

Town Council Meeting

July 13, 2021

The Town Council of Victoria, Virginia met on July 13, 2021 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, Town Treasurer, Diane Harding, Clerk Vickie McDaniel, Police Chief H. Keith Phillips and Assistant Fire Chief Chris Garrett.

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

The invocation was given by Councilmember Jones followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Mayor Smith asked if there were any additions to the meeting. Town Manager Rodney Newton advised item (10a). Apex Clean Energy, Francis Hodsoll, would not be attending the meeting tonight and wished to add a resolution for the Virginia Community Block Development grant for approval as item (10a). Also, citizen Patricia Harper-Tunley asked to speak to council regarding logging trucks on Mecklenburg Avenue. Ms. Harper-Tunley was added as item (10d).

Mayor Smith 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 June 2021 regular meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Councilmember Brame and seconded by Councilmember Mattox to accept the Treasurer's report for June 2021. Mr. Newton added the FY20-21 year was completed with final entries and reflected on the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Chief H. Keith Phillips gave the Police Report. Chief Phillips stated they had 41 calls, 4 citations and 1 arrest. Officer Phillips thanked both full and part time police officers for working as they continue to look for another police officer. Mr. Newton noted that recently hired officer; Mr. Warf took another job offer. Mr. Newton stated the next academy doesn't start until January 2022. Meanwhile, Mr. Newton discussed with Councilmember Mattox to possibly advertise for a certified officer. Mayor Smith commended Officer King and P/T Officer Joel Manning. Chief Phillips stated they have also started working on inoperable vehicles. Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Brame to accept the Police Report as presented. Motion carried.

Assistant Fire Chief Chris Garrett gave the Fire/Rescue Department Report. He stated they had a steady month with 126 calls. Station 2 in Victoria had 77 calls while Station 7 in Kenbridge had 49 calls. Assistant Chief Garret advised the Financial Statement reflected the Truck/Tractor Pull fundraiser. Also, VFD assisted KFD on a huge warehouse fire last month and will hold an after action on Thursday, July 16th for those who would like to stop by and see pictures and statistics during the fire. Assistant Chief Garrett advised they put a new medic unit in service this month that was received thru the Cares Act fund. Motion was made by Councilmember Brame and seconded by Councilmember Jones to approve the Fire Department report as presented. Motion carried.

Informational Items:

- a) Mr. Newton discussed the local grant through the DHCD for the STEPS building to repair the roof and possibly get some tenants there to make use of the facility. Unfortunately, that grant did not get processed at the end of the year and we are applying again with help from CRC for \$362,000.00 with the Virginia Department Community Block grant funds for the Town of Victoria Community Facility Renovation project. Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Garrett to adopt a new resolution applying for the grant and authorizing Mr. Newton to submit documents for the grant. Motion carried. Resolution attached to July minutes.
- b) Councilmember Jones asked council to rescind the motion at last months meeting concerning the request for a street light at 2540 Lee Avenue as the motion goes partially

against our Street Light policy. Mr. Newton advised the Street Committee to review the policy.

Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Mattox to rescind the motion from last months meeting. Motion carried.

Recommendation was made to turn over to the Street Committee until next months August 2021 meeting.

- c) Mr. Newton provided council with a draft copy of a golf cart/utility vehicle ordinance that he has been working on with both Councilmember Gill and Councilmember Garrett. Council will review and table till next months August 2021 meeting.
- d) Citizen Patricia Harper-Tunley presented council with a list of concerns and petition along with photos of Mecklenburg Avenue whereby, logging trucks have been traveling into town. Ms. Harper-Tunley spoke on behalf of residents on Mecklenburg Avenue concerning the logging trucks. Ms. Harper-Tunley advised she has brought to the Board of Supervisors as well. She is looking at safety and infrastructure of the street. Ms. Harper-Tunley spoke with VDOT about how to get a “Thru Trucks Prohibited” sign. She was advised to speak with both the Board of Supervisors and the Town of Victoria. Ms. Harper-Tunley mentioned a truck route is already in place. Mr. Newton advised some of the street damage was due to a 600 foot sewer line put in by the town and asphalt contractors will be fixing this week.

Town Manager Update:

- a) Mr. Newton advised the sewer line and water repairs on W. 7th and Lunenburg Avenue have been completed. As mentioned earlier, asphalt contractors will be fixing the roads soon. Mr. Newton stated the influent has reduced significantly. They are going to start monitoring Tidewater Avenue going into W. 7th Street. The east wastewater plant had a huge influent and is planning to smoke test next week to try to isolate the issue. Mr. Newton also provided council with a Consent Order Compliance Report regarding repairs done that he submitted to Mr. Reynolds at DEQ. Mr. Reynolds was pleased with what he has seen and we were on course with everything we need to do for the consent order. We are monitoring the west wastewater plant 24 hours a day for influent and charting that with rainfall.
- b) Mr. Newton discussed the American Rescue Plan. We will be receiving funds through the Commonwealth of Virginia. Mr. Newton provided council a guidance summary over potential uses of the funds. The town was allocated \$1,687,002.00 through the American Rescue Plan Act Corona Virus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. The first apportion of funds of \$843,501.00 was received June 30, 2021. The second apportion of funds of \$843,501.00 is scheduled to be near the end of FY22. This money has to be expended by end of 2024. Mr. Newton requested a Public Hearing for the August 2021 council meeting to approve a budget amendment for first installment of the American Rescue Plan funds.

Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Gill to schedule a Public Hearing at the August 2021 council meeting to approve the budget amendment. Motion carried.

Mr. Newton advised general uses for the Local Fiscal Recovery Fund as follows:

- respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts
- provide premium pay to essential works or grants to employers of essential workers by providing premium pay to eligible workers
- provide government services to the extent of any revenue reduction resulting from the pandemic
- make necessary capital improvements in water, sewer, and/or broadband infrastructure.

Mr. Newton asked council for consideration of using funds towards the new automated meter reading equipment. Cost would be approximately \$190,000.00 and would free up a

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current annual budget line of \$36,000.00 appropriated for the next three years. Also, the \$3M sewer project is eligible with use of these funds. Mr. Newton suggested a large portion of these funds be used towards the wastewater sewer treatment project so the town does not have to borrow as much money or raise rates for town citizens. Mr. Newton recommended setting aside \$1M for the West Street project. Other uses of the funds would be assistance for small businesses in our community, for example enhancing outdoor spaces (restaurant patios), improving buildings that face the streets in town but limited to currently licensed businesses in town, locally owned and within the enterprise zone. Another possible use of the funds is the purchase of a new garbage truck and trash cans. Currently, our primary garbage truck is a 2006 rear loader and our back-up garbage truck is a 1991. Mr. Newton recommended Mayor Smith, the Finance Committee and himself oversee the American Rescue Plan fund and if any other councilmembers have other projects they wish to look at we will continue discussion at next months August council meeting.

- c) Mr. Newton advised he and Treasurer, Diane Harding have been working on the FEMA Public Assistance application due to the ice storm. Mr. Newton stated we are applying for \$45,000.00 for the debris clean-up, generators and can also claim time to apply for it. It could take several months before we know anything. Mr. Newton will keep council posted on the process.

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

Vickie McDaniel, Clerk

Allen D. Smith, Mayor

Approved August 10, 2021

Rodney Newton, Town Manager