

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

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

**December 13, 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. Tyler Hughes, Councilman  
Hon. Crystal Lyke, Councilwoman

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

Those Absent: Hon. Aaron McKinney, Councilman

**AGENDA ITEM 2  
INVOCATION by Pastor Kenneth Sturgill of the Spirit and Truth Worship Center.**

**AGENDA ITEM 3  
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**AGENDA ITEM 4  
ADOPT OR AMEND THE AGENDA  
Motion by Bailey, seconded by Lyke, that the Agenda for the Regular Council Meeting of December 13, 2022 be amended to add Resolution 16-2022 as Item 8e. Motion resulted as follows:**

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

**AGENDA ITEM 5  
COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

No comments.

**AGENDA ITEM 6  
GENERAL ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- a. **Approval of minutes of Council Workshop of November 1, 2022.  
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.**
- b. **Approval of minutes of Regular Council Meeting of November 8, 2022.  
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.**
- c. **Departmental Reports for the month of November 2022.  
Recommended Action: Received and filed.**
- d. **Treasurer's Reports for the month of November 2022.  
Recommended Action: Received and filed.**

**Motion by Hughes, seconded by Bailey, that the General Order of Business be approved as presented. Motion resulted as follows:**

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

**AGENDA ITEM 7  
TOWN ENGINEER'S REPORT**

John Broskey said they received the contracts back from the contractor and passed them on to Charles Bledsoe for his approval. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is in agreement to hold a pre-construction conference after the 1st of the year because so many people will be out of the office during the holidays.

Working on DEQ ARPA application for Cadet/Italy Bottom Sewer Project that is due Thursday.

**AGENDA ITEM 8  
TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT****a. Proclamation – Ride Rental, LLC**

Mr. Lawson presented this proclamation to Council for their approval to welcome Ride Rental LLC as a new business in Town.

**Motion by Hughes, seconded by Lyke, that Council approve a proclamation welcoming the Ride Rental LLC and owner Stacy Doyle located at 526 Wood Avenue East. Motion resulted as follows:**

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

**b. Proclamation – Kerigan’s Bridal and Formal Shop**

Mr. Lawson presented this proclamation to Council for their approval to welcome Kerigan’s Bridal and Formal Shop as a new business in Town.

**Motion by Bailey, seconded by Lyke, that Council approve a proclamation welcoming the Kerigan’s Bridal and Formal Shop and co-owners Kerigan Robinson and Gavin Harbolt located at 510 Wood Avenue East. Motion resulted as follows:**

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

**c. Resolution 15-2022 – ARPA Premium Pay Stipend FY2021-22**

Mr. Lawson presented this resolution stating the Town’s intention to use a portion of the ARPA funds for premium pay to Town employees and a one-time stipend to the Fire Department.

**Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bloomer, that Council approve Resolution 15-2022 being a resolution stating two intended uses of a portion of the Local Fiscal Recovery Funds through the American Rescue Plan Act for premium to all Town employees and a one-time stipend to Fire Department Volunteers. Motion resulted as follows:**

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

**d. Resolution – Abandon Terrace Park Alley**

Per SW VA Museum Staff – resolution is not needed.

**e. Resolution 16-2022 – Appoint Mark Lester to Planning Commission**

Mr. Lawson presented this resolution to Council for their approval to appoint Mark Lester to fulfill the unexpired term of Charlie Beverly on the Planning Commission.

**Motion by Bailey, seconded by Lyke, that Council approve a Resolution 16-2022 being a resolution appointing Mark Lester to the remaining unexpired term of Charlie Beverly, with an expiration date of October 31, 2025. Motion resulted as follows:**

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

**f. Projects Update**

**ARPA Bonus**

Mr. Lawson said employees were very thankful to the Town and Council for the ARPA bonus they received this month.

### **Big Cherry Lake**

Mr. Lawson said there was some vandalism at Big Cherry Lake. Apparently someone cut the locks and stole the batteries from the camera system. He said we are trying to get the video to look for any evidence. He said we plan to put alarms on the boxes to indicate when someone is trying to get into them.

He said he and Mr. Broskey met with representatives from the Department of Mines Minerals and Energy (DMME) regarding the AMLER grant we have been awarded. He said they asked for better maps because they couldn't determine the route we have planned. He confirmed that the Devil's Bathtub is an eligible site – the forest trails to Big Cherry – Straight Fork Loop and Century Road – are already existing trails and will be connection points. He said the site itself runs from the watershed to Devil's Bathtub. He said they discovered that any funds put into the budget for engineering can be moved later if we need to, but anything put into construction cannot be moved so he said we will update our budget to make sure we can move some items around if we need to during the project. The bad news is that we are probably looking at two years before we get any money from the grant.

### **Christmas Events**

Mr. Lawson reminded everyone of the Employee Lunch this Thursday at noon. Our annual Christmas party for employee children will follow at 6 pm that evening. All children under 15 who are members of employee's family are invited. Council may bring their children or grandchildren if they wish.

He said we had bought some shirts for Council members but when they came in they were not exactly what we wanted so we will make a few small changes and reorder them. He asked for updated shirt sizes from Council members.

He said the first night of the Greenbelt-In-Lights rides took about 152 people around the Greenbelt. The second night around 364 people rode the circuit, but an additional 70 people left because of the long lines.

Mr. Lawson showed Council the Christmas cards we are sending out this week. He asked them to give him a list of anyone they wish to add to our list.

### **Enterprise Business Loan**

Mr. Lawson said he met with the business owner that we gave an Enterprise Business Loan in 2017 to inform them the lien would not be released for the \$10,000 payment they intend to make. He told them we will not do that until the loan is fully paid. The business owner anticipated paying off the loan by mid-February. He said if they pay the principal, he will discuss with Council the possibility of waiving a portion of the interest and late fees.

### **Britalians Film Crew**

Mr. Lawson said a team from Britalians will be here on December 21<sup>st</sup> thru the 23<sup>rd</sup> to film downtown. He said we will try to do a major cleanup of the sidewalks and streets before they come.

### **“Wing Walk”**

Mr. Lawson said an idea was presented to him to incorporate with getting the DORA process going this year. It involved a “Wing Walk” that will start at Moon Dog's then move down the street to the next restaurant serving wings in the DORA area. Each person in the group will take turns paying for an order of wings at each spot, with the group filling out scorecards to

rate each restaurant according to specific criteria, such as best bar, best sauce, etc. He said it's a step toward getting the businesses to develop more ideas to get people visiting and walking around downtown.

### **Gap Partnership**

Gap Partnership has an officers meeting scheduled for tomorrow with their regular monthly meeting on Thursday at the 404 Café.

### **Council Workshop**

Mr. Lawson pointed out that the next scheduled Council Workshop will be on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, the day after New Year's Holiday. He asked if Council wished to hold the meeting as scheduled or cancel it. The consensus was to leave the Workshop scheduled as is.

### **Food Bank**

Mr. Lawson said that prior to COVID, the Food Bank was serving 185-200 people per month. During the COVID months, they only served around 70 people per month. Now that things are getting back to normal regarding the virus, the Big Stone Gap Food Bank is serving 200-215 people per month on a regular basis. However, Feeding America, which helps fund the local food banks, has cut their funding to the pre-pandemic level which has left their supplies extremely low. Mayor Johnson said he has not seen their supply shelf this low before. As a result, they have asked us to make an additional donation of \$1,000 from our discretionary fund. Mr. Lawson said he plans to reach out to Feeding America to explain the situation to try to get their funding back up to normal. He asked Council what they wish to do.

**Motion by Hughes, seconded by Lyke, that the Town make an additional one-time donation of \$1,000 to the Big Stone Gap Food Bank to help alleviate the loss of funding and enable them to restock their shelves. Motion resulted as follows:**

**Ayes: Bailey, Bloomer, Gilley, Hughes, Johnson, Lyke**

**Nays: None                      Abstain: None                      Absent: McKinney**

### **AGENDA ITEM 9**

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

No reports.

### **AGENDA ITEM 10**

#### **COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

All the Council members wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Councilman Hughes said he has received some complaints about the debris left on Valleyview Drive and mud in a resident's water lines after our crews repaired a water line there. Mayor Johnson commented that flushing the hydrant there may solve part of the problem.

Vice-Mayor Bailey said the crowd waiting in line to do the Greenbelt-In-Lights ride was huge the previous weekend, so she was one of the many who didn't wait to do the ride. Mr. Lawson reminded everyone that if they have a church group or a family group they can get a special ride around the Greenbelt if they will call the Visitor Center to schedule the ride.

Mayor Johnson said it was great watching the kids enjoy their time with Santa at the Visitor Center and said the Grinch was a big hit too. He thanked everyone involved in making it happen. He thanked Council for the donation to the Food Bank – he said it is greatly needed. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

**AGENDA ITEM 11  
ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bloomer, 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 7:03 pm.**

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