

1 | **Appomattox Town Council**
Regular Council Meeting
January 13, 2020

The Appomattox Town Council held a Regular Council meeting on Monday, January 13, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. at the Appomattox Municipal Building, 210 Linden Street, Appomattox, Virginia with Mayor Harvey, presiding.

Town Council members present were Jonathan D. Garrett, James Boyce, Sr., Mary Lou Spiggle, Timothy W. Garrett, Steven T. Conner and Claudia G. Puckette.

Staff present were Town Manager, Gary Shanaberger; Facilities Director, Jeff Elder; Town Treasurer, Kim Ray; and Office Manager, Christy Torrence.

Mayor Harvey called the meeting to order.

Rev. Carlton Duck, Pastor of the Gethsemane Baptist Church gave the invocation, and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Harvey hoped everyone had a special and wonderful holiday season.

Scheduled Public Appearances:

Christy Coleman, CEO of the American Civil War Museum (delayed at the scheduled time).
(After new business was complete)

Ms. Coleman appeared before Council to discuss the proposal for a welcome center at the American Civil War Museum site. The proposal of a welcome center was never about replacing the current visitors center in downtown Appomattox, Coleman said.

Ms. Coleman took questions from Council:

Mayor Harvey questioned if there was a possibility of a phone app vs. the digital pad map?
Ms. Coleman responded that a digital app for phones, devices, etc. would be cost prohibitive.

Mr. Jonathan Garrett questioned if Ms. Coleman had talked to any of the businesses in Appomattox to gain support for this?

Ms. Coleman responded yes, she personally had lunch with several people from Appomattox to garner support and share where we they were institutionally. There appears to be support for the museum to stay and be active and folks have also said there is a little nervousness. Will it pull the 6,000 people from downtown? That has never been the intent. The intent is to drive people downtown. The welcome center is a suggestion to connect the visitation from the National Park Service, to the American Civil War Museum to the visitors center downtown.

Mr. Boyce asked if this is a one-time request?

Ms. Coleman responded that this is a one-time request.

Mr. Boyce – So individual businesses can place their brochures there?

Ms. Coleman – yes, it will be organized to focus on what is in the Town and County.

Mrs. Puckette – thanked Ms. Coleman for coming, clarifying and sharing this information. She is also very appreciative of the information proposed on the new signs that give direction to the welcome center and the visitors center.

Mr. Boyce – I think there has been a lot of discussion. A lot of misinformation and to the point it has become a distraction to Council because we are seeing the same thing time after time. It is my intent to make a motion that we vote aye or nay tonight, we are either to do this or we are going to drive it off the map, one of the two.

On a motion by Mr. Boyce, to take a vote to support this in the amount of \$15,065.00 with the option of going with the second display in the downtown location for the amount of \$19,700 (and some change).

Mr. Timothy Garrett, I have a point to make we had a previous motion made to go before the Finance & Planning Committee.

Mr. Boyce – I understand that but this was something that was already in the works before then.

Mayor Harvey restated the motion on the floor:

On a motion by Mr. Boyce, to take a vote to support this in the amount of \$15,065.00 with the option of going with the second display in the downtown location for the amount of \$19,700 (and some change).

The motion was seconded by Mr. Conner.

Further discussion:

Mr. Conner – I think people need to understand is that this isn't hurting anybody, it can only help. The numbers are out there. You've got to get them to the rest of the Town and County. The town is our concern and we need to get them to the Town and if they go out there and drive on by and don't stop and it's hard to find then they aren't coming. And then everybody is losing not just downtown, everybody is losing. In the old days, we talked about having a welcome center out where the old service station was and now they [American Civil War Museum] are going to give us a building and staff for free – they are giving us a gift. We need to take it.

Mayor Harvey – any other discussion?

Mrs. Puckette – Is this signage and the one time we would be paying to get this off the ground – is this helping the situation from the folks who were so opposed? Is this making them more comfortable with the idea? I think the idea is wonderful, we need this. We need to market ourselves and this is one way of doing it. So, what are some of the other objections now that would be out there that people might have to this.

Mr. Timothy Garrett – I think you need to open it [discussion] to the audience.

Mayor Harvey – we could hold the vote and hear from citizens. I did speak to as many business people as I could today to show them this and I think one of the objections is purchasing the

piece of equipment that is going into the museum and it's not on our town property. The argument is if we can put it in one private business, why can't every private business have one? I think they were a little more satisfied with the sign that it had the downtown center information on there and that the downtown center is not closed or closing.

The [ACWM] removed the personnel (labor) issue out of the proposal which was another area of concern or big problem for the downtown businesses.

Mrs. Puckette – I look at this like we are paying them [ACWM] for a service. If we provide funding to the museum for a service for us to drive people in town, would not be my business.

Mr. Conner – It's not like we are providing a donation to them [ACWM], they are providing a service for us.

Mrs. Puckette – It is our [Town] equipment and if we find that the number of visitors doesn't improve, we can take it out and bring it home.

Mayor Harvey – This is an experiment to see if it is going to work. Mr. Timothy Garrett suggested we open the floor to citizen comments and there are some people here tonight that I spoke with today that may have something they want to say.

Citizen Comment Period – There was no movement to the podium.

Mayor Harvey – I didn't know we were going to vote on this tonight – so it's thrown me a little of a curve ball.

Mr. Timothy Garrett – What we've voted on in the past, any funds given out to the general public would be brought to the Finance Committee and go through the budget process and we've done that at prior meetings.

Mr. Conner – I don't know that we are making a donation here, rather paying for a service. If you remember, and I was against that then, we hired the people that were going to help us with the sesquicentennial and do all this great stuff to get people downtown and we gave them \$10,000-15,000 and all I got was a picture of the guy toting a table down the street. The Town went after the Civil War Museum, prior to me being on Council. We made donations and now we've got it here and we have to help it. This will get our numbers up. We have to get something out on the highway. A place where they can park a motorhome or a bus. Not to a place that funnels them to a place they can't park. It's bad enough when you go down Main Street to the bank and can't find a parking place. Nobody wants to walk today. They want to park at the front door. They [ACWM] can tell visitors what the Town and County have to offer. It's just a gift and they took the labor out of it. It's our material to send people to our staff. It would help our hotel. We begged developers to build and promised them. We've wanted it for years and the numbers didn't work. We've got people who stepped up and took a chance with their personal money to help this community and we need to help them. Location means a lot in business.

4 | **Appomattox Town Council**
Regular Council Meeting
January 13, 2020

Mayor Harvey – we have a motion and second on the floor:

ROLL CALL VOTE:

J. Garrett – no, J. Boyce – yes, M. Spiggle – no, T. Garrett – no, S. Conner – yes, C. Puckette – yes.

Mayor Harvey – I don't like this position. I knew I was going to be put in this position.

Mr. Jonathan Garrett – we were supposed to discuss this at the retreat, and it hasn't gotten here yet.

Mayor Harvey – I know, and I didn't know we were going to be taking a vote on this.

Mrs. Puckette – can we table this?

Mayor Harvey – Not now. The motion is on the floor and the vote has already been taken.

Mayor Harvey – I've supported this idea from the beginning and some of the problems that came up at the community meeting, I backed up because I thought the points made by Town businesses were correct. I feel like what they [ACWM] has brought back has corrected the issues that I heard there other than this piece of equipment and I think if we buy the piece of equipment and put one in the visitors center it solves that issue too. I am going to vote – YES.

Motion carried 4-3, with the Mayor breaking the tie.

Mayor Harvey – Again, I think we've done this improperly.

Mr. Jonathan Garrett requested to be excused to attend a structure fire call with the Appomattox Volunteer Fire Department. All present agreed.

Consent Agenda:

On a motion by Mr. Timothy Garrett, seconded by Mr. Boyce, Council voted to adopt the consent agenda for Monday, January 13, 2020 as presented. All members present voting aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Unfinished Business:

None

New Business:

On a motion by Mr. Jonathan Garrett, seconded by Mrs. Puckette, Council voted to adopt the 2020 Appomattox Town Council meeting schedule as presented. All members present voting aye. Motion carried 6-0.

5 | **Appomattox Town Council**
Regular Council Meeting
January 13, 2020

On a motion by Ms. Spiggle, seconded by Mr. Conner, Council voted to re-appoint Chris Simpson to the Town of Appomattox Economic Development Authority, term ending December 31, 2023. All members present voting aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Ms. Spiggle requested to begin discussion of repairs to the outside of the Visitors Center on Main Street. The architects are still working on plans for the inside, but we need to repair the outside. We are starting the downtown revitalization grant and we need to be proud of this building.

Mrs. Puckette – do we have specifications?

Mr. Timothy Garrett – my intentions are to put it back the way it is now.

Mayor Harvey – I didn't realize we were to turn this over to Mr. Elder as an in-house thing. I thought we were going to use an outside person to write the bids.

Mr. Shanaberger – We will follow the Council's lead on this. If it is Council's desire for staff to do it in house, we will do the best we can with it.

Mr. Conner – I think maybe we should get two of the people in the back row to help us with that.

Mr. Timothy Garrett – There are people who would do this work everyday who can come give you a price on it – just like the roof here at this building.

Mr. Shanaberger – Do we want to bid the roof as a replacement or repair?

Mr. Timothy Garrett – get 2 bids – one for each; replacement with slate.

On a motion by Mr. Timothy Garrett, seconded by Mr. Jonathan Garrett, Council moved to authorize Jeff Elder, Facilities Director to obtain bids on all exterior work, except landscaping of the Visitors Center on Main Street and to suspend the services of Dagleish, Gilpin Paxton until further notice. All members present voting aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Standing Committee Reports:

None

Citizen Comment Period:

None

Town Manager's Report:

Mr. Shanaberger reported on the following items:

- The Planning Commission is still moving ahead on the Comprehensive Plan. The process is moving smoothly.
- The Economic Development Authority is scheduled to meet tomorrow night and we plan to swear in Chris Simpson as our new member. Also, hopeful to set a date for a trip to Marion, Virginia to visit their award-winning downtown.
- Continuing to move forward on inflow and infiltration projects and closing the Trickling Filter Plant. Those projects are still moving along at a nice pace.
- The Church Street waterline project is moving at a good pace.
- The Lee Grant Avenue project is going to take a little more time.
- Finally, the staff is already working on the 2020-2021 Town budget.

6 | **Appomattox Town Council**
Regular Council Meeting
January 13, 2020

Council Concerns:

Mr. Timothy Garrett stated the Town needs to own the board [equipment] because the software can be out of date in six (6) months

Adjournment:

On a motion by Mr. Conner, seconded by Mrs. Puckette, Council voted to adjourn. All members present voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Roxanne W. Casto
Clerk of Council

Paul D. Harvey, Mayor