

Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Saltville Town Council held on August 14, 2018 at 7:00 p.n. in the Town Hall

Council: Tom Holley, Hiram Robinson, Eugene Call, Bryan Morris, Steve Surber, and Ron Orr

Mayor: C. Todd Young

Staff: Brian Martin, Town Manager
Trent Crewe, Town Attorney
Erik Puckett, Acting Police Chief
R.B. Henderson, Public Works Director
Tammy carter, Front Office Clerk
Steve Johnson, Clerk/Treasurer

Councilman Morris made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2018 regularly scheduled meeting, and Councilman Call seconded. All were in favor.

Citizens' Time

Dave Smith spoke about the upcoming Labor Day festival and gave an update on the musical acts for each of the four nights. He also mentioned that the committee would be selling tickets to raffle off an American flag quilt that will be signed by the performers.

Neil Johnson represented the Saltville Golf Club and told the Council about the upcoming first annual Herbert "Chub" Arnold Memorial Golf Tournament to be held Labor Day weekend. Mr. Arnold was a life-long citizen of Saltville and involved in many town activities over the years including playing baseball for the Saltville Alkalis. Mr. Johnson invited the Council to the dinner that will be held on Saturday night.

Kris Sheets represented the Saltville Library and brought a "thank you" banner to the Council from the kids that were involved in her summer program. There were over 1300 total participants and more than 200 free books were given away.

She also told the Council that her position will become full-time in September, and that the Saltville branch had not had a full-time librarian in over nine years.

Jeff Woodward encouraged the Council to attend the dinner for Chub Arnold as he is a member of the golf club as well. He asked the Council to explain why Chris Wilcox was no longer the Police Chief. He also mentioned that since Chief Wilcox was no longer with the town and was in charge of the clean-up process, it seems that the process has slowed down some. He has seen a member of the Council laying down mulch and pressure washing the post office, but there is still more work to be done on the litter ordinance.

Leon Kukeattinun was at the meeting on behalf of the Junior Panthers program for youth football. He asked the Council for a \$500 donation to help with the cost of the insurance for the season. After certain expenses, there is only \$28.43 left from each registration fee. The cost alone to refurbish helmets is \$28.00. The Mayor asked about the money spent by the town to purchase new helmets a couple of years ago, and Mr. Kukeattinun stated that just refurbishing helmets doesn't fix concussion warranties and that their Board is currently holding fund raising activities. Also, helmet technology changes year-to-year. Additionally, all new shoulder pads were purchased last year. This season, there are 105 kids in the football program and about fourteen in the flag program, and next year, Robbie Milhorn will take over the Junior Panthers.

Currently, there are two fundraisers going on. The cheerleaders are selling Little Debbie snacks, and the football players are having a raffle to win a gun and a year's membership in the Northfork Sportsmen's Club.

Councilman Surber made a motion to authorize this \$500, which will come from the Town Manager's discretionary account. Councilman Call seconded, and all were in favor.

Approval of the Agenda

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

Old Business

1. Speed bumps and junk cars

Town Manager Brian Martin said there would be no problem placing speed bumps on Fifth Avenue. Councilman Morris asked about the viability of speed dips rather than speed bumps since it would probably be cheaper to cut away than to add to the existing asphalt. The Mayor

then mentioned the possibility of using removable speed bumps. Councilman Morris asked Mr. Martin to bring cost options to the Council for the September meeting.

2. Palmer Mill

Mr. Martin reminded the Council that a couple of groups have looked at the Palmer Mill for possible use. However, it is in a bit of a disrepair and needs to be fixed. The Mayor suggested having the county building inspector go through the building and give the town a rough cost estimate to have these repairs completed in order for the Mill to get up to code. Mr. Martin said he would call the inspector.

3. Bids for burned houses

The bids for the removal of the burned structures on the following streets were as follows:

Totten Construction, LLC:

- Court Street: \$13,900
- Govt. Plant Road: \$3,800
- Henrytown Road: \$4,900
- Perryville Road: \$4,800

RNG Services, LLC

- Court Street: \$14,875
- Govt. Plant Road: \$4,999
- Henrytown Road: \$10,400
- Perryville Road: \$9,250

Mr. Martin said that the bids do not cover the cost of the asbestos abatement if it is needed. The town would incur that cost. If the abatement is expensive, then the town could do two houses this year and two the next. The town will pay for this with some of the funds that are part of the loan received from the MRPDC.

Councilman Call made a motion to accept the lower bid for all properties (Totten Construction, LLC). This is dependent upon the cost of the asbestos abatement for each property. Councilman Morris seconded, and all were in favor.

4. Bids for site clearances

There was only one contractor who bid on the site clearances, RNG Services. Councilman Morris asked Mr. Martin why the town could not burn this itself. Mr. Martin said that DEQ gave the town a one-time approval last December at the old town shop. A private person can burn if he wants to, but a public entity cannot. For the burn last December, the town had to say it was burning the brush for a training exercise for the fire department and not just to remove the brush. Councilman Surber asked if the property on Easy Street had been cleaned yet, and Mr. Martin said that a few follow-up letters needed to be sent to homeowners who had yet to clean their properties. Councilman Surber then asked Acting Chief Puckett to continue what Chief Wilcox had been doing with enforcing the litter ordinance.

The bid to clear the burn pile at the old shop site was \$4500, and the bid to clear the site on Battleground Avenue at the site of proposed shop was \$6500. The remaining bid was for \$4500 to clear the lot toward the EPOVA property providing it was cleared at the same time as the spot for proposed town shop. If not cleared then, the price would be \$7500. Councilman Morris made a motion to accept the bids of \$4500 for the burn pile and \$6500 for the site of the proposed town shop. No action was taken on the other bid. Councilman Call seconded, and all were in favor.

5. Employee leave time

Mr. Martin told the Council that he had checked on the leave time policies from the neighboring towns of Marion, Chilhowie, Glade Spring, and Damascus. All four of these towns use an accrual system for their leave time that starts on the first day of employment. Councilman Morris said he thought this was the best system to use and that he would like to see vacation time and sick leave made into two separate categories. The Mayor replied that leave days in general are from the same overall pot and it doesn't really matter what they're called. Mr. Martin asked Clerk/Treasurer Steve Johnson about the town's current structure since he tracks it. Mr. Johnson said if the town were to switch to an accrual system, he would like to see it happen at the start of a fiscal year since under the current system people have already taken days off, and from a paperwork standpoint, it would be difficult to combine the town's current structure with a newly installed accrual one.

Mr. Martin said he would have a meeting with a couple of Councilmembers, the Mayor, and the department heads and bring back a suggestion at the September meeting.

Northwood High School Softball Team Recognition

The Mayor altered the agenda to do the presentation for the 2018 Northwood High School Softball team since they all arrived. The team advanced to the state semifinals for the first time in school history, and Coach B.J. Buchanan was named Coach-of-the-Year by a couple of media

outlets. The team also set a record for most wins in a season, most home runs, most runs scored, most hits, most doubles, most RBIs, and highest batting average. Additionally, Catie Bordwine was named first team All-State, and Nancy Jo Roberts was named second team All-State.

6. Guardrails/barriers for West Main Street

Mr. Martin said he has reached out to VDOT about the process for installing guardrails or some other type of barrier on West Main Street in the area of the playground, but they have yet to call him back. His concern is that if the town installs something without VDOT clearance, then the town would be subject to liability issues. He will get in touch with VDOT again.

New Business

1. Comprehensive Plan

Lori Deel told the Council about the upcoming process for putting together the town's new Comprehensive Plan. It is customary to have input from the community, so she suggests putting a suggestion box at the water window, and there may be a booth at the Labor Day festival. She said people could also email her.

Going into September and October, she would like to have two meetings with the community to go over everyone's ideas. There will be another session in early November before a final draft is ready for the November 13, 2018 Council meeting. After that, there will be a public hearing to discuss it before it is officially approved.

2. SIDA replacement

Councilman Orr, the Chair of the Saltville Industrial Development Authority, stated that a replacement is needed for Linda Stone who resigned when she moved to Georgia. The SIDA members want someone who would be the Secretary and Treasurer, so experience is desired from that standpoint. Ann Boardwine was approached, and she has agreed to replace Ms. Stone if that is what the Council goes along with. She was recommended unanimously by the SIDA body.

The Mayor mentioned that in the past when there's a vacancy on the SIDA, the Council had advertised for letters of interest from those who would like to be SIDA members, but it was up to the Council how they wanted to proceed. Councilman Surber made a motion to appoint Ann Boardwine to the SIDA, and Councilman Morris seconded. All were in favor.

3. Pool parties

Mr. Johnson said there had been a couple of inquiries about having pool parties after the pool had officially closed up until Labor Day, and he asked the Council to formally vote on this since they had set the closing date. Councilman Morris made the motion to allow these parties, and Councilman Call seconded. All were in favor.

4. EMS, Inc. report

Gary Johnson spoke on the following:

- 1) The weekly meetings with R.B. Henderson to go over operation and maintenance items are ongoing.
- 2) Improvements are continuing at the wastewater plant which has contributed to some of the lowest effluent numbers in the history of the plant.
- 3) The chemical pumps are being standardized in order for not needing backups.
- 4) Eventually, generators will be needed for the wells and pump stations.
- 5) The town probably needs a policy regarding pressure reducer valves and where they are placed. There have been questions about whether the homeowner should be responsible for their upkeep and installation. The Mayor said that meters should definitely be on the town's right-of-way. Mr. Johnson suggested having the Water/Sewer Committee meet to discuss this further.
- 6) The town needs to continue its project to provide backup and replacement pumps for all the wells and pump stations. Additionally, an emergency plan needs to be in place in case of mechanical failure, power outages, or disasters.
- 7) All ten samples were collected from homeowners for the Lead and Copper analysis.
- 8) All water storage tanks (especially the insides) need to be inspected.
- 9) The town's water loss is at 48.4%, down from 73.5% in April.

5. Paleontology agreement

Councilman Orr said the town has an agreement in place with the Gray Fossil Site and East Tennessee State University regarding who can dig in the Wellfields to protect artifacts from disappearing. Gray and ETSU are the ones who actually run the annual digs and maintain the artifacts in Gray. The current agreement expired in April, and a new five-year agreement needs to be put in place to make sure that the specimens that are excavated don't deteriorate. If the town wants anything back, then the town needs to have a curator to look after it. Mr. Crewe has looked over the agreement, and says it's fine.

Each Councilmember has a copy of the agreement, and it will be voted on next month.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Martin spoke on the following:

- 1) The Council's choices for the town's committees will be given to the front office.
- 2) The Sewer Project is about 99% complete, and a final change order is forthcoming. DEQ has told the town to apply for its Certificate to Operate which is the first step to getting the Consent Order lifted.
- 3) Darian Musick of Crossroads Engineering updated the Council on the upcoming water system project. This will be a \$1.6 million project with \$330,000 of it consisting of grant funds. The project will consist of replacing residential meters, two-inch meters, surface lines, upgrades to the British Rowe pump station, galvanized line replacement on Cove Street, and other tasks. There will be a community meeting to discuss this since the replacing of the service lines will impact practically every line in town. The consensus is that many of the town's meters are not registering properly now.

The town found out today that \$141,000 in grant funds has been awarded by the Health Department and will be used to fix existing pumps or replace those pumps and master meters. Additionally, a contact tank at the Cardwell Town Well could be eliminated making the pumping process more streamlined.

The Lane Group performed a rate study last year and the town chose the rate schedule that meet the minimum rate requirements set forth by the Virginia Resource Authority. The town did this to be eligible for the VRA loan for the sewer project. There will probably be another one due to changes in the town's budget where the town did not renew the contract with Veolia, thereby, altering the town's expenses. This will be revisited when the closing date for the project documents gets closer.

- 4) The SIDA is paying for the HVAC repairs at the GCS building.

5) The Council has a copy of the Emergency Custody Order (ECO) and Temporary Detention Order (TDO) resolution that concerns the time taken up by local rural municipalities for the civil commitment process of individuals who need it. Acting Chief Erik Puckett said the time involved is a burden to the police officers. This resolution asks the Legislature to develop and adequately fund alternative transportation systems to take the strain off of rural municipalities. Councilman Morris made a motion to approve the resolution, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

6) The town has received the documents from the Defense Logistics Agency concerning the Hummer. Councilman Morris made a motion to take the documents to the DMV to get the title for the Hummer, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

7) There are two police cars at the old town shop and an old backhoe at the wastewater plant that the town can rid of either by taking them to Berry's for the scrap money, take bids, or take them to the state surplus sale. Councilman Morris made the motion to take the police vehicles to Berry's and the backhoe to the state surplus sale, and Councilman Call seconded. All were in favor.

8) The Mayor has suggested that the department heads get smart phones so they would always be tied into their emails. Councilman Morris made the motion to procure the smart phones, and Councilman Robinson seconded. All were in favor.

9) Councilman Surber stated that the town had donated the swings at the old playground to the North Holston recreation area and the big apparatus to the Little League. Local citizens had donated the money to build the old playground. The big apparatus was taken down and is now sitting in a pile at the Little League fields under some power lines. Councilman Surber said he would to see the town donate the apparatus to the North Holston playground since right now it is just lying in a heap creating an eyesore, and he made a motion to that effect. Councilman Morris seconded.

During the discussion, the Mayor stated that he thought the inmates were supposed to have put the apparatus back up at the Little League fields. Acting Chief Puckett said the last he had heard was that it couldn't be reconstructed under those power lines. The Mayor said the issue was that the Council had already made a motion several months ago to give this to the Little League, and the Council should at least talk to the Little League reps before they make other motions to give it away to someone else. Plus, this would take it away from the kids here in town.

Councilman Morris said that Little League has made no effort to put it back together, and if other people in the area want it and will use it, then they can have it. Also, it is currently in a bad location, and it needs to be used rather than go to waste. Mr. Crewe said if it was donated to another organization without any obligation from the town to assemble it, then it is probably no longer town property since it was given away. Councilman Robinson said he had talked to

Monica Johnson, whose husband Gabe is the new president of Little League, and she said the plan for now was to put it up. The Mayor suggested having Councilman Surber rescind his motion, and this would be discussed next month with more information available. The motion was rescinded.

10) If any Councilmember wishes to have an official email account for the town, let him know and it will be set up per Councilman Morris' request.

Police Chief's Report

Acting Chief Puckett spoke on the following:

- 1) The budgeted police vehicle, a 2018 Explorer, has been ordered from Sheehy Ford in Richmond. The equipment and lights will be installed once it arrives.
- 2) Officers Bordwine and Keene are currently at the Academy and doing well. Graduation will be November 26th.
- 3) Officer David Frye is the School Resource Officer at the elementary school and will attend the Academy starting in January.
- 4) The department assisted with the carnival and *Saltville Gives Back*.
- 5) He and Sergeant Lynch met with officials at United Salt regarding a new safety and disaster plan.
- 6) He will start going ahead with the blight and litter issues that Chief Wilcox was handling. The majority of the houses and property owners that received letters have put forth some effort to improve their properties.
- 7) There is a dog problem on Easy Street that has been ongoing. One is running at large causing problems, so its owner will be identified and go from there.

Maintenance Report

R.B. Henderson spoke on the following:

- 1) The water and sewer system ongoing improvements have really helped the town but more are needed.
- 2) Last month the town dug five graves, replaced asphalt, did some maintenance at the wastewater plant, replaced a backflow preventer, and ran a line from the sludge building to the press.
- 3) There was an issue at the Route 91 lift station with the pumps malfunctioning. An estimate was obtained for a rebuilt pump, and it fell between \$3200 and \$3600. Councilman Robinson made a motion to procure the pump for that price range, and Councilman Morris seconded. All were in favor.
- 4) The heavy rains more than likely contributed to a hole that formed on Battleground Avenue.
- 5) The town has nine generators and there has probably been no maintenance done on them the last five years. He gave the Council price quotes for new ones and asked them to look those quotes over and discuss this more next month.
- 6) The rollup door at the GCS building needs to be replaced, and there is a \$3600 quote for that. Councilman Morris made the motion to accept the quote of \$3600, and Councilman Robinson seconded. All were in favor.
- 7) The town needs a policy on pressure reducer valves about where they are to be located and who's responsible for them. The Mayor suggested having the Water/Sewer Committee meet and bring back a recommendation to the Council.
- 8) Reiterating what Gary Johnson spoke about regarding the tanks, Mr. Henderson said all of the tanks need to be inspected and not just a select few. The Mayor suggested putting this out for bid when the time comes.
- 9) Councilman Morris asked about street signs since several in the town are faded or missing and need replacing. Mr. Henderson said some had been ordered at \$60 per sign. The ones put up so far are sized based on the speed limit on the roads. He will check with the county to make sure the town's spelling matches the county's 911 system.
- 10) Councilman Surber asked about a fence around the McCready pump station. Mr. Henderson replied that the town would probably put that out for bid.
- 11) Concerning the salt shed, Councilman Orr made a motion to proceed with the clear span option for \$31,000. The town will supply the block and asphalt for around \$11,000 more. Councilman Call seconded, and all were in favor.

12) Councilman Morris thanked Councilman Robinson for power washing the post office.

Fire Department Report

Gerald Arnold, Jr. spoke on the following:

- 1) The department had ten calls last month, four were in-town and six were out-town.
- 2) There was one fire, four traffic accidents, one assisted rescue, and two miscellaneous calls.
- 3) The department's BINGO games last week drew the biggest crowd since it started, 116 people. Additionally, more money was given away, \$11,000, than had ever been.

Before adjourning, Councilman Robinson thanked all who attended the meeting and gave special thanks to Tabby Henderson, Larry Ratcliff, and the Saltville Preservation Alliance for their work in beautifying the town. He thanked Dave Smith as well. The town has never looked better and the improvements are continuing.

Councilman Call then made the motion to adjourn, and Councilman Morris seconded. All were in favor.

