

**MINUTES
TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN OF SHENANDOAH
JOINT PUBLIC HEARING
SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST**

JUNE 27, 2023

The Shenandoah Town Council and the Shenandoah Planning Commission held a joint public hearing on Tuesday, June 27, 2023, beginning at 7:00 p.m., with Mayor Clinton O. Lucas, Jr presiding.

ATTENDANCE: Council Members present were: Mayor Clinton O. Lucas, Jr.; Vice Mayor William Kite; Council Members Denise Cave; Russell Comer, Jr.; Lynn Fox; I. Michael Lowe; and Richard Pierce.

Council Members absent were: None.

Planning Commission Members Present: Chairman I. Michael Lowe; Vice Chairman Arthur “Todd” Stroupe; Commissioners Jonathan Comer, Karen Comer, and Timothy Seal.

Planning Commission Members absent: MacKenzie Watson as well as one vacant position on the Planning Commission.

Other Town Officials present were: Juanita Roudabush, Town Manager/MMC; Tonya Southers, Town Clerk; Paul Davis, Chief of Police.

Citizens present were: Pamela Houck; Alexandra Wilfong, and Jeff Grimsley.

Media Representatives: None.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Clinton O. Lucas, Jr. opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. He stated the purpose of this joint public hearing is for a special use permit request of Pamela Houck for use of the community center as a daycare, at and near 300 First St, Shenandoah, VA, identified by tax map number 102A3-2-C.

He noted if approved, this special use permit request would allow for any items allowed as a matter of right and in compliance with the Town Code section 50-67(c)(2), and 50-183 with any special conditions that may be added.

Mayor Lucas inquired if there was anyone present to speak *for* the special use permit request?

Pamela Houck, owner of the business with Carolyn Richards, spoke and stated she wanted to settle any fears regarding the events which occurred in Luray a while back. She stated she has been in business for 35 years and currently has 7 locations. She sent out flyers (800 of them)

through the school system about the possibility of a daycare opening. She also stated she wanted to put the rumors of the woman in Luray owning the center to rest.

Mayor Lucas inquired about the hours of the daycare.

Pamela Houck replied the hours would be from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Karen Comer inquired as to whether it would be only for children.

Pamela Houck replied that it was only for children 12 or younger.

Commissioner Comer also inquired as to whether or not the community center would still be available for use by the public.

Pamela Houck stated they were coordinating with the Fire Department to work out those details.

Commissioner Comer asked if the center was able to take children through the state subsidization program.

Pamela stated they would absolutely be taking those children, as well as, those who may not be approved through the subsidization programs.

Commissioner Comer also inquired if there was any plan to use the playground.

Pamela Houck stated they would definitely use it and would be willing to help pay for the mulching and maintenance when needed.

Commissioner Comer asked how many children they would be able to accommodate, as well as, the ratio of children to staff.

Pamela Houck said they could take up to 80 children and the ratios were as follows: for infants, a ratio of 1 worker for every 4 children; children up to 2 years of age would be 1 worker for every 8 children; ages 3 to 4 years of age would be 1 worker to every 10 children; and school aged children would be 1 worker to every 18 children.

Commissioner Comer asked if they would need to make any modifications to the building.

Pamela Houck said that there would not be any modifications required – she said “I have never seen a building more perfect.”

Commissioner Comer also inquired as to whether they would be taking any special needs children.

Ms. Houck stated unless the Luray Center is totally full, they would not be taking any special needs children. She stated working with special needs children was not her specialty. She stated special needs children have different needs as well as different ratios of workers to children.

Commissioner Comer asked about employment.

Pamela Houck reported there is normally college students who need internships or stay at home mothers who would apply for these positions. She stated regardless of who applied, there would be a lot of required training before they would be ready to work at her daycare.

Councilman Pierce asked Ms. Houck if she was the owner of all the locations.

Pamela Houck stated she was the owner of all of them except the Harrisonburg location – she stated she gave that one to her daughter, however, she was the administrator of ALL the locations.

Commissioner Jonathan Comer asked if it would be classified as a school.

Town Manager Roudabush stated we were classifying it as a school.

Commissioner Jonathan Comer inquired about the use of the playground for children under age 2.

Pamela Houck stated they have been given permission to fence off the grassy area outside the back door to use for the younger children. She stated they would not use the park every day. She stated the school aged children would use the playground.

Town Manager Roudabush informed Pamela Houck there is a special surface material used on the playground to allow handicapped access. Also, the equipment is generally 5-12 year old approved. There is 2 pieces approved for 2-5 year olds but it is not separate.

Pamela Houck stated she would be very interested in helping maintain as well as replace the material as needed.

Town Manager Roudabush also informed Pamela Houck there was not a restroom at the playground.

Pamela Houck stated they didn't intend to need restrooms as they would go back to the Center.

Mayor Lucas inquired if there was anyone present to speak *against* the special use permit request.

Closing of Joint Public Hearing: There being no further questions, a *motion* was made by Vice Mayor Kite, *seconded* by Councilwoman Cave, to close public hearing at 7:12 p.m.

Council Members Vote was as follows:

YEA: Vice Mayor Kite
Councilwoman Cave
Councilman Comer
Councilman Fox
Councilman Lowe
Councilman Pierce

NAY: None.

ABSTAIN: Mayor Lucas

ABSENT: None

VOTE: Unanimous in favor of motion.

Councilman/Commissioner Lowe stated he was very impressed by what he heard and a daycare in this area was needed.

A *motion* was made by Commissioner Jonathan Comer, *seconded* by Commissioner Karen Comer, to suggest approval for the special use permit request of Pamela Houck for use of the community center as a daycare, at and near 300 First St, Shenandoah, VA, identified by tax map number 102A3-2-C, as presented.

Planning Commission Members Vote was as follows:

YEA: Chairman I. Michael Lowe
Commissioner Jonathan Comer
Commissioner Karen Comer
Commissioner Timothy Seal
Commissioner Arthur “Todd” Stroupe

NAY: None.

Abstain: None

Absent: Commissioner MacKenzie Watson

VOTE: Unanimous in favor of motion.

Town Manager Roudabush stated we will always include they must comply with all applicable Federal, State, Town, and County Regulations for Daycare Centers, as well as comply and maintain all required Health and Safety Regulations.

A *motion* was then made by Vice Mayor Kite, *seconded* by Councilman Pierce, to concur with the Planning Commission’s recommendation and approve the special use permit request of Pamela Houck for use of the community center as a daycare, at and near 300 First St, Shenandoah, VA, identified by tax map number 102A3-2-C, as presented.

Councilman Pierce inquired about the daycare fixing meals.

Pamela Houck stated they would fix breakfast, lunch and a snack which would all be approved by the Health Department.

Council members Roll Call Vote was as follows:

YEA: Vice Mayor Kite
Councilwoman Cave
Councilman Comer
Councilman Fox
Councilman Lowe
Councilman Pierce

NAY: None.

ABSTAIN: Mayor Lucas

ABSENT: None

VOTE: **Unanimous in favor of motion.**

ADJOURNMENT: A *motion* was made by Councilman Pierce, *seconded* by Councilman Comer, to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Members vote was as follows:

YEA: Vice Mayor Kite
Councilwoman Cave
Councilman Comer
Councilman Fox
Councilman Lowe
Councilman Pierce

NAY: None.

ABSTAIN: Mayor Lucas

ABSENT: None

VOTE: **Unanimous in favor of motion.**

APPROVED:

ATTESTED:

Clinton O. Lucas, Jr., Mayor

Tonya Southers, Town Clerk