

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING, HELD ON
MONDAY, MARCH 12 2012, AT 7:30PM IN THE CREWE LIBRARY AND
CONFERENCE CENTER, CREWE, VIRGINIA**

Present: Mayor Simmons, Council Members Rhea Houchins, Sally Wilkerson,
John Spencer, Robbie Knight, Pat Rose, E.B. Fisher, and Shirley Dalton

Also Present: Town Manager, Wade Walker and Chief of Police Art Booth

Council Member Pat Rose led in the Lord's Prayer and Rhea Houchins led the pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Simmons opened the meeting announcing the Public Hearing to hear comments on the following:

The Planning Commission for the Town of Crewe will hold a public hearing at 7:30pm on Monday, March 12, 2012 in the Conference Room of the Crewe Library and Conference Center at the corner of Tyler and Pennsylvania Avenue.

The purpose of this hearing is to hear comments on a request by Wilkerson Company, Inc. for a change in zoning from C1 Commercial to M1 Industrial for the block bordering 200 W. Carolina Avenue, 100 Powell Street, 200 W. Virginia Avenue, and 100 Meade Street.

Hearing no comments, Mayor Simmons asked for a motion to close the public hearing. Motion made by E. B. Fisher and second by Robbie Knight. Motion passed.

Mayor Simmons then asked Planning Commission Member Jerry Fuller for their recommendation to Town Council. Mr. Fuller informed Council the commission recommended changing the zoning from C1 Commercial to M1 Residential. Mayor Simmons thanked Mr. Fuller for the service of the Planning Commission.

Mayor Simmons opened the regular meeting by stating his concern for the passing of Steve Ferguson, Nottoway County Planner. He stated that Mr. Ferguson was the ultimate professional and was definitely an asset to Nottoway County and the Town of Crewe. He will be missed. Council expressed their sympathy and offered condolences to Mr. Ferguson's family.

Mr. Simmons then recognized those citizens in the audience who were running for Town Council in the upcoming elections. He thanked them for their interest in the Town and stated all candidates were worthy and how comfortable he felt the future of the Town government would be in capable hands.

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CITIZENS COMMENTS

Ms. Jerri Morton addressed Council concerning the upcoming 100 Mile Yard Sale. She stated how successful the event had been in past years and how much business it brought to participating towns. The event is scheduled for July 7, 1012. She asked for Council's support. Mayor Simmons stated it was a very successful event and he echoed Ms. Morton's comment that it was good for local business. Council gave general consensus for support.

Mr. Art Booth, Sr. thanked the Town for the Code Red System and said he appreciated being notified during the recent water event and also being notified when it was concluded. He felt it was a very good system and thanked the town for providing the service.

Mr. D. J. Slaw then addressed Council with his concerns that recent activity involving himself and the Crewe Police Department. He stated he felt he was not treated fairly and felt the results of the activity were due to personal reasons between himself and the Chief.

Ms. Angela Stewart stated she also felt Mr. Slaw was treated badly and that she herself was not treated well during the confrontation.

Ms. Wendy Bowen spoke concerning a past article in the local paper where she had complained about issues with the Police Department. She stated the situation had improved greatly and she appreciated the cooperation the Police had given her and other merchants in town with providing security at opening and closing of her business. She also stated how pleased she was with the Nottoway County Emergency Squad and what a good job they are doing. She thanked all for their service.

Mr. Bill Wilkerson, Sr. spoke saying he had lived in the Crewe community his entire life and how proud he was to live here. He stated Crewe was a great place to live and grow up. He thanked Council for the Airport and stated how nice and important a facility it is. He commended Council for the job they do.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion made by Mrs. Wilkerson and seconded by Mr. Fisher to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion passed.

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MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Walker informed Council the substantial completion date on the holding tank at the Sewer Plant was February 29, 2012. The final punch list is taking place this week and project for all practical purposes is complete.

Mr. Walker then spoke about the recent major water line break and the resulting necessity to issue a "Boiled Water" Notice. The loss in pressure on the water system caused the pressure to fall below our required 20 PSI thereby requiring the issuance of the notice. Walker explained that loss of pressure could cause the system to "suck back" or reverse which could possibly pull contaminants back into the system. The notice is issued as a precaution. Notification through the "Code Red" system worked well and the system is a valuable tool for notices to the town residents.

Manager Walker informed Council of our new hire at the Water Treatment Plant. Amy Davis begins work as an operator trainee next week. She resides in Rice and comes to us with a great deal of experience as a Waste Water operator. Chief Operator John Hricko stated she will be a valuable asset to the town and we look forward to working with her.

TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Tessie Bacon informed Council of our ongoing pursuit of perfecting the process whereby we will be able to enforce the Building Codes. She stated she and Manager Walker had met with County Administrator Ronnie Roark to discuss the use of the County Building Inspector to assist us. Mr. Roark asked for a letter requesting the services of the County that he will present to the Nottoway County Board of Supervisors for approval. There is also an opportunity to solve some of these problems via tax liens against the same properties. It would be less costly to pursue via tax liens than through enforcement of the building code.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Development

Council Member Wilkerson informed Council the Garden Club had constructed and installed five new blue birdhouses around the wooded side of the Crewe Cemetery. The birdhouses are a good addition to the Cemetery and the Garden Club will be maintaining them.

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She stated the Railroad Museum had met and a main topic was that provided grant monies need to be spent by October. They are looking at purchasing covers for some of the outside artifacts that are exposed to the weather. They are also working on an additional display area out front to assist with bringing in traffic off the highway. She encouraged anyone to visit the museum and take advantage of this fine facility. She also stated they were always looking volunteers to help so anyone interested should contact the museum and offer their help.

Ms. Wilkerson then congratulated Council Member Fisher for his 50 years of service to the Emergency Squad. She stated to do something for 50 years is a great accomplishment and he should be commended for his service.

Mrs. Wilkerson then stated her concern for the passing of Steve Ferguson and what a wonderful person he was and what an outstanding job he had done for the Town of Crewe and Nottoway County.

She also stated her concern for Council Member Pat Rose and her health issues and offered her sincere hope that it will come to a peaceful conclusion and offered her assistance in any way she can.

Economic Development

Council Member Rose stated she had attended the latest Economic Development Meeting in the County but due to the meeting being in closed session, she is unable to report the results.

Facilities

Council Member Houchins stated we had some empty hangers that needed to be filled at the Airport. The plan is to spread the word and possibly send out a flyer to other neighboring airports that these are available. He also stated his pleasure with the birdhouses recently installed at the cemetery.

Public Works

Council Member Spencer stated that everything seemed to be going well with the exception of the recent water break. No further report.

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Park and Recreation

Shirley Dalton reported that a local citizen who uses the playground area frequently contacted her about the possibility of adding some trees to the area for shade. She also would like to see an additional bench inside the fence and gates installed on the entrances. Manager Walker informed everyone the gates were removed because someone continues to pull the down. Council Member Wilkerson stated she had noticed a playground in Farmville that had offset fencing overlapping with an opening for the entrance. Possibly this would work. Ms. Dalton also asked if we could possibly put some picnic tables in the area. There was some concern for creating a place to congregate. Ms. Dalton stated we should not let this type of activity stop us from moving forward in a positive way. Ms. Wilkerson asked if we could possibly look at building outside structures with slats that could provide the shade.

She reported the coach at the Railroad Museum is being worked on and will soon be opened. This will be a major draw for the museum and many people are looking forward to touring the coach.

Public Safety

Council Member Fisher stated he had talked with the fire department and they asked if we have considered their request to start reserving for a new pumper. Council agreed it would be discussed during the upcoming budget meetings. The Fire Department remains busy with ongoing calls.

He stated the Emergency Squad had obtained two Lucas II machines, which will do automated chest compression via a 50/50 grant. The total cost of the machines was \$26,000.00 of which the squad was required to pay \$13,000.00. Paramedics and EMT's are currently being trained on how to use the machines.

Mr. Fisher's conversations with Chief Booth conclude the department is staying busy. The Crime rate is down from 2011 and officers are doing a good job.

Police Chief's Report

Chief Booth reported the department had been busy and he stated they had met with the local businesses and worked out schedules where officers would be assisting with store openings and closings. The meetings were very positive and should benefit the community.

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Police Chief's Report (Cont.)

Council Member Dalton asked if we could possibly have something for the Fire Department much like we did for the Police Night Out. Discussion followed.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Simmons reported he had been in further contact with Norfolk Southern concerning the lease of railroad property at Hagberg Park and the Little League ball fields. Norfolk Southern has offered a \$100.00 per year annually renewable lease. Discussion followed. A motion was made by Ms. Wilkerson and seconded by Ms. Rose to pay the \$100.00 and secure the lease but they requested Mayor Simmons ask them for a donation of the \$100.00 back to the town through their foundation. The motion passed.

Mayor Simmons then reminded Council opening ceremonies at the Little League would be on April 7, 2012 at 12:00pm. Council Member Dalton suggested as many members of Council attend as possible to show our support for the program.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Simmons asked Council if they were prepared to make a decision on the proposed zone change discussed earlier in the Public Hearing. A motion to change the area from C1 Commercial to M1 Industrial was made by Pat Rose and seconded by Rhea Houchins. The motion passed.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

None

Hearing no further discussion, a motion was made by Council Member Spencer and seconded by Ms. Wilkerson for adjournment.

Meeting adjourned.