

Town Council Meeting

February 11, 2020

The Town Council of Victoria, Virginia met on February 11, 2020 in the Town Municipal building with the Honorable Carol R. Watson, 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, Clerk Vickie McDaniel, Police Chief H. Keith Phillips and Assistant Fire Chief Chris Garrett.

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

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

Mayor Watson asked if there were any additions to the meeting. Citizen Wanda Fix asked to speak about town ordinances. Mayor Watson added Ms. Fix as item 9 (a).

Mayor Watson asked if there were any Conflicts of Interest on matters being discussed on the agenda. No comments.

Motion was made by Councilmember Brame and seconded by Councilmember Gill to accept the January 2020 regular meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Brame to accept the Treasurer's report for January 2020.

Chief H. Keith Phillips gave the Police Report. Chief Phillips stated they had another busy month with 62 calls, 19 citations and 3 arrests with 3 charges. Chief Phillips also advised the new Dodge Ram 1500 Pickup Truck recently purchased will be ready once the radios and lights are installed and detailing completed. Chief Phillips provided council a proof of the vinyl detailing to the new pick-up truck. Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Elam to accept the Police Report as presented. Motion carried.

Assistant Fire Chief Chris Garrett gave the Fire/Rescue Department Report. He stated they had another busy month at Station 2 in Victoria with 90 calls and Station 7 in Kenbridge with 43 calls. Assistant Chief Garrett provided the Financial Report and stated they had a negative balance due to an insurance payment for FY20. Assistant Chief Garrett also stated they had a successful Fire and Rescue Banquet and awards ceremony on Saturday, February 8, 2020. Also, new shirts have been purchased for full time employees to wear for the department. There were no questions regarding the budget. Motion was made by Councilmember Brame and seconded by Councilmember Jones to approve the Fire Department report as presented. Motion carried.

Citizen Wanda Fix expressed concern to council on the town ordinance regarding violations of trash, abandoned vehicles and property in town. Town Manager Rodney Newton and Property Maintenance Official, advised letters have not been sent to persons regarding such violations. Mr. Newton stated violations regarding trash and/or abandoned vehicles can be delegated to Chief Phillips and go through our Town Ordinance. However, dilapidated buildings fall under Property Maintenance. Ms. Fix provided Chief Phillips with a list of abandoned vehicles along 1st Street to 14th Street. Ms. Fix also suggested a clean-up day or day for people to call to have items picked up. Town Manager Newton advised we have something in place whereby citizens can call but there is a charge. Councilmember Gill stated we have two clean-up days a year and only a handful of citizens show up to help.

Informational Items:

- a) Mr. Tom Angelo, CEO of Centra Southside Community Hospital and Ms. Sharon Harrup, Chairman of Centra Southside Community Hospital Board of Directors donated the Bridgforth Medical Building as a Deed of Gift to the Town of Victoria. However, stipulations do apply. The building can only be used by a federally qualified health clinic such as Southern Dominion Health System and not any corporate health system, such as VCU, Bon Secours, HCA, etc over the next 20 years. Town Manager Rodney Newton encouraged council members to accept the offer as the building will continue to sit vacant. Motion was made by Councilmember Brame and seconded by Councilmember Gill to accept the donation of the Bridgforth Medical Building. Motion carried.

- b) Mayor Watson advised we had 269 riders for the month of January 2020.
- c) Mr. Newton updated council of the recent developments regarding the operations of the two wastewater treatment facilities. It will be September before the preliminary report will be done but looking at a \$1M to \$1.5M project with the west lagoon. Our permit is through 2024 but need to decide if we want to continue with the West WWTP facility or close it all together. We were in compliance this month with ammonia in the west lagoon and copper in the east but we may not be next month. Mr. Newton does not want to raise any red flags with the EPA. Mr. Newton will be talking with our engineers in March 2020 on some options we may have. We have 816 customers with 520 customers using less than the 3,000 gallon minimum each month. Our revenue for sewer annually is approximately \$500,000.00. If we increase the sewer rate by \$2.00 from \$18.50 to \$20.50 and increase the Lunenburg County Prison, as their rate has not be increased since 2012, our sewer revenue will be around \$550,000.00 annually. Mr. Newton also mentioned this will be a 2021 project and feels most of the work can be done by town employees however, some will have to be contracted out. Councilmember Elam stated we have to do something. Mr. Newton also mentioned if USDA is used to fund the project, they will enforce a rate increase. More discussion will continue at next month's meeting. Mr. Newton advised we continue to work with B & B Consultants and recently submitted 3 weeks of data. They will meet again in March 2020 to discuss different options as well as, the shortest and least expensive routes to take but the final study will not be completed until September 1, 2020. Mr. Newton did express more copper issues and foresees having to go under another consent order for protection and additional time to the town.

Town Manager Update:

- a) Mr. Newton advised we are still trying to find candidates to make the LOVE sign.
- b) Mr. Newton advised both Town IDA and County IDA met on Friday, February 7, 2020 on an offer for the STEPS building and adjoining property. The County IDA agreed to sell to the Town IDA for \$1.00 and the Town IDA voted to accept the offer. Hawthorne and Hawthorne is currently writing up a formal lease agreement with IDA to delineate any responsibility for the building as it has now shifted to the new town shop. Mr. Newton asked permission from council to proceed with drawing up a lease agreement with IDA for the STEPS building to be used as the new town shop. Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Brame to proceed with the lease agreement for the STEPS building. Motion carried.
- c) Mr. Newton advised Robinson, Farmer and Cox started the FY2019 audit today, February 11, 2020 and are scheduled to be here until Thursday, February 13th. Treasurer Diane Harding stated they have reviewed meals tax, accounts payable, business licenses, and miscellaneous revenue thus far and we are up to code and things are moving along quickly.
- d) Mr. Newton mentioned payments are starting to come in thru IRMS for delinquent water bills.
- e) Councilmember Elam inquired about the bamboo on West Sixth Street. Mr. Newton advised a letter has been sent to the owner but no response yet.
- f) Mr. Newton stated town employees did an outstanding job on the 11th Street sewer line repair. They replaced 440 feet of sewer line along with adding a new manhole. Additional help was needed and cost from contractors has not been determined. Mr. Newton also stated they met with Dixie Paving and paving will begin next week to complete the project.
- g) Mr. Newton advised the 4th Street pipe replacement seems to be holding. Town employees will begin another 250 feet pipe replacement on 12th Street to eliminate some issues there. Also, the pipe under 6th Street has collapsed behind Little B convenient store

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as well as, a sinkhole in the alley by the Victoria pool. Mr. Newton has ordered new pipe and will be meeting with VDOT this week to talk about the ditch alongside the alley to see if they will make it deeper to pull to the ditch on Washington Avenue.

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

Vickie McDaniel, Clerk

Carol R. Watson, Mayor

Approved March 10, 2020

Rodney Newton, Town Manager