



MINUTES

TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION

MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2022 AT 4:00 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 150 EAST MONROE STREET WYTHEVILLE,
VA 24382

1. UNAPPROVED MINUTES

A. Persons Present

Beth A. Taylor - Mayor
Cathy D. Pattison - Vice-Mayor Pattison
Mark J. Bloomfield - Council Member
Holly E. Atkins - Council Member
T. Brian Freeman - Town Manager
Elaine R. Holeton - Assistant Town Manager
Sherry G. Corvin - Town Clerk
Michelle Workman Clayton - Town Attorney
John Woods - Planning Director
Billy Anderson - Assistant Town Engineer
Josh Jones - Police Officer
Alison Pollard - Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce
James Cohen

Persons Absent

Gary L. Gillman - Council Member

2. ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED

A. **Approval of Agenda**

Town Manager Freeman advised that the first item on the agenda is the Approval of Agenda, and this required a motion and approval by the Committee. He stated that he would like to combine the discussion regarding the Fourth Street Civic Center parking lot improvements, and the review a resolution endorsing East Main Street-Wytheville Community College and Downtown Wytheville Pedestrian Safety Improvements. Town Manager Freeman noted that Planning Director Woods will discuss both of these items at one time with the approval of the Committee. He then inquired if there was a motion to approve the amended Work Session agenda.

Motion made by Mayor Taylor, Seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison.

Voting Yea: Mayor Taylor, Vice-Mayor Pattison, Councilwoman Atkins, Councilman Bloomfield

B. Discussion regarding the Fourth Street Civic Center parking lot improvements

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the discussion regarding the Fourth Street Civic Center parking lot improvements, and that Planning Director Woods will provide more information regarding this matter. Director Woods noted that this project was started not long after Heritage Walk was finished close to the Fourth Street Civic Center. He advised that this project is designed to maximize the current spaces at the civic center, and that this should add around 30 or 40 new parking spaces by marking the spaces behind the civic center. Director Woods stated that this project was designed about five years ago and was put on hold when there was discussion regarding a new fire station and possibly converting the Fourth Street Civic Center. He noted that the possible placement for the electric vehicle chargers is compatible with this project. Town Manager Freeman inquired about a space that fronts on Spring Street. Director Woods noted that space has been put in, however, the lines are not striped due to travel lanes. Discussion was held regarding the parking at the Fourth Street Civic Center and the cost of the project. Director Woods noted that some of the striping and the removal of three islands in the parking area would most likely cost a significant amount less than to complete the project in full. Town Manager Freeman noted that Director Woods will come back to a future meeting to provide a proposal of what it would cost to finish the project completely, and a proposal of what it would cost to complete the minimum amount of work to the parking area. Mayor Taylor inquired about a home that is adjoining the civic center property that was discussed in the past, and the possibility of it being donated to the Town. Town Manager Freeman noted that he will check on this matter and try to contact the owner of that home.

Review of resolutions endorsing East Main Street-Wytheville Community College and Downtown Wytheville Pedestrian Safety Improvements

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is to review resolutions endorsing East Main Street-Wytheville Community College and Downtown Wytheville Pedestrian Safety Improvements. He noted that Planning Director Woods will give the Committee information regarding this matter. Director Woods stated that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has a grant application that is open currently for safety improvements that are low cost but are of high benefit like crosswalk improvements. He noted that all crosswalks across Main Street, Fourth Street, etc. will be upgrade to high visibility crosswalk standards that VDOT uses statewide. A brief discussion was held regarding the crosswalk upgrades. Town Manager Freeman commented that these will be completely funded from the Federal Highway Administration Highway Safety Improvement Program if approved. Further discussion continued regarding the areas that are eligible for the grant safety improvements. Town Manager Freeman noted that Council will act on two resolutions regarding this matter at the following Council meeting.

Discussion regarding the request from Mr. Jen Wu for a sewer extension

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the discussion regarding the request of Mr. Jen Wu for a sewer extension to new apartments on Bob Spring Road. He stated that any developer does have the right to request for a sewer

extension, however, Council is under no obligation to provide the extension unless inclined to do so. Town Manager Freeman noted that the cost estimate is broken down into materials cost and labor costs with a total of about \$36,000. A discussion was held regarding Mr. Wu's request and other similar requests. Councilwoman Atkins inquired about how long it would take for the Town to recover the cost, if they decided to provide the extension. Town Manager Freeman noted that it would take many years based off of how small sewer charges are. Councilwoman Atkins inquired about the process of sewer extensions from the past. Town Manager Freeman stated that he did not know how many requests have been approved. Further discussion was held regarding what options are available for this request and future development of that area. Mr. James Cohen inquired about what would happen if the Council denied this request and how the Town could connect to the sewer. Town Manager Freeman noted that he was not for sure, since both sewer sections are on Mr. Wu's property. He advised that the Committee could table this discussion until a future meeting if there are more questions that need to be answered. It was the consensus of the Committee to table this discussion until a future meeting.

C. Discussion regarding Ordinance No. 1417 repealing Ordinance No. 1259 - Solicitation and Aggressive Solicitation

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the discussion regarding Ordinance No. 1417 repealing Ordinance No. 1259 - Solicitation and Aggressive Solicitation. He noted that Town Attorney Clayton will provide information regarding this matter. Town Attorney Clayton stated that she is requesting that Town Council repeal Ordinance No. 1259 in light of continually evolving First Amendment American Jurisprudence. She noted that a new ordinance focused on pedestrian safety will be presented to the Town Council in November, and it will address public safety concerns in a content mutual manner. Town Attorney Clayton stated that the new ordinance will not say anything about solicitation, and that it will only address the normal flow of traffic in public roadways and safety inconveniences. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if this draft of Ordinance No. 1417 came from another locality. Town Attorney Clayton advised that this version came from Fredericksburg. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if this pertained to a phone call she received from Town Attorney Clayton from the previous week. Town Attorney Clayton advised that is correct.

D. Discussion regarding Christmas Festivities

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the discussion regarding Christmas Festivities. He noted that it has been standard operating procedure for several years that the Council allows Downtown Wytheville, Inc. to expend a certain amount of funding in preparation for the downtown Christmas Parade and other Christmas activities. Town Manager Freeman stated that the request was for up to \$7,500 and has spoken with Town Treasurer Stephens regarding this matter, and that those funds will be paid for with the allocation to Downtown Wytheville, Inc. He inquired if there was a motion to grant Downtown Wytheville, Inc. permission to expend up to \$7,500 for the Christmas Parade and associated costs.

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

E. Discussion regarding the Turkey Trot Wellness Initiative

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the discussion regarding the Turkey Trot Wellness Initiative. He noted that Assistant Town Manager HOLETON will discuss this matter with the Committee. Assistant Town Manager HOLETON noted that she was contacted by the Human Resources Department with this idea for employee wellness day. She stated that they would like to provide ten spots for ten potential Town employees to participate in the Turkey Trot event that HOPE, Inc. is hosting, and that the Town would pay for the participation in the event if Council were inclined to do so. Town Manager Freeman commented that it would be a \$350 donation to HOPE, Inc. to sponsor a Town entry into the Turkey Trot event. Councilwoman Atkins inquired about what would happen if there were more than ten employee entries. Assistant Town Manager HOLETON noted that if there are more than ten there will be a fair process to choose the entries. Town Manager Freeman noted that Staff could come back to Council and request payment for those entries. He inquired if there was a motion to sponsor a Town Turkey Trot team for as many employees who want to participate in the Turkey Trot event in person hosted by HOPE, Inc.

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

F. Discussion regarding a winter warming shelter

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the discussion regarding a winter warming shelter, and that the Town was approached by a group regarding this matter. Mayor Taylor noted that he has spoken with some ladies who are a part of a group that wants to allow as many churches, businesses, etc. as possible to find an area to develop a winter warming shelter for men only. She stated that these ladies inquired about the downstairs of the Fourth Street Civic Center and if it could be a potential area for the shelter. Councilman Bloomfield noted that he believes this is an idea that is worth seriously being considered. Further discussion was held regarding the details that will need to be worked out regarding the winter warming shelter. It was the consensus of the Committee to invite members of the group associated with the warming shelter and someone from HOPE, Inc, to attend the next Town Council meeting.

G. Review of Committee Vacancies

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the review of Town Committee vacancies. Town Clerk Corvin provided a listing of current committee vacancies and upcoming vacancies. She noted that these committees

include the Board of Zoning Appeals, Wytheville Redevelopment and Housing Authority and the Recreation Commission. Further discussion was held regarding the committee vacancies.

H. Council Member Time

Councilman Bloomfield noted that he was approached by some individuals affiliated with the election has inquired if a large sign could be put up at the Fourth Street Civic Center addressing the location of where to vote, since they are no longer voting there.

Councilman Bloomfield inquired about the courthouse bells that used to ring and if anyone knew anything about them. Mayor Taylor noted that the clock used to ring as well, but it does not ring anymore either. She noted that this topic was brought up a couple years ago.

Councilman Bloomfield stated that after an event from the previous Saturday, a few merchants approached him inquiring if the trash cans on Tazewell Street could be upgraded to ones that are similar to the trash cans on Main Street. He noted that someone may need to look at Heritage Walk between Spring and Monroe Street and maybe having a barrier that would keep vehicles from driving on it. A brief discussion was held regarding what types of barriers could be put on Heritage Walk. Town Manager Freeman noted that has been discussed previously and that he will check on these matters.

Councilman Bloomfield stated that a contractor put underground cable or pipe on the west side of the Farmers' Markt and has messed up their gravel parking lot. He inquired if the Town could have the contractor fix the parking lot. Town Manager Freeman noted that he will check on this matter.

Councilman Bloomfield inquired if Public Utilities staff were paid overtime or if they were paid in time off. Town Manager Freeman advised that they were paid overtime, however, they are not exempt employees, and they have both the options of overtime or time off.

Councilwoman Atkins noted that Staff had been working on Pine Street and that there is an area where concrete has been cut out, and that needs to be repaired from where they were working. Town Manager Freeman noted that he will have check on this matter.

Town Manager Freeman inquired if there was a motion to recess the Work Session meeting until after the following Town Council meeting. (5:39 p.m.)

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

Town Manager Freeman inquired if there was a motion to reconvene the Work Session meeting. (6:38 p.m.)

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

Mayor Taylor noted that she would like to share some of the highlights from the Virginia Municipal League (VML) Conference. She noted that stability, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Cyber Security were the main things that stood out to her during the conference.

Mayor Taylor stated that she would like Council to give some thought to another citizens outreach called Citizens Academy. She noted that she will gather some more information regarding this matter and give it to the Council members. Mayor Taylor gave a brief overview of the Citizens Academy to the Council.

Vice-Mayor Pattison noted that she would like to follow up on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). She stated that she is on the Wythe County Community Hospital board, and they do not have an interpreter on site. Vice-Mayor Pattison stated that there is a program online where you can reach an interpreter virtually. She commented that this program may be something for the Town to look into. Town Manager Freeman. Further discussion was held regarding the ADA.

Vice-Mayor Pattison stated that she would like to have more discussion regarding the dog park in the future, because she would like to see it developed in the near future. Councilwoman Atkins noted that possibly a small dog park could be established with the money that is already in the budget and add onto it in the future. A discussion was held regarding the funding and development of a dog park. Town Manager Freeman stated that he will have Planning Director Woods attend a future meeting to update the Committee on the plan that was on the table for the dog park and cost estimates. Mr. James Cohen suggested a registration fee for the dog park, so that citizens are invested in coming to the park.

I. Miscellaneous (if any time permitting)

Mayor Taylor noted that the Veterans Day event will be on Friday, November 11, 2022, at 11:00 a.m., at the Wytheville Meeting Center.

Town Manager Freeman noted that he would like to deliver an update style report and feels as if it is more informative to citizens who may be in attendance at the meetings. He stated that he will be moving forward with those types of reports, unless there is any objection from Council. Mayor Taylor inquired about sensitive items and how he will report those items. Town Manager Freeman noted that they will be covered in closed session if they are fit. He stated that if they do not fit under closed session he will call or meet with the members personally to discuss these items.

Town Manager Freeman noted that Staff is proposing starting in November that there will only be one Council meeting. He noted that discussion was held to start the meeting at 5:00 p.m. instead of 6:00 p.m., however, there is the option to start at 4:00 p.m. A discussion was held regarding the start time of the Council meeting and the

meeting agenda. It was the consensus of the Committee to start the combined Work Session and Town Council meetings at 5:00 p.m.

There being no further business, the Work Session was adjourned. (7:20 p.m.)

T. Brian Freeman, Town Manager

Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk