



MINUTES

WYTHEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2023 AT 5:00 PM

MUNICIPAL BUILDING - 150 EAST MONROE STREET
WYTHEVILLE, VA 24382

1. RE: ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Holly Atkins, Councilman Gary Gillman, Councilwoman Candice Johnson

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Town Manager Brian Freeman, Assistant Town Manager Elaine HOLETON, Town Clerk Sherry Corvin, Town Treasurer Michael Stephens, Police Chief Joel Hash, Detective Joe Kincer, Police Officer John Oglesby, Police Officer Kyle Counts, Planning Director John Woods, Computer Operations Manager Ron Jude, Andy Kegley, Jordan Stidham, Donna Leonard, Nancy Martin, Kirk Chamberlain, Andrea Midkiff, James Cohen

2. RE: CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order.

3. RE: ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Mayor Taylor established that a quorum of Council members was present.

4. RE: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilwoman Candice Johnson.

5. RE: APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is the Approval of Agenda. She inquired if there was a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion made by Councilman Gillman, Seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison. 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.

6. RE: SCHEDULED RECESS AT 6:00 P.M.

Mayor Taylor advised that for informational purposes, the agenda includes a 6:00 p.m. scheduled recess, if necessary.

7. RE: CONSENT AGENDA

A. Mayor Taylor presented the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of June 12, 2023. She inquired if there was a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion made by Vice-Mayor Pattison, Seconded by Councilman Gillman.
Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

8. RE: PUBLIC HEARINGS, REQUESTS, RESOLUTIONS, COUNCIL DECISIONS

A. RE: PUBLIC HEARING - HOPE, INC. ALLEY CLOSING REQUEST

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider a request from HOPE, Incorporated to close an alley running parallel to West Monroe Street and West North Street, between 14th and 16th Streets, and to consider waiving the payment value of \$14,229.00 for the alley. She noted that Planning Director Woods would give the Council more information regarding the request. Director Woods advised that HOPE, Inc. is the current owner of all parcels in the block, and their intent is to construct workforce housing. He stated that there is a single family-dwelling located on one of the parcels owned by HOPE, Inc. which is currently vacant. Director Woods remarked that around one quarter of the block has been mowed regularly as a lawn, and the remaining portion has been used and cut for hay production. Planning Director Woods continued to review information regarding the block owned by HOPE, Inc., and the request to close the alley located in this block.

Mayor Taylor advised that the meeting constituted a public hearing (due notice having been given) to consider a request from HOPE, Incorporated, to close an alley running parallel to West Monroe Street and West North Street, between 14th and 16th Streets. She inquired if there were any citizens present who wished to address the Council during the public hearing.

Mr. Andy Kegley with HOPE, Inc. was recognized and stated that he would like to thank the Council for considering his request, and that this will be the first presentation from HOPE, Inc. regarding this project. He gave a brief overview of the timeline of this project. Mayor Taylor inquired how many homes will be constructed on this lot. Mr. Kegley stated that there will be three buildings constructed and that there will be 30 units. Councilwoman Johnson commented that she believes this will be a nice housing development.

Mr. Jordan Stidham the Director of Finance and Development for HOPE, Inc. was recognized and stated that their goal is to construct housing that blends in with the community, so that the residents can be proud of where they live. He then discussed their goals for design with the Council. Mayor Taylor thanked Mr. Stidham for his comments. She inquired if there were any other citizens who wished to address the Council during this public hearing. There being none, she declared the public hearing closed.

Mayor Taylor presented Ordinance No. 1425, an ordinance discontinuing and vacating an alley running parallel to West Monroe Street and West North Street, between 14th Street and 16th Street. She inquired if there was a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1425 on first and final reading. Motion made by Councilwoman Johnson, Seconded by Councilwoman Atkins. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion regarding 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.

Mayor Taylor advised that the waiver of payment for the value of the alley is now before the Council for consideration. A motion was made by Councilwoman Johnson and seconded by Councilwoman Atkins to approve the waiver of payment in the amount of \$14,229.00 for the value of the alley. 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. RE: PUBLIC HEARING - FISCAL YEAR 2022-23 BUDGET APPROPRIATIONS

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider appropriations to the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget. She stated that Town Treasurer Michael Stephens would give the Council more information regarding the appropriations. Town Treasurer Stephens advised that a budget amendment is required when a municipality exceeds the amount of money appropriated for expenditures. He noted that there were a few unexpected expenditures for the current fiscal year, therefore, the Council will need to amend and appropriate \$15,000 for the Perpetual Care Fund, \$8,000 for the Wytheville Economic Development Authority Fund (EDA) and \$2,100 for the Park Amenities Fund.

Mayor Taylor advised that the meeting constituted a public hearing (due notice having been given) to consider appropriations to the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget. She inquired if there were any citizens present who wished to address the Council during this public hearing. There being none, she declared the public hearing closed.

Mayor Taylor advised that appropriations to the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Budget are now before the Town Council for consideration. She inquired if there was a motion to amend and appropriate the 2022-23 Park Amenities Fund Budget in the amount of \$2,100, the Perpetual Care Fund Budget in the amount of \$15,000 and the Wytheville EDA Fund in the amount of \$8,000. Motion made by Councilwoman Atkins, Seconded by Councilman Gillman. She 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.

C. RE: ORDINANCE NO. 1422 - FISCAL YEAR 2023-24 BUDGET

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider Ordinance No. 1422, the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2023-24, on third and final reading. She noted that Town Manager Freeman will give the Council more information regarding the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget. Town Manager Freeman gave a brief Staff Report/Presentation reviewing the General Fund and reviewing a few changes to the use of the Reserves Fund.

Mayor Taylor advised that Ordinance No. 1422, the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2023-24, is before the Town Council to consider on third and final reading. She inquired if there was a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1422, on third and final reading. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she would like to make a motion to make an amendment to the budget regarding the Animal Control Fund. She noted that she feels as if the Town should pay more toward food, litter, spaying and neutering for the Town's Cat Shelter. Town Manager Freeman stated that there is a line item in Animal Control's budget for supplies. A brief discussion was held regarding supplies and what the Town should contribute. Councilwoman Atkins remarked that a stainless-steel cabinet kennel was donated to the Cat Shelter, however, she would like to for Staff to look into purchasing about six more to help with cleanliness. Discussion continued regarding stainless-steel cabinet kennels. A motion was made by Councilwoman Atkins to amend the budget and to \$5,000 for food, litter, spaying and neutering and to add approximately \$28,000 for six stainless-steel cabinet kennels for the Town's Cat Shelter. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a second. There being none, the motion died for lack of second. Councilwoman Atkins thanked the Council members for listening to her idea. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1422, the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2023-24, on third and final reading. Motion made by Vice-Mayor Pattison, Seconded by Councilman Gillman. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. Councilwoman Johnson stated that she is not in agreement with the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Budget. Councilwoman Atkins advised that she is not in agreement with the budget either. She noted that there are some employee salaries that need to be looked at since the Compensation Study was completed. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if Town Manager Freeman had tweaked some of the salary amounts from the study. Town Manager Freeman noted that is correct. Councilwoman Atkins commented that she would like to meet with Town Manager Freeman to review some employee salaries. Councilwoman Johnson remarked that she would also like to meet with them regarding salaries. Discussion continued regarding the review of employee salaries. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any other discussion regarding 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, Councilman Gillman. Voting Against: Councilwoman Atkins, Councilwoman Johnson.

D. RE: ORDINANCE NO. 1424 - MOWING ORDINANCE

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider Ordinance No. 1424, an ordinance amending and reenacting Chapter 12. Solid Waste Collection and Disposal, Article VI. Nuisances on Premises, Removal of Weeds, Mowing, Etc., and Clutter, Division 2. Removal of Weeds, Mowing, Etc., by amending section 12-92. Excessive Vegetation; Overgrowth, and by adding Section 12.94. Mowing Exemptions, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, on first and final reading.

She stated that Assistant Town Manager Holeton would give the Council more information regarding the Ordinance. Assistant Town Manager Holeton provided information regarding the recently adopted Ordinance No. 1420 that repealed and replaced the entire Chapter 12, and reviewed the changes that have been made since this ordinance was adopted. She stated that the major changes that have been made are intended to clarify the mowing exemption for properties that are currently engaged in active agricultural operations. Councilwoman Atkins inquired about who measures grass when enforcing the Mowing Ordinance. Town Manager Freeman stated that enforcement of the ordinance is complaint based and most offenders are repeat offenders. He noted that Staff or contractors, usually, know where these offenders are located, and they will measure the grass and then take a before and after picture for billing purposes. Councilwoman Atkins remarked that she would like to see some of those properties better maintained. Discussion continued regarding maintaining the properties of citizens violating the Mowing Ordinance.

Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1424, an ordinance amending and reenacting Chapter 12. Solid Waste Collection and Disposal, Article VI. Nuisances on Premises, Removal of Weeds, Mowing, Etc., and Clutter, Division 2. Removal of Weeds, Mowing, Etc., by amending Section 12-92. Excessive Vegetation; Overgrowth, and by adding Section 12.94. Mowing Exemptions, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, on first and final reading. Motion made by Vice-Mayor Pattison, Seconded by Councilman Gillman. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she would like for there to be added language regarding consequences of violating the Mowing Ordinance. Town Manager Freeman discussed this request with the Council. There being no further discussion, the motion was approved with the following voting results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson. Voting Against: Councilwoman Atkins.

E. RE: ORDINANCE NO. 1426 - CIGARETTE TAX ORDINANCE

Mayor Taylor advised that the next item on the agenda is the consideration of Ordinance No. 1426, an ordinance repealing and replacing Chapter 14. Taxation, Article IV. Cigarette Tax, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, on first reading. She noted that Town Manager Freeman will present more information to the Council regarding this ordinance. Town Manager Freeman gave a Presentation/Staff Report regarding cigarette taxes.

Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1426, an ordinance replacing Chapter 14. Taxation, Article IV. Cigarette Tax, on first and final reading. Motion made by Councilman Gillman, Seconded by Councilwoman Atkins. 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.

F. RE: RESOLUTION - GEORGE WYTHE HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS TENNIS TEAM

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is a resolution recognizing the George Wythe High School (GWHS) Girls Tennis Team. She stated that the GWHS Girls Tennis Team was unable to attend the meeting, however, the Team will attend the July 24, Town Council meeting to receive the resolution. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to adopt the resolution recognizing the George Wythe High School Girls Tennis team.

Motion made by Councilwoman Johnson, Seconded by Councilman Gillman. Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

G. RE: ISSUANCE OF TOWN HUNTING PERMITS

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the issuance of hunting permits on Town-owned land on Sand Mountain. She noted that Town Manager Freeman will give the Council more information regarding the hunting permits. Town Manager Freeman stated that the Town has permitted hunting on

approximately half of the Town's property on Sand Mountain for a number of years. He advised that the Town issues a maximum of 50 permits each year. Town Manager Freeman remarked that the hunting regulations were revised for this area to mirror the requirements of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries for the adjacent Big Survey property. He commented that it is the recommendation of Town staff that the permits for the 2023 hunting season be issued again.

Mayor Taylor advised that the issuance of hunting permits on Town-owned land on Sand Mountain is before the Council for consideration to approve or deny. Councilwoman Johnson inquired about how the hunting permits were advertised to the public. Town Clerk Corvin stated that ads are placed in the newspaper and that it is advertised on social media. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve the issuance of a maximum of 50 hunting permits on Town-owned land on Sand Mountain.

Motion made by Councilman Gillman, Seconded by Councilwoman Johnson.
Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

9. RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is Citizens' Period. She inquired if there was anyone who wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period. Mayor Taylor stated that there are two citizens listed on the sign-in sheet who stated that they wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period, and she asked that Ms. Donna Leonard, please come to the podium and state her name and address for the recording of the minutes.

Ms. Donna Leonard was recognized and stated that she resides at 530 East Monroe Street in Wytheville. She advised that she had never attended a public hearing, and inquired if the public was allowed to speak during the public hearings. Ms. Leonard commented that Mayor Taylor did not address the public during the public hearings. Mayor Taylor stated that there are specific matters that require public hearings. She advised that public hearings are opened for public comments and then closed after all comments have been made. A brief discussion continued regarding the process of opening and closing public hearings for public comments. Ms. Leonard inquired if Staff has estimated the amount of revenue the Town will receive from the recent meals tax increase. Town Manager Freeman stated that Staff has estimated to receive approximately \$500,000 from the increase. Ms. Leonard advised that the main reason she attended the Town Council meeting is to address her concerns regarding speeding on East Monroe Street. She noted that this problem needs to be solved even if there is a stop sign at every intersection, speed bumps and rumble strips. Ms. Leonard remarked that Staff should consider a way to start slowing people down before they reach East Monroe Street. She commented that speeding is not only a problem on East Monroe Street, but it is a problem throughout town. Ms. Leonard then listed speeding vehicles that she recognizes regularly. She inquired if a police officer could be scheduled strictly for traffic during their shift. Ms. Leonard stated that she feels as if the speeding issues are just as important as any other call of which an officer would have to respond. She commented that earlier that day, she was walking to meet another couple before attending the Council meeting, and that it took her ten minutes to cross Monroe Street due to heavy traffic. Ms. Leonard stated that she did not understand how traffic was slower on Main Street but not East Monroe Street. Town Manager Freeman remarked that the functional classification of those two streets is different, which creates problems if stop signs are going to be placed at numerous intersections in town. Discussion was held regarding the functional classification of these two streets and how to reduce speeding in the area. Town Manager Freeman stated that he and Police Chief Hash would like to meet with Ms. Leonard to discuss this issue further. Ms. Leonard stated that she would like to meet with them, as well. Town Manager Freeman advised that he will contact Ms. Leonard regarding a meeting time. Mayor Taylor thanked Ms. Leonard for her comments. She inquired if there were any other citizens present who wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period.

Mr. Kirk Chamberlain was recognized and stated that he resides at 495 East Monroe Street. He noted that he wanted to address the Council regarding speeding issues. Mr. Chamberlain advised that he was told that there were not enough police officers to enforce speeding. He remarked that Wytheville needs to be pedestrian and bicycle friendly if children are going to walk to school and ride bikes in the future. Mr. Chamberlain stated

that if there are drivers speeding disregarding the law that neither of these things will happen. He inquired if the Virginia State Police, Wythe County Police and the Virginia Department of Transportation could monitor speeds if the Wytheville Police Department cannot enforce it due to being understaffed. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she believed the Wytheville Police Department is now close to being fully staffed. A brief discussion continued regarding speeding concerns. Mr. Chamberlain stated that he would help with suggestions if needed, and he thanked the Council for allowing him to speak.

Town Treasurer Michael Stephens was recognized and stated that he would like to thank the Town Council for their support of the 92nd Annual Treasurers Association Conference that was held the previous weekend. He advised that he would like to commend the Wytheville Meeting Center staff for their help with the event.

10. RE: REPORTS

A. RE: STAFF REPORT(S)

Town Manager Freeman presented the Staff Report, and a copy is attached and made part of the minutes.

B. RE: UPCOMING MEETINGS

1. The Town of Wytheville Municipal Offices will be closed, and all services curtailed on Tuesday, July 4, 2023, in observance of the Independence Day holiday.

2. The next regular meeting of the Wytheville Town Council will be held on Monday, July 10, 2023, at 5:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

11. RE: OTHER BUSINESS

A. RE: TOWN COMMITTEE/BOARD UPCOMING VACANCIES

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is the review of upcoming vacancies on Town Committees/Boards. She stated that Town Clerk Corvin will give the Council more information regarding these vacancies. Town Clerk Corvin advised that the Council members received a listing of the upcoming Committee vacancies. She then reviewed the listing of the vacancies with the Council. Town Clerk Corvin noted that anyone who is interested in serving on a Town Committee/Board can apply online through the Town's OpenGov portal. Mayor Taylor inquired of Town Clerk Corvin regarding a timeline for applicants. Town Clerk Corvin stated that Staff tries to put a deadline on applications when multiple applications are being submitted for one Committee/Board. A brief discussion continued regarding applications for Town Committee/Boards.

B. RE: COUNCIL MEMBER TIME

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is Council Member Time. She inquired if Councilman Gillman had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Councilman Gillman inquired if the Town could do anything about the drainage problem at Elizabeth Brown Park. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would talk to Public Works and Engineering staff about the problem. Mayor Taylor advised that a class from Virginia Tech is visiting Downtown Wytheville to conduct a small study on connectability and walkability in the parks. She advised that they have a large interest in water management, and that they could possibly assist in solving the drainage problem. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she would like to mention the erosion problem near the Wythe County Community Hospital to the Virginia Tech students, as well. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would look into this matter.

Mayor Taylor inquired if Vice-Mayor Pattison had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Vice-Mayor Pattison stated that she did not.

Mayor Taylor inquired if Councilwoman Atkins had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she would like to thank Town Treasurer Stephens, the Treasurer's Office staff, the Wytheville Meeting Center staff and everyone who was part of hosting the Annual Treasurers Association Conference.

Councilwoman Atkins stated that she would like to thank the Public Works staff for taking care of a situation at the Fourth Street Civic Center before the Chautauqua Festival.

Councilwoman Atkins inquired if the Town Council would consider giving Town employees the day off on Monday, July 3, 2023, for the July 4th holiday. She noted that she would like to give employees the day off to show appreciation to them. A motion was made by Councilwoman Atkins and seconded by Councilwoman Johnson for the Town Council to consider giving Town employees the day off on Monday, July 3, 2023, and to add eight hours of annual time for employees who cannot take the day off. Discussion was held regarding the Town departments that will not be able to take off on Monday, July 3, 2023. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any further discussion. 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.

Mayor Taylor inquired if Councilwoman Johnson had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Councilwoman Johnson stated that she was going to discuss the speeding issues on Monroe Street during this time, however, citizens have expressed their concerns on this matter. She advised that she would like for Staff to work with these citizens to find a solution to the problem. Councilwoman Atkins noted that she would recommend looking at other localities to see if they have had the same problems and the process they used to solve them. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would look into this.

Councilwoman Johnson stated that she would like to thank Town Treasurer Stephens and his Staff for their outstanding job hosting the Annual Treasurers Conference.

Mayor Taylor inquired if the Council has given any thought as to whether they would like to host a September 11 Commemoration Event. She stated that this topic did not need to be discussed, and that she wanted to know if the Council had any input on this event. There being no discussion on this event, she proceeded with the agenda.

12. RE: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be discussed a motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting. (6:44 p.m.)

Beth A. Taylor, Mayor

Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk

STAFF REPORT

June 26, 2023

- 1. 2023 CHAUTAUQUA FESTIVAL:** A special thanks goes to the Wythe Arts Council, Town of Wytheville Public Works Department, Public Safety Department and all of the many volunteers that put countless hours into the Chautauqua festival. The rainy week might have deterred some of the crowds we are used to seeing, but the aforementioned folks worked very hard planning and executing this event. So, from the Town of Wytheville, thank you.
- 2. EMS SERVICES:** The rainy weather often brings with it an uptick in emergency medical services calls. Although, we do not have all the numbers in, yet, I do understand that it was quite a busy week for Public Safety personnel, so thank you all of the Town's emergency services personnel for working through a challenging week, weatherwise.
- 3. TREASURERS' ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE:** I'd like to take a minute to acknowledge the work of the treasurers' office led by Michael Stephens, last week the Town of Wytheville hosted the 92nd annual Treasures' Association of Virginia Annual Conference. This was the first time a Town has ever hosted the event. I was able to attend the annual awards banquet dinner. It was a lovely event and I believe we had over 300 in attendance. Everyone I talked to said it had been a tremendous event, and I think all the credit for that goes to Michael, Angela, Dara, Amanda and Janet, and the folks we had with the Meeting Center, The Department of Museums, etc., also, I would like to thank the Public Safety personnel and Public Works crews for further assistance throughout. I believe this was the first time our entire Treasurers' Office staff was able to attend the conference, but I would for like them to consider attendance at future events, in other localities, to continue to develop those all important networks within the profession.