



# APRIL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 6:00 PM

RUTH TOWN HALL

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## MINUTES

### CALL TO ORDER

David called the meeting to order.

### INVOCATION

David offered an Invocation

### ROLL CALL

David called roll, all officials and manager attending. Guests are as follows:

Amanda Guy, Joe English, Jenni and Jamie Gabriel and their two daughters, Rafael Pagan, Jean Guy Joseph Doty, Andy Kyres, Tuyet Ann Doty, Troy Harris, John and Nancy Hooper, Damon Olivari

### AGENDA ADOPTION

William made a motion to adopt the agenda as written. Nick seconded, passes unanimously.

### GUEST SPEAKERS-No guest speakers have registered to appear.

No guest speakers registered to appear.

### COMMUNITY FORUM

Ann Doty wanted the board to consider what might happen to the Ruthridge entrance. She shared her concerns and fears of the ownership changing to a private owner and what that might entail. She wants to know who is going to be responsible for the area, and that it be maintained for their community. She is interested in how the new roadway may impact the entrance. She is genuinely concerned about the Whitesides road intersection going forward and believes it is important to their neighborhood and the entire Town. She communicated her appreciation for the opportunity to speak.

Rafael Pagan, lives on Sherry Street. Rafael shared when some in the community perceived a previous threat of the small parcel being sold, a petition was signed by thirty in the community and even included a quote they had procured for maintenance of \$600.00 per year and wanted the Town to consider taking this on for Ruthridge. These are his concerns. He thanked the board for listening.

Andy Kyres has lived in Ruthridge for 20 years, expressed his concerns about the entrance; he noticed the trail and the lights being set up for the trail. His concern is he sees that done and he's lived in Ruthridge for 20 years and the lights on the entrance have never been fixed, no lights on the entrance, people are coming in all hours of the night and his question is what are the commissioners doing in the Town of Ruth to take care of his neighborhoods entrance? Commenting so far he hasn't seen anything. He goes on to say so far it is a reproach as far as he can see why nothing has been done about it. He goes on to say there is a curb near the columns that has been broken for a while; he is in construction and offered to repair it and has not heard anything back about it.

Damon Olivari lives in Ruth and wants to echo his neighbors' sentiments that he's lived there 10 years and the lights have never worked and they've done just enough to get by. He's extremely cautious about selling it to another person and has already had that happen in the neighborhood and is dissatisfied with the outcome. He feels it is time for the Town of Ruth to step up and maintain the entrance for Ruthridge and their side a little bit.

Nancy Hooper has lived in Ruthridge since 2006 and remembers a time when it was well maintained. She communicates it is important to those who live there including some who could not attend tonight, and they have communicated the same things.

Joseph Doty communicates he lives in Ruthridge as well and has a couple of suggestions he thinks might be helpful for the entrance because it is concerning to him as well. He feels it is the first thing people see when they come to the Ruthridge community. He feels for many people it is the picture that gets painted for the Town of Ruth, the first impression made on them for the Town of Ruth. Because of that he believes-and he believes a lot of other residents of the Town as well believe- it should be maintained. He feels since the Town of Ruth owns the property it is their responsibility to maintain the property for the Ruthridge community. He understands the Town of Ruth maintains the mall area between Railroad Avenue and Church Street and therefore the addition of this small piece should be no problem to maintain as well. Another suggestion he has is perhaps the Town, while proud of their Christmas lights, it only lasts three to four months of the year; they could use those funds to maintain the entrance to Ruthridge if no other funds are available and it would be enjoyed year round and it would upgrade the face of the Town and be more respected and remembered when they come through. He thanks the board for his time to speak and hopes his suggestions are helpful.

Troy Harris comes forward and has been in Ruthridge for 29 years. He is a neighbor and homeowner in Ruthridge and tries to keep his yard and property up to par. He communicates there is a piece of property in front of his home now that is unkept. The trees are knocked down and just left. He understands they are talking about the front entrance but inside the neighborhood needs to be kept clean. He doesn't know who owns the property but some how or another they need to address that and get the logs and lots cleaned up. He wanted to bring this to attention. He thanked the board for his time to speak.

Jennifer Gabriel echoed the entrance as well; her other concern is to widen the entrance so two cars can pass easily as well as the school bus. She shared with the other residents of Ruthridge they have welcomed her and she appreciates her community.

### **APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING'S MINUTES**

William made a motion to approve last meetings minutes. Nick seconded, passes unanimously.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Amie wants to review election term changes vs current senate supported election cycle changes.

Amie wanted to clarify with David in particular the senate supported motion is for the election cycle, not the election terms. She believes she will still need to pursue the path forward to amend the Charter to reflect a four year election term. She's curious if Senator Moffitt can assist us with that endeavor as well. David clarified Senator Moffitt's bill also covered the election term as well as the cycle.

2. Amie would like to discuss a sign renovation with the board.

Amie thanked all those who came out and their comments and suggestions. Amie shared that David had given her an excellent idea for utilizing funding and providing the Town with an asset. She agrees with David the sign on the Town property as you enter Ruthridge is and should be a Town asset. She would like to float the idea of repurposing the sign to be a Town of Ruth sign, not a Ruthridge sign. This would promote inclusivity and give the board a more justified position to expend funds for maintaining an asset for the entire Town, not just one isolated neighborhood. She agreed with Andy and Joseph there would be more enhancements possible if the sign is neutral and not dedicated to only Ruthridge; including lighting, repairs, upgrades, etc. She communicated the possibility of change with the roadways in the future to connect the neighborhoods of Ruth thereby providing multiple ways to access the communities, making it truly a more cohesive Township with a really nice, well-maintained sign. She suggested the idea of expanding decorations for certain events and holidays to include the entrance. She has reached out to gather some renderings; David suggested placing those on the website and doing some polls for citizens to participate in the design selection of the sign.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

3. Amie wants to encourage the board to be thinking about any line items they may want to add, delete, change; any projects on the horizon the board may want to take on. Amie is exploring grants and funding; managing ARPA; preparing numbers along with CPI's and such; has Christmas decoration repair totals as well as more details and pricing on trail lights and cameras. All will be reviewed during Budget Workshop meeting(s).

Amie encouraged the board to be actively and aggressively pursuing any projects on the horizon the board may want to take on. Amie is exploring grants and funding; managing ARPA; preparing numbers along with CPI's and such; has Christmas decoration repair totals as well as more details and pricing on trail lights and cameras. All will be reviewed during Budget Workshop meeting(s).

4. Financial reports circulated prior will be reviewed for any actionable items.

Amie reviewed the budget vs actual and her recommendations for amending the budget. William made a motion to amend the budget per the recommendations. Nick seconded, passes unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

5. Nick would like to discuss his conversations with other Emergency Management officials and utilize whatever influence the Town might have to affect the Church Street 64 end closure. Nick feels we should reach out to the NCDOT/State to alter this closure if possible.

Nick discussed his conversations with high level Emergency Management officials equally concerned about the dead ending of the 64 entrance to Church Street. He even mentioned discussions from Fire Officials of mutual aid response times and hypothetically envisioning connecting Youngs Drive with Ruthridge somehow for a second way in and out for mutual responding firemen. Amie reviewed the logistics and dynamics of mutual aid. David reminded those in attendance of Old Towne having only one way in and one way out as well.

Amie mentioned another resource that might be helpful to David in his quest for traffic patterns and flows through Whitesides is Clark Poole, the former Chairman for the Chamber of Commerce. Amie was given his name as a wealth of knowledge when she was talking with realtors regarding commercial possibilities for other Town property. David will reach out to him.

David shared his results investigating the Bradford Pear cuttings. There is a moratorium on cutting any trees due to Bat migration. So the DOT wanted to cut them before the moratorium went into place. The engineers shared with him if the Town desires they will come out and remove the debris. The board wants David to pursue it and he will do so. The board also wants David to investigate with his contacts the possibilities of the DOT aiding the Town in connecting the neighborhoods and sharing the optimal access to 64 through the current plans. David will reach out to them.

6. Amie will update the board to an inquiry she feels the board should be apprised of for informational purposes only.

Amie wanted to make sure the board was aware of the contract with Middle Mile and the invoicing that should've taken place. Amie reached out to Doug Barrick in his capacity of Chairman of the RRDC and he has not responded or returned her voice mail. It has been several weeks. She wanted the board to be in the loop regarding the conversation. David will mention it to Doug in passing.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Nick made a motion to adjourn, William seconded, passes unanimously.

*In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons who need accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting should contact Town Hall at (828) 287-7943 within 48 hours prior to the meeting to request such assistance.*