

Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Saltville Town Council held on April 12, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall

**Council:** Tom Holley, Sandra Wyatt, Eugene Call, David Smith, and Ron Orr  
Randall Brickey was absent

**Mayor:** C. Todd Young

**Staff:** Trent Crewe, Town Attorney  
Chris Wilcox, Police Chief  
R.B. Henderson, Public Works Director  
Steve Johnson, Clerk/Treasurer

Councilman Holley made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2016 regularly scheduled meeting, and Councilman Call seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Councilman Smith abstaining since he was not present for that meeting.

#### **NORTHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM**

Several members of the Northwood High School Girls Basketball team were in attendance with Coach Gillespie to accept a proclamation from the town regarding their recent state championship and undefeated season. The Lady Panthers defeated the Appomattox Regional Governor's School in the finals to finish the season at 29-0. This was the first state championship in girls basketball in the school's history.

Each Council member and the Mayor personally congratulated Coach Gillespie and the girls present and spoke of how proud they were at the team's accomplishment. The Mayor also thanked the Mayors and staff of the towns of Chilhowie and Marion since they had supported the team too.

#### **Citizens' Time**

**Leon Kukeattinum** was at the meeting representing the Junior Panther Football and Cheer organization. He gave the Council an overview of the group's financial situation. There were 71 players last season, and based on a cost-per-child calculation, the football portion finished \$2.00 to the good. There were 40 cheerleaders total, but based on the same cost-per-child

calculation, the cheerleader portion finished \$450.00 in the hole. The town's \$500.00 donation helped to alleviate that deficit. The cost for officials for the year was \$825.00, but using the recreation building as a concession stand enabled the organization to not lose money for the officials. Over \$2875.00 in donations were used for coaching shirts, insurance, window clings, bracelets, helmet decals, trophies, etc.

Currently, the equipment is outdated, so, unless new equipment is purchased, the upcoming season may be in jeopardy. By his records, no new equipment has been purchased since 2010. The helmets alone would be around \$78.00 per helmet. The Mayor suggested having Mr. Kukeattium get together a total cost for the helmets and give that to Councilman Call, the Chair of the Recreation Committee, to discuss further.

He concluded by mentioning that last year's third and fourth grade team won the championship last year by defeating Chilhowie. The group is getting a trophy to commemorate the title but needs a place to put it. It could even be placed at the Town Hall.

**Mike Snavely**, a representative of the Smyth County Humane Society, told the Council about his organization. They are involved in educational programs at the elementary schools and receive food donations through local food pantries. A fostering program has been established where people can foster animals for a couple of weeks before they are adopted. Due to this, almost 900 animals at the Smyth County Shelter were saved last year. Additionally, 550 animals were either spayed or neutered last year too.

He said his group meets the second Monday of each month in Marion at the Royal Oak Church, and he invited everyone to attend.

**Jeff McMillion**, a police officer for the town, thanked everyone in the room for their support. He has resigned effective near the end of the month and will be moving to Greensboro, North Carolina. Chief Wilcox said he had learned a lot from him and was excellent with community outreach, amongst other tasks.

**Diana Haynes** asked why the proposal for the Rec Building that the Little League organization had given the Council to ponder at a prior meeting was not on the agenda. She asked the Council if they needed more information. Town Attorney Trent Crewe said he recalled replying about this in an email to Town Manager Mike Taylor shortly after that meeting but would check his records and dig it up again.

## **Approval of the Agenda**

Councilman Orr made a motion to approve the agenda, and Councilman Smith seconded. All were in favor.

## **Old Business**

### **1. Fire Department request**

Councilman Orr said the members of the Fire Department had come to the Council requesting that the daily financial business responsibilities of the Department be given back to them. Currently, this is handled by the front office. The Department has recently started BINGO, and that will involve a separate accounting routine too.

A meeting of the Police, Fire, and Rescue Committee was held to discuss this matter further. It was the recommendation of the Committee to have the Department take over their financial responsibilities effective immediately since the Department has good people in place to do this. Councilman Orr then made the motion to grant the Department's request, and Councilwoman Wyatt seconded. All were in favor.

### **2. Vendor permits**

In Mr. Taylor's absence, Clerk/Treasurer Steve Johnson said that research was still being conducted on this topic before it was turned over to Councilman Holley's Ordinance Committee.

### **3. Elizabeth Cemetery bone discoveries**

Mr. Johnson said that the people from Radford University were in the cemetery and discovered more bones in the dirt pile. They are putting together an official report that will be given to the Council when it is finished.

## **New Business**

### **1. If I Were Mayor contest**

The Mayor congratulated Andrew Bordwine, the winner of the town's second annual *If I Were Mayor* contest. Andrew is the son of Robin and Jeff Bordwine and lives at 419 Greenbrier Drive in Saltville. He is a student at Northwood Middle School.

### **2. Spring clean-up**

Mr. Johnson told the Council that the Spring clean-up will be May 9 - 13. The announcement in the paper will identify what the town will and will not haul away.

### **3. Elizabeth Cemetery sunken graves**

Councilman Call mentioned that he had been approached by a few citizens regarding the fact that many grave plots needed to be filled in due to the ground settling over the years. Dirt needs to be back-filled around some of the tombstones too. One plot in particular has what looks like two deep groundhog holes on it. Referencing the aforementioned dirt pile where the bones were discovered, Councilman Call stated that a big piece of concrete was also discovered there as were grave markers with the initials H.H.W. and one each that said Mother and Father. He said he did not know if the town was responsible for fixing these issues with the settling or the contractor who digs the graves for the town was responsible. Regardless, the settling needs to be addressed. Councilwoman Wyatt mentioned that some of the very old graves would sink due to the fact that the remains buried there would have long since disintegrated.

Councilman Holley asked if the contract for the digging of the graves specified who was responsible for filling in the sunken plots. Mr. Johnson said he would look it up, but that when the town has asked the contractor to fill in graves before that had sunk some, the contractor readily did so and even took it upon himself to fill in graves on occasion.

### **4. Pool discussion**

Councilman Call, the Chair of the Recreation Committee, stated that during a meeting of this committee back in the winter, it was discussed that this summer would include the hiring of only lifeguards to work at the pool. The lifeguards would operate the gate and the concession stand too instead of hiring workers just for those tasks. In the past the lifeguards were concerned that they were not getting enough hours. Now, the weather plays a part since if it is storming, the pool has to shut down. However, this doesn't happen a lot. Due to the lack of

hours, some lifeguards sought employment at other pools, mainly the one in Glade Spring. Speaking of the pool in Glade Spring, the lifeguards there work the concession and gate areas.

Toward the end of last summer, some of the lifeguards left to pursue other jobs since they were not making much money here. If the lifeguards continue to leave, the pool cannot stay open. It also needs to be noted that the lifeguards have to spend around \$150.00 for the class to initially obtain and then retain their certifications. Councilman Holley asked who made out the schedule and was told the manager. The Mayor mentioned that the town usually hires every certified lifeguard that applies. This is due to the fact that they have other things going on such as vacations, sports camps, band camps, etc. The more lifeguards the town has means that there won't be a shortage when some of them are unavailable. Moreover, there are usually just about half as many concession and gate workers as lifeguards, so they would get more hours. Councilman Call continued and gave an example that if a lifeguard became sick or had to leave, there would be enough lifeguards there to take that place instead of having to call someone in as a replacement. Regarding the gate, after the first month or so, not many people are coming in and paying daily since most of the people there will have bought season passes which demonstrates the lack of a need for just a gate worker.

The only concern for Councilman Call was that not enough lifeguards would apply to handle all of the tasks involved at the pool. The Mayor then stated emergency workers could be hired to work at the gate or in the concession stand if that happens. Councilman Call then made the motion to only hire lifeguards for this summer, and Councilman Orr seconded. The motion carried 4-1 with Councilwoman Wyatt voting no due to the fact that some kids could have already put in applications to just work at the gate and in the concession stand. Councilman Smith asked if the ad for pool workers had already run in the paper, and Mr. Johnson said no. The town was waiting on the outcome of this discussion to see what type of worker to actually advertise for.

## **5. Lane Group report**

Les Sutherland spoke on the following:

1) With help from Veolia, there was camera monitoring along the sewer lines on McKee Street. The video showed that using technologies like the one Reline has might be the best way to repair the lines. The people from DEQ are in agreement that the whole project could be bid out using that type of technology.

2) Concerning the leak on Overlook Court in Edgewood, the hole was filled back in, but another depression formed about thirty feet away where no water line was present. The depression was excavated in the center for an area of seventeen feet long, twelve feet wide, and seventeen feet deep. Most of the soil was firm, and there were no voids in the side walls. Also, there was not much saturated soil either. They thought they would find an old sewer line, but they did not. Veolia did camera monitoring but there was no indication that soil was getting into the

sewer line. The hole was then filled in with VDOT number one stone. They asked the Hughes and the Arnolds, the owners of the houses closest to the depression, to let the town know if they noticed anything, such as another hole forming.

## **6. Veolia report**

Bill Duty spoke on the following:

- 1) The holes on Edgewood have been repaired. There were three on Overlook Court and one on Mathieson Drive.
- 2) There is more asphaltting to do on East Main Street where the new sewer line was installed, and some sidewalk repairs need to be done as well.
- 3) Councilman Holley asked about a leak that is present at the Cargo sign and some pressure problems on East Main Street. Mr. Duty said they cut up some of the road but did not hear a leak. The next step is to cut more of the road down to TJ's to see if the problem can be identified.

Mr. Duty talked to a Barrett lady on East Main Street who had good pressure but her next door neighbor did not have the same pressure. They suspect that the neighbor either has galvanized lines that are deteriorating or her pressure reducer may need replacing. Speaking of galvanized lines, over six hundred feet of galvanized lines had to be replaced on King Avenue.

- 4) Councilwoman Wyatt asked about the grading at the Salt Park that was affected by the line replacement on King Avenue. Mr. Duty replied that this area would be graded back down.

## **Town Manager's Report**

Mr. Johnson informed the Council that Councilwoman Wyatt wanted to discuss the Historical Committee. She stated that their members had discovered that there had been vandalism done to the cabin on Smokey Row and asked if the town's insurance could be contacted.

She also mentioned that a group called the Virginia Flaggers were putting up flags around town at no cost to the town. They wanted to put up flags on town land such as at the Salt Park and at the Battlefield Overlook. The Mayor agreed those would be two ideal locations.

## **Police Chief's Report**

Chief Wilcox spoke on the following:

- 1) Last month, there were 293 calls.
- 2) Due to Officer McMillion leaving, there are now two vacancies in the department for which to be advertised.
- 3) The Fish-a-Ree was held last Saturday. He thanked Assistant Chief Erik Puckett for his work with this.
- 4) A grant is being put together to have a resource officer at the elementary school. The Mayor mentioned that Sheriff Shuler was working on having resource officers in all the schools, so Chief Wilcox might want to contact the Sheriff to check on that progress.
- 5) There will be a drug take-back on April 30<sup>th</sup> between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The Mayor said he had been asked about a so-called drug drop box. Chief Wilcox replied that DEA regulations prohibit this but will sponsor two of these take-backs per year.
- 6) Nixle is doing updates for the department.
- 7) There will be a meeting on July 7<sup>th</sup> at the Abingdon Church of Christ concerning safety for faith-based organizations.
- 8) Councilman Holley asked if the town would have to supply resource officers too if the county did. The Chief said no.
- 9) Councilwoman Wyatt asked about people speeding between BB&T and the traffic light. The Chief replied he would look into having more patrols there.

## **Fire Department Report**

Assistant Chief Bobby Dye spoke on the following:

- 1) He thanked the Council for their vote of confidence concerning the department's finances.
- 2) The building was full the first night of BINGO. Councilman Orr congratulated the department of their BINGO success, specifically having a television in the other room in which the BINGO results could be broadcast. Assistant Chief Dye said that saved about \$2200.

3) The county-wide mutual aid meeting went well.

### **Closed Session**

Councilman Smith made a motion to enter Closed Session in accordance with the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711(A)(7) for the consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body; and consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel; and Section 2.2-3711(A)(29) for the discussion of the awarding of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. Councilman Orr seconded, and all were in favor.

After exiting Closed Session, Councilman Smith made a motion to certify that the Closed Session was conducted in conformity with Virginia law regarding those matters that are exempted from open meeting requirements and nothing was discussed other than what was mentioned in the motion to convene Closed Session. Councilwoman Wyatt seconded, and the roll call vote was 5-0 in the affirmative.

Councilman Smith made a motion to have Mr. Johnson send the email that was discussed in Closed Session. Councilwoman Wyatt seconded, and all were in favor.

Lastly, Councilman Smith made a motion to adjourn, and Councilman Call seconded. All were in favor.

