

Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Saltville Town Council held on March 10, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall

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

**Mayor:** C. Todd Young

**Staff:** Jordan Powers, Acting 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

Councilman Holley made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2020 regularly scheduled meeting, and Councilman Orr seconded. All were in favor.

Before Citizens' Time, the Mayor and Police Chief Puckett recognized Adam Bordwine as Saltville's Officer-of-the-Year. This honor is sponsored by the Marion VFW. Officer Bordwine has been with the department for over two years. In the 2019 calendar year, he was second in writing tickets and second in arrests. Additionally, before last Christmas, he took it upon himself to purchase a gaming console for a kid who was going through a bad domestic situation.

Like they did last year for Jake Frye when he won the award, the Council gave Officer Bordwine twelve additional hours of leave time after a motion by Councilman Surber and a second by Councilman Robinson. The motion carried unanimously. All of the Council members and the Mayor personally thanked Officer Bordwine and the other officers, as well, for his service.

### **Citizens' Time**

**Preston Frye** represented Little League and thanked the town for all of the repair work that had been done to the fields and the backstop and press box areas. He mentioned that a total of 119 kids had signed up for this year's season. They are looking to procure a new padded backstop, and Opening Day will be on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Randall Smith** complimented the Mayor on his viewpoints recently expressed in an article that appeared in the Smyth County newspaper. He encouraged the town to upgrade the Palmer Mill

for shows, plays, events, etc. and seek out grant funding if need be. This applies to the Stuart House and Salt Park as well.

Regarding the parcel of town property he is trying to purchase, he said the surveyor the town hired is surveying the wrong parcel. The Mayor said he had talked to the man on the phone before and that he and Clerk/Treasurer Steve Johnson would contact him again to see what is happening. When it is surveyed, anyone is welcomed to bid on the property.

**Jody Olinger** mentioned that for the last three years, and upcoming on June 27<sup>th</sup> (starting at noon with music that night) she has put together a Poker Run in memory of C.C. Olinger, her late husband. She thanked those who donated food and music to the event since its inception. All of the money from her event is donated back to kids in the community in the form of donations to the archery team, volleyball and basketball shoes for those who need them, the backpack program, etc. She also helped a former student who had cancer and established a \$500 scholarship fund last year for a senior student from Northwood or Chilhowie facing adversity to help them go forward in life.

Ms. Olinger invited the Council to attend this year's Poker Run and enjoy the music and food vendors and thanked the press for its continued coverage of the event.

**Monica Johnson** spoke about the latest meeting of Keep Southwest Virginia Beautiful, of which she's a member of the Board. On the agenda were the topics of recycling, keeping local waterways clean, and the issue of old tires in lakes and rivers, which is a huge problem. KSVB has put together a five-year plan to help with the tire problem including each individual community looking at their own lakes and rivers and policing the problem itself.

There's a big push to have a regional recycling center with county administrators and county Boards of Supervisors actively involved to represent their constituents. Saltville itself could put together a local composting program or even have its own recycling center. She concluded her discussion by stating that the next meeting of KSVB will be in Tazewell on May 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

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

### **Old Business**

## **1. Lawnmower bids**

The bids were as follows:

Virginia Armstrong: \$200 for the John Deere rider  
Bobby Dinsmore: \$100 for the Cub Cadet  
Jack Frye: \$200 for all of the mowers  
Harry Blevins: \$100 for the Cub Cadet

Councilman Orr made a motion to contact the two bidders for the Cub Cadet and have them give their best offer with the highest offer getting the mower. Councilman Holley seconded, and all were in favor.

Councilman Orr made the motion to offer the John Deere to the high bidder. There was no second, so the motion failed.

## **New Business**

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

The Mayor presented a plaque to this year's winner, Karlee Frye. She is the daughter of Roger and Diane Frye.

### **2. Northwood wrestling recognition**

The Mayor recognized this year's Northwood Wrestling Team for their achievements on the mat. Among the standouts were Trevor Stevens, Dalton Hoover, Jake Keesee, and Tristan Bowman. Tristan finished fourth in the state in the 132-pound weight class.

The Mayor then said that he recently found out that Police Chief Erik Puckett had actually scored the first touchdown in the history of Northwood Middle School when the consolidation happened back in the 1980s. He presented Chief Puckett a plaque for this achievement.

### **3. Town Shop**

This topic was tabled.

#### **4. Sale of the town's inoperable vehicles**

Councilman Surber asked about selling the green Blazer that was now about fourteen years old. Public Works Director R.B. Henderson said there were some issues with the frame and the cost to repair is not that much, so it will probably get fixed.

#### **5. EMS, Inc. report**

Gary Johnson spoke on the following:

- 1) The weekly meetings between EMS and the town's maintenance staff are continuing.
- 2) The DEQ report for February was submitted.
- 3) The I&I problem was made worse by the excess rain last week and led to a few overflows, which were reported to DEQ.
- 4) The VDH report was submitted for February, and the water accountability is still high.
- 5) The Phase II water project may start in April.
- 6) Regarding the interconnection with Washington County, the Mayor said it was his understanding it was now in the hands of Washington County since they had applied for funding through the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission. He said it was his concern who would test the water system if there is a complete water loss, and Mr. Johnson agreed and said he was also worried about pressure buildup. This will be settled before any interconnection is established.

#### **Committee Reports**

The Parks & Recreation Committee was the only one to meet in February. Councilman Morris, absent from tonight's meeting, is the Chair and left the Council a copy of his notes.

#### **Town Manager's Report**

Acting Town Manager Jordan Powers spoke on the following:

- 1) The MRPDC awarded the town a \$40,000 grant from the Southwest Virginia Regional Water/Wastewater Construction Fund to upgrade the aerial crossing at the head works, and the Mayor is authorized to sign it.
- 2) The Wellness Center will have an open house on March 21<sup>st</sup> from 10:00 a.m. – noon. People will be able to get a tour, sign up for a membership, seek employment opportunities, and enjoy refreshments.
- 3) There will be an Earth Day Spring Clean-up at the Salt Trail playground on April 22<sup>nd</sup> from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
- 4) He contacted the realtor of a foreclosed property on Sycamore Road who agreed to have the bank who owns the property get the property in compliance with town ordinances.
- 5) The Blue Ridge Discovery Center near Konnarock has reached out to the Mayor and Council to enjoy a tour of the facility.

### **Police Chief's Report**

Chief Puckett spoke on the following:

- 1) He once again congratulated Adam Bordwine for being Saltville's Officer-of-the-Year.
- 2) The department had a TDO on March 4<sup>th</sup> that carried over into March 5<sup>th</sup>.
- 3) The Fish-a-Ree will be held in conjunction with the fire department on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Kids only will fish from 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. followed by everyone starting at noon. Lunch will be served at 11:00 a.m. Councilman Surber made the motion to hold the event, and Councilman Robinson seconded. All were in favor.
- 4) As Preston Frye stated earlier, Opening Day for Little League will be April 11<sup>th</sup>. Councilman Surber made a motion to allow a parade as part of the festivities, and Councilman Holley seconded. All were in favor.
- 5) The next concealed weapons class will be on March 21<sup>st</sup> starting at 1:00 p.m.
- 6) Starting with the April meeting, the Council will be given stats for each officer. A street light survey will be included.

## **Board of Supervisors Report**

Neither county Supervisor was present for the meeting.

## **Public Works Director's Report**

R.B. Henderson spoke on the following:

- 1) Extra fluoride was ordered since its availability may get tight due to the current situation.
- 2) One grave was dug last month.
- 3) Leak detection was done last week on West Main Street, and a couple of problem areas were discovered. More tests will be done to pinpoint the exact location of the leaks.
- 4) As part of Phase II of the upcoming water project, a pre-construction meeting was held so contractors could look over the pumps, etc.
- 5) He has put together a work expectations list for the maintenance employees, and he and Mr. Martin will have a meeting with everyone.
- 6) The gate at the wellfields was badly rusted so it was replaced with one made of galvanized steel.
- 7) The boxes for the lights at the little league field need replacing since they are rotted. The total estimate is about \$1600 which represents \$800 to a contractor and \$800 to AEP. Councilman Orr made the motion to approve the estimate, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

Jody Olinger, who spoke at Citizens' Time, said she would donate \$200 for this project.

- 8) AEP is replacing poles on East Main Street near Cedar Branch to have them closer to the road at the cemetery. A one hundred foot temporary road needs to be built to access one of the existing poles. It would be constructed off of the gravel parking area at the Battlefield Overlook, and AEP needs the town's permission to do it.

The Mayor suggested going back to AEP and bartering by suggesting they can build the road if they do the work at the fields for free. Councilman Orr put that in a motion, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

### **Fire Department Report**

Chief Jimmy Davidson spoke on the following:

- 1) There were eleven calls last month with three in the county and eight in the town. These included four rescue, two MBA, two miscellaneous, and three fire.
- 2) During 2019, the department had one hundred forty total calls. Sixty of those were in the town, eleven were in Chilhowie, sixty-four were in Smyth County, three were in Washington County, and two were in Tazewell County.
- 3) Nobody from Washington County has responded to the Mutual Aid request yet. The Mayor said he would call the county's administrator.

### **Rescue Squad Report**

Councilman Robinson, a member of their Board, said they were currently on a call. They are looking forward to the meeting with Smyth County that was cancelled due to snow.

### **Closed Session**

Councilman Robinson made a motion to enter Closed Session in accordance with the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) to discuss inmate supervisor personnel; and 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. Councilman Orr seconded, and all were in favor.

After exiting Closed Session, Councilman Robinson 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 Holley seconded, and the roll call vote was 4-0 in the affirmative.

Councilman Orr made a motion to hire Rocky Casey as an inmate supervisor, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

Councilman Robinson made a motion to hire Donald Eastridge as an inmate supervisor, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

Councilman Orr made a motion to extend the run of the ad for inmate supervisors, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

Lastly, Councilman Holley made the motion to adjourn, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.