



MINUTES

WYTHEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY, JANUARY 08, 2024 AT 5:00 PM
MUNICIPAL BUILDING - 150 EAST MONROE STREET
WYTHEVILLE, VA 24382

1. **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, Chief Deputy Clerk Brandi Jones, Interim Town Attorney Paul Cassell, Computer Operations Manager Ron Jude, Building Official Tim Spraker, Building Permit Technician Jason Hamm, Police Chief Joel Hash, Corporal Todd Matthews, Police Officer David Newman, Jim Cohen, Robert Suthers, Bonnie Agnew

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. Councilwoman Johnson inquired if the agenda could be amended to include a Closed Meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A.) (8.) Consultation with legal counsel for legal advice. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve the agenda, as amended. A motion was made by Councilman Gillman and seconded by Councilwoman Johnson to amend the agenda to include an additional item in a Closed Meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A.) (8.) Consultation with legal counsel for legal advice. 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.

6. **RE: 6:00 P.M. RECESS**

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 regular Town Council meeting of Monday, December 11, 2023. She inquired if there was a motion to approve the minutes of the regular Town Council meeting of Monday, December 11, 2023, as presented.

Motion made by Vice-Mayor Pattison, 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.

8. **RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is Citizens' Period. She stated that there is one citizen listed on the sign-in sheet who would like to address the Council during Citizens Period. Mayor Taylor inquired if Mr. Robert Suthers would come to the podium and state his name and address for the recording of the minutes.

Mr. Robert Suthers was recognized and stated that he resides at 990 South 14th Street. Mr. Suthers expressed his concerns regarding the 20th Street Bridge. Discussion was held regarding the history, construction and current state of the 20th Street Bridge, along with the current accessibility of the area since the closure. Mr. Suthers then read a statement from his neighbors, Ms. Katie and Kathy Melton, regarding their concerns on the 20th Street Bridge closure. He thanked the Council for allowing him to speak. Mayor Taylor thanked Mr. Suthers for his comments. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if rumble strips and/or blinking lights could temporarily be installed at the intersection of Railroad Avenue and U.S. Route 21. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would look into this option. Mayor Taylor inquired if anyone else wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period. There being none, she proceeded with the agenda.

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

A. RE: ORDINANCE NO 1429 - BUILDING REGULATIONS

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider Ordinance No. 1429, an ordinance repealing and replacing Chapter 4, Building Regulations, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, on first and final reading. She stated that Building Official Tim Spraker would now discuss this ordinance with the Council.

Building Official Spraker briefly reviewed Ordinance No. 1429, and the changes that have been made, with the Council. He inquired if there were any questions from the Council that he could answer. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if there was a specific reason that Building Official Spraker chose five-year terms for members to serve on the Building Code Appeals Board. Building Official Spraker stated that there was not a specific reason for that time frame, however, the State Code does not stipulate how long the terms members can serve on the Building Code Appeals Board.

Councilwoman Johnson stated that she would like to thank Building Official Spraker for the Building Code training he recently put together. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1429, an ordinance repealing and replacing Chapter 4, Building Regulations, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, on first and final reading. 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 results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Councilman Gillman, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Mayor Taylor, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilwoman Johnson.

B. RE: RESOLUTION - FAIR HOUSING

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider adopting a resolution endorsing the concept of Fair Housing. She stated that Town Manager Freeman would now discuss this resolution with the Council.

Town Manager Freeman stated that, each year, the Town adopts a resolution that endorses the concept of providing Fair Housing. He noted that by adopting this resolution, the Town, as a recipient of State and Federal Funding, provides certain assurances to the State and Federal governments that it is complying with various facets of the law. He advised that one of the assurances that the Town must provide is that it endorses the concept of Fair Housing and calls upon the citizens of Wytheville, along with those in banking and housing industries, to join and work together in the observance of free and equal housing treatment for all. Councilwoman Johnson inquired regarding what procedure is in place to ensure that these entities are being fair. Town Manager Freeman stated that he is not sure if that oversight is in the Town's purview. He noted that this resolution tells the State and Federal government that the Town and the community support Fair Housing. A brief discussion ensued regarding the enforcement of Fair Housing for all people in the Town. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to adopt a resolution endorsing the concept of Fair Housing. Motion made by Vice-Mayor Pattison, 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.

C. RE: WYTHEVILLE RECREATION COMMISSION - APPOINTMENT

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider an appointment to the Wytheville Recreation Commission to fill the expired term of Mr. Michael Mitchell (term expired December 31, 2023). She stated that this appointment will be for a for a three-year term and that the term expires December 31, 2026.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Pattison and seconded by Councilman Gillman to appoint Mr. Brady Parks to the Wytheville Recreation Commission for a three-year term (new term expires December 31, 2026). 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: WYTHEVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY - APPOINTMENT

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider an appointment to the Wytheville Economic Development Authority to fill the expired term of Ms. Linda Nye (term expired December 12, 2023). She stated that this appointment will be for a four-year term and that the term expires December 12, 2027. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to appoint Dr. Wendy Welch to the Wytheville Economic Development Authority for a four-year term (new term expires December 12, 2027).

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.

E. RE: WYTHEVILLE BUILDING CODE APPEALS BOARD - APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider an appointment to the Wytheville Building Code Appeals Board to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Brad Litton (term expires July 26, 2025) and to appoint two new alternate members to the Board.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Johnson and seconded by Councilwoman Atkins to appoint Mr. Donald Repass to the Wytheville Building Code Appeals Board to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Brad Litton (new term expires July 26, 2025) and to appoint Mr. Mike Carrico as the alternate member to the Board for a five-year term (new term expires July 26, 2028). 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.

F. RE: DISTRICT III GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATIVE - REAPPOINTMENT

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the request of District Three Governmental Cooperative to reappoint Councilwoman Holly Atkins and alternate Councilman Gary Gillman to the District Three Board of Commissioners for a one-year term (terms expired December 31, 2023).

A motion was made by Councilwoman Johnson and seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison to reappoint Councilwoman Holly Atkins to the District Three Board of Commissioners and Councilman Gary Gillman as an alternate member for a one-year term (new terms expire December 31, 2024). 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.

G. RE: WYTHEVILLE REHABILITATION ZONE SELECTION COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the appointment of a Wytheville Planning Commission member and a Wytheville Economic Development Authority member to the new Rehabilitation Zone Selection Committee (terms expire with the members' Commission and Authority expiration dates). She noted that Assistant Town Manager Holeyton will discuss these appointments further with the Council.

Assistant Town Manager Holeyton advised that the Rehabilitation Zone Program that the Town Council adopted requires that a Town Selection Committee be selected to prescreen the applications for the Council and then make the recommendations to the Council regarding what properties should be selected for that zone. She advised that this Committee will consist of a member from the Planning Commission, the Wytheville Economic Development Authority (WEDA), the Town Council and two (2) Staff members. A motion was made by Councilman Gillman and seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison to appoint Wytheville Planning Commission member Mr. Keith Jones (term expires March 2, 2027) and to appoint WEDA member Ms. Kathleen Laster (term expires December 12, 2024) to the Town Rehabilitation Zone Selection Committee. 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.

10. RE: REPORTS

A. RE: STAFF REPORT(S)

Town Manager Freeman presented his Staff Report, as follows:

SHRED DAY EVENT: Truliant Federal Credit Union in conjunction with the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce, would like to have their next Shred Day event on Saturday, March 9, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This event has been going on for quite some time and participation is typically quite high. This does not require Council action, but we wanted to make you aware of it in case you had any questions.

TREASURER'S OFFICE CLOSING: The Treasurer's Office will be closed from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, as part of the migration of the financial software from BAI to Edmunds Gov Tech. Edmunds staff will be inside our system for a scheduled "data pull," and we will not be in it at the same time, therefore, we will be unable to process any transactions during that timeframe.

STREET CLOSURE: Residents of the Town of Wytheville may have noticed the recent work on Tazewell Street. We are pleased to announce that Heritage Walk Phase III Sidewalk Construction Project is well underway and ahead of schedule. In addition to sidewalk construction, the project will construct new curb and gutter, along with drainage improvements along the Tazewell Street Corridor. The contractor is Jones Road and Bridge who will be working in this area until the project is complete.

Citizens are advised that the small section of Tazewell Street, in the vicinity of the Visitors Center, will be closed to thru traffic from Tuesday, January 9, 2024, until further notice. We expect that the closure will last for two (2) weeks but will be dependent on the weather. We ask that travelers please try to use alternate routes during this time.

A detour route will be marked using portions of East Ridge Road, Third Street and Valley Street. Traffic missing the initial route detour sign will have the availability to utilize the Visitors Center parking lot to turn around and proceed back to the provided detour route.

Anyone with questions or concerns is welcome to contact the Town at (276) 223-3434.

SNOW REMOVAL PROCESS: Our Public Works Director was recently on the radio with the "Talk of the Town" segment and did an excellent job of explaining what the snow removal process for the Town of Wytheville is, so, I thought it would be beneficial to share that information, again, for the benefit of the Council and other audiences that this may reach.

The Town of Wytheville maintains over 180 miles of streets within town limits, making snow removal a big job for our Public Works Department when Mother Nature leaves a blanket of white stuff on our community.

The Town of Wytheville gives priority and emphasis to clearing the main arterial streets first and then the collector and local streets. The Town has an emergency snow route that must be prioritized in case Interstates 77 or 81 are closed due to poor road conditions or accidents. Parking spaces in the downtown area are cleared as soon as possible and access roads to school parking lots are cleared to allow early dismissal.

During snowstorms, the Public Works Department works twenty-four (24) hours a day to keep the main arteries clear within the corporate limits. Lesser connector roads are cleared after the main arteries are sufficiently maintained.

Here are some steps taken during the winter season to make sure snow removal is a priority and the process goes as smooth as possible:

1. Snow forecasts are monitored to determine the anticipated extent of the storm and expected temperatures.
2. Personnel are notified of anticipated shift times. All employees of the Public Works Department are available twenty-four (24) hours a day for snow removal.
3. Anti-icing product is applied to arterial roadways when temperatures are appropriate to minimize bonding of snow to pavement.
4. Snow removal equipment and personnel are deployed when snow starts falling.
5. Prioritization criteria is used on snow routes with arterial roadways being addressed first, followed by collector roadways and residential streets.
6. Abrasive materials are applied to roadways when required to provide traction. Curves, hills and intersections, normally, receive a salt and pea gravel mixture.
7. Roadways are widened to completely remove snow from driving surfaces. Several passes are sometimes necessary to completely remove snow.
8. Ice removal and clean-up operations can take several days to complete.

These procedures must be followed for each snowstorm that occurs in order to provide the safest roadways possible. When the crews reach neighborhood streets, if the amount of snow warrants, it may be necessary for there to be two plowings of a street to get it properly cleared. Citizens are encouraged to, if possible, wait until after the second plowing before digging out of their driveways. Property owners are encouraged to park off the street, if possible, during inclement weather, to avoid the frustration of being "plowed in". Our Public Works Department works around the clock after a snowstorm to clear roadways. We appreciate their hard work to make our streets safe to travel on. We also appreciate our citizens' patience as Public Works crews do their jobs.

B. RE: UPCOMING MEETINGS

Chief Deputy Clerk Jones presented the upcoming meetings, as follows:

1. The Wytheville Recreation Commission will meet on Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., at the Wytheville Community Center.
2. The Wytheville Planning Commission will meet on Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.
3. Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated (DTW) will meet on Monday, January 15, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., at the DTW Office on Main Street.
4. The Town of Wytheville Municipal Offices will be closed and all services curtailed on Monday, January 15, 2024, due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

5. The Wytheville Redevelopment and Housing Authority will meet on Wednesday, January 17, 2024, at 12:00 p.m., at the Housing Authority Office.
6. The New River Regional Water Authority (NRRWA) will meet on Thursday, January 18, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., at the NRRWA Plant in Austinville.
7. District Three Board of Commissioners will meet on Thursday, January 18, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., at the Marion Office.
8. The next Council Work Session will be held at 4:00 p.m., on Monday, January 22, 2024, prior to the regular scheduled Wytheville Town Council meeting at 5:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

11. RE: OTHER BUSINESS

A. RE: REVIEW OF VACANCIES/UPCOMING VACANCIES ON TOWN COMMITTEES/BOARDS

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is the review of the vacancies/upcoming vacancies on Town Committees/Boards. Chief Deputy Clerk Jones stated that the Council has a listing of all the upcoming vacancies through the end of 2024. She then reviewed the list of vacancies with the Council.

B. RE: COUNCIL MEMBER TIME

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is Council Member Time. She inquired if Councilwoman Johnson had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Councilwoman Johnson stated that she has received complaints regarding speeding on Mountain View Drive. Councilwoman Johnson commented that she was not sure what kind of measures can be taken, however, the Town needs to respond to these citizens who have speeding complaints. She requested that Town Staff review some traffic calming measures for the Mountain View Drive neighborhood. Town Manager Freeman stated that he has spoken with Police Chief Hash regarding this matter. He advised that Lieutenants have assigned Police Officers to Mountain View Drive to patrol the area. Town Manager Freeman noted that he spoke with a gentleman who lives on Mountain View Drive who had speeding complaints, and he noted that the gentleman is requesting Stop signs for the area. He explained to the Council why Stop signs should not be used as speed control devices, and he noted the use of other traffic calming measures for this area.

Councilwoman Atkins stated that she did not necessarily agree that Stop signs should not be used. She noted that there have been several Stop signs installed around town. Councilwoman Atkins commented, for example, there was recently a Stop sign installed on Fisher Road. Town Manager Freeman explained that the Stop sign installed at the intersection of Fisher Road and East Pine Street is to help drivers make a left-hand turn. He commented that Stop signs are used to control traffic movements within an intersection. A brief discussion continued regarding the appropriate uses for Stop signs. Town Manager Freeman explained that the Town needs to be careful about using traffic control devices for uses for which they are not intended. He stated that it is a liability issue. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she does not want the Stop sign to be installed for speeding purposes, but for safety purposes because there are a lot of people who walk on Mountain View Drive. She continued to express her concerns regarding the installation of a Stop sign on Mountain View Drive. Discussion continued regarding installing a Stop sign on Mountain View Drive. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would have Staff install the Stop sign at the intersection of Mountain View Drive and 13th Street.

Mr. Robert Suthers was recognized and stated that his neighbor Ms. Katie Melton had inquired about the Town installing a Stop sign on South 20th Street going north at the intersection near the Bridge. Discussion was held regarding how requests can be made to install Stop signs in town. Town Manager Freeman thanked Mr. Suthers for his comment.

Councilwoman Johnson stated that she had spoken with Assistant Town Manager Holeton regarding employee recognition on the home page of the Town's website, and she inquired how that is progressing. Assistant Town Manager Holeton advised that she has had multiple conversations with Director of Public Information/Tourism

Rosa Jude regarding this matter, and that she believes the employee recognition will start in January. Assistant Town Manager Holeton noted that she will be meeting with Director Jude this week with the January employee recognition group.

Mayor Taylor inquired if Councilwoman Atkins had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she would like to follow up on the clutter problem on Lexington Street that she addressed at the last meeting. Interim Town Attorney Cassell stated that this issue had been reverted to him by Town Staff and that he is working on this matter.

Councilwoman Atkins inquired about the heat in the Public Works snow removal vehicles. Town Manager Freeman stated that, to his knowledge, all the heat in those vehicles works.

Councilwoman Atkins inquired about installing educational televisions for employees. Town Manager Freeman stated that there are a number of challenges when it comes to installing the televisions. He noted that someone would have to put together materials specifically to display on the televisions. Councilwoman Atkins explained that she would only like to have the Employee Newsletter displayed. Assistant Town Manager Holeton noted that once the Town transitions to its new software, every employee will have their own portal where the information can be conveyed to them. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she has asked for this for a couple of years, and that she wants this displayed for the employees who may not have access to this type of information. Discussion was held regarding the ability to place educational televisions in different places within each department. Town Manager Freeman advised that Staff will come up with a solution to this matter.

Mayor Taylor inquired if Vice-Mayor Pattison had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Vice-Mayor Pattison stated that she was going to discuss the 20th Street Bridge during this time, and that previous discussion has given her some additional thoughts. She noted that the timeframe of the closure is critical, and the previous contracts that were signed in the early 1900's need some additional research. Vice-Mayor Pattison commented that she appreciated Mr. Suthers comments and the comments he shared from his neighbors, too. Councilwoman Johnson and Vice-Mayor Pattison stated that they stand with Mr. Suthers and the rest of the Town citizens regarding the 20th Street Bridge closure and alternate routes.

Mayor Taylor inquired if Councilman Gillman had anything to discuss during Council Member Time. Councilman Gillman noted that he has received a complaint about four-wheelers being parked around Wythe Produce near Hilltop Cycle that has a trailer attached to it and is full of wood. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would check on this matter.

Mayor Taylor advised that the local auto repair shops are starting to accumulate vehicles that are sitting around the lots. She noted that inoperative vehicles are starting to become a problem again, and that she would like for the Police Department to monitor this. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would look into these issues.

Councilwoman Johnson inquired if all the road maintenance vehicles that are used for snow removal could be checked to see if the heat works. Town Manager Freeman stated that he will double check on this matter. She advised that she was going to do some research to see if there could be some grant money available to replace some of the vehicles that are old.

12. 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.) (8.) Consultation with legal counsel for legal advice. She inquired if there was a motion to go into a closed meeting.

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 in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson. (6:32 p.m.)

RE: CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

Mayor Taylor advised that it would be 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.) (8.) Consultation with legal counsel for legal advice 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 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: Councilman Gillman, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Mayor Taylor, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilwoman Johnson. (7:29 p.m.)

13. RE: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be discussed a motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting. (7:31 p.m.)

Beth A. Taylor, Mayor

Brandi N. Jones, Chief Deputy Clerk

STAFF REPORT JANUARY 8, 2024

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