

**WISE TOWN COUNCIL JOINT MEETING WITH
WISE PLANNING COMMISSION
Tuesday, August 27, 2024; 7:00 P.M.
WISE MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
501 WEST MAIN STREET - WISE, VIRGINIA 24293**

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor
Ben Conway
Jeffery Dotson
Robin Dotson
Caynor Smith, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / INVOCATION:

Police Chief Kevin Yates led the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilman Jeffery Dotson provided the invocation.

AGENDA CHANGES:

Town Manager Laura Roberts advised that there were no changes to the agenda.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion to approve the consent calendar, which included the minutes of the July 23, 2024 regular Council meeting, the July 2024 Police, Water Plant, and Fire Department Reports, and the August 2024 Recreation Specialist, Planning Department and Special Events Reports. Robin Dotson seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Dr. Amanda Hall, resident of Raleigh, North Carolina, and founder of Empower Action, informed she hosted a youth photovoice storytelling camp from July 29, 2024 through August 2, 2024 at Gather @ 411 East Main for local teenagers. Hall advised it was a wonderful week filled with storytelling about the youth in the Town and surrounding area being the future of Appalachia. She further informed that a gallery exhibit showcasing the week's work was displayed at Gather @ 411 East Main and would be open to the public during the upcoming Centennial Celebration. Hall stated she looked forward to continuing photovoice storytelling in Wise in the future and including multigenerational groups moving forward.

Rosiland McAmis, resident of 613 Orr Street NE, on behalf of the students and parents of Central High School, requested Council approval to co-sponsor a homecoming parade and community block party to be held on Sunday, September 29, 2024. McAmis also requested approval to close a portion of Main Street from Birchfield Road to Railroad Avenue for the event, which would begin at 4:00 p.m. She informed the celebration would also include a pep rally, food trucks, and vendors and would be a joint celebration with UVA-Wise. Councilman Robin Dotson made a motion for the Town to co-sponsor the event and close the street as requested. Jeffery Dotson seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Robin Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Michael Hatfield, Wise County Administrator and resident of 615 Orchard Lane SW, provided statistical information from the Census Bureau, which reflected a 15.5% decrease in Wise County’s population and a 12% decrease in the Town of Wise’s population since 2010. He stated outward migration had slowed; however, deaths were outnumbering births in the area. Hatfield added that the number of dwellings in Wise County had decreased by 6.8% since 2010. He informed that Wise County was working diligently to bring new industry to the area, which could potentially replenish the population, also creating the need for additional housing.

Leton Harding, Jr., President of Powell Valley National Bank and resident of 6314 Hurricane Road, provided various statistical information regarding population loss and the need for housing in the area. Harding cited the Weldon Cooper Center of the University of Virginia and the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis as the sources used to obtain the information shared. He encouraged all local officials to support housing developments to address the decline in both the population and available homes in the area.

Thomas Kennedy, investment property owner and resident of 303 Spring Avenue SE, encouraged Council to approve changes to Ordinance #13, 1998, which would reduce fees associated with the installation of water and sewer taps for certain developments. If approved, the change would allow developers to have the option to install a single water meter and sewer connection for duplexes located on a single parcel of record that are to remain rental properties and are not to be sold as separate units with the owner or developer being responsible for all utility maintenance from the single water meter and sewer connection. Kennedy stated the reduction in fees would enable potential housing developers to complete projects in the area soon, therefore aiding in the housing crisis.

CONVENING OF JOINT MEETING WITH PLANNING COMMISSION:

Mayor Adkins invited the Town of Wise Planning Commission members to the table for the joint meeting for the purpose of conducting a joint public hearing on a Conditional Use Permit application submitted by the Town of Wise for the creation of a Food Truck Incubator to be located at the corner of Vanover Avenue and Darden Drive. Chairman Greg Widener called the Planning Commission meeting to order with a quorum present. Planning Commission Secretary Anna Maness called the roll with the following members present: Greg Widener, Duane Phillips, Kelly Sorah, Teresa Adkins, and Mike Clisso.

REVIEW, COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION / PUBLIC HEARING:

Town Planner Reagan Walsh reported on the Conditional Use Permit application regarding a Food Truck Incubator project. She informed the property on which the Food Truck Incubator would be located was near the intersection of Darden Drive and Vanover Avenue and was in the B-1 Neighborhood Business District. Walsh added that the property was currently vacant, located in

a flood plain and was acquired by the Town of Wise during a previous FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. She informed the Town was requesting a Conditional Use Permit to utilize the property as a Food Truck Incubator, which would provide space for food entrepreneurs to explore the possibility of opening permanent restaurant locations, and to provide food options in an area of Town where few existed. Walsh advised that because the project was a Town of Wise project and was proposed to be constructed on Town-owned property, it was considered to be a governmental use, which required a Conditional Use Permit in the B-1 Neighborhood Business District.

Chairman Widener opened the floor for the public hearing. Susan Mullins, an employee of Fas Mart, advised the Food Truck Incubator would be located across the street from the 308 Hurricane Road store. She stated the store's deli would be heavily impacted by having food trucks in such close proximity. Mullins requested the Planning Commission consider the impact the project would have on the Hurricane Road location, as well as on other Fas Mart stores in the area that have a deli or franchise located within them. There being no one else in attendance wishing to comment, the public hearing was closed. Widener opened the floor for Planning Commission discussion. Kelly Sorah expressed concern regarding the design of the project's parking area, stating there was insufficient parking space which could create a safety hazard for pedestrians. Walsh advised the design provided was not final and additional parking would be included. Chairman Widener called for a motion. Mike Clisso made a motion that the Wise Planning Commission recommend the approval of the Conditional Use Permit application submitted by the Town of Wise for the development of a Food Truck Incubator to be located near the intersection of Darden Drive and Vanover Avenue. Commissioner Phillips seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Greg Widener	"Aye"
Duane Phillips	"Aye"
Teresa Adkins	"Aye"
Mike Clisso	"Aye"
Kelly Sorah	"Aye"

Chairman Widener forwarded the recommendation of the Wise Planning Commission to approve the Conditional Use Permit application as submitted. Widener adjourned the meeting of the Wise Planning Commission and turned the joint meeting over to Mayor Adkins and Wise Town Council.

REVIEW, COMMENT AND ACTION BY TOWN COUNCIL:

Mayor Adkins opened the floor for Council comment regarding the adoption of Resolution #23, 2024 to approve a Conditional Use Permit application submitted by the Town for the Food Truck Incubator Project. Councilman Jeffery Dotson opined the location of the Food Truck Incubator would bring more business to the Hurricane Road Fas Mart location as well. Robin Dotson stated the project under discussion would be a great addition to the Town, noting the benefit to UVA-Wise students. Following the discussion, Ben Conway made a motion to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA APPROVING A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA FOR THE FOOD TRUCK INCUBATOR PROJECT, A GOVERNMENTAL USE, IN A B-1 NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT". Jeffery Dotson seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Robin Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Mayor Adkins adjourned the joint meeting with Wise Planning Commission.

PUBLIC HEARING – REQUEST TO AMEND ORDINANCE #13, 1998:

Town Manager Laura Roberts advised the Town had received a request from Land Star Ventures, LLC, the developer interested in purchasing Midsouth Development located along Patriot Drive and Bear Creek Road in Wise County, to amend Ordinance #13, 1998 to allow managed properties to receive water and sewer service from a single meter and connection. She informed that the Ordinance required duplexes to have one water meter and one sewer connection per dwelling unit. Roberts stated the purpose of the request was to reduce developmental fees that would be incurred by Land Star. She added that current tap fees for the Town were less than those of Wise County Public Service Authority. A public hearing was held on the request to amend Ordinance #13, 1998 to allow for a single water meter and sewer connection for the proposed development. Joe Kiser, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Operations at UVA-Wise, advised the College would lease the duplexes from Land Star for student housing as quickly as the units were completed. He stated that housing for students was desperately needed and individual cut-offs for each unit were desired by the College. Justin Gonzales, Director of Workforce Housing for Land Star Ventures, LLC, provided statistics supporting the potential economic benefit that the addition of a housing development would bring to the Town. He added a deed restriction agreement would be included, listing Land Star as the responsible party for having individual water meters installed at each unit should the development be sold in the future. Gonzales stated separate cutoffs would be installed on each unit as well. Town Manager Laura Roberts cautioned that if the units were sold, with individual meters installed by the developer in the future, the Town would be responsible for servicing the lines to the meters, which could potentially be located in areas that would be difficult to access, such as under structures. County Administrator Michael Hatfield stated a development plan would have to be approved by Wise County and would not receive approval if any water, sewer, or drainage lines were located under a structure. Bonnie Aker, resident of 619 Crestview Drive SW, inquired if Land Star would be purchasing building materials locally for the development. Gonzales advised that local businesses would be used to purchase materials where possible. Robin Benke, co-owner of Midsouth Development and resident of 116 Dotson Avenue NW, requested Council approval of the Ordinance amendment under discussion, citing the need for housing as a reason. Following a brief discussion, Mayor Adkins closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT:

Jeffery Dotson, Committee Member, summarized the meeting of the Public Works Committee held to discuss a request from Land Star Ventures, LLC to amend the Town of Wise Water and Sewer Ordinance #13, 1998 regarding meter requirements for duplexes and to discuss the request from Wise County to eliminate Facility Fees paid to the Town for out-of-town water and sewer connections. He reported the Public Works Committee had recommended at the time of their meeting that Council not amend section 5b of Ordinance #13, 1998, therefore not allowing only

one water meter and sewer connection for the proposed development. Dotson stated that with more information that had become available since the meeting, his opinion had changed. He opined that more information was needed on both issues discussed by the Committee in order for changes to be made to the Ordinance and the Facility Fees. Town Manager Laura Roberts provided potential language that could be used to amend Ordinance #13, 1998. Attorney Leonard Rogers suggested the meeting be continued to allow time for an Ordinance amendment to be drafted.

REQUEST FOR FUNDS FOR WISE REGIONAL FIRE SCHOOL:

Fire Chief Jack Mullins requested that Council co-sponsor the Regional Fire School scheduled for September 12 – 15, 2024. He informed that 359 students had enrolled to date. Mullins reviewed various expenses that would be incurred during the school. Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion to donate funding to Wise Fire Department for expenses not to exceed \$3000 for the Regional Fire School. Jeffery Dotson seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Robin Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

PROCLAMATION #8, 2024:

Centennial Committee members Caynor Smith, Jr. and Jeffery Dotson summarized both recent and upcoming events scheduled for the Centennial Celebration. Robin Dotson made a motion to adopt “A PROCLAMATION OF THE MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2024 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 21, 2024 AS THE TOWN OF WISE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION WEEK”. Ben Conway seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

CEMETERY COMMITTEE REPORT:

Town Manager Laura Roberts, Committee Member, summarized the meeting of the Cemetery Committee held to discuss the requirement of vaults and the placement of a gate in the fence located behind the First Bank and Trust parking lot at Wise Cemetery. She advised the Committee recommended vaults to be required for each burial in the Wise Cemetery for safety and maintenance purposes. Roberts added the Committee also recommended that a gate be installed in the fence located at the back of the First Bank and Trust parking area to allow for better access to the cemetery. Ben Conway moved to approve the Cemetery Committee recommendations as presented. Robin Dotson seconded the motion that carried 5-0.

APPOINTEE REPORTS (Informational Purposes Only) – Acknowledgment of Receipt:

Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion acknowledging receipt of the following appointee reports:

1. Cumberland Airport Commission regular meeting from August 15, 2024.
2. Economic Development Authority meeting from July 11, 2024.

Ben Conway seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

COUNCIL COMMENT:

Robin Dotson expressed desire to amend Ordinance #13, 1998 in an effort to address housing needs in the area.

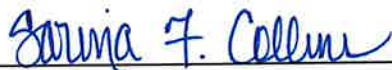
Jeffery Dotson thanked County Administrator Michael Hatfield for being in attendance, noting the need for the County and Town to work together for the betterment of the community.

STAFF COMMENT:


Special Events Coordinator Natasha Proulex informed she had been contacted on behalf of Central High School requesting the Town of Wise to provide a meal before a home football game for the football team, cheer team, and coaches. Council advised Proulex to obtain the approximate cost to the Town prior to its next meeting for consideration. She also requested Council approval to allow a local food truck to be set up at the Farmer's Market. Council concurred with the request.

CONTINUANCE:

There being no additional discussion by the Wise Town Council, Jeffery Dotson made a motion to continue the meeting until September 3, 2024. Robin Dotson seconded the motion that passed 5-0.



Sarina F. Collins, Town Clerk/Treasurer


Teresa Adkins, Mayor