

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

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

May 10, 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. Robert Bloomer, Councilman
 Hon. Kent Gilley, Councilman
 Hon. Crystal Lyke, Councilwoman
 Hon. Aaron McKinney, Councilman *arrived at 6:35 pm

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

Those Absent: Hon. Tyler Hughes, Councilman
 Mr. Charles Bledsoe, Town Attorney

AGENDA ITEM 2

INVOCATION by Reverend Josh Tompkins of West End Baptist Church.

AGENDA ITEM 3

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA ITEM 4

ADOPT OR AMEND THE AGENDA

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Gilley, that the Agenda for the Regular Council Meeting of May 10, 2022 be adopted as presented. Motion resulted as follows:

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

**AGENDA ITEM 5
COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

No comments.

AGENDA ITEM 6**SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA MUSEUM – Burke Greear, Historic Preservation Specialist**

Mr. Greear said the Gathering in the Gap will be on May 28th. There will be three stages - the Main Stage for Dave Eggar and Crystal Gayle in the evening, the Acoustic Arbor Stage will go from noon to 4 pm, and the Beer and Wine Garden will have performances going from 12:30 to 5 pm. The Competition Stage will be from noon to 4:30 pm. He said the museum will be open all day from 10-5 pm. They will have shuttle service from Bullitt Park to the ticket gate, the Beer & Wine Garden, and the children's area. Food vendors will be open from noon until the end of the day, craft vendors will be there from noon to 6 pm. Mr. Greear gave tickets and flyers to the Council members.

AGENDA ITEM 7**VA DEPT OF HEALTH - Dr. David Dawson Award Presentation to Water Plant**

Dr. Dawson brought greetings from our district engineer Rex Peppler who gave a good report of the Water Treatment Plant's performance each year.

Dr. Dawson said he was here to present an award from the Office of Drinking Water to the Water Treatment Plant (WTP). This award was initiated by the EPA to encourage waterworks to do better than just the regulations. Unfortunately the program did not generate a lot of interest, so in 2006 Virginia created its own initiative.

Dr. Dawson said the awards encompass about 130 Water Treatment Plants throughout our region. The purpose of a WTP is to treat water and turn it into safe, disinfected water. There are three main components to qualify for the award: 1) is filtration – a 0.3 turbidity rate is required by the state but a 0.1 turbidity is required to qualify of the award, 2) back wash filters, and 3) sedimentation in the basin. Dr. Dawson noted that our WTP is one of two plants that has water coming into the plant on its own (from Big Cherry) without having to be pumped from a river or other source. He explained that meeting the first component of 0.1 turbidity will garner a WTP a Bronze award. Meeting that requirement plus the 2nd component will earn a Silver award, and meeting all three requirements wins the WTP a Gold award.

Dr. Dawson presented Utilities Director Gary Hampton and the Town of Big Stone Gap a Gold award for meeting all three components of the program.

AGENDA ITEM 8**GENERAL ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- a. **Approval of minutes of Council Workshop of April 5, 2022.**
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
- b. **Approval of minutes of Regular Council Meeting of April 12, 2022.**
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
- c. **Departmental Reports for the month of April 2022.**
Recommended Action: Received and filed.

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

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

**AGENDA ITEM 9
TOWN ENGINEER’S REPORT**

In Mr. Broskey’s absence, Mr. Lawson said we submitted two grants to the Virginia Department of Health last Friday for large projects on both the water and sewer systems.

**AGENDA ITEM 10
TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT**

a. Ordinance 08-2022 – Oakview Cemetery Name Change
Mr. Lawson said Council must vote to change the name of Oakview Cemetery to the Joseph Garfield Long, Sr. Memorial Cemetery.

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Bloomer, that Council adopt Ordinance 08-2022 being an ordinance to change the name of the Oakview Cemetery to the Joseph Garfield Long, Sr. Memorial Cemetery. Motion resulted as follows:

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

b. Ordinance 09-2022 – Transfer of Property
Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this ordinance authorizing the transfer of 3,425 square feet of property to the Southwest Virginia Museum for improvements to the 101 Car.

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bailey, that Council adopt Ordinance 09-2022 being an ordinance transferring 3,425 square feet, more or less, from Tax Parcel No. 021245, to the Friends of Southwest Virginia Museum Historical State Park, Inc. for the purpose of improvements to the current site of the 101 Railcar. Motion resulted as follows:

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

c. Jordan Barnette Boulevard
Mr. Lawson presented Council with the proposal to name the alley way that begins at Clinton Ave E, continuing along the back side of the Freedom Chevrolet property as Jordan Barnette Boulevard.

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Gilley, that Council authorize the naming of the alley way that begins at Clinton Ave E, continuing along the back side of the Freedom Chevrolet property as Jordan Barnette Boulevard. Motion resulted as follows:

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

d. Mac Music

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this proclamation welcoming Mac Music as a new business in Town.

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Gilley, that Council approve a proclamation welcoming Madison Denhardt, owner of Mac Music located at 215 Wood Avenue East in Big Stone Gap. Motion resulted as follows:

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

e. Proclamation – Big Stone Gap Golf

Mr. Lawson asked Council to approve this proclamation welcoming Big Stone Gap Golf as a new business in Town.

Motion by Bailey, seconded by Lyke, that Council approve a proclamation welcoming Phillip and Debra Ramsey, owners of Big Stone Gap Golf located at 706 Cherokee Avenue West in Big Stone Gap. Motion resulted as follows:

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

f. Projects Update

Auditor

Mr. Lawson said we have received only one response to our request for proposal for audit services – Rodefer Moss, who is our current auditor. He noted that we have always had a good relationship with them and they are up-to-date on the changes we have made to our accounting system and our agreement with Paymerang to process our accounts payables. He said we will contact them to move forward with that agreement.

Blue Highway Fest

Mr. Lawson said we received a \$30,000 grant from the Virginia Tourism Commission’s Market Leverage Program and Regional Marketing Program. He said they distributed over \$2.7 million throughout Virginia with a goal of having over 125,000 more room stays than before within an 18 month period. Mr. Lawson said we certainly anticipate being able to contribute to that with this festival. He said our grant will be spent directly on High Road

Agency's marketing campaign for the festival. He said he will sign the sound and stage contract tonight, which alone is more than \$30,000.

Bullitt Park

Mr. Lawson said we have taken down the old Little League concession stand, which is where main power comes in to the park, and will lay conduit underground to run across the road and toward the cabin field. He said we will also get a cost estimate to see if it's cheaper to run power from that meter location around the exterior of the park or have two new meters dropped at each stone gate to run power from. He said we will need power for vendors around the perimeter of the field, and we will also install LED lights so people can see to get around inside the park after dark.

Mr. Lawson said the black fencing that is around the ball fields will continue along the edge of the track and make an L-shape connection to the new building. On the playground side it will also end in an L-shape at the building. Each side will have a gate for access. Also on the playground side we will take some grass out and enlarge the playground to include a merry-go-round and swings.

He said we will have a 12 ft. gate at the west end of the field to allow a tractor-trailer to back into the area to set-up and deliver to the stage, which will set on the high jump area and not on the actual football field. He said we are checking on removable goal posts to use for the festival and future events. We are also in the process of getting stone columns to put along the end zone with a black chain link fence between stone columns.

Mr. Lawson said he met with the Union Athletic Director and Coach Turner for the home field renovations. He said the same rubber in the Visitor locker room will be on the floor. Four feet up the wall will be brick tile and above that the wall will be wrapped with action photos of players. The men's restroom will be for the players, and the women's restroom will be used as a storage area. The heating/air conditioning was donated by Robbie Boggs with Mid-Mountain HVAC. There are two water fountains still to be installed, and the ceiling will be burnt plywood. He said there will only be one entrance to the facility.

He said we have the angles and the lumber to erect backstops for the Little League field by using 2 x 12 boards. He said the Kiwanis Club had talked about doing new backstops but now that it won't be needed, they are talking about redoing the basketball courts at Bullitt Park. They will make a donation yearly from their events such as the Grizzly Run.

Miners Park

Mr. Lawson said we will take up the bricks up at Miners Park and put concrete down. On the outside we will use the old bricks laid in the concrete. We are also putting a black chain-link fence and a gate along the back area and will move the stairs to the back side to allow access to the stage from the alley. The other steps will stay where they are. Three trees will be removed in front of Freda Bishop's building to make room for a mural on the side of the building. The Union High School Art Department has come up with a good idea for the mural depicting a miner. Jeff Gowder has agreed to give us some big boulders that we are considering doing a love sign at the entrance to Town. One other possibility is putting the stones in Miners Park with a love sign depicting black and white mining scenes.

Eagle Scout Project

Mr. Lawson said an Eagle Scout made six new benches at the baseball fields. We may move them to allow for mowing but we are thinking of having a future Eagle Scout project to add a few more benches to the fields.

Soap Box Derby

Mr. Lawson said we had to cancel the Soap Box Derby due to weather and will try to reschedule for June.

Moving Forward Request

Moving Forward Physical Therapy asked for us to be a co-sponsor of the Tour de Crackers Neck by donating \$350. Council agreed to make the donation and be a co-sponsor of the event.

**AGENDA ITEM 11
COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No reports.

**AGENDA ITEM 12
COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

Councilman Gilley mentioned that Kid's Fishing Day is on May 28th from 8 am to noon. He said he and Gary Harris are coordinating everything. There will be a lot of prizes and food.

Vice-Mayor Bailey said that Trey Peace's dad said Trey was hired for the Economic Development position at the Town of Pulaski. He said they told him that 50% of the reason he got the job was because of his internship with us last summer. Vice-Mayor Bailey said Judy Samples complimented Parks & Recreation for helping set up tables for her.

Mayor Johnson said the new Big Stone Gap Golf course is wonderful. He also asked everyone to remember Robert Phillips of Wildcat Towing because he was in a bad accident. He thanked everyone for all their work and is thankful for everyone.

**AGENDA ITEM 13
ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

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