

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

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

April 5, 2022

6:30 PM

AGENDA ITEM 1

Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice-Mayor Bailey called the meeting to order.

Those Present: Hon. Nancy Bailey, Vice-Mayor
 Hon. Robert Bloomer, Councilman
 Hon. Tyler Hughes, Councilman
 Hon. Aaron McKinney, Councilman

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

Those Absent: Hon. Gary Johnson, Mayor
 Hon. Kent Gilley, Councilman
 Hon. Crystal Lyke, Councilwoman
 Mr. Charles Bledsoe, Town Attorney

AGENDA ITEM 2

REVIEW OF MINUTES

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

AGENDA ITEM 3

TOWN ENGINEER'S REPORT

Greenbelt Phase V

Mr. Broskey said he submitted our request to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for additional funding for the Greenbelt Phase V Project and we are awaiting a response.

Big Cherry Trails

Mr. Broskey said we received our categorical exclusion on the environmental for the Big Cherry Trails Project and we are moving forward on the plan design.

Project Funding

Mr. Broskey said they made a site visit to the Wastewater Treatment Plant and are moving on to the Water Treatment Plant to look at different projects that may be needed in the hopes of

receiving some funding that may become available from the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

AGENDA ITEM 4 TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

a. Proclamation – BSG Nutrition

Mr. Lawson said this proclamation is to welcome BSG Nutrition as a new business in Town.

b. Proclamation – Moving Forward Physical Therapy, Inc.

Mr. Lawson said this proclamation is to welcome Moving Forward Physical Therapy as a new business in Town.

c. Designating April as Child Abuse Awareness Month

Mr. Lawson said this proclamation is to designate April as Child Abuse Awareness Month. Vice-Mayor Bailey added that the proclamation will be presented at the Pinwheel Planting ceremony at the Mountain Empire Older Citizens (MEOC) at 10:30 am Friday followed by a luncheon for everyone who works with abused children.

d. Resolution 05-2022 – Approval of Funding Application

Mr. Lawson said this resolution is to approve the submission of an application to the Virginia Tobacco Commission (VTC) for \$300,000, which is part of matching funds for a project at Big Cherry for which we have applied for a bigger grant. He noted if we do not get the bigger grant we will withdraw our application for this grant until a better opportunity arises.

e. Resolution 06-2022 – Blanket VDOT Project Signatory Authority

Mr. Lawson said this resolution is to authorize the Town Manager to sign any necessary documents for ongoing projects with VDOT that need to be renewed periodically.

f. Boundary Adjustment – 101 Car Location

Mr. Lawson said the first boundary adjustment to the Southwest Virginia Museum for the 101 Car was not enough to encompass the decking and handicapped ramp so we need to grant them 25 feet more. He said we will also help them to get water and sewer hooked up.

g. Projects Update

Little League

Mr. Lawson said the Little League has cancelled the opening-day parade scheduled for Saturday due to forecasted rain. The games scheduled for Saturday have been moved to Sunday, and they will look at having a parade later in the year.

Bullitt Park Multi-Purpose Building

Mr. Lawson said the concession stand in the new building will be ready by Sunday's Little League games. He noted that the gas-powered water heater didn't arrive in time so we installed an electric water heater until it gets here, at which time we will move the electric water heater to the

new storage building behind Town hall constructed to house the equipment and supplies stored at the Armory Building.

DHCD Visitors

Mr. Lawson said we hosted 12 members from the Department of Housing and Community Development to tour past projects and possible future projects. He said it went very well and DHCD will be sending more people in the future to follow up.

Police Department

Mr. Lawson said Chief Hamm has hired a new police officer to send to the Police Academy. He said they are waiting on references to come in on one other prospect. In the meantime, Mark Harmon has returned as a part-time officer.

Mr. Lawson said the new Tasers have arrived, and we will use Wise County officers to train our officers on proper use of the equipment. Chief Hamm said we will send one of our officers to instructor training classes in June.

Budget

Mr. Lawson said he and Amanda Hawkins are working hard on the new budget. He said he hoped to end up with a budget between \$200,000-350,000 more than it was last year.

Wise County Chamber of Commerce Gala

Mr. Lawson said the annual gala is this weekend on April 9th at 5:30 pm and we have four tickets left. The theme is *Murder on the Orient Express*.

Cemetery Name Change – Oakview

Mr. Lawson noted that Charles Bledsoe was absent but he read Mr. Bledsoe's letter. In summary, Mr. Bledsoe stated he found no obstacles or statutory prohibitions in changing the name of Oakview Cemetery if Council wishes to do so.

Building Official

Mr. Lawson announced that our Building Official, Matthew Bright, has accepted a job with the State Fire Marshall's office. He will be working in the Lenowisco District, and while he cannot do fire inspections for the Town any longer, we are working on a hybrid plan to contract with him to continue to work on Planning and Zoning. Building permits will be done through the County as most other towns do.

Job Openings

Mr. Lawson said we have three job openings we will be advertising – Human Resources Clerk, Meter Reader, and Patrolman.

Reassessment

Mr. Lawson said Council will need to hold a public hearing to discuss the revenue increase resulting from the reassessment of real property by the Wise County Commissioner of the Revenue. Our anticipated levy will generate a greater than 1% increase compared to the 2021 generated revenue. Virginia state code requires Council to hold a public hearing on the increase if Council does not wish to lower the tax rate to only generate the allowable 1% increase in revenue.

Water Leak

Mr. Lawson said we had a leak at the Wallens Ridge Prison water tank. Mid-Atlantic, who had originally installed the tank, repaired it. He noted that both the Wallens Ridge Tank and the Hamner Hollow Tank need refurbishing. The estimated cost of the Wallens Ridge Tank rehab is between \$25,000-28,000. He said we don't have an estimate of the Hamner Hollow Tank but it's expected to be around \$30,000-32,000.

**AGENDA ITEM 5
COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No reports.

**AGENDA ITEM 6
COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

Councilman Hughes said thanks to all employees. He said he would like to see a motion next week for the name change at Oakview Cemetery.

Vice-Mayor Bailey said she enjoyed the concert at MECC. She said she attended the grand re-opening for the BSG Pottery Shop and it was very nice.

**AGENDA ITEM 7
ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned 6:51 pm.

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