**MINUTES**

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**MONDAY, JANUARY 8, 2024**

**TOWN HALL-6:00 P.M.**

Council Members Present: Others Present:

Kenneth Holbrook Chad Monday-Town Manager

Bob Salyers Wendee Jones-Treasurer

Jeff Langley Travis Jessee-Street Dept. Superintendent

Harry Kelly Travis Stanley-Sewer Dept.

Josh Sawyers Earl Carter-Public Works Director

Matt Jordan Jonathan Johnson-Police Chief

Bill Wallace Julie Hensley-Attorney

Bob Harrison-IDA Chairman

Kathy Stewart-Main Street Manager

Mayor Holbrook called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and established a quorum was present.

Approval of Agenda

Councilman Jordan asked to add the VML outdoor recreation/fitness grant as agenda item number 2 and Safety Building Funding Options as agenda item number 3. Mayor Holbrook asked to add porta-potties as agenda item number 4. Councilman Kelly asked to add the Possible Rename of Bush Drive as agenda item number 5. A motion to approve the amended agenda was made by Councilman Jordan. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kelly. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Request/Presentation

Bo Lee addressed the council concerning the issue of jake brakes as a possible noise violation. He told the council the noises occur around 4:30-5:00 am. He said if the trucks were doing the correct speed, the jake brake would not be needed. Councilman Jordan asked Chief Johnson if this violated the noise ordinance. Chief Johnson inquired whether a formal noise ordinance or just one addressing noisy animals was passed at last year’s meeting. Councilman Sawyers said the one passed in July addressed animals only, but the original ordinance could be used to enforce this. Councilman Kelly suggested using signs to enforce the noise ordinance for the trucks pending VDOT approval.

Clarence Peters, Wise County Board of Supervisors, introduced himself to the council. He told the council to feel free to contact him with any questions or needs. Mr. Peters said he spent quite a bit of time in St. Paul while campaigning and saw quite a few good things going on.

Tim Boardwine, Wise County Board of Supervisors, said having Mr. Peters representing St. Paul was a benefit to the town.

Council Comments

Councilman Wallace welcomed the three new council members. He said he looked forward to working with them.

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Councilman Jordan welcomed the three new council members. He expressed his thanks to the town employees and the Fire Department for their work during the Christmas season and the Christmas Eve Santa toy distribution.

Councilman Sawyers thanked the Police Department and Fire Department for a successful Christmas Eve Santa toy distribution.

Councilman Kelly thanked the two Board of Supervisors members for addressing the council. He also thanked all those in attendance saying that you must attend the meetings to know what is going on in town. He expressed his thanks to the town residents for being re-elected to the council.

Councilman Langley expressed his thanks to the town residents for being elected to the council seat. He said although he is not originally from St. Paul, it feels like it is his home now.

Councilman Salyers said he is looking forward to seeing the town move forward.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Councilman Sawyers. The motion was seconded by Councilman Langley. The motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda Items

Councilman Sawyers asked if an architectural design was ready for the Lyric Theater roof. Town Manager Monday said he is waiting on Quesenberry’s to get back to him with a quote.

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda items was made by Councilman Jordan. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kelly. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Automobiles Driving on Sidewalks

Councilman Wallace said the survey and design are not completed. Councilman Wallace made a motion to table the item. The motion was seconded by Councilman Langley. The motion passed unanimously.

Capital Improvement Plan

Town Manager Monday said a Capital Improvement Plan workshop was held last Friday. There will be one final workshop before the next council meeting. A motion to table the item was made by Councilman Kelly. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wallace. The motion passed unanimously.

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Pool Elevator/Pool Lighting and Security

Town Manager Monday met with Jay Gouge, the town I.T. manager to discuss lighting and security cameras. Mr. Gouge is currently awaiting pricing for the lighting and security. A motion to table the item was made by Councilman Jordan. The motion was seconded by Councilman Langley. The motion passed unanimously.

Tennis Courts

Town Manager Monday met with Chris England who did the pickleball and tennis courts in Big Stone Gap and Bob Gibson who was involved in the Castlewood tennis court renovations to get ideas and suggestions for companies to get estimates. Councilman Jordan asked Town Manager Monday if this item could be removed from Old Business since it may coincide with the VML Grant agenda item. Town Manager Monday said the VML grant was geared more toward the outdoor fitness circuit. Councilman Jordan made a motion to table the item. The motion was seconded by Councilman Langley. The motion passed unanimously.

Audit

Town Manager Monda said he spoke with Tamara Greear with Rodefer and Moss. Ms. Greear now has two more available team members to work on the town’s FY 2021-2022 audit. Ms. Greear intends to present at the February 2024 council meeting. A motion to table the item was made by Councilman Jordan. The motion was seconded by Councilman Sawyers. The motion passed unanimously.

Dog Park

Town Manager Monday said he can potentially get grant funding from the Department of Forestry to put the dog park at the cul-de-sac on Riverside Drive. A motion to authorize the Town Manager to pursue grant opportunities for the dog park was made by Councilman Jordan. Councilman Sawyers seconded the motion. Under discussion, Councilman Kelly expressed his concern about a dog park being a huge insurance liability for the town. Councilman Kelly said he does not believe this should be pursued at this time and asked that it be removed from the agenda to be brought back up at a later date. Councilman Jordan asked if the town was locked in with the location. Town Manager said no, but the grant does require site-ready plans. Councilman Sawyers asked if other locations could be looked at. Town Manager Monday said other locations can be looked at. Councilman Kelly asked Town Manager Monday who would be responsible for the maintenance of the dog park with Town Manager Monday responding that the town street department would be responsible. Councilman Kelly said this would increase the workload since it is a seven-day-a-week job. Councilman Kelly asked who would be responsible if there were dog fights or human injuries. Town Manager Monday said the town would be liable. Mayor Holbrook called for a vote on the motion. Salyers-Aye; Langley-Aye; Kelly-Nay; Sawyers-Aye; Jordan-Aye; Wallace-Nay. The motion passed 4-2.

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New Business

Town Sign Quotes

Town Manager Monday said he asked Appalachian Graphics for a quote on the signs for Oxbow Lake and the park. No quote has been presented from them yet. He said Councilman Kelly also gave him information about another company to get a quote from. Councilman Sawyers asked if Speed Pro was asked for a quote. Town Manager Monday said he reached out to them with no response. A motion to table the item was made by Councilman Sawyers. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kelly. The motion passed unanimously.

VML Grant

Town Manager Monday said VML shared information about a grant opportunity for outdoor fitness. He recommends sending this information to the recreation committee to see if this is something the town would like to pursue. A motion to send the VML grant information to the recreation committee was made by Councilman Sawyers. The motion was seconded by Councilman Langley. The motion passed unanimously.

Multi-Use Public Safety Building

Councilman Jordan informed the council of a possible grant to help fund a multi-use public safety building. Councilman Jordan made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to pursue the grant opportunity for a multi-use public safety building. The motion was seconded by Councilman Sawyers. Under discussion, Councilman Wallace asked how much the grant was for. Town Manager Monday said the grant was a 75/25 match grant with interest rates between 3.75-4.5 percent with a loan term of up to four years. Councilman Wallace asked how much money the town would be spending. Town Manager Monday said he estimates the cost to be about $3.5 million. Councilman Jordan made an amended motion to allow Town Manager Monday to pursue the multi-use public safety building with the architect's plans to include the Police Department. Councilman Sawyers seconded the amended motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Porta-Potty Placement

Mayor Holbrook said he has been approached by citizens asking to place temporary porta-potties at Oxbow Lake and the park since the bathrooms must remain winterized until the last seasonal freeze. He asked for a motion to authorize the porta-potties.

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A motion to place two porta-potties at the park and Oxbow Lake was made by Councilman Jordan. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kelly. Under discussion, Councilman Jordan said he liked Councilman Kelly’s idea to update the bathrooms to mimic the new park bathrooms with heat. Councilman Sawyers asked if there were any regulations to be followed with porta-potty placement near the river. Councilman Kelly suggested putting the porta-potties at the end of the park on the pavement. Mayor Holbrook called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Possible Rename of Bush Drive

Councilman Kelly said he was approached by the IDA Chairman, Bob Harrison, about possibly changing the name of Bush Drive. He asked Mr. Harrison to address the council. Mr. Harrison said this would allow the town to rename the street without using a company name. Councilman Sawyers asked if the sewer plant would be affected since it was on Bush Drive. Travis Stanley said the permits would need to be changed if the physical address to the sewer plant changed. Public Works Director Earl Carter reminded the council that we would be working with Russell County on the name change since that section of town is in Russell County. Mayor Holbrook said the council needs to consider a public hearing for a street name change on Bush Drive. A motion to table the item was made by Councilman Kelly. Councilman Sawyers said we specifically need to reach out to McDonald's to make sure they are not affected negatively by a street name change. The motion was seconded by Councilman Jordan. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to enter into closed session with Chief Johnson in attendance to discuss Personnel under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), Legal Matters under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(7), and Contracts under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(30) was made by Councilman Sawyers. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wallace. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Sawyers made a motion to enter into open session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kelly. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Sawyers made a motion to certify that only personnel under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), Legal Matters under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(7), and Contracts under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(30) were discussed in closed session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Kelly. A roll call vote was taken. Salyers-Aye; Langley-Aye; Kelly-Aye; Sawyers-Aye; Jordan-Aye; Wallace-Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Sawyers made a motion to approve the hire of Ethan Nunley as a police officer at the rate of $15.00 per hour and send him to the police academy. The motion was seconded by Councilman Langley. The motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Sawyers made a motion to extend the initial contract with Debora Baca to run through December 31, 2023, and going forward issue a new contract for $35 per hour up to 28 hours a month on a five-month basis. The motion was seconded by Councilman Jordan. The motion passed unanimously.

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A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Kelly. The motion was seconded by Councilman Jordan. The motion passed unanimously.

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Mayor

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Town Clerk