

**fROUND HILL TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
January 20, 2021**

A Regular Meeting was held by the Round Hill Town Council on Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting was conducted electronically pursuant to *Ordinance 2020-04: Providing for Continuity of Government* adopted by the Mayor and Town Council on April 28, 2020. There was no public access to the Town Office for this meeting. The Mayor, Town Council Members, and Staff attended this meeting electronically using Zoom. Members of the public were able to attend this meeting electronically using the link published with the Agenda.

**Council Members Present**

Scott T. Ramsey, Mayor  
Mary Anne Graham, Vice-Mayor  
Donald Allen  
Melissa Hoffmann  
Jesse Howe  
Michael Hummel  
Paula James

**Staff Members Present**

Melissa Hynes, Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator  
Danielle Albright, Town Planner  
Marty Feltner, Utility Supervisor  
Maureen Gilmore, Town Attorney  
James High, Utility Department  
Sue Holland, Town Treasurer  
Robert Lohr, Project Specialist  
Harriet West, Town Clerk

**Others Present**

There were no members of the public present.

**IN RE: CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Ramsey called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m., and read the *Continuity of Government* notice, as follows:

*Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting will be conducted electronically pursuant to the **Emergency Ordinance to Modify Public Meeting and Public Hearing Practices and Procedures to Address Continuity of Operations Associated with Pandemic Disaster** adopted by the Mayor and Town Council on April 28, 2020. There will be no public access to the Town Office for this meeting. The Mayor, Council Members, and Staff*

*will be participating remotely. Members of the public may attend this meeting electronically using the link or call-in number provided on the Agenda.*

Mayor Ramsey noted that, as the meeting was being held via electronic means, and an American flag was not available, the Pledge of Allegiance would not be recited.

### **IN RE: ROLL CALL**

Roll Call was held; Mayor Ramsey noted that, with all members of the Town Council, and himself present, a quorum was established.

### **IN RE: PUBLIC HEARING**

#### **1. Water and Sewer Ordinance Amendments**

The Public Hearing to receive comment on the Water and Sewer Ordinance Amendments was opened by Mayor Ramsey at 7:34 p.m. It was noted that Councilperson Hummel, Vice-Mayor Graham, and Town Attorney Gilmore updated the Ordinances, in large part to address issues surrounding Availability Fees and grinder pumps. Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes reported that the Ordinance Amendments were duly advertised.

Mayor Ramsey then opened the meeting to public comment regarding the Ordinance Amendments; no comments were provided, either in person or in writing. Mayor Ramsey asked if there were any Council comments on the Ordinance Amendments; there were none.

Mayor Ramsey closed the Public Hearing at 7:36 p.m.

### **IN RE: PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **IN RE: ADOPTION OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA (Amendments & Deletions)**

Vice-Mayor Graham moved **to adopt the Agenda, with the following addition: add *Business Item #3 – Virginia Municipal League "Virginia Town & City" Article about Round Hill;*** Councilperson Hummel seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<b><u>MEMBER</u></b>	<b><u>VOTE</u></b>
Michael Hummel	Aye
Melissa Hoffmann	Aye
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Jesse Howe	Aye
Donald Allen	Aye
Paula James	Aye

## **IN RE: APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **1. November 18, 2020**

Vice-Mayor Graham requested clarification of lines #260 and #261, on page seven, in paragraph one, which read *Vice-Mayor Graham also noted other concerns, including criticism of Round Hill's planning*. Mayor Ramsey stated that this was during discussion of Round Hill's mandated participation in a water rate planning study, and centered around if Town Staff should provide information for inclusion in the study. Discussion ensued, with it being decided to delete the sentence from the minutes.

There were no further corrections.

Vice-Mayor Graham made a motion **that the minutes be approved, as amended**; Councilperson Allen seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<b><u>MEMBER</u></b>	<b><u>VOTE</u></b>
Michael Hummel	Aye
Melissa Hoffmann	Aye
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Jesse Howe	Aye
Donald Allen	Aye
Paula James	Aye

## **IN RE: BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **1. Utility Department Update**

Vice-Mayor Graham presented this item, reporting that the Utility Department held a meeting last week, at which the following items were discussed:

- The budget for the Southern Water Tank. Town Engineer Lane noted that the cost for purchase of the tank itself has not yet been budgeted, and the cost for this structure has gone up since the beginning of the project; Mr. Lane suggested adding the cost of the structure to the upcoming budget discussions.

Mayor Ramsey noted that Staff has considered this issue, and that discussion of budgeting this cost will be discussed at this evening's meeting.

- Concerns have been voiced by property owners adjacent to the proposed Well D regarding the appearance of the well casing building; two proposals for this building have been put forth, in an effort to address these concerns, but a decision has not yet been made. It was requested that Staff provide both "pros" and "cons" for the two designs under consideration.

Mayor Ramsey noted that the Round Hill Owners' Association (RHOA) will have the final decision-making authority regarding this item. Vice-Mayor Graham requested that Project Specialist Lohr and Utility Supervisor Feltner expedite the report on possible alternative building designs. Project Specialist Lohr briefly described the two options under consideration, one of which uses a stone cover, and one of which uses a low-profile, "hot-box" cover. Mayor Ramsey stated that the Town will try to provide the best options possible to the RHOA; if the group declines the designs provided, the Town will undertake further action, which will bring the decision back to the Town Council.

- *East Coast Utilities* has not yet provided a final quote for the safety improvements needed at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Vice-Mayor Graham noted that the monthly meetings have been valuable, and stated that it is hoped the monthly schedule will resume soon.

## **2. Franklin Park Trail/Main Street Enhancement Project Update**

Project Specialist Lohr presented this item, highlighting the following:

- Installation of the 12-inch valve has been completed; with installation of another valve, and piping, underway.
- The service interruption to customers in the construction area was wider than expected, due to the need to shut off an additional valve; Staff worked to notify customers and to provide water to residents. Mr. Lohr reported that the service interruption was to customers on East Loudoun Street, as had been expected, and in the Lake Point subdivision, which was not expected.
- All valve work has been completed.
- The contractor has requested extended work hours, asking to be allowed to begin work at 7:00 a.m. and work until dusk. There are no plans to work beyond the 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. timeframe during the spring and summer. The contractor is working with Loudoun County and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) on this request.
- That nine to 11 houses will be impacted by the switchover to two-inch PVC pipe.
- That numerous meetings are scheduled for this week, as the contractor has requested a complete shut-down of water lines on East Loudoun Street. Project Specialist Lohr reported that the contractor's request for an all-day shut-down was denied by Staff, with the alternative of lowering water pressure, rather than the complete shut-down of water service, presented. Project Specialist Lohr stated his belief that Staff has adequately addressed safety issues surrounding the lowering of water pressure, and reported that they are now awaiting the contractor's response. A progress meeting is scheduled for tomorrow morning. Updated information will be provided to affected residents in the near future.

There was discussion of the concerns expressed in conjunction with the water pressure issue, with Project Specialist Lohr suggesting that anyone who has additional concerns contact Town Engineer Lane or Utility Supervisor Feltner. There was also brief discussion of the request for extended work hours. In response to a question from Council, Project Specialist Lohr stated that updated, daily plans for the project may be reviewed at the construction trailer, adjacent to Niels Poulsen Park.

### **3. Virginia Municipal League *Virginia Town & City* Article About Round Hill**

Vice-Mayor Graham presented this item, noting that this publication plans to highlight a town in Loudoun County in each issue leading up to the Virginia Municipal League (VML) conference scheduled for the fall in Leesburg. Ms. Graham noted that Round Hill is to be featured in the March issue, and asked if Staff is working on this article; Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes responded that Staff will submit the article by the February 22<sup>nd</sup> deadline. Mayor Ramsey reported that this had been discussed with those organizing the evening on a recent Coalition of Loudoun Towns (COLT) call, and that he will provide additional information regarding this topic to Council Members.

## **IN RE: ACTION ITEMS**

### **1. Water and Sewer Ordinance Amendments**

Mayor Ramsey noted that this Action Item will provide for adoption of the Ordinance Amendments which were the subject of this evening's Public Hearing, and called for a motion. Vice-Mayor Graham made a motion **that the Round Hill Town Council adopt Ordinance Number 2021-02, which adopts the amended Water and Sewer Ordinances, as set forth in Attachment A.** Mayor Ramsey reiterated that this action is to adopt the Ordinance Amendments. Councilperson Allen seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A voice vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<b><u>MEMBER</u></b>	<b><u>VOTE</u></b>
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Donald Allen	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye
Jesse Howe	Aye
Paula James	Aye
Melissa Hoffmann	Aye

Mayor Ramsey stated that the Ordinances have hereby been adopted.

## **IN RE: BUDGET WORK SESSION ITEMS**

### **1. Presentation: FY22 Utility Fund and General Fund Capital Improvement Plan Projects and Budgets**

Mayor Ramsey stated that Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes will provide the Staff Presentation for this item, with discussion by the Town Council to follow. The Mayor noted that he will provide options for financing for the projects.

Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes began the presentation by noting that there are currently 24 Capital Projects represented in Round Hill's budget, with only three to four new projects included in that number. Ms. Hynes explained that an overview of all projects will be presented this evening, beginning with the General Fund Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Budget.

The following General Fund Budget items/issues were highlighted:

- A spreadsheet of General Fund CIP projects, provided to Council, which included the total cost for each project. Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes explained how costs are carried over until each project has been completed.
- Draft Project Sheets for each individual effort; these provided more detailed information. The Franklin Park Trail/Main Street Enhancement Project, continuing work at Sleeter Lake Park, the update to the Town's website and software, proposed Boundary Line Adjustments, and Pedestrian Improvements on Airmont Road at the Main Street/Loudoun Street intersection were discussed.

Project Specialist Lohr provided additional information on the Pedestrian Improvement project, noting that additional funding will be requested from both the State and Loudoun County. Mr. Lohr explained that it is unlikely the County will agree to provide a portion of this funding at this time, due to their funding schedule; further, Mr. Lohr noted that VDOT is requesting a commitment to fund the project. Discussion ensued regarding these concerns, and of the possibility of Round Hill providing the funding up-front for the Pedestrian Improvements project. Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes and Project Specialist Lohr provided information on additional funding which may be available, and of the required start date for the project under this funding scenario. Mayor Ramsey suggested that an achievable milestone be identified to serve as a starting point for the project, noting that initiating the design may be a good beginning point. There was additional discussion of how funding could be sought from Loudoun County, VDOT, and other sources. Staff is to further research these possibilities, and provide that information to the Council at its meeting of February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

- Upgrades continue at the Town Office, with notable progress made this year; only a few items remain to be completed.
- Work on the Pedestrian Tunnel under the Route 7 Bypass continues, with funding expected during FY2022, for completion of the project in FY2023.

- The effort to purchase new financial software for use by the Town continues.
- Work continues on Niels Poulsen Park. The purchase of new playground equipment for the Town Park on Loudoun Street may be delayed until next year.
- An update of the Town Code is included in these projects. The goal is to make the document more consistent and up-to-date, and to make it available to residents online. The provider is ready to begin this work.

There was brief discussion of the quote provided by the firm slated to undertake this work, with Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes stating that she will contact the provider to ensure that the quote is correct.

Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes then presented the Utility Fund Budget, highlighting the following:

- The Southern Water Tank project – this is an ongoing project. The quote for the actual tank has increased by nearly one-million dollars since last year, with a request made to the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) for additional funding.

Council was asked to decide if this should remain on its current schedule, or be delayed somewhat, with completion of the project slated for 2023. Discussion ensued regarding various funding sources which could be used to meet the increased cost, and of the schedule for completion of the project.

- Well D Property Acquisition – this is an ongoing project, and will extend into the next fiscal year.

The steps necessary for completion of the project were discussed. Mayor Ramsey requested that additional financial information be provided to Council, to provide context for these discussions; this information will be provided to Council at the February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. The Town is moving toward the Testing and Development portion of this project.

- Rebuild of Route 719 Well Building – this has been under discussion for the last few years, with additional funding requested this year to address problems with this building. Improvements are needed in order to address both water quality and aesthetics. Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes noted that she will provide to Council a more detailed plan for remediation of the building at its next meeting.

There was a lengthy discussion of the potential for future use of this well, of the reasons leading to the high cost of replacement of the building, and of water quality from this well. Utility Supervisor Feltner noted his belief that this well is a viable source, and explained the impact that disuse of this well could have on the rest of the utility system.

Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes and Utility Supervisor Feltner reiterated that additional information regarding this project will be provided at the next Town Council meeting.

- Lakefield Facilities Water Main – this includes the water line to Sleeter Lake Park, and the second portion of the line from the park to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- Replacement of Water Lines and Valves – Utility Supervisor Feltner explained that this project will provide information on valves in the system where problems exist. Mr. Feltner noted that the valves currently in use in the Stoneleigh subdivision are no longer available for purchase; therefore, Stoneleigh will serve as the pilot project for this effort. Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator Hynes noted that updated numbers for this project will be provided at a future Town Council meeting.
- New Regional Water Treatment Plant to Replace the Evening Star Drive Plant – this project was proposed last year.
- Existing Well Rehabilitation – Utility Supervisor Feltner explained that undertaking this effort could help increase production at some wells, with this still under review by Emery and Garrett Groundwater Investigations (EGGI), Town Engineer Lane, and himself. Mr. Feltner reported that the system has seen a reduction in total production in all system wells, and that Staff is working to determine if this rehabilitation project would help with this loss of production.

Council decided to keep this item in the budget for one year, and revisit it if it proves useful.

- New Utility Office Building and Storage Building – this project was delayed due to the COVID pandemic. There is a possibility that a prefabricated building could be installed, reducing costs. Changes have been made to the site plan, per Loudoun County requirements. Updated information regarding this project will be provided to Council at its next meeting.
- Geographic Information System (GIS) – this goes hand-in-hand with preventive maintenance work, with the hiring of a part-time contractor to compile the data collected by the maintenance company included in the total of this project's budget. Mayor Ramsey requested that cost-savings be sought.
- Utility Department Dump Truck for Hauling Sludge – Utility Supervisor Feltner explained the need for this new vehicle, to serve as a second vehicle and to provide a heavier truck when circumstances require. In response to a question from Council, Mr. Feltner reported that a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) will not be required for operation of this truck.
- Replacement of the Green Sand Filter System at the Goose Creek Facility – Utility Supervisor Feltner explained that the existing filters there have been in place for some time, and do not work correctly, as they must be manually adjusted. Mr. Feltner further explained that replacement parts for the system are no longer



available for purchase. He explained that this request is for a new system, which is expected to provide 15 to 20 more years of service. Utility Supervisor Feltner noted that, if the existing filter system fails to meet limits, VDH would require its replacement.

Discussion ensued regarding possible means to address a failure of the system if the purchase of this new filter system is delayed for one year or so.

## **2. Water Rate Study Update**

Mayor Ramsey presented this item, with a PowerPoint presentation provided to the Council. Mayor Ramsey reported that the most recent Water Rate Study was completed in 2019, but that this update is needed due to both new projects planned and projects currently underway. Mayor Ramsey explained developments and changes seen in Round Hill since 2019, and noted the increase in CIP projects for the upcoming budget year. He noted that additional information is still needed to complete the study; this includes input from the Town Council. Mayor Ramsey then provided a series of graphs and tables, which provided comparisons of data in various categories for a range of years, and information regarding various funding scenarios. Mayor Ramsey noted that decisions made regarding funding could require changes to the Town's Fiscal Policy. Mayor Ramsey asked Council Members to consider their comfort level with borrowing/carrying debt, as provided for in the various funding scenarios; discussion ensued, with comments and/or recommendations made by Council to be considered in the update of the Water Rate Study. There was also discussion of the amount of money currently in Reserves, and its potential use for necessary projects. Water and sewer rates were discussed, with it being the consensus of Council not to raise rates this year due to hardships brought about by the pandemic. It was also noted that interest rates are, at this time, exceptionally low, making borrowing for projects more reasonable. At the suggestion of the Council, it was decided to seek an opinion from Mitchell and Company and/or Davenport regarding funding options, including borrowing. There was also a suggestion from Council that the scheduling of these various projects be spread out over a longer period of time, to avoid over-committing the Town. Mayor Ramsey noted that the decision before Council, at this time, is to determine if borrowing is an option; Mr. Ramsey reassured Council that this is for planning purposes, with actual decisions about projects and spending to be brought before Council at the appropriate time. The discussion ended with concerns regarding unexpected expenditures raised, and possible ways to handle these expenses discussed.

## **IN RE: TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilperson Hummel asked to confirm that a Town Council meeting will be held next week; Mayor Ramsey noted that it would be.

Vice-Mayor Graham noted that former Town Council Member Mary Leonard recently passed away; she had been ill with COVID.

Mayor Ramsey reported that the VML Conference is to be held in Leesburg this year. The conference will be highlighting the towns of Loudoun County, with Staff to provide an article to the organization about Round Hill.

Mayor Ramsey also reported that the Virginia General Assembly is considering a bill which would require holding municipal elections in November, in conjunction with the general election. He noted that COLT opposes this legislation, believing that the choice should remain with localities.

Mayor Ramsey reported that the County has a coronavirus vaccination site in Sterling, with a second site for teachers opening soon (or possibly now open); a third site, which will also be in eastern Loudoun County, is expected. Mayor Ramsey noted that COLT would like for there to be a center which is more convenient for those living in western Loudoun. Mr. Ramsey reported that the County is working with private providers to increase the number of vaccination sites, but it is uncertain if any will be in the western portion of the County. The Mayor noted that COLT advocates for provision for at least one western site, and explained that regulations exist which require a VDH employee to be present at all sites; this negatively impacts vaccine distribution. Discussion ensued regarding the eligibility of Council Members and Staff for vaccination, to foster continuity of government. Mayor Ramsey noted that the emphasis for Loudoun County, at present, is to vaccinate first responders and teachers.

Mayor Ramsey stated that he will provide additional COLT updates to Council via e-mail.

**IN RE: MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Ramsey at 11:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Scott T. Ramsey, Mayor

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Debra McDonald, Recording Secretary

Date Approved: March 3, 2021