

**- CITY OF BUENA VISTA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

JUNE 6, 2019

The City Council for the City of Buena Vista met for a Regular Council Meeting on Thursday, June 6, 2019 shortly after 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers (2039 Sycamore Avenue).

Council Members Present: Mayor Bill Fitzgerald

Melvin Henson Danny Staton

Stanley Coffey Steve Baldrige

Members Absent: Vice-Mayor Tyson Cooper, Council Member Clark

ADG#1 PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND PRAYER: Mayor Fitzgerald opened the meeting by requesting that everyone stand and repeat the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was observed.

ADG #2 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MAY 16, 2019:

Motion was made by Councilman Henson to approve the above minutes, seconded by Councilman Staton, carried by Council.

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 an item listed on the agenda, open for public comment, will be heard when that item is considered:

Chief Keith Hartman was the only person to speak. He advised Council that the Police Department has received 2 SRO grants. They received a continuation grant for the current SRO and a part-time position for \$40,000.00. They will have to match the grants by 10% that the Police Department will absorb. He said he is very disappointed as a citizen and as a City employee. He said in the last 2 meetings Council has made Mr. Scudder's job immensely harder and every

department in the City harder because they have given them no money to work with. He stated that he hopes Council can live with that when the City has no money left.

ADG #4 REPORTS:

1.) Mayor

None.

2.) City Manager

Mr. Scudder started his report by saying that Rachel Moore has worked on a Regional Economic Development Grant: a REDI Grant. Mr. Scudder said it is a planning grant for Economic Development purposes. He said it will be interesting to see how the grant pans out. Mr. Scudder advised that Tom Roberts, Rachel Moore and Hunter Young met with 4 vendors and did the bid opening for the Industrial Park construction. All the bids were tight. The grant from Adkins Excavating for \$679,000.00 was accepted. We got some news from the State Legislature that if you are a locality that uses police body cams, you may have to fund the local Commonwealth's Attorney more money because of the extra work involved in reviewing body cams history. He opined we are going to have to work our way through this one. It is an unfunded mandate.

Councilman Baldrige said that he has already talked with Chris Russell about the body cams. Mr. Russell is being replaced with Mr. Josh Elrod who will serve as interim Commonwealth's Attorney and he might not be as up to date as Mr. Russell is. He pointed out to Mr. Russell that up in the City of Staunton, the police body cam uses a service that creates a web site. If there is an attorney that wants to see the body cam footage, they must send an email request to the Commonwealth Attorney's office. They will send a key that will only open access to the case you are inquiring about. That will make the body cam information available to defense attorneys. He opined if a person is put on this it seems that we might not need an attorney: maybe a paralegal or a victim/witness coordinator. Either one would be less expensive than hiring another attorney.

Mr. Kearney said we only found out about this yesterday and they will work with the Commonwealth Attorney to minimize or eliminate this requirement. A decision must be made by the end of the month.

3.) City Attorney

Mr. Kearney said that we did close on Columbia Gas this week. We can now go forward with the road and the installation of the utilities.

4.) Council Committee/Representative

Councilman Baldrige reported that he attended the Municipalities dinner and looked at all the data on tourism and overnight stays. Our contribution to the Regional Tourism Board is created as a function of the meals and lodging tax revenue in Buena Vista. He said that 38% of those coming into the area stay overnight and are coming for leisure reasons. The leisure guests in the area are attending the events at the Horse Center. About 20% of those who come into the area are coming in for one of the colleges and they are the second most likely to purchase things. There was also some discussion about short term rentals also known as Air B&B. There are 21 addresses listed in Buena Vista used for that purpose.

Mayor Fitzgerald said that they are not really laid out like a B&B and there are only 12, not 21. Some of them have a Buena Vista address but are located on Route 608, Glasgow and Long Hollow.

Councilman Baldrige said the summary was that the conservative to the more liberal guests as to return on expenses for every dollar the municipalities fund for tourism, we end up seeing somewhere between \$8.52 to \$19.00 worth of spending of tourists. He said the most important takeaway that he received was if someone would be interested in building a hotel in Buena Vista. He said the demonstration on the cabinetry from the high school was mind blowing.

Councilman Henson congratulated all the graduates from PMHS. Also, the 5 sports teams and individuals that participated in the State championship games. He opined it really looks good for the City. He advised that the carnival held by the BVFD went very well. Councilman Henson said the camping at GMP over the Memorial Day weekend was very good and the ceremony held at the cemetery was very good. He advised that the Fiddlers Convention will begin next week and requested prayer for the Austin family that has a son missing. He also reminded everyone of the cake walk scheduled for June 23 at the BVFD for the victims of the South River Market explosion.

Councilman Coffey said there are some people that want to organize a fund raiser for the families of the SRM explosion. He will keep Council informed on the progress.

Councilman Henson asked Mr. Scudder if anything has been done about Mrs. Fix's water situation down on 11th and Hawthorne.

Mr. Scudder said he will have to check and let Councilman Henson know.

Councilman Staton reminded everyone that Mrs. Fix has received only 2 reports this year and she also called Public Works and did not get a response.

**CONSIDER APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS,
COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES:**

ADG #5 BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS:

Mrs. Marolyn Cash has resigned from the Board of Zoning Appeals. Her term will expire on December 31, 2020. This is the third time this item has appeared on the agenda. **NO APPLICANTS - ADVERTISED NEWS GAZETTE MAY 15, 2019; WEB SITE AND CHANNEL 18 APRIL 23, 2019**

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

ADG #6 BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS:

Mr. Casey Crookston has resigned from the Board of Zoning Appeals. His term will expire on December 31, 2021. This is the third time this item has appeared on the agenda. **NO APPLICANTS - ADVERTISED NEWS GAZETTE MAY 15, 2019; WEB SITE AND CHANNEL 18 MAY 13, 2019**

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

**ADG #7 BUENA VISTA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY:**

Ms. Skye Lowry's term will expire on July 31, 2019. This is the first time this item has appeared on the agenda. Mrs. Lowry is willing to serve again if reappointed. **NO APPLICANTS - ADVERTISED NEWS GAZETTE JUNE 5, 2019; WEB SITE AND CHANNEL 18 MAY 29, 2019**

Motion was made by Councilman Baldrige to reappoint Mrs. Lowry to the BVEDA, seconded by Councilman Henson, carried by Council.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

**NB #1 MR. JIM JONES WILL UPDATE COUNCIL ON THE
NATURAL BRIDGE STATE PARK:**

Mr. Jim Jones of the Natural Bridge State Park gave Council an update on the progress being made at the Park. (See report in minute book)

**NB #2 RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY MANAGER,
JAY SCUDDER TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS FOR VDOT
PROJECTS WITHIN THE CITY OF BUENA VISTA:**

Ms. Wheeler read the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION R19-08

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Transportation has requested that City Council give the City Manager, Mr. Jay Scudder, the authorization to sign all documentation for all VDOT projects that the City of Buena Vista may participate in.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Buena Vista does hereby give the City Manager, Mr. Jay Scudder, the authorization to sign all documents pertaining to all VDOT projects the City of Buena Vista may participate in.

William H. Fitzgerald, Mayor

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

Date of Adoption

Motion was made by Councilman Baldrige to approve the above Resolution, seconded by Councilman Coffey, carried by Council.

NB #3 DISCUSS AND APPROVE REIMBURSEMENT OF \$1,250.00 TO THE BUENA VISTA FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR THE BUSINESS LICENSE FOR THE CARNIVAL:

Councilman Baldrige motioned to approve the reimbursement of \$1,250.00 to the BVFD for the business license for the carnival, seconded by Councilman Coffey, carried by Council except for Councilman Henson who abstained.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business Mayor Fitzgerald adjourned the Council meeting.

William H. Fitzgerald, Mayor

Dawn M. Wheeler, Clerk of Council