



Town of Vienna

Charles A. Robinson Jr. Town
Hall
127 Center Street South
Vienna VA, 22180

Meeting Minutes Town Council Work Session

Monday, May 18, 2015

8:00 PM

Charles A. Robinson, Jr. Town Hall, 127
Center Street, South

Work Session

1. Regular Business

*Present: Mayor Laurie DiRocco
Councilman Emil Attanasi
Councilwoman Linda Colbert
Councilwoman Edythe Kelleher
Councilman Pasha Majdi
Councilwoman Cary Sienicki
Councilman Howard Springsteen*

*Also Present: Mercury Payton, Town Manager
Stephanie Baynes, Public Information Communications Specialist
Steve Briglia, Town Attorney
Daniel Janickey, Deputy Chief of Police
Tony Mull, Director of Information Technology
Cathy Salgado, Director of Parks and Recreation
Carol Waters, Deputy Town Clerk*

Election Polling Places for 2015 and 2016

Cameron Quinn, General Registrar of the Fairfax County Board of Elections, led discussions about finding alternative polling places to use while the Vienna Community Center is undergoing renovations. The Community Center is scheduled to be closed for fifteen months, beginning September 1, 2015. Accompanying Ms. Quinn was Mr. Chris Daugherty, the custodian of the voting machines, and Ms. Beth Messel, the clerk to the electoral board and back-up support to Mr. Daugherty.

Per the Electoral Board, a suitable voting location must have:

- * ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessibility*
- * Adequate parking places*
- * Space for curb-side voting*
- * Suitable inside space to form and manage lines of people waiting to vote*

The Electoral Board representatives had already visited the Vienna Presbyterian Church (VPC) to look at as a possible location to conduct the Town Elections. Mr. Daugherty stated that the facility had "more than met all of their needs, perhaps even better than their regular polling places." The Church has agreed to make their facility available for an election for the Electoral Board's customary stipend of \$250.00 a day.

Council Members questioned whether citizens would object to the use of a religious institution as a voting place. Ms. Quinn responded that yes, there are always some people who complain about any decision that the Board of Elections

makes. However, they opined that the vast majority of residents in Fairfax County would not have a problem with it. Ms. Quinn said that voting in a religious institution was not a political issue. Faith Baptist Church on Center Street, South was also suggested as a possible back-up location since it has ample parking and is all on one level. According to Ms. Quinn, the decision on where to conduct voting other than Town elections will ultimately be made by Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Hunter Mill District Representative, Catherine M. Hudgins. Ms. Quinn said that the non-Town elections will be conducted at Vienna Elementary School, and they have already contacted Superintendent Garza about possibly closing school for the day or just for the morning of voting.

There was a lot of discussion about notifying citizens of the change in polling locations. Ms. Quinn advised that voters would be sent a voter's card for notification. Ms. Quinn mentioned the Town's "robust" e-mail notification system, and suggested that the Town have their Public Information Officer start working on ways to tell the Vienna voters. Ms. Quinn also remarked that the Town could put information in its monthly newsletter. Ms. Quinn added that voters can always call the County to inquire about polling locations, they can call the County's automated phone system for information, they can go on the County website to check, and the County now has an app for voter information. Mr. Daugherty confirmed that they will definitely post signs around the old polling place and on the alternate polling place on the day of elections.

Ms. Quinn further reported that the County provides absentee voting for 45 days prior to all regular elections. People with disabilities are allowed to vote absentee, and Ms. Quinn said that the County never questions claims of disability. Curbside voting is always available for eligible voters, as well.

Town Attorney Steve Briglia advised that the Town will need to pass an ordinance to change the voting locations. He suggested that Council have it on the Regular Council Meeting of July 6th, 2015. Mr. Briglia will draft an ordinance for Council consideration for the June 1st Council meeting. He added that the Town should publicize the change in polling places in January of 2016, in order to give the public at least 60 days notice.

Before she left, Cameron Quinn talked about Fairfax County's need for more election officers. She encouraged everyone to try to enlist more people to apply. Election officers are paid \$175.00 for a 14 hour day. Fairfax County employees are allowed to use administrative leave for the day off work if they serve as election officers, and the Town of Vienna may consider allowing the same for Town employees.

Recommendation: Town Attorney will draft an ordinance to change the Town's voting locations temporarily. This issue is to be scheduled for the Regular Council Meetings of June 1, 2015 and July 6, 2015.

New Town of Vienna Alerting System - Everbridge

Tony Mull, Director of Information Technology, briefed the Mayor and Council on plans to change over from the current Civic Plus alerting system to a new system called Everbridge Alert, which the Town will call "Vienna Alerts." Everbridge will combine Civic Plus with the Vienna Police Department's Public Safety Reverse 911 system. The new system will continue to inform the public of important Town of Vienna information, public safety alerts, public works related emergencies, and police media releases and highlights. In addition, Everbridge will

provide weather alert notifications which are address specific. The weather alerts will be automatic, pushed out by the National Weather Service. Weather notifications will be based on the address entered when someone subscribes, but there will be the option of entering more than one address.

Water main break alerts are not address specific, so Everbridge subscribers will be made aware of all road closures in Town. Council voiced dissatisfaction with the promptness of recent water main break notifications.

The Vienna Police Department's and the Town Hall's Public Information Offices will both coordinate and send out alerts. It can be done remotely.

Current subscribers of Civic Plus Alert System will receive a welcome notice to prompt them to sign up for Everbridge. Re-registration will be required to be in the Everbridge system. The Mayor expressed hope that the number of subscribers would at least double from the 1300 currently signed up with Civic Plus.

Mr. Mull announced that he would like to be ready to start the new system on August 31, 2015. He reported that the advertising campaign will begin on July 1, 2015, using notification by e-mail, Town Newsletter, billing inserts, the website, and the cable access channel.

Recommendation: Staff will prepare for the ad campaign to begin July 1, and the launch of "Vienna Alerts" on August 31, 2015.

Police Highlights

Chief Morris was out of Town, so Deputy Chief of Police Dan Janickey led the conversation on whether or not to include people's names in the Police Highlights. The Police Highlights are published weekly on Fridays, and give brief narratives of that week's police responses and arrests in the Town of Vienna. The Highlights include dates and times of events and indicate the locations only by the hundred block of the street address. The purpose of the Police Highlights is to keep citizens informed about the level of crime in their neighborhoods and to apprise them of what has been going on. Deputy Chief Janickey noted that the Police Department initiated the weekly reports/ highlights because people would call in and ask what had happened on their street if they saw police cars.

The Police Highlights previously disclosed the names of those arrested, unless they were under age. Based on comments and recommendations from Council, all names have been left out since the February 13, 2015 highlights. Citizen response to this change has been neutral, Janickey said. He commented that it saves staff time to leave the names out, particularly in cases where the charges are legally expunged later and all previous records must have the names removed.

Deputy Chief Janickey advised that other jurisdictions still providing names in their police highlights include Fairfax County, Fairfax City, Town of Herndon, and Falls Church.

The group talked over what to do if people call the Police Station requesting names and/or addresses. Janickey said that to date, police staff has handled these requests by providing more information but not releasing specific addresses or names of the people involved, and the requesters have seemed satisfied. Council stipulated that the Town should not "put up barriers" to public information. Council stressed their priority to maintain transparency, but also to respect privacy. Town

Attorney Steve Briglia recommended that inquirers who want more detailed information may be directed to the Fairfax County Courts to request a copy of the summons. The court system would also have the additional information of what happened in court, and Town records would not have any of that. Mr. Briglia stated that a lot of people go to the court to get arrest records, and the Town is not trying to withhold public records. Mr. Briglia further indicated that if staff has questions about any of this, they should talk to him.

Council considered the fact that Police Highlights from February 6, 2015 and before contain names and are still available to the public. It was agreed that those previous reports are public records and it would take a tremendous amount of staff time to go back and remove all of the names. Deputy Chief Janickey said he would look into it.

Recommendation: Continue producing the weekly Police Highlights without giving names. Requests for more detailed information may be referred to the court system. The Town Attorney will also remain available for questions.

2. Meeting Adjournment

The work session adjourned at 9:51 p.m.

Mayor Laurie A. DiRocco

Signed / Dated: _____

Attest: _____

Deputy Town Clerk

THE TOWN OF VIENNA IS COMMITTED TO FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STANDARDS. TRANSLATION SERVICES, ASSISTANCE OR ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS FROM PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE TO BE REQUESTED NOT LESS THAN 3 WORKING DAYS BEFORE THE DAY OF THE EVENT. PLEASE CALL (703) 255-6304, OR 711 VIRGINIA RELAY SERVICE FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED.