



MINERAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 10, 2025 at 6:30 PM

312 Mineral Avenue Mineral Virginia 23117

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Members Present:

Acting Mayor Ronald Chapman

Michelle Covert

David Hempstead – arrived at 8:32 PM

Bernice Kube - Present via Zoom due to medical reasons

Olivia McCarthy

Rebecca McGehee

Others Present:

Nicole Washington, Town Manager

Stephanie Dorman, Town Clerk

Robert Sproul, Esq. , Town Attorney

Kelly Singletary, Town Treasurer – arrived after FOIA training

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion to adopt agenda as presented by Council Member McCarthy and seconded by Covert.

Michelle Covert - yes

Bernice Kube - yes

Olivia McCarthy - yes

Rebecca McGehee - yes

Motion passed 4-0-0.

FOIA TRAINING

Joe Underwood, with Virginia FOIA Advisory Council provided FOIA Training to present Council members, staff, and Planning Commissioners.

The present Commissioners were Ed Kube (via Zoom), Brian Thaler, and Jim Snider.

The training lasted approximately 75 minutes.

Council took a ten-minute recess and an email was sent to Councilman Hempstead to advise the training was over.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

9.26.2024 Minutes

Motion to approve minutes as presented by Covert and seconded by McCarthy.

Ronald Chapman – yes
Michelle Covert - yes
Bernice Kube - yes
Olivia McCarthy - abstain
Rebecca McGehee - abstain

Motion passed 3-0-2.

10.7.2024 Minutes

Motion to approve minutes as presented by Covert and seconded by McCarthy.

Ronald Chapman – yes
Michelle Covert - yes
Bernice Kube - yes
Olivia McCarthy - abstain
Rebecca McGehee - abstain

Motion passed 3-0-2.

Council discussed the back log of minutes. All minutes will be added to the March agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public signed up to speak.

OLD BUSINESS

Appointment of Mayor

Motion to appoint Ronald Chapman as Mayor by Kube and seconded by McCarthy.

Ronald Chapman – abstain
Michelle Covert - yes
Bernice Kube - yes
Olivia McCarthy - yes
Rebecca McGehee - yes

Motion passed 4-0-1.

“Appointment of Vice Mayor” and “Posting of Council Vacancy” added to agenda with consensus of Council.

Appointment of Vice Mayor

Motion to appoint Dr. Michelle Covert as Vice Mayor by McGehee and seconded by McCarthy.

Council member Kube advised that she believes it is best for Council member Covert’s request for an easement or street closure to be resolved before taking a seat of prominence.

Ronald Chapman – yes
Michelle Covert - abstain
Bernice Kube - no
Olivia McCarthy - yes
Rebecca McGehee - yes

Motion passed 3-1-1.

Posting of Council Vacancy

Council will review resumes and letters of interest on March 3, 2025 at 6:30 pm.

Council will appoint a new Council member on March 10, 2025 at 6:30 pm.

Motion for March 3rd to be the final day to receive applications and March 10th for appointment of a Council member made by Council member McGehee and seconded by Council member McCarthy.

Michelle Covert - yes
Bernice Kube - yes

Olivia McCarthy - yes
Rebecca McGehee - yes

Motion passed 4-0-0.

Mayor Chapman will no longer be voting unless required.

REPORTS

Treasurer's Report

Council member McGehee asked if the Town is on budget and the Town Manager responded that the Town is generally on budget. The Town Manager explained the report provided in the packet to Council.

The Town Manager advised that the budget report is still a work in progress as they are still working to understand the software system.

Council member McGehee complemented the staff on their work.

The Town Manager stated that the upcoming budget will all be done within the financial system.

Council member McGehee asked for a status on the audit and the Town Manager advised there have been several meetings with the Auditors as they continue to look for needed documents.

The Town Manager added that she is still working to get the grant money for the water.

DMV Report

Council member McGehee asked if DMV numbers are down.

The Town Manager advised this is partially due to correct numbers being reported as they had previously been inflated.

Council member McGehee apologizes as she read the report wrong and understands that is the Town's revenue, not the amount DMV made for the month.

Mayor Chapman asked about staff morale and the Town Manager responded that everything is going well, and they are not currently looking to fill the vacancy.

Town Manager/ Zoning Administrator Report

Mayor Chapman asked when the Whitlock Family Park sign will be installed. The Town Manager reported that it will be installed mid-April.

Council member Kube added that they are hoping to have a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Whitlock Family Park and the sign on the first weekend in May. The Mayor would like to invite the Governor, Duane Adams, and John McGuire to the ribbon cutting ceremony. Council member Kube would first like to confirm the date with the Whitlock family.

The Town Manager advised that the garage door is being installed on the 21st.

The Town Manager presented the water disconnection policy. There are several past due accounts and this policy would help the Town to address these accounts.

Council member McGehee asked if there is anything for residents who are facing hardship and the Town Manager advised that is something Council can create but currently the Town does not have anything in place. Council discussed potential ideas on how to address this issue.

Mayor Chapman asked for a status on the residence that is having a large leak. The Town Manager reported that the resident has cut the water, clarifying that the Town did not cut off their water, and the resident is getting quotes for the repairs. The Town Manager has provided the residents with potential resources.

Council member Hempstead arrived at 8:32 pm.

Mayor Chapman asked if this policy needed to be voted on by Council and the Town Manager believes it would make staff feel better to have the backing of Council on this.

Council member McCarthy asked if the Town may be able to transition to online billing. The Town Manager reported that it would be a process and eventually the Town would like to email bills. Council discussed what the electronic bills may look like.

Motion to approve the water disconnect policy by Council member McCarthy and seconded by Vice-Mayor Covert.

Michelle Covert – yes
David Hempstead - yes
Bernice Kube - yes
Olivia McCarthy - yes
Rebecca McGehee - yes

Motion passed 5-0-0.

The Town Manager added that answers from the Town Hall questions are listed in her report.

Committee's Report

Vice Mayor Covert:

Utilities:

There is a potential grant and since it has such a small turnaround time, Thomas Jefferson Planning District is applying on the Town's behalf. The grant money can be used for water related materials.

The Vice Mayor and Town Manager have met with a Hydrogeologist regarding the wells. The Hydrogeologist will have drillers come and see if the screens on the well can be cleaned. This can potentially help bring the well back online. The Town is applying for grants to help fund this project.

Economic Development:

There has been interest in potentially renting the building next to the recycling bins. The committee believes it could be good for the Town to rent out that building.

Council member McGehee:

Cemetery:

Mr. Tony Henshaw has been working to clean up around the cemetery as objects have been blown around.

The committee would like a sign to be added that displays the rules.

The Town Manager asked if the sign could be formatted the same as the sign for the Whitlock Family Park sign for consistency.

Police:

There have been 20 traffic stops in the Town for the month of January; 16 on Main Street and 4 on the back streets.

Fire Department:

The Fire Department is still working on their building. They are hoping to get medics to volunteer.

The Fire Department won first place in the decorating contest.

Council member McCarthy:

The Parks and Beautification committees are working together as they tend to blend. The committees would like to host a beautification festival in the spring.

The committee would like to do a large item trash pick-up, hopefully in April.

The committee would like to work with local businesses to do something similar as the Town did for the holiday decorating contest.

A long-term plan would be working with Master Gardeners in Louisa to utilize space and create a community garden.

Another idea the committee had is "Adopt a sign" where businesses or residents could adopt and maintain a Town sign.

Council member Kube:

Parks:

The committee would like to establish flea markets on Saturday mornings or afternoons and would like the restrooms to be open to accommodate the public.

The committee would like a line item created in the budget solely for the Parks Committee. This could include funds for murals and signage.

The committee will develop a plan to present for the use of the Old School Property and the Old Factory.

The committee would like to place lights along trees in the park corridors and trees next to the sidewalks, as well as lights in general around the parks. They would also like banners that can go across the road to advertise for different activities.

The committee would like handicapped parking spaces to be made available.

Mayor Chapman:

Bylaws and Charter update:

Updates on the Bylaws and Charter will be presented next month to Council. The committee will present updates in sections.

Personnel:

The committee is vetting policies and would like a new personnel handbook to give to staff by July 1, 2025.

The Mayor was made aware that the Town needs to appoint a member of the elected body to the County's Planning Commission. The Mayor would like to wait until the vacant Council seat is filled before making the appointment.

NEW BUSINESS

Water disconnect policy

The policy was addressed earlier in the meeting.

Posting of Planning Commission Vacancy

Motion to authorize staff to post vacancy for Mineral Planning Commission made by Vice Mayor Covert and seconded by Council member McCarthy.

Michelle Covert – yes
David Hempstead - yes
Bernice Kube - yes
Olivia McCarthy - yes
Rebecca McGehee - yes

Motion passed 5-0-0.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Special Council meeting March 3, 2025 at 6:30 pm.
Regularly scheduled Council meeting March 10, 2025 at 6:30 pm.

CLOSED SESSION

Council went into closed session at 9:05 PM in accordance with §2.2-3711(A)(7) and §2.2-3711(A)(8) to discuss with legal counsel actual litigation and to consult with counsel regarding derelict buildings.

Motion by McCarthy and seconded by McGehee.

Michelle Covert - yes
David Hempstead – yes
Bernice Kube – yes
Olivia McCarthy - yes

Rebecca McGehee - yes
Motion passed 5-0-0.

BACK IN SESSION

All members of Council voted to certify the closed session and to go back into session at 9:43PM

Ronald Chapman - yes
Michelle Covert – yes
Bernice Kube - yes
David Hempstead - yes
Olivia McCarthy - yes
Rebecca McGehee - yes

Motion passed 6-0-0.

Mayor Chapman reported that local businesses are doing a “shop hop” for Valentine’s Day and advocated for people to shop locally.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn the meeting by McGehee and seconded by McCarthy.

Michelle Covert - yes
David Hempstead – yes
Bernice Kube – yes
Olivia McCarthy - yes
Rebecca McGehee - yes

Motion passed 5-0-0.