

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE TOWN OF VINTON PLANNING COMMISSION  
HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2005, AT 6 P.M., IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM AT THE  
VINTON MUNICIPAL BUILDING LOCATED AT 311 SOUTH POLLARD STREET.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**        **Bruce Mayer, Chairman**  
                                  **Joan Drewery**  
                                  **Dave Jones**  
                                  **Bob Patterson**

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**        **Dawn Michelsen**

**STAFF PRESENT:**         **Kevin Boggess, Town Manager**  
                                  **Consuella Barbour, Assistant Town Manager**  
                                  **Barry Thompson, Finance Director**  
                                  **Anita McMillan, Planning and Zoning Director**  
                                  **Julie S. Tucei, Planning Secretary**

**AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Approval of Minutes: Public Hearing—July 27, 2004**
- III. Capital Improvement Program (CIP) FY 2005-2009**
- IV. Election of Officers: Chairperson**
  - Vice Chairperson**
  - Secretary**
  - Recording Secretary**
- V. Other Business**
- VI. Adjournment**

Just prior to the beginning of the work session, Mr. Boggess introduced Mr. Thompson, the new Town Treasurer, and Ms. Barbour, the new Assistant Town Manager to the Planning Commissioners. He also briefly explained what they would discuss in regards to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) review. The work session was then called to order by Chairman Mayer at 5:52 p.m. Roll was called, and all members were present except Ms. Michelsen.

The first item on the agenda was the approval of minutes from the public hearing held on July 27, 2004. Mr. Patterson made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and all members who were present voted in favor of the motion made by Mr. Patterson to approve the minutes.

Chairman Mayer next asked Mr. Boggess to proceed with item three on the agenda, the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) FY 2005-2009. Mr. Boggess stated that he first wanted to let them know that the War Memorial Improvement Project and the Fire and Rescue Building had both been approved to proceed. He stated that the Town would be paying for those projects over the next twenty (20) years. He said that the War Memorial was in the one point eight (1.8) million dollar range and the Fire and Rescue Building was in the one (1) million dollar range. He said that Roanoke County would also be contributing money towards the Fire and Rescue Building. He said that the project would mean new debt service, and that part of it would be in the next budget year and that it would be fully in place the year after next. He said that the budgets would be a little tighter than usual as they adjust to the debt service. He also mentioned that the Town had recently had a visit from Anthem Insurance during

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION  
MARCH 3, 2005  
PAGE 2**

which they were told that the health insurance rates would increase by twenty-three point six (23.6) percent. He stated the Town would go from paying roughly four hundred fifty (450) thousand dollars to about five hundred fifty (550) thousand dollars in insurance premiums. He said he was surprised that the increase was that high. He stated that they still wanted to try to do a good job in keeping up with the capital projects. He said that he wanted to go through the list of CIP items and talk about the amounts and some ideas that they had about possibly funding some of the items earlier. This would allow them to get more items done this year. He stated that it would depend upon the projected revenue figures that Mr. Thompson has been working on. He said he thought that figure would be around two hundred (200) to two hundred twenty (220) thousand dollars in the General Fund, and in the Utility Fund they hoped to stay around two hundred (200) thousand dollars. He mentioned that he would briefly go over each of the projects, and then would go over Staff's priority ranking of the projects. He said that the General Fund projects were funded with general tax dollars generated from real estate, business taxes, etc. He said that Utility Fund projects were funded by water and sewer usage fees. He wanted to discuss the General Fund projects first. He asked the Chairman if he preferred to go over all of the projects quickly by each department, or just go over the recommended projects only. The Chairman asked how many total projects there were. Mr. Boggess stated that there were twelve (12) recommended projects, and there were probably about twenty-four (24) total projects. Chairman Mayer said that he thought they should go over all of the projects. Mr. Boggess asked them to refer to the General Fund spreadsheet that had been provided to them. He said that the first department listed in the General Fund was Administration, which included the Town Manager and Human Resources Departments. He stated that their request for the technology escrow was twenty-five (25) thousand dollars. He said it was money that was set aside each year to replace computers, servers, and to try to stay on top of technology. He mentioned that this past year a server was replaced and that the computers within the Town were now linked together. He mentioned that Ms. Tucei had helped to oversee the technology upgrades. Next, Mr. Boggess spoke about the Finance Department's requests. He stated that there were two requests including the cash register upgrade and a laser printer. He asked Mr. Thompson to briefly explain the requests. Mr. Thompson stated that they would like to replace the existing cash registers. He mentioned that the ones that they had been using were outdated. He said that they would like updated software, from DOS based to Windows based for the new cash registers. He mentioned that it would improve the efficiency. He said that the laser printer they were looking at would help them to replace the postcard type of water bill with a statement type of water bill. He said that statement bills would allow better communications with customers, and he also mentioned that the postcard bill was not confidential. He said that anyone could read them and see if customers were in arrears. He mentioned that, as far as communicating with the customers, "stuffers" could be inserted with the bills in the envelopes. He said that they could move towards newsletters. Mr. Jones asked if the postage costs for the current bills were at the postcard rate. Mr. Thompson stated that they were mailed at a reduced postage rate, and he mentioned that they would be going to first class postage rates if they switched to a statement bill. Mr. Thompson stated that they had quite a bit of problems with the postcard bills. He said that many customers come into the office and say they never received their bills. He mentioned that they felt like some of the postcards might be getting torn up or lost in the sorters at the post office. He stated that he had also had complaints from customers regarding the lack of confidentiality of the cards. Mr. Jones asked if the new equipment could be used

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION  
MARCH 3, 2005  
PAGE 3**

in the pet tag process. Mr. Thompson stated that they would not have the software for that. He said they would like to have that software also. Mr. Boggess mentioned that the laser printer could be used for them. Mr. Thompson agreed. Mr. Boggess then moved on to the Police Department's requests. The first item he mentioned was the vehicle replacement, and he said that they have ninety (90) thousand dollars in this year's request. He said it was for the replacement of three (3) vehicles. He mentioned that they alternate between replacing two (2) vehicles one year, and three (3) the next year. He stated that they had tried to extend the life of the vehicles by having more vehicles that were not driven as much. He mentioned that they also assign each vehicle to two (2) officers so that if something happened to a vehicle they could be held responsible for it. Mr. Boggess said that the next request from the Police was the replacement of the dispatch console and renovations to the dispatch bathroom. He mentioned that there was an empty area in dispatch that they would like to enclose to give the officers a break room area. He stated that they had also requested new, taller equipment lockers because the existing ones were not large enough to hang uniforms in. He said that the existing lockers were about twenty (20) years old. He said that their next requested item was two (2) data terminals for police vehicles. He stated that they were just beginning to place the original six (6) into vehicles because of the new CAD system being installed. The last item for the Police was to update the sergeants' office with modular furniture to get rid of their 1960's metal desks. Mr. Boggess next went over the Fire Department's requests. He stated that their first request was for forty five (45) thousand dollars to replace car two (2) with a four (4) wheel drive sport utility vehicle. He mentioned that car two (2) was an old 1985 Ford Crown Victoria. He said that it would be more useful for them to have a larger vehicle to carry items to fire scenes, and that the four (4) wheel drive would be useful also. He said their next request was for more five (5) inch hose, which would give better flow and fight fires more efficiently. He stated that it would be placed on tanker two (2) and ladder two (2). He stated that their third request was for eighteen (18) thousand dollars for the diesel exhaust removal system. He said that their fourth request was to replace the concrete ramps that lead up to the doors. He said they also requested money to paint the fire station and money to purchase a wireless mobile computer for the fire apparatus. Mr. Boggess mentioned that he did not recommend the diesel removal system, the replacement of the concrete ramps, or the painting of the fire station due to the planned renovation and addition work. As far as the requests for the Rescue Squad, he said that they had requested a replacement of the radio repeater on Chestnut Mountain and the purchase of a M-Series Zoll Heart Monitor. He mentioned that he had some questions about the replacement of the radio repeater. He said that essentially they were running two separate radio systems. His thought was that perhaps they should consolidate the systems down to a single system. He mentioned that would be discussed with the volunteers and with Public Works who both used the system that may be phased out. The next department Mr. Boggess covered was the Public Works. He mentioned that Mike Kennedy was the new director of that department. Mr. Boggess stated that Mr. Kennedy had taken a close look at the equipment and determined that there was a lot that really needed to be replaced. He mentioned that the first piece of equipment that needed to be replaced was the 1965 frail head lawn tractor. He said that it was used to cut grass on steep embankments. He stated the cost would be about one hundred five (105) thousand dollars. He said it needed immediate replacement for safety reasons, and they may go to Council soon to ask for its replacement. He stated that it would come off the request list if it can be funded in this budget year. Mr. Boggess stated that this piece of equipment had

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION  
MARCH 3, 2005  
PAGE 4**

been nicknamed the “widow maker”. The next item request for Public Works was two (2) ride-on lawnmowers. Mr. Boggess said it would make mowing operations more efficient. Another item requested for Public Works was the repairs to the Walnut Avenue bridge near 5<sup>th</sup> Street. He said the repairs would consist of fixing areas where the concrete had fallen away from the structure. Mr. Boggess stated that the repairs had been needed for several years; however, it had never been funded because the repairs weren’t critical. He said it may not get funded this year either. He mentioned that it just needed to be kept on the horizon for future funding. The next item request for public works was the management software that would be used to track work orders and vehicle maintenance. Mr. Boggess stated that all the work orders were now being done by hand. Ms. McMillan mentioned that they might be able to incorporate the soon-to-be-required VPDES reporting of illicit discharge into storm drains or waterways. The next item requested by Public Works was bucket truck replacement. He stated that it has been used for many functions including changing street light bulbs and putting up Christmas decorations. He said the used truck was purchased many years ago. He mentioned that it was a 1985 model. Another Public Works request was for a waste oil furnace. He stated that they were used to generate heat by burning used motor oil. Mr. Boggess said the oil was recycled and they did not have to pay a company to haul it away. He mentioned that the payback on the furnace would take about five (5) years. The last item that Public Works requested was the water truck replacement. He stated that it was used to control dust and to water the hanging baskets and flower beds throughout Town. He mentioned that it was a 1965 truck that used to be a fire truck and it had been converted into a water truck. He said he had been told that if too much water was put in the tank, it makes the truck too heavy, and the brakes won’t function. Mr. Boggess next discussed the requested items for the War Memorial. He said that dishwasher replacement, the walk-in freezer, and the heat pump replacement would not be funded due to the impending renovations project. He said those items would be included in the renovations project. As far as the swimming pool, he mentioned the replacement of the filtration equipment. He said that the filtration was not sufficient because the water doesn’t turn over quickly enough and there were not enough skimmers, but he said that it was grandfathered under the old regulations that were in effect when it was built. The next item requested for the pool was the painting of the interior with epoxy paint. He said that it was not recommended for funding until the 06-07 budget. The last item for the pool was the picnic shelter, recommended for funding in the 07-08 budget. He mentioned that the Town needed to decide the future of the swimming pool in the next couple of years. For the senior citizens’ program, the bus replacement was the first item on the list. Mr. Boggess mentioned that the twenty-two (22) passenger bus was getting old. The second item was the senior center lighting and suspended ceiling. He mentioned that both of those items did need to be done; however, there were some asbestos concerns which could increase the cost. He mentioned that the senior building could see more usage in the future with the War Memorial renovations upcoming. He said it should be made to look better and more inviting. The next department requests discussed was Planning and Zoning. He asked Ms. McMillan to go over the Special Projects. Ms. McMillan first mentioned the façade improvement and said that Ms. Consuella Barbour had been working hard on this project. She stated that the County and Town had given ten (10) thousand dollars each towards this project. She said they hoped that the project would really take off, and she would hate not to continue it if it did. She said that the next special project was to obtain a planning grant, which would be the first step in implementing some of the ideas from the recently completed Comprehensive Plan.

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION  
MARCH 3, 2005  
PAGE 5**

The next item was contractual services, which they had discussed moving into the regular budget. She said it was for VPDES—the storm water program. The last item was replacement of the Ford Taurus. She stated that staff did not feel comfortable driving it on out-of-town trips. She mentioned that, if the police retired one of the four (4)-wheel drive vehicles, the Planning Department could take it instead of getting a new vehicle. Ms. McMillan said that was all of her requests. Mr. Boggess said that had been a quick summary of all the General Fund projects, and that the total requested amount was eight hundred forty seven (847) thousand dollars. He mentioned that they could probably fund two hundred (200) to two hundred fifty (250) thousand dollars worth of projects. Mr. Boggess next discussed the Utility Fund. He stated that Mr. Kennedy had prioritized the requests that totaled about two hundred (200) thousand dollars. Mr. Boggess said that he was recommending that all the requests be funded. The first item was an engineering study of the water system to determine how long the wells should last, where weak points might be in the system, and if the Falling Creek System should be connected to the rest of the water system. He mentioned that Vinton was not interested in joining the Western Virginia Water System at this time. The Town felt that it could provide water and sewer service at lower rates and with better customer service. He mentioned that there would be a rate increase this year due to the improvements that must be done to the sewer treatment plant. The Town must pay its share for the improvements at the treatment plant, which would be about two and a half (2.5) million dollars. Chairman Mayer asked if the most recent improvements to the plant were undersized. Mr. Boggess stated that it was over-promised, that they had received what they had paid for. He said that the next improvement was being done under a D.E.Q. consent order. The next item for the Utility Fund was the replacement of the Jeep Cherokee. He mentioned that the 1980s Jeep had begun service in the rescue squad many years ago. Another item for the Utility Fund was the replacement of an old Crown Victoria with a new small pickup truck for the meter readers' use. The meter readers would be able to carry tools with them in the pickup, and it would not use as much gasoline since it would not have a V-8 engine like the Crown Victoria has. Mr. Kennedy had also requested to replace the Chevy Astro van with a full-sized pickup truck for the sewer crew's use. Another item he had requested was the replacement of the sewer camera truck. He mentioned that an old ambulance was being used for the sewer camera. Mr. Kennedy had also asked to replace the water pressure regulator on Washington Avenue. Mr. Boggess stated that it was something that needed to be done, but was not a critical need. He said it was the last line of defense against over-pressurizing an area. The next item for the Utility Fund was to replace the two (2) Twin Mountain water tanks with one (1) tank. This was on the Falling Creek water system which served approximately four hundred (400) customers. He mentioned that, even if the Falling Creek system was ever combined with the rest of the Vinton water system, that tank would still be needed. Mr. Boggess stated that the last Utility Fund request was for a mobile light plant. He said it would be a generator with huge lights attached to it and would be used for working at night during water or sewer breaks. He stated that Mr. Kennedy would really like to see that funded for safety reasons. Mr. Boggess next discussed their recommended items for funding in the General Fund. He asked that the Planning Commission review their list and re-prioritize it in the way they felt the items needed to be funded. He mentioned that the most important item to him was the replacement of the frailhead tractor, and that they hoped to fund it sooner than later. He said, if they could pull the cost of it out, they would be right on target for funding. He mentioned that they would need to keep the project cost around two hundred twenty (220) thousand dollars. He said, if they added to the list,

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION  
MARCH 3, 2005  
PAGE 6**

they would need to take something off the list. He said that the second item was the addition of the ride-on lawnmowers. He mentioned that they would like to fund those early as well, in addition to the Public Works software. He said those were critical needs that needed to be taken care of. Mr. Boggess gave them a few minutes to look over the list he had written up. Mr. Patterson stated that he thought there were a lot of items on the list that needed to be done for safety reasons. Chairman Mayer asked if the funds for the pool filtration items were being split. Mr. Boggess said they were being split over two (2) years. He stated that Mr. Thompson was going to setup a way to keep track of money being saved for projects over a couple of years. Mr. Patterson asked if the repairs needed for the Walnut Avenue bridge were for safety reasons. Mr. Boggess stated that it would eventually become a safety issue. He said that the engineers who inspect the bridges annually in the Town had not yet reduced the rating on the bridge. Mr. Boggess said reducing the rating on the bridge would cause some of the companies in that area with heavy trucks to be on the Town quickly about it. He stated that it may only be one (1) or two (2) years before the rating would have to be reduced. Ms. Drewery mentioned that it could be sooner with the water and debris that wash under the bridge during heavy rains. Chairman Mayer asked how much Southern States trucks weighed. Mr. Jones said the trucks weigh approximately forty-two (42) thousand pounds. Chairman Mayer asked if money needed to be spent on a bridge that was unrated. Ms. Drewery pointed out that it was the truck route and did keep trucks from cutting through her neighborhood so much. Mr. Boggess stated that an unrated bridge was a good thing. If VDOT required the Town to limit the weight allowed on the bridge, the trucks would have to be rerouted through Midway. Mr. Boggess asked if the Planning Commission would like to find a way to move the Walnut Avenue bridge back on to the priority list. Ms. Drewery then asked, if it was not put on the list this year, if it would have to be put on the list next year. Finally, Ms. Barbour asked if they were concerned about repairing a bridge that would still be located within the floodway. Ms. Drewery stated that there used to be a one-lane bridge there before, and that the bridge there now was a big improvement over it. Chairman Mayer asked if there would be room on the list for the bridge repairs if the frailhead tractor and the two (2) ride-on mowers were purchased ahead of time on this year's budget. Mr. Boggess stated that he felt that they would be able to fund two hundred twenty (220) thousand dollars; therefore, he put together a list together of three hundred twenty eight (328) thousand dollars with the idea of paying for some of the items early. Mr. Thompson said they were planning to ask Council's permission to purchase the frailhead tractor and mowers ahead of time. Mr. Jones said that the rest of the list would use the available funding. Mr. Boggess said they could put the bridge on the list. He stated that the final funding figure had not yet been determined. He said it would be worth putting it on the list so that Council would keep it in mind. Ms. McMillan mentioned that it would be good to have it on the C.I.P. to show for the VDOT six (6) year plan. Mr. Boggess agreed with her. Chairman Mayer stated that it needed to be in the C.I.P. Mr. Boggess asked where the Planning Commission would like to put it on the C.I.P list. Ms. Drewery asked if there was any way to reduce the costs of the repairs. Mr. Boggess stated that they could fund half of the cost this year and the other half next year. Chairman Mayer stated that it was a public safety item, whereas the cash registers were not. Ms. Drewery agreed with him. Mr. Jones said it was a major road that was getting more traffic because of what Roanoke City did with Route 24. Mr. Boggess said they could put funding at one third (1/3) of the total cost this year and be able to move it up higher on the list, and he said they could get the other two thirds (2/3) next year. Mr. Boggess asked if there was anything

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION  
MARCH 3, 2005  
PAGE 7**

else they would like to add to this list. The Commissioners had nothing else to add to the list. Mr. Boggess asked if they wanted to move any items up farther on the list. Both Mr. Jones and Chairman Mayer said to leave the list in the order that Mr. Boggess presented it, with the addition of the Walnut Avenue bridge at the bottom. Mr. Jones said if the bridge needed to be moved up in priority, it could be done at a later time. Mr. Boggess next discussed the utility fund. He said that the requests for funding were at one hundred ninety nine (199) thousand dollars. He mentioned that it was what the Public Works Director saw as the immediate needs for the coming year. Mr. Boggess said that he did not see problems with being able to fund the items in the utility fund. Mr. Jones said the items looked to be very well organized. He said these items had to be kept going; otherwise, it was “pay me now or pay me later”. Chairman Mayer said that the utility fund had the money to pay for the items. Ms. Drewery noticed a request for a cell phone in one of the fire department’s vehicles in the General Fund. She asked why they needed the cell phone since they had radios. Mr. Boggess mentioned that it allowed the Town to stay in touch with the employees without going over the County-wide radio network. He said they also needed the phone to call the hospitals because of the patient confidentiality laws. Chairman Mayer asked for a motion to recommend the C.I.P. with the addition of the Walnut Avenue bridge repairs. Mr. Patterson made the motion, and Ms. Drewery seconded his motion. A roll call vote was taken and all members present voted in favor of Mr. Patterson’s motion. Chairman Mayer thanked the staff for one of the most detailed C.I.P. reports ever sent to them without frivolous items in it.

The next item discussed was other business because Chairman Mayer requested to skip the Election of Officers. Chairman Mayer mentioned that he had still not received his certificate from the Certified Planning Commissioner class, even though he had sent in all the homework. Ms. McMillan stated that Ms. Cooper was working on obtaining Chairman Mayer’s certificate. Chairman Mayer mentioned the planning assistance that was needed to look at some of the recommendations from the new Comprehensive Plan. He also mentioned that he had someone call him about opening up a “doggy day care”. He said it was not defined by the zoning ordinance, and was unlike a kennel where the dogs stayed overnight and was not like a veterinarian’s or grooming office. Ms. McMillan mentioned that her time was being taken up by the Hazard Mitigation Grant, as well as the new storm water requirements. Ms. McMillan said that staff would need time to do research on the “doggy day care”. Chairman Mayer stated that he was concerned by the lack of frequency of the meetings. He mentioned that he knew they were normally held on an as-needed basis. Ms. McMillan said she thought that, according to the state code, the Planning Commission must meet at least three (3) times per year. Chairman Mayer asked that they put together a work agenda for the upcoming meetings. Ms. McMillan mentioned that there had been many site plans submitted to the Town for review and approval. She named several of the site plans including Village Green townhomes, Lewis Russell Estates single family homes, and Falcon Point single family homes. She also mentioned that Advance Auto had submitted a preliminary site plan for a new building to be built near their existing store. Ms. McMillan said the planning department was also handling the façade improvement grant applications for downtown, and said they had received two (2) applications to date. Ms. McMillan said that the Comprehensive Plan had been sent to the printer for the copies to be made. She then asked, in regards to upcoming meetings, if they could be scheduled on the first Thursdays of each month. Chairman

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION  
MARCH 3, 2005  
PAGE 8**

Mayer stated that it seemed to him that they should be meeting at least every two months. Chairman Mayer, Mr. Jones, and Ms. Drewery said they would like to keep abreast of what was taking place in the Town. Mr. Jones stated that he felt that the Planning Commissioners should know what was taking place without having to ask builders and citizens. Ms. McMillan offered to send them a copy of the monthly report that was sent by her department each month to Town Council. Ms. McMillan suggested that they meet the first Thursday in May, July, and September. Chairman Mayer asked if they would be able to meet in April to prioritize for the remainder of the year what needed to be accomplished. Meeting dates of April 7<sup>th</sup> and June 16<sup>th</sup> were set for 5:30 p.m. Ms. McMillan mentioned that Clean Valley Day would be held on April 9<sup>th</sup>, and the annual Spring Cleanup Week would be held April 11<sup>th</sup> through April 15<sup>th</sup>. Another upcoming event she told them about was Arbor Day at Herman L. Horn Elementary School on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The next item of business was the election of officers. Bruce Mayer was nominated for Chairperson. Joan Drewery was nominated for Vice Chairperson. Anita McMillan was nominated for Secretary. Julie Tucei was nominated for Recording Secretary. The motion for the nominations was made by Mr. Patterson, and was seconded by Mr. Jones. A roll call vote was taken, and all members who were present voted in favor of Mr. Patterson's motion.

Ms. McMillan again mentioned that the Comprehensive Plan had been sent to the printer for duplication at a cost of approximately thirty (30) to thirty-five (35) dollars per set. The Commissioners asked that, once the copies were completed by the printer, a letter be sent to all of the citizens who had been involved with the Comprehensive Plan process telling them that copies of the Plan were available for them to pickup at the Planning Department at no charge. Ms. McMillan also mentioned that the executive summary of the Plan would still need to be completed by staff. She said she would bring copies of summaries that other localities had done of their Comprehensive Plans to their next meeting for the Planning Commission to help decide the format for Vinton's summary.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m. by Chairman Mayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Anita McMillan  
Planning Commission Secretary