



**MINUTES**  
**TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2023 AT 3:30 PM**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 150 EAST MONROE STREET**  
**WYTHEVILLE, VA 24382**

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**1. ATTENDANCE**

**A. Persons Present**

Beth A. Taylor - Mayor  
Cathy D. Pattison - Vice-Mayor  
Holly E. Atkins - Council Member  
Gary L. Gillman - Council Member  
Candice N. Johnson - Council Member  
T. Brian Freeman - Town Manager  
Elaine R. Holeton - Assistant Town Manager  
Sherry G. Corvin - Town Clerk  
Michelle Workman Clayton - Town Attorney  
Michael G. Stephens - Town Treasurer  
Blaine Grubb - Police Officer  
Charlie Jones – Downtown Wytheville, Inc.

**Persons Absent:**

None

**2. ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED**

**A. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Taylor advised that the first item on the agenda is the Approval of Agenda and this required a motion and approval by the Council. She inquired if there was a motion to approve the Work Session agenda as presented.

Motion made by Vice-Mayor Pattison and seconded by Councilwoman Atkins to approve the Work Session agenda as presented. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

**B. DISCUSSION REGARDING FISCAL YEAR 2023-24 BUDGET**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is the discussion regarding the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget. She noted that Town Manager Freeman will provide the Council with information regarding this topic. Town Manager Freeman thanked Town

staff for their continued help in the budget preparation process. He then briefly reviewed the budget information that was discussed at the last Work Session. Town Manager Freeman stated that the Town is still experiencing challenges with inflation due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and that, as of February, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is still over six percent. He noted that Water and Sewer, Public Safety and Public Works are the Town's largest expenditures. Town Manager Freeman noted that local taxes make up 37 percent of all General Fund revenues, which includes meals tax, lodging tax, state sales tax, tobacco tax, etc. Discussion continued regarding local taxes and their contribution to the Town's revenue. Town Manager Freeman advised the Council that Categorical Aid consists of restricted funds that come primarily from the State of Virginia for designated purposes. He commented that the Town receives a grant from the Department of Criminal Justice Services, annually, and that they will be giving away extra funds, this year, through the ARPA Law Enforcement Equipment Program. Town Manager Freeman stated that, hopefully, the funds will be used for the purchase of two new police vehicles, ballistic vests and the replacement of surface weapons. He noted that the Public Works Department receives most of their revenue from the annual Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Highway Maintenance Grant. Town Manager Freeman commented that the funds from that grant pay to pave the streets, run the street sweeper, fix potholes, etc. He stated that Heritage Walk Phase III is another grant from VDOT, along with the museum connector, and he advised that Heritage Walk Phase III is in the right-of-way stage and is close to being put out to bid. A brief discussion continued regarding the progression of Heritage Walk Phase III and other grants that the Town receives. Town Manager Freeman stated that interest on reserves only consists of about three percent of the General Fund revenue, and that there has been an increase in these funds since approximately 2018. He commented that the Town has tried to save as much of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds as possible, and that the Town's reserve funds have increased. Discussion was held regarding splitting the use of the reserves into capital and one-time uses and operational uses with the Council. Town Manager Freeman stated that, soon, the Council will consider a change in the Town's water rates. He advised that the proposed change is a one dollar increase on the base water rate. Discussion continued regarding operational uses of the Town's reserves for water. Town Manager Freeman stated that Staff would like to propose the same change to sewer rates as water rates. He noted that the base rate would change from \$13.00 to \$14.00. Discussion continued regarding operational uses of the Town's reserves for sewer. Town Manager Freeman stated that the next steps regarding the budget will be the first reading of the budget, setting a public hearing for the budget and setting a public hearing to consider the Real Property Tax Rate.

**C. REVIEW OF PROPOSED INCREASES FOR VARIOUS TOWN FEES**

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the review of proposed increases for various Town fees. He noted that Staff wants to make reviewing the Town's fees part of the annual review process, and he stated that a listing of all of the Town fees is included in their meeting package. Town Manager Freeman commented that these fees do not generate a lot of revenue for the Town, but the only time they are adjusted is when a Department Head makes the request to

do so. He stated that the Council will consider these fee increases at a future meeting, but he wanted to give the Council members this information to review ahead of time. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if the proposed fees are compatible with other surrounding localities. Town Manager Freeman commented that he was not sure because these types of rates are not tracked very well. Discussion was held regarding the increase in Town fees and comparing them to other communities. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would look into comparing the fees to other communities that are similar in population and economic interest to Wytheville.

There being no further business, the Work Session was adjourned. (4:48 p.m.)

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T. Brian Freeman, Town Manager

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Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk