

Minutes of the Public Hearing and the regularly scheduled meeting of the Saltville Town Council held at the Town Hall on September 11, 2018 at 6:45 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. respectively

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

**Mayor:**C. Todd Young

**Staff:** Brian Martin, Town Manager  
Trent Crewe, Town Attorney  
R.B. Henderson, Public Works Director  
Jake Frye, Police Officer  
Tammy Carter, Front Office Clerk  
Steve Johnson, Clerk/Treasurer

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

The Mayor opened the Public Hearing and stated its purpose was to give notice of the town's intent to apply for USDA Rural Development funds to assist with completion of a Preliminary Engineering Report to assess and prioritize needed improvements to the town's water and wastewater systems.

Nobody had any comments, so the Mayor closed the Public Hearing after five minutes.

### **REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING**

Councilman Holley made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2018 regularly scheduled meeting, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

### **Citizens' Time**

**Ellie Branham** spoke on behalf of the Saltville – Rich Valley Lions Club. She stated that the Lions Club wanted to hang flower baskets from the electrical poles starting next spring as had been done in years past. The flowers would be supplied by the Haynes Greenhouse, and she asked

that the town crew be the ones to water the flowers. The Council was in agreement this would be a good idea.

**Preston Frye** represented the Saltville Little League. He mentioned that the Little League gets \$500 from the town as part of the town's budget and asked that another \$500 be given to offset the cost of paying for their charter, insurance, and any remaining bills from this past season.

Councilman Morris made the motion to give an extra \$500 to Little League and have it come from the Town Manager's discretionary account. Councilman Robinson seconded, and all were in favor.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

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

### **Old Business**

#### **1. Employee leave time**

Councilman Morris said he had met with the department heads and the Mayor regarding the town's current leave time policy for employees. As it now stands, newly hired employees have to wait for a year before they are eligible for leave time. The consensus was to change that time period to ninety days. It was also recommended to establish a new policy that states an employee will not collect any payment for unused leave time if that employee resigns from the town before working an entire year.

Councilman Morris made the motion to adopt these two modifications to the town's personnel policy, and Councilman Robinson seconded. During the discussion, Councilman Holley said the Council had worked hard over the years to get the personnel policy in place to where people will not get checks in the thousands of dollars when they leave, so he saw no reason to change the policy now. Councilman Morris replied that the only change was the time frame where an employee would be eligible for leave. Also, the town will save some money if an employee leaves before working a year since this new requirement says the town will not pay them for any remaining leave time in that instance. Moreover, there is no accrual system in place to accumulate days so there will be none of those big checks.

The motion carried 4-1 with Councilman Holley casting the dissenting vote.

## **2. Paleontology agreement**

Councilman Orr reminded the Council they were given the rough draft last month of the town's agreement with ETSU and the Museum of the Middle Appalachians regarding the archeological digs in the Wellfields. He asked them if they had any comments. Councilman Morris said that the only complaint he had ever heard was that there was too much vehicular traffic on the Barbrov Trail when the digs take place. He asked if that could be reduced. Councilman Orr replied that there could be a line added to the agreement that states vehicles could park on the Salt Trail behind the VFW when the digs were being undertaken.

This topic was tabled until the October meeting.

## **3. Playground equipment at the Little League ballfields**

Councilman Morris stated that he went to the recent Little League Board of Directors meeting, and the playground equipment was discussed. The current Board tabled this discussion themselves until the new Board takes over at the September 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. The Mayor mentioned that the Council had already voted to give this equipment to Little League, so they couldn't just take it back. Preston Frye, who spoke during Citizens' Time, said the new Board's first official meeting will be on the first Sunday in October, and this will be one of the items discussed.

## **4. Speed bumps**

Town Manager Brian Martin said he had estimates for installing rubberized speed bumps on Fifth Avenue as was discussed at the August meeting. They were \$120.00 apiece. For around \$200, the town could install asphalt speed bumps. The trouble with the asphalt speed bumps is that they hinder snow removal while the rubberized ones could be removed during snow removal.

Councilman Surber made the motion to install the rubberized speed bumps, and Councilman Morris seconded. All were in favor.

## **New Business**

### **1. Certified inspectors for town projects**

Mr. Martin informed the Council that any project the town undertakes that involves a VDOT right-of-way or using VDOT standards will involve a VDOT certified inspector. This will greatly reduce the town's liability issues. Councilman Orr asked if this requirement will be included in any future Request for Proposals the town sends out, and Mr. Martin replied yes.

### **2. Truck parking time limit**

Councilman Surber mentioned that tractor trailers have been parking across from Greg's where it has just been asphalted. Someone pulling out from the parking lot at Rite-Aid can't see around these trucks creating a safety hazard. These big trucks are also parking on the lots at the ball fields which is not good for the asphalt there. Councilman Morris said he thinks that someone local is the one who is parking adjacent to Rite-Aid, and audience member Bobby Dye confirmed this by saying that this man parks there on the weekends.

The Mayor asked Councilman Surber what his recommendation was regarding the parking at the ballfields, and Councilman Surber said he would to see no big truck parking there at all. He put this in the form of a motion, and Councilman Morris seconded. Before the vote, the Mayor asked Town Attorney Trent Crewe if the town could attach a fine to this, and Mr. Crewe said yes. Councilman Surber modified his motion to add a \$150 fine for a first offense and a \$250 fine for each subsequent offense. Councilman Morris still seconded, and all were in favor.

Regarding the local citizen parking near Rite-Aid, Councilman Morris suggested having Acting Chief Puckett speak to this gentleman first before any official action is taken. This topic was tabled until the October meeting.

### **3. EMS, Inc. report**

Gary Johnson spoke on the following:

- 1) The weekly meetings are continuing and very productive.
- 2) The August report to DEQ has been sent, and it included one overflow.
- 3) The installation of the sludge hopper cover should begin shortly.
- 4) The Health Department reports regarding the water system have been submitted.

5) The water accountability totals continue to improve, and the work is ongoing with the town's engineers regarding the upcoming water projects.

6) The lead and copper sample analyses have been completed and submitted to the Health Department.

7) The town has contracts with a company for maintenance of the town's water tank in Edgewood and the 107 pump station tank. The Health Department recommends that tanks are inspected every five years. Mr. Johnson wants to make sure that work the company is doing is in line with Health Department standards.

Mr. Martin said that the town has ten tanks, and he did not know why the town entered into an agreement back in 2003 to only inspect two tanks. It needs to be set up so that two different tanks are inspected each year since the Health Department recommends that each one be inspected every five years. This way, all of the tanks will get inspected in the proper time frame. Moreover, Mr. Martin stated that the town gets a report saying this company has done the work, but he did not know why they were doing the work on town property without a town employee present. He recommends putting together a Request for Proposal (RFP) for future tank inspections. Councilman Morris made a motion to advertise this RFP, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

8) Since all of the water meters in town are getting replaced as part of the upcoming water project, Mr. Johnson recommends that a formal policy is developed regarding the placement of water meters, pressure reducer valves, and water cut off / cut on procedures.

#### **4. USDA grant funding resolution**

Mr. Martin presented the Council with a resolution regarding the Public Hearing held before the regular meeting. This resolution states that the town will accept a \$22,500 search grant from the USDA to help undertake a study performed by the Lane Group and Crossroads to help rebuild the systems and prioritize how they are rebuilt.

Councilman Morris made a motion to have the Mayor sign the resolution, and Councilman Orr seconded. All were in favor.

#### **5. Labor Day recap**

Councilman Robinson, the Chair of the Special Events Committee, first thanked the Saltville Preservation Alliance for decorating the store fronts of the downtown businesses for the Labor Day weekend. Much planning and work was done by the town crew to make sure all the setup was done as it needed to be, and the committee itself had to meet deadlines and make sure contract specifications were being met. There were good crowds and music for all who

attended. Councilman Robinson specifically pointed out the contributions of Mr. Henderson and Jacky Colston in making sure everything ran smoothly. He thanked all who came out for the music and vendors and said he expected the weekend to be even better next year. Councilmen Surber and Morris thanked Councilman Robinson, the committee, and the town crew for their hard work and said the Commons Area never looked better.

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

Mr. Martin spoke on the following:

- 1) The sewer project is pretty much complete except for the paperwork, and the water project will probably start in the spring.
- 2) He will sign the documents on September 19<sup>th</sup> for the \$141,000 Health Department grant, and the application has been filled out for the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission Water/Wastewater \$100,000 grant.
- 3) The Salt Trail and the intersection improvement project funded by VDOT are having the environmental review and procurement documents put together.
- 4) The first Comprehensive Plan meeting will take place in a couple of weeks.
- 5) The junk cars at the old Town Shop have been removed and sold for scrap per the Council's vote.
- 6) Municode has delivered the first draft of the Town Code to be reviewed by Mr. Crewe.
- 7) The annual Town and Country dinner sponsored by the Smyth County Chamber of Commerce will be held on September 18<sup>th</sup>.
- 8) The staff has completed the Census Bureau request for 2018 medical expenditures.
- 9) The Southwest Virginia Community Health Systems is having a free Health Fair on September 19<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
- 10) Two sycamore trees at the end of Panther Lane may need to be trimmed or, eventually, cut entirely.

## **Police Chief's Report**

Officer Jake Frye, filling in for Acting Chief Puckett, spoke on the following:

- 1) The new Explorer will soon be delivered.
- 2) No major incidents happened at the Reenactment or during the Labor Day festival. All officers worked both events.
- 3) Overtime will go back to normal this fall and winter.
- 4) There have been complaints about loud mufflers and speeding on Allison Gap Road. Officer Frye himself has written summonses for this, and the midnight shift will continue extra patrols.
- 5) Officer Chris Hogston was involved in a vehicle stop, foot pursuit, and resisting arrest case, but is okay. After felony warrants were obtained, a local male was apprehended and taken to the Southwest Virginia Regional Jail.
- 6) Acting Chief Puckett and First Sergeant Lynch are in Roanoke for the Chiefs' Conference.
- 7) Regarding the hurricane and the effects that may be felt in the area, he met with the Smyth County Sheriff's Office about people getting trapped by flood waters and setting up shelters for people to stay.

## **Maintenance Report**

Public Works Director R.B. Henderson spoke on the following:

- 1) He thanked the members of the town crew and the inmate supervisors for their work during Labor Day.
- 2) The bed is rusted and the transmission is pretty much shot on the town's trash truck. The town will look into getting a dumpster for the trash. Councilman Morris asked about the cost for a used trash truck, and Mr. Henderson said it would vary.
- 3) One of the pumps at the Route 91 pump station was recently refurbished, but is starting to sound bad.
- 4) The old backhoe at the wastewater plant hasn't been used in years, so it will be taken to the surplus sale on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

5) He asked for the Council's recommendations regarding the generator maintenance quotes saying he did not think the generators had been maintained in the last five years. The Mayor suggested going with the least expensive quote since they were basically the same. Mr. Martin also recommended going with a twelve month opt out clause if the contractor chosen is not performing up to standard. Councilman Morris said he would like to see Mr. Martin and Mr. Henderson choose what they thought was best and have the contract include the twelve month opt out clause. He put that in the form of a motion, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

6) He would like to see a mobile generator at well sites and the wastewater plant. Councilman Orr suggested doing an RFP for these generators based on the recommendations of the engineers, and the Mayor said an electrician could wire them all the same so they could be used at all places.

7) Councilman Morris asked about the status of the salt shed, and Mr. Henderson replied that they laid out the corners and the area will be cleared out by Dusty Ratcliff, who got the bid last month.

### **Fire Department Report**

Fire Department member Gerald Arnold spoke on the following:

- 1) Two fires in the county occurred last month in addition to four vehicle accidents.
- 2) There were three assists with the Rescue Squad in the county.
- 3) Four miscellaneous calls were answered with two each in the town and county.

### **Closed Session**

Councilman Morris made a motion to enter Closed Session in accordance with the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711(A)(5) for a discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry; 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 Morris 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 Orr seconded, and the roll call vote was 5-0 in favor.

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