TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP, VIRGINIA REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE Via GO TO MEETING Platform BIG STONE GAP, VA

July 14, 2020

6:30 PM

*As a result of the State of Emergency declared by Virginia Governor Ralph Northam on March 12, 2020, by Wise County Virginia Executive Michael Hatfield on March 19, 2020, and by the Council of the Town of Big Stone Gap Virginia effective March 20, 2020, the public meeting on July 14, 2020, at 6:30 pm, is to be conducted electronically as authorized by Resolution 08-2020 adopted on April 7, 2020.

*This Electronic Meeting was conducted via the GO TO MEETING platform and was made available to Council Members, Town Staff, and the public by conference call. All votes called for were roll call votes.

AGENDA ITEM 1

Call to Order and Roll Call

Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order.

Those Present: Hon. Gary Johnson, Mayor

Hon. Nancy Bailey, Vice-Mayor Hon. Robert Bloomer, Councilman Hon. Kent Gilley, Councilman Hon. Tyler Hughes, Councilman Hon. Crystal Lyke, Councilwoman Hon. Aaron McKinney, Councilman

Staff Present: Mr. Stephen Lawson, Town Manager

Ms. Amanda L. Hawkins, Town Clerk/Treasurer

Mr. Charles Bledsoe, Town Attorney Mr. Steve Hamm, Chief of Police

AGENDA ITEM 2

INVOCATION by Mayor Gary Johnson.

AGENDA ITEM 3

ADOPT OR AMEND THE AGENDA

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Gilley, that the Agenda for the Regular Council Meeting of July 14, 2020 be adopted as presented. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney

Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: None

AGENDA ITEM 4 COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

No comments.

AGENDA ITEM 5

GENERAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. Approval of minutes of Council Workshop (Electronic) of June 2, 2020. Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
- b. Approval of minutes of Regular Council Meeting of June 9, 2020. Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
- c. Approval of minutes of Special Council Meeting (Electronic) of June 15, 2020. Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
- d. Departmental Reports for the month of June, 2020.
 - Recommended Action: Received and filed.
- e. Treasurer's Reports for the month of May, 2020.

Recommended Action: Received and filed.

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Bloomer, that the General Order of Business be approved as presented. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney

Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: None

AGENDA ITEM 6

TOWN ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. McElroy said there is nothing new to add to his report from last week, but he and Jon Broskey would be glad to answer any questions. Mrs. Bailey said she went by the Greenbelt Phase V bridge site and everything looks good.

AGENDA ITEM 7

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

a. Resolution 12-2020 – SMART Scale Applications

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this resolution to submit applications for funding from VDOT's SMART Scale Program.

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Bloomer, that Council approve Resolution 12-2020 being a resolution of support for the submission of applications for funding for two Highway Improvement Projects along Gilley Avenue E via the Virginia Department of Transportation's SMART Scale Program. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney

Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: None

b. Resolution 13-2020 – Section 125 Plan

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this resolution to adopt the Section 125 Plan.

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Bloomer, that Council approve Resolution 13-2020 being a resolution adopting the Section 125 Premium Only Plan for the plan year ending June 30, 2021. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney

Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: None

c. Budget Amendment – Additional Revenues/Expenses for FY2019-2020

Mr. Lawson asked Council to set a public hearing to hear citizens' comments on this amendment to the FY2019-2020 Budget.

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Bloomer, that Council authorize a public hearing for August 4, 2020 at 6:30 pm for the purpose of amending the FY2020 budget adding revenues and expenses to the General Fund in the amount of \$419,913, to the Water Fund in the amount of \$237,150, and to the Sewer Fund in the amount of \$7,300, for a grand total of \$664,363. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney

Naves: None Abstain: None Absent: None

d. Rt. 610 & Shelby Avenue Phase II Change Order

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve a change order for the Rt. 610 & Shelby Avenue Phase II Project.

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Gilley, that Council authorize the Town Manager to sign and execute an expected change order for the St. Rt. 610 & Shelby Ave Phase II Waterline Replacement Project to facilitate closeout of the project. Motion resulted as follows:

Roll Call Vote)

Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney

Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: None

e. COVID-19 Update

Mr. Lawson said that Wise County has 47 cases with 13 hospitalizations and 2 deaths, the City of Norton has 4 cases with 2 hospitalizations, Lee County has 22 cases with 1 hospitalization, and Dickenson County has 6 cases with no hospitalizations. Due to the increase in COVID-19 cases, the Wise County Administrative Offices are closed as of today. The constitutional offices (Treasurer's Office and the Commonwealth Attorney's Office) in the courthouse remain open.

Mr. Lawson said that there is certainly an increase in cases which most people attribute to people going on vacations. Ballad Health has asked the mayors of all town/counties that Ballad serves to mandate wearing masks. Mr. Lawson noted that the Governor has already issued an order for everyone in public places to wear a mask. The Virginia Department of Health will be responsible for the enforcement of wearing a mask. The Police Department would be involved only if business owners call to have someone who is refusing to wear a mask removed from their premises, which would come under the trespassing law.

Mayor Johnson said that Council cannot supersede the Governor's order and is not sure of the need for the Town to issue an order when the Governor has already done so. Town Attorney Charles Bledsoe said that whatever rules the Town puts into effect must be applied uniformly and without discrimination to any party or person. Mayor Johnson stated that we will enforce any laws that are already in effect that we have jurisdiction over but said that there is no need to implement any further rules.

f. Projects Update

Mr. Lawson said he met with Roger Mullins about Peanut Football. He advised him to wait to see what the schools decide to do with their fall sports programs. He said that at this time the Town is not ready to give him permission to use the fields with the spread of the virus in our area on the rise.

Mr. Lawson said that the Job Corp students will return in September but will not be able to leave their campus until later in the year. He said he will meet with the Gap Partnership to see if we can find a group to finish laying the block for the multi-purpose building at Bullitt Park and get it under roof before winter.

He said that paving has resumed and all road cuts will be repaired by the end of next week.

He said we have a check that will go out this week to the Department of Environmental Quality for \$25,000 for an Intake Withdrawal Permit Renewal.

Mr. Lawson said that we had a water leak in Strawberry Patch and on the old Rt. 23 this week. The leak was in the line that supplies water to Lee County and was preventing the tank from filling, resulting in low water pressure for people in that area.

Mayor Johnson asked for a discussion about crosswalk rules. Mr. Bledsoe said that Virginia has always required drivers to yield to pedestrians, but a new law that went into effect July 1st states that once a pedestrian is in a crosswalk traffic from both directions is required to stop until the pedestrian gets out of the crosswalk. Failure to do so is now classified as a misdemeanor. In the past, cars would slow down until the pedestrian got across the road. Now all traffic must come to a stop until the road is clear. But he noted that unless a pedestrian is already in the crosswalk, they do not have the right-of-way over vehicles. He emphasized that pedestrians and drivers are equally responsible to act in a safe manner. Mayor Johnson asked if signs are required at crosswalks. Mr. Bledsoe said he doesn't see a need to do that. Mr. Lawson added that putting signs on East 5th Street or Wood Avenue would not help because of the line-of-sight issue.

AGENDA ITEM 8
COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports.

AGENDA ITEM 9

COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Mr. Hughes said to keep everyone in their prayers, especially the first responders and those that are ill. He said the decision was made to not host the Home Craft Days this year, but hopefully they will be on track next year to have their 50th year celebration.

Mr. Bloomer asked Stephen Lawson if he has a quote for the concrete at the Disc Golf park. Mr. Lawson said he does not have a quote yet. Mr. Bloomer asked if Steve Hamm has signs for the Dog Park yet. Chief Hamm said he does not and will talk to Mr. Lawson about that.

Mr. Gilley encouraged everyone to stay safe.

Ms. Lyke said to stay safe and encouraged everyone to pull together during this difficult time.

Mrs. Bailey asked everyone to stay safe and thanked all the Town employees, especially the Police Department and Public Works.

Mr. McKinney echoed everyone's wishes to stay safe and healthy.

Mayor Johnson said he and Kent Gilley have been involved with the handicapped fishing docks. He said they have not forgotten the issue and suggested they form a committee with Bobby, Kent, and Aaron to look at all the possibilities. He said we can't do any concrete work right now but we will try to do something with gravel to make the dock we have a little better. He said he is proud of how the Town is coming together and thanked employees for overlapping and helping one another. He said Mr. Lawson has done a wonderful job with Big Cherry and asked him to talk about the latest developments.

Mr. Lawson said that John Browning, who has property on the Scott County side of Big Cherry, has offered to help with the road maintenance since he has equipment already up there. He will use his equipment for road and ditch maintenance and charge us a nominal fee. Mr. Lawson said that this situation is advantageous to us because it's low-cost maintenance and it saves us from having to haul heavy equipment up the mountain to do road work.

AGENDA ITEM 10 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bloomer, that the meeting be adjourned. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney

Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: None

Meeting adjourned at 7:08 pm.

Minutes Recorded & Transcribed by Amanda L. Hawkins–Town Clerk/Treasurer