



MINUTES

WYTHEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2023 AT 5:00 PM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING - 150 EAST MONROE STREET
WYTHEVILLE, VA 24382

1. **RE: ATTENDANCE**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Town Manager Brian Freeman, Assistant Town Manager Elaine Holeyton, Town Clerk Sherry Corvin, Interim Town Attorney Paul Cassell, Town Treasurer Michael Stephens, Computer Operations Manager Ron Jude, Fire Chief Chris Slomp, Police Sergeant Tommy Lester, Wytheville Farmer's Market Manager Thalia Rodriguez, David Johnston, James Cohen, Hank Ball, Maelene Watson, Don Lawson, Megen Woods

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 Councilman Gillman.

5. **RE: APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is the Approval of Agenda. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Pattison and seconded by Councilman Gillman to amend the agenda to include the following items to the agenda: 1.) Add an additional item in Open Session to amend the holiday hours for Friday, December 22, 2023, from four holiday hours to eight holiday hours; and, 2.) Add an additional item in a Closed Meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A.) (3.) Discussion regarding the acquisition/disposition of property used for a public purpose. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she was going to request during Council Member Time if the Council would consider amending the holiday hours for Wednesday, November 22, 2023, from a half day to a full day. Mayor Taylor inquired if the original motion would need to be amended to include Councilwoman Atkins request to include an agenda item. Interim Town Attorney Cassell inquired of Vice-Mayor Pattison if she was willing to amend her motion to include Councilwoman Atkins request. He inquired if Councilman Gillman was also willing to confirm the second. Vice-Mayor Pattison and Councilman Gillman both agreed to the amendment. Discussion ensued regarding the original motion. Mayor Taylor reiterated that the amended motion to amend the agenda is to 1.) Add an additional item in Open Session to amend the holiday hours for Friday, December 22, 2023, from four holiday hours to eight holiday hours; 2.) Add an additional item in a Closed Meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A.) (3.) Discussion regarding the acquisition/disposition of property used for a public purpose; and, 3.) Add an additional item in Open Session to amend the holiday hours for Wednesday, November 22, 2023, from four holiday hours to eight holiday hours. Voting Yea: Councilman Gillman, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Mayor Taylor, Councilwoman Atkins, 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

Mayor Taylor presented the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the Special Town Council meeting of October 11, 2023. She inquired if there was a motion to approve the minutes of the Special Town Council meeting of October 11, 2023, as presented.

Motion made by Councilman Gillman, Seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any further discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

8. RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is Citizens' Period. She stated that there are several citizens listed on the sign-in sheet who would like to address the Council during Citizens' Period. Mayor Taylor commented that she would proceed with the order that they are written on the sign-in sheet, and the first name on the list is Mr. Hank Ball.

Mr. Hank Ball was recognized and stated that he resides at Hedgefield Lane in Wytheville. Mr. Ball commented that he was addressing the Council regarding the activity taking place at the Hedgefield Apartment Complex every night. He explained that after the staff leaves the complex after their shifts during the week, on the weekends and during the holidays, lots of bad activity is taking place. Mr. Ball discussed the numerous problems with vagrants, the young people living there who have their friends living with them, theft, drug activity, etc., and the fact that the office staff do not seem to be able to put a stop to it. Mr. Ball continued to discuss his concerns and frustrations at the Hedgefield Apartment Complex with the Council. He stated if this governing body is not who he needs to speak to regarding this issue, to please direct him to where he needs to go to in order to resolve his issues. Town Manager Freeman advised Mr. Ball to provide him with his contact information, and that he would contact Mr. Ball directly with the names and numbers of who may be able to help him. Councilwoman Atkins stated that Ms. Regina Pike also works in the office at the Housing Authority and could help him. Mr. Ball remarked that he has never seen her. Councilwoman Johnson commented to Mr. Ball that she is sorry that the residents are having so many safety issues. Discussion ensued regarding the presence of the police helping with the vagrants and others who are not residents of the apartment complex. Mr. Ball thanked the Council for allowing him to speak. Mayor Taylor thanked Mr. Ball for bringing the issue to the Council's attention.

Ms. Maelene Watson was recognized and stated that she resides at 105 Antler Drive in Wytheville. She noted that she is the Commander of the American Legion Post #9 of Wytheville, Commander of District Seven for the Western Region of Virginia, Chair of the Wall of Honor Committee and an Army veteran. Ms. Watson stated that she would like to address the Council regarding the Veterans Day Ceremony from a veteran's perspective. She noted that she had put her thoughts on paper so that she would not forget anything, and she would like to read what she has written to the Council. Ms. Watson expressed her concerns regarding the Veterans Day Ceremony and Parade not being rescheduled for another day, the veterans of Wytheville not feeling as appreciated as the Run for the Wall veterans, etc. She commented that the veterans of Wytheville are willing to help with anything the Town needs, and she thanked the Council for allowing her to speak. Mayor Taylor thanked Ms. Watson for sharing her thoughts with the Council. She commented that as a wife of a veteran, she understands what being a veteran is all about, and the rest of the Council does, as well. Mayor Taylor advised that the Town's Wall of Honor Committee did have a lovely Veterans Day event at Spiller Elementary School on Friday, November 10, and there were a lot of veterans in attendance, which was very nice. Councilwoman Johnson discussed the banners she had requested awhile ago for the downtown area that families of veterans could purchase in their memory or honor. Town Manager Freeman explained that he and Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated Executive Director Todd Wolford had some discussions regarding her request, and, if the Council agrees and Councilwoman Johnson agrees, he and Executive Director Wolford would like to explore the project more, review the logistics of it and see if the project is something that the three of them can work on over the next few months. Councilwoman Johnson agreed. She stated that she would like to propose if there is a way to offer the banners to the veterans'

families as a discount through the Town and budget for it next year. Councilwoman Atkins commented that she had also contacted Mr. Wolford some time ago regarding a banner business that he could contact, and that she had also sent him screenshots of banner examples. Discussion continued regarding the banners.

Mayor Taylor inquired if there were any others who wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period. There being none, she proceeded with the agenda.

9. RE: PRESENTATIONS TO TOWN COUNCIL

A. RE: PRESENTATION ON FARMER'S MARKET

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is a presentation by Ms. Thalia Rodriguez regarding the Wytheville Farmer's Market. Ms. Thalia Rodriguez stated that she resides at 210 West Spring Street in Wytheville. She explained that she was attending the meeting to present an idea on behalf of the Wytheville Farmer's Market for a potential renovation of the kitchen space into a commercial teaching kitchen and a few other updates. Ms. Rodriguez noted that the idea of converting the kitchen into a commercial kitchen has been in the works for several years, but, due to the changes in management over the years, it has not been able to be implemented. She commented that she thought that the Town Council, at one time, approved the project, but with the change in Council, the Farmer's Market Board realized that it would need to request approval once again. Ms. Rodriguez presented a PowerPoint presentation of the Farmer's Market Board of Directors' proposed ideas for the commercial teaching kitchen, if approved by the Town Council. She stated that the Farmer's Market Board also requested that she inquire about the renewal of their lease of the building that is set to expire at the end of 2023. Ms. Rodriguez remarked that the Farmer's Market Board has requested if the Town Council would be able to schedule a meeting with them to discuss a few changes to the Wytheville Farmer's Market Lease Agreement. She noted that she was not sure if this would be a meeting between the Town Manager and the Board or the Town Council and the Board. Ms. Rodriguez discussed why the Farmer's Market and its programs are important to the community. She stated that she wanted to discuss the topic of the installation of air conditioning with the Council if they approve a commercial kitchen. Ms. Rodriguez remarked that the Wytheville Fire and Rescue Department inspected the building, and they recommended installing a fire alarm system and a Knox Box. She inquired if the Council would allow the Farmer's Market Board to paint the building on the interior or work with the graphic design departments at Radford University or Virginia Tech to come in and paint a mural. Ms. Rodriguez inquired if the Council would approve the Farmer's Market Board installing shades and/or curtains in the picnic area to keep the sun from ruining the produce of the vendors who set up during market hours.

Town Manager Freeman stated that he and Ms. Rodriguez would pick some dates to meet and discuss the items that she has requested. He noted that, last week, Chief Slemple sent him the Knox Box request, and this has been ordered and will be installed. Town Manager Freeman stated that he agrees with Ms. Rodriguez regarding the mural, and he feels that it would be a great idea. He noted that he hopes the Council will support their request for the mural. Town Manager Freeman advised that regarding the request for shades in the picnic area, he thinks this is a great idea, too. He remarked that he would like to see how the Farmer's Market plans to install the shades, etc. Mayor Taylor inquired if the mural and shades would be two items that the Council could make a decision on at this meeting so that Ms. Rodriguez could report back to her Board. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if the Council would pay for the shades or if they would be grant funded. Ms. Rodriguez stated that the Farmer's Market Board is willing to pay for the shades since it is something that they are requesting that is not a necessity. Town Manager Freeman commented that he would like to clarify that the area where the shades would be installed would be in the outdoor pavilion. Ms. Rodriguez stated that is correct. Discussion ensued regarding the shades. Mayor Taylor inquired if Town Manager Freeman would schedule a meeting with representatives of the Farmer's Market Board to discuss the Lease Agreement and the other items discussed and then share the meeting details with the Council to see how the Council would like to proceed. It was the consensus of the Council to approve the Farmer's Market Board to have a mural painted inside the Farmer's Market building and for the Board to purchase

shades to be installed in the outdoor pavilion. Mayor Taylor thanked Ms. Rodriguez for her presentation, and she proceeded with the agenda.

B. RE: PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION SECTION OF THE TOWN CODE

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is a presentation by Fire Chief Chris Slemph on the proposed amendments to the Fire Prevention and Protection section of the Town Code. Chief Slemph explained that the ordinance before the Council is only a draft and does not require any action from the Council at this meeting. He stated that he would be giving the Council some background and an overview of where and why the ordinance needs to go in the direction that it does. He noted that the amendments are needed due to the significant changes in the past five years to the Fire and Rescue Department, as well as outdated Town Code sections, Town Code sections that conflict with State Code sections, etc. Chief Slemph reviewed the proposed amendments to the Fire Prevention and Protection section of the Town Code with the Council. He explained that there are new chapters being proposed in the draft ordinance, as well. Chief Slemph stated that he would request that the Council review the proposed amendments, and if they have any questions, he would be glad to talk to the Council members individually. He remarked that he would spend as much time with each of them as they would like to answer their questions. Mayor Taylor inquired if any of the Council members had any questions for Chief Slemph, at this time.

Councilwoman Johnson stated that she would like to thank Chief Slemph for taking his time and going through the Town Code to get the Code up to date.

Mayor Taylor inquired of Chief Slemph as to who serves as the Town's Fire Marshal. Chief Slemph advised that, technically, right now, he is the Fire Marshal. He explained that the Town also has a couple of Assistant Fire Marshals. He commented that since the Fire Marshal(s) enforce the Town Codes, an Oath of Office needs to be taken when appointed. Chief Slemph stated that he has replaced this back in the ordinance. Mayor Taylor inquired if the Fire Department is going to continue to be able to serve warrants. Chief Slemph advised that, at this time, if the Fire Department needed to serve a warrant, they would not be able to do so, and that a Police Officer would have to do so. He explained the powers of a Fire Marshal in the State of Virginia if they have received certain training. Discussion ensued regarding the Code section regarding the serving of warrants, carrying firearms, etc.

Councilman Gillman inquired of Interim Town Attorney Cassell if the Council could make a motion to give Chief Slemph the authority to enforce a burn ban. Interim Town Attorney Cassell stated that he was not aware of a State Code provision that authorizes enforcement without a corresponding ordinance. Chief Slemph remarked that he would do some research to make sure that his proposed amendments regarding burn bans are correct. Interim Town Attorney Cassell advised that it will either be in the Virginia Code, or it will have to be an ordinance. He stated that the Council is not going to be able to proceed with the motion at this meeting. Interim Town Attorney Cassell advised that Chief Slemph may already have the authority to enforce the burn ban, however, this has not been reviewed, and it could exist somewhere in the Virginia Code or Fire Prevention Code. Chief Slemph stated that he would review a fire manual and share the information with Mr. Cassell.

Councilwoman Atkins inquired of Chief Slemph regarding the burn ban that Wythe County has in place at this time, and, if the Town of Wytheville must follow the ban. Chief Slemph stated that is correct. Discussion ensued regarding Wytheville being covered under the Wythe County burn ban until the Town can establish its own burn ban. Chief Slemph thanked the Council for allowing him to speak. Mayor Taylor thanked Chief Slemph for his presentation, and she proceeded with the agenda.

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

A. RE: WYTHE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOUNDATION FOR EXCELLENCE REQUEST

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the request of Wythe County Public Schools Foundation for Excellence to provide traffic control on

Saturday, January 13, 2024, to conduct a Sandman Half Marathon and the MLK 5K Run. Assistant Town Manager Holeton reviewed the request with the Council, and she noted that the Safety and Events Committee has reviewed the request and recommended that it be approved. Councilwoman Atkins inquired of Assistant Town Manager Holeton if there would be rescue squad members involved throughout the route because of it being such a brutal run. Assistant Town Manager Holeton stated that this is a great question, but this was not discussed during the Committee meeting. She noted that she would be happy to send this request to the Fire and Rescue Department to see if they can be available to assist with the event. Assistant Town Manager Holeton advised that she would work with Chief Slomp regarding the request. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve the request of Wythe County Public Schools Foundation for Excellence to provide traffic control on Saturday, January 13, 2024, to conduct a Sandman Half Marathon and the MLK 5K Run.

Motion made by Councilman Gillman, Seconded by Councilwoman Johnson. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

B. RE: OPEN DOOR CAFE STUFFED STRUT REQUEST

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the request of Open Door Cafe to provide traffic control on Thursday, November 23, 2023, to conduct the Stuffed Strut 5K Run. Assistant Town Manager Holeton reviewed the request of Open Door Cafe. She noted that the Town of Wytheville has entered a team of approximately 20 Town employees through its Risk Management Funds again this year. Mayor Taylor inquired if there is a motion to approve the request of Open Door Cafe to provide traffic control on Thursday, November 23, 2023, to conduct the Stuffed Strut 5K Run.

Motion made by Councilwoman Johnson, 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 in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

C. RE: KIWANIS CLUB OF WYTHE COUNTY REQUEST

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the request of the Kiwanis Club of Wythe County to provide traffic control on Saturday, May 4, 2024, to conduct a 5K Run. Assistant Town Manager Holeton reviewed the request of the Kiwanis Club of Wythe County with the Council. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve the request of the Kiwanis Club of Wythe County to provide traffic control on Saturday, May 4, 2024, to conduct a 5K Run.

Motion made by Councilwoman Johnson, 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 in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

D. RE: DOWNTOWN WYTHEVILLE, INCORPORATED WYTHEVILLE CHRISTMAS PARADE AND CELEBRATION REQUEST

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the request of Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated to provide traffic control on Saturday, December 2, 2023, for the Wytheville Christmas Parade and Celebration. Assistant Town Manager Holeton reviewed the request of Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated regarding the Wytheville Christmas Parade and Celebration with the Council. She stated that she would like to note that since the Council received their packets, there has been an update to the start times. Assistant Town Manager Holeton reviewed the new start times that would allow enough time for people to get from the tree lighting ceremony to the parade lineup. Discussion ensued regarding the activities throughout the celebration.

Councilwoman Johnson inquired as to why events are being advertised in the Town's water bills before the Town Council has approved them. Town Manager Freeman stated that Staff will need to start paying close attention to the dates of the events before including the advertisement in the water bills. Councilwoman Johnson advised that future events should not be advertised before the Town Council approves them in the event that there are changes made to the event request.

Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve the request of Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated to provide traffic control on Saturday, December 2, 2023, for the Wytheville Christmas Parade and Celebration.

Motion made by Councilwoman Johnson, 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 in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

E. RE: PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX REIMBURSEMENT RATE

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the establishment of the Personal Property Tax Reimbursement Rate. Town Treasurer Michael Stephens stated that the Commonwealth of Virginia gives the Town of Wytheville a set amount of money each year to distribute towards non-business vehicles. He noted that, each year, these funds must be allocated based on the criteria of the Personal Property Tax Relief Act. Town Treasurer Stephens advised that this year's tax reimbursement rate is 36.48 percent. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to establish the Personal Property Tax Reimbursement Rate at 36.48 percent.

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: Councilwoman Johnson, Councilwoman Atkins, Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilman Gillman.

F. RE: APPOINTMENT - JOINT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF WYTHE COUNTY

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider an appointment to the Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County (JIDA) to fill the expired term of Mr. David Kause (term expired November 10, 2023). A motion was made by Councilman Gillman and seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison to appoint Mr. Mark Bloomfield to the JIDA for a four-year term. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. Councilwoman Johnson stated that she would like to hold a meet-and-greet session with Ms. Vicki Parks before making a decision. Councilman Gillman stated that he would like to withdraw his motion to appoint Mr. Mark Bloomfield to the JIDA. It was the consensus of the Council to schedule a meet-and-greet session with Ms. Vicki Parks before appointing a new member to the JIDA.

G. RE: APPOINTMENT - BUILDING CODE APPEALS BOARD

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider an appointment to the Wytheville Building Code Appeals Board to fill the expired term of Mr. William Turner, III (term expired July 26, 2023). Mayor Taylor inquired if the Council would like to make an appointment to the Building Code Appeals Board, or would they prefer to schedule a meet-and-greet session with the applicants. A brief discussion was held regarding the Building Code Appeals Board applicants. It was the consensus of the Town Council to schedule a meet-and-greet session with Mr. Andy Sayers and Mr. Landon Sayers before making an appointment to the Building Code Appeals Board.

H. RE: DISPENSE WITH DECEMBER MEETING

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider dispensing with the December 25, 2023, Town Council meeting due to the Christmas holidays. Town Manager Freeman briefly discussed dispensing with the December 25 Town Council meeting. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to dispense with the December 25, 2023, Town Council meeting due to the Christmas holidays.

Motion made by Councilwoman Johnson, Seconded by Councilman Gillman. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

I. RE: AMENDMENT TO TOWN HOLIDAY HOURS - CHRISTMAS EVE OBSERVANCE

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider amending the holiday hours for Friday, December 22, 2023, from a half day to a full day. Vice-Mayor Pattison stated that she would suggest the Town Council grant all Town employees a full day off on Friday, December 22, 2023. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Pattison and seconded by Councilwoman Johnson to approve amending the holiday hours for Friday, December 22, 2023, from a half day to a full day. Town Manager Freeman stated that there are employees who work in the Public Safety, Public Works and Public Utilities Departments who will not be able to take the holiday off. He noted, however, that these employees will have holiday hours added to their leave balance. Councilwoman Johnson thanked the Town employees who work in these Departments for their service during the holidays. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any further discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

J. RE: AMENDMENT TO TOWN HOLIDAY HOURS - THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider amending the holiday hours for Wednesday, November 22, 2023, from a half day to a full day. Councilwoman Atkins stated that due to the busy upcoming travel season, she would like to give Town employees a full day off on Wednesday, November 22, as an incentive. A motion was made by Councilwoman Atkins and seconded by Councilwoman Johnson to approve amending the holiday hours for Wednesday, November 22, 2023, from a half day to a full day. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson.

11. RE: REPORTS

A. RE: STAFF REPORT(S)

Town Manager Freeman presented his Staff Report, as follows:

2023 TOWN EMPLOYEE HOLIDAY BONUS: Town Manager Freeman stated that the Town of Wytheville has, historically, provided employees with a holiday bonus during the last pay period before the Thanksgiving holiday. He noted that if a bonus is provided this year, it would need to occur on the November 22, 2023, paycheck to remain consistent with that timeframe. Town Manager Freeman advised that prior to 2020, this bonus was typically computed as one (1) percent of the individual employee's salary, meaning each employee received a different amount with higher paid employees receiving more than lower paid employees. He commented that this did not seem equitable to him. Town Manager Freeman stated that in 2020 or 2021, he proposed that the Town compute one (1) percent of payroll and then evenly distribute that to full-time employees. He noted that this came out to around \$500 for each full-time employee and in 2021 and 2022, that is what was given. Town Manager Freeman stated that, previously, bonuses were not given to part-time employees, however, last year, part-time employees with at least 50 hours worked as of October 31 were provided with a \$100 bonus. He advised that his proposal to the Town Council is to keep the holiday bonuses and bonus schedule the same as last year, with a \$500 bonus for full-time employees and a \$100 bonus to part-time employees. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve the \$500 bonus for full-time employees and a \$100 bonus for part-time employees with at least 50 hours worked prior to October 31, 2023.

Motion made by Councilman Gillman, Seconded by Councilwoman Johnson. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. Councilwoman Atkins inquired of Town Manager Freeman if seasonal part-time employees will receive the holiday bonus. Town Manager Freeman stated that if they worked 50 hours from January 1 to October 31, they will receive the bonus. There being no further discussion, the motion was approved with the following voting results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Councilman Gillman, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Mayor Taylor, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilwoman Johnson.

B. RE: UPCOMING MEETINGS

Town Clerk Corvin presented the upcoming meetings, as follows:

1. The Wytheville Redevelopment and Housing Authority will meet on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 12:00 p.m., at the Housing Authority Office.
2. The New River Regional Water Authority will meet on Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at the Water Plant in Austinville.
3. District Three will meet on Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., at the Marion Office.
4. The Homestead Museum Advisory Board will meet on Friday, November 17, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at the Jackson Property.
5. Downtown Wytheville, Inc. will meet on Monday, November 20, 2023, at 5:30 p.m., at the DTW Office.
6. The Town of Wytheville Municipal Offices will be closed, and all services curtailed beginning Wednesday, November 22, 2023, through Friday, November 24, 2023, due to the Thanksgiving holiday.
7. The next regular meeting of the Wytheville Town Council will be held on Monday, November 27, 2023, at 5:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers.

12. RE: OTHER BUSINESS

A. RE: REHABILITATION ZONE PROGRAM

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is the continued review of the Housing Rehabilitation Zone Program. Assistant Town Manager Holeton noted that since she reviewed this topic at the last regular meeting, she has spoken with the Council members individually and discussed their questions, concerns, etc. She stated that after those discussions, Staff has been able to develop a first draft of the Rehabilitation Zone Program, which is included in the Council's meeting package. Assistant Town Manager Holeton commented that once the Council approves the Program, an ordinance will be required along with a map that shows the properties located in the Rehabilitation Zone. She advised that action does not need to be taken at this meeting. Assistant Town Manager Holeton stated that she would like to give the Council some time to review the first draft of the Program, and that she would be glad to meet with any of the Council members regarding any questions or concerns they may have. She then briefly reviewed the timeline of when it would be beneficial for the Rehabilitation Zone Program to be in place. Mayor Taylor inquired of Assistant Town Manager Holeton regarding the first draft of the Program and Town Council's discretion regarding waiving tax liens to facilitate the sale of property. Assistant Town Manager Holeton noted that section and advised that the request will be about a specific section. She then gave the Council an example of a request regarding waiving tax liens or facilitating the sale of property at the Town Council's discretion. Assistant Town Manager Holeton continued to discuss various items in the first draft of the Rehabilitation Zone Program with the Council. Councilwoman Johnson thanked Assistant Town Manager Holeton for her hard work on this Program. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any other discussion regarding this topic. There being none, she proceeded with the agenda.

B. RE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is an update regarding the Economic Development Incentives. Assistant Town Manager Holeton advised that the Town's Economic Development Incentives package was originally drafted in 2014, and the second edition of the package was updated in 2020. She stated that a revised version of the Economic Development Incentives package will be necessary in 2024. Assistant Town Manager Holeton noted that multiple Town Departments and representatives in the area have met recently to discuss the current package and the possible direction of the revised package. She advised that the first draft of the Economic Development Incentives package could possibly be available by early 2024 for the Town Council's review. Assistant Town Manager Holeton then reviewed some of the current Economic Development Incentives package with the Council members. Councilwoman Johnson inquired when the next meeting with Town Departments and other representatives will be held regarding the revision of the package. Assistant Town Manager Holeton noted that the next meeting will be held on December 11, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. in Conference Room A. A brief discussion was held regarding Council members attending the meeting and how many members can attend at one time.

C. RE: OPEN DOOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT APPLICATION

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is an update regarding the Open Door Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application. Assistant Town Manager Holeton stated that localities can only pick one project per year for a CDBG application. She noted that the Town received a request from Open Door to sponsor them in a CDBG application in the summer round. She advised that two public input meetings are required to sponsor a CDBG application to let the community know what kind of grant this is, and that if they had a project they would like to work with the Town on, they are welcome to share their ideas. Assistant Town Manager Holeton commented that the Town Council would not consider approving the CDBG application until after the public input meeting. She stated that Staff will present more information to the Town Council regarding Open Door's request for a CDBG application at a future meeting. Mayor Taylor inquired if the Town or if Open Door will hold the public input meeting. Town Manager Freeman stated that the first public input meeting is an administrative hearing with Staff, and the second meeting will be a regular public hearing here at the Town Municipal Office. Discussion continued regarding the public hearings and the scheduling of the meetings.

D. 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 stated that he would like to report a pothole on Ridge Road. Town Manager Freeman stated that he will have Staff check on 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 have anything to discuss at this time.

Mayor Taylor inquired if Councilwoman Atkins had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Councilwoman Atkins noted that she had spoken with Town Manager Freeman on Friday about the trash at the day care facility. Town Manager Freeman stated that he did have an explanation for the trash. Councilwoman Atkins commented that it was fine, however, she wanted to put it on the record that she had spoken with Town Manager Freeman regarding this matter.

Councilwoman Atkins noted that there may be some employees retiring within the next few years. She stated that she would like to work with the Human Resources Department, if possible, to look at employees' retirement benefits. Councilwoman Atkins commented that she was not sure what the current retirement benefits are, but she would like to see if the Town could offer better benefits. A brief discussion was held regarding possible ideas on how to begin improving retirement benefits. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would like to discuss these ideas further with Councilwoman Atkins and bring them back to a future meeting. Councilwoman Atkins advised that she will discuss this matter with Town Manager Freeman.

Councilwoman Atkins inquired of Town Manager Freeman regarding the status of installing reflective stickers on the Town's Public Work vehicles. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would check on this matter.

Mayor Taylor inquired if Councilwoman Johnson had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Councilwoman Johnson stated that parking on Main Street had been discussed previously, however, she wanted to bring this topic up as a reminder that the parking is an ongoing problem. Town Manager Freeman gave a brief overview of some of the parking enforcement solutions that were discussed in the past.

Mayor Taylor stated that Wythe County Community Hospital is requesting an additional handicapped parking spot in the area of the corner of Fourth and Main Streets. Town Manager Freeman advised that he had Staff review this request recently, and that he would email the Council members regarding the results of Staff's analysis.

E. RE: CLOSED MEETING

Mayor Taylor advised that it will now be necessary for the Council to go into a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A.) (3.) Discussion regarding the acquisition/disposition of property used for a public purpose. She inquired if there was a motion to go into a closed meeting.

Motion made by Vice-Mayor Pattison, Seconded by Councilman Gillman. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. Councilwoman Johnson inquired if this topic was discussed in a previous closed meeting. Mayor Taylor stated that is correct. Councilwoman Johnson noted that she thought this topic was put to rest at a previous meeting. Mayor Taylor advised that someone wanted to discuss this topic again, and that it was never voted on to put it to rest. Brief discussion continued regarding this topic being the subject of a previous closed meeting. The motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson. (7:06 p.m.)

F. RE: CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

Mayor Taylor advised that it was necessary to certify the closed meeting. She noted that it was also necessary to reconvene into open session. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to certify the closed meeting held pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A.) (3.) Discussion regarding the acquisition/disposition of property used for a public purpose, and that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification applies, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Council.

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: Councilwoman Johnson, Councilwoman Atkins, Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilman Gillman. (8:41 p.m.)

G. RE: TOWN PROPERTY ON STAFFORD UMBERGER DRIVE

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Pattison and seconded by Councilman Gillman to offer the Town property on Stafford UMBERGER Drive to the interested party at the amount authorized, subject to approval by the Town Council after a public hearing, and, if unsuccessful, to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a real estate agent selected by the Town Council. 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: Councilman Gillman, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Mayor Taylor, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilwoman Johnson.

H. RE: PROPERTY AT 1035 NORTH FOURTH STREET

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Pattison and seconded by Councilman Gillman to set a public hearing for the January 8, 2024, Town Council meeting to consider the proposed acquisition of real property for \$200,000 at 1035 North Fourth Street. 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: Councilwoman Johnson, Councilwoman Atkins, Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilman Gillman.

13. RE: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be discussed a motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting. (8:47 p.m.)

Beth A. Taylor, Mayor

Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk

STAFF REPORT

NOVEMBER 13, 2023

2023 TOWN EMPLOYEE HOLIDAY BONUS: Town Manager Freeman stated that the Town of Wytheville has, historically, provided employees with a holiday bonus during the last pay period before the Thanksgiving holiday. He noted that if a bonus is provided this year, it would need to occur on the November 22, 2023, paycheck to remain consistent with that timeframe. Town Manager Freeman advised that prior to 2020, this bonus was typically computed as one (1) percent of the individual employee's salary, meaning each employee received a different amount with higher paid employees receiving more than lower paid employees. He commented that this did not seem equitable to him. Town Manager Freeman stated that in 2020 or 2021, he proposed that the Town compute one (1) percent of payroll and then evenly distribute that to full-time employees. He noted that this came out to around \$500 for each full-time employee and in 2021 and 2022, that is what was given. Town Manager Freeman stated that, previously, bonuses were not given to part-time employees, however, last year, part-time employees with at least 50 hours worked as of October 31 were provided with a \$100 bonus. He advised that his proposal to the Town Council is to keep the holiday bonuses and bonus schedule the same as last year, with a \$500 bonus for full-time employees and a \$100 bonus for part-time employees. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve the \$500 bonus for full-time employees and a \$100 bonus for part-time employees with at least 50 hours worked prior to October 31, 2023.