

**TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP, VIRGINIA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

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

August 11, 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 Bloomer, that the Agenda for the Regular Council Meeting of August 11, 2020 be amended to replace item 7f ServLine Utilities Protection with COVID-19 and Infectious Disease Prevention Plan. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

**Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney
Nays: 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 July 7, 2020.
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.**
- b. **Approval of minutes of Regular Council Meeting (Electronic) of July 14, 2020.
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.**
- c. **Departmental Reports for the month of July, 2020.
Recommended Action: Received and filed.**

Motion by Bloomer, seconded by Bailey, 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

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

**AGENDA ITEM 6
TOWN ENGINEER'S REPORT****Rt. 610 and Shelby Avenue Phase II Waterline Replacement Project**

Mr. Broskey said the contractor has completed the concrete ditch on the Shelby Avenue Phase II portion of this project, and we are waiting on approval from VDOT to close this project out.

Vice-Mayor Bailey asked when the Greenbelt Phase V Project will begin. Mr. Broskey said we have submitted the 90% plans and are waiting on VDOT's comments, which should come within 30 to 90 days of receiving the plans. He said we will move as quickly as possible once we get the go ahead to begin construction.

**AGENDA ITEM 7
TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT****a. Budget Amendment – Additional Revenues/Expenses for FY2019-2020**

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this amendment to add revenue and expenses to the FY2019-20 Budget.

Motion by Bloomer, seconded by Bailey, that Council approve a budget amendment to the FY2019-20 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

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

b. Joint Public Hearing – Special Use Permit Request – Savida Health

Mr. Lawson asked Council to schedule a joint public hearing for Council and the Planning Commission to hear public comments on a request from Savida Health for a Special Use Permit to establish a drug treatment outpatient facility at Cloverleaf Square.

Motion by Hughes, seconded by Bloomer, that Council authorize a Joint Public Hearing with the Planning Commission on September 1, 2020 at 6:30 pm to receive public comment regarding the issuance of a Special Use Permit to Savida Health to operate an outpatient drug and alcohol treatment facility in Cloverleaf Square. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

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

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

c. Budget Amendment – HIDTA Revenue for FY2020-21

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve the amendment to this year's budget.

Motion by Bloomer, seconded by Bailey, that Council approve a budget amendment to the FY20-21 budget adding \$3,496 in revenues and expenses to the General Fund for an equipment purchase. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

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

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

d. Resolution 14-2020 – Reappoint Greg Kress to the Planning Commission

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this resolution to reappoint Gregg Kress to the Planning Commission.

Motion by Bloomer, seconded by Bailey, that Council approve Resolution 14-2020 being a resolution reappointing Greg Kress to the Big Stone Gap Planning Commission for a four year term which will expire on July 31, 2024. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

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

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

e. Resolution 15-2020 – Reappoint Lorenzo Rodriguez to the Planning Commission

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this resolution to reappoint Lorenzo Rodriguez to the Planning Commission.

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Lyke, that Council approve Resolution 15-2020 being a resolution reappointing Lorenzo Rodriguez to the Big Stone Gap Planning Commission for a four year term which will expire on July 31, 2024. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

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

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

f. COVID-19 and Infectious Disease Prevention Plan

Mr. Lawson said the Virginia Department of Labor sent a draft of this policy to the counties, which in turn has asked towns within their boundaries to all adopt a similar policy. He said that we have been working with Wise County and neighboring towns to develop a cohesive policy.

Vice-Mayor Bailey commented that the policy states that employees should wear a mask where feasible. She noted that we are under a mandate from the Governor to wear a mask at all times. She asked whether the police department is still required to transport mental health patients and, if so, do they wear masks.

Mr. Lawson replied that we do not require workers who are in a ditch repairing waterlines where there is limited air circulation to wear masks. Nor do employees who are working in open air and distancing six feet. However, employees who are in a vehicle together are required to wear masks. He said that the Virginia Health Department states that exposure to COVID-19 occurs when a person comes within six feet of another person who is experiencing symptoms for 15 minutes or more.

Mr. Lawson said that police transports are still taking place but masks are worn when anyone is in the vehicle with them. He added that our first responders are informed if they are going to an address of a confirmed case.

Motion by Bloomer, seconded by Hughes, that Council adopt the COVID-19 and Infectious Disease Prevention Plan policy as required by the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health Program and Virginia Department of Labor and Industry COVID-19 Standard 16VAC 25-2020 issued on July 27, 2020. Motion resulted as follows:

(Roll Call Vote)

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

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

g. Projects & COVID-19 Update

Mr. Lawson said that the COVID-19 virus cases in Wise County have been steadily climbing recently with the county reporting 168 cases, 20 hospitalizations, and 3 deaths, which results in 442 cases for every 100,000 in population; the City of Norton reports 21 cases, 2 hospitalizations, and 0 deaths, which results in 529 cases per 100,000 in population; Lee County has 125 cases, 9 hospitalizations, 1 death, which results in 531 per 100,000 in population; and Scott County is up to 111 cases, 11 hospitalizations, and 3 deaths, which results in 535 per 100,000 in population. The population ratio shows that the virus is spread pretty evenly throughout our area.

Mr. Lawson commented that businesses appear to be tightening restrictions on customers wearing masks to enter their stores. He said that the Wise County Health Department has recommended that all town offices not hold meetings that are not absolutely necessary. He said that we have decided to close the Town offices again to the public and conduct business by appointment only. Employees will wear masks when escorting customers in to the building, and certain departments will enter through certain doors to minimize contact. The gym will be open for reservations only because the rentals are usually for family gatherings. We have also decided to suspend credit/debit card fees for customers using that method to pay their bills while the lobby is closed. During the first closing we absorbed the loss of about \$2,500 in fees since we still have to pay Municipality for their services. Mr. Lawson asked Council if they were in agreement with these steps. Several members expressed their agreement.

Mr. Lawson said that the Public Works bucket truck is back up and running and we should be caught up with picking up brush by the end of this week or the beginning of next week.

He said we should be ready to sign the contract on the Mutual Building Co-Work Space by Thursday. If anyone wants to meet with him at the Mutual Building to see the plans they need to let him know.

He said they are still trying to set up a joint Planning Commission and Council tour to the Savida Health clinic in Abingdon, so if anyone is interested in going please let him know.

Mr. Lawson said that they are continuing to work on the Big Cherry roads after recent rains left them in pretty rough shape. He said the Mayor is going to go up tomorrow and report back on ditches that need to be cleaned. Mayor Johnson said that if any other Council members could go with them he would appreciate the company.

AGENDA ITEM 8 COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports.

AGENDA ITEM 9 COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Mrs. Bailey thanked everyone for their hard work during these hard times.

Mr. Bloomer, Mr. Gilley, and Mr. Hughes all encouraged everyone to stay safe.

Mr. Hughes added that this is a scary time but Southwest Virginians always pull together and we will get through this.

Ms. Lyke asked for prayers for her family who is mourning the loss of her cousin who died from cancer.

Mr. McKinney encouraged everyone to stay healthy.

Mayor Johnson said he visited the Hallmark shop today and talked with a lady who is making items from buttons from the old Collingsworth store. She asked why the Town doesn't update our facebook page and do more to help the downtown businesses advertise. He said that she has toughed it out during these tough times and would like some help in getting the word out to shop and eat local. He said that Council members need to visit our merchants to see what they need and want to do. He thanked all our first responders.

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

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

Meeting adjourned at 7:09 pm.

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