

Town Council Meeting

December 13, 2022

The Town Council of Victoria, Virginia met on December 13, 2022, in the Town Municipal building with the Honorable Allen D. Smith, Mayor, presiding: Councilmember's in attendance were Ronald Mattox, Johnnie Brame, James G. Elam, Jr., Christopher Garrett, Sandra Jones and Chris Gill. Also attending were Town Manager Rodney Newton, Treasurer Diane Harding, Town Clerk Vickie McDaniel, Police Chief Joel Manning and Assistant Fire Chief Grayson Townsend.

Mayor Smith called the meeting of the Town Council to order.

The invocation was given by Mayor Smith followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Motion was made by Councilmember Brame and seconded by Councilmember Gill to go into Public Hearing on:

- To hear comments on the proposed Solar Facility Ordinance
- To hear comments on the proposed expansion of the Town of Victoria Enterprise Zone

No comments were made.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Brame to come out of Public Hearing. Motion carried.

Mayor Smith asked if there were any additions to the meeting. Town Manager Rodney Newton asked to speak about the Utility Billing Policy. Mayor Smith added Mr. Newton as Information item 11(e). Citizen Chris Garrett asked to speak about law enforcement. Mayor Smith added Mr. Garrett as Information item 11(f). Citizen Taylor Newton asked to do a presentation. Mayor Smith added Ms. Newton as Information item 11(g).

Mayor Smith asked if there were any Conflicts of Interest on matters being discussed on the agenda. There were none.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Brame to accept the November 2022 regular meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Jones to accept the Treasurer's report for November 2022. Motion carried.

Chief Joel Manning presented the Police Report. He stated they had a busy month with 94 calls. Chief Manning advised both F/T Police Officers attending the Central Virginia Criminal Justice Academy will be graduating tomorrow, Wednesday, December 14, 2022 in Lynchburg, VA. Also, we continue community presence with our two P/T officers, Lafferty and White. They have both become an asset to the Victoria Police Department. The PD has isolated locations and started parking in areas of complaints about barking dogs. He stated providing presence and due to the colder weather, the barking dogs nuisance has subsided. Chief Manning advised traffic control for the Christmas Parade went well. He also updated on the complaint of brush and debris at 1516 6th Street. Town Manager Rodney Newton researched and they were able to talk to the owner resulting in the removal of the brush and debris. They will continue to monitor. Chief Manning advised two bloodhounds of PathSeeker Kennel have been certified. One will be in Russell County in southwest Virginia and the other will be with VSP Trooper Reeves serving Lunenburg County and southside Virginia. This will have a positive impact for law enforcement in our area. There were no further questions regarding the Police Report. Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Gill to accept the Police Report as presented. Motion carried.

Assistant Fire Chief Grayson Townsend presented the Fire Department Report. They had 163 calls for the month of November at Station 2 and Station 7. There were no questions regarding the budget. Motion was made by Councilmember Jones and seconded by Councilmember Elam to approve the Fire/Rescue Department report as presented. Motion carried.

Informational Items:

- a) Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Elam to adopt the proposed Solar Facility Ordinance and Financial Compensation Policy. Motion carried.
- b) Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Mattox to accept the proposed Expansion of Town of Victoria Enterprise Zone and authorization for Mayor Smith to sign the resolution. Motion carried with Councilmember Garratt abstaining.
- c) Town Manager Rodney Newton provided council the 2023 Holiday Schedule. This follows previous years and the state holiday schedule. Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Brame to approve the 2023 Holiday Schedule as presented. Motion carried.
- d) Town Manager Rodney Newton provided council with proposed bonuses for employees for the upcoming holiday. Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Brame to approve the employees holiday bonuses. Motion carried.
- e) Mr. Newton discussed the Utility Billing Policy. He advised we currently bill around 45 days behind for water usage. This is due to the time it takes town employees to read the meters and then inputting in the system. Mr. Newton advised with the new meters, we can read the meters on the 25th of the month and bill on the 1st of each month. This will allow us to bill for actual previous month usage but will have to first go through a transition period. Mr. Newton requested two odd billing cycles. Basically, a billing cycle runs from 29-32 days. To make this transition, we will need two billing cycles for 42 days each. We can adjust the rates so we can compensate for the overages. Mr. Newton discussed the two transition billings for possibly February and March 2023. Once we get through the transition, the May billing will be for April water usage (previous month). Mr. Newton also requested a change in the current billing policy as follows:
 - Bills will be mailed around the 1st of the month and due on the 15th
 - Penalty/interest will be added on the 16th
 - 30 days from the original due date a delinquent letter will be mailed and an additional \$35.00 late charge
 - 50 days from the original due date if the bill is still unpaid, a disconnect notice will be mailed and another \$45.00 late charge
 - 60 days from the original due date if it's still unpaid, service will be disconnected

Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Brame to move forward with adjusted billings. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Mattox to accept the Utility Billing Policy revisions. Motion carried.

- f) Citizen Chris Garrett at 1601 4th Street brought to councils' attention two separate incidents that were suspicious. The first occurred on December 5, 2023 at 3:53 pm where a subject on a bicycle dressed in all black went to a vacant house and was pulling on the wooden door as if he was trying to get in. Mr. Garrett deemed it as suspicious and called the dispatcher for a police officer. The dispatcher advised there were no officers available. Mr. Garrett was able to get in touch with the homeowner and later determined the subject was not breaking into the house. On December 10, 2023 at 11:29pm a truck came to a rolling stop at the intersection on 4th at his residence and a subject jumped out and hid behind his Dodge pick-up truck in his driveway. Mr. Garrett called dispatch and was told again no police officers were available at that time. Mr. Garrett is concerned that after calling dispatch two separate times and no police officers were available portrays the community is open. Mr. Garrett's conclusion is the dispatcher made the call in saying that no officers were available and never gave it to law enforcement. Mr. Garrett advised he still has not heard from anyone regarding his calls. Chief Manning advised dispatch should not have said that. He has been working a lot of 16-hour days and has informed them to call him at any time. Mr. Newton advised Chief Manning to get with Major Penland to address this issue.

- g) Citizen Ms. Taylor Newton advised Mr. Robbie Batte was present and had something to give to the town. Mr. Batte enjoys taking pictures and presented to the town a canvas of Nottoway Falls below the bridge at the second falls taken back in October 2022. This image was shown in South Hill at an exhibition and in a digital display at a museum in London. Mayor Smith accepted the canvas print from Mr. Batte and it will be displayed in the town office.

Town Manager Update:

- a) Mr. Newton updated on the water plant. Mr. Newton stated the flow meter was installed two weeks ago. It is operational and we are pumping about 350 gallons a minute which is really low from where we should be. They are still waiting to make the connection from the flow meter to our SCADA system so operators can see it up in the control room. Mr. Newton advised the pressure relief valve still has to be installed but will be easier to do now to go back up to the flow meter. Mr. Ronnie Williams with Precision Pipes helped the majority of one afternoon to get them too fully close. The three to four hours of work is what stirred the water up and made it discolored. The next phase of putting in the pressure relief valve will require isolating the water plant. Mr. Newton hopes to do this in the next couple of weeks. Mr. Newton advised our finished pumps are not pumping at near the capacity as they should. They are 600 gallon a minute pumps and right now they are only pumping 350 gallons a minute. He stated what is taking the plant seven hours to pump should only be taking about 4 hours per day. Sydnor-Hydro removed one finished pump and found it to have significant iron deposits inside impeding our pumping capacity. We will have the pump cleaned and installed for approximately \$16,000.00. If that fixes the problem, then the second pump will be pulled. They are working with the SCADA vendor to make repairs to system and with Kinex to work toward fiber connections between water plant and Nottoway Falls and Modest Creek.
- b) Mr. Newton advised on December 4, 2023 he remotely read 790 meters in 45 minutes. We have approximately fifteen meters left to install. We will not be changing out the commercial meters as they will remain as manual reads. We are working with both Core & Main and Southern Software (FMS) to get everything implemented to automated data entry and any problems worked out in the next few weeks. Both remote reading and billing will soon be done in approximately three to four hours.
- c) Mr. Newton updated on the sewer project. The DEQ grant application will be filed tomorrow, December 14, 2023. The drawings are in progress for the force main and have been able to cut approximately 600 feet from the length by changing the tie in point for the East facility to a 12" line higher up. Mr. Newton advised the pump station is also in the design phase and hopes to have finished by the first of 2023. He and WWTP Supervisor Grayson Townsend are meeting with Mr. Andy Koester with Moonshot Missions tomorrow morning to discuss the copper issue and look at some possible automated options at the east wastewater plant.
- d) Mr. Newton stated the garbage truck is in Chesapeake, VA for pre-delivery inspection and awaiting arrival of parts. They are looking at new guidelines for trash cans now. Mr. Newton will send to council before the end of the month with hopes of getting the new trash truck here by early January 2023.
- e) Mr. Newton advised behind Jefferson Avenue on Kelly Drive and Sandy Lane; Dominion Virginia Power has contractors moving overhead lines to underground.
- f) Mr. Newton and Chief Manning are looking into options on an ordinance for parking of commercial road tractors in residential areas to submit to council for approval.
- g) Mr. Newton provided to the county some of our councilmembers email addresses. A company called River Link is looking to develop a strategic action plan for the VGA area (southside Virginia) and may be contacting you after the first of the year for some input.
- h) Mr. Newton advised the employee Christmas Luncheon will be held on Thursday, December 15th at noon in the town office.

Town Council Meeting

December 13, 2022

- i) Mr. Newton advised council Mr. Ty Dunbar is home and doing well. He had triple by-pass surgery back in November and is home bound until December 28th when he goes for a follow-up appointment.

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Smith adjourned the meeting.

Vickie McDaniel, Clerk

Allen D. Smith, Mayor

Approved January 10, 2023

Rodney Newton, Town Manager