

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

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
505 E 5<sup>TH</sup> STREET S  
BIG STONE GAP, VA**

**March 1, 2022**

**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. Crystal Lyke, Councilwoman  
                                  Hon. Robert Bloomer, Councilman  
                                  Hon. Kent Gilley, Councilman  
                                  Hon. Tyler Hughes, Councilman  
                                  Hon. Aaron McKinney, Councilman

Staff Present:           Mr. Stephen Lawson, Town Manager  
                                  Ms. Amanda Hawkins, Town Clerk/Treasurer  
                                  Mr. Charles Bledsoe, Town Attorney  
                                  Mr. Steve Hamm, Chief of Police

**AGENDA ITEM 2**

**REVIEW OF MINUTES**

**Review of draft of minutes of the Council Workshop of February 1, 2022, and the Regular Council Meeting of February 8, 2022.**

**AGENDA ITEM 3**

**JOSHUA DELP – SWVA DISC GOLF**

Mr. Delp said there are approximately 40-60 disc golf courses from Knoxville to Asheville but only two in our region. He said this Disc Golf Course will be a very unique course in that it is 100% in the woods with 18 holes, and it will complement the 9-hole course at Fraley Park. He said it is sure to draw people to Big Stone Gap. He commented he has played in tournaments in Knoxville that had close to 500 people in attendance. He said he invited the owners of a Disc Golf Shop in Colonial Heights to play the course and they named it as one of their top three courses and are interested in sponsoring a tournament.

Mr. Delp said the course is located near the Archery Range Pool. The UDISC app will show the course once it is named and added. The course has a warm-up basket to get you started. He said they have ten T-pads almost done, with nine left to complete. Mr. Lawson said the Town has contributed the lumber, materials, and labor for the course. He said we have yet to come up with a name the course.

Mr. Delp said a big plus to the course is it's close proximity to food establishments in Town. He commented that he has played on really good courses that he had to pack his lunch for because they were so far from food and restaurants.

Mr. Delp said he would also like to see the course used by the local colleges – Liberty University, ETSU, Emory & Henry, and Middleton College all have Disc Golf Teams that play in collegiate tournaments. Some colleges even have small scholarships for students who play the sport.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4 TOWN ENGINEER'S REPORT Greenbelt Phase V**

Mr. Broskey said they have been working hard on updating the cost estimate of the Greenbelt Phase V bridge which comes in \$230,000 over budget. He said they spoke to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and they are working on trying to get the additional funds from their program. If that doesn't work, the second option will be to propose that the Town and VDOT both contribute a portion of the cost. The last option is for the Town to try to come up with the funds ourselves.

#### **System Wide Water Loss Project**

Mr. Broskey said they are still working on easements for the System Wide Water Loss Project.

#### **Big Cherry Trails**

Mr. Broskey said they sent the environmental assessment on the Big Cherry Trails Project to the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and submitted their first report and payment application.

#### **Frog Level Park Drainage**

Mr. Lawson asked when the surveyor will be able to shoot the levels at Frog Level for drainage. Mr. Broskey said they will probably get to do that next week.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5 TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

##### **a. Proclamation – Sweet Winks**

Mr. Lawson said this proclamation is to welcome Sweet Winks to Big Stone Gap. He said they have already have their Grand Opening.

##### **b. Projects Update**

#### **Ballad Health Updates**

Mr. Lawson asked Mitch Kennedy with Ballad Health to update Council on the plans and renovations for Ballad Health's medical complex at Lonesome Pine Hospital.

Mr. Kennedy said Ballad has made a lot of changes in the area - one of which is opening the Lee County Hospital which has created some ripple effects for our area as well. He said they are working with architects for the new renovations that will take place at our Lonesome Pine

Hospital. The budget for the whole project will be \$9.3 million, which will include upgrades to the Hospital and the Armory renovations.

Hospital Renovations and Updates include:

- Second floor will house their Acuity Adjusted Unit which will provide all stages of patient care, from admission to discharge
- Second floor will gain a new CT scanner at a cost of about \$1,000,000.
- Enhancement of their spine rehab and pain management services
- ER renovation to improve patient flow and visibility while expanding triage space
- Wound care services updates
- Cardio-pulmonary services updates
- Radiology updates and MRI services
- Full-service laboratory updates
- Sleep studies

Armory Building Renovations will include:

- Sports Medicine Program complete with physical therapy and wellness services
- Primary Care offices
- Behavioral Health services
- After-hours clinic that will be open evenings and weekends

Mr. Kennedy said they will have an answer in the next 60 days as to whether they will renovate the existing Armory building or demolish it and construct a new building. He said the ER renovations will go to bid in May with work scheduled to begin in early fall.

### **Bullitt Park Multi-Purpose Building**

Mr. Lawson said the electrical work was installed today. They still need the concession room equipment installed and roll-up doors put up to complete the building. This will allow the Union Little League to meet for their opening games on April 9th. We are waiting on fence pricing information to come in.

### **Business Challenge**

Mr. Lawson said there were seven winners in all for the Building Business in Big Stone Gap Challenge the Town sponsored:

Best Pitch:	Far Fetched Grooming - \$1,000
Best Business Plan:	Far Fetched Grooming - \$1,000
First Place winners (2):	Far Fetched Grooming - \$15,000 Moving Forward Physical Therapy-\$15,000
Second Place Winner:	Big Stone Gap Pottery -\$10,000
Third Place Winners (4):	Moondog - \$5,000 Delta Dream -\$5,000 Sweet Winks -\$5,000 Mac Music - \$5,000

**Bullitt Park – Home Field House**

Mr. Lawson said that during the winter David Long and his crew demolished the old locker room interior. The plan is to line walls with a faux treatment about four feet high that will not be easily damaged or require a lot of maintenance. The rest of the walls will be decorated with live action scenes from past sports events. He said that Mid-Mountain Heating & Cooling donated three Trane HVAC units for the building.

**Blue Highway Fest**

Mr. Lawson said all the bands have been secured for the Blue Highway Festival, and about 60 vendors have signed up for the event. He said we will change the ticket sale booths from the track gates to the stone gates at the Bullitt Park entrances. He said additional parking has been secured throughout Town and the County and bussing contracts have been obtained for transporting people to and from Bullitt Park. He said the Forestry Department at Cave Springs is assisting with RV spots and Spearhead Trails will help out there as well. He noted the Wise County Tourism association is asking all the towns for any RV spots they may have available for that weekend.

**Parks & Recreation Activity**

Mr. Lawson said we are working on a mitigation plan for the drainage issues at Frog Level Park. He mentioned this is the last week of Rec League basketball for the Parks & Rec department.

We are purchasing a metal building for Parks & Rec to use for storage. The building will be placed at the back of Town Hall behind the Police Department. This will replace the Armory site as a storage area for Parks & Rec items.

Mr. Lawson said the Visitor Center will host a Mardi Gras party in the basement at Curklin's on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

**AGENDA ITEM 6****COMMITTEE REPORTS****a. Planning Commission**

Councilman Gilley said the Planning Commission met last night. He said they were given a packet with responses from Old Dominion Power (ODP), who is seeking a Special Use Permit to install a high-voltage power line across Town. He said they will meet again on Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, to get more responses. He said it is a tough decision to make. Commission members had concerns about the effects on the appearance of the lines and discussed making some restrictions.

Mayor Johnson said he is concerned about the lines cutting across Town.

Mr. Lawson requested that the Planning Commission ask if ODP is serious about the alternate routes.

**AGENDA ITEM 7****COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

Councilman Hughes thanked everyone for their support during his loss of a family member. He congratulated all the Business Challenge participants and winners. He thanked Josh Delp for his work on the Disc Golf course and presentation as well as the Town staff.

Vice-Mayor Bailey said it was great to be a part of the Business Challenge and agreed with Councilman Hughes. She thanked the Planning Commission for the work they are doing. She said Ked Meade is doing a great job.

Mayor Johnson said he always enjoys welcoming a new business to Town. He said Ked Meade and Stephen Lawson are doing a great job. He noted the Greenbelt looks good and the water/sewer crews do a great job as well.

**AGENDA ITEM 8  
ADJOURNMENT**

**Meeting adjourned 8:03 pm.**

---

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