

**ROUND HILL TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
December 6, 2023**

A Regular Meeting was held by the Round Hill Town Council on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 at 7:15 p.m. The meeting was held at the Town Office, 23 Main Street, Round Hill. Instructions for participating remotely were provided on the meeting agenda.

Council Members Present

Scott Ramsey, Mayor
Mary Anne Graham, Vice-Mayor
Dan Brzezynski
Michael Hummel
Paula James
Sean Lloyd
Isaac Pacheco

Staff Members Present

Melissa Hynes, Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator
Maureen Gilmore, Town Attorney
Keith Lane, Peed & Bortz (participated remotely)
Rob Lohr, Project Manager
Bobby Lohr, Town Planner
Marty Feltner, Utility Supervisor (participated remotely)
Harriet West, Town Clerk

OATH OF OFFICE CEREMONY

Gary Clemens, Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court, delivered the Oath of Office to the Town's newly elected officials including Mayor Ramsey, Vice-Mayor Graham, and Councilpersons Brzezynski and Pacheco. Mr. Clemens thanked everyone for their service to the Town.

In recognition of Councilperson Hummel's retirement from the Town Council, Mayor Ramsey presented him with a frozen turkey and explained the history behind this tradition. Vice-Mayor Graham thanked Councilperson Hummel for his service to the Town and said he will be missed.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ramsey called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilperson Hummel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL AND REMOTE PARTICIPATION

Roll Call was held. Mayor Ramsey, Vice-Mayor Graham, and Councilpersons Brzezynski, James, Hummel, Lloyd, and Pacheco were physically present constituting a quorum.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were none.

ADOPTION OF REGULAR MEETING AGENDA (Amendments & Deletions)

Vice-Mayor Graham moved **that the agenda be adopted**; seconded by Councilperson Pacheco. There was no discussion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Dan Brzezynski	Aye
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye
Paula James	Aye
Sean Lloyd	Aye
Isaac Pacheco	Aye

DISCLOSURES

There were none.

PRESENTATION

1. Groundwater Level Review, Peter Foster, Emery & Garrett Groundwater Investigations

Ms. Hynes introduced Peter Foster, a hydrologist with Emery & Garret Groundwater Investigations (EGGI). Mr. Foster gave a presentation on the status of the drought conditions and water levels in Town wells and responded to questions from the Council. Key discussion points included:

- Northern Virginia and the southeast U.S. are experiencing severe drought conditions.
- The region is experiencing an 11 to 15-inch cumulative precipitation deficit for the year. This is a significant deficit, and it is not likely to go away anytime soon; recharging the groundwater aquifers takes time.
- Production for Wells 719, 2C, 21SA, and 21SB declined in 2023, in line with what would be expected under drought conditions.
- There appears to have been substantial water level declines for some of the other wells (21NA, 12, and 22A) and some of the data for other wells is questionable (Well 7). These wells require further investigation to make sure the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system is calibrated correctly. This involves doing manual readings of each well and comparing it to the SCADA readings.
- The addition of Well D will provide system resiliency and redundancy to the system and protect the other wells and aquifers.
- Additional recommendations include maintaining mandatory water restrictions until more is known about the groundwater recharge availability; collecting manual water level recordings in each production well to evaluate actual water levels and to calibrate SCADA data where possible; recalibrating/replacing SCADA water level recorders (if necessary); implementing an annual long-term water level monitoring program; and continuing groundwater exploration development to increase system capacity and resiliency.

Ms. Hynes noted that the Town has switched to a new SCADA provider and work is underway to upgrade the system. Mr. Foster explained the process for doing the manual readings which includes inserting a tube into the well, dropping a manual water level reader down the tube, and recording the date and time. He suggested that this be done periodically, perhaps quarterly. Mr. Lane explained that the SCADA issue is not a communication issue, it is more of a transducer issue, and more investigative work needs to be done.

Mr. Foster suggested getting the manual readings for the wells, verifying the SCADA data, and making operational changes, if necessary. He noted that it could take many months or even years for the wells to completely get back to normal. The first step is to determine if there are digital issues with the wells that are showing the most significant water level declines.

Mayor Ramsey suggested staying in Mandatory Water Conservation through January 2024 and revisiting this again in February as the situation evolves. Mr. Foster agreed with this approach and noted that if things do not improve over the winter, the Council will have more difficult decisions next year.

A discussion ensued regarding Well C. Ms. Hynes explained that the Town is currently negotiating with the property owner for easements for Well C. Mr. Foster noted that EGGI drilled and constructed Well C; it is on private property, but the Town paid for it. The well was constructed to public water supply standards. Mayor Ramsey noted the Town would have to go through an acquisition process.

2. Mandatory Water Conservation Staff Update

Staff provided an update on the effects of mandatory water conservation measures implemented in November 2023:

- There was a significant drop in consumption between October and November.
- Consumption for November 2023 decreased 11% below the historical seasonal average.
- The number of customers using more than 200 gallons per day decreased in November.

Ms. Hynes gave an update on other water conservation efforts and stated she did not recommend going to Mandatory Water Conservation Phase 2 at this time. A discussion ensued about the need to let customers know that their efforts are working but remind them about the long-term need for water conservation over the next several months. Ms. Hynes suggested that the Town move to monthly billing to help increase customers awareness of their usage while staff continues to work on getting the Neptune 360 customer dashboard in place. Mayor Ramsey noted the potential impact of water conservation on future rates.

A discussion ensued about the County's role in encouraging water conservation for private well owners in the County. Mr. Foster explained that there are many "straws" (wells) in the aquifers. Loudoun Water has a very robust water-level monitoring program. Usage is a big factor and irrigation is a huge driver of consumption. He further explained the geological difference in Loudoun County and noted that wells in different locations respond differently as a result. Ms. Hynes confirmed that EGGI will be doing the manual water level recordings and staff will revisit EGGI's prior ground water recommendations.

Mayor Ramsey stated it will be a Council decision if and when the Town goes to monthly billing. Ms. Gilmore confirmed that this change will require a public hearing. Ms. Hynes explained the monthly billing process and noted the intent is to help customers better monitor their consumption and budget for their utility bills. Following further discussion, there was no objection from the Council for staff to move forward with monthly billing plans.

APPROVE MINUTES

1. October 4, 2023

Vice-Mayor Graham moved **the minutes be approved**; seconded by Councilperson James. There was no discussion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Dan Brzezynski	Aye
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye
Paula James	Aye
Sean Lloyd	Aye
Isaac Pacheco	Aye

BUSINESS ITEMS

There were none.

ACTION ITEMS

1. FY 2024 Strategic Action Plan

Ms. Hynes presented this item. The Council is being asked to approve the FY 2024 Strategic Action Plan. Following discussion, Councilperson Pacheco moved **to adopt the 2025 Priorities & Projects with the one addendum that “Design of Southern Greenway Pedestrian Trail” be moved to Number 8 and “Advocate for a County Community Center in Round Hill” be moved to Number 9**; seconded by Vice-Mayor Graham. There was no discussion. A vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Dan Brzezynski	Aye
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye
Paula James	Aye
Sean Lloyd	Aye
Isaac Pacheco	Aye

2. 2024 Meeting Calendar

Ms. Hynes presented this item. The Council is being asked to approve the 2024 Meeting Calendar and Inclement Weather Policy. Following discussion, Councilperson Pacheco moved **that the Round Hill Town Council adopt Resolution 2023-07 to approve the 2024 Town Council meeting schedule and inclement weather policy as presented**; seconded by Councilperson Brzezynski. There was no discussion. A voice vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Dan Brzezynski	Aye
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Michael Hummel	Abstain
Paula James	Aye
Sean Lloyd	Aye
Isaac Pacheco	Aye

REPORTS & UPDATES

1. Utility Capital Projects

Mr. Rob Lohr reported on the following:

- Sequencing Batch Reactors (SBRs) – Utility staff are working on repairs to the SBRs at the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).
- Well D – The installation of the SCADA equipment, electrical service, and connection to the Evening Star Treatment Plant is scheduled to be completed in December. Staff are working with the Virginia Health Department on the inspection process.
- Lerner Parcels (Hayman Lane and Yatton Road) – Town staff have been in discussion with representatives from Lerner about three lots that may be of interest to the Town for strategic utility operations and trail connections. Staff will provide more information at a later date.
- Airmont Water Tank & Evening Star Treatment Plant – Staff will be increasing efforts on these projects following the completion of Well D. The water line realignment for the Airmont Water Tank is still proceeding.

2. Utility Operations Update

Mr. Feltner will provide an update about the work at the WWTP at the end of the week.

3. Town Administrator Updates

- In response to questions from Vice-Mayor Graham, staff gave updates on the Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA) Study being conducted by Dr. Davis at Virginia Tech and the ongoing Asset Management System project.
- In response to questions from Councilperson James, staff provided updates on the recent Freedom of Information Act Requests (FOIA), status of violations at the WWTP, and the Town signs.

TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilperson Hummel gave an update on the recent Planning Commission meeting including the Eastern Commercial application, the Western BLA Plan, potential future assignments for the Commission, and the need to appoint a Town Council member to the Planning Commission. He shared a recent problem he had with a water leak at his home and thanked Mr. Rob Lohr for responding on a Sunday evening. Ms. Hynes discussed changes to the policy for responding to after-hours customer calls. Mr. Hummel thanked everyone that he has worked with over the years.

Councilperson Lloyd thanked Councilperson Hummel for his service to the Town.

Councilperson Pacheco said he appreciated the opportunity to serve with Councilperson Hummel. He congratulated Mr. Feltner on 25 years of service to the Utility Department and said he appreciated being invited to the holiday luncheon.

Councilperson James said she learned a lot from working with Councilperson Hummel.

Vice-Mayor Graham said it has been a joy working with Councilperson Hummel. She thanked the staff for the holiday decorations at the park and for participating in the tree lighting. She stressed the need to continue to request funds from the County for the Airmont Tank and other utility projects. Mayor Ramsey thanked Supervisor Kershner for his support with the funding request for the tank and said the Town will continue to track this through the County's process. He agreed this is one of many issues they are facing as a community and that additional financial assistance from the County will be needed.

Councilperson Brzezynski congratulated Commissioner Hummel and thanked everyone for the tree lighting.

Mayor Ramsey provided the following comments:

- He thanked the staff for the tree lighting and banners.
- He had a meeting tonight with the Brentwood Springs Home Owners Association Board about the Town BLA; it will be a process they lead based on what is best for their community.
- The Town will be moving forward with the BLA for Niels Poulsen Park and a few other strategic parcels in 2024.
- There was good data presented on the drought; he will be updating the spreadsheets for the rate model as part of the budget process.
- He gave his heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Councilmember Hummel for his time, judgement, and temperament.

Councilperson Hummel asked if the Coalition of Loudoun Towns (COLT) has discussed the drought. Mayor Ramsey said it has not been a topic for COLT yet; the towns have been addressing this on their own.

CLOSED SESSION

Vice-Mayor Graham move that the **Round Hill Town Council recess its open meeting and convene a closed session to consult with the Town Attorney and Town Staff on the Main Street construction project matters requiring the provision of legal advice, as authorized by Code of Virginia 2.2-3711 (A)(8). The Town Attorney, Project Manager, and Town Administrator will participate in the closed session;** seconded by Councilperson Brzezynski. There was no discussion. A voice vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Dan Brzezynski	Aye
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye

Paula James	Aye
Sean Lloyd	Aye
Isaac Pacheco	Aye

The Council and staff went into closed session at 9:58 p.m. and came out of closed session at 10:30 p.m. Vice-Mayor Graham moved **that the Round Hill Town Council reconvene its open session and adjourn its closed meeting**; seconded by Councilperson Hummel. There was no discussion. A voice vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Dan Brzezynski	Aye
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye
Paula James	Aye
Sean Lloyd	Aye
Isaac Pacheco	Aye

Vice-Mayor Graham moved **to certify that during the closed session, only the matters identified in the motion to convene the closed session were discussed**; seconded by Councilperson Hummel. There was no discussion. A voice vote was held; the motion was approved 6-0. The vote is recorded as follows:

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Dan Brzezynski	Aye
Mary Anne Graham	Aye
Michael Hummel	Aye
Paula James	Aye
Sean Lloyd	Aye
Isaac Pacheco	Aye

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Ramsey adjourned the meeting at 10:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott T. Ramsey, Mayor

CERTIFIED:



Harriet West, Town Clerk

APPROVED: January 7, 2024