

**ROUND HILL TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
February 16, 2022**

A Regular Meeting was held by the Round Hill Town Council on Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. Pursuant to *Ordinance 2022-01: To Provide for Continuity of Government During a State of Local Emergency*, adopted by the Town Council on January 19, 2022, this meeting was held electronically. Instructions for participating remotely were provided on the meeting agenda.

Council Members Present

Scott T. Ramsey, Mayor
Mary Anne Graham, Vice-Mayor
Jesse Howe
Paula James
Sean Lloyd

Council Members Absent

Melissa Hoffmann
Michael Hummel

Staff Members Present

Melissa Hynes, Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator
Marty Feltner, Utility Supervisor
Maureen Gilmore, Town Attorney
Robert Lohr, Project Manager
Harriet West, Town Clerk

Others Present

Isaac Pacheco
Steve Mulroy, Virginia Municipal League/Virginia Association of Counties Finance

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ramsey called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call was held. Mayor Ramsey noted that Councilpersons Howe, James, Lloyd; Vice-Mayor Graham; and himself were present, constituting a quorum. Councilpersons Hoffmann and Hummel were absent.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge was not recited because this was an electronic meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Isaac Pacheco, a new resident in Lake Ridge Estates, expressed his enthusiasm with the ongoing development of the trail connecting Round Hill to the park and plans for the trail system to be built out in phases over several years. He noted there is a trail that will potentially connect Round Hill to an area behind Lake Ridge Estates and goes to where the new development is occurring around Sleeter Lake, but it dead ends in the woods. Mayor Ramsey explained that the Town is actively pursuing a project to have the two trails linked between The Bluffs and Lake Ridge Estates; however, it is not entirely in the Town's control. The Round Hill Owners Association (RHOA) must also approve the construction of a dedicated trail since it would be located on their property. Mr. Pacheco noted that it is currently being used as a "de facto" trail by residents of both communities to access Round Hill.

ADOPTION OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA (Amendments & Deletions)

Vice-Mayor Graham moved **that the agenda be adopted**. Councilperson Howe seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 4-0-2, with Councilpersons Hoffmann and Hummel absent. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Jesse Howe	Aye
Paula James	Aye
Sean Lloyd	Aye
Melissa Hoffmann	Absent
Michael Hummel	Absent

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. November 3, 2021

Vice-Mayor Graham asked about Questions 18 and 19 at the top of page 7; she noted there is no additional information in Question 18 and wondered if that was deliberate. Mayor Ramsey recalled that Questions 18 and 19 were merged. Ms. Hynes agreed they were merged in the minutes; the discussion regarding the Economic Development Initiatives was vague. The only current Downtown Economic Initiative is to study the shared parking lot. Vice-Mayor Graham asked staff to make changes to clarify the discussion. Ms. Hynes suggested separating Questions 18 and 19, and under Question 19 adding "Additional Town-initiated economic development initiative projects beyond working with the County." Vice-Mayor Graham moved **to adopt the minutes, as amended**; Councilperson Howe seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 4-0-2, with Councilpersons Hoffmann and Hummel absent. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Jesse Howe	Aye
Paula James	Aye

Sean Lloyd	Aye
Melissa Hoffmann	Absent
Michael Hummel	Absent

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Utility Department Update

Vice-Mayor Graham asked for an update on the company that was hired to camera the sewer lines. Mr. Feltner reported their truck is still out of commission but noted the weather has not been conducive to completing the work.

2. Franklin Park Trail/Main Street Enhancement Project Update

Mr. Lohr reported on the following:

- The contractor has made significant progress in recent weeks: ten aprons were poured and eight of those driveways were reopened.
- Mayor Ramsey noted the Franklin Park trail section from Lake Point to the Park appears to be nearly complete and asked for an update on when it will be open to the public. Mr. Lohr noted that the trail will open once the connection has been made, although the trail is being used now. Mr. Lohr will follow up with the County for a date when the trail will open to the public.
- Vice-Mayor Graham commented that the roads are still uneven. Mr. Lohr stated that the contractor has been having difficulty smoothing out the road due to the freezing and thawing. Once the concrete work has been completed the contractor will be able to apply the final grade which will help with the rough road condition.
- Mayor Ramsey asked about the structure that is creating a raised area in the road. Mr. Lohr explained that the structure will be dropped several feet; a new top will be installed and the entire hump in the road will be cut out.
- Councilperson James asked if Bobby's (Round Hill Auto Service) is closed due to apron work. Mr. Lohr explained that the owner offered to close for a week to facilitate the apron work.

3. Goose Creek Water Treatment Plant Repairs and Rehab Update

Ms. Hynes presented this item. She reviewed the background, including the recent emergency repairs that were completed between April 2021 and now. Initial cost projections were estimated at \$700,000 and current projections are now under \$300,000.

Mayor Ramsey asked if the filters were replaced. Mr. Feltner stated that the filters were not replaced, just rehabilitated. The life expectancy of the rehabilitated filters is between ten and 15 years. There have been other issues with substandard building and internal plumbing, which resulted in high pressure. The remaining work is expected to be completed in the next two months.

Vice-Mayor Graham asked if the Town Council is planning for future renovations for budgeting purposes. Ms. Hynes indicated that will be accomplished through the Asset Management Plan and

the new Preventative Maintenance Program. Mayor Ramsey added that a \$500,000 unspecified placeholder was added in the rate study beyond the six-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

4. Draft Managed Reserve Policy/Cash Management Policy

Ms. Hynes presented this item. The Council is being asked to adopt a Managed Reserve Policy as an addition to the Town's overall Fiscal Policy. The Managed Reserve Policy will set parameters for how much cash to keep in the Town checking accounts with the remaining cash to be invested in the Virginia Investment Pool (VIP) Stable Net Asset Value (NAV) Liquidity Pool. Staff is recommending a 90-day policy as a starting point. Ms. Hynes introduced Steve Mulroy, Managing Director of Virginia Municipal League/Virginia Association of Counties Finance.

Mayor Ramsey referenced the following draft proposal for an amendment to the Fiscal Policy that he emailed to the Council Members:

1. The Town shall maintain at least 90 days of projected expenses in cash or cash-equivalent accounts that can be accessed without delay.
2. Additional reserves beyond 90 days of expenses may be invested in accordance with State code and best practices to maximize the rate of return while maintaining a low level of risk, for example in the Virginia Investment Pool (VIP) or Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP).

Mr. Mulroy explained that liquidity pools are ideal for covering unexpected expenditures where funds must be accessed quickly. If an order is placed by 2:00 p.m., the requested funds will be wired by end of the day. There are no transaction fees or withdrawal penalties. The fund is AAA rated by Standard & Poor's and is extremely accessible and liquid.

Mayor Ramsey asked if there are less-liquid pools that the Town could use for some of its "long-long-range" reserves. Mr. Mulroy said VIP offers a 1-3 Year High-Quality Bond Fund, which is suitable for reserve funds that are carried over from year-to-year. To take advantage of this fund the Town would have to be able to invest through market cycles. It is an appropriate, high-quality fund for local governments. Standard & Poor's rates this fund as AA+. Mayor Ramsey indicated that the Town has a requirement to maintain a year of reserves; this fund could be used for any balances that exceed a year.

Mayor Ramsey requested that Staff get additional information from the Town of Leesburg about maintaining a 90-day fund and how they handle investments regarding longer-term reserves.

Ms. Hynes will discuss this further with Mr. Mulroy and the Town of Leesburg and come back to the Council with additional information at a future meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Annual Open House Permit for Home Occupations

Ms. Hynes presented this item. Staff was approached by a resident with a home-based business who would like to host vendors in her front yard during the Hometown Festival. Ms. Hynes

presented her concept that would allow a “one-day amnesty” so home-based businesses could hold Open Houses on their properties once a year.

Discussion ensued about allowing the Open House only during Town events or at any time during the year, the impact on parking, and the effect on the Hometown Festival. Mayor Ramsey suggested adding an additional section to the Home Occupation Ordinance language that would set out allowable activities and restrictions for a one-day Open House. Ms. Hynes clarified that the questions before the Council are: 1) Does the Council want to allow Open Houses for Home Occupations; 2) Does the Council want to limit the Open House to a Town festival; 3) Does the Council want to amend the Zoning Ordinance now or offer this on a trial basis this year. Following further discussion, Mayor Ramsey conducted a straw vote on whether to allow Open Houses for home-based businesses on a limited basis once or twice a year:

- Councilperson James said she did not have enough information but had concerns about the impact on neighbors. Ms. Hynes noted there is a section on the permit that asks if the applicant has notified their neighbors.
- Councilperson Lloyd said that in general he is supportive.
- Vice-Mayor Graham stated she is willing to try it out, once or twice a year, and to allow the vendor to pick a day rather than being restricted to a specific weekend.
- Councilperson Howe said he is supportive.

Mayor Ramsey pointed out that Open Houses are occurring already, specifically for the Western Loudoun Art & Studio Tour or anytime someone holds a yard sale at their home.

Other discussion points included:

- How to handle objections from neighbors.
- Whether or not to limit outdoor music.
- Whether or not to limit permission to just the person with the active Home Occupation license at the licensee’s address.
- Whether or not to allow multiple vendors at one address.

Ms. Gilmore suggested that the Council brainstorm what the purpose would be for allowing Open Houses and then staff can draft alternatives for the Council’s consideration. If this is made part of this Ordinance, then the regulations would apply to all home-based businesses. The Zoning Administrator would have some discretion when issuing a permit.

Councilperson Lloyd questioned the downside in allowing active home-based businesses to invite other vendors to participate in their Open House, one day out of the year. Mayor Ramsey stated he would have a concern if outside vendors were permitted any time of the year. He noted it would be less of an issue for him if outside vendors are permitted during a regularly scheduled festival. A discussion ensued regarding how Business Professional Occupational Licenses (BPOL) would be handled on the day that one of the Home Occupation permit holders brings in vendors.

Mayor Ramsey summarized the discussion as follows:

- The Council, in general, is favorable to Home Occupations having an Open House once a year, with looser rules during Hometown Festival.
- The Council is concerned about outside vendors coming in and would like to see some regulation around that.
- The sentiment for now is to do this on a trial basis this year under the Town Administrator's discretion and evaluate how it goes.
- Outside vendors would have to be identified in advance and a nominal fee should be charged for each vendor.
- If a Round Hill resident with a Home Occupation license wanted to set up on another Round Hill resident's property, they should not be treated as an outside vendor.

Ms. Gilmore noted that there is currently a BPOL category for *Vendors/Craftsmen Selling at Limited Community Events*; the fee is \$10/day.

FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2023 BUDGET

1. FY 2023 Budget Schedule

Ms. Hynes reviewed the budget schedule:

- The Real Estate Tax Rate is due to the County by the first week in April.
- The General Fund Budget will be presented in March and the Utility Fund Budget will be presented in April.
- The goal is to have the FY 2023 Budget completed by May 11, with the Public Hearing on June 1, and adoption of the Budget on June 15.
- Special meetings will be scheduled if necessary.

Ms. Gilmore noted that the Personal Property Tax Rate is due to the County by March 1.

2. Review of FY 2022 Capital Projects (Utility Fund and General Fund)

Ms. Hynes presented this item and discussed the following utility projects: Southern Water Tank; Well D Acquisition; Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades (Phases 1 and 2); Inflow and Infiltration Investigations (Sewer Line Inspections); Rebuild Rt. 719 Well House; Lakefield Facilities Water Main; Replacement of Water Mains and Valves; New Regional Water Treatment Plant to Replace the Evening Star Water Treatment Plant; Existing Well Rehabilitation Program; New Utility Office Building and Storage Building; Utility Geographic Information System Mapping and Program; Utility Dump Truck for Hauling Sludge; and Green Sand Filtration at Goose Creek Water Treatment Plant. Ms. Hynes did not foresee more than a few new projects being added to the CIP for the upcoming Budget. Many existing projects will be finishing up in the next year.

General Fund Projects discussed included: Round Hill Pedestrian Improvements on Main Street; Sleeter Lake Park Improvements; New Website Design and Software (this project will be complete

before next the next Budget); Boundary Line Adjustment (short-term and long-term); Southern Gateway Pedestrian Trail; Town Office Upgrades (for new windows, siding, and insulation); Tunnel Rehabilitation and Security Program (this project has been put on hold temporarily pending obtaining an easement from the Virginia Department of Transportation); Financial Software Program (pending until the transition to Invoice Cloud is implemented); Upgrades to Niels Poulsen Park (repairing the fitness trail and obtaining a grant for sunshades); new Playground Equipment at the Town Park; and Recodification of the Town Code.

Ms. Hynes asked the Council Members to review the Information Technology modernization proposal/plans and to let her know if they have any questions.

Ms. Hynes noted that health insurance premiums are going up eight percent next budget year and the federal Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) is five percent; she is asking other towns what they are doing since this percentage seems high based on previous years' COLAs.

REPORTS

Ms. Hynes reported on the following:

- Vice-Mayor Graham asked about the audit presentation; Ms. Hynes said Jeff Mitchell will be making a presentation to the Council at the March 2 meeting.
- Councilperson James requested a draft copy of what the new fire station will look like; Ms. Hynes stated she would send that out.

Mayor Ramsey reported on the following:

- Western Loudoun suffered a big loss on the redistricting plan. The Board of Supervisors adopted a plan that removed one of the Western Districts and created an additional Eastern District. The Blue Ridge District was eradicated and Western Loudoun is left with the Catoclin District. The Coalition of Loudoun Towns (COLT) fought hard to prevent this from happening. The Board adopted the plan by a 7-2 vote with Supervisors Caleb Kershner and Tony Buffington voting against. Mayor Ramsey said it was disturbing that the Eastern Supervisors felt they could dismiss the views of the Western Supervisors without trying to reach a compromise that would serve everyone. In answer to a question from Vice-Mayor Graham, Mayor Ramsey stated that the Town of Middleburg will be in the same district as Brambleton; all other towns, including Round Hill, will be in the Catoclin District.
- Many other towns are reporting large assessment increases. Several towns he contacted are not going to equalize but take the middle ground between equalizing and absorbing some of the property increases. These towns have concerns about inflation and energy costs. If Round Hill can balance its budget with equalizing, Mayor Ramsey felt that was the route to take. He noted that Loudoun County is talking about not equalizing as well so there could be tax increases.

TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

Vice-Mayor Graham stated that last Friday she saw a flock of robins in her back yard; spring is coming.

Councilperson James said she read the notes about the Eastern Commercial District; she asked if an application had ever been submitted. Mayor Ramsey said no application has been submitted. He noted it would be very expensive to develop an application that would not have a chance of being approved. Mayor Ramsey stated that the Comprehensive Plan allows for mixed use under certain conditions, but to use the property for mixed uses would require a zoning change. He explained there was a proffer associated with the original rezoning that said the property would be commercial, but the Town would have architectural control over the site. The property is still owned by the Eckles Estate; the people who made the presentation to the Council on February 2nd do not own the property, but they have a contract with the Eckles Estate to potentially purchase the property if they are able to seal a path to viable development. As a contract purchaser, they have a contract to purchase under certain conditions.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Ramsey adjourned the meeting at 9:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott T. Ramsey, Mayor

CERTIFIED:



Harriet West, Town Clerk

APPROVED: April 20, 2022