

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE RURAL RETREAT TOWN
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY, May 12, 2026- 7:00 P.M.**

Mayor and Council Members Present: Tim Litz, Mayor, James Lloyd, Geary Jonas, James P. “Sean” Viars, Alma Dunford, Bob Lewis

Council Members Absent: Dale Yontz, Vice-Mayor

Administration Present: Monica H. Patton Clerk/Treasurer

Administration Absent: Jason Childers, Town Manager
Derek Breedlove, Police Chief

Others Present: James Rudzinski, Maylie Rudzinski, Brenda Atwell, Judy Colley, Cailynn Pigrene, Golby Gage Hamm, Maddox Owens, Conner Hensley, Heather Funk, Kyle Funk, Ellen Schaack, Ed Schaack, Emily Voight, Trevor Voit, Caden Dyer, Vincent Brough, Kinli Akinson, Troy Copenhaver, Faith Copenhaver, Haven Howington, Stephanie Hamm, Chloe Hamm, Audrey Arnold, Tammy Markle, Chris Markle, Jack Linkous, Cassidy Hensley, Kevin Hensley, Kristen Owens, Josh Owens, Edward Buller, Cayden Willis, Avery Brown

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Mayor Litz called the meeting to order and determined a quorum was present.

INVOCATION

Councilmember Jonas gave the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Litz led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Councilmember Lloyd seconded by Councilmember Lewis to approve the minutes of the April 28, 2026, meeting. The motion passed by a vote of five (5) for: Jonas, Lloyd, Viars, Lewis, Dunford; zero (0) against.

RESOLUTIONS RURAL RETREAT HIGH SCHOOL BAND – Mayor Litz read the following resolutions:

RESOLUTION
The Rural Retreat High School Band

Whereas, the Rural Retreat High School Band has demonstrated dedication, discipline, and artistic excellence through months of rehearsal and preparation;

Whereas, the Rural Retreat Concert Band achieved Virginia Honor Band status for the first time in school history last year, which is the highest honor a band can receive, and this marks back-to-back superior ratings at concert assessment. This is the highest rating you can receive at this event;

Whereas, the 2025-2026 band received Concert Assessment superior rating on March 11, 2026;

Whereas, this year the Rural Retreat High School band competed at the Chilhowie Apple Festival and the George Wythe Band Festival which included awards such as first place in marching, music, general effect, and percussion;

Now Therefore, Be It Resolved, that in recognition of the 2025-2026 Rural Retreat High School Band's outstanding accomplishments and the pride they have bestowed upon themselves, the Rural Retreat High School and the Rural Retreat Community, the Rural Retreat Town Council in regular session this 12th day of May 2026 does hereby congratulate the Rural Retreat High School Band for a successful competition season; and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Rural Retreat Town Council officially commends the Rural Retreat High School Concert Band under the direction of Band Director, Caden Dyer and the entire staff for their leadership and dedication to the band students;

Be It Further Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be presented to the Rural Retreat High School Band.

Be It Further Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be incorporated into May 12, 2026, minutes of the Rural Retreat Town Council.

RESOLUTION
Recognizing Colby Hamm
Rural Retreat High School Concert Band

Whereas, the Rural Retreat High School Concert Band had a successful 2024-2025 season; and

Whereas, the Rural Retreat High School Concert Band achieved Virginia Honor Band status for the first time in school history for the 2024-2025 season; and

Whereas, they received Concert Assessment superior rating on March 12, 2025; and

Whereas, the Rural Retreat Town Council would like to recognize Colby Hamm who made the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association (VBODA) all state band; and

Now Therefore, Be It Resolved, that in recognition of the 2024-2025 Rural Retreat High School Concert Band outstanding accomplishments and the pride they have bestowed upon themselves, the Rural Retreat High School and the Rural Retreat Community, the Rural Retreat Town Council in regular session this 12th day of May 2026 does hereby congratulate the Rural Retreat High School Concert Band for a successful competition season; and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Rural Retreat Town Council acknowledges the Rural Retreat High School Concert Band under the direction of Band Director, Caden Dyer and the entire staff for their outstanding performance, leadership, and dedication; and

Be It Further Resolved, that this resolution be presented to Colby Hamm with a copy sent to Rural Retreat High School to be included in his permanent school records.

Be It Further Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be incorporated into May 12, 2026, minutes of the Rural Retreat Town Council.

CITIZEN'S TIME – None

CORRESPONDENCE – Treasurer Patton read a thank you note from the Rural Retreat Depot Foundation for the donation of \$3,000. She read another thank you note from the Rural Retreat High School After Prom Committee for the town's donation of \$2,000 for the after-prom event. She read a graduation announcement from the RRHS Class of 2026. The graduation exercises are scheduled for Friday, May 22, 2026, at 6pm.

POLICE REPORT - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Councilmember Lloyd stated that he spoke with Troy Harris and explained that the Depot Foundation will be handling the Dr. Pepper Day event this year.

DIGITAL SIGN - Councilmember Viars asked if anything has been accomplished on the digital sign that the Lions Club is interested in helping the town purchase and install.

NEW BUSINESS – Opening Day Heritage Park – Mayor Litz asked if everything will be ready for Opening Day on May 23. Mike Jones stated that the park is not finished but it will be ready on the 23rd. Councilmember Lewis asked if the equipment will be tested prior to the opening. Mr. Jones stated that the pool company is scheduled to install pumps and test the system.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE & APPROPRIATIONS – None

PERSONNEL, ORDINANCES & LEGAL MATTERS – None

HERITAGE DAYS – None

MURAL PLANNING- Councilmember Dunford inquired when a decision would be made regarding the mural design. Treasurer Patton reported that the muralist had sent three design samples to Town Manager Childers. She confirmed that the samples were also distributed to all Council members. Councilmember Lloyd suggested that the committee meet at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday. Treasurer Patton agreed to contact the muralist and schedule the meeting for 5:30 p.m. tomorrow evening. Councilmember Dunford asked how long it would take to complete the mural. Treasurer Patton replied that the muralist indicated the work could be completed within one week, in time for the park opening, provided a design is selected promptly. Councilmember Viars recommended that the committee be given authority to make the final decision on the design.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

The Town Manager’s report is attached and is hereby made part of these minutes. The following items were reported and discussed.

- **Downtown Revitalization:** Everything is looking good for the opening of the playground and splash pad. The turf has been laid on the playground and looks very nice. The gazebo has been delivered but has not been placed at the location because the Town did not want to mess up the area due to rain. The fencing company will need to do their work in the near future. The flagpole has been ordered with a tentative delivery date in June. This could be sooner depending on availability. The Town has a few options as far as lighting for the flagpole. It can be installed on the flagpole itself, or it can be installed in the ground below the pole. I reached out to Mr. Bud Pollard about possibly providing music for the Splash Pad opening. He will be out of Town that weekend but will provide his PA equipment if needed.
- **Mural:** The Town needs to come to a conclusion on the mural style. The project is ready to begin.
- **Pepper Stage Decking:** The contractor will be onsite to replace the decking at the Pepper Stage. I was told the construction would begin the last week of this month.

- **Water Plant:** The CIP cleaning will occur on May the 20th at the Phillippi Spring Water Plant this was the date that Mike Whalen was available to aid with this activity.
- DEQ is still working with the Town and the Engineer to schedule the sampling for the RAW water at Staley Spring to give the Town the analysis of the water plant manufacturer. Part of the delay is because of the lack of rainfall in past few months and has dropped the water table. They want regular rainfall totals, so they get a true reading on the capacity of the spring.
- **Kinder Valley Loop Water Project:** The construction of the water lines has been completed and tested. The Town is in the process of closing out this project with VDH. This was completed with grant money through VDH.

ADDITION TO TOWN SHOP - Councilmember Lewis asked Mr. Jones whether the addition to the shop, budgeted under capital outlay, would be under contract by the end of the current fiscal year. Mr. Jones confirmed that the project will be under contract by the end of June. Mayor Litz suggested that this item be added to Unfinished Business for future meetings.

LOCUST AVENUE WATER LINE REPLACEMENT - Councilmember Lewis inquired about the progress on the water project on Locust Avenue. Mr. Jones stated that the project will be included in the FY26-27 budget. Councilmember Lewis noted that materials previously purchased for the project are deteriorating. Mr. Jones confirmed that if the materials are not used within the next year, the gaskets will deteriorate and become unusable. Councilmember Lewis suggested covering the ends of the pipe containing the gaskets to protect them. Mr. Jones agreed and stated that he will cover the ends of the pipe with tarps to shield them from the sun.

PLAYGROUND - Councilmember Lewis inquired about the intended age levels for the playground at the park. Treasurer Patton stated that the play space is designed for children aged 2 to 12 years old. Councilmember Lewis noted that there is not a swing suitable for an eight-year-old child. Treasurer Patton explained that belt swings were not included in the design due to limited space and to prevent older children from becoming too rambunctious. Councilmember Viars observed that the swing area is not large enough to accommodate bigger swings. Treasurer Patton responded that the current design was developed based on the funding amount budgeted for the project. Treasurer Patton added that the playground at the Community Center will include swings for older children.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The invoices for May 12, 2026, were read and approved.

ADJOURNMENT – There being no additional business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned upon a motion by Councilmember Lewis. The motion was duly seconded and approved.

Mayor

Clerk