

Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Saltville Town Council held on March 8, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall

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

Mayor: C. Todd Young

Staff: T. Michael Taylor, Town Manager
Trent Crewe, Town Attorney
Chris Wilcox, Police Chief
R.B. Henderson, Public Works Director
Tammy Carter, Front Office Clerk
Steve Johnson, Clerk/Treasurer

Councilman Orr made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2016 regularly scheduled meeting, and Councilwoman Wyatt seconded. All were in favor.

Councilman Orr made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2016 special-called meeting, and Councilman Holley seconded. The motion carried 3-0-2 with Councilmen Call and Brickey abstaining since they were not present for that meeting.

Citizens' Time

Tabby Henderson mentioned that she attended a breakfast sponsored by the Smyth County Chamber of Commerce where she learned of two programs that the Chamber was sponsoring. One is a business and management workshop to be held at the Wayne Henderson School in Marion on March 31st. The other is a customer service workshop and manufacturing oriented workshop. She also had a concern about the geese in town and said they are starting to pair off.

Ms. Henderson then told the Council there is a speeding problem on First Avenue. Last week a young driver drove by her house going really fast and she raised her hand at this driver. The driver turned around and came back and started pointing at Ms. Henderson and revved her engine. Ms. Henderson then said she got the tag number and reported it, but after school today, two carloads of kids went speeding by again. She suggested having the police run more radar on First Avenue.

Tim Nutter said he was asked by Councilman Orr to put a proposal together for the Recreation Building at the special-called meeting on February 26th. This proposal outlines how Little League would maintain the building and its contents at no cost to the town.

He gave the Council and the Town's attorney a copy of this proposal. He mentioned that the Little League's website, leagues.bluesombrero.com\SaltvilleLL, was now up and running. The site's database would track the stats of all of the kids in Saltville's Little League program in real time throughout their careers. The site will eventually contain any committee reports too.

Approval of the Agenda

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

New Business

1. Vendor permits

Town Manager Mike Taylor said that some citizens had trailers from which they could sell stuff such as hamburgers and hot dogs. The town currently has no regulations involving food trailers and how they operate other than standards set forth by the Virginia Department of Health. Mr. Taylor then suggested sending this to Councilman Holley's Ordinance Committee so their recommendation could be brought back to the Council. They could look at statutes from other towns as their basis for coming up with a draft proposal for the Council to discuss.

This was tabled until Councilman Holley could have a meeting of his committee.

2. Fire Department request

Mr. Taylor told the Council that the Fire Department was growing and had started their billing process and was going to take up BINGO shortly. Now, the town handles all of the money for the department, but they want to take over their financial dealings. He suggested having the Mayor and Councilman Orr, who is the Chair of the Police, Fire, and Rescue Committee, to meet with members to discuss their request further. Councilman Brickey asked if the whole committee needed to be in on this discussion, and Mr. Taylor replied the Mayor and Councilman Orr could meet with them first. Councilman Brickey asked why the entire committee would not be in on this meeting, and Mr. Taylor said that was at the Chair's discretion.

This was tabled until a meeting could be scheduled.

3. Lane Group report

Jeff Spickard spoke on the following:

- 1) The preliminary engineering plans for the sewer project have been completed. There were changes in the scope of work since DEQ had asked for a couple of revisions. There could be some alternate methods used for the repairs including using the technology employed by Reline America.
- 2) They are looking into storm water issues on Palmer Avenue, Sheep Hill, and Overlook Court. Councilman Brickey asked if the Palmer Avenue issue was at the Frye residence, and Mr. Spickard said yes.
- 3) Lane is working with Gavin Blevins from the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission concerning the area near the Tin Bridge Trestle and the so-called land bridge.

4. Veolia report

Bill Duty spoke on the following:

- 1) He gave the Council pictures of the leak in Edgewood and the sewer repairs on East Main Street. On East Main Street, the pipe had completely deteriorated but has now been replaced. All that is left is a little cleanup.

Old Business

1. Conservation easement

Mr. Johnson said the Planning Commission had met with Neal Kilgore of the Virginia Outdoors Foundation per the Council's wishes at the January meeting. The Commission members recommended granting this conservation easement. Town Attorney said the easement would not interfere in the town's comprehensive plan. Mr. Crewe said this area was already zoned in a way that would facilitate what is in the plan. Councilman Call made the motion to grant this easement, and Councilwoman Wyatt seconded.

During the discussion, Councilman Brickey asked for more detail. Mr. Kilgore gave the Council the map of the 300 plus acres showing the location of the property. Councilman Brickey asked

how this would affect the town if a developer wanted to put in a subdivision there. Mr. Kilgore stated that if the landowner chose to protect and conserve this area, then this land will be restricted to whatever the covenants are in the deed of easement in perpetuity. This property in particular could be further subdivided two times, and this would yield a total of three parcels of whatever size the landowner wanted. This easement would pass from landowner to landowner and would not be broken. There could be up to five homes on this property but as many barns as needed. The rule of thumb is that up to 1% of the property can be under roof, either with barns or dwellings. Going by the size of the property in this example, up to 3.2 acres can be under roof.

The purpose of the program is to set aside agricultural and forested lands to be used for those purposes and the population grows. It is a voluntary program that only happens when the landowner wants to do it. Nothing is forced. This property can be bought or sold like any other property, but the conservation easement remains.

The motion carried 4-1 with Councilman Brickey voting no.

2. Washington County Mutual Aid Agreement

Mr. Taylor said this was tabled last month due to the fact that the draft copy had just arrived the day of the meeting, and the Council didn't have any time to peruse it. The Mayor asked Chief Wilcox if the agreement was sufficient with him, and Chief Wilcox told him it was. Councilman Brickey made the motion to approve the agreement, and Councilman Call seconded. All were in favor.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Taylor spoke on the following:

1) The Virginia Health Department has an application deadline upcoming for a grant for ongoing studies of the wand meter readers. Crossroads Engineering needs Council's approval to apply for this grant. The vote to approve applying for the grant will not obligate the Council in any way. Councilman Holley made the motion to apply for the grant, and Councilman Orr seconded.

During the discussion, Mr. Duty said they were the iPERL meters, which are better meters than the standard meters. They have good sensors, are more accurate on readings and leak detection, and will cut down on the manpower it takes to read meters in general since the workers won't have to get out of their trucks to read them. Councilman Brickey asked if this was the same brand meter that Veolia gave the Council an estimate on earlier, and Mr. Duty said

he thought so. Councilman Brickey then stated that he had heard of several problems that people had experienced with the iPERL brand. He had asked a couple of towns who used those meters what they thought of the iPERL and they told him the company would not stand behind the warranty. Mr. Taylor said that, to his knowledge, the grant was not restrictive to that particular brand of meter. Councilman Brickey then stated that he was not against applying for the grant, but this particular meter is a bad one.

The motion carried 4-1 with Councilman Brickey voting no.

2) The meter books were not read this month but were estimated by Veolia instead. Veolia reads the meters, but could not due to the winter storm and various other issues that Mr. Duty touched on in his report including the major leak in Edgewood and the disintegrating sewer line on East Main Street. Because of this estimation, some people may not get an accurate reading this month. Their bill could be lower than normal which means that next month's bill may be higher since it will take in the difference. Or vice versa. The front office regrets this and so does Veolia since they are the ones who do the actual reading.

3) The town had a conference call with DEQ that included the Lane Group, Veolia, and state officials to discuss the ongoing sewer project. The town's audits that DEQ requires will be in by the first of April.

4) Due to the fact that Council members had various questions, a meeting was held on February 27th with Veolia that included Mr. Taylor, Councilman Smith of the Water, Sewer, and Refuse Committee, R.B. Henderson, and Steve Johnson.

5) The packets contained information from Radford University concerning the bones found in the cemetery dirt pile. An on-site visit will happen tomorrow.

6) A meeting was held on March 4th with the Lane Group to go over specific projects including the runoff issue on Government Plant Road, the drainage issue on Palmer Avenue, and smaller areas that were experiencing ponding effects.

7) The packets contain information from Hungate Business Services concerning additional backup for the computer system. There have been a few security breaches in the area lately, and Hungate says we need additional protection. This would be about an extra forty extra dollars a month to have this protection.

8) The signage for Palmer Avenue is being developed. United Salt will provide signage as well.

9) The VDOT project for Palmer Avenue at the ball fields will begin around July 18th and last until about October 1st. Traffic patterns will be altered slightly, so meetings will be held with those involved. Councilman Orr said the Lions Club carnival will be held the week before, so that event should be okay.

10) Interior work had to be done on the public bathrooms at the train station.

11) The Easter Egg Hunt will take place on March 26th on the high school lawn. The following day, there will be a sunrise service on the Commons Area. If the weather is bad, then the Friends Church will host this service.

12) The girls basketball team will get a sendoff tomorrow on their way to Richmond by the Police Department, the Fire Department, and the Rescue Squad. They will escort the charter bus to Interstate 81. The Town of Chilhowie has offered any assistance the team may need, and the director of the Valley Nursing Home has asked the bus to stop there to receive well wishes. On Thursday, the game will be shown on the television in the Council room through an internet link. Anyone who wants to watch it can come and do so. Good luck to the Lady Panthers!

13) According to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the GCS Building is still in play for a prospective business. Mr. Taylor thanked Saltville's representative on the Smyth County Industrial development Authority, Amy McVey, for her good work. Ms. McVey worked for the town for years.

14) The Council will get a monthly schedule for the stage and the Commons Area in general.

15) Getting back to Hungate, the Mayor asked Council's wishes. Councilman Brickey suggested letting the Town Manager handle this, and the other Council members agreed.

Police Chief's Report

Chief Wilcox spoke on the following:

1) He thanked Ms. Henderson for her input on the speeding on First Avenue.

2) He gave the Council a press release detailing three traffic stops the department made. During one of those stops, a man was discovered with an assault rifle which had a high capacity banana clip style magazine along with a ski mask. The drug problem in the area is still ongoing but the town is working with both counties and the federal government to combat this problem. He implored the public to pass along any information they may have to the department.

3) The calls for the month of February were broken down like the Council had asked. Councilman Brickey asked the gallons of gas used, and Chief Wilcox said that at the last Council meeting, a question was expressed about an officer who lives outside of the town. He had given her a car to take home since she is an on-call investigator twenty-four hours a day, seven

days a week. She does not have time to stop by the department to get a vehicle if a situation arrives where she has to process a scene.

Someone in the community had raised a question about the gas being used by her car since she lived out of town. He created a spreadsheet from August 20th, the day the new vehicles were put into service. From August 20th through November 12th, her unit used the least amount of gas of the three overall patrol units. Officer McMillion's unit used 224 gallons, Officer Buchanan's unit used 232 gallons, and her unit used 214 gallons. From November 12th through February 12th, Officer McMillion used 244 gallons, her unit used 239 gallons, and Officer Buchanan used 257 gallons. Her vehicle has not incurred any additional maintenance costs either. Councilman Brickey then asked if the mileage for each vehicle was available, so Chief Wilcox said he would get that if it was wanted. Councilman Call asked if she would patrol at all, and Chief Wilcox she would occasionally fill in a gap if needed.

4) Mr. Taylor said that Assistant Chief Erik Puckett would resume his concealed handgun classes at the Town Hall if the Council agreed. He also said that Assistant Chief Puckett is working on the ongoing geese problem. In the past he has addled the eggs to help prevent overpopulation. Addling involves rubbing the eggs with a type of oil. The mother will still sit on the eggs, but the embryos just eventually die. An actual roundup is expensive and will be included in next year's budget.

Councilman Brickey asked if there was a cost to the public for the gun class, and Mr. Taylor said there was no cost. He then mentioned that the class should never have been discontinued in the first place. He also asked Mr. Taylor to get back with the Council quickly if the Council needed to take any action regarding the geese since he gets calls frequently about this issue and something needs to be done.

Fire Department Report

Assistant Chief Bobby Dye spoke on the following:

- 1) The Firefighter I class finished this past Sunday. Four finished the class out of thirteen participants. Everyone passed their practical. They have to take one more HAZMAT class, and then Firefighter II can start.
- 2) The billing started on March 1st.
- 3) The Gaming Commission has approved the department's BINGO license. There will be a meeting shortly with the BINGO supplier.

- 4) The grant for the smoke detectors has allowed the department to obtain over forty-five of the detectors.
- 5) The department will receive extra radios from the Town of Chilhowie. They are testing one right now, and if everything is okay, they will use the other ones provided by Chilhowie.
- 6) The department has switched to Comcast as their internet provider, and this will save around \$50 monthly. Councilman Brickey thanked the members for their hard work and mentioned that people in the town had noticed the changes they had implemented to make the department better.

Closed Session

Councilwoman Wyatt 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. Councilman Holley seconded, and the motion carried 4-1 with Councilman Brickey voting no.

After exiting Closed Session, Councilwoman Wyatt made the 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 Holley seconded, and the roll call vote was 5-0.

Lastly, Councilman Call made the motion to adjourn, and Councilman Brickey seconded. All were in favor.

