

Fries Town Council
December 5, 2017
Minutes

Members Present: Bill Davis, Cynthia Grant, JoAnn Gunter, Nancy Hawks, Marie Isom, Dawn Patton and Gary Sumner.

Others Present: Richard Farmer, Mayor; Officer Cody McGrady, Grayson County Sheriff's Department; Gene Adkins and Karen Snyder, Fries Community Center; Steven Clark, Ray Howe and several citizens.

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

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

Police Report: Officer Cody McGrady gave the following report for November: Arrests; 1 drug and 1 warrant; the investigation of 15 misdemeanors and 1 traffic accident. Routine activities included: 236 closed business checks, 34 service calls, 51 church checks, 72 directive patrols, 30 open business checks, 25 forestry checks, 5 open bank checks, 1 civil paper, 1 substance seizure, 3 warrant services, 7 motorists assist and 4 ACO calls for a total of 168.10 hours. Officer McGrady also reported that the department had been working on a mailbox vandalism case recently. Ninety-Two mailboxes had been vandalized in the Fries, Galax and Grayson areas. He asked that if anyone had any information to please let the department know. The Mayor thanked him for the report.

Organization Updates:

1. Fries Volunteer Fire Department Update: Chad Stanley was unable to attend.
2. Fries Community Center Report: Karen Snyder reported that the annual Christmas on the Mountain had been a success. She thanked the Virginia Tech Jazz Ensemble for their participation. She also reported that they had started remodeling the bathrooms in the dining room and would be installing new sinks and handicap accessible toilets. K—3rd basketball was underway as well as registrations for the 4th—7th grade boys and girls and planned to start their games in January. A benefit for Donald Hill was scheduled for December 10th from 2—5pm to help pay for medical bills and travel expenses. Lastly, the Theatre Christmas Ornaments had sold out, but another order had been placed and should arrive before Christmas. The Mayor thanked Karen for her report and hard work.
3. Tourism Report: Marie Isom reported the following:

- She had attended several workshops and webinars concerning marketing and getting the most from social media on behalf of the town.
- She had been working with Cindy Rowe planning the 2018 season for the Farmer's Market. She stated that Cindy would be attending an upcoming meeting to update council.
- She was updating our local event and tourism information on the state and county websites, as well as our own.
- She announced that VRBO and HomeAway had been bought out by Expedia. She was concerned that the buyout would have an affect on our own vacation rentals by giving them less control over their marketing and costing them more. She and others were working to find a way to help area vacation rentals to work more collaboratively.
- She announced that Ms. Kate Irwin would be producing a lifestyle magazine about our area called "Here". The magazine would be a subscription magazine and she hoped that local businesses would take advantage of the advertising opportunity.
- The Mill Bell Committee had moved the mill bell to the depot site and planned to try and get a foundation laid before the weather got bad. She thanked Randy Lineberry, Tommy Taylor, Herbie Funk, David Isom, Gene Adkins, Steve Clark and Harry Boyles for their efforts in moving the bell. The Mayor suggested putting lights and a wreath on the bell for Christmas. Gene Adkins volunteered to decorate the bell. The next Mill Bell Committee meeting was scheduled for December 12th at 2pm.
- The Information Center/Gift Shop was stocked by 10 contributors and opening on Fridays and Saturdays from 11am—6pm.

The Mayor thanked Marie for her report and hard work.

Old Business:

1. Y Repair Project Update: The Mayor reported that the new balance for the Y Repair Project was up to \$39,895.80. Work on the third side was almost finished and he stated that fundraising would continue until the last side was finished.
2. Park Project Update: Kim Mallory was not able to attend, but reported that she was working with Marty Hall who planned to give a donation either from his foundation or personally in honor of his mom. Gus Hill had approached her about digging up the park, removing the remains of the old structure and filling it back in before installing new equipment. She hoped he could do it in the spring. Kaboom did not grant the 2017 application, but she had applied for 2018 funding. She said winners would be announced in the spring.
3. Steven Clark: Steve reported that the courts had been sealed and he was ready to begin building holes for his miniature golf course.

New Business:

1. Ray Howe: Mr. Howe addressed council again concerning the mandatory minimum water bill. Mr. Howe suggested that having a mandatory minimum was creating an environment not conducive for growing businesses. He also did not feel that it was fair to charge citizens for water that they weren't using. After expressing several other reservations, he had concerning the town, the Mayor thanked Mr. Howe for his comments.
2. Decal Changes: After some discussion, Nancy Hawks moved that the town stop selling decals in 2018 and follow suit with the county by charging a vehicle licensing fee on the personal property tax. Dawn Patton provided the second. All present voted Aye and the motion carried. After some further discussion, Dawn Patton moved to change the Personal Property tax due date to June like Grayson County. Nancy Hawks provided the second. All present voted Aye and the motion carried. The Mayor reported that he would get with Roger Brooks to see what other steps needed to be taken to make the changes happen.

Announcements:

There were no announcements.

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

Signed: _____

Attest: _____