REGULAR WORK SESSION OF THE FARMVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON JUNE 3, 2020

At the regular work session of the Farmville Town Council held on Wednesday, June 3, 2020, at 11:00 a.m., in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, 116 North Main Street, Farmville, Virginia, there were present Mayor David E. Whitus, presiding, and Council members G.C. Cole, D.L. Hunter, B.R. Vincent, T.M. Pairet, D.E. Dwyer, A.D. Reid, and J.J. Davis.

Staff present were Town Manager C. Scott Davis, Chief of Police Andy Ellington, IT Support Ashley Atkins, and Administrative Assistant Jackie Vaughan.

Mayor Whitus called the meeting to order and welcomed guests viewing the meeting via Facebook Live.

The Administrative Assistant called the roll noting all members were present.

Mayor Whitus provided Council member with a copy of a Facebook post that was forwarded to him about a protest that was planned for June 2, 2020, on the courthouse lawn, and directed their attention to the last paragraph, referring to Chief Ellington contacting the organizer of the event to offer support. He commended the Police Chief for his excellent outreach efforts. Mayor Whitus asked Chief Ellington to give an update on the events that have been going on in Town.

Chief Ellington stated he reached out to protest organizer Megan Garrett and was impressed and proud of the group for wanting to express their First Amendment right by organizing a professional protest in a respectful manner. He said the Town is very fortunate to have the bond and support between the community and the police and has not seen incidents such as those seen in other places. He said the police must be on the lookout for outsiders coming into areas causing problems. Chief Ellington mentioned the following measures the Farmville Police Department has taken to ensure public safety:

- The Farmville Police Department, together with other local law enforcement agencies, made a public statement to the community that we are not proud of what has happened and do not agree with the death of George Floyd. Chief Ellington stated the behavior of the officers in the George Floyd incident is not the behavior that is acceptable in law enforcement and the Farmville Police Department and other local law enforcement agencies will not tolerate such actions.
• About two years ago when protest and riots became more frequent, the Police Department purchased equipment and tactical gear that may be needed if it occurred in the Town. Ten officers have been trained as a field force unit and can be used to work in conjunction with Virginia State Police. He mentioned that at this time, they may not be able to call on the State Police due to incidents that are currently occurring elsewhere in the state.

• He has reached out to other law enforcement agencies and all agree, that if they have any trouble to notify each other and they will assist.

• The police department has ordered additional supplies.

He noted that the police department is prepared in case anything was to take place.

**APPROVED MOVING FORWARD WITH THE COUNCIL RETREAT**

On motion by Mr. Pairet, seconded by Mr. Davis and with all Council members voting “aye”, the motion was approved to schedule the Council retreat for Thursday, June 25, 2020, from 12:00 noon until 5:00 p.m. and Friday, June 26, 2020, from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon.

**BACKGROUND:** Mayor stated some Council members have expressed concern with meeting for the retreat due to the COVID-19 pandemic and asked the Town Manager, Scott Davis, to give his thoughts. He stated the retreat is very important because it helps everyone to be on the same page, especially when it comes to where Council wants the Town to be in the next twelve to eighteen months and long term. The retreat will be beneficial for current Council members, as well as the new Council member coming in July and added it will be helpful for him as a new Town Manager. Mr. Davis advised Council that Kim Payne, the retreat facilitator, has some questions for the Council members that will help him prepare and will be contacting members by phone prior to the retreat.

Council members agreed to move forward with the retreat as scheduled for June 25, 2020, and June 26, 2020, in the Emergency Operation Center. Mayor Whitus stated that Council will observe social distancing at the retreat.

**PRESENTATION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOWN BUDGET**

Mr. Scott Davis, Town Manager, stated the proposed fiscal year 2020-2021 Town Budget has been placed in Dropbox for Council’s review, and it has been vetted by the Council’s Finance and Ordinance Committee. Mr. Davis gave Council a brief summary of the proposed budget, a total of $23,419,357.71, which encompasses $12,424,977.63 in the General Fund, $1,732,569.72 in the Street Maintenance Fund, $2,104,359 in the Water Fund, $2,405,110 in the Sewer Fund,
$771,943 in the Transportation Fund, and $3,980,398.36 in the Airport Fund. He said if you breakdown the proposed budget by funds, 53% is in the General Fund, 8% in Street Maintenance, 9% in Water Fund, 10% in Sewer Fund, 3% in Transportation Fund, 17% in Airport Fund. The Town Manager noted all funds in the Street Maintenance Fund are received from the Virginia Department of Transportation for street maintenance.

The Town Manager explained that the letter included with the proposed budget is to help the public understand the budget. He spoke about the General Fund being 53% of the budget and being what the Town uses daily to operate. All revenues are based upon how the Town projects to finish FY2019-2020. He said four revenues – BPOL, Sales Tax, Meals Tax, and Lodging Tax have been decreased by approximately twelve percent of the projected finish for fiscal year 2020 due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Town Manager mentioned there is a transfer from the Water Fund of $325,000, a transfer from the Sewer Fund of $900,000, and a carryover of the current Set Aside Fund, which he anticipates being $1,365,890.67 on June 30, 2020, which should be enough to make the September bond payment and still have some left in the account. The Town Manager reminded Council that September through December is the toughest time of the year cash-flow wise. In the future he would like to work towards the goal of reducing transfers from the Water and Sewer Funds to the General Fund by decreasing the debt service, and at the same time, not increasing the debt service through any new loans or bonds on new debt.

The Town Manager spoke of the General Fund by revenue type, stating of the two larger revenues, 52% are taxes and licenses and 33% are transfers and interest. He mentioned for expenditures, certain positions are frozen and are not currently funded in the proposed budget until revenues show that they can be filled. All line item expenditures in each department were examined closely and some reduced from prior years. At the request of the Finance and Ordinance Committee, all capital items were placed in the contingency line item and will only be spent upon approval of the Council. He noted the full document can be viewed in Dropbox folder, along with the Five-Year Capital Improvement Program. The Town Manager said the Five-Year Improvement Program is a guide for how to fund in future years for capital projects, and it must be updated each year. He asked Council to approve the Capital Improvement Program, not that they agree with everything in it, but as acknowledgment that they have reviewed it.

The Town Manager stated he will be asking Council to approve the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Classification and Compensation Plan, as previously presented. He said the Classification and
Compensation Plan has a list of positions, with the minimum, medium and maximum salary listed. He said the plan does not list individuals or their salaries.

Mayor Whitus thanked the Finance and Ordinance Committee, Council and staff for the hard work put into preparing the proposed budget, and said Council has taken a measured approach to keep everyone as whole as possible, without making major cuts, maintain all the current employees, maintain all of the Town services and no tax increases. He said he feels Council and staff are on the right track with the proposed budget.

Council member Jamie Davis stated it is the intent for the Town Manager and Treasurer to continue putting money in the Set Aside Account monthly to be prepared for next year as well. He said he really appreciated Council’s carefulness with the budget and spending over the years.

**AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE FOR A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 TOWN BUDGET**

On motion by Mr. Dwyer, seconded by Mr. Davis and with all Council members voting “aye”, the motion was approved to authorize advertisement for a public hearing for the proposed fiscal year 2020-2021 Town Budget.

**DISCUSSION OF THE DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE, ZONING AND SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE AND ZONING MAP**

Mayor Whitus asked the Town Manager to give an update on the draft Comprehensive Plan update and Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Map. There have been questions from Town residents that have received a letter regarding the matter. He asked the Town to address the matter of why some residents received letters and some did not.

The Town Manager stated by state law, the Town is required to send the legal advertisement of the public hearing, if it is more than 25 properties, to those that are affected by the rezoning. He added some properties in Town are not affected by the rezoning, and there are zoning changes in districts, but it does not mean they get a physical copy of the public hearing. The requirement is that the Town publish it in the newspaper.

The Town Manager gave a brief explanation about the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan), stating that it is a living document that shows potentially what the Town can do five, ten, fifteen and twenty years in the future. The State Code requires that the Comprehensive Plan be updated every five years. The Comp Plan consists of sections for transportation, the economy, education,
housing, and future land use. He stated the Comp Plan can be used to help formulate a budget and can be particularly useful in various areas for the Town.

The Town Manager gave a brief explanation of the proposed Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance, stating currently they are described in two different sections. Mr. Davis stated there is a Zoning section, that includes information for the Planning Commission, and there is a Subdivision Ordinance section. He stated Council authorized him two years ago to sign an agreement with the Berkley Group to revamp the current Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Map. The Town Manager spoke of the process of developing the proposed Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, stating the goal of amending the current ordinances is to reduce the number of districts. He said the current Zoning Ordinance has five residential districts and four business districts, and the proposed Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance contains four residential districts and three business districts. The Town Manager explained that after speaking with staff, the Berkley Group suggested merging the Zoning Subdivision Ordinances into one section. Once a draft was prepared, the public was invited to participate in a survey to give input and to attend and take part in two separate community open houses. The Planning Commission reviewed the information during several of their meetings, making suggestions. At their May 20, 2020, meeting, the Planning Commission unanimously agreed to recommend to Council to approve the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance, as presented to the Council. The Town Manager mentioned that he and some Council members have received letters regarding the proposed Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance. A public hearing has been advertised to be held at the regular Council meeting on June 10, 2020. The Berkley Group will be at the meeting to give a presentation on the proposed Comprehensive Plan, Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Map. The public can participate in the public hearing on the matter by calling the Town Manager’s Office to obtain the conference call number, emailing their comments to the Town Manager or any member of Council, or call the Town Manager’s Office. Mayor Whitus encouraged the public to use the available options to participate if they have any comments.

**DISCUSSION ABOUT COVID-19 – GOVERNOR’S PHASE II**

Mayor Whitus stated the Governor announced the State will enter Phase II on Friday, June 12, 2020. He shared that he has received calls from restaurant owners expressing concerns and asking if the Town should ask the Governor to delay the Town from moving into Phase II. He
assured them that the Town will be following the Governor’s order and will allow what is allowed in the Governor’s Phase III.

The Town Manager briefly spoke on the Town plans for moving into Phase II. He suggested that Town Offices remain closed to ensure the safety of employees. He said the Governor’s Order speaks of limiting the occupancy of personal space so that a safe distance can be maintained or either teleworking when possible, in which the Town employees are not doing. Town employees are currently staying within their work area, as much as possible, and communicating thru phone calls and emails. If they leave their work area to visit another area, face masks are required. The Order also speaks of non-contact collection of payments, which the Town is currently accepting payments online, mail or in the payment drop boxes. Mr. Davis explained that building permit applications are handled through email or in the payment drop boxes. He described how contractors would lean close to the Administrative Assistant when coming inside for building permits or information, which puts the staff at risk.

The Town Manager advised that he will be meeting with the recreation staff to develop a plan for reopening activities when it is time. He said he is considering opening Town rental facilities, but with the order stating no more than 50 people, there is no way to ensure the renters comply with the order.

Mr. Cole asked if the regular Council meeting could be opened to the public because of the scheduled public hearings. He stated the public should have the option to appear in person to address Council because the importance of the public hearing matters. Mayor Whitus stated anyone that would like to attend to speak in person would have to obey the social distancing, wear a mask, and wait in the corridor to be called in one at a time. He said they will also have to call in to make an appointment, and staff will sanitize the microphone after each guest.

The Town Manager informed Council that STEPS has reopened and is accepting recycling, the Town has begun taking recycling to them once again.

**COMMENTS BY THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF TOWN COUNCIL**

Mr. Dwyer stated a resident in the Crestview Subdivision asked why there are no sidewalks in Crestview Subdivision. He asked Council if anyone has any history on why there are no sidewalks in that subdivision? The Town Manager stated he could not speak on the matter because he is unaware of any discussions on that subject. He said with the new ordinances, the contractor
will be required to add a sidewalk. Mr. Hunter said he remembered in prior years, when there were discussions about installing sidewalks in the Crestview area, the residents did not want them.

**CLOSED SESSION – PERSONNEL**

On the motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Hunter, and with all Council members voting “aye,” Council went into closed session under paragraph A.1 of Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, discuss the performance of the Town Manager concerning specific personnel matters.

Council returned to the regular order of business.

**CLOSED MEETING CERTIFICATION**

WHEREAS, the Farmville Town Council has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Farmville Town Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Farmville Town Council hereby certifies that, to the best of each member’s knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Farmville Town Council.

VOTE: Seven “ayes,” No “noes”

MOTION: Davis SECONED: Hunter

AYES: Cole, Hunter, Vincent, Pairet, Dwyer, Reid, and Davis

NOES: None

ABSENT DURING VOTE: None

ABSENT DURING MEETING: None

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Deputy Clerk

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned.

APPROVED: ATTEST:

David E. Whitus, Mayor Jacqueline B. Vaughan, Deputy Clerk