



**MINUTES**  
**TOWN COUNCIL WORK SESSION**  
**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2022 AT 4:00 PM**  
**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 150 EAST MONROE STREET**  
**WYTHEVILLE, VA 24382**

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- 1.
- A. Persons Present**
- Beth A. Taylor - Mayor (electronically)  
Cathy D. Pattison - Vice-Mayor  
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  
Frances Emerson - Director of Museums  
Josh Sharitz - Director of Parks and Recreation  
John Lackey - Police Officer  
Alison Pollard - Executive Director, Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce  
James Cohen

**Persons Absent**

Gary L. Gillman - Council Member

**2. ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED**

**A. Approval of Electronic Participation**

Town Manager Freeman noted that Mayor Taylor desired to attend the meeting virtually from her home due to personal illness, and this required a motion and approval by the Committee. He inquired if there was a motion to approve Mayor Taylor attending the Work Session meeting virtually from her home.

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

Mayor Taylor then joined the meeting virtually.

**Approval of Agenda**

Town Manager Freeman advised that that the first item on the agenda is the Approval of Agenda, and this required a motion and approval by the Committee. He inquired if there was a motion to approve the Work Session agenda.

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

## **B. Discussion regarding the Virginia Outdoors Foundation Grant**

Town Manager Freeman stated that the next item on the agenda is the discussion regarding the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) Grant, and that Planning Director Woods will discuss this with the Committee. He advised that Staff has applied for funding for a dog park through the VOF the past two grant cycles, and both applications were denied. Town Manager Freeman noted that the VOF is still a good resource to use for other Town projects. Planning Director Woods gave an overview of the previous applications made by Town staff for the dog park. He noted that a representative from the VOF visited the possible dog park location at the balloon tank site on Cove Road, and that he was not very interested in that project. Planning Director Woods stated that they also visited the Truss Bridge Park where he discussed an idea of possibly having a trailhead opening a segment of Reed Creek for allowing access for kayaking and canoeing. He advised that the VOF representative strongly encouraged pursuing that project instead of the dog park. Planning Director Woods stated that the VOF provides two rounds of funding per year, and that the VOF tries to keep their funding limit under \$150,000. Planning Director Woods estimated around \$120,000 to \$140,000 as the cost for the Truss Bridge Park project. Vice-Mayor Pattison inquired about contacting Mr. Rusty Jones about at park donation. Town Manager Freeman advised that a client of Mr. Jones purchased a handicap accessible picnic table and donated it to the park. He noted that Mr. Jones advised he may interested in contributing a fishing pier. A brief discussion continued regarding the dog park, Truss Bridge Park funding and a possibility of a dog park at the location. Councilwoman Atkins inquired about the funds that have been set aside for the dog park, and how they can put back into the budget for this year. Town Manager Freeman noted that there could possibly be a dog park put in at the Truss Bridge Park, and the funding that has already been put aside may cover those costs if the VOF provides funding for the Truss Bridge Park project. Town Manager Freeman noted that Director Woods will meet with Mr. Jones, and provide the Committee with more information regarding the projects at a future Work Session.

## **Update regarding quotes for the Rock House Stabilization Project**

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is an update regarding the quotes that have been received from contractors for the Rock House Stabilization Project. He noted that Director of Museums Emerson will provide the Committee with the update. Director Emerson noted that three contractors evaluated the Rock House. She advised that they expected to receive quotes from each contractor for the project, however, Staff only received a quote from one. Director Emerson noted that Mr. Mark Zammit with Building and Design submitted a bid for

\$354,300. She stated that she believes Mr. Zammit will do a wonderful job on the Rock House repairs. Director Emerson noted that \$50,000 has been granted by the Wythe Bland Foundation. She advised that she is applying for \$10,000 from the Richardson Foundation and will be applying for \$75,000 from the Commonwealth History Fund. Discussion was held regarding grants and funding for the Rock House Stabilization Project. Town Manager Freeman stated this leaves about \$120,000 not funded. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she would like to see that amount budgeted to fund the remaining cost. Town Manager Freeman stated the Council needs to take action on this matter, and inquired if there was a motion for Staff to execute a contract with Building and Design at the bid price.

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

### **Review of the proposed Parks Policy**

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is to review the proposed Parks Policy. He advised that Director of Parks and Recreation Josh Sharitz and Town Attorney Clayton will provide the Committee with more information regarding this matter and the parks hours. Town Attorney Clayton noted that the Committee received a copy of the draft Parks Policy in their package. She explained that Town staff has been made aware that people have been spending the night in the parks, which is concerning to citizens. Director Sharitz stated that there are certain portions of the park that are causing problems, like people staying overnight on the bleachers at Withers Park. He indicated that that the whole park would not be closed, but only portions that may already be or may become a problem. Director Sharitz advised that the draft language states that the Wytheville Police Department will be able to enforce trespassing violations in designated park areas where park hours may be posted, unless people are granted permission to be in those areas by the Town Manager or his designee. Discussion was held regarding certain areas of the park and the proposed Parks Policy. Town Manager Freeman noted that Town staff will be attending a future Work Session to provide the Committee with more information regarding this matter. Councilman Bloomfield inquired if there have been many complaints from citizens about people sleeping overnight since the closing of the OYO Hotel. Town Manager Freeman noted that it has been mentioned to him a few times, but the information did not come from the Police Department Staff. A brief discussion was held regarding how to fence off the McWane shelter area, and Director Sharitz noted that he will check on this issue. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if anyone has given out information to the homeless about where they can stay. Town Manager Freeman stated that HOPE, Inc. and Town staff met regarding this matter, and HOPE, Inc. will give these individuals a resource guide and information on where they can stay. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if Police Department Staff could give homeless individuals information, as well. Town Manager Freeman advised they discussed that matter in their meeting, and he will contact the Police Department to discuss this matter. He stated that Director Sharitz will update the Committee on fencing off the McWane shelter at a future Work Session.

### **C. Review of a resolution waiving food truck fees**

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the review of a resolution waiving food truck fees. He advised that this resolution would temporarily waive fees in some circumstances, until a formal ordinance could be created. Parks and Recreation Director Sharitz noted that it is becoming more difficult for food trucks to be involved in Parks and Recreation events due to the \$250 peddlers license fee. He advised that the Parks and Recreation Department is requesting the fee be waived until an ordinance is formed. Director Sharitz noted that this would allow them to attract more food vendors or different vendors for their events. Town Attorney Clayton explained that the food vendors will still pay meals tax, and a possible fee from the Meeting Center for the use of their facility. A brief discussion was held regarding an ordinance and fees regarding food trucks. Town Manager Freeman noted that the Council will vote on this matter during the following Council meeting. He advised that this resolution will waive fees for Town sponsored events. Councilwoman Atkins inquired how Staff will make sure that vendors possess the correct licenses and that the Town receives the correct amount for the meals tax. Town Manager Freeman noted that Staff will be working directly with the vendors and that there will be an agreement stating that they are required to report their sales to the Town. He advised that Town Treasurer Stephens keeps a record of vendors operating in town and if they are paying for a business license, meals tax, etc. Discussion continued regarding the operation of food trucks in town.

**D. Review of an amended New River Regional Water Authority Bond Resolution**

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is the review of an amended New River Regional Water Authority (NRRWA) Bond Resolution. He stated that this resolution acknowledges that the NRRWA is applying for a bond, and that the Town of Wytheville approves for them to apply for the bond. Town Manager Freeman noted that each participating locality will pay their portion of the bond amount if there was a default. He noted that action on this resolution will be taken during the regular Council meeting.

**E. Council Member Time**

Mayor Taylor inquired about a problem with grass being blown on tombstones while mowing and not being blown off at the cemetery. Town Manager Freeman noted that there have been several complaints about this matter. He advised that he has spoken with Public Works Director Peeples about this problem previously, and that he will look into it again.

Mayor Taylor noted that Walk and Talk with the Mayor will begin in October, and that it will take place on Thursdays at 12:00 p.m. She noted that she will be taking citizens through the parks and different areas of town allowing them to see what is going on in town.

Councilwoman Atkins inquired if the condition of the Public Works vehicles has been checked on. Town Manager Freeman noted that he has spoken with Public Works Director Peeples about this matter. He advised that heat should work in all vehicles, however, some may be surplus vehicles and it is possible for the heat not to work very well. Town Manager Freeman noted that Director Peeples will inventory those

vehicles, and the ones without heat would not be used unless it is necessary. He advised that Staff will continue to follow up on this matter.

Councilwoman Atkins stated that some of the pallets have been moved from the Fairview Road Property, and that she appreciated them being moved. Town Manager Freeman advised that the property she inquired about on Deerfield Lane has been mowed.

Councilwoman Atkins noted that there are still parking spots blocked on Main Street in front of the Millwald Theatre during the weekends. Town Manager Freeman noted that Councilman Bloomfield will speak with the contractor regarding this matter.

Councilwoman Atkins noted that there has been some employee turnover, and inquired if the Compensation and Classification report may be received sooner than anticipated. Town Manager Freeman noted that a meeting is scheduled to review the study. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if the reason for employee turnover may be due to salary, and if Staff could look into this. Town Manager Freeman noted that salary was indicated as a problem from a former employee who just recently left the Town.

Councilwoman Atkins inquired if Ms. Bonnie Wright requested the Town to co-sponsor the Church Street Trunk or Treat event, or if she had any concerns regarding this matter. Assistant Town Manager Holeton advised that Ms. Wright initially agreed but then contacted Town staff and expressed some concerns about the Town co-sponsoring the event. She noted that Ms. Wright will be attending the next Safety and Events Committee meeting to discuss the co-sponsoring of the event.

Town Manager Freeman inquired if there was a motion to recess the Work Session meeting until after the following Town Council meeting. (5:45 p.m.)

Motion made by Councilman Bloomfield, Seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison  
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. (6:21 p.m.)

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

Councilwoman Atkins inquired about the status of the dog park. Town Manager Freeman noted that there have not been any changes, and that the main focus is the funding. A brief discussion was held regarding the budgetary issues regarding the dog park. Councilwoman Atkins inquired about the location, and she noted that receiving donations may help the progress of the dog park. Town Manager Freeman stated that the balloon site had been the approved site for the dog park with little opposition. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she would like to receive more information regarding the cost of the dog park. Town Manager Freeman noted that Staff will give her that information.

Mayor Taylor stated that she would like to thank the Roop family for their hard and everything they do for the Wytheville Sports Hall of Fame.

**F. Review of the Virginia Municipal League (VML) Conference Agenda**

Town Manager Freeman advised that the next item on the agenda is to review the Virginia Municipal League (VML) Conference agenda. He advised that himself and Assistant Town Manager Holeton will be leaving before the completion of the conference due to a meeting with Staff that was scheduled. Town Manager Freeman reviewed the conference agenda and times with the Committee.

**G. Miscellaneous (if any time permitting)**

Town Manager Freeman stated that the minutes from the September 12, 2022, Work Session is included in the meeting package, along with an October meeting calendar and a Wythe County Public School ground breaking invitation.

There being no further business, the Work Session was adjourned. (6:36) p.m.

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T. Brian Freeman, Town Manager

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Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk