

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

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

**August 2, 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. Tyler Hughes, Councilman  
                              Hon. Crystal Lyke, Councilwoman  
                              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. Kent Gilley, Councilman  
                              Mr. Charles Bledsoe, Town Attorney

**AGENDA ITEM 2  
REVIEW OF MINUTES**

**Review of draft of minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of July 12, 2022.**

**AGENDA ITEM 3  
TOWN ENGINEER’S REPORT**

**Greenbelt Phase V & Big Cherry Trails**

In Mr. Broskey’s absence, Mr. Lawson said the Greenbelt Phase V and the Big Cherry Trails Projects will be bid together since the same contractor will be qualified to do both projects. They will be advertised on August 7<sup>th</sup>, with a pre-bid conference held at Town Hall on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Bids will be due on September 13<sup>th</sup> at 3 pm.

Mr. Lawson said we continue to work on the next round of water/sewer grant money.

## **AGENDA ITEM 4 TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT**

### **a. Resolution 12-2022 - SMART Scale Application**

Mr. Lawson said this resolution is to authorize the Town to apply for funds from the Virginia Department of Transportation’s SmartScale Program to put in a turn lane at the intersection of Gilley Avenue and Carter Street near Burger King. He noted this is the only SmartScale Project we have applied for.

### **b. Projects Update**

#### **Health Wagon**

Mr. Lawson said the Health Wagon will be at the Wise County Fairgrounds from August 12<sup>th</sup> to August 26<sup>th</sup>. He noted this service was formerly known as the RAM Program, and has evolved from just offering dental services to offering vision care as well.

#### **Bullitt Park**

Mr. Lawson said paving is continuing near the Multi-Purpose Building at Bullitt Park. He said the section between the track and the building came in at \$6,000 less than it would have been to use concrete, and we got it finished about four weeks before the concrete would have been available.

He said we painted all of the old fencing left in place at Bullitt Park. He noted the fencing near the end zones was strung wrong but we will not ask the fencing company to turn it around because it was a Town staff error. He said if we put pylons in later the fence will have to come down so we can correct the error then. He said we will pressure-wash the bleachers before the first home game.

He noted the goal posts are in. He said the bases will be drilled by the same crew that is installing the traffic light on Country Boy Hill, with assistance from Quesenberry’s.

#### **Paving**

Mr. Lawson said the paving in the alley between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets downtown has begun. He said the original bid recipient did not have the correct licensing in place so Mike Disney hired a company from Kingsport to do his side of the work. We decided the work would show more continuity if done by one paving company so we will contract them to do all of the paving in the connecting alley way to allow for correct drainage in that area.

#### **Blue Highway Fest**

Mr. Lawson said representatives for Blue Highway were in Town and did another walk-around of the park. One of their suggestions was to develop more RV spots. Mr. Lawson said that we talked with Gilliam’s Funeral Home about their Aviation Road property. He noted that Bobby Bloomer has some land in that area that he has agreed to let us use. He said we are looking for a place to put some “Glamping Tents” that someone has. He said they ask a higher price for the privilege of staying in the glamping tents, so we are thinking the Cabin yard would be a good place for them to set up.

Mr. Lawson said Mark Deahl has offered to provide wood bundles for people who want to use fire pits.

**New Business Openings**

Mr. Lawson said that Big Cherry Brewing Company will have a soft opening the third week in August, with a full opening somewhere between then and the first of September. He said Moon Dog may have their grand opening in mid-September. He said we will apply for our DORA license now to be ready for the festival in October.

**Flooding**

Mr. Lawson said we have had flooding in the usual areas around Town, noting that sinkholes have developed in some areas that will need to be evaluated as soon as it dries up enough to safely get into the areas. He said the Town of Pound seems to have taken the worst of the rain.

**Water Testing**

Mr. Lawson said we were alerted by a Facebook post to a home in Crackers Neck that tested positive for lead in the water. The home is over a hundred years old. He said Gary Hampton met with the home owners on Monday morning to test their water as well as the houses on either side of them. Our test of the home also showed positive for lead. Mr. Hampton then launched an area-wide testing protocol to collect samples from other houses in the area. The results of those samples will be back in about a week.

**Police Safety Kits**

Mr. Lawson said that Mayor Johnson forwarded a letter to him from a doctor – he agreed that the Town will get first-aid kits, shock blankets, etc. to equip all of our patrol cars to provide aid to victims while waiting on medical personnel to arrive.

**Business Closing**

Mr. Lawson commented on a few businesses that have closed recently. He said each business is unique and have their own reasons for closing, none of which have anything to do with the community.

**AGENDA ITEM 5  
COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Lawson said that the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for last night was cancelled due to lack of a quorum. He noted this is the third meeting that has been postponed because of not having a quorum.

**AGENDA ITEM 6  
COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

Councilwoman Lyke asked if we have the number of tickets sold for the Blue Highway Fest yet. Mr. Lawson said that around 3,000 have been sold so far.

Councilman Hughes sent thanks to all the Town employees, saying the Town looks great.

Vice-Mayor Bailey echoed Tyler's thanks to the Town and said she is glad to see the Police Department vacancies filled. Mr. Lawson commented that the new recruits seem happy to be here. Chief Hamm added that we will have two more certified officers coming within the next two weeks.

Mayor Johnson commented on an accident that killed a bear cub in his neighborhood and wanted everyone to be aware of how unafraid the bears are as they roam around in people's yards. He thanked Stephen and Amanda and all the Town crews for doing a great job.

**AGENDA ITEM 7  
ADJOURNMENT**

**Meeting adjourned 6:51 pm.**

---

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