

Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Saltville Town Council held on January 8, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall

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

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

Mayor C. Todd Young was not present, so Councilman Surber made a motion to have Councilman Morris serve as the Acting Mayor for the purpose of leading the meeting. Councilman Robinson seconded, and the motion carried 5-0-1 with Councilman Morris abstaining.

Councilman Call made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2018 regular meeting, and Councilman Orr seconded. All were in favor.

Citizens' Time

Janice Orr told the Council that the annual Woolly Day would be January 26th at the high school from 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. Woolly's weather prognostication will be between 10:30 and 11:00. The tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children and will also be good for admission that day. This day is the biggest fundraiser for the Museum of the Middle Appalachians which has now been in existence for over twenty years.

The Museum had around 5000 visitors this year. These guests came from a variety of countries including Austria, France, Finland, Switzerland, South Korea, Barbados, Brazil, Germany, Ireland, Thailand, Canada, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Chile, China, Kazakhstan, Costa Rica, England, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, and New Zealand. Most of these visitors said they were in the United States on a tour and discovered the Museum on the internet. A gentleman from Brazil said that the Museum was the best representation of the Appalachian region he had ever seen.

The Christmas tree exhibit ended up with 31 total trees comprising civic, business, church groups and individuals, and the late Helen Dye provided the decorations.

Approval of the Agenda

Councilman Surber said he had a request to add a discussion about putting speed bumps on Fourth Avenue. Town Manager Brian Martin said he would put this topic in his report. Mr. Martin also said he needed to add an item to Closed Session under Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711(A)(3) since there has been a request to purchase town property. Councilman Orr made a motion to add this to Closed Session, and Councilman Robinson seconded. All were in favor.

Councilman Surber then made a motion to approve the agenda, and Councilman Robinson seconded. All were in favor.

Old Business

1. Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Martin told the Council that he provided them with a list of goals that are to be included in the Comprehensive Plan. There was no negative feedback, so he suggested having a Public Hearing on February 12, 2019, the date of the February Council meeting, for the Comprehensive Plan. During the regular meeting, it will then be voted upon.

Councilman Surber made a motion to have the Public Hearing on February 12th at 4:45 p.m., and Councilman Call seconded. All were in favor.

New Business

1. EMS, Inc. report

Gary Johnson spoke on the following:

- 1) The weekly meetings to discuss operation and maintenance items are ongoing.
- 2) The DEQ report for December, 2018 was submitted.

- 3) Another warning letter was received from DEQ regarding an overflow at the Route 91 pump station. He repeated what he said last month about starting smoke testing in the affected areas when the weather breaks.
- 4) The annual chloride report is about to be submitted to DEQ, and there is a water withdrawal report that is due soon.
- 5) The monthly water report was submitted to DEQ for December, 2018.
- 6) There was a meeting on December 18, 2018 with the town's engineers to discuss the water improvement project.
- 7) Councilman Orr, the Chair of the Water/Sewer Committee, is putting together an outline on policy guidelines. Councilman Orr stated that he is having a committee meeting on Tuesday, January 15th to discuss this further. The final draft will then ultimately have to go to the Ordinance Committee for review before the Council adopts it.

Committee Reports

There were no committee meetings this month.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Martin spoke on the following:

- 1) He's coordinated with AEP regarding the transformer move next year.
- 2) An asset management plan is currently being constructed for the town's capital assets.
- 3) There are upcoming meetings with both counties to discuss the town's water purchase agreements with them. There's no official agreement in place as of yet.
- 4) He asked for input regarding the building of a pier in the Wellfields. This would increase fishing and other outdoor opportunities like other localities have experienced and would be built through grant funding.
- 5) There was damage to the Glade Spring trail head of the Salt Trail. The inmate crew will repair and reinstall it over the next couple of weeks.

6) A response letter has been drafted to DEQ regarding the Route 91 pump station overflows.

7) The town crew will paint the top of the town's water tanks with skid-proof paint since they are prone to being slick.

8) He will look into quotes for a marquis for the Town Hall. If the Council approves, it will become part of next year's budget.

9) Councilman Robinson wanted to discuss a so-called summer work program. He said it would consist of 2 – 4 high school students who would work for the town starting two weeks after school gets out for the summer and ending two weeks before it starts back. They would not be able to use any power tools due to liability issues, but the work they would do would free up the town crew to do more pressing jobs. They would get a feel of what it is like to work for the town and develop a sense of pride in doing so. Acting Mayor Morris asked what the cost to the town would be, and Mr. Martin said maybe around two thousand a summer paying minimum wage or the students could put some of those hours to college credit through the AIMS scholarship at Virginia Highlands Community College or Wytheville Community College. To get this, you have to have at least sixty hours of volunteer service. The kids could get paid or apply the hours toward their volunteer service.

10) Councilman Orr asked to discuss the use of donated property, namely the property under the Civil War Trust. He received a call from Neal Kilgore about the piece of property put into the preservation trust. Councilman Orr needs to know if the town has any intentions for the property so they can be relayed to Mr. Kilgore. The body that gave the town the land takes an annual survey about what the town is doing with it. It can't be developed but can be used for tourist purposes such as cutting a trail through it to reach the Civil War sites on the property, which is behind the #11 Well on the hill. Acting Mayor Morris said it was his opinion that the town had a lot going on now, and it may be hard to start another project.

11) Regarding the speed bumps on Fourth Avenue, Acting Mayor Morris asked Mr. Henderson where he thought the speed bumps should be placed and was told at the top of the hill, definitely, but probably at the bottom as well. Chief Puckett said his concern is what if someone comes in and wants one on First Avenue or Third Avenue. The town may find itself installing them all over. Town Attorney Trent Crewe stated that the volume of traffic could determine where they are put. VDOT can do a survey where the numbers of vehicles and the average speed are measured, and this would give the town an objective criteria on which to base its decisions.

Councilman Call made the motion to install the speed bumps on Fourth Avenue, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

Police Chief's Report

Chief Puckett spoke on the following:

- 1) Officer David Frye starts the Academy on January 14th.
- 2) Officer Bordwine is almost finished with his field training, and Officer Keene will begin his field training at the end of the month.
- 3) No major incidents occurred over the holiday season.
- 4) There was a rock slide on Highway 91 near Jimmy Joe's on December 31st that shut down the road for two days.
- 5) AEP will be moving equipment through the town in February. Portions of streets will be closed for a period of time. Acting Mayor Morris asked how much advanced notice the town will receive and if there would be any overtime work involved. Mr. Martin said he was getting weekly updates, and Chief Puckett said that there would be a couple of days of overtime.

Fire Department Report

Chief Jimmy Davidson spoke on the following:

- 1) Last month, the department had twelve total calls, ten of which were in the county and two in the town.
- 2) Regarding the hydrant replacement, Chief Davidson said that the only quote received involved the contractor supplying all of the equipment and labor, replacing or repairing the hydrants and the asphalt and concrete, furnishing all materials to replace the hydrants as needed, supplying the backhoe and dump truck, traffic control, and whatever else may be needed. The four employees doing the work would each make \$200 per hour.

Councilman Orr asked about the cost of the parts, and Chief Davidson said that would be determined based on the work. Acting Mayor Morris said it could fluctuate between \$5000 and \$50,000. Councilman Orr suggested tabling this until the cost could be determined and put that in the form of a motion. Councilman Call seconded, and all were in favor.

- 3) He asked about water that is standing at the fire hall and if the Lane Group could come and look at the drainage. Mr. Martin said he would contact them.

Public Works' Director's Report

Mr. Henderson spoke on the following:

- 1) The town crew went through CPR, First Aid, and confined spaces training and received their hepatitis shots.
- 2) The shipping date for the salt shed is scheduled to be February 18th, and the area still needs to be graded. The drawings were received from the company.
- 3) Two members of the crew will take their CDL tests tomorrow.
- 4) The gas tank at the town shop will be inspected on January 24th.
- 5) The Mayor had mentioned a drainage issue on the Barbrow Trail, so that has been fixed.
- 6) The written report he gave the Council contained the gas usage for the year.
- 7) Acting Mayor Morris had asked about a quote for a truck with a snow plow, and that is included in the report as is the cost of a water pump on a generator at the head works.
- 8) Acting Mayor Morris asked about placement of the salt shed when it arrives, and Mr. Henderson stated that the right-of-way to the gun club goes right through the area. He'd like to see it moved to not affect the shop area, but that road belongs to the Harris family, so they need to be asked what they think. Mr. Crewe suggested recording a right-of-way agreement between the Harris family and the town that says it would be moved to a specific spot. The current right-of-way currently comes off of Battleground Avenue and goes up and forks and comes out on the Harris property. The town could leave the two access points the same, do away with one fork that is not being used and do that in writing and take the rest in a straight line to come out of Battleground Avenue and go to the town's property line so it starts and ends in the same place after it is changed. This would cause the Harris family no inconvenience since the entrance and exit points are the same. The difference would be that instead of driving straight through, there would be a little bit of a loop. The town needs to get an agreement with them and signed by them with a survey showing where the right-of-way is being moved and have it properly recorded. The stumbling block may be if the adjoining property owner would agree to it. If they refuse, the issue becomes if the town does it to them rather than with them.

Councilman Orr suggested talking to the property owners before any type of plat is attempted and if all of the property owners are agreeable, then Mr. Martin will work with Mr. Crewe to get the agreement drafted and perform the survey. He put that in the form of a motion. Councilman Surber seconded, and all were in favor.

Rescue Squad Report

Captain Joe Arnold spoke on the following:

- 1) The repeater repairs the Council approved last month will be a little less than originally thought.
- 2) The squad answered 59 calls last month with 47 of them having a Saltville zip code.
- 3) They have been updating their Facebook page.

Closed Session

Councilman Orr made a motion to enter Closed Session in accordance with the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711(A)(7) for 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 Section 2.2-3711(A)(3) to discuss the disposition of public property. Councilman Holley seconded, and all were in favor.

After exiting Closed Session, Councilman Orr 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 Call seconded, and the roll call vote was 5-0 in the affirmative.

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