

**Community Development Committee**

**Town of Independence**

**April 16, 2024**

**9am – Fire Hall**

**Draft Minutes**

Committee Members Attending: Kit Marshall, Chairwoman, Joan Collins, Mark Miller, Matthew Adams

Ad hoc Members Attending: Laura Ratcliffe, Town Manager

Absent : Ronald Sexton, Mary Ann Halsey

- 1) Welcome – Chairwoman Marshall welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2) The minutes from the March 4<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved.
- 3) Old Business
  - a. Town Park Update
    - i. Councilwoman Marshall reported that several members of the committee met with Cynthia and Rick Taylor from Grayson Landcare Permaculture group at the site to discuss the plans. Cynthia will provide a high-level proposal/planting list and proposed to meet with the group again in mid-June to finalize details.
    - ii. Town Manager Ratcliffe stated the plan for the VOF funds needs to be started soon and finalized by June so that there is time to purchase the items. The grant deadline is December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024.
  - b. 5 Year Plan
    - i. Town Manager Ratcliffe presented a proposed 5-year Community Development Plan created from the discussions had with committee members. A copy of the plan is attached to these minutes. The plan is broken into 3 sections (Streetscape, Resident & Business Engagement/Support), and Services & Infrastructure. The plan includes specific action items for each year with associated estimated costs. The plan should be used to set budget and activity priorities. It is also important to remember this is a plan and will change overtime as new information, etc. is received by the group. Discussion ensued about the plan. There were no suggested changes to the plan by the committee members. The members agreed the plan should be presented at the upcoming budget session to support their committee budget recommendation.
  - c. 2025 Budget Recommendation – The committee reviewed requests made by various groups for budget support in the upcoming year. The committee approved \$100,450 to be submitted for the proposed community development budget. This amount is budgeted across the following as follows:
    - 1) Misc. 5 Year Plan Items - \$ 18,450
    - 2) Community Support - \$55,000
      - a. Healthcare Initiatives - \$10k

- b. Fire Dept - \$17,500 (Note, subsequent to this meeting a funding request was received from the Fire Dept for \$30k. The recommendation was revised to \$20,000)
  - c. Rescue Squad - \$16,500
  - d. 1908 - \$5,000
    - i. Committee suggested the Farmer's Market make a donation to the 1908 to help offset restroom costs if this isn't already happening.
  - e. Library - \$4,100
    - i. Committee suggested the Farmer's Market make a donation to the library to help offset restroom costs if this isn't already happening.
  - f. Friends of SW VA - \$0
  - g. Family Resource Center - \$1,000
  - h. Independence Cares - \$2500
  - i. MGG - \$2500 (storage costs only if necessary)
  - j. Miscellaneous - \$2500 (to be used for Chamber, Art & Ag and other requests that come through the year)
- 3) Town Events - \$27,000
- a. 4<sup>th</sup> of July
  - b. Privy Races
    - i. Committee suggested to try to capture crowd count as measurement of event success.
  - c. Safe Halloween
  - d. Christmas/Santa
- d. Town Code Change Recommendations – none action at this meeting
- 4) New Business
- a. None

There being no additional business, Councilwoman Marshall adjourned the meeting.