



MIDDLEBURG TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 13, 2017



PRESENT: Mayor Betsy A. Davis
Councilmember J. Kevin Daly
Councilmember Kevin Hazard
Councilmember Peter Leonard-Morgan
Councilmember Trowbridge "Bridge" Littleton
Councilmember Philip Miller
Councilmember Mark T. Snyder

STAFF: Martha Mason Semmes, Town Administrator
Martin R. Crim, Town Attorney
A.J. Panebianco, Chief of Police
Mike Prince, Police Lieutenant
William M. Moore, Town Planner
Cindy C. Pearson, Economic Development Coordinator
Ashley Bott, Town Treasurer
Jamie Gaucher, Business & Economic Development Director

ABSENT: Vice Mayor Darlene Kirk

The Town Council of the Town of Middleburg, Virginia held their regular monthly meeting, beginning at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 13, 2017 in the Town Hall Council Chambers, located at 10 W. Marshall Street. Mayor Davis led Council and those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Public Comment

Dennis Cotter opined that the Town was looking good these days with the new streetscape improvements and the hail storm damage repairs. He reported, however, that the house at 301 East Washington Street had not been repaired and included broken windows. Mr. Cotter advised that it was located on the east entrance to town and opined that it gave a bad impression to visitors. He noted that the owners were planning major renovations; and, suggested they fix the broken windows in the meantime. Mr. Cotter advised that he had written to the Town twice regarding this matter, with no response, which was why he was appearing before the Council. He opined that the broken windows were a nuisance and could be an open invitation to crime. Mr. Cotter suggested the Council ask the owners to repair the windows as soon as possible.

Colleen Mathis, 7 South Madison Street, appeared before Council regarding the new parking regulations. She noted that she had lived there for two years and had always been able to park on the street. Ms. Mathis advised that she worked from home; therefore, it was difficult for her to move her car as often as necessary. She questioned whether it was possible to purchase a hanger/sticker for parking. Ms. Mathis expressed concern as it would be difficult to not get parking tickets. She noted the escalating fees and advised that this would be bad for her. Ms. Mathis expressed hope that residents could be grandfathered so there would be parking available for them. She opined that other municipalities offered parking passes/zones for a fee.

Punkin Lee appeared before Council regarding the wayfinding sign agenda item. She noted that the project was discussed three years ago, with the committee having viewed a sample sign. Ms. Lee advised that on paper, it looked like one thing; however, when the sample arrived, no one thought it was great. She opined that this project had not gone anywhere since. Ms. Lee further opined that the streetscape project did not turn out like the original concept and noted that there were many more poles. She suggested there was visual litter and street clutter. Ms. Lee questioned why the Town did the streetscape project if it intended to add additional signs without removing some and opined that it would be a “sea of signs”. She advised that the signs have not been presented to either the Streetscape Committee or the HDRC. Ms. Lee acknowledged that these were VDOT signs that must comply with their guidelines; however, she suggested there were ways to improve on what the Town had. She suggested that to “stamp” something that had been sitting for three years and to let it go was something the Town would not want to live with.

Special Recognitions by Mayor and Council

Resolution of Appreciation

Councilmember Daly moved, seconded by Councilmember Leonard-Morgan, that Council adopt a resolution extending its appreciation to Charles M. “Mike” Prince for his service in the Middleburg Police Department from December 6, 2007 through August 1, 2017.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Daly, Hazard, Leonard-Morgan, Littleton, Miller and Snyder
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Vice Mayor Kirk
(Mayor Davis only votes in the case of a tie.)

Councilmember Daly read the resolution aloud.

Mayor Davis presented a signed copy of the resolution to Lieutenant Prince, along with a clock with the Middleburg town seal engraved on the pendulum. She thanked Lieutenant Prince for all of his years of service and dedication to the Town.

Erin Rayner, of Congresswoman Comstock’s office, appeared before Council to thank Lieutenant Prince of his years of service. She presented him with a flag that had been flown over the State Capitol on the Fourth of July.

Approval of Minutes

Councilmember Snyder moved, seconded by Councilmember Daly, that Council approve the June 8, 2017 Regular Meeting, June 20, 2017 EDAC Meeting, June 22, 2017 Work Session and June 27, 2017 Middleburg Futures’ Group meeting minutes as amended.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Daly, Hazard, Leonard-Morgan, Littleton, Miller and Snyder
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Vice Mayor Kirk
(Mayor Davis only votes in the case of a tie.)

Staff Reports

Stuart Will, of IES, reported that the following work had been done: on June 2nd, he replaced the contactor on the #2 BFD that drove the membrane pumps; on June 21st, he performed an acid recovery clean on the #2 membrane itself, which provided superb recovery; and, on June 29th, he replaced the ultraviolet bulbs on the #2 bank of the disinfection system at the wastewater treatment plant. He advised that the latter was necessary as the bulbs were to be replaced every ten thousand hours; however, that had not been done since IES began work for the Town. Mr. Will reported that toward the beginning of the month, he began having problems with the Well L telemetry at the Stonewall Water Treatment Plant. He explained that they were able to reset it for a while; however, toward the middle of the month, it failed completely. Mr. Will advised that he was working to get Embarq to repair it.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that she attended a Board of Supervisors Finance Committee meeting regarding the consolidated Town-County billing item and advised that they endorsed moving forward with it. She noted the need to work out a memorandum of understanding between the County and the towns and suggested this was a good step forward. Ms. Semmes noted that they talked about the cost to the County for providing the service.

Town Treasurer Bott reported that they originally talked about a one percent fee; however, the Committee later recommended a 1.25% fee. She advised that the County Treasurer returned to the towns with a fee of 1.15%. Ms. Bott noted that he asked which towns would be interested in consolidated billing at that level.

Councilmember Miller questioned whether the fee would be capped at that level or whether the County could return later with a higher amount. Town Treasurer Bott suggested the need to include a cap in the MOU.

Councilmember Snyder questioned whether the MOU would come to the Council. Town Administrator Semmes confirmed it would. She noted that the Town Attorney was involved in the review. Ms. Semmes opined that the towns wanted to emphasize to the County Board that town taxpayers were also county taxpayers; therefore, they were already paying some of this cost.

Town Treasurer Bott reported that the difference was \$725 based on the current Town budget.

Councilmember Littleton questioned whether the County knew how many towns were going to take advantage of this opportunity. Town Treasurer Bott reported that five of the seven planned to participate.

Councilmember Miller inquired as to who was not taking advantage of it. Town Treasurer Bott reported that Purcellville just spent \$400,000 for the purchase of Munis software; therefore, they wanted to utilize it to its capacity. She opined that they may buy in at a later time; however, they first wanted to see how their system worked. Ms. Bott advised that Hamilton was the other town and explained that they were so small that they decided to keep their system as is.

Councilmember Littleton questioned whether the staff had any concern that the County would become a victim of their own success. Town Treasurer Bott confirmed she was not and reminded Council that the County already had the data. She advised that there was a severe issue with the County getting information to the towns in a usable format. Ms. Bott reiterated that they already had the data and noted that it was only a matter of adding a line to their bill so the towns' taxes could be collected. She noted that they have spent hours in meetings just trying to figure out a format that the towns could work with, which was why Leesburg raised this suggestion. Ms. Bott reiterated that she was not concerned.

Mayor Davis questioned whether they would do a one-time billing for the Town. Town Administrator Semmes confirmed they would. She explained that this would impact the Town's budget process as it must have a tax rate set by April 14th.

Councilmember Miller inquired as to the time and cost savings for the Town. Town Treasurer Bott reported that it was a huge cost savings. She noted that it was only once a year; therefore, she could still do it. Ms. Bott explained that having one billing would alleviate having multiple hands in the pot and would give residents one bill. She advised that the residents could still come to the Town with questions and noted that the staff would still provide customer service. Ms. Bott opined that this was a great idea given the amount of work that went into putting the County's data into a workable format. She noted that people also frequently called because they thought they had paid their tax bill, only to find out they paid the County, not the Town. Ms. Bott opined that this was a good idea.

Town Attorney Crim reminded Council that this would require statutory authorization; therefore, it would not be implemented until the fiscal year starting July 2019.

Town Administrator Semmes explained that the reason the staff was coming to the Council earlier was that the County needed to make some changes to their software program in order to accommodate this change. She noted that the County Treasurer was also asking for additional compliance officers and advised that the County would also handle the Town's collections of delinquent taxes. Ms. Semmes reported that the County's recommendation for approval was contingent upon getting the enabling State legislation passed. She noted that while one never knew what would happen at the General Assembly, the County was increasing their chances of having it pass by applying it only to Loudoun County. She opined that it was easier to get legislation passed if it only applied to those jurisdictions that were supporting it. Ms. Semmes advised that the Board only supported it because it was a local option as to whether the towns participated. She noted that Fairfax County and Herndon were already doing this.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that progress was being made on the hiring of a Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor. She noted that the Town received a late applicant, who was a good one, and advised that they had an interview with him. Ms. Semmes expressed hope to have an announcement early next week. She advised that in her absence, she had already worked on the terms of the offer with Town Planner Moore and Vice Mayor Kirk. Ms. Semmes noted that she planned to handle this like the Town handled the police officer positions in that the Town Planner would prepare an offer letter based on the terms she had approved and would sign that in her absence, along with the Mayor.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that the Town was starting to receive applications for the Accounting & Administrative Assistant position. She further reported that the Town Treasurer would handle those. Ms. Semmes encouraged the members of Council to send anyone who may be interested in this position to Ms. Bott.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan inquired as to whether the staff had the chance to talk to VML about electronic agendas.

Councilmember Littleton reported that a week ago, he, Councilmember Daly, Town Administrator Semmes, Town Planner Moore and Town Clerk North met to discuss electronic agendas. He noted that previously, they identified what they wanted the system to do. Mr. Littleton advised that everyone's items were consolidated on a spreadsheet, with the committee identifying what the system must do and what it would like for it to do. He reported that last week, the committee met and agreed that there were approximately eight things the system must do from the beginning, such as that it must be secure and protected; that agendas must go out electronically and could be updated as needed; and, that the system must meet FOIA and newspaper publishing requirements. Mr. Littleton advised that there were a few other items on the list; however, this was basically where the committee wanted to start. He explained that the next step was to see who could provide this and to talk to other towns to see who they used. Mr. Littleton suggested the need to find systems that were off-the-shelf that would meet the Town's requirements for consideration. He advised that the Town Clerk had collected information on what other jurisdictions were using.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan inquired as to who was involved with this project from the Town. Councilmember Littleton reiterated that it was Town Administrator Semmes, Town Planner Moore, Town Clerk North, Councilmember Daly and himself.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that she had comments on the draft MOU with Visit Loudoun. She noted that she also discussed the MOU with Councilmember Leonard-Morgan earlier in the day. Ms. Semmes advised that she forwarded it to the Town Attorney for his legal review and to Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher, who would meet with Beth Erikson, of Visit Loudoun. She explained that they were focusing on the type of services the Town wanted from Visit Loudoun, the kind of accountability it wanted and how this could be included in the MOU to ensure the Town received the services it would like to get. Ms. Semmes advised that they planned to look at what was possible and would tie it to what the Town wanted in the MOU.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan advised that one of the things the Middleburg Futures' Group was working on was outreach. He suggested it would be great to make sure these efforts were not being doubled.

Councilmember Miller noted that he had some specific ideas as to what he would like to see from the marketing efforts for the Town's dollars. He advised that he would be happy to sit down with Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher to discuss them.

Councilmember Littleton advised that one of the things he would like was for Visit Loudoun to offer training for small businesses so they could do better with social media and noted that they had staff who did that well. He suggested their representative come to Middleburg for an hour a month in order to help the small businesses get better at that, which would provide a direct benefit.

Town Administrator Semmes advised that one of her review comments was that the Town wanted to have some workshops here. She noted that Leesburg had an advantage in that the Small Business Development Center was located there and had a training facility.

Mayor Davis noted that some of this was done by the Business Association and the County's Small Business Center.

Town Administrator Semmes noted that the Journey Through Hallowed Grounds used to provide an ambassador training program.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan advised Council that he discussed this with a colleague on the Middleburg Futures' Group sub-committee. He reported that in the last thirty days, Middleburg had not had one Instagram post from Visit Loudoun. Mr. Leonard-Morgan suggested it would be great to have one.

Mayor Davis opined that there had been one and noted that Visit Loudoun had brought a group here. She noted that this may have only been posted on Facebook.

Councilmember Snyder reminded Council that, a few years ago when Visit Loudoun was asking the Town to renew their budgetary agreement, he asked them what they were going to do for the Town. He advised that they started to step up after that and provided more information. Mr. Snyder suggested that may not be what the Town wanted and noted the need for on-going discussions.

Mayor Davis introduced **Jamie Gaucher, the Town's New Business & Economic Development Director**. She welcomed him to the community and noted that he would do great things for the Town. Ms. Davis reported that Economic Development Coordinator Pearson was working with Mr. Gaucher to educate him on what she did.

Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher opined that to work through a transition was a great opportunity that did not come along often in state or municipal government. He noted that gaining her experience as an invaluable opportunity.

Economic Development Coordinator Pearson noted that she received a report from Focal Creative about the website. She reported that it contained a huge list of items that the Revised website did not provide the Town. Ms. Pearson advised that she would send that to the Town Attorney so they could determine what should be done next. She reminded Council that the Town needed to decide what direction it should go in and opined that Mr. Gaucher would be a great help in making that decision.

Councilmember Miller noted that he would like to see the report. He reminded Council that the new website had been in development for over a year.

Councilmember Miller questioned whether it was possible to schedule meetings with Bendure Communications and Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher to go over the Town's communications plan. He opined that there was not much of a plan and that what was done was more of a reaction. Mr. Miller expressed hope that Mr. Gaucher could sit down with Ms. Bendure to determine what she could do so he could determine how best to utilize those services moving forward.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan advised that he would like to sit in on that meeting as well.

Town Planner Moore reported that there would be an insert in the July utility bill regarding an online survey that was being done related to the Comprehensive Plan update. He advised that the survey was live; however, it had not yet been advertised. Mr. Moore noted that he would also get with Economic Development Coordinator Pearson to get the notice included in the Friday E-Mail Blast.

Town Planner Moore reported that he was working on a few final details on the Route 50 Project to get the town "spruced up". He explained that he was working on a plan to repaint the yellow curbs and parking spaces, as well as restriping South Madison Street. Mr. Moore noted that he finally received the hardware in order to mount the few remaining parking signs and opined that this would happen within the next week. He advised Council that during their next meeting, the Streetscape Committee would talk about a planting plan for the large expanse around the trees that were planted during the project.

Councilmember Daly questioned whether it was premature to inquire as to the status of the new sidewalk project.

Town Planner Moore reported that he and the Town Administrator met with Jim Bishoff, of J2 Engineers, and advised that he had some ideas for how to address this project. He reported that Mr. Bishoff would have a survey done soon in order to determine specifics, such as whether curb was needed along East Marshall Street to facilitate drainage. Mr. Moore reiterated that Mr. Bishoff had some ideas as to the layout of the sidewalk in proximity to a wall versus the street.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that the good news was that the Town owned more land at the corner of Pickering and Stonewall Avenue where the land dropped off, which would give the Town room to work with the slope. She advised that they discussed removing some scrub trees and installing some nice plantings. Ms. Semmes noted that this would also involve the installation of curb on Pickering Street in order to connect to the curb at the BB&T parking lot.

Councilmember Snyder inquired as to where Marshall Street ended and Stonewall Avenue began. Town Administrator Semmes confirmed it ended and began at that intersection.

Councilmember Hazard noted the Cowgill report on the Health Center building. He further noted that they were checking the fire extinguishers, which must be done. Mr. Hazard advised that there were three vacant units in the building and opined that Cowgill was still trying to decide with whom to list the property.

Economic Development Coordinator Pearson advised Council that she received an email earlier in the day from Cowgill reporting that Margaret McMahon was willing to list the property. She noted that the firm that already had the basement floor units listed was willing to step away so Ms. McMahon could list those as well. Ms. Pearson noted that the firm that had the listing on the apartment had two people who were interested in it and reported that if they had not leased it by the time their agreement was up, Ms. McMahon would also list that one.

Councilmember Hazard suggested that Cowgill's report needed to reflect that more than the fact that they were inspecting fire extinguishers.

Town Treasurer Bott reported that the water bills would go out this week and noted that this was the first bill under the new software. She advised that it was going well.

Chief of Police Panebianco noted that the Police Department would miss Lieutenant Prince and reminded Council that National Night Out would be his "retirement party". He encouraged everyone to attend. Chief Panebianco advised that Lieutenant Prince had done a fabulous job during his tenure as Chief. He reminded Council that National Night Out would be held on August 1st from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Chief Panebianco noted that Lieutenant Prince had served the Town for ten years.

Chief Panebianco announced that the Police Department had succession plans in place. He explained that no one had a single set of duties that they only performed and noted that they planned for succession on an ongoing basis. Chief Panebianco reported that he did recruit for Lieutenant Prince's replacement and would eventually give promotions. He further reported that the Town had hired an officer, Jason Davis, who he hoped to introduce to the Council during their next meeting. Chief Panebianco advised that he would start work on August 1st. He noted that he already worked for the Town as a part-time officer and worked in the Town of Haymarket. Chief Panebianco further noted that he formerly worked in a management position with Safeway. He advised that he had five years' experience and knew the community and opined that he would be a good fit. He reported that the Town received twenty solid applications from certified police officers, including ones from very large police departments. Chief Panebianco advised that he was very excited about the application pool.

Chief Panebianco reported that he painted numbers on the parking spaces on the main street, which would allow the officers to enforce the time limits. He advised that they would try to finish that over the next few weeks. Chief Panebianco reported that he had marked one hundred five parking spaces thus far. He opined that the numbering was not noticeable and noted that they were only there for the officers. Chief Panebianco distributed a sample ticket to the Council and noted that they could not be destroyed. He advised that the software was easy to deal with on his end. Chief Panebianco noted that there have been some issues. He explained that the officers did not necessarily know who wrote what tickets when and advised that multiple officers wrote tickets for an expired inspection sticker within a twenty-four hour period, which resulted in the third fine being \$100. Chief Panebianco noted that he saw the fine on the report and adjudicated it. He advised that it was very easy to address mistakes like that and reported that he was working on a directive on how to notify other officers of tickets written for something like an expired inspection sticker so everyone would be aware when this occurred.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan questioned whether the Town was out of the warning phase. Chief Panebianco confirmed it would not be on the parking time violations until the coming weekend. He noted that they were never doing warnings for safety violations. Chief Panebianco advised that the tickets could be paid online and opined that it was an easy process. He noted that of the nine tickets paid thus far, four were paid online.

Chief Panebianco reported that the only glitch was on the stop orders. He explained that he had worked with two different people from the DMV, who gave him conflicting instructions and noted that the same document had been signed multiple times as a result. Chief Panebianco opined that they have that complete; however, he did not know how long it would take to get their blessing to do the stops.

Chief Panebianco addressed the issue of resident parking. He advised that he did not have a problem with resident parking; however, he reminded Council that the premise was to turn over the parking spaces. Chief Panebianco noted that the parking spaces in the public parking lots were all eight hour spaces and suggested there were options available.

Mayor Davis questioned how the complaining party addressed this issue when there were parking meters. Chief Panebianco opined that she did not live there when there were meters.

Councilmember Snyder advised Council that he lived in an apartment on Madison Street thirty years ago. He further advised that he would park on Federal Street and noted that the only time he had difficulty was when he was too sick to deal with his car.

Mayor Davis suggested the staff encourage people to use the eight hour parking that was available. She noted that if the Town gave all of the residents on-street parking, it would lose a lot of spaces. Chief Panebianco opined that the Town would lose ten to twelve percent of its parking in the main area.

Town Planner Moore noted that residential permit parking was intended to address residential areas on the fringe of a commercial area where there was spill over. He advised that it was also used in university towns. Mr. Moore noted that it was not used in commercial areas that people chose to use for residential purposes.

Councilmember Hazard questioned whether the Town had parking permits that could be purchased. Mayor Davis confirmed it had a limited number. Town Administrator Semmes reported that the Town had a waiting list and advised that the party in question was added to that list.

Chief Panebianco noted that while it was a convenience to park in front of a resident's building, this was the same as if business owners parked in front of their stores for eight hours. He reminded Council that the purpose of the new system was to discourage this from happening. Chief Panebianco expressed an understanding of the party's desire to park close to her residence; however, this may not meet what the parking enforcement was designed to accomplish.

Town Administrator Semmes questioned whether there was a consensus among the Council that it did not want to issue residential permit parking in the downtown area. She noted that there was no such program available at this time.

Councilmember Snyder opined that the consensus of the Council was to not implement one.

Chief Panebianco noted that after 7:00 p.m., this area was available for twelve hour parking, in addition to three hours beginning at 7:00 a.m. He reiterated that an individual could park in that area from 4:00 p.m. to 10:00 a.m. without fear of being ticketed. Chief Panebianco opined that there were a lot of hours available for parking.

Chief Panebianco asked that an item be added to the next Council agenda to allow Officer Davis to meet them and to take an oath of honor, which held him accountable to a higher standard to the citizens and the Council.

Councilmember Daly noted that the Town received applications from twenty qualified officers and opined that this was a reflection of the respect and reputation of Middleburg's Police Department. He advised that Purcellville asked how the Chief got so many applications as they only received a couple and opined that the Chief was "putting the brand out there".

Chief Panebianco advised that the Department's reputation was not just a local one, but was a state-wide one. He noted that they have been called to consult for questions and advised that he had worked with the Town Attorney on issues in other localities. Chief Panebianco reminded Council that the Town solicited for certified officers as it could not afford to send someone to the Police Academy. He noted that the Town received more than twenty applications; however, only twenty were certified. Chief Panebianco advised that he interviewed six individuals and reported that he would have felt comfortable offering three of them a job. He suggested the Town was fortunate to be thought of as highly as it was and opined that a large part of that was due to the support of the Council and Town Administrator.

Mayor Davis questioned whether it was correct that the Town did not send its officers to the Police Academy. Chief Panebianco explained that it did not send them to the academy for basic training, which was six months long. He advised that in a small town, it would take at least three years to see everything they could see. Chief Panebianco noted that he tried to recruit quality officers from other jurisdictions.

Town Attorney Crim noted that he knew Officer Davis and opined that he was a good choice for Middleburg. He reported that he continued to go back and forth with AT&T on the tower lease. Mr. Crim advised that they continued to have discussions regarding the hold-over clause that he wanted to include in the event AT&T wanted to hold over after the end of the term of the lease. He expressed hope to have resolution of that issue shortly.

Town Attorney Crim advised that he recently received a contract for Invoice Cloud for the acceptance of utility payments online and reported that he would take a look at it. He noted that he was familiar with their work and knew what to expect.

Town Attorney Crim reminded Council that last month, they discussed the bonus ordinance and noted that it was now complete. He suggested that whenever the Council wanted to take it up again, they could do so. Mr. Crim noted that the policy was still under review.

Town Attorney Crim reported that he would be on vacation August 14-27; however, his office was prepared to answer any questions the Town may have.

Action Items (non-public hearing related)

Council Approval – Northern Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan

Councilmember Snyder moved, seconded by Councilmember Daly, that Council approve the Town of Middleburg section of the 2017 Northern Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Daly, Hazard, Leonard-Morgan, Littleton, Miller and Snyder

No – N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Vice Mayor Kirk

(Mayor Davis only votes in the case of a tie.)

Council Approval – Pink Box MOA

Councilmember Snyder opined that this was still under legal review. Town Attorney Crim confirmed he had completed his review.

Councilmember Daly moved, seconded by Councilmember Snyder, that Council approve the Pink Box Memorandum of Agreement as presented. Councilmember Daly further moved, seconded by Councilmember Snyder, that Council authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement on the Town's behalf.

Councilmember Littleton thanked the Town Administrator and Town Attorney for their help in working through this matter. He noted that the Museum Foundation's ownership of the Pink Box was new; however, the Town Administrator's history went much further back than anyone's on the Foundation Board. Mr. Littleton advised that the Board was looking forward to a great, long-term relationship with the Town

Town Administrator Semmes advised that she appreciated that Mr. Littleton worked with the Town to allow for some flexibility in the agreement. She noted that the Town hoped the visitor's center would grow with the museum and advised that no one knew what the future would hold. Ms. Semmes suggested that both bodies were open to strengthening the partnership.

Councilmember Littleton noted that they talked about Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher's ability to use it for meetings. He opined that everyone was on board with doing what had been discussed.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that earlier in the day, there were some visitors in the Town Office who were doing a scavenger hunt and were looking for the Jackie Kennedy Pavilion. She noted the need to talk to Salamander about changing their scavenger hunt. Councilmember Hazard noted the need to update it as people were continuing to ask about the Middleburg Country Inn.

Councilmember Littleton noted that he was in the Pink Box over the weekend when visitors asked about the story of the Jackie Kennedy Pavilion. He advised that once he told them the story, they were disappointed. Mr. Littleton further advised that he then explained that Mrs. Kennedy had an affinity for Middleburg, which they attempted to memorialize.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Daly, Hazard, Leonard-Morgan, Littleton, Miller and Snyder
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Vice Mayor Kirk
(Mayor Davis only votes in the case of a tie.)

Discussion Items

Wayfinding Plan Update

Town Administrator Semmes reminded Council of the colors they chose for the signs. She opined that VDOT was close to approving them. Ms. Semmes advised that she received an email from the consultant stating that the official who reviewed the plans offered some very minor comments and reported that the largest thing they wanted was an overall map to show the sign locations. She noted that VDOT's new wayfinding sign program would be implemented by the end of August and expressed hope that this would be the first project approved under it. Ms. Semmes noted that the consultant expected full comments from VDOT within the next couple of weeks and advised that she was already working on the ones of which she was aware. She reminded Council that she provided them with a history of the project.

Town Administrator Semmes advised that as to Ms. Lee's comment, the original plan was reviewed and approved by the Washington Street Streetscape Committee, which included representatives from the HDRC, Middleburg Streetscape Committee, Planning Commission and Town Council, as well as a citizen at large. She noted that the Washington Street Streetscape Committee was first constituted in 2013 as an advisory committee for the Washington Street Streetscape Project and advised that that project included a concept for the wayfinding signs. Ms. Semmes opined that the HDRC was asked whether they wanted to review the plan.

Town Planner Moore advised that in 2014, he inquired during an HDRC meeting whether the entire body wanted to review the plans or whether they were okay sharing their comments with Bill Turnure, Punkin Lee and Trow Littleton who were serving on the Washington Street Streetscape Committee at that time. He advised that the HDRC was fine with that and did not ask that the final plan return to them.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that there was money in the budget for the signs.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan noted that he lived on Chinn Lane. He reported that there was a rusty pole, with nothing on top but a sign that read "Chinn Lane". Mr. Leonard-Morgan reminded Council that this street was located within the Historic District; however, it did not have a nice sign.

Town Administrator Semmes reminded Council that this was considered to be Phase 1 of the plan. She explained that the previous Council expressed an interest in replacing and consolidating all of the Town's street signs with the stop signs over time and opined that half of the poles could be removed through this consolidation. Ms. Semmes advised that once VDOT approved the plan, the Town would have a template going forward for replacing the signs. She opined that there was some money in the budget to start the street sign replacement process. Ms. Semmes noted that the staff had heard comments regarding the street signs, including those in Ridgeview.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that there was also another round of transportation enhancement funding that she and Town Planner Moore had discussed. She noted that the deadline for applying was November 1. Ms. Semmes reported that this funding was based on a two-year cycle; therefore, the Town would not be able to apply again for another two years. She advised that they wanted to work up an application for South Madison Street. Ms. Semmes noted that depending on what the Planning Commission wanted, they could talk about working up something for Federal Street; however, she opined that such an application would be premature.

Councilmember Snyder suggested the need to focus on the surrounding neighborhoods. He further suggested starting with the commercial district and then moving back into the surrounding neighborhoods.

Town Administrator Semmes expressed hope to have the sidewalk installed soon near Chinn Lane and noted that it was part of the scope of work. She advised that the road was being lost at that corner.

Councilmember Hazard questioned whether the Town needed to go through another cycle with VDOT if it wanted to incorporate new street signs. Town Administrator Semmes opined that it would not; however, she advised that she would get an answer to the question. She reminded Council that the goal was to get the plan approved.

Town Planner Moore noted the need to get VDOT approval. He expressed hope that once the wayfinding program, which had a street sign component, was approved that the staff could get other signs approved.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan noted that the base was still missing from some of the signs. Town Planner Moore reported that in addition to the hardware for mounting the signs, he received the bases. He opined that he had enough to address the signs that had that method of bolting. Mr. Moore reminded Council that one such base was already in place on the pole in front of the Pink Box and opined that it was very inconspicuous.

Town Administrator Semmes noted that she ran into Delegate Minchew and his wife, who was the Chair of Leesburg's Board of Architectural Review, last week. She advised that Mrs. Minchew complimented her on how beautiful the town was. Ms. Semmes noted that Leesburg had received an application for a micro cell facility and advised that they were worried about them. She reminded Council that the amendment to the state legislation allowed for a review of them in the Historic District; however, Mrs. Minchew did not believe it gave them as much review authority as was needed.

Town Attorney Crim reported that this issue had heated up within the last few weeks. He advised Council that Vienna was in the last stages of reaching a contract, Alexandria had approved one and the City of Manassas had received applications. Mr. Crim noted the sudden uptick in that work. He advised that this was a surprise to him as he was led to believe the test market would occur elsewhere.

Councilmember Littleton noted that he had served in the telecom industry in the past. He explained that the reason the companies were jumping on this was that the cost for a micro cell was one tenth of the cost of a cell tower.

Town Attorney Crim noted that this was something the HDRC should consider.

Councilmember Snyder advised that he saw this as a huge threat.

Councilmember Littleton opined that it would be awful. He advised that in talking with people in the telecom industry, it was all about getting cell towers out there in order to service the customers. Mr. Littleton noted that they did not care what they looked like. He opined that in locations such as Middleburg, they wanted to get them inside the walls as it was all about line of sight. Mr. Littleton suggested they wanted these antennas all down the main street.

Town Attorney Crim noted that they wanted them on top of fifty foot poles, which was out of scale with Middleburg's streetscape. He reiterated the need to adopt policies with regard to them. Mr. Crim advised that those in driveways could be addressed through right-of-way permits; however, those on private property would be considered to be accessory structures. He noted the need to look at the Town's height regulations for accessory structures and suggested that if it did not have one, the Town needed to look at one.

Town Planner Moore reported that the maximum height of accessory structures in Middleburg was fifteen feet. Town Attorney Crim opined that this would be a barrier and suggested the telecom businesses would look for ways to get around it.

Town Administrator Semmes advised that a proposal was made to put one in a fake chimney in Leesburg on a building that never had a chimney.

Councilmember Miller opined that Ms. Lee had a point with regard to the number of sign poles and noted that the wayfinding plan was developed when the Town had parking meters. He suggested the placement was a concern, as was clutter. Mr. Miller opined that there may be too many sign poles.

Councilmember Littleton noted that they were now different and reminded Council that the wayfinding signs were not designed with those in mind.

Mayor Davis opined that the parking meters were even worse.

Councilmember Miller noted that the parking meters were lower; and, advised that everything was now at the same height. He questioned how the fox was chosen and opined that it looked like it faced the other way when compared to the fox on the Town seal.

Town Administrator Semmes advised Council that there was a requirement with regard to the number of signs at an intersection. She explained that VDOT would not allow the Town to install wayfinding signs right at a corner and advised that they wanted to allow people time to make the decision as to whether to turn or not. Ms. Semmes noted that the signs would need to be set back from the intersection and would need to be installed on either side of it.

Councilmember Miller noted the wayfinding signs. He questioned whether the entire sign would have to be replaced if the Town wished to add something to it. Mr. Miller further questioned whether this was a modular sign system. He noted the cidery that would be opening and advised that it was not listed on the signs.

Town Administrator Semmes advised that the cidery was not eligible for inclusion on the Town's wayfinding signs as they were not located within the Town limits. She noted that the only part of that property that was in the Town limits was the residential piece.

Town Planner Moore reminded Council that the owner had two pieces of property. He advised that he had not seen the site plan; therefore, he was not familiar with whether the cidery building was being placed on the parcel that was located partly in the town and partly in the county. Mr. Moore reiterated that the owner had two parcels of land in this area.

Councilmember Miller noted that the Foxcroft School was not located in town; however, it was listed on the sign. Town Administrator Semmes confirmed it was not. Town Planner Moore explained that it was not eligible to be on the wayfinding sign under VDOT's criteria. He advised that the only way the Town was allowed to list The Hill School on the sign was by including its Performing Arts Center. Mr. Moore noted that they would have a presence but not because of the school.

Councilmember Miller questioned whether the Foxcroft School was still eligible to have a green sign on Madison Street. Town Administrator Semmes advised that this would be up to VDOT. Town Planner Moore opined that the sign should probably not be there and suggested it may be one that was installed before anyone was paying attention. He advised that the sign was not eligible to be installed under VDOT's current criteria.

Councilmember Miller noted the signs on Liberty Street across from the church. He questioned whether those would disappear. Mayor Davis noted that those were a test that was done many years ago and opined that they should have been removed. Town Administrator Semmes suggested that something like that could be placed on private property but could not be placed in the right-of-way. She advised that it could not be a wayfinding sign.

Mayor Davis advised that the majority of the signs were street signs. She noted the library sign on Reed Street and the one in front of the Community Center that pointed to the National Sporting Library & Museum. Ms. Davis also noted the ones in the center of town and opined that they would declutter the existing signs. She reiterated that the majority of the signs were street name signs.

Councilmember Miller noted the Mosby Heritage Area Trail sign that was located in front of the Safeway. He questioned its age. Town Administrator Semmes reported that it would not come down and advised that the Town was not proposing to change it. She noted that it was not a Town sign.

Councilmember Littleton opined that it was a part of a tour route and noted that it was located in the planting bed. Mayor Davis opined that it was a part of their driving tour route.

Councilmember Miller opined that signs such as that one would be inconsistent in terms of the pole.

Councilmember Snyder reminded Council that the Town could not mess with signs that were on private property. He further reminded them of the First Amendment. Mr. Snyder noted that this applied to commercial and private speech.

Town Planner Moore noted that the Town could look at signs like that and discuss whether it wanted to work with the organization to replace the pole to make it more consistent with the wayfinding poles. He reminded Council that the poles for the parking limit signs were the same style. Mr. Moore noted that if the desire was consistency, the staff could work to that end. He reminded Council that the Town had numerous signs that were outside of the wayfinding sign program for which the Town could start to incrementally replace the poles.

Councilmember Miller noted that the Town's entrance signs had a totally different look and feel to the proposed wayfinding signs.

Councilmember Littleton questioned whether the wayfinding plan included the entrance signs. Town Administrator Semmes confirmed there was no plan to replace those signs as part of the Phase 1 project. She reminded Council that Phase 1 was originally planned to be done in conjunction with the Route 50 Project; however, that did not happen. Ms. Semmes noted that a lot of communities had gateway signs and suggested the Council may wish to decide what it wanted to do with those in the future.

Councilmember Hazard noted that the LS103 location was one of the busiest intersections. He opined that it would be nice to see the sign at street level in terms of mass and scale in order to give the Council a better idea of what it would look like. Mr. Hazard suggested it should be easy to do and noted that the consultant could simply take a picture and superimpose the signs on it. He suggested it be photo shopped into a picture for the Council's review.

Councilmember Miller agreed this would give the Council a better perspective of what the signs would actually look like. He suggested this was important.

Town Administrator Semmes reminded Council that there would be old signs that would be removed.

Councilmember Littleton suggested the Council may want to think about not including names in the sign, but rather have plaques attached to it. He cited the example of the visitor's center/museum and advised that, at this point, the Board did not know what its name would be. Mr. Littleton suggested that if someone donated enough money, they may name the building after them.

Councilmember Snyder suggested that if someone did not like the name on a wayfinding sign, the Council could consider a change at their expense.

Councilmember Littleton cautioned Council to be careful to not confuse people. He advised that if the sign read "visitor's center" but it was called the "Pink Box" on the literature/Google, it would confuse visitors. Mr. Littleton suggested the way to easily fix this was to have each listing as a bolted on plate. He noted that each plate would be the same color. Mr. Littleton explained that this would allow for a name change without the need to remove the entire sign.

Councilmember Miller opined that there were many solutions to that problem of which sign makers and designers would be aware.

Town Administrator Semmes advised Council that the signs were not intended to have names on them. She suggested that in the case of the visitor's center/museum, these were generic terms that referenced something a visitor was looking for. Ms. Semmes cited parking as another example. She reiterated that it was not intended to list names but rather was to list functions that people were looking for, such as a visitor's center. Ms. Semmes advised that they added museum to it as the staff knew it would be there; however, she reiterated that the name of the museum would not be on the sign. She further reiterated the need to only provide the gist of what was there. Ms. Semmes reminded Council of the need to keep the message as simple as possible as people would be driving. She advised that she would prefer to put "The Hill School" on the sign, which was the staff's original idea, and suggested it could read "The Hill School Theatre".

Mayor Davis advised Council that a lot of thought had gone into this project, including a lot of things the members were raising. She agreed with the need to keep the terms generic.

Councilmember Snyder noted that it was easier to understand a function over a local name and suggested the function should be a universal term.

Councilmember Miller advised that if a mock-up was going to be prepared, he would also like to see what the kiosk sign would look like.

Town Administrator Semmes advised Council that as to the kiosk, the only thing that would be visible from the street would be the fox. She explained that the Town was not allowed to have things visible from the street that were supposed to be on a pedestrian scale. Ms. Semmes noted that this was why the arrow was pointed toward the building.

Town Planner Moore reminded Council that the sign design was not yet developed and noted that the materials before them were for VDOT's review. He opined that VDOT did not care what the pedestrian information included, as they only wanted to see that it was for pedestrian information. Mr. Moore reiterated that there had been no discussion of what the kiosk would contain, whether it was a map, a map with listings or something that would be easily changeable.

Mayor Davis noted that the previous Council did have that discussion and reported that they agreed it should contain the map.

Town Planner Moore reiterated that the details had not been developed in the plan before the Council as it was just for VDOT.

Town Administrator Semmes reminded Council that the things that mattered to VDOT were the sign materials, color and content. She further reminded them that as to color, VDOT reserved certain ones for themselves.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan questioned whether the rebranding would affect the sign. Town Administrator Semmes inquired as to the type of brand that would affect it. Councilmember Leonard-Morgan noted that he did not know. He suggested that a rebranding could be completely different than the current one.

Town Administrator Semmes reminded Council that not everything in town had to be branded completely the same. Councilmember Miller opined that it should be.

Town Administrator Semmes noted that there were wayfinding signs that did not carry a locality's marketing brand.

Councilmember Littleton suggested the Council should leave that option open and noted that the Town was going to go through a branding exercise. He suggested it could be determined that Middleburg's brand should not be a fox and questioned whether the Council wanted to be thoughtful about that before it had signs made.

Councilmember Snyder suggested it should not and noted that the Council had been going through this exercise for two or three years. He advised that if someone told him that the fox was not the Town's brand, he would ask the Police Chief to escort them out of town.

Mayor Davis noted that the Council had been working on this for a long time. She opined that there was nothing wrong with the fox.

Councilmember Miller noted that the Town could go through the branding exercise and come up with a fox that was stylistically different. He suggested it could face a different direction or be in a different pose. Mr. Miller noted that it could also incorporate the "relax, you're in the village" sleeping fox.

Mayor Davis questioned what would have happened if the signs had already been installed before the Town went through the rebranding exercise.

Councilmember Miller advised that, in that case, he would have tried to find money in the budget to replace the fox. He opined that the right thing to do was to make everything consistent over time.

Councilmember Hazard opined that the Council was over thinking this and noted that eighty percent of the signs were street signs that would not change. He suggested that even if the branding changed, the Town could change them out and questioned the cost for a sign. Mr. Hazard noted that the poles would be the same. He advised that he did not see that as a major issue. Mr. Hazard reminded Council that the Town had a plan and suggested it go with it. He further suggested the need to reverse the fox.

Councilmember Daly questioned how long the Council was talking about to go through a rebranding process. He noted that the sign project had been underway for four years. Mr. Daly questioned when the rebranding meetings would occur.

Councilmember Miller opined that this could be done, depending on how long it took to design the new brand, by January.

Councilmember Snyder suggested the Council was asking to put perfection in the way of serviceability and advised that he did not want to wait. He opined that four years was a long time to work on something.

Councilmember Miller questioned what the VDOT approval process would entail if the Council agreed to go ahead with the current plan but later wanted to adapt the signs to the rebranding. He further questioned whether it could be another six months.

Town Planner Moore opined that this would depend on whether the change was a simple one, such as a change of the fox. He suggested that if all of the other things, such as sizes and colors were the same, it would be a simple process of resubmitting the new logo. Mr. Moore reminded Council that the Town had money to begin implementation of the project this year and suggested that another option would be to begin implementation of the street signs before the wayfinding ones. He advised that once the branding exercise was done, the staff may have to go back to VDOT for change out the fox logo.

Councilmember Daly agreed the Town should start with the street signs first. He noted that changing the branding was not that critical that it could not wait a few months. Mr. Daly opined that no one would get lost because the fox was facing the wrong direction.

Councilmember Snyder suggested that VDOT would not care what direction the fox faced as long as it was similar.

Councilmember Littleton noted that if the Town went through a rebranding exercise with the community, it could only ask the community to use the brand as it could not force them to do so. He further noted the need to have the community buy into it. Mr. Littleton suggested that to then say that the “Town was not going to live by it” or that “we knew at the time we approved the signs that we were going to be doing this but we did it anyway” would take away some of the Town’s credibility when it said “branding was important, we support this idea, we want to have a consistent look and feel in the Town”. He agreed that ninety percent of the signs were street name signs and suggested the Council was only talking about the signs that had a fox on them.

Councilmember Miller advised that from a branding perspective, Councilmember Littleton was right in that the Town would ask everyone to follow the branding guidelines. He suggested that if everyone did so, it would add intrinsic value to the look, feel and recognition of the town. Mr. Miller noted that if they saw the same fox on the entrance sign and map, visitors would know those were Town signs. He suggested that if it was on a pamphlet, visitors would know it was “official”.

Councilmember Snyder noted that the Town had been using the current fox as the Town’s symbol, if not its brand, for at least fifty years. He opined that the Town’s brand was heavily invested in that image.

Town Administrator Semmes advised that in her experience in working with community branding, the Town must decide what it was branding and the purpose. She noted that the Town seal was not going to change and advised that it was the official governmental seal. Ms. Semmes advised that to her what was being talked about was community branding for economic development and marketing purposes. She noted that most of the time that was not the government seal. Ms. Semmes suggested that for this purpose, the Council could just put the Town seal on the signs. She agreed it would be nice to put the brand on them; however, she noted that in her experience, the brand often changed. Ms. Semmes noted that Loudoun County's branding changed twice during her two-year tenure. She asked the Council to think about what made sense for these signs in the long term, recognizing that the Town may rebrand itself every five or ten years.

Councilmember Hazard suggested the Council could postpone this decision and noted that VDOT had not yet approved the plan. He suggested that once the Town received an approval, it would put the signs out to bid and questioned whether it was possible to put them out to bid in two phases, with one being the street signs. Mr. Hazard reiterated his suggestion that the Council postpone the decision on the foxes and noted that if the branding appeared to be taking forever, they could just use it.

Town Administrator Semmes noted that once the branding was complete, the Council could determine whether it lent itself to being on the signs.

Councilmember Hazard noted that the street signs represented the Town and suggested this needed to be considered.

Councilmember Miller noted that he was the person pushing the branding. He advised that he would never hint that this was something that would last "forever" in an RFP. Mr. Miller noted that he wanted it to be something that stood the test of time. He suggested it would represent something that would not be changing every couple of years and noted that Middleburg moved slowly.

Town Administrator Semmes advised that based on what she was hearing, the staff could move forward and opined that it would be useful for the Council to see a scale mock-up of the sign at the intersection. She suggested the Council was saying that once the Town received VDOT approval, which she hoped would be in August, the staff could let the Council know it would be bidding out the street signs and stop signs for now. Ms. Semmes noted that, in the meantime, she would ask VDOT whether they cared if the Town did more signs than just those since it had the budget. She opined that it made sense to do ones, such as Chinn's Lane, at that time.

Councilmember Hazard suggested the staff also ask VDOT for an estimated time frame to get approval to change the logo if the Town did so.

Councilmember Littleton suggested that if approval was gained in September but it turned out the rebranding would take a year, the Council may want to say "never mind, do them all now".

Results & summary of facilitated economic development session

Mayor Davis advised Council that she spoke with Councilmember Littleton and explained that she wanted the Council to have some sort of a summary and to let them know what exactly the plan entailed.

Councilmember Littleton distributed a copy of his presentation and reminded Council of the reasons this initiative was undertaken. He noted that a lot of success had been achieved in the town over the last five to ten years. Mr. Littleton advised that the Town's infrastructure and finances were fixed and opined that the foundation was solid on which to build for the next ten years. He reminded Council that there seemed to be a lot of active buy-in from the community by individuals who wished to become involved. Mr. Littleton questioned how the Town could leverage forward from the success of the past. He used the analogy that ten years ago, Middleburg was like a broken plate, with all of the pieces now having been put back together to form a great base. He questioned how it could be protected.

Councilmember Littleton explained that the idea was to determine how the town could move forward to the next stage, to develop a community plan for the long term and to correct some of the downturn that had been experienced. He suggested the need to correct some misinformation and to increase communication beyond what it currently was. Mr. Littleton noted that the Town had great assets and people and questioned how they could be better utilized.

Councilmember Littleton reported that the Middleburg Futures' Group looked at the desired outcomes and what Middleburg should look like in 2021. He advised that they wanted Middleburg to be real, authentic and vibrant, with people walking around. Mr. Littleton further advised that they wanted it to be business friendly and to have more businesses, restaurants and events. He noted that they suggested it be friendly and walkable, with a brand that was consistent and appealed to visitors, businesses and residents. Mr. Littleton further noted that they suggested it still be the friendly community for which it was known.

Councilmember Littleton reminded Council that the weaknesses and obstacles listed were some of the things that came out of the survey of the 1,200 people. He further reminded them that everyone had challenges and noted that there was no such thing as perfection. Mr. Littleton questioned how the weaknesses and obstacles could be addressed. He advised that what the members came away with was what was going to be the key for success. Mr. Littleton noted that they agreed it must be the right size, achievable and manageable. He advised that they wanted there to be two-way communication between all of the stakeholders and to embrace the team concept. Mr. Littleton suggested that in looking at all of the committees that existed in the Town (HDRC, EDAC, Planning Commission, MBPA, Streetscape, Main Street, Public Safety, Town staff, Go Green), most of them had some kind of stake in a lot of the initiatives that the Town was engaged in; however, they did not interact with each other. He advised that the Futures' Group talked about how they could be the glue that created the lines of communication upstream and downstream between the things. Mr. Littleton noted that with the exception of one committee, all were represented on the Middleburg Futures' Group. He further noted that others were also represented including: the National Sporting Library, Salamander, the Pink Box, wineries, retail, real estate, Arts in Middleburg and the Film Festival. Mr. Littleton reiterated the need to have as much two-way communication as possible. He stressed that the idea was not to take away from, supersede or disown any of the committees of their responsibilities, but rather was to make sure that what they were working on was known to other people.

Councilmember Miller cited as an example that something may be learned through the Planning Commission's Comp Plan survey that could be helpful in the branding exercise.

Councilmember Littleton advised that the next piece the Middleburg Futures' Group considered was Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher, who could be a leader in the community in trying to do what the Futures' Group envisioned. Mr. Littleton noted that the Futures' Group was a ready-made resource for Mr. Gaucher to engage with and that they could support and help him. He suggested that it was up to Mr. Gaucher to serve as the leader to bring this thing forward. Mr. Littleton opined that Mr. Gaucher would facilitate the working relationship with the stakeholders, move projects forward and increase communication. He suggested that over time, the Economic Development Director would become the quarterback of the team, with the Middleburg Futures' Group and other committees being the team that would work together to achieve the goals they set for themselves. Mr. Littleton noted that they would also rally the fans in the stadium, which would be the broader community including the citizens, business owners and residents.

Councilmember Littleton reported that the Futures' Group then looked at the next step and came up with twenty or thirty items that would be great to go after. He advised that some of them would never happen as they were too large. Mr. Littleton explained that the Futures' Group then broke themselves into three groups, with each having something they would push forward. He advised that those items included: engagement, in order to determine how to engage the community and visitors in a more meaningful and consist way; branding, and how the town was branded to consistently represent how Middleburg was and what made Middleburg, Middleburg; and, the Middleburg experience and how it could be improved.

Councilmember Littleton noted that Councilmember Leonard-Morgan served on the engagement sub-committee. He reiterated that they wanted to determine how to better connect the community, businesses and organizations. Mr. Littleton advised Council that the last time the sub-committee met, they discussed how to get the word out and how people could be better engaged. He noted that there were things such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Mr. Littleton advised that during this conversation, Sean Martin mentioned that the Boxwood Winery was celebrating its ten year anniversary during the coming weekend. He noted that everyone at the table, including the representative from Salamander, said that “they had no idea that this was occurring”. Mr. Littleton opined that had people known about it, Boxwood and Salamander could have worked together to get the word out to people. He noted the need for a broad connection across all of the businesses so they could help one another.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan noted that the sub-committee had been discussing that the left hand did not know what the right hand was doing. He further noted that the MBPA and Town were each under taking efforts without knowing what the contract entailed with the Town’s communications contractor. Mr. Leonard-Morgan noted the need for more focus. He opined that the use of social media was getting better. Mr. Leonard-Morgan suggested the need to find out more about Visit Loudoun and to try to get more out of them to help the Middleburg brand.

Councilmember Littleton noted that there were stakeholders listed under each sub-committee and advised that it was the sub-committee’s responsibility to make sure that all of them were engaged and were a part of the team that made things better.

Councilmember Littleton reported that the second item that everyone wanted to tackle was the Middleburg brand. He opined that while not bad, the brand was inconsistent and suggested it could be more consistent and uniform. Councilmember Miller opined that it was also dated.

Councilmember Littleton displayed different websites from Middleburg. He advised that the first photograph on the Visit Middleburg website was of horses and the second one of a golf course. Mr. Littleton reminded Council that the Town did not have a golf course, nor was it known for golf. He advised that the Town (government) represented itself in many ways with a different fox being on the benches, signs and seal.

Councilmember Miller, who served on the branding sub-committee, reported that they identified a list of mandatory deliverables that would be needed for a branding exercise and explained that this was the first step. He noted that he had taken a lot of photographs of business signage around and throughout the town so any potential RFP respondent would have some idea of what the other brands looked like. Mr. Miller advised that they were well into the process of writing a statement of requirements for an RFP.

Mayor Davis questioned whether this was branding that would be done through EDAC. Councilmember Miller confirmed that EDAC would be involved. He noted that the three individuals who were on the branding sub-committee were himself, Daniel Leger and Vincent Bataoel.

Mayor Davis expressed concern that things could stray so far that the Council lost track of its committees and noted that all of those listed were people who were dedicated and came here to help. She expressed fear that money had been spent to make sure that everyone was on the same page and going in the same direction. Ms. Davis noted that branding was something that EDAC should be working on. She further noted that the photographs showed items that needed to be cleaned up and suggested that was something for the Streetscape Committee to work on. Ms. Davis opined that these were all committees from within the Town. She noted that the Middleburg Futures’ Group was coming up with great ideas; however, those ideas should return to the Town committees that should be doing the work, such as the HDRC. Ms. Davis reminded Council that there were great networking opportunities on a monthly basis, such as the Main Street Committee meetings. She noted the Boxwood anniversary that was mentioned and advised that Sean Martin stopped attending the Main Street Committee meetings, which was where people got this information.

Councilmember Hazard agreed. He noted the graphic distributed by Councilmember Littleton that showed the Middleburg Futures' Group as the overarching one. Mr. Hazard opined that the Town Council should be the overarching group.

Mayor Davis suggested it should be the Council and the Business & Economic Development Director.

Councilmember Hazard noted that the Director was a part of the Town. He reminded Council that the Middleburg Futures' Group was not and suggested the need to keep that clear.

Councilmember Littleton advised that it was not that the Middleburg Futures' Group was overarching. He explained that the idea was that branding was more than just one group and was not just EDAC. Mr. Littleton suggested it also included the MBPA, Salamander, the Town Council and the businesses. He opined that there was no one place to go where all of the groups were represented.

Councilmember Hazard disagreed and noted that all of the committees reported to the Town Council.

Councilmember Littleton noted that the MBPA, Salamander, National Sporting Library and the Pink Box did not report to the Council. He advised that they were major elements of the town. Mr. Littleton expressed concern about being rigid about whether something was a committee of the Town and opined that the issue was about the right people in the room, regardless of what they sit on.

Mayor Davis opined that now that the Town had Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher, he needed to be the one putting these things together and keeping everyone informed.

Councilmember Littleton opined that this was what the Middleburg Futures' Group said. He opined that if Mr. Gaucher were to attend all of the committee meetings that would be all he did.

Mayor Davis questioned whether the branding item was given to EDAC. Councilmember Miller advised that it had not been given to anyone to work on. Councilmember Littleton advised that nothing had been assigned to anyone. He explained that they just formulated the three things that they thought were bite size, important and accomplishable in short order. Mr. Littleton cited the wayfinding signs as an example and noted that they did not want to wait a year and a half to get the Town's social media better aligned. He opined that this should only take a couple of months and suggested the need to just get the right people/committees around the table so it could be done and implemented.

Mayor Davis opined that it sounded like there was a sub-group that was going to work on branding; however, that would not be EDAC. Councilmember Littleton confirmed this was correct. He suggested branding was more than EDAC and opined that it was also the HDRC, with regard to what could and could not be done in the Historic District. Mr. Littleton questioned how EDAC and the HDRC could be brought together at the same time so they could work together. He further questioned the mechanisms in place to do that.

Mayor Davis questioned whether Councilmember Littleton was just talking about a couple of meetings. Councilmember Littleton confirmed he was not and advised that what he was saying was these people should drive down into the committees to work with them to come up with a solution.

Councilmember Miller opined that ultimately, this would be a Town Council thing that Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher would lead. He advised that the reason they were working on the branding was to give Mr. Gaucher something to work with and noted that it would take a while for him to understand Middleburg. Mr. Miller reported that this was the exercise they were going to do.

Town Administrator Semmes opined that what she was hearing was that Councilmember Miller wanted to make sure that branding had a public process and involved the community. She reported that any branding process that was bid through the Town, whether it was led by EDAC or by Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher, would have a stakeholders group doing it. Ms. Semmes reminded Council that EDAC had representation from the MBPA and retailers and noted that even that was not enough. She advised that the staff would like to have guidance. Ms. Semmes noted that if this was a Town project, they would use the committees and get feedback and suggested they let EDAC get going on it. She opined that the Streetscape Committee would love to have the recommendations related to the benches.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan noted that the Middleburg Futures' Group, which consisted of people from all walks of life, met for four days to brainstorm. He further noted that they sat down and came up with thoughts and ideas from a perfect world perspective. Mr. Leonard-Morgan advised that they ultimately honed down to the document before the Council. He opined that it was an effort from a diverse group of people to say "hey, this is what we think we should do, what do you think?"

Mayor Davis opined that a phenomenal amount of work had been done. She further opined that the process was great, as well as what the group came up with. Ms. Davis suggested the need for the Council to receive a report, with a summary, to determine how the Town needed to move forward. She suggested the items be doled out where the Council wanted to so they could be worked on.

Councilmember Miller opined that this was where they were from his sub-group's perspective. He noted that he wanted to give Mr. Gaucher time before he presented him with his branding information. Mr. Miller advised that it had been beneficial to be involved in the Middleburg Futures' Group because it had been collaborative and because he received different perspectives from different people. He suggested it was a great communications mechanism for the stakeholders groups that helped facilitate really big projects. Mr. Miller noted that as a result, they held people accountable. He opined that it was a communications and an accountability mechanism. Mr. Miller suggested it answered to all of the organizations and the Council.

Councilmember Littleton explained that the idea was to have the committees charge forward and implement the ideas. He noted that the Middleburg Futures' Group specifically said that "it was not here to do the work and we want to help them be successful". Mr. Littleton suggested the Middleburg Futures' Group would come together once a month for an hour to report on where things were and to ask for help if needed. He opined that everyone would always be informed as to what was going on. Mr. Littleton advised that when he served on the Planning Commission, Councilmember Hazard did a great job of reporting on what the Council was doing; however, he did not have a clue as to what the other Town committees were doing. He noted that now that he served on the HDRC, he had no clue as to what was going on with the Planning Commission. Mr. Littleton explained that the hope was to elevate visibility. He stressed that it was not to cut anyone out but rather was a mechanism to engage them more.

Councilmember Miller explained that this was a mechanism to empower people, not to cut anyone out.

Town Planner Moore advised Council that from a staff perspective, the Middleburg Futures' Group was very problematic for the staff. He stressed that he was not talking about what they were doing, which was great. Mr. Moore explained that procedurally, it had made things very difficult from a staff perspective. He noted that it was a privately formed group and was not a creation of the Council. Mr. Moore reminded Council that three of its members were attending the meetings. He advised that in order to help protect the Town from liability, it was sending a staff member to take minutes at a private group meeting that was not a creation of the Council. Mr. Moore opined that this created a problem for the staff and noted that it was not in the business of spending taxpayers' money for staff time to attend a private group meeting. He explained that he was not saying the Town should not take minutes of the meeting. Mr. Moore reminded Council that Councilmember Littleton said "this group was not overarching"; however, he also said "they would get together monthly and send things down to the different committees". He noted that the Middleburg Futures' Group could not send anything down to a Town committee. Mr. Moore reiterated that he was not talking about intent and explained that he was only

talking about this committee not being a creation of the Council, which put the staff in a difficult position. He reminded Council that they were talking about the Futures' Group throwing things to the Business & Economic Development Director and reiterated that it was not a creation of the Council. Mr. Moore noted that Mr. Gaucher would work with private groups anyway; therefore, it was probably not a big deal. He advised that it would be very helpful from a staff perspective if somehow, the Council decided what the Middleburg Futures' Group was going to be in relation to the Town. Mr. Moore questioned whether it was going to be a creation of the Council or a private group. He further questioned whether the staff had the Council's authorization to devote staff resources to it if it was going to be a private group.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan agreed that having three Councilmembers on the committee had created problems that he did not think about.

Councilmember Daly questioned whether the Council wanted to make a motion to formalize the committee.

Councilmember Snyder opined that the Council was not in a position to make a motion to define the committee as it had not been thought out. He advised that he had some of the same concerns as Town Planner Moore. Mr. Snyder opined, based on the graphic that was presented, that it appeared that the Middleburg Futures' Group was taking ownership of the Town's committees.

Councilmember Snyder advised that he was not comfortable as he felt the group was ill-defined. He noted that it had its own mission and was telling the Council the wonderful things it would do, including interacting with the Council and Town committees; however, the Council did not set it up. Mr. Snyder expressed an understanding that there were private groups that worked with the Town and noted that they were well defined as they had been around for a while. He cited the Middleburg Business & Professional Association as an example. Mr. Snyder noted that the MBPA had its own private defined role and reminded Council that it occasionally would ask something of the Town. He advised that he did not see that kind of relationship with the Middleburg Futures' Group. Mr. Snyder opined that it was a renegade council and was ill-defined. He explained that he was saying that "it appeared to have that kind of structure" and noted that he was not saying that "it was". Mr. Snyder advised that it was ill-defined to those members who were not a part of it. He noted that because it already had three members of Council at the meetings, he did not feel comfortable going to them.

Councilmember Littleton advised that when he said that "one of the good things that would come out of this was that the Middleburg Futures' Group could help drive information back to the Council and committees", it was not that it was driving anything. He explained that this would occur because everybody that was on the Council or a committee would be hearing the broader message and would bring that back as a committee member. Mr. Littleton opined that it was communication feedback and suggested it was a way that committees could communicate up, out and back to others. He asked the members of Council to tell him how committees in town received information about what other committees were doing.

Councilmember Hazard noted that the newsletter and calendar of events were sent out weekly, to which everyone had access. He opined that there was already a mechanism in place.

Councilmember Littleton questioned how the Planning Commission found out about something like the Streetscape Committee discussing planters and benches. He noted that this type of information was not on a calendar or weekly email.

Councilmember Hazard agreed with Councilmember Snyder and noted that he was uncomfortable having the Middleburg Futures' Group be the group that would tell everyone about everything.

Councilmember Littleton reiterated his question as to how the committees found out information and opined that this was part of the problem.

Councilmember Hazard noted that Councilmember Littleton raised the example of the Boxwood Winery's anniversary. He questioned whether they submitted items to the Economic Development Coordinator.

Economic Development Coordinator Pearson advised Council that she had asked multiple managers at Boxwood to put their activities on the calendar of events. She noted that they did until they switched managers, at which point, she had to resubmit her request.

Mayor Davis opined that the Town did have a process in place. Councilmember Hazard agreed with Mayor Davis that the enthusiasm, the fact that they were doing things and that there were a lot of people involved were great; however, the Town had to be careful. He noted that while Councilmember Littleton stated that it was not so, the graphic showed the Middleburg Futures' Group as being over all of the committees. Mr. Hazard reiterated the need to be careful with this. He advised that he was just now hearing that the Town was not doing wayfinding signs because the Middleburg Futures' Group was doing a branding exercise and that the branding for the Town was being changed.

Mayor Davis explained that this was why she asked that this item be placed on the agenda and advised that until she did, the only information the Council had been given was what it read in the newspaper.

Councilmember Littleton advised that he did not understand that because EDAC had been talking about branding for a year. He noted that it was also discussed during the Council's visioning session in April and the Council did a quad sheet on it.

Councilmember Hazard noted that the Council was changing something that had been in the works for four years. He opined that the enthusiasm was good; however, he believed the Town needed to be careful about the Middleburg Futures' Group. Mr. Hazard reiterated that the Council agreed not to do something during the meeting because the Town may change its brand. He questioned how that was being dictated to the Council.

Councilmember Snyder advised that he was uncomfortable with the structure of the entire committee. He reminded Council that a councilmember served on Town committees and advised that that member and the staff communicated to those committees. Mr. Snyder suggested that when the committees asked that information be communicated to other committees, it did so through the staff. He opined that this was often done through the Town Clerk as she was present taking minutes. Mr. Snyder noted that Wellhead Protection may ask for more information from the Utility Committee and advised that when he served on the Planning Commission, they asked for information on the HDRC and vice versa. He reiterated that they went through the staff, which was a clean process and was well defined. Mr. Snyder noted that the Middleburg Futures' Group now existed and advised that he did not understand its charter or why it had taken over a Council goal for branding. He reiterated that he did not understand its structure or communications. Mr. Snyder expressed an understanding that it consisted of nine very enthusiastic people and opined that this was great; however, he suggested it needed to have a structure that the Council and staff could understand.

Councilmember Littleton explained that the Middleburg Future's Group did not exist to take away anyone's job. He reminded Council that they have been talking about branding for a year. Mr. Littleton suggested they wanted to move it forward. He explained that the goal, if this was the case, was for the four or five people who could help push it forward to move things to get it done. Mr. Littleton advised that the Middleburg Futures' Group were the cheerleaders. He further advised that they were not doing the work and were not usurping anyone's authority or taking away their power. Mr. Littleton stressed that Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher would be a part of it; however, he opined that it would take a while for him to get up to speed on the town. He suggested the Middleburg Futures' Group was a resource for him. Mr. Littleton reiterated that once a month, the representation of the committees, major businesses and organizations in town could get together to compare notes and opined that this would not happen any other way. He noted that the Council talked about how the staff did things and reported back. Mr. Littleton further noted that every other week, not a single member of Council offered a committee report. He opined that the Council was not aware of whatever was going on with the HDRC or Pink Box and suggested that this was something the Council needed to get

better at doing. Mr. Littleton opined that Councilmember Leonard-Morgan was great at doing it for Go Green. He suggested it was the little things, such as how did the Town get better at social media, cleaning up the weeds in town or replacing the benches, that needed to be addressed. Mr. Littleton opined that those were some pretty straight forward items. He questioned how the Town could engage and get the branding item done and opined that no one in town would do it.

Councilmember Miller questioned the point of this discussion and opined that it was going on and on. He advised that he wanted to get to a resolution and questioned whether there needed to be a motion.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan noted that members of the Council had concerns. He advised that when he learned about the three councilmember situation, it concerned him that he was in the Middleburg Futures' Group meetings. Mr. Leonard-Morgan suggested that one of the members consider not being in the meetings from both a legal and practical standpoint, including having to do minutes.

Town Planner Moore opined that this was not necessarily a bad thing; however, he suggested it was bad when the body was not a creation of the Council or affiliated with the Town.

Mayor Davis noted that nothing had come to the Council and advised that what she knew was what she read in the newspaper. She opined that this was frustrating because of the comments that "certain things were being done" and "this was what they were planning on doing". Ms. Davis advised that whether they meant it or not, it sounded like the Middleburg Futures' Group was going to be implementing all of these things. She noted that she had had people ask her about them. Councilmember Littleton noted that this was not what was intended.

Mayor Davis acknowledged that this was the case. She reiterated that this was the reason she asked that this be placed on the agenda and noted that she had not received any kind of information. Ms. Davis explained that she wanted a summary or a plan for moving forward with their ideas.

Councilmember Littleton advised that it was the Middleburg Futures' Group's fault as they only reached the point of identifying what this meant two weeks ago.

Mayor Davis cited the name "the Middleburg Futures' Group" and noted that people were asking her what that was; however, she was not sure. Councilmember Littleton explained that it was a name the facilitator came up with. Mayor Davis noted that no one knew that and suggested this was a communications issue. She opined that everyone was starting to get it and could move forward.

Town Administrator Semmes advised Council that the staff needed clarification on how it was supposed to direct its time in going to meetings or responding to requests for assistance.

Councilmember Miller suggested that nothing came from the Middleburg Futures' Group. He further suggested that it did not give anything to the Town to do. Mr. Miller opined that it was a communications mechanism and suggested it would come through the committees. He explained that if it was an idea that needed to move forward, this would be a committee thing, not a Middleburg Futures' Group thing. Mr. Miller opined that it was a great idea to rotate membership so only two members of the Council were on the committee at the same time. He advised that it was a facilitation mechanism to make sure that everyone was on the same page so the ship could move forward.

Town Administrator Semmes requested further clarification. She opined that what she heard Councilmember Miller say earlier was the sub-committee of the Middleburg Futures' Group was preparing an RFP for branding.

Councilmember Miller clarified that he would only provide background in order to help develop an RFP. He further clarified that it was a needs assessment. Mr. Miller advised that he was doing this as a Councilmember who knew that it must occur as a part of the visioning process. He noted that he was collaborating with anyone who wanted to work with him.

Town Administrator Semmes expressed confusion and questioned whether this was something the Council directed him to do. She noted that it was something the staff would typically develop in conjunction with the Council, EDAC and anyone else they wanted to engage to come up with those ideas.

Councilmember Miller explained that he was just trying to collect some things that could be thought-starters in order to move things forward now that Mr. Gaucher was on board.

Councilmember Daly opined that, from listening to everyone, the recommendation was that Councilmember Miller was going to work with Business & Economic Development Director Gaucher to share the information he had been gathering. He further opined that he was not giving the staff any direction. Mr. Daly suggested he was going to work with the staff, who would in turn work with the committees, to make sure the Town got a cohesive, coordinated branding package. He opined that it was councilmembers who were providing that direction.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan opined that it should be more of a proposal to the Council. The remainder of Council agreed.

Councilmember Hazard opined that Councilmember Miller's point that things were not happening and that they were going to make them happen was good; however, the procedural part was out of whack.

Councilmember Miller acknowledged that. He advised that when he looked at why the group started, this was why. Mr. Miller noted that the MBPA went to Councilmember Littleton and said "this was going on and no one knows what's happening". He explained that the idea was to get everyone in one room in order to get all of the ideas and to make the plans happen.

Councilmember Hazard agreed this was a good thing; however, he was hearing that this was impinging on the staff. He noted that this should not occur, especially by a group that was not sanctioned by the Council.

Councilmember Littleton agreed and advised that he would take the responsibility to go see everyone to make sure they had a level of comfort.

Councilmember Hazard suggested the meeting minutes be sent by blind copy to everyone so it would not be a meeting of the Council.

Town Attorney Crim reminded Council that it would be a meeting if three Councilmembers were present.

Councilmember Miller suggested that only two Councilmembers be present and that the minutes be sent by blind copy to the Council.

Town Attorney Crim explained that the reason for sending the minutes by blind copy was only so there would not be a situation where someone could reply to all, which could be an electronic meeting.

Report - New chairs for Council Dais

The Council agreed to table consideration of this item until the Town Clerk returned.

Information Items

Councilmember Littleton advised Council that at some point the Middleburg Museum Foundation would get feedback on what should go in the building. He noted that they did not want to fill the building but rather wanted to tell the story of Middleburg, with artifacts supporting the story. Mr. Littleton explained that the Foundation had identified themes and narratives and created an outline that was grouped into eight different

areas, including: beauty of the countryside; multifaceted, friendly community; historical architecture infrastructure; and, rich political and social history. He further explained that it would not be a chronological narrative of Middleburg, but rather would be areas with stories within them. Mr. Littleton noted that as to the category “rich political and social history”, one of the items was how the treaty of Albany helped create Middleburg, with one of the stories being what happened at the meeting that created it. He reviewed some of the stories to be told and advised that they would focus on them. Mr. Littleton noted that they had sixty narratives, of which they had only flushed out ten percent, and opined that over time, some of them would go away as they would not make sense. He advised that in the near term, they would start interviewing people. Mr. Littleton noted that they would start their interviews with the Council to determine what they were missing. He cited the example of the story of how the Mayor’s mother started The Fun Shop as one of the first female owned businesses in town and advised that they wanted to capture and tell that story. Mr. Littleton advised that this would happen in the near term.

Closed Session – Legal Advice of Counsel, Property Acquisition and Appointment to HDRC

Councilmember Daly moved, seconded by Councilmember Miller, that Council go into closed session as allowed under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act Sections 2.2-3711(A)(7)(3) and (1) pertaining to consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by the public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel; the discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose; and, the discussion, consideration or interviews of prospective candidates for employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining or resignation of specific public officers, appointees and employees of the public body. Councilmember Daly further moved, seconded by Councilmember Miller, that these matters be limited to (1) the provision of legal advice by the Town Attorney related to the applicability of a Town Code provision; (2) potential property acquisition within the Town limits and (3) an appointment to the HDRC. Councilmember Daly further moved, seconded by Councilmember Miller, that in addition to the Council, the following individuals be present during the closed session: Martha Mason Semmes, Martin Crim, Rhonda North, and Ashley Bott for the first part; Martha Mason Semmes and Martin Crim for the second part; and, Rhonda North for the third part. Councilmember Daly further moved, seconded by Councilmember Miller, that the Council thereafter reconvene in open session for action as appropriate.

It was noted that Town Clerk North was not present for the meeting and would not participate in the closed session.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Daly, Hazard, Leonard-Morgan, Littleton, Miller and Snyder

No – N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Vice Mayor Kirk

(Mayor Davis only votes in the case of a tie.)

Mayor Davis asked that Council certify that to the best of each member’s knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting, which each member so did. She reminded those present for the closed session that any discussion that occurred within it should be treated as confidential.

Councilmember Snyder moved, seconded by Councilmember Daly, that Council appoint Virginia Jenkins to the Historic District Review Committee to fill an unexpired term, said term to expire December 31, 2017.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Daly, Hazard, Leonard-Morgan, Littleton, Miller and Snyder
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Vice Mayor Kirk
(Mayor Davis only votes in the case of a tie.)

There being no further business, Mayor Davis declared the meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

APPROVED:

Betsy A. Davis, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk