

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

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

February 04, 2025

6:30 PM

**AGENDA ITEM 1
Call to Order and Roll Call**

Mayor Johnson called the February 04, 2025 meeting to order.

Council 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 Hawkins, Town Clerk/Treasurer
 Mr. Charles Bledsoe, Town Attorney
 Mr. Matt Russell, Chief of Police

Council Absent: Hon. Aaron McKinney, Councilman

AGENDA ITEM 2 - REVIEW OF DRAFT MINUTES

Review of draft of minutes of the Council Workshop of January 9, 2025 and the Regular Council Meeting of January 9, 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 3 - TOWN ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Broskey said on the System Wide Water Improvement Project Phase IA, 2A and 2B the Contractors were back on site at Italy Bottom and it was going well. He said they were still working on the Big Cherry Environmental Assessment. Mr. Broskey said they are in the process of getting user agreements for Sunrise Village. Stephen Lawson asked about the valves that were not closing properly. Mr. Broskey said the defective valves were being replaced. Mr. Lawson asked about the two supply lines at Dollar General and Advance Auto. Mr. Broskey said they got those changes also. Mr. Lawson said when we come up beside of O'Reilly's that there is enough room and would not have to bore under the road and is there enough in the contingency funds to cover these changes. Mr. Broskey said those changes had been marked up and taken care of and there was enough in the contingency fund for these changes.

AGENDA ITEM 4 TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

a. Resolution 06-2025 – Appropriate \$700,000 ARC Funds

Mr. Lawson said this was a resolution for Council to approve appropriating \$700,000 in ARC Funds for Big Cherry Regional Recreation Enhanced Infrastructure Project.

b. Ordinance 17-2024 – Tiny Houses Ordinance

Mr. Lawson said this was an Ordinance for Tiny Houses being an ordinance regarding construction requirements for homes that are 400 square feet or less, also known as tiny homes, and a Public Hearing will need to be set at the Town Council Meeting next week.

c. Parade Permit – Union Little League Opening Day

Mr. Lawson said this was a request for Council to approve a Parade Permit for Union Little League Opening Day to kick off the 2025 season.

d. Projects Update

Mr. Lawson said there would be a Cemetery Dedication for the Joseph Garfield Long, Sr. Memorial Cemetery on June 21, 2025 at 11 am.

Mr. Lawson said there was a sponsorship request from Friends of the Museum for \$400 for a stage; he said it will be on the agenda for the Regular Council Meeting February 11, 2025.

Mr. Lawson said he would be asking Council at the Regular Council Meeting February 11, 2025 for \$300 to sponsor Union Wrestling Club in purchasing a building.

Mr. Lawson passed around thank you letters for the raffles the Town sponsored at the Blue Highway Festival from the IBMA Foundation, Appalachian Service Project and Mountain Empire Community Foundation.

Mr. Lawson said there will be a Chamber Gala April 5, 2025 and Council has 8 tickets, to let him know who wanted to attend.

Mr. Lawson said USPS sent a letter to build out at 512 Shawnee Avenue East; he said with that letter we can now ask for plans; Council would have 30 days to review then USPS has another 30 days to respond.

Mr. Lawson said the Environmental Assessment for Big Cherry was high due to the archaeological broad area of the project. He said it will need to be narrowed down, and the Town will be asking for another extension.

Mr. Lawson said Mike Jones was hired in the Police Department and he was already a certified officer.

Mr. Lawson said they were working on renovating, upgrading and decluttering the Police Department.

Mr. Lawson said there were calls during the rain regarding drainage and these have been taken care of to his knowledge.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Gilley said the Planning Commission met last night and he asked Council to review the Tiny Houses Ordinance. He said they discussed many topics, and the Comprehensive Plan needs reviewed and updated. Mr. Lawson said the cost is the biggest issue coming in around \$270,000-300,000 for the Plan. Mr. Lawson also said they would check on funding for this. Wendy Warden asked if she could speak, as she is the Chair of the Planning Commission. She asked if the Planning Commission meetings could be published on the back of the water bills and asked Council if there could be a free permit issued for yard sales so the town would have the opportunity to inform them of how to operate a yard sale properly and could it be promoted on the Visitor Center page. There was a discussion regarding the permit and Council said it would be reviewed.

AGENDA ITEM 10 - COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Councilman Hughes said thank you to all the employees and guests.

Councilwoman Lyke said Friends of the Museum wants to have two stages with equipment ready this year in case there are weather issues and that's what they are raising money for.

Councilwoman Bailey said she was glad to be back and thanked everyone for their thoughts and prayers.

Mayor Johnson said thanks to everyone for the job they done during the storms. He said there would be a Mardi Gras Gumbo Cookoff in March, and more details would be announced later.

AGENDA ITEM 11 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned 7:18 pm.

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