



## **AGENDA ITEM 5**

### **COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

#### **Rev. Saundra Jones, Big Stone Gap, VA**

Rev. Jones thanked Council and Town Manager Stephen Lawson for paving the roadway into Oakview Cemetery as well as granting permission for Eagle Scout Grant Wilson to make benches to put in the cemetery.

She said she is here to request that the name Oakview Cemetery be changed to honor Joseph Garfield Long, Sr. She said Mr. Long was the caretaker of the cemetery from 1953 to 1972. During that time, he and his sons dug graves with picks and shovels. She said she is aware they will need to get letters of approval from families buried at Oakview but feels sure they can do that. She said Council can find several stories about the Longs and Oakview on her facebook page “Saundra Jones”.

#### **Lisa Davis, Art Teacher, Union High School**

Ms. Davis said she would like to get the mural discussion going again for continued funding of the Art Department at Union High School (UHS). Mr. Lawson said we still have money in the budget for art projects. He asked when she would like to do a project. She said either semester (January or August) would be fine.

Councilwoman Lyke mentioned the possibility of something like a memory “wall” for pets. She said it is a great fund-raiser.

Councilman Hughes said it has been mentioned several times to construct some type of project to honor UHS State Champions. He asked the best time to do this type of project. Ms. Davis said late spring or early summer would be best.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6**

### **GENERAL ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- a. **Approval of minutes of Regular Council Meeting of November 9, 2021.**  
**Recommended Action: Approve as presented.**
- b. **Departmental Reports for the month of November 2021.**  
**Recommended Action: Received and filed.**
- c. **Treasurer’s Reports for the month of September 2021.**  
**Recommended Action: Received and filed.**

**Motion by Lyke, seconded by Hughes, that the General Order of Business be approved as presented. Motion resulted as follows:**

**Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney**  
**Nays: None                      Abstain: None                      Absent: None**

## **AGENDA ITEM 7**

### **TOWN ENGINEER’S REPORT**

#### **Greenbelt Phase V**

Mr. Broskey said he has a conference call with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) scheduled for tomorrow and expects good results. He said we are in the home stretch to get this project out to bid.

**Big Cherry Trails**

Mr. Broskey said they are working to get the environmental portion of the Big Cherry Trails project completed and are hoping for approval within the next month. He said we expect to advertise for bids in the spring. He said this project is for about a mile-long walking trail.

**AGENDA ITEM 8****TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT****a. Resolution 19-2021 – 2022 National Fitness Campaign**

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this resolution affirming the Town's intent to match the \$30,000 grant awarded and to collaborate with the National Fitness Campaign to implement a free to the public outdoor fitness court at Bullitt Park.

**Motion by Hughes, seconded by Bloomer, that Council approve Resolution 19-2021 being a resolution affirming the Town's intent to match the \$30,000 grant awarded and to collaborate with the National Fitness Campaign to implement a free to the public outdoor fitness court at Bullitt Park. Motion resulted as follows:**

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

**Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None**

**b. Resolution 20-2021 – Re-appoint David Gibson to Planning Commission**

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this resolution re-appointing David Gibson to the Big Stone Gap Planning Commission for a four year term to expire on January 16, 2026.

**Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bailey, that Council approve Resolution 20-2021 being a resolution re-appointing David Gibson to the Big Stone Gap Planning Commission for a four year term to expire on January 16, 2026. Motion resulted as follows:**

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

**Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None**

**c. Proclamation – Gigi's Clothing & More**

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this proclamation welcoming Karen Duff, owner of Gigi's Clothing & More, LLC located at 322 Cloverleaf Square, E-2 in Big Stone Gap.

**Motion by Hughes, seconded by Lyke, that Council approve a proclamation welcoming Karen Duff, owner of Gigi's Clothing & More, LLC located at 322 Cloverleaf Square, E-2 in Big Stone Gap. Motion resulted as follows:**

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

**Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None**

**d. Proclamation – Delta Dream, Inc.**

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this proclamation welcoming Andrew Botts, owner of Delta Dream, Inc. located at 20 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street South in Big Stone Gap.

**Motion by Lyke, seconded by Hughes, that Council approve a proclamation welcoming Andrew Botts, owner of Delta Dream, Inc. located at 20 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street South in Big Stone Gap. Motion resulted as follows:**

**Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney**  
**Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None**

**e. Resolution 21-2021 – ARPA Premium Pay and Stipend**

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this resolution approving premium pay for all Town employees and a one-time stipend to Fire Department Volunteers.

**Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bloomer, that Council approve Resolution 21-2021 being a resolution stating two intended uses of a portion of the first tranche of the allotment of Local Fiscal Recovery Funds through the American Rescue Plan Act for premium pay to all Town employees and a one-time stipend to Fire Department Volunteers. Motion resulted as follows:**

**Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney**  
**Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None**

**f. Projects Update****Employees**

Mr. Lawson said the Town's annual Employee Lunch was today. He said about \$3,500 worth of gift cards were awarded to employees.

**Grand Opening**

Mr. Lawson said the grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony for Delta Dream will be held on Friday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, at 4:00 PM.

Gigi's Grand Opening will be held tomorrow at 1:00 PM at Cloverleaf Square.

**Christmas Events**

The Southwest Virginia Museum will be holding night viewings of their Festival of Trees on December 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

A 5K Lighting-up-the-Greenbelt Run will be held on December 18<sup>th</sup> on the Greenbelt.

The Visitor Center will be the launching point for Greenbelt-in-Lights rides on December 18<sup>th</sup>. They will also host Pictures With Santa and the Christmas Market during the evening. Greenbelt-in-Lights will also offer rides on the evenings of December 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Groups may still schedule special tours by calling the Visitor Center.

The June Tolliver House will host an Open House on the evening of December 18<sup>th</sup>.

Town Offices will be closed on December 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> for the Christmas Holidays. Garbage service will run as usual on Thursday and Friday but will not run on Saturday, Dec. 25<sup>th</sup>. This is the one day a year that garbage service does not operate.

### **Planning Commission Vacancy**

Mr. Lawson said he has not received any suggestions from Council for candidates to fill Wendy Dillon's seat on the Big Stone Gap Planning Commission. He asked that they give this some serious thought and let him know of any potential candidates.

### **Armory Building**

Mr. Lawson said the Town and Ballad Health will be announcing the sale of the Armory Building to the Lonesome Pine Hospital at a press conference tomorrow at 10 am at the Armory. He said this is a big event for our area.

### **Police Department**

Mr. Lawson said he and Chief Hamm interviewed four candidates for police officers today with seven scheduled for tomorrow. He said we used the Indeed website this time around and garnered a good group of applicants. Chief Hamm set up a trial run as a preliminary measure to the Academy entrance test, and all the interviewees passed the run. Mr. Lawson noted we are currently four officers down with a fifth out with an injury, and one upcoming retirement, Detective Hollinger, at the end of January.

## **AGENDA ITEM 9**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No reports.

## **AGENDA ITEM 10**

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

Councilman Hughes said he is sorry he missed the Town's Employee Lunch today but he appreciates all the employees and is encouraged to hear about the police officer applicants. He said he has been approached by the Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards (SAMS) here in Town with questions about Old Dominion Power's Special Use Permit request for a high-power line. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Councilwoman Lyke thanked everyone for coming tonight, and thanked Lisa Davis for all her volunteer work in Town. She wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Vice-Mayor Bailey said she was pleased to attend the Employee Lunch today and enjoyed talking with the employees. She thanked Sandra, Alberta, and Lisa for coming tonight.

Mayor Johnson said he enjoyed the Employee Lunch today and the wonderful food. He said he appreciated the dedication today honoring Michael Chandler. He said he has received letters from different parts of the state identifying with the Town's loss from towns that have lost an officer themselves. He said he appreciates the employees and enjoyed the time spent with them. He said he is sorry to see Detective Hollinger retire. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a great New Year.

**AGENDA ITEM 11**

**CLOSED SESSION in accordance with VA Code 2.2-3711(A)(1) for the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidate(s) for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body, specifically for the purpose of addressing issues or concerns with Police Department staffing, salaries, retention, and safety.**

**Motion by Hughes, seconded by Lyke, that Council enter a Closed Session in accordance with VA Code 2.2-3711(A)(1) for the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidate(s) for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body, specifically for the purpose of addressing issues or concerns with Police Department staffing, salaries, retention, and safety. Motion resulted as follows:**

**Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney  
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None**

*(Motion to Reconvene into Open Session / Certification of Closed Meeting)*

**Motion by Bailey, seconded by Lyke, that Council re-convene into Open Session. Motion resulted as follows:**

**Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney  
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None**

**Ms. Hawkins read the Certification of Closed Meeting. Roll call vote resulted as follows:**

**Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney  
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None**

**AGENDA ITEM 12  
ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke, McKinney  
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.**

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