

TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP, VIRGINIA

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

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

August 8, 2023

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
Hon. Aaron McKinney, Councilman

Staff Present:

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

Those Absent: None

AGENDA ITEM 2

INVOCATION by Pastor Lonnie Brooks of the East Stone Gap Baptist Church.

AGENDA ITEM 3

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA ITEM 4

ADOPT OR AMEND THE AGENDA

Motion by Hughes, seconded by Bailey, that the Agenda for the Regular Council Meeting of July 11, 2023 be adopted as presented. Motion resulted as follows:

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

**AGENDA ITEM 5
COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

No comments.

**AGENDA ITEM 6
GENERAL ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- a. **Approval of minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of July 11, 2023.**
Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
- b. **Departmental Reports for the month of July 2023.**
Recommended Action: Received and filed.
- c. **Treasurer's Reports for the month of July 2023.**
Recommended Action: Received and filed.

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

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

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

Greenbelt Phase V Project

Mr. Broskey stated that we are waiting for the arrival of the bridge, which should be in November.

System Wide Water Loss Improvements Phase 1A, 1B, & 2

Mr. Broskey said they were working on completing the letter of condition items and are looking at the requirements that need to be met so the bid advertisement can be published.

**AGENDA ITEM 8
TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

- a. **ORDINANCE – Ordinance 02-2023 Peddlers License (Revision)**

Motion by Hughes, seconded by Bailey, that Council adopt Ordinance 02-2023 being an ordinance revision to the Peddlers' License Ordinance. Motion resulted as follows:

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

b. Water Tank Maintenance

Mr. Lawson said he, Mr. Broskey, Mr. Hampton, and Mrs. Hawkins all agree the best option is to negotiate with Southern Corrosion Inc and to enter into a contract with them once the negotiations are completed.

Motion by Bloomer, seconded by Hughes, that Council authorize Stephen Lawson, Town Manager, to enter a contract with Southern Corrosion Engineered Tank Care to establish a water tank maintenance program. Motion resulted as follows:

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

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

c. RFP – General Engineering Services

Mr. Lawson said we received two submissions for the General Engineering Services RFP that closed on June 27th. He said the scoring committee had met and reviewed the submissions and agreed to award a contract to both Mattern & Craig and The Lane Group.

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Bailey, that Council approve awarding a General Engineering Services contract to The Lane Group, Inc. and Mattern & Craig for one-year with three one-year renewal option years.

d. Interim Financing – USDA Rural Development – System Wide Water Loss Improvements Ph. 1A, 1B & 2

Mr. Lawson advised Council that we had solicited offers directly to from three local banks – Truist Bank, First Bank & Trust, and Powell Valley National Bank - for the interim financing for the System Wide Water Loss Improvements Project funded by Rural Development. Truist Bank did not submit an offer, but we did receive offers from First Bank & Trust and Powell Valley National Bank. Mr. Lawson asked Council to accept the offer from Powell Valley National Bank.

Motion by Hughes, seconded by Bloomer, that Council authorize Stephen Lawson, Town Manager, to accept the interim financing offer from Powell Valley National Bank to establish a \$1,762,000 loan at an interest rate of 4.95% with interest billed monthly for a term of 18 months for the System Wide Water Loss & Improvements Project Phase 1A, 1B, and 2.

e. Projects Update

Mr. Lawson said a support letter for Round the Mountain for an artisan endowment grant was sent out this week. Their goal is to have several pop-up art facilities around the area Round the Mountain has a presence in. Mr. Lawson said his goal is to have a designated location in downtown Big Stone Gap for the artisans.

Mr. Lawson said he and David Long met with Scott County Telephone at the property in Italy Bottom near the substation to allow a broadband switch to expand and provide more service to the area. They also discussed clearing off the surrounding area; Mr. Lawson wants to talk to the contractor about making a small path toward the river, up by the building where the parking lot will be as a part of the Greenbelt Trail.

Mr. Lawson said the Town of Big Stone Gap's server has been down for 12 days, 5 business days. Payroll did not get processed till late Friday evening, no direct deposit was available this payroll due to the system being down, paper checks were issued and distributed to employees Saturday morning. The Town provided cash to employees who needed money on Friday evening until the banks opened Saturday morning. The technicians are optimistic about having it up and running in the next couple of days.

Mr. Lawson said there will be a CDL license class with Mountain Empire Community College on August 15th from 5-9 pm. There are 4 people with their CDL learners permit eligible for the class and 1 person who is getting their learners' permit.

Mr. Lawson said we were a finalist for the ARC Power Grant for Big Cherry for water and sewer infrastructure improvements, which will get those services to the campsites. The total money estimated for the project is \$1,526,600. The breakdown of that number is \$1,221,100 from ARC, \$300,000 from the Tobacco Commission as match, and \$5,500 from Lenowisco. ARC will make an announcement later of the final award amount and recipient.

Mr. Lawson said Boyd's Construction has not returned an estimate for the road repair and ditch cleaning needed at Big Cherry. Ben McFall had done it previously but has not responded to our request for an estimate this time either.

Mr. Lawson said the completion of the basketball goals and LED board at Bullitt Park are on hold until we receive the needed hardware.

AGENDA ITEM 9 COMMITTEE REPORT

Councilman Gilley said that the Planning Commission will meet tomorrow, August 9th, at 5:30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 10 COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Councilman Bloomer asked if the pickle ball outline could be done while waiting for the basketball goals to be installed. Mr. Lawson said he would rather the painting be done all at one time. Councilman Bloomer also asked about the rubble at the Wampler apartments. Mr. Lawson said that their equipment had broken down and the Town had sent a letter, and their notice is not up yet, but he will check on it and get back to him. Council Bloomer also said that the dip in the road at the Cadet Bridge on Route 58 needs to be repaired.

Councilman Hughes said the new tourism signs look great. He also said this was the last weekend for the Trail of the Lonesome Pine and encouraged everyone to go see it. He said that Senator Warner will be hosting a community leaders discussion on rural broadband and economic development on August 22 at 3:30 pm at the Visitors Center. He thanked all the Town employees.

Vice-Mayor Bailey said her family returned for a visit and loved all the improvements that had been made to the Town. She said it made her very proud to brag about the Town.

Mayor Johnson thanked the employees for the job they have done on the server issue. He thanked the Police Department and Parks and Rec for the great work they do, working outside in the weather. The bear issue is still an ongoing problem, and he is still getting calls. He is very thankful for how the Town is moving forward.

AGENDA ITEM 11 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Gilley, 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 6:57 pm.

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