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**Town Manager's Report to Mayor and Town Council
September 13, 2018**

Joint Public Hearing with Planning Commission on Presentation of 2018 Comprehensive Plan

You have in handouts a draft copy of the 2018 Chilhowie Comprehensive Plan. As you recall from last month Council voted to hold a joint public hearing on the Plan for the September meeting.

The Planning Commission has been working on the Plan since the kick-off meeting in October, 2017 with the staff and Mt. Rogers PDC meeting approximately ten times on the project. As you recall we contracted with the PDC to assist the Town with the rewrite. State planning laws and procedures prescribe that at least the goals, objectives and strategies be update at least every five years. This was done along with updating a variety of statistics relating the Town and County, with some State and National comparisons.

The Joint Public Hearing was duly advertised on August 29 and September 5 in the Smyth County News. The Planning Commission will be seated with the Council for the hearing, which the Mayor will open, after the Planning Commission brings their meeting to order. Council may consider any public input, if any, and ask that minor changes be consider by the Planning Commission at the meeting. If major changes / additions are deemed appropriate by Council then I recommend they be referred they go back to the Commission and the Joint Public Hearing be continued to October. If no additions or changes are considered, then the Planning Commission would make a motion to recommend (or even not recommend I suppose!) that the Comprehensive Plan be adopted. Council will then make a motion to accept or reject the Commission's motion, which will finalize the project.

Procurement and Selection of Architect / Engineer (A & E) Services for Farmer's Market Building

You have in your agenda packet various documents relating to the award of the \$232,280 grant and procurement of A & E services for the Farmer's Market Building. As you can see we solicited proposals through a general advertisement for the project and I sent the full Request for Proposal (RFP) to the three firms that are currently working for us, namely Hurt and Proffitt, The Lane Group and Thompson and Litton. The deadline for submissions was August 31, 2018 at 4:00. Firms that submitted were Hill Studio and Hurt and Proffitt.

I will be setting up the interviews process for the firms. As you can see by my attached email of August 30, and my September 5 letter to the responding firm, the Wellness and Parks Committee and staff the interviews will be conducted September 11. I am going to include a fifth criterion for scoring, "Experience with Past Rural Development Projects". This will be in addition to the four ones listed in the RFP that are "Experience with Similar Projects", "Qualifications and Availability of Specific Individuals to Provide Services", Ability to Design Project within the Stated 90 Day" and "Familiarity with the Town of Chilhowie and Past Projects". The scoring sheet that will be given to the committee will give 20 points for

each of the five criteria for a total of 100 points. The committee will make its recommendation to the full Council on September 13.

Also attached in your agenda is an agreement with Mt. Rogers PDC to assist us with the administration of the project. The contract is for \$5,000 and is included in the Rural Development (RD) budget.

Also included in your packet is the United States Department of Agriculture's formal notice of the grant award in Mr. Ricardo Colon's letter of August 15 in the amount of \$232,280. On a related note we met with RD Area Director Craig Barbrow on August 29 to go over requirements of the program. He mentioned to us that the grant award from the Rural Business Development Grant is the largest ever given to a locality in Virginia since the program was started in the 1990's! I thought that was quite a compliment to the Town of Chilhowie and showed the funding agencies confidence in the Town.

Landowner Agreement at Recreation Park Between Town of Chilhowie and Upper Tennessee River Roundtable (UTR) and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

You have in your agenda packet two important pieces of information regarding the work the UTR and USFWS are proposing to do at the Recreation Park this Fall and Winter in the amount of \$93,532 (including the Town's match of \$31,600).

The large document entitled "Chilhowie Town Park Habitat Restoration Project" was presented to council back in March of 2017 and details the improvements proposed for the park. They include putting large tree root wads into the bank for bank restoration and stability, boulder clusters to enhance the fishery and aquatic life, a fishing platform and cutting the edge of the stream bank back on the north side of the river to allow for more river / flood capacity. This plan was presented to Council on March 8, 2018 but no formal action was taken on the plan and none was requested since various permits needed to be secured.

Also included in the formal agenda packet is a document entitled "Partners For Fish and Wildlife Program – Landowner Agreement" that gives a good overview of the project and participant responsibilities. The budget shows a total improvement of \$93,532, as mentioned above, with the Town's match of \$31,600 being cutting and / or hauling the material off from the excavation of the cut of the edge of the stream bank.

Mr. Cory Kanuckel of the USFWS will appear before Council to once again explain the project and ask that the Landowner Agreement be approved now all permits have been secured. I want to give him an ample amount of time for everyone to understand this important project.

Update on Downtown Revitalization Project

As you know the Old Superior building is down having been completed by D H Griffin. Boring Contractors is slated to begin removal of the slab the week on September 10. Boring Contractors have finished boring under the Norfolk Southern Tracks and the large hole filled near the Baptist Church on Railroad Avenue. They should be finished installing the pipe in the Berry's lot by the week of September 10 and then begin going down Main Street.

As we disclosed to the Downtown Management team we did not get bids on the Downtown façade portion of the project for the second time, this in spite of the facades being bid on their own this second time. This was very disappointing especially in light of we contacted at least two local contractors about the project and one of which attended the pre-bid conference. Another contractor from Lebanon also picked up plans for the project.

Angela Wolfe of Mt. Rogers PDC contacted our representative in Abingdon with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) on getting a price from Boring Contractors on the façade project. DHCD said no in spite of the advertising and administrative costs being another \$2,500 to do it for a third time. DHCD said Boring Contractors could submit a bid in a formal process. DHCD also said they have seen façade projects bid three times before getting a price on other projects. If bid a third time we very likely would have to have the grant contract deadline past April, 2019 but that

remains to be seen. I am going to call DHCD to discuss this whole situation further. One contractor suggested he would be more interested in the project if the line consolidation was done first, so I will contact Project Manager Dennis Amos about this.

Update on East Lee Highway Sidewalk Project

The Preconstruction Conference on the \$426,865 construction project is slated for September 12 at 2:00 p.m. All necessary documents and bonds have been turned into Thompson and Litton and I signed the Notice of Award on August 28.

Atmos Energy began preparations for relocating the gas line along East Lee Highway the week of September 3. That relocation will be completed the week of September 10. The Notice to Proceed will be set at the Preconstruction Conference on September 12. I would anticipate that date would be set around the 24th of September. The project duration has 120 days to Substantial Completion which would push the date into 2019, but I feel confident the project will be substantially completed by the end of this year.

Respectfully Submitted,

John E. B. Clark, Jr.
Town Manager