

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

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
505 E 5TH STREET S
BIG STONE GAP, VA**

January 10, 2023

6:30 PM

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 Pastor Timothy Robinson of Trinity United Methodist Church.

AGENDA ITEM 3

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA ITEM 4

ADOPT OR AMEND THE AGENDA

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bloomer, that the Agenda for the Regular Council Meeting of January 10, 2023 be adopted as presented. Motion resulted as follows:

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

AGENDA ITEM 5

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

No comments.

AGENDA ITEM 6

GENERAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. **Approval of minutes of Council Workshop of December 6, 2022.**
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
- b. **Approval of minutes of Regular Council Meeting of December 13, 2022.**
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
- c. **Departmental Reports for the month of December 2022.**
Recommended Action: Received and filed.
- d. **Treasurer’s Reports for the month of December 2022.**
Recommended Action: Received and filed.

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bailey, 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

In Mr. Broskey’s absence, Mr. Lawson said he will give updates during his Town Manager’s Report.

AGENDA ITEM 8

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

- a. **Proclamation – Hard Rock Equipment dba Hard Rock Outdoor**
Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this proclamation to recognize Hard Rock Outdoor as a new business in Town.

Motion by Lyke, seconded by McKinney, that Council approve a proclamation welcoming Hard Rock Equipment DBA Hard Rock Outdoors and owner Gregory D. Glass located at 1522 3rd Avenue East. Motion resulted as follows:

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

- b. **Resolution 01-2023 – Terrace Park Alley**
Mr. Lawson presented this resolution to Council that states the Town’s intention to abandon and vacate an alley adjacent to Terrace Avenue. He cautioned that the earliest we can hold a public hearing on this would be January 20th, so Council has the option of scheduling a special meeting to approve this or wait and have the public hearing at the February Council meeting. Council agreed to have the public hearing at the February Workshop.

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Gilley, that Council authorize a public hearing on February 7, 2023 for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding vacating a section of Terrace Avenue on Tax Parcel #021245 that was transferred to The Friends of Southwest Virginia Museum Historical State Park Inc by Ordinance 15-2017 (Tract #1) and Ordinance 09-2022 (Tract#2). Motion resulted as follows:

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

c. Ordinance 02-2023 – Revision of Peddlers License

Mr. Lawson asked Council to table this item at this time while it is being reviewed.

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Gilley, that Council table the discussion of Ordinance 02-2023 – Revision of Peddlers License until further research is done. Motion resulted as follows:

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

d. Projects Update

Water Tanks

Mr. Lawson said he, Gary Hampton, and John Broskey will meet with a different tank repair company to get a quote to repair and maintain our water tanks to compare with Veolia's proposal.

Greenbelt Phase V Project

Mr. Lawson said they are trying to get a date confirmed with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the contractor for the Greenbelt Phase V Project Pre-Construction Conference.

Resident Income Surveys

Mr. Lawson said they were back in East Stone Gap today to do more resident income surveys for a possible project to upgrade water/sewer services there. He said there are 67 residential homes (with 2-3 vacant houses) in the proposed project area. He said they got six surveys filled out today bringing their total to 22 completed and turned in. He noted that about 25 residents were not home or did not answer the door. He said they still have 45 surveys to be completed and while they don't need all 67 to proceed with the proposed project, they need at least three quarters of them done.

Scott County Telephone Cooperative

Mr. Lawson said that SCTC has received a grant from the state to provide better service to rural areas and are in the process of moving our way. He said we are a big part of the upgrades by being a connection point for outlying areas. He said a great place for them to put

up a station would be in Italy Bottom – there is land beside the substation and would be close enough for them to hook up to electricity. He said they would need a building about 20' x 45' for a generator. He said they are looking at another piece of property closer to the four-lane with the ultimate goal of providing better internet service in Powell Valley. He said progress is taking a while because when they petition a utility company to use their poles they can only petition for 300 poles at a time. He said we are also considering providing an easement across Big Cherry to install poles across that way. In return, if we have places we need electricity they will help us by erecting poles that can be used for electricity.

Jim Palmer Book on Fire Department History

Mr. Lawson said that the Fire Department has sold \$1,400 worth of books so far. He said if Council wants one we will get it for them. He said we will have copies for sale at the Visitor Center as well.

Job Vacancies

Mr. Lawson said we advertised today for an Administrative Assistant and an Account Clerk. The Administrative Assistant position will pay between \$30,000 and \$35,000, and the Account Clerk position will pay between \$27,000 and \$32,000. He said we are interviewing for both positions with the thought that more restructuring could make work flow better.

Paymerang Automation

Mr. Lawson said Paymerang invoice automation is in place and we hope to run a batch of invoices by the end of January. He noted the practice batch has worked perfectly. Ms. Hawkins said it took a while to get their configuration to work with our software company. He noted that once everything is in place, this process will cut down work time on payables from a day and a half to about a 30 minute time frame.

New Bill Processing Service

Mr. Lawson said the new bill processing service will hopefully be ready to go by the end of January. The new company enables us to now offer E-Billing by emailing bills to customers who sign up. We will also have this option for Real Estate and Person Property Tax billing as well.

Financial Disclosures

Mr. Lawson noted that packets with the annual Financial Disclosure forms are on Council's desks – please complete and return to Amanda as soon as possible.

Forward Wise County

Mr. Lawson said Forward Wise County will begin this year's session on February 28th and will run for 11 weeks. He noted the Town usually has a couple of employees attend. He said if Council is interested in doing this please let him know.

Bullitt Park Ball Schedule

Mr. Lawson said we have worked out the Bullitt Park Schedule for next year. There will be 24 softball tournaments available and open for registration. He said the tournament organizer is Adam Bishop, and all parties are in agreement with our schedule. The Little

League Opening Day will be March 25th. Mr. Lawson said at Council's February meeting we will discuss any fees for use of the fields and lights, or a portion of the gate fees.

AGENDA ITEM 9 COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports.

AGENDA ITEM 10 COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Councilman Hughes thanked employees for all they do. He said he met with Stephen Lawson & Ked Meade about the Public Art Committee and they have scheduled a meeting in early February to address some possible projects.

Councilwoman Lyke said Council's Regular Meeting is scheduled for February 14th, Valentine's Day. She said the John Fox Jr House is having a valentine's event that evening that she is attending and asked if we could reschedule our meeting so they don't conflict. Ms. Hawkins said it would be possible to cancel the Workshop on February 7th and move the Regular Meeting to that date.

Motion by Hughes, seconded by Lyke, that the Council Workshop scheduled for February 7, 2023 be cancelled and the Regular Council Meeting scheduled for February 14, 2023 be moved to February 7, 2023 at 6:30 pm. Motion resulted as follows:

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

Vice-Mayor Bailey commented that she attended Forward Wise County several years ago and encouraged everyone to participate

Mayor Johnson thanked everyone for their hard work.

AGENDA ITEM 11 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bailey, 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 7:04 pm.

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