

Fries Town Council
June 2, 2015
Minutes

Members Present: Jo Ann Gunter, Nancy Hawks, Marie Isom, Carolyn Jones and Dawn Patton.

Others Present: Richard Farmer, Mayor; Denny Brooms, Fries Community Center; Chad Stanley, FVFD; Karen Snyder, Festival & Events Committee; Kelly Haga, Grayson County Treasurer and several citizens.

The Mayor called the meeting to order and JoAnn Gunter gave the Invocation.

Minutes & Bills: Dawn Patton moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and to approve the minutes and bills as presented. Nancy Hawks provided the second to the motion. All present voted Aye and the minutes and bills were approved.

Police Report: Officer Jeff Merilic gave a summary of police activity for May. He reported 1 drunk in public, 1 drive while suspended, 1 driving under the influence, 1 drug arrest, 1 traffic arrest and 4 other arrests. He also reported investigation of 1 misdemeanor. Routine activities reported included: 259 closed business checks, 26 service calls, 90 church checks, 63 directive patrols, 49 open business checks, 73 forestry checks, 7 motorist assists, 2 DMV notice, 14 civil papers, 2 warrant services, 2 crime prevention contacts, 9 house checks, 4 first responders and 22 open bank checks for a total of 163.90 hours. The Mayor thanked the Officer for his report and the department for their service.

Organization Updates:

1. Fries Volunteer Fire Department Update: Chad Stanley reported that the department had answered 51 EMS calls and 4 fire calls in May. Two members, Ms. Crystal Faulkner and Ms. Samantha Amburgey, received their paramedic certification. He also reported he had received the ISO report back and the departments rating went from an 8 to a 5. (1 is the best.) This improved rating should help lower homeowner insurance rates in town. Upcoming events included their June 12th & 13th Ranch Rodeo at their Providence location and the July 4th parade and fireworks. The Mayor thanked Chad for his report and for the department's efforts. He also expressed sympathy for the loss of Chad's grandfather, Fred Stanley, who recently passed away.
2. Fries Community Center Report: Denny Brooms reported that they were still addressing pool issues, but planned to open by the weekend. They had already interviewed lifeguards and were prepared to open as soon as the pool could be filled. They were planning another poker run in June and were also planning to sell concessions for the upcoming tee ball season. He had contacted several game vendors and hoped to have games back in the lobby soon. He also reported that they were still working on getting their QuickBooks accounting system set up. He thanked the fire department for providing a sound system for their square dance and he also thanked the Mayor and all the volunteers for their hard work raising funds for the building renovation. The Mayor thanked Denny for his report.

3. Tourism Report: Marie Isom thanked the New River Trail State Park for installing a handrail on the stairs leading to The Café. The park service will also be providing signage locally. Marie asked council for permission for the tourism committee to work with the park service on the verbiage and placement of the signs. Dawn Patton provided the second and the motion was approved. The tourism committee recently participated in a hashtag local business Twitter initiative lead by the Governor of Virginia, they updated both the friesva.com and the friesfestivals.com websites, compiled photos and information for a community spotlight for the tourism blitz in September, began work on setting up a temporary visitors center in a room under the pool, began work on a booklet for local businesses that lists all the lodging, recreation, food and things to do for the area and attended several webinars. She thanked Mr. C. L. Perkins for compiling the photos and information collected into a digital video for the community spotlight. She thanked Richard Farmer and Martha Nichols for working to develop our relationship with Emory & Henry. She welcomed Tim & Minda Dixon and their new business. New River Outdoor Adventures recently opened in the former Blue Cat on the New space. She also thanked Kit Marshall for updating our information on the Round the Mountain and Crooked Road websites and for her leading the renovation of the theatre. She then read a proposal from Kit that asked for permission to request donations of quilts to replace the blue damask on the walls of the theatre. The quilts would act as acoustic panels. Each quilt would have a custom sized frame built to hold it like a picture against the wall, with a solid black fabric "frame" stretched around the edge for continuity, preserving the quilt. Each quilt donated would be commemorated with a small engraved plate stating who it was created by, date, in loving memory of, etc. Dawn Patton provided the second and her request was approved. Upcoming events for the tourism committee included a Galax Theatre Guild performance of Some Enchanted Evening to be held in the Fries Theatre on June 19th at 7pm. Admission was to be by donation, with all proceeds benefiting the theatre renovation fund. She also reported that Timmy Dixon was working to get the dualathon together for August. This will be the first time that the town would be taking the lead on the event and volunteers that have participated in this type of event would be needed. The tourism blitz will be held in September at the Lamsburg Welcome Center. Kit Marshall is assembling displays to spotlight our local lodging and Mr. Perkin's digital spotlight will be featured there also. Marie thanked everyone for supporting the tourism committee in all their endeavors. The Mayor thanked Marie for her report.
4. Festivals & Events Committee: Karen Snyder reported that the Henry Whitter Festival had been a success. She thanked Bill Davis for the use of his sound system, the fire department for use of their bleachers and Gene Adkins for lining up the bands. The Crooked Road event scheduled for June 13th was canceled because most local bands and vendors were already booked for other events. She reported that the July 4th celebration would be held in the Town Park and the fireworks would be fired from the old mill site. The committee had decided to move the Festival by the River from September to October 3rd, and the Annual Christmas on the Mountain celebration would be on December 5th. The committee was also putting together a tribute to Joe Wilson for the June 11th Jam Session. The Mayor thanked Karen for her report.

Old Business:

1. Y Repair Project Update: The Mayor reported that the fish fry fundraiser had been a success. \$2,425.36 was raised at the event. He also reported that the balance on the renovation account was up to \$13,097.40 and that 93 people had donated to the cause.
2. Depot Project Update: Dawn Patton reported that she had contacted Kevin Heath and Bobby Lane from The Lane Group concerning the depot. They both reported that the goal was still to have the bidding packages available for the July meeting and they were on track. Both Bobby Lane and Kevin Heath will be attending the July meeting.

New Business:

1. 2015/2016 Budget: The Mayor read the proposed 2015/2016 budget out loud. There were no questions or comments. Dawn Patton moved to adopt the budget as presented. Nancy Hawks provided the second. All present voted Aye, and the budget was adopted.
2. Computer Equipment: Karen Snyder reported that there were several old computers found in the Community Center and asked for council input as to what to do with them. After some discussion, council gave her permission to dispose of the equipment however she wished.

Announcements:

1. Large Item Curbside Pickup was scheduled to take place the week of June 15th. All items should be put out by June 15th, actual pickup could occur later in the week.

With no further business to discuss, Dawn Patton moved to adjourn, Marie Isom provided the second and the meeting was adjourned.

Signed: _____

Attest: _____