MINUTES OF THE STRASBURG TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023 AT 7:00 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE STRASBURG TOWN HALL.

<u>Call to Order:</u> Mayor Boies called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance: Vice Mayor McCoryn led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation: Rev. David Howard, pastor of Strasburg Presbyterian Church, offered the invocation.

Roll Call:

ROLL Called with the following members present: Mayor Boies, Vice Mayor McCoryn, and Council Members Carter, Hooser, Kimmons, Lowder, Monahan, and Stover. Absent:

Public Hearings: None

Introduction and Recognition of Visitors and Guests:

• Monthly Employee Update

New Employees	<u>Department</u>	Effective Date
Promotions/Transfers	<u>Department</u>	Effective Date
John "Jay" Magdinec (Lt. to Cpt.)	Public Safety	07/01/2023
Eric Ramey (Serg. To Patrol Lt.)	Public Safety	07/01/2023

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Boies said, "To govern this town fairly, it takes a diverse Council that represents, and listens to a wide variety of citizens. The Town of Strasburg has done a great job at electing a Council that embodies this. However, it doesn't matter how diverse we are in our representation and thoughts if we do not conduct ourselves with **RESPECT** for each other and our citizens that opinions differ from ours. We must listen with respect and civility, converse with respect and civility, and act with respect and civility.

For the past 2.5 years we have witnessed **Council Member Hooser** disrespect citizens, business owners, employees, current council members, and former council members. The disrespect has taken place on social media, through text messages, email, and even the dais.

As a result, the entire council has come together to draft a public resolution censuring Council Member Hooser. The council knows that this will not necessarily change Council Member Hooser's actions but is a message to citizens letting them know that Council Member Hooser's actions are not supported by the Strasburg Town Council."

Mayor Boies then read the resolution:

Whereas, we the members of the Strasburg Town Council are the duly elected representatives elected by the citizens of Strasburg; and

Whereas, we the members of the Strasburg Town Council understand that holding public office is a privilege and we should be held to a higher standard of behavior; and

Whereas, Dane Hooser has repeatedly misrepresented his authority to speak for the Town of Strasburg and its Council, as a whole; and

Whereas, Dane Hooser has repeatedly used social media and other forms of correspondence to make disparaging and false comments to citizens or employees of the Town of Strasburg; and

Whereas, Dane Hooser has repeatedly used his position to perpetuate personal vendettas; and

Whereas, Dane Hooser has repeatedly ignored or dismissed requests that he stop contact or stop using his position on the dais and social media to harass or make offensive comments; and

Whereas, in exercising our responsibility as leaders in this community, we are compelled to call attention to the unacceptable behavior of a member of Town Council.

Resolved, That—

- (1) Strasburg Town Council Member Dane Hooser be censured with the public reading of this resolution by the mayor; and
- (2) Strasburg Town Council Member Dane Hooser is hereby removed as liaison for Public Works, Utilities, and Infrastructure.
- (3) That we, the members of the Strasburg Town Council, declare that this behavior is unacceptable and goes against what this Town represents. That our residents deserve an explanation, and apology, an assurance that this conduct is not supported by the Council, and that we seek for it to cease immediately.

Unanimously adopted by Strasburg Town Council on this 8th day of August, 2023.

Mayor Boies read the "Strasburg Town Council Code of Conduct and Ethics" as passed on December 12, 2006:

STRASBURG TOWN COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICS

PREAMBLE

The citizens of Strasburg are entitled to fair, ethical, accountable, and effective local government. Such a government requires that public officials:

- Comply with both the letter and the spirit of the laws, ordinances, and policies affecting government.
- Be independent, impartial and fair in their judgment and actions.
- Use their public office for the public good, not for personal gain.
- Conduct public deliberations and processes openly.
- Act with respect and civility.

To this end, the Strasburg Town Council has adopted this Code of Conduct and Ethics to emphasize the imperatives of integrity, fairness, and accountability in local government.

1. Act in the Public Interest

Recognizing that stewardship of the public interest must be their primary concern, Council Members shall work for the common good of the people of Strasburg and not for any private or personal interest. They will treat all persons, claims, and transactions in a fair and equitable manner.

2. Conduct of Members

Council Members shall at all times refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the Town Council, boards, commissions, committees, staff, or the public.

3. Respect for Process

Council Member duties shall be performed in accordance with the processes and rules established by the Town Council. A Council Member shall respect a decision once it has been made by the majority of Council.

4. Communication

It is the responsibility of Council Members to share substantive information that is relevant to a matter under consideration that they have received from sources outside of the decision-making process with all other Council Members.

Council Members shall interact with one another honestly, forthrightly, and respectfully. Discussions shall focus on issues, policies, and other substantive matters relating to the function of Town government.

5. Confidential Information

Council Members shall respect and preserve the confidentiality of information provided to them concerning the matters of the Town. They shall neither disclose confidential information without proper legal authorization nor use such information to advance their personal, financial or private interests.

6. Advocacy

To the best of their ability, Council Members shall represent the official policies and positions of the Town Council. When presenting their personal opinions or positions, members shall explicitly state that they do not represent the Council or the Town.

7. Positive Work Environment

Council Members shall support and maintain a positive and constructive environment for residents, businesses, Town employees, and others involved in Town activities.

8. Compliance

The Strasburg Town Council Code of Conduct and Ethics expresses standards of ethical conduct expected of Members of the Strasburg Town Council.

Members of the Council have the primary responsibility to ensure that ethical standards are understood and met, and that the public can continue to have full confidence in the

integrity of the Town government.

Mayor Boies said she had placed a copy of this at each Council Member's seats so each member could review as reminders. "We have a great Town Council here and are doing a lot of great things in this town." In order to move forward, we need to have respect and not the nastiness we see in national politics. "That's not Strasburg, that's not us (the nastiness), and as your mayor, for as long as I am mayor that is the direction we will continue is respect. Not agreeability, we don't have to agree with everything, but respect; we must demand that here for our citizens, ourselves, and everybody we interact with. The town will continue to do great things moving forward in that way."

Citizen Comments:

Kristen Laise, Executive Director of Belle Grove Plantation and Belle Grove, Inc.: Stated Belle Grove, Inc. owns the property at 242 Fort Bowman Road. This property is about 100 acres and is a National Historic Landmark. She said she spoke to the Council about a year ago, along with Karen Beck-Herzog with Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park, wanting to inform the Council about the importance of viewshed protection. This is both the view of the Massanutten Mountain which is part of the town's logo, but also the view back off the hill. They know development is inevitable and that housing is desperately needed, especially affordable housing, but she would like for Council to remember the importance of the viewshed and the fact that t, and the parcel to be discussed later on this agenda will be adding more dense housing on a sliver of property that provides an amazing view. She is asked all the time in her position 'whatever happened to x, y, or z property, and why can't it be preserved,' so in her role, she feels compelled to speak. She knows there are portions of this property that have been donated to the Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation and they are exceedingly grateful for this. This sliver of land she feels would be a real asset to the community and the neighborhood if it were preserved in greenspace.

Consent Agenda:

1) Minutes of the July 5, 2023 Work Session and Minutes of the July 11, 2023 Regular Council meeting.

Council Member Lowder moved to approve the consent agenda; second by Council Member Carter. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business (Discussion and/or Action Items):

1.) Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA23-0001) requested by Landmark Atlantic Holdings, LLC

<u>Description</u>: A Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA23-0001) requested by Landmark Atlantic Holdings, LLC, owner, for property identified as Tax Map 016 A 167A located at 144 Fort Bowman Road, approximately seven hundred feet east of the intersection of Fort Bowman Road and Old Valley Pike and containing 3.306 acres. The request is to recategorize the Highway Commercial Development Area to a Residential Development Area.

P&Z Administrator Otis said this was discussed at the work session. The Comprehensive Plan amendment is required before moving forward with the rezoning.

Vice Mayor McCoryn asked if P&Z Administrator Otis was able to get any more information from VDOT on Mr. Gross' questions. He said he had not but went through old emails. Essentially, it is like a person who owns a piece of property adjacent to John Marshall Highway, and they wanted to put in a driveway, they would need a permit to connect to a VDOT road. Currently, there is not a permit for that connection at that location.

Vice Mayor McCoryn moved for approval of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment as requested by Landmark Atlantic Holdings, LLC; second by Council Member Lowder.

Discussion:

Council Member Monahan said the gate is the only thing Mr. Gross was concerned with. P&Z Administrator Otis said the concern is they have been using this and there is no signage that states is not a public access. The reason there is no signage is because it is not off bond yet. The town will require this when it goes off bond. Council Member Monahan said if this is approved, and later P&Z Administrator Otis finds out from VDOT that the gate is not required, it could be removed. P&Z Administrator Otis said it could be removed but he doesn't foresee VDOT allowing this gate not to be installed.

Council Member Kimmons asked which approval the gate is part of and P&Z Administrator Otis said it is the rezoning. No conditions are attached to the comprehensive plan amendment.

The motion passed on a roll call vote with the following results:

Council Member Stover	Aye
Vice Mayor Coryn	Aye
Council Member Monahan	Aye
Council Member Lowder	Aye
Council Member Kimmons	Aye
Council Member Hooser	Aye
Council Member Carter	Aye

2.) Rezoning Application (REZ23-0001) requested by Landmark Atlantic Holdings, LLC Description: A Rezoning application (REZ23-0001) requested by Landmark Atlantic Holdings, LLC, owner, for property identified as Tax Map 016 A 167A located at 144 Fort Bowman Road, approximately seven hundred feet east of the intersection of Fort Bowman Road and Old Valley Pike and containing 3.306 acres. The request is to rezone the subject property from the Highway Commercial District to the Multi-Family Residential District, construct 29 townhomes, and extend Homewood Way to this development as the primary access.

Council Member Monahan thanked Ms. Laise for coming and speaking on this. We would love to have this not be developed but the fact is that if it is not rezoned and it stays commercial, we could, by-right, have a taller building obstructing the viewshed. She heard what she said and appreciated her coming.

Council Member Stover was in agreement with **Council Member Monahan**, but something will go in there by-right and it will be worse.

Vice Mayor McCoryn moved for approval of the rezoning application (REZ23-0001) as requested by Landmark Atlantic Holdings, LLC; second by Council Member Lowder.

Discussion:

Council Member Kimmons said he will vote against this motion because he cannot in good conscience vote yes for a gate to be put across the road that provides secondary access to a community. We have too many problems with this in other parts of town and we should be finding ways to have more ingress and egress in case of accidents or emergencies.

Vice Mayor McCoryn understands this, but she understands this is a common way to address similar circumstances in other developments and neighborhoods, so she doesn't think that is reason enough to hold up the application.

Council Member Hooser said he wishes all neighborhoods had at least two ways in and out, but almost none of them have more than one way in and out. He doesn't see this as a reason to not approve. But, going forward, when approving developments, that Council makes sure they have at least two ways in and out. To clarify, Vice Mayor McCoryn said this is a second ingress/egress, it is just that it is an emergency access.

The motion passed on a roll call vote with the following results:

Council Member Kimmons	Nay
Council Member Lowder	Aye
Council Member Carter	Aye
Council Member Hooser	Aye
Vice Mayor McCoryn	Aye
Council Member Monahan	Aye
Council Member Stover	Aye

3.) Budget Amendments/Adjustments/Carryovers

<u>Description</u>: Review of the FY2023 Budget Amendments and the FY2024 Budget Reappropriations (Carry Overs) and setting of public hearing(s).

Town Manager Coggsdale reviewed the items. The budget amendment is for the Borden Mowery Drive Extension project. Town Council approved the purchase of property on March 14, 2023, in the amount of \$381,200. The budget amendment exceeds one percent of the total of the Town's FY2023 Adopted Budget, so a public hearing is required.

Due to circumstances, some funds budgeted in the FY2023 budget were not expended prior to June 30, 2023. To ensure the items/projects move forward, the funds have been moved from one fiscal year to the next which is called a reappropriation. The amount of reappropriations is \$356,275.47. The reappropriations are more than one percent of the total of the Town's FY2023 Adopted Budget, so a public hearing is required.

Town Manager Coggsdale asked that two public hearings be set for Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at 7 p.m.

Council Member Kimmons moved to schedule the two public hearings (FY2023 Budget Amendments and FY2024 Budget Reappropriations) for Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at 7 p.m.; second by Council Member Stover. The motion passed unanimously.

4.) South Loudon Street Nuisance Property

<u>Description</u>: Vacant property at South Loudoun Street which is currently a nuisance due to overgrowth and safety concerns of trees on the property.

P&Z Administrator Otis said he brought this to Council about a month ago. He has since walked the property and found a total of nine trees that will need to come down. He reached out to five firms, but only heard back from one person. The company will need to do all the job at one time. The funds will be pulled from the General Fund Contingency.

Council Member Carter asked if any damage was sustained in the recent storm and this property did not sustain damage.

Council Member Carter moved to address the violation on South Loudoun Street by approving the expenditure of \$5,950 from the General Fund Contingency for removal of overgrown brush and dead trees which pose a possible hazard to neighboring properties; second by Council Member Kimmons.

Discussion:

Vice Mayor McCoryn said this property has no known owner. P&Z Administrator Otis said it has been vacant and taxes have not been paid since 2002. They have done a lot of research and have not found any heirs.

With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

1.) Boy Scout Troop 5 Eagle Scout Project

Town Manager Coggsdale said this is a discussion about a project by Scout Nicholas Beinbrink. He has been working with the town on a civic sign for about a year. Nicholas said he has been in scouting since first grade and has lived in Strasburg his entire life. To be an Eagle Scout, you have to do something that will benefit the entire town. His idea is to upgrade the current community sign to promote the pride of Strasburg and to match the new signs that the town now has. Borden Lumber recently put up a temporary sign. His plan is to have three support tubing posts. He showed a picture of the plan and said it will also have a brick flower bed which will have purple and white perirenal flowers. They will use a gray colored brick for the flower bed. The sign will by 12' x 12'. They would like to add a Troop 5 sign and a SHS FFA sign. The flower bed will be about 18 inches tall. The brick will be purchased from a local company and the flowers from a local nursery. Nicholas thanked all the leaders who came out to support him and fellow scouts.

Mayor Boies thanked Borden Lumber for updating the sign. The timing is a little unfortunate as the sign was just put up about two weeks ago. **Christina**, at Borden's, said the sign was falling apart and they offered to do this for free.

Mayor Boies said this is a sign that has the town's churches and non-profits listed on it and asked if there was an interest in maybe having a sign that would list state championships for our youth.

Council Member Hooser said it is too bad that Borden's just did the sign about two weeks ago, but thinks this proposed sign looks great and he wouldn't turn down a great project like this.

Council Member Monahan asked what the possibility is for Public Works to store the sign Borden's made for a future location. Town Manager Coggsdale said since we have two exits off the interstate, maybe the other sign could be used at the second entrance.

Mayor Boies said Nicholas has been working with a town staff member for about a year, so this project did not just come about. It is unfortunate that the timing of both signs happened at the same time. She added that the sign is wood so it would eventually have to be replaced. The sign being proposed by Nicholas would somewhat match the new signs in Strasburg and he wants the proposed sign to match the new signs of Strasburg. They could consider using the colors in the logo.

Mayor Boies asked if our staff could water the flowers in the planters. Town Manager Coggsdale said this is a detail that will have to be worked out. We would want to minimize labor and maintenance. Nicholas said they can pass the idea on to younger scouts to help with watering.

Council Member Carter commended **Nicholas** for being an Eagle Scout. He said that speaks for his integrity. He thanked him for staying in scouting that long. Every Eagle Scout he has met in his professional career has been an outstanding person and he is looking forward to seeing what he does in life.

Consensus was to move forward and have Town Manager Coggsdale sign off on this project.

Town Manager Coggsdale said becoming an Eagle Scout is a huge undertaking for **Mr. Bienbrink**. Once he achieves this, he would like to have him back and recognize him at a Council meeting.

Reports:

Departmental Reports:

Complete reports are provided in the Council packet which is available on the town's website at www.strasburgva.com. Reports are also found on the "Meetings" page of the website (https://www.strasburgva.com/meetings).

Town Manager Coggsdale said if any Council Members had questions on the reports, he would try to answer or get back to them with an answer.

Town Manager Coggsdale read the report submitted by **Marisa Varley**, Parks and Recreation Manager, on the Strasburg Town Pool.

"I am writing to inform you about the recent closure of the Strasburg Town Pool due to a significant algae infestation. This closure has been undertaken as a necessary measure to ensure the safety and well-being of all pool users.

Background: Over the past 2 weeks, our management team has been monitoring the water quality and overall condition of the pool. Including hourly testing water testing. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts to maintain proper water chemistry and filtration, an outbreak of algae occurred. Algae growth in swimming pools can be caused by a combination of factors, including inadequate water circulation, insufficient sanitizer levels, improper pH balance, and external contamination.

Reasons for Closure: The decision to close the pool was not taken lightly but was made in the interest of public health and safety. Algae growth can lead to a range of health and safety concerns, including:

- Slippery Surfaces: Algae can create slippery and hazardous surfaces around the pool area, increasing the risk of slips and falls.
- Reduced Water Clarity: Algae growth can significantly reduce water clarity, making it difficult for lifeguards and pool staff to monitor swimmers effectively.
- Chlorine Ineffectiveness: Algae consumes chlorine, rendering it less effective in disinfecting the water. This can lead to an increase in harmful bacteria and pathogens.

Actions Taken:

- Upon the discovery of the algae outbreak, the following actions were taken: Closure: The pool was closed to prevent further exposure to potentially harmful water conditions. Algae Removal: Our pool staff initiated a comprehensive process to remove the algae from the pool, including thorough scrubbing, vacuuming, and shock chlorination. Management consulted with multiple pool experts including National Pools of Roanoke. We requested a filter inspection on July 31, 2023. We received a call back from National Pool on August 7, 2023. We sent the information requested. A follow up call was made August 8, 2023. As of this writing, National Pools has not been able to give us a date for an inspection.
- Water Testing and Balancing: Once the algae was removed, water samples were taken for testing to ensure proper water chemistry and sanitization levels. The pool will only be reopened once these levels are within the recommended ranges.

Enhanced Maintenance Protocol: We will enhance our pool maintenance protocols to minimize the risk of future algae outbreaks. This includes, optimizing filtration, and enhancing monitoring procedures. Reopening: We understand the inconvenience that this closure may cause to our valued patrons. However, our top priority remains the safety and well-being of all pool users. We are working diligently to rectify the situation and anticipate reopening the pool as soon as water quality standards are met. We will keep all patrons informed about the reopening date through our official

communication channels.

Future Recommendations: Additional staff training on maintenance protocols. Evaluation of the filtration equipment. Repair or upgrade as needed."

Town Manager Coggsdale said they had an algae issue, and now hazy issues. This causes problems because you can't see the bottom of the pool. In addressing the algae, haziness has been created. The only thing that helps with this is time. The pool will remain closed until Friday.

Council Member Monahan asked who wrote the report, and it was noted that Marisa Varley wrote it. Council Member Monahan asked what caused the problem. Is it people coming from the pool from the river? Is it because of different staff? Town Manager Coggsdale said he believes it is a combination of things, with dryness and extreme heat being part of the problem. They are talking to others who have had this problem in the past.

Mayor Boies asked about National Pools. **Town Manager Coggsdale** said they want them to come and evaluate where we are with pool operations. We want to make sure that if we have pump issues that we address them now.

Council Member Monahan asked if the pool was drained this past winter and it was not and the pumps were kept running.

Council Member Lowder asked if this would have happened if it was a saltwater pool. **Town Manager Coggsdale** said he was not sure but could ask.

Town Manager Coggsdale said they can look back, but we want to move forward. **Mayor Boies** said she knows it takes training and lots of monitoring to keep the pool going. She thinks it is good to keep citizens updated on Discover Strasburg. **Town Manager Coggsdale** said we will evaluate and see what lessons have been learned and how we can improve the pool operations.

Mayor Boies thanked the Police Department and all the staff that helped with National Night Out. She also thanked the Strategic Initiatives staff for continuing to move things forward.

Council Member Monahan said it was a fabulous location for National Night Out. She saw more people than she did last year at the shelters.

Council Member Kimmons said it was good for downtown.

Mayor Boies said a citizen had asked about the bank building and said that yes, we do own the bank building. **Town Manager Coggsdale** said we have received the structural analysis from Dewberry. He will be updating the Council in an email tomorrow. Some details had to be discussed further so he could communicate it better with Council. Because of it being a police department, it goes to a risk 4 category in building code.

Special Committee Reports:

NSVRC: Council Member Kimmons said the group did not meet but should meet next week.

Council Member Items:

Council Member Hooser said, "It was a little awkward at the beginning of the meeting. I do want to say, that while you may censure me, I will not be censored; I will continue to speak truth to power and you bet your butt I have a personal vendetta when someone posts a picture of my apartment on fire out of spite; the day that I lost all of my belongings, I lost pets, and the very bed that I sleep in. I have a personal vendetta with that, and I think it was shameful and they admitted it was deliberately spiteful."

Council Member Kimmons asked to put forward an amendment to the Council Code of Conduct. "Council Members have no individual authority or gains in making promises, decisions or commitments that the elected body has not authorized. When presenting their individual opinions and positions, individual members shall explicitly state that they do not represent the entire Council. In their capacity as appointed members of other boards, Council Members are permitted to vote on routine matters which impact that specific board. However, prior approval of Council is necessary if a member will vote on significant items directly involving or impacting the town."

Council Member Kimmons said he had found this wording in several other Codes of Conduct and felt it would be good to add to our Code of Conduct.

Mayor Boies asked him to send the language to Town Manager Coggsdale and Clerk of Council Keller and it will be discussed at the next work session.

Closed meeting:

Vice Mayor Reynolds moved to enter into a closed meeting pursuant to Code of Virginia §2.2-3711(A)(1) for discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body. The subject of the closed meeting is to interview candidates for a vacant Council position.

And, moved to enter into a closed meeting pursuant to Code of Virginia §2.2-3711(A)(7) for consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in the open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body.

Council Member Kimmons offered the second to the motion. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously and Council entered into closed meetings at 7:58 p.m. Reconvened at 9:51 P.m.

Mayor Boies said, "The Council of the Town of Strasburg hereby certifies by Roll Call vote that to the best of each member's knowledge (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia Law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Council of the Town of Strasburg."

Each member should respond "I so certify" by Roll Call vote.

Vice Mayor Reynolds	I so certify
Council Member Carter	I so certify
Council Member Hooser	I so certify
Council Member Kimmons	I so certify
Council Member Lowder	I so certify
Council Member Monahan	I so certify
Council Member Stover	I so certify
Mayor Boies	I so certify

Mayor Boies said Town Attorney Helm wanted to make a statement about an upcoming SUP application.

Town Attorney Helm said, "Iit was brought to my attention that there was an SUP application submitted by FIDUM, LLC. It appears, based on the information I have received, that there was an original advertising error in the original notice that was submitted; it did not have an appropriate tax map ID number located on it. As such, it is my recommendation that it be resubmitted for a new notice so that we can have an appropriate public hearing. I don't believe that the public hearing that

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was originally held under that original notice would be considered valid based on the defect of the original error pursuant to the UDO of Strasburg. That is my recommendation."

Consensus of Council was to follow the recommendation and hold the appropriate public hearing.

Being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 9:53