

Minutes of the January 11, 2022 regularly scheduled meeting of the Saltville Town Council held at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall

Council: **Monica Johnson, Jeff Comer, Eugene Call, and Gary Call**
 Steve Surber was absent, and Bryan Morris arrived during the
 discussion about waste collection services

Mayor: **C. Todd Young**

Staff: **Brian Martin, Town Manager**
 Paul Cassell, Town Attorney
 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 December 14, 2021 regularly scheduled meeting, and Councilwoman Johnson seconded. All were in favor.

No one spoke during Citizens' Time.

Approval of the Agenda

Councilman Eugene Call made a motion to approve the agenda, and Councilwoman Johnson seconded. All were in favor.

Old Business

1. Residential waste collection services RFP

Town Manager Brian Martin stated that only one company, GFL Environmental, submitted an RFP for residential waste collection services. This company went under contract with Chilhowie last month. He recommended the Council approve their proposal. Councilman Comer asked how this proposal related to what the town was currently paying Republic Services, and Mr. Martin replied this proposal was not quite a five percent increase over Republic's rate.

However, if the town continued with Republic, it faced a 55% increase when the current contract expired. Moreover, all of the current cans will be replaced. If approved, all residential trash will be collected on a Thursday.

Councilman Morris made a motion to approve the bid from GFL and have the Mayor sign it, and Councilman Gary Call seconded. All were in favor.

Old Business

1. Town-wide signage

Councilwoman Johnson said that the hydrant near her house was recently hit again due to the fact that big trucks are still entering that area, so there needs to be more signage showing those trucks where they need to go. She suggested these signs show more pictures (such as a truck with a big *no sign* through it) since some of the drivers that visit United Salt don't speak much English. The Mayor asked that pricing for these signs be brought to the meeting next month. She also thinks the blue directional signs should be replaced to which Mr. Martin replied that John Boyd, who originally put up those signs, has been contacted and is expected to come and look and give an estimate for replacing them.

She continued and said she would like to see more signage for the trails coning off of Highway 91 since some people aren't sure where to go to keep following the trail. She would also like to see a logo for the trails since one doesn't currently exist.

2. Garbage bins and recycling

Councilwoman Johnson asked the GFL representatives in attendance if the company had recycling bins. They said they had them, but there is no place in the area to take the materials. Councilwoman Johnson said the county currently had two locations for cardboard pickup, but those locations were not close to Saltville. GFL said they have several cardboard recycling bins coming to the area. She then asked GFL if they had glass and/or cans recycling programs and was told that a bin that would be classified as a single stream (glass and cans together) would make the most sense for this area, but the closest place to take it is the Blacksburg and Christiansburg area, and they are currently looking into a place in Washington County for this single stream program.

3. Cameras and fencing

Councilwoman Johnson asked if any information was received regarding fencing around the old town shop, and Mr. Martin said that he has asked the Lane Group to provide a cost estimate for fencing in that area.

She asked the rest of the Council what they thought about getting cameras for that area and the Salt Trail in addition to the fencing. Fire Chief Lynch said he had a lead on several different types of cameras in different price ranges and would bring them to the February meeting.

4. Auto-Aid

Curtis Crawford, the Emergency Services Coordinator for Smyth County, spoke on the following:

- 1) He gave the Council a packet that highlighted the parameters which needed to be followed by the county's fire departments.
- 2) The fire fighting workload is increasing in the county. The NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) guidelines state that seventeen people are required to be on the scene of a fire. That means that the Saltville Volunteer Fire Department would have to fill three or four trucks for every fire call. Therefore, the departments in Chilhowie, Adwolfe, and Nebo will help out during calls the SVFD receives. All would be dispatched simultaneously.
- 3) Each department has to keep their equipment up to standards, and each department has to follow two federal laws, NFPA 1901 and NFPA 1910.
- 4) He asked the Council to look through the packet and vote on it next month. The county is the only agency that has approved it so far. It's a living document, so it can be changed.

5. EMS, Inc. report

Gary Johnson spoke on the following:

- 1) The weekly meetings continue to be productive.
- 2) The December DEQ report was submitted as was the annual fluoride monitoring report.
- 3) One small overflow was reported.
- 4) The belt press conveyor was damaged by the Waste Management truck, so their insurance is going to pay for it to be replaced.
- 5) The VDH monthly report and the Water Treatment Leak Loss report were both submitted.

6) The water meter project has been finalized to proceed. The Mayor asked the brand that was going to be used, and Mr. Johnson said they were the Sensus iPERL meters.

7) Councilman Morris mentioned that the town received funding from Mount Rogers to help pay the cost of the aerial crossing, and he asked where the rest of the funding was coming from. Mr. Martin said the town has put in an application with DEQ to fund the rest of the cost.

Committee Reports

Councilwoman Johnson said the Christmas decorations have been taken down.

Public Works Director's Report

R.B. Henderson spoke on the following:

1) The truck that Councilwoman Johnson referenced hit the hydrant near her house, and a report was turned in to the police. A contractor will probably need to dig down and check everything out. Mr. Martin said he would get with United Salt to get the insurance information.

2) The new pumps at the 91 station are working really well.

3) Someone had hooked into an old water meter on Cedar Branch where an old house had been torn down. They pulled the meter and concreted the box in.

4) Per Council's instructions, the speed bumps have been taken up for the winter. Councilman Comer asked if they would be put back down in the spring, and Mr. Henderson said they would be if the Council approved.

5) Councilman Morris asked about the snow removal equipment, and Mr. Henderson said one of the trucks has been at the Ford place since last spring, and they still tell him that the part has not come in yet because of supply chain issues. The spreader has been serviced, and it will be picked up tomorrow. Councilman Morris said he recalled a 550 framed truck with a plow and spreader being discussed a few years ago, but nothing came of it.

Police Chief's Report

Chief Puckett spoke on the following:

1) There were two candidates for the position of Police Officer/Inmate Supervisor. The first one got another job offer, and the second one accepted the position but then called back later and declined it because it was for less money than his current job, and he did not want to work with inmates. Town Attorney Paul Cassell said that every jurisdiction he works for currently has police openings, so there is a lot of competition out there.

2) Regarding the inmates themselves, Chief Puckett has heard nothing from the jail whether or not they will be releasing inmates to work. The Mayor suggested looking into part-time workers for upkeep and mowing. Councilwoman Johnson said the town has to have people picking up the trash in town and keeping everything mowed. Councilman Morris agreed and said he did not see the inmates coming back for the foreseeable future. This was tabled to the February meeting.

Fire Department Report

Chief Lynch spoke on the following:

1) There were fifteen total calls in December with seven in the town and eight in the county. For 2021, the department responded to 216 total calls.

2) He encouraged the Council to adopt the Auto-Aid agreement in February since it is really good for an all-volunteer department like Saltville's. It will help in getting more people on the scene of a call, and the entire county comes together.

Councilman Morris encouraged not just the town but the entire county to sign the Auto-Aid agreement because everyone comes together, and that makes it better for a volunteer department since the members have other jobs and can't always respond to calls.

Emergency Medical Services Report

Kyle Brewster spoke on the following:

1) They had eighty-one calls last calls with five rolling over from Washington County. They have not rolled over any calls in over three months which means they are doing better in picking up second and third calls.

- 2) Travis Lowman has started teaching his EMT class. By May he'll be able to teach more.
- 3) The hospital is having about a four-hour delay getting people discharged because there are not enough units to help. They are going to start helping with this in February.
- 4) They have written a policy they'd like the Council to consider for February's meeting, and he gave each Council member a copy.
- 5) There are two new applications to consider, Thomas Chappell and William Allison. Councilman Morris made a motion to hire both, and Councilman Gary Call seconded. All were in favor.
- 6) Richelle Lowman told that Council that they had a \$4021.69 profit for December. She also wrote a grant application that was awarded in the amount of \$90,000 which will be used to purchase three cardiac monitors. Two of those will go in the quick response vehicles, and the third will basically be a back-up.

She is currently writing a grant to replace the radios.

- 7) Councilman Morris asked if the proposed policy change contradicted the town's current personnel policy. Mr. Cassell said he didn't see anything that would stick out but would review it.

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Martin spoke on the following:

- 1) The proposed lease of the Palmer Mill to the Allison Gap Community Center prepared by Mr. Cassell is before the Council to vote upon. Councilman Gary Call made a motion to approve the lease and have Mr. Martin sign it. Councilman Morris seconded, and all were in favor.
- 2) VDOT has no issues with the town making Bank Street one-way, so the Council can proceed as they see fit.
- 3) The Mayor asked if he could contact VDOT about paving Highway 107 into the town limits.
- 4) A housing feasibility study and new town shop quotes are being undertaken by the Lane Group.

5) The town received a TEA-21 grant from VDOT over a decade ago to fix and install sidewalks in town. The Council at the time voted to return that funding since the town and VDOT could not agree on the overall scope of the project because the town would have had to provide tens of thousands as well. However, there was preliminary design money spent, so now the town has to reimburse VDOT \$21,000.

6) The final touches are being put on the grant application for the Salt Trail. This is being written by Mount Rogers and Catherine Van Noy.

7) Someone reported the town to the U.S. Treasury Department for potential misuse of the CARES Act funding it received over a year ago. He wants the public to know that the town was cleared of any violation. It was frustrating to go through, but the validation that the town did nothing wrong made it worthwhile.

8) Our consultants at CARDNO Engineering have re-submitted the application for clean-up funding for the old town shop site.

9) Councilman Eugene Call asked if Mr. Moss, who spoke at last month's meeting regarding housing rehab projects and a new subdivision, had anything in the works yet. Mr. Martin replied that the town will have Mr. Moss put together a housing rehab planning grant that could be applied for in the spring.

Closed Session

Councilman Morris made a motion to enter Closed Session in accordance with the Code of Virginia, Section 2.2-3711(A)(29) to discuss the awarding of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body; Section 2.2-3711(A)(8) to consult with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel; and Section 2.2-3711(A)(7) to consult with legal counsel and be briefed by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in an open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body. Councilwoman Johnson seconded, and all were in favor.

After exiting Closed Session, Councilman Morris made a motion to certify that the Closed Session was conducted in conformity with Virginia law regarding those matters that are exempted from open meeting requirements and nothing was discussed other than what was

mentioned in the motion to convene Closed Session. Councilman Eugene Call seconded, and the roll call vote was 5-0 in the affirmative.

Councilman Morris made a motion to have Mr. Martin contract with TUC Technologies to provide IT services to the town beginning March 1, 2022. Councilman Eugene Call seconded, and all were in favor.

The Mayor asked Clerk/Treasurer Steve Johnson to put two items on the agenda for February's meeting, and those were 1) giving hiring and firing powers back to the Town Manager and 2) having the town's committees dissolved.

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