



# MINUTES

## WYTHEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

MONDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2023 AT 5:00 PM  
MUNICIPAL BUILDING - 150 EAST MONROE STREET  
WYTHEVILLE, VA 24382

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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, Fire and Rescue Chief Chris Slemp, Police Chief Joel Hash, Building Official Tim Spraker, Building Permit Technician Jason Hamm, Police Sergeant Tommy Lester, Police Officer David Newman, Downtown Wytheville, Inc. Assistant Charlie Jones, James Cohen, Debbie Moody, Jim Lloyd, Whitney Hodges, Savannah Hodges, Ernest Simons, Charlotte Simons, Audrey Bellan, Coltin Bellan, Others

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 Vice-Mayor Pattison.

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 add an item canceling the public hearing that is scheduled for January 8, 2023, at 5:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building. 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 Town Council Work Session and the regular meeting of November 27, 2023. She inquired if there was a motion to approve the minutes of the Town Council Work Session and the regular meeting of November 27, 2023, as presented.

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.

8. **RE: PRESENTATIONS TO TOWN COUNCIL**

**A. RE: JUNIOR APPALACHIAN MUSICIANS (JAM) PRESENTATION**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is a presentation by the Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM). She then introduced and welcomed the members of JAM to perform their presentation for the Council. The members of JAM gave an overview of their program, the history behind it, they thanked the Town Council for allowing them to perform and they performed a series of Christmas songs for the Council. The Town Council thanked the JAM members for their performance.

**B. RE: PRESENTATION REGARDING PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE BUILDING REGULATIONS**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next item on the agenda is a presentation by Building Official Tim Spraker on the proposed amendments to the Building Regulations section of the Town Code. Building Official Spraker noted that the Town has went quite some time without any upgrades to the Building Regulations section of the Town Code. He then reviewed the areas of the Building Regulations section that need to be upgraded. Building Official Spraker stated that the Council members could contact him if they had any questions. The Council thanked Building Official Spraker for his presentation.

**9. RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next item on the agenda is Citizens' Period. She noted that there were no citizens listed on the sign-in sheet who stated that they wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period, therefore, she would proceed with the agenda.

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

**A. RE: ORDINANCE NO. 1427 – FIRE CODE AMENDMENTS**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider Ordinance No. 1427, an ordinance repealing and replacing Chapter 6, Fire Prevention and Protection; and, amending and reenacting Chapter 9, Offenses - Miscellaneous, Article III. Air Pollution Control by renaming the article and by removing the following sections: Section 9-76. Definitions; Section 9-77. Penalty; Section 9-78. Authority and Declaration of Policy; Section 9-79. Relationship to State Rules; Section 9-80. Powers and Responsibilities of Air Pollution Control Officer; Section 9-81. Open Burning; Section 9-82. Smoke or Other Visible Emissions; and, Section 9-83. Emergency Procedure; and, amending and reenacting Chapter 11. Police, Article III. Alarm Systems, Section 11-44. Penalties for False Alarms, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, on first and final reading. Mayor Taylor stated that Fire Chief Chris Slemp would now discuss this ordinance with the Council.

Fire Chief Slemp briefly reviewed Ordinance No. 1427 with the Council, and he inquired if there were any questions he could answer. Mayor Taylor advised that the Council did not have any questions for Fire Chief Slemp. She inquired if there was a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1427, an ordinance repealing and replacing Chapter 6, Fire Prevention and Protection; and, amending and reenacting Chapter 9, Offenses - Miscellaneous, Article III. Air Pollution Control by renaming the article and by removing the following sections: Section 9-76. Definitions; Section 9-77. Penalty; Section 9-78. Authority and Declaration of Policy; Section 9-79. Relationship to State Rules; Section 9-80. Powers and Responsibilities of Air Pollution Control Officer; Section 9-81. Open Burning; Section 9-82. Smoke or Other Visible Emissions; and, Section 9-83. Emergency Procedure; and, amending and reenacting Chapter 11. Police, Article III. Alarm Systems, Section 11-44. Penalties for False Alarms, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, on first and final reading. 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 results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Councilman Gillman, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Mayor Taylor, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilwoman Johnson.

**B. RE: ORDINANCE NO. 1428 – HOUSING REHABILITATION ZONE**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider Ordinance No. 1428, an ordinance establishing a Housing Rehabilitation Zone in the Town of Wytheville,

Virginia, on first and final reading. She stated that Assistant Town Manager HOLETON would discuss the ordinance with the Council.

Assistant Town Manager HOLETON briefly discussed Ordinance No. 1428 with the Council and inquired if there were any questions. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1428, an ordinance establishing a Housing Rehabilitation Zone in 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: Councilwoman Johnson, Councilwoman Atkins, Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilman Gillman.

**C. RE: VIRGINIA ORGANIZING REQUEST**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the request of Virginia Organizing for traffic control to conduct a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day March on Sunday, January 14, 2024. 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 how the Town's Police Department will help assist with traffic control for this event. Assistant Town Manager HOLETON stated that the Police Department will regulate traffic control at both ends of March, to ensure that the participants are safe. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve the request of Virginia Organizing for traffic control to conduct a Martin Luther King, Jr. Day March on Sunday, January 14, 2024.

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: WYTHEVILLE RECREATION COMMISSION, WYTHEVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND WYTHEVILLE BUILDING CODE APPEALS BOARD APPOINTMENTS – SCHEDULE MEET AND GREET**

Mayor Taylor advised that the Council will be considering multiple applicants to serve on the Wytheville Recreation Commission, the Wytheville Economic Development Authority and the Wytheville Building Code Appeals Board. She inquired if the Council would like to schedule a Work Session to hold meet-and-greet sessions with the applicants. Discussion was held regarding scheduling a Council Work Session to conduct meet-and-greet sessions with all the applicants wanting to serve on these Town Committees and Boards.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Johnson and seconded by Councilwoman Atkins to schedule a Town Council Work Session to conduct meet-and-greet sessions on Monday, January 8, 2024, at 4:00 p.m., for all the applicants wanting to serve on the Wytheville Recreation Commission, the Wytheville Economic Development Authority and the Wytheville Building Code Appeals Board. 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 vote: Voting Yea: Councilman Gillman, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Mayor Taylor, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilwoman Johnson.

**E. RE: WYTHEVILLE RECREATION COMMISSION - REAPPOINTMENT**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the reappointment of Ms. Brittney Litton to the Wytheville Recreation Commission (term expires December 31, 2023). She stated that this reappointment would be for a three-year term (term expires December 31, 2026). Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to reappoint Ms. Brittney Litton to the Wytheville Recreation Commission for a three-year term (term expires December 31, 2026).

Motion made by Councilwoman Atkins, 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, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilwoman Johnson.

**F. RE: WYTHEVILLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY - REAPPOINTMENT**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the reappointment of Ms. Melissa Crockett to the Wytheville Economic Development Authority (term expires December 12, 2023). She stated that this reappointment will be for a four-year term (term expires December 12, 2027). Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to reappoint Ms. Melissa Crockett to the Wytheville Economic Development Authority for a four-year term (term expires December 12, 2027).

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

**G. RE: ESTABLISHMENT OF REAL PROPERTY TAX DUE DATE**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to establish a due date for the Real Property Taxes. She stated that Town Manager Freeman would provide the Council with more information regarding establishing a due date for the Real Property Taxes. Town Manager Freeman noted that there has been a delay with the Town receiving tax information from Wythe County this year. He advised that Wythe County has established the due date of January 31, 2024, for the County's Real Property Taxes to be paid. Town Manager Freeman noted that Town Treasurer Michael Stephens would suggest that the Town Council set the due date as January 31, 2024, for the Town Real Property Taxes to be paid. Discussion was held regarding the Town Council setting the due date as January 31, 2024, for the Town Real Property Taxes. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to establish January 31, 2024, as the due date for the Town Real Property Taxes to be paid.

Motion made by Councilman Gillman, Seconded by Councilwoman Johnson. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. Councilwoman Atkins noted that citizens have inquired with her as to why taxes are mailed around the time of the holidays. She inquired if there was any way that Staff could look at developing a way for citizens to pay part of their taxes in the middle of the year. Town Manager Freeman advised that he feels as if that is already an option for citizens. He stated that he will speak with Staff regarding ways to advertise the existing partial payment option to citizens. 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.

**H. RE: SCHEDULING WORK SESSION**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to schedule a Work Session for Monday, January 22, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. to hear a presentation from Virginia Tech students regarding their project in the town. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to schedule a Work Session for Monday, January 22, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. to hear a presentation from Virginia Tech students regarding their project in the town.

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

**I. RE: PUBLIC HEARING CANCELLATION**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider cancelling the public hearing that was scheduled for Monday, January 8, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. regarding property located at 1035 North Fourth Street. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to cancel the public hearing that was scheduled for Monday, January 8, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. regarding property located at 1035 North Fourth Street.

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 results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Councilman Gillman, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Mayor Taylor, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilwoman Johnson.

## 11. **RE: REPORTS**

### A. **RE: STAFF REPORT(S)**

Town Manager Freeman presented his Staff Report, as follows:

**20TH STREET BRIDGE UPDATE:** Town Manager Freeman stated that Norfolk Southern's engineering consulting firm will be on site at the 20th Street Bridge on December 12, 2023, to perform an inspection, and to advise Norfolk Southern of necessary repairs. He advised that they were given the inspection report from the Town's engineers, however, they will also be performing their own inspection. Town Manager Freeman noted that the Town's Public Works staff is still working on a plan to create a completely passable road across the unimproved portion of the Madison Street right-of-way. He commented that this will allow the neighborhood and Public Safety personnel access to travel, should there be an issue with Railroad Avenue. Town Manager Freeman stated that the speed limit on Route 21, as it approaches Railroad Avenue, has been decreased to 35 miles per hour.

**HERITAGE WALK UPDATE:** Town Manager Freeman advised that Heritage Walk Phase III is finally underway. He noted that this phase will complete the sidewalk connection on Tazewell Street from the Visitors Center to the existing sidewalk near Ridge Road. Town Manager Freeman stated that this is a 150-day contract, and Staff are anticipating that this phase will be completed by May 2024.

### B. **RE: UPCOMING MEETINGS**

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

1. The Wytheville Planning Commission meeting scheduled for Thursday, December 14, 2023, has been canceled, due to the holidays.
2. Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated (DTW) will meet on Monday, December 18, 2023, at 5:30 p.m., at the DTW Office on Main Street.
3. The Wytheville Redevelopment and Housing Authority will meet on Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at 12:00 p.m., at the Housing Authority Office.
4. The New River Regional Water Authority (NRRWA) will meet on Thursday, December 21, 2023, at 10:00 a.m., at the NRRWA Plant in Austinville.
5. The Town of Wytheville Municipal Offices will be closed, and all services curtailed on Friday, December 22; Monday, December 25; and, Monday, January 1, due to the Christmas and New Year's holidays.
6. The next Council Work Session will be held at 4:00 p.m., in the Council Conference Room on Monday, January 8, 2024, prior to the regularly scheduled Wytheville Town Council meeting at 5:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers.

## 12. **RE: OTHER BUSINESS**

### A. **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 did not have anything to discuss at this time.

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 stated that it has come to her attention that

there are some issues with pinecones and pine needles located at 300 Sherwood Forest Road. She inquired if Staff could explore cleaning these up. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would check on this matter.

Councilwoman Atkins stated that there is a problem with some clutter at the 800th block of East Lexington Street. She inquired if Staff could look into this matter. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would look into this problem.

Councilwoman Atkins inquired if a stop sign could be placed at the intersection of Mountain View Drive and Fisher Road. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would check on this matter.

Councilwoman Atkins inquired if a resolution could be made for the "A Christmas to Remember" event that was recently held. Discussion was held regarding the development of a resolution for the past event. A motion was made by Councilwoman Johnson and seconded by Councilwoman Atkins to develop a resolution recognizing this year's "A Christmas to Remember" event that was held on Saturday, December 9, 2023. 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.

Mayor Taylor inquired if Councilwoman Johnson had anything she would like to discuss during Council Member Time. Councilwoman Johnson stated that she would like to thank Town Manager Freeman and the Public Works Staff for taking care of an issue that she had previously discussed. Town Manager Freeman stated that the Public Works Department took care of the problem, and it was not thanks to him.

Mayor Taylor stated that she did not have anything to discuss during Council Member Time.

**B. RE: MISCELLANEOUS**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item consists of Council Committee Reports, the January 2024 Town Council meeting calendar and the November Building Permit reports. She inquired if any of the members had any Council Committee reports. Mayor Talor stated that since no Council members had anything to report for Council Committee reports, that she would like to update the Council regarding the most recent Tree Advisory Committee. She noted that they are still actively working on the development of the Specimen Tree Program Walking Tour. There being no other discussion, she proceeded with the agenda.

**13. RE: CLOSED MEETING**

- A.** 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 regarding specific legal matters. She inquired if there was a motion to go into a closed meeting.

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 in favor and there being no opposition: Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Gillman, Councilwoman Johnson. (5:58 p.m.)

- B.** 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 regarding specific legal matters, 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 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 results, by roll call vote: Voting Yea: Councilwoman Johnson, Councilwoman Atkins, Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilman Gillman. (6:30 p.m.)

**14. RE: THANK YOU FROM TOWN COUNCIL**

Councilwoman Atkins and Councilwoman Johnson stated that they wanted to thank all of Town staff for their hard work, and that they wanted to wish everyone a Merry Christmas on behalf of the Wytheville Town Council.

**15. RE: ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to be discussed a motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting. (6:31 p.m.)

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Beth A. Taylor, Mayor

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Brandi N. Jones, Chief Deputy Clerk

**STAFF REPORT**  
**DECEMBER 11, 2023**

**20TH STREET BRIDGE UPDATE:** Town Manager Freeman stated that Norfolk Southern's engineering consulting firm will be on site at the 20th Street Bridge on December 12, 2023, to perform an inspection, and to advise Norfolk Southern of necessary repairs. He advised that they were given the inspection report from the Town's engineers, however, they will also be performing their own inspection. Town Manager Freeman noted that the Town's Public Works staff is still working on a plan to create a completely passable road across the unimproved portion of the Madison Street right-of-way. He commented that this will allow the neighborhood and Public Safety personnel access to travel, should there be an issue with Railroad Avenue. Town Manager Freeman stated that the speed limit on Route 21, as it approaches Railroad Avenue, has been decreased to 35 miles per hour.

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