

Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Saltville Town Council held on February 9, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall

Council: Monica Johnson, Jeff Comer, Eugene Call, Bryan Morris, Steve Surber
Gary Call arrived during the Fire Department Report

Mayor: C. Todd Young

Staff: Brian Martin, Town Manager
Paul Cassell, Town Attorney
Erik Puckett, Police Chief
R.B. Henderson, Public Works Director
Steve Johnson, Clerk/Treasurer

Before the meeting started, the Mayor welcomed Jeff Comer back to the Council.

Councilman Morris made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2021 special-called meeting. Councilman Eugene Call seconded, and the motion carried 4-0-1 with Councilman Comer abstaining.

Councilwoman Johnson made the motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2021 regularly scheduled meeting, and Councilman Eugene Call seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Councilman Comer abstaining.

Councilman Eugene Call made the motion to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2021 special-called meeting, and Councilman Morris seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Councilman Comer abstaining.

Councilman Eugene Call made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2021 special-called meeting, and Councilman Morris seconded. The motion carried with Councilman Comer abstaining.

Citizens' Time

No one sent the town an email to be read.

Approval of the Agenda

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

New Business

1. EMS, Inc. report

Gary Johnson spoke on the following:

- 1) The DEQ report for January was submitted as were the VDH report and the VDH Water Treatment Leak Loss report.
- 2) The Lane Group has been doing some smoke testing to help with inflow and infiltration.
- 3) The sludge press pump quote the Council approved last month was a mistake. The company that quoted the price, Ortec, gave the wrong price. The new one was for \$1600 more. The company the town received the quote from (Ortec) had received the wrong information from the supplier. The Mayor asked why a quote could not have been obtained from another source. Mr. Johnson replied that Ortec actually made the press the town has so it would have been difficult to find a compatible one that would have worked.

Councilman Morris made the motion to accept the new quote, and Councilman Eugene Call seconded. The motion carried 4-1 with Councilwoman Johnson voting no.

- 4) Another pump is in need of repair, so Mr. Martin gave permission to have it pulled and get a quote on having it repaired.

5) Since this was his first meeting after being appointed, Councilman Comer asked what exactly EMS, Inc. did. Mr. Martin explained that they were the contractors chosen to run the water and sewer system for the town in 2018 like Veolia used to do. Now, at the end of March the EMS, Inc. contract runs out, and Gary Johnson has expressed the interest in continuing the relationship with the town under the current contract's rates. Councilwoman Johnson asked for a copy of the current contract before a vote is taken. Councilman Morris made a motion to table this until next month, and Councilman Eugene Call seconded. All were in favor.

- 6) The engineers from Crossroads were in attendance and said that the Phase II Project is pretty much complete except for the closeout paperwork. Both wells have new pumps, and there is also a booster pump in Cardwell Town and at #10. The meters and valves have been replaced, and the Buckeye Booster pump was able to be removed. Additionally, the booster at British Rowe will be removed eventually.

Regarding the Phase I Project, everything is ready to go as the Health Department has approved the construction permit, and the environmental review has been completed. The only issue now is the completion of the audit. Clerk/Treasurer Steve Johnson said it is supposed to be ready in a few weeks, and Mr. Martin said he would call the auditor tomorrow. Councilman Morris asked about the ad for an auditor that ran, and Mr. Johnson replied that the ad ran for

about three months, and no firm responded. Councilman Morris then made the motion to re-advertise for auditing services, and Councilwoman Johnson seconded. All were in favor.

Committee Reports

The Mayor said he attended the Tourism Board meeting, and Amanda Livingston was introduced as the new director. She will probably attend next month's Council meeting.

Public Works Director's Report

Public Works Director R.B. Henderson was not present for the meeting.

Police Chief's Report

Police Chief Erik Puckett spoke on the following:

- 1) Nick Griffith resigned and went back to being a contractor. He said he could make more money that way.
- 2) The Commonwealth Attorney says the town can go ahead and dispose of the red truck that had been vandalized.
- 3) He and the Mayor met with the Wellness Center to discuss a litter pick-up. There will be one in April and one after Labor Day. The town will purchase twenty-five grabbers for the jobs.
- 4) The monthly stats are included.
- 5) Skylar Call is doing well at the Academy and has passed all of his tests.

Fire Department Report

Chief Bryan Lynch spoke on the following:

- 1) The department had fifteen calls last month with five being in the town and ten being in the county.
- 2) The department now has eighteen members.
- 3) Councilwoman Johnson asked if they were looking into purchasing a new vehicle or maybe leasing one. Chief Lynch replied that all of their current big trucks were at least twenty years old, so there is ample wear-and-tear on them, but none are currently having any major problems.
- 4) Since this is Councilman Comer's first meeting, he asked Chief Lynch about his fire background. The Chief replied that he had been a member of the department since 2009 and has been in a supervisory position since 2014 when he became Captain. He was named Deputy Chief in 2016 and remained in that position until being appointed the Chief in December of 2020. He's currently has his FF-1 and FF-2 and other certifications.

Councilman Comer thanked him and said the town was fortunate to have someone with that much experience.

Rescue Squad Report

Members of the Squad were not present for the meeting, but Councilman Morris asked if the town was still paying them the \$3000 a month per the town's budget. Mr. Johnson said the check for February had not been sent yet. Then, due to the fact that the town is probably going to open its own Emergency Medical Services department, Councilman Morris made a motion to stop sending those monthly checks to save some money. Councilman Gary Call seconded, and the motion carried 5-1 with Councilwoman Johnson voting no.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Martin spoke on the following:

- 1) Trent Crewe, the town's current attorney, has accepted a position at the Town Manager of Bluefield, Virginia. Therefore, his partner Paul Cassell, will be at most of the town's meetings moving forward, but Trent will still be involved in town activities.
- 2) The town transferred ownership of the old town shop site to the SIDA a couple of years ago in order to better apply for EPA funding to have the site cleaned. The town was awarded the

funding, but it was then rescinded. Therefore, the Smyth County EDA had agreed to have the property transferred to them so the town can again pursue the funding to have the property cleaned making it viable for other use.

3) He's having a meeting with the town's grant writer to talk about funding for the town's School Resource Officer and for enhancements to the Salt Trail.

4) There's a meeting with AEP tomorrow to discuss the transformers being moved to the Broadford Station. The final two have not left Asia, but they have passed their electrical inspections and will arrive later in the summer. Therefore, AEP has requested that the town extend its original easement agreement for \$15,000. However, this will extend into the next fiscal year when the town is due to have the bridge rehabbed in the Government Plant (where the transformers will cross). This could endanger that project, so a special meeting may have to be called when the transformers arrive.

5) The bridge at Cedar Branch has been repaired. The Mount Rogers Planning District Commission contributed \$40,000 for the repair and the SIDA put in \$113,084.21. The SIDA met a few days ago to approve this, but this money reduced the funds in their account so it is no longer feasible to construct a new town shop at this moment. If funds are going to be needed to construct a new town shop, there's a chance that the fiscal year transfer provided to the town each year could be reduced. If the SIDA gets the Titan buildings transferred back to them, this could change.

6) The Wellness Center has requested the town's help in sealing and restriping the parking lot by proposing a 50/50 split. Councilwoman Johnson asked for a couple of more quotes than the one they provided, and Mr. Martin said he would help them with that. Councilman Morris made a motion to approve up to \$6650, the amount of the quote the Wellness Center obtained. Councilman Eugene Call seconded, and the motion carried 5-0-1 with Councilman Comer abstaining since he works part-time at the Wellness Center.

7) The Mayor asked Mr. Martin to check on training in water and sewer for the town's maintenance employees since the town has rejoined the Virginia Rural Water Association.

Closed Session

Councilman Morris made a motion to enter Closed Session in accordance with the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) to discuss personnel in the Emergency Medical Services department. Councilman Eugene Call seconded, and all were in favor.

After exiting Closed Session, Councilman Morris 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. Councilman Eugene Call seconded, and the roll call vote was 6-0 in the affirmative.

Councilman Morris made a motion to set special-called meetings on February 24th and 25th, and Councilman Eugene Call seconded. All were in favor.

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