

Minutes of the regularly scheduled meeting of the Saltville Town Council held on May 10, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall

**Council:** Monica Johnson, Jeff Comer, Eugene Call, Steve Surber, Gary Call  
Bryan Morris arrived during the approval of the April 12<sup>th</sup> minutes

**Mayor:** C. Todd Young

**Staff:** Brian Martin, Town Manager  
Erik Puckett, Police Chief  
R.B. Henderson, Public Works Director  
Steve Johnson, Clerk/Treasurer

Councilman Eugene Call made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 29, 2022 continued meeting, and Councilwoman Johnson seconded. The motion carried 4-0-1 with Councilman Surber abstaining since he was not present for that meeting.

Councilman Morris made a motion to approve the meeting of the April 12, 2022 regularly scheduled meeting, and Councilman Eugene Call seconded. The motion carried 4-0-2 with Councilmen Morris and Surber abstaining since they were not present for that meeting.

### **Citizens' Time**

**Phil Collins** was in attendance representing the Allison Gap Community Center, whose members are leasing the Palmer Mill from the town. He said that they recently received an \$775 electric bill and plan to spend \$1850 for some propane heaters. They've also spent \$3500 on general maintenance costs, including \$700 on a lawnmower. He asked if the town could help them out with some of these costs.

Councilwoman Johnson asked if they had contact numbers since she knows that some people are already wanting to rent out the building and property. Mr. Collins replied that their numbers are on their organization's Facebook page. Councilman Gary Call thanked him for picking up trash on Highway 107.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

Councilman Morris made a motion to approve the agenda, and Councilman Surber seconded. All were in favor.

## **New Business**

### **1. *If I Were Mayor* contest**

The Mayor introduced Olivia Wyatt, a student at Northwood Middle School, as this year's winner. Michelle Gowdy, the Executive Director of the Virginia Municipal League, (VML is the sponsor of the contest) was in attendance and personally recognized Ms. Wyatt's essay for identifying a problem and then presenting a solution for something she thought the town needed to accomplish. Ms. Wyatt received a gift card and certificate from VML and read her essay aloud for the audience.

### **2. Spring clean-up**

Councilman Morris made a motion to have the spring clean-up the week of June 6 -10, and Councilman Eugene Call seconded. All were in favor.

### **3. Town project engineering updates**

Crossroads Engineering gave an update on the following projects:

1) The scope of the Rural Development project includes line replacement, the Cardwell Town contact tank, the Route 107 pump station, and the Edgewood station. Generators will also be added to all stations. They are working with their architectural subs to finalize the design for the Cardwell Town tank replacement. The Rural Development project budget may not cover all of the lines to be replaced, so an application has been put in for a CDBG construction ready program.

2) The Phase I project has two components. The first is the meter replacement. The contractor has completed their first survey which looked at all of the existing meters the town services. The meters and radios have been slow to get delivered, but about 20% of the meters have arrived as has about 50% of the radios. The software has arrived as well. The meter installation will not be completed until late fall or early winter.

The bids for the water line replacement should go out in around sixty days. This is mostly line replacement in Cardwell Town. Councilman Morris asked if the meter replacing would not start until all the meters have arrived and was told that the meters would be installed about 200 at a time and activating the radios for trial runs. The Mayor asked if the meters would be put on the town's right-of-way, and they told him that the meters that are currently on the town's r-o-w would stay there. There will be a group of meters associated with line replacement jobs that

will be installed at their current locations. When the main line is replaced and the setters are set, then many of those will be moved to the town's r-o-w.

#### **4. EMS, Inc. report**

Gary Johnson spoke on the following:

- 1) The weekly meetings with town staff are ongoing and beneficial.
- 2) The DEQ report for April was submitted.
- 3) Regarding overflows, there was one blockage on the force main line. Town Manager Brian Martin responded to the DEQ letter that was mentioned at the April meeting.
- 4) The structural engineer is getting closer to the final design of the new aerial crossing.
- 5) The VDH monthly report and the Water Treatment Leak Loss report were submitted for April.
- 6) The replacement parts for the belt press came in today, so it will be fixed soon.
- 7) Councilwoman Johnson thanked Mr. Johnson and Rick Moore for giving the students a tour of the wastewater plant on Student Government Day.

#### **Board of Supervisors Report**

Supervisor Call could not attend the meeting.

#### **Public Works Director's Report**

R.B. Henderson spoke on the following:

- 1) The town has six barrels of chlorine in stock and plenty of fluoride.
- 2) A leak was repaired on the eight-inch waterline at the Cedar Branch Bridge.
- 3) The pool has been cleaned and is ready to be filled. The rough spots have been sanded and more epoxy paint has been applied there. The new cells for the salt generator were also

installed which should help keep the chlorine and PH level in check since that was an issue last year.

4) A speed bump was put on Fourth Avenue.

5) The water accountability is staying in the sane range, but the new lines and water meters should help.

6) Councilwoman Johnson thanked him for helping in the town-wide clean-up in April.

### **Police Chief's Report**

Chief Puckett spoke on the following:

1) There was a record crowd of over 400 at this year's Fish-a-Ree.

2) Officers Call and McVey attended the Highway Safety Summit in Alexandria. This was paid for by a DMV grant.

3) Jeff Collis, the Code Enforcement Officer, has started his job.

4) The speeding and other driving situations near the ballfields is being addressed. Several summonses have been issued for each violation.

5) The stats are included.

6) Chris Hogston is Saltville's Officer-of-the-Year. The Marion VFW sponsors this award every year for all three towns in Smyth County.

7) Councilwoman Johnson thanked Officer McVey for helping with the damage in Chilhowie following that big storm last Friday. She also mentioned that next week is Police Week.

8) Councilman Comer asked how the issue was going with big-rig GPS taking the drivers down the wrong road going to United Salt. Chief Puckett said there are still some problems, but they seemed to have slowed down a little.

### **Fire Department Report**

1) They had nine calls during April.

2) The Firemen's Bash will be held on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, and there will be fireworks that night. A parade will be held during the day. Councilman Morris made a motion to have the parade, and Councilwoman Johnson seconded. All were in favor.

#### **Emergency Medical Services Report**

1) They had ninety-seven calls last month with fifteen being for convalescence.

2) The EMT Academy will start in August.

3) They donated \$1000 toward the Fish-a-Ree.

4) Grant applications are ongoing.

5) Councilwoman Johnson thanked them for giving a tour during Student Government Day and recognized Richelle Lowman for getting her certifications in addition to her regular duties.

#### **Town Managers Report**

Mr. Martin spoke on the following:

1) The town recently purchased an excavator.

2) The Chamber sponsored the town's clean-up on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Mayor and Councilwoman Johnson showed up to help.

3) The three bridge reports were submitted to VDOT.

4) VDH, along with Clegg Williams and Manual Street from the county are helping with the proposed campground. An E&S (erosion and sediment) plan is being put together, and dirt may start moving within sixty days.

5) He attended the Brownfields Abandoned, Damaged, and Dilapidated Buildings Project meeting in Marion today. This pilot program is through the Virginia DEQ and works to reduce blight.

6) The town's mowing has started.

7) Next week is Police Week as Councilwoman Johnson mentioned.

8) Code Enforcement Office Jeff Collis gave an update on his work so far:

He has visited seventeen homes with issues regarding their properties. As of today, five of those have cleaned up, and the other twelve are currently working on theirs.

He met with David Haynes from Chilhowie who set him up for a class in August.

Councilwoman Johnson thanked him for his work so far and said it is good he's being seen in the community.

Councilman Comer asked him to give an update at every monthly meeting describing his process for contacting property owners and the various tasks he's accomplished.

9) Councilman Eugene Call said a resident at 803 East Main Street was having problems with his water meter and the bills for about a year and a half. Mr. Henderson and Mr. Martin said they look into it. He also mentioned that the cemetery has never looked better.

Regarding the bump in front of Friends Church, Mr. Henderson said the big Wellfields drain and various sewer pipes run through that area. The town's engineers are looking into it.

10) Councilman Gary Call asked about the sidewalks. Mr. Martin said the town received some money from VDOT around 2009 for these, but not enough to completely do the project and couldn't afford to pay for it by itself. The town had spent \$21,000 of VDOT's money on engineering fees, but since the project was discontinued, the town now has to pay that back. The town hopes to reapply for VDOT money during their next grant cycle.

11) Councilwoman Johnson said money had been set aside in the budget for a few years to repair fire hydrants, but this had not been done yet. Mr. Martin said Smyth County Emergency Medical Services Director Curtis Crawford is working on this, and Fire Chief Lynch has put together a GIS map of the hydrants.

12) Councilman Eugene Call said he would like to see speed bumps near the pool and golf course, and Councilwoman Johnson said the same about the ball fields. She also mentioned that since the town did away with committee reports, she would like to see each Councilmember get a chance to speak at the end of each meeting on topics they see fit. The Mayor replied that each Councilmember gets a chance to speak after each topic is discussed now. Councilman Comer introduced the new manager of the Wellness Center.

Lastly, Councilman Eugene Call made the motion to adjourn, and Councilman Morris seconded. All were in favor.

