

The Pearisburg Town Council met in Special Session on July 22, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the Pearisburg Municipal Building. Present for the meeting was Mayor Dickerson; Council Members Ballard, Journell, Clark and Eaton; Town Manager Meredith; Town Clerk Harless and Patrick O'Brien, NRVRC.

O'Brien updated Council on the current status of the proposed DHCD (Department of Housing and Community Development) CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Downtown Project Grant . He is still working with Town staff and Hill Studios to finalize work associated with the Planning Grant. He met with the Downtown Management Team and is working towards adding their suggestions and comments into the plan. The current plan covers numerous possibilities for the downtown. The team has worked to scale back the scope of the plan to a more realistic proposal. He stated that wanted to bring the current plans to Council to make additional adjustments and changes to the plan. He addressed the grant requirements and the Design Plan created by Hill Studios. His goal is to have the Town prepared to be under contract with DHCD in September.

O'Brien discussed the proposed designs for the Multi-Purpose Town Square Improvements. He stated that the main improvements on the Town Square were to increase and improve parking areas. He pointed out the need for updating and creating public space improvements on the Town Square; parking improvements near the salt shed; graveled lots; and organization of parking spaces.

Eaton inquired about the parking area on No. 4. O'Brien answered that there would be a paved parking lot close to the Allen building and new turf parking area beside it along the tree line. Eaton expressed some concerns with there being enough space to fit No. 4. O'Brien stated that No 3. would be paved and wrap behind the Allen building and exit onto Wenonah Avenue. She asked if the houses above the old Town Shop were to be included in the project. Meredith stated that one house across from shop has already been removed from the lot and a new home was constructed in its place. He asked if this could count as match. O'Brien answered that if receipts or documentation dated after July 1, 2016 were available, then yes it could be included. Meredith stated that he planned to count Tazewell and Church paving as match if approved. O'Brien felt it could count as match. Meredith asked if all documentation

needed to be in hand prior to entering into contract with DHCD. O'Brien answered that it wasn't required up front but advised that it would be a good idea to begin gathering the documentation to provide when needed.

Eaton asked what the plan was for the homes above the Town Shop and whether the Town can declare them as blight or demolish them. O'Brien stated that the Town would need to provide a blight remediation plan for Andrea Jones with DHCD to review. He stated that if owners don't want to participate the Town could ask permission to power wash and put a coat of paint on the homes. Eaton asked if the Town could use the Virginia State Code to demolish the homes. O'Brien answered that it was up to the Downtown Management Team to define what is considered blight in the project area. Meredith stated that the Town should consider additional project costs when evaluating whether or not to tighten up the definition of blight because of the additional costs associated with enforcement. O'Brien stated that a definition for blight would need to be decided upon and inventory of buildings with blight created by the end of August to meet deadlines.

O'Brien stated that the Town owned areas in No. 1 and No. 6; and that No. 7 is owned by Psathas. Eaton asked if town staff could address the trees and lighting, along with some grading for match. O'Brien stated that we could use town labor and grant money for supplies. Meredith roughly estimated a match of \$75,000 to \$90,000 in paving improvements in the designated area. Eaton suggested Council prioritize the important areas to address first. Meredith stated that Director of Public Works Wilson felt the public works crew could complete the stabilized turf parking.

O'Brien stated that the Town needs to be very clear in the bid package as to what the Town is providing and what the contractor will need to include in the scope of their work. We should include some flexibility on the projects for the bid package.

Eaton asked if Council planned to leave the salt shed in its current condition. Meredith stated there had been some interest from individuals about developing the shop in the future but nothing that was imminent.

Council discussed the proposed plans for the Municipal Parking Lot Improvements. Council agreed on the proposal for new lightening and low maintenance flowering trees.

Councilmembers expressed reservations about the proposal for terraced steps accessing Main Street from the Municipal Parking Lot. Eaton asked at what point does a decision need to be made to eliminate portions of the proposed project. O'Brien stated that the scope of the work needs to be defined before the Planning Grant contracts are completed. The Planning Grant contracts will not commit the Town to do the project. He stated that once the town begins the implementation phase, there is another step to decide on the plans and put in the bids for the contractors. Meredith felt the overall decision was up to Council. O'Brien stated that Council needed to be ready to move forward at their August council meeting to meet upcoming deadline. Clark felt that Council should remove No. 3 and No. 4 and focus on the Town parking lot. Meredith suggested placing gravel instead of paving the Town parking lot. He did have some concerns about storm water drainage. Clark felt it would be good for businesses and town employees to have extra parking.

After Council discussed the plans for Multi-Purpose Town Square Improvements, items identified to keep in the proposed plan include the following:

- Construct No. 6 (Town owned) and No. 1 (Town owned) like No. 5 (Town parking lot beside old shop) and designate handicap parking for this area
- Minimal Improvements to No. 8 (Town parking lot behind Shelton Place) and designate handicap parking along with designated parking spaces for Shelton Place businesses near the ramp to the back of the building
- No. 3 (Allen's property) move to low priority compared to other needed improvements in the downtown
- New proposal for No. 7 (Psathas property) instead of terrace seating, utilize the area for a nice sidewalk/walkway to access Sylvia's Restaurant and create a pathway between the restaurant and Psathas building in the green space
- Designate No. 5 (Town parking lot) as low priority. If scope of project allows possibly do some light grading and gravel fill-in
- Eliminate No. 4 Turf Parking (Allen's property) due to other needed improvements in the downtown
- Eliminate No. 2 completely from the project

Council discussed the proposed terraced steps accessing Wenonah from the Municipal parking lot. O'Brien stated the plan called for wooden steps not concrete. Council discussed maintenance of the green space near the proposed steps between the Smith and Ingram building. They felt market lights and dispensers for pet waste would be an improvement. Eaton felt it would be convenient for residents to park in the municipal lot and be able to access Main Street and downtown businesses. She asked about reducing the cost of the steps. Meredith stated that he felt staff could construct the wooden steps. He didn't want to commit to a concrete project which may prove costly. Eaton asked about the current walkway between the theatre and apartment building. O'Brien stated market lighting was being proposed. He would need to look at the rules for historic buildings. The project might need to include the cost of placing lighting on poles and not anchor the lights to the building. Eaton asked if an estimate could be done on gravel verses paving for the proposed addition to the municipal parking lot. Meredith stated he could contact Hurt & Proffitt to study the cost involved to construct a new parking lot area. The Town could use their services as match. Council agreed on new lighting along back of businesses on Wenonah in Municipal Lot

Meredith has received three contract commitment letters from business owners. The Christian Mission and Roger Jennelle will easily meet the match with current improvements taking place on their buildings. O'Brien stated that he would leave window treatments in downtown district between the owner and Downtown Management Team. Eaton asked about the minimum for participation in the grant regulations. O'Brien answered that the Town needed four participants. Clark asked about placing a mural on the back of the Pearis Theatre. She stated the Town still has a project that needs to be completed. Meredith answered that he may need to contact the Commission for Arts and get permission for funds to be re-allocated. O'Brien thought this would be a good time to tie that project into the grant. Meredith stated that the Town didn't have a contact to ask for permission. O'Brien mentioned a West Virginia professor he knows with online resources. Clark stated that she would contact Sylvia Fleener executrix on the estate.

Eaton asked about the next step on bidding the project out. She asked if the Town would have one contractor, or several, do all the business facades. O'Brien answered that

contractors can bid on portions of the project or the entire project. He stated that the Town's design plan would need to be very firm when you put the project out to bid. Eaton asked if the business owners could choose their own contractor. O'Brien stated that if they used their own contractor they would only get reimbursed for materials and not the labor. Clark asked where the low-income markers come into play. O'Brien stated that we advertise during the project if interested please apply. The Town will make a good faith effort to hire low-income contractors. The contractors will have to agree to the levels of pay that DHCD sets for rates.

Clark asked if Council could cap the amounts. Meredith stated the Mission will be close to matching \$30,000. Eaton asked O'Brien if other localities ever trouble have meeting their match. O'Brien stated that the best practice was to focus on the scope of the project and only include what the Town felt comfortable including in the project. He stated that during a 5-year period the property owners would be obligated to maintain the improvements based on their agreement. Eaton asked about having lien options or placing an easement on the building instead of a lien on their property. Clark asked if the Town could include language on the maintenance responsibilities.

Meredith stated that there were some deliverables that needed addressed in order to move forward and meet deadlines. Council needed to look at approving a Façade Improvement Program Design and grant permission for O'Brien to submit an RFP for Architecture/Engineering Services. Meredith stated he had reviewed the RFP and felt it was acceptable. He recommends Council approval contingent upon Town Attorney review.

Eaton made a motion that Council approve moving forward with advertising the RFP for Architecture/Engineering Services on the Downtown Revitalization Project contingent upon Town Attorney review . Ballard seconded the motion. Voting yes: Mayor Dickerson; Council Members Ballard, Journell, Clark and Eaton. The motion carried by a vote of 5 to 0.

Clark addressed Council with her concerns about accepting the grant project. She has reservations on the amount of Town funds needed for the project and amount of staff time required to assist with match. She stated that she is concerned that regular scheduled work may fall behind with the current and future projects already scheduled. She mentioned the Sewer Project, CIP Waterworks Plan, Water Project, Parks, Rec Revitalization Project along with

routine improvements and maintenance on Town facilities. She stated that the Police Department is short an officer due to injury and the Chief may want to hire an additional officer in the next budget year. Clark stated that she was still considering all options not fully committed to moving forward with the Downtown project. She would like to see it completed but has concerns about adding this to the current workload placed on the Town's staff.

Meredith spoke in reference to Clarks concerns. He stated that the Town does consist of a small staff. He stated that the Sewer Project should wrap around the end of September, in the next year or two there will be some facility capital improvement plans developed. Staff is in the early planning process on a capital improvement plan for the waterworks system. This plan will identify future projects in the coming fiscal cycles. He felt that if projects were staggered just right, staff should be able to handle another project. Clark replied that the Town just didn't have a big staff to complete all these projects at one time. She has had complaints about the condition of the Town Pool bathhouse. She has concerns about the needed replacement of the HVAC system at the Town Library and there are numerous improvements needed at the Community Center. She would like to consider putting time and resources into the Town's facilities that need repair and upgrades. She stated that she understands that we do get complaints and concerns about the downtown but feels that the Council should consider the immediate needs the Town's facilities. Meredith replied that he understood a new HVAC at an estimated cost of \$180,000 and would most likely be needed soon. He felt that Town staff assisting with the project would help reduce the amount of funds on the Town match for the project. Meredith felt that if the projects were planned effectively, then it should be feasible for all projects to be completed. Meredith stated that he feels that Town Staff can manage the Downtown Project. Eaton stated that she felt much better about the project after clarification and discussion with O'Brien. Council thanked him for his update and input on the project.

On a motion by Eaton, seconded by Clark, passed by the following recorded vote, Council Members, Dickerson, yes, Williams, absent; Eaton, yes; Ballard, yes; Journell, yes; Clark, yes; and Harrell, absent; Council went into Executive Session as permitted by Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A) (29), for discussion of the award of public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of

such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the Town.

On a motion by Journell, seconded by Ballard, passed by the following recorded vote, Council Members Dickerson, yes, Williams, absent; Eaton, yes; Ballard, yes; Journell, yes; Clark yes; and Harrell, absent; Council returned to regular session.

On a motion by Clark seconded by Eaton, and passed by the following recorded vote, Council Members Dickerson, yes, Williams, absent; Eaton, yes; Ballard, yes; Journell, yes; Clark yes; and Harrell, absent; Council certified that the subject discussed in this Executive Session was the subject identified in the motion to go into Executive Session and only that subject, and that Council discussed no other subject while in Executive Session.

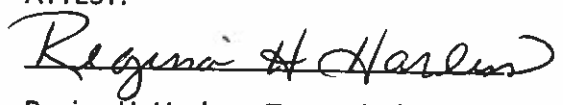
There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED:



Mayor Robert L. Dickerson

ATTEST:



Regina H. Harless, Town Clerk