, church signs, etc. She said many of them are faded and have started to lean over.

Mr. Scudder said that Trina Mastran and Johnny Cole are working on the signs.

Council Member Clark said that she noticed approximately 12 to 15 signs between Food Lion and Bontex that may need to be removed. She opined that anything that can be removed would be helpful.

CONSIDER APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES:

APT #1 PUBLIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AUTHORITY:

Ms. MarVita Flint has resigned. Her term will expire on June 30, 2018. This is the second time this item has appeared on the agenda. ADVERTISED: NEW GAZETTE 3/14/18; WEB SITE AND CHANNEL 18 3/14/18

Motion was made by Councilman Baldrige to appoint Mr. Brent Styler to fill Ms. Flint's unexpired term as well as appoint him to a new four year term. Vice-Mayor Cooper seconded the motion, carried by Council.

Mr. Melvin Henson's term will expire June 30, 2018. This is a 4 year term. Mr. Henson is willing to serve again if re-appointed. This is the first time this item has appeared on the agenda. NO APPLICANTS: ADVERTISED THE NEWS GAZETTE APRIL 4, 2018; CHANNEL 18 MARCH 28, 2018; WEB SITE MARCH 28, 2018

Motion was made by Council Member Lisa Clark to re-appoint Councilman Melvin Henson, Mayor Bill Fitzgerald and Ms. Deidra Dryden to serve 4 year terms, seconded by Councilman Baldrige, carried by Council.

Mr. Bill Fitzgerald's term will expire June 30, 2018. This is a 4 year term. Mr. Fitzgerald is willing to serve again if re-appointed. This is the first time this item has appeared on the agenda. NO APPLICANTS: ADVERTISED THE NEWS GAZETTE APRIL 4, 2018; CHANNEL 18 MARCH 28, 2018; WEB SITE MARCH 28, 2018

Motion was made by Council Member Lisa Clark to re-appoint Councilman Melvin Henson, Mayor Bill Fitzgerald and Ms. Deidra Dryden to serve 4 year terms, seconded by Councilman Baldrige, carried by Council.

Ms. Deidra Dryden's term will expire June 30, 2018. This is a 4 year term. Ms. Dryden is willing to serve again if re-appointed. This is the first time this item has appeared on the agenda. NO APPLICANTS: ADVERTISED THE NEWS GAZETTE APRIL 4, 2018; CHANNEL 18 MARCH 28, 2018; WEB SITE MARCH 28, 2018

Motion was made by Council Member Lisa Clark to re-appoint Councilman Melvin Henson, Mayor Bill Fitzgerald and Ms. Deidra Dryden to serve 4 year terms, seconded by Councilman Baldrige, carried by Council.

Mr. Tim Dudley's term will expire June 30, 2018. This is a 4 year term. Mr. Dudley is not willing to serve again. This is the first time this item has appeared on the agenda. NO APPLICANTS: ADVERTISED THE NEWS GAZETTE APRIL 4, 2018; CHANNEL 18 MARCH 28, 2018; WEB SITE MARCH 28, 2018

This item will be carried over to the next Council meeting.

APT #2 ROCKBRIDGE REGIONAL LIBRARY BOARD:

Mrs. Jane Armstrong's term will expire May 31, 2018. This is a 4 year term. Mrs. Armstrong is not willing to serve again. This is the first time this item has appeared on the agenda. **NO APPLICANTS: ADVERTISED THE NEWS GAZETTE APRIL 4, 2018; CHANNEL 18 MARCH 28, 2018; WEB SITE MARCH 28, 2018**

This item will be carried over to the next Council meeting.

APT #3 ROCKBRIDGE AREA COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD:

Ms. Lori Turner has resigned. Her term will expire on December 31, 2020. This is the first time this item has appeared on the agenda. **NO APPLICANTS: ADVERTISED THE NEWS GAZETTE 3/21/18; WEB SITE AND CHANNEL 18 3/15/18**

This item will be carried over to the next Council meeting.

APT #4 CENTRAL SHENADOAH PLANNING COMMISSION:

Ms. Lisa Clark's term will expire on June 30, 2018. Ms. Clark is willing to serve again if re-appointed. This is the first time this item has appeared on the agenda.

Motion was made by Councilman Henson to re-appoint Council Member Clark for a 3 year term, seconded by Councilman Coffey, carried by Council.

APT #5 PLANNING COMMISSION:

Mr. Michael Ohleger's term will expire on June 30, 2018. Mr. Ohleger is willing to serve again if re-appointed. This is a 4 year term. This is the first time this item has appeared on the agenda. **NO APPLICANTS: ADVERTISED THE NEWS GAZETTE 3/21/18; WEB SITE AND CHANNEL 18 3/15/18**

Motion was made by Councilman Coffey to re-appoint Mr. Ohleger to another 4 year term, seconded by Council Member Clark, carried by Council.

OLD BUSINESS:

OB #1 DISCUSS CITY CHARTER COMMITTEE:

Three applicants: Mr. Tom Roberts, Mr. Bob Gay, Mr. Jerry Miller

Councilman Henson wanted to know how many people will be on the committee.

Mayor Fitzgerald said probably 7 members. He asked Ms. Wheeler to get in touch with Mr. Tim Petrie to see if he would be interested in serving on this committee.

This item will be carried over to the next Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

NB #1 HOSPICE PROCLAMATION:

Clerk of Council, Dawn Wheeler, read the following Proclamation:

PROCLAMATION

Healthcare Decisions Day Proclamation

WHEREAS, *Healthcare Decisions Day* is designed to raise public awareness of the need to plan ahead for health care decisions, related to end of life care and medical decision-making

whenever patients are unable to speak for themselves and to encourage the specific use of advance directives to communicate these important health care decisions; and

WHEREAS, in Buena Vista, VA, the Five Wishes Advance Directive and Living Will program provided courtesy of Rockbridge Area Hospice provides the specifics and offers a model form for patient use; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that only about 20 percent of people in Buena Vista, VA have executed an advance directive. Moreover, it is estimated that less than 50 percent of severely or terminally ill patients have an advance directive; and

WHEREAS, it is likely that a significant reason for these low percentages is that there is both a lack of knowledge and considerable confusion in the public about Advance Directives; and

WHEREAS, one of the principal goals of *Healthcare Decisions Day* is to encourage hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, continuing care retirement communities, and hospices to participate in a State-wide effort to provide clear and consistent information to the public about advance directives, as well as to encourage medical professionals and lawyers to volunteer their time and efforts to improve public knowledge and increase the number of Buena Vista citizens with advance directives; and

WHEREAS, Rockbridge Area Hospice and other organizations throughout Virginia have endorsed this event and are committed to educating the public about the importance of discussing health care choices and executing advance directives; and

WHEREAS, as a result of April 16, 2018, being recognized as *Healthcare Decisions Day* in Buena Vista, VA, more citizens will have conversations about their health care decisions; more citizens will execute Advance Directives to make their wishes known; and fewer families and health care providers will have to struggle with making difficult health care decisions in the absence of guidance from the patient;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, William "Billy" Fitzgerald, Mayor, do hereby recognize April 16, 2018, as **HEALTHCARE DECISIONS DAY** in Buena Vista, VA, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.

CLERK

MAYOR

Mayor Fitzgerald presented the Proclamation to Susan Harrison from the Rockbridge County Hospice office.

NB #2 TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA:

Councilman Henson said this is something that will help decorate the City and the entrance to Glen Maury Park. There is a group of folks that would like to put flags on the 10th Street Bridge. They will put 5 American flags on each side of the bridge. The pipe for the stands and the flags will be donated. All we need to do is get Public Works to mount the stands on the bridge and hang the flags. The City will be responsible for the upkeep of the flags like they do with the flags on Magnolia.

Council Member Clark wanted to know if the flag holders are permanent.

Councilman Henson said they are permanent. The poles will be about 10 feet high and the flags will hang at about 13 feet from the ground up.

Mayor Fitzgerald said this project will not cost the City anything except maintaining them.

NB #3 DR. KEELER TO DISCUSS THE SCHOOL BUDGET AND A ROAD BEHIND THE HIGH SCHOOL:

Dr. Keeler and Anna Graham updated Council on their budget request and discussed installing a road behind the high school.

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Dawn M. Wheeler

Clerk of Council

William H. Fitzgerald

Mayor