

Council Minutes
Workshop Meeting
January 24, 2022 - 6:30 p.m. – 502 Front Street E, Coeburn, VA

Attendees:

Upon roll call, the following members of council were present: Jeff Kiser, Deventae Mooney, Joe Still and Sharon Still. Carles Collins did not attend the meeting. Jimmy Williams - Town Manager, and William Sturgill – Town Attorney, were also present. Cathy Sharpe – Clerk/Treasurer, did not attend the meeting.

Call to Order:

Mayor Jeff Kiser called the meeting to order. Mr. Joe Still gave the invocation. The group remained standing for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Jeff Kiser.

Public Expression:

There was no public comment. Public expression was closed.

Approval of the Agenda:

Mr. Jeff Kiser made a motion to add under New Business (E) – Text My Gov. Ms. Sharon Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes. Mr. Jeff Kiser made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Sharon Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

Reports:

Town Manager

Mr. Jimmy Williams, Town Manager, advised that most of his reporting is already on the agenda. He reported that the town is looking into opening up an account with Truist Bank. He advised he has spoken with Miners Exchange and their IT person says they don't have the capability to do an electronic transfer for direct deposits. He said Southern Software advised him that in this situation some of their customers open an account with another bank specifically for payroll. Mr. Williams advised doing this would allow all the general ledger items and payroll to fall into place the way it does currently. Sherrie would still have to key the payroll but it would be direct deposited by Southern Software. Mr. Williams reported Clockwise is who Southern Software uses for their time clocks. He advised that they would set up four time clocks and those time clocks would send the time directly to Southern Software.

Ms. Still advised that her sister works for a multi-million dollar company that used ADP in the past. They now use Paycom. She said her sister told her Paycom is smoother, easier and everything came out perfect. They also used a company called Payroll Network. Mr. Williams said obviously the concern is to get the general ledger to be correct. He advised that he would get

pricing from them and present it at the next meeting. Mr. Kiser asked if the town uses Southern Software for payroll would it all go through a time clock. Mr. Williams said they could use time clocks or let Sherrie key the time in the way she currently does. Mr. Kiser said the idea was to keep anyone in the office from having to do any part of payroll. He said if the data is still having to be put into the system by someone in the office then that is defeating the purpose. Mr. Williams advised signatures would have to be done to open an account at Truist Bank if council decides to go that route. Ms. Still asked if all the other accounts would remain at Miners Bank. Mr. Williams said he would like to move all the accounts to Truist Bank. Ms. Still said it would be probably be easier to move all the accounts. Mr. Kiser advised that during the Boundary Adjustment Committee meeting some pertinent information came out that would influence the decision to change banks. He asked that this be discussed during closed session. Ms. Still said it couldn't be voted on tonight anyway.

Mr. Kiser advised that the flower pots need to be changed out, especially those at the bridges because they are crumbling. He said this needs to be done sooner than later; it is cold outside right now but it isn't that far away for it to be warm again. He advised that Mr. Wright likes to do the flowers the end of May. Mr. Kiser said the pots need to be placed at least three or four weeks prior to that.

Mr. Williams said he spoke with someone at the company who sells the teeter totter and merry go round. He was supposed to get a quote yesterday but hasn't received it yet. He said he was told that basically it would be the price that was in the book. Ms. Still advised that the price in the book has already been approved and if the price hasn't changed they need to be ordered.

Mr. Still asked if Mr. Williams has had time to look for trucks. Mr. Williams advised that he has looked at a few but most of them are between \$40,000.00 and \$50,000.00. He reported David Gibson found two trucks that have stainless steel salt spreaders and blades already on them. The cost of those trucks are \$7,500.00 each. Mr. Livingston said the town might could get both of them together at a cheaper price. Mr. Kiser asked what the mileage is on them. Mr. Livingston didn't know but Mr. Williams advised that they were 1996 and 1998 models. Mr. Kiser asked if Mr. Gibson would be able to go look at the vehicles in person tomorrow. Mr. Livingston said yes. Mr. Kiser advised that a text consensus would be possible if Mr. Gibson thinks the trucks are worth the price.

Ms. Still asked if Mr. Livingston and Mr. Williams have found a lawnmower yet. Mr. Williams said they have been looking and have a couple of quotes. He advised they are still waiting for Cox Tractors out of Kingsport to give them a quote and he will have all of them ready for the next council meeting. Ms. Still asked if they were Exmark brand. Mr. Williams replied yes.

Ms. Still asked if the welcome sign in Banner has been moving forward. She said all the signs eventually need replaced. Mr. Williams said he hasn't contacted Bristol signs yet. Ms. Still asked if he was going to contact Bristol Signs and he said yes.

Mr. Still asked if the water project is still progressing. Mr. Williams advised that the project is supposed to start the middle of next month.

Ms. Still asked if there has been any news on the Marquee. Mr. Williams advised he hasn't been able to find a better seal for them and they are still looking at March to complete it.

Ms. Still asked about the police department and depot doors. Mr. Williams said Mr. Livingston will answer that during his report. Mr. Livingston said the doors are being worked on.

Ms. Still asked about the water bills that are delinquent. Mr. Williams advised that he spoke with the County Administrator today and he is supposed to get with County Finance. He said the Administrator thought Coeburn wasn't supposed to get funding until the second drawdown. Mr. Williams said he was told it was from the first drawdown. Ms. Still asked what the amount was again; Mr. Williams said \$22,000.00. Ms. Still asked if it was only supposed to be used for that purpose. Mr. Williams said yes. Ms. Still asked if the delinquents are just on hold until that funding comes through. Mr. Kiser said the town should wait until the funding comes in before doing anything else. Ms. Still said the bills just keep getting higher and higher. Mr. Williams said that is just the way it is. Mr. Mooney said when council voted, the date was for February 15th bills and no more after that. He said council will have to decide at the next meeting if they will keep waiting or not. Ms. Still said she feels like if the customers start at \$0.00 they will be more apt to try to keep their bills paid. She said she realizes there are frequent fliers who won't. Mr. Williams advised that he can't make it go any faster than what the county is doing. Mr. Kiser said he doesn't want to lose the \$22,000.00 and that has to be done first. Mr. Mooney said he hates to lose the money too but they can't keep dragging it out forever and ever. He said at the next meeting he wants to know where the \$22,000.00 stands. Ms. Still said she wants to know what is outstanding at that time.

Ms. Still asked if Mr. Williams has heard from Ms. Davalos about the Flatwoods Picnic Area. He said he hasn't been able to get in contact with her. She hasn't responded to his email and didn't answer when he called. Ms. Still said she would like to find out where the town stands on that. She said it has been dragging on for three years now.

Ms. Still asked if Mr. Williams contacted anyone about the pool repairs. He said he contacted someone who said they don't do anything to that extent. He called another location out of Knoxville but hasn't heard anything back from them. He said there is another location in Kingsport but after reading the reviews he doesn't feel like the town should get involved with that company. Ms. Still said some of the plastic edging that is on the concrete lip of the pool has to be addressed before the pool is opened this year. She said the slides also have to be put in permanently. She advised that payroll for pool employees needs to be addressed. She said she applied for a grant to do free swim lessons which she thinks would be awesome. She said the lessons would be for eighteen kids per week for a two month period. She advised that the grant would pay for the lifeguards and the town for the use of the pool. Mr. Williams said he is going to contact a place in Asheville as well.

Public Works

Mr. Jeff Livingston, Public Works Superintendent, reported leaks were repaired at Laurel Avenue, Fawn Road, Spring Street and behind the post office. He advised that they also checked the leak at Crab Orchard Road.

Mr. Livingston also reported that sewer was jetted at Cornerstone Avenue, Central Street and Cedar Street.

Mr. Livingston advised that the water heater was replaced at Town Hall and 80 work orders were completed.

He said he spoke with Ronald Anderson, Exterminator, about getting rid of the pigeons. Mr. Livingston said the pigeons are bad at the stage. He advised that he will present council with a quote for the pigeon removal when he receives it.

Ms. Still asked about the doors for the police department and depot. Mr. Livingston said they are being worked on right now. He advised he will contact them again if he doesn't hear from them in a couple of days.

The Lane Group

There was no representative from The Lane Group present. Mr. Williams advised that the project should start bidding in February.

Treasurer

Ms. Cathy Sharpe, Clerk/Treasurer, was not present for the meeting. Mr. Williams advised she has been working from home trying to get all the W2 stuff done. He said if she isn't able to come into the office tomorrow she will print them from home and the office employees will feed the printer for her. He said she is keeping up with the bank balances in case something has to be paid, etc.

Police Department

Mr. Scott Brooks, Police Chief, did not present a report. He advised that he printed the wrong one and brought February's to the meeting instead of January.

Mr. Brooks reported he has been doing some research about vehicles. He said he will probably wait until February and make some copies of some stuff and get more information to share with council. He said the police department will be needing cars. He said he would propose having two from a grant and leasing three others.

Mr. Still asked if the police department received their ammo. Mr. Brooks said yes.

Fire Department

There was no representative from the fire department present. No report was given.

Attorney Report

William Sturgill, Town Attorney, asked if the agreement for the police office has been signed that was presented at the last meeting. Mr. Williams said the dates have to be changed because the officer was taken out of the current class.

Ms. Still asked about the One Act Resolution. Mr. Sturgill said he has one ready but it hasn't been signed or approved. He just needs to change the number. Council agreed to vote on the Resolution at the next meeting on February 14, 2022.

New Business:

- A. Mattern & Craig Engineers, Lincoln Street Bridge – Mr. Williams advised that it is the time of the year that a safety test has to be done on the Lincoln Street bridge. The test has to be done in March and the cost will be \$1,700.00 for the inspection. If the town elects to do it after March it will be \$2,700.00. Mr. Kiser said there is no choice; it has to be done. Council advised Mr. Williams to put the dollar amount on the agenda for next meeting.
- B. NewGen Strategies & Solutions, Wise Co PSA-Coeburn Consolidation Study – Mr. Williams advised that NewGen Strategies & Solutions is based out of Maryland. He said they are the ones doing the study and have sent him a request of information which he included in council packets. Mr. Williams said he has sent less than half of the information to them but is in the process of getting everything else together for them. Mr. Williams reported they have given the town some bills to pay. He said he spoke with Duane Miller and Mr. Miller told him if the town held onto those bills until they reach \$40,000.00 he will give the town that money. Ms. Still wanted to make sure the town isn't paying anything at all. Mr. Williams said no; he is just holding onto the invoices until they reach \$40,000.00. He said Lenowisco and the Health Department are paying for the study. He said he is doing a lot of the work considering they are supposed to be the ones doing the study.
- C. Salt Purchase from VDOT – Mr. Williams reported that Mr. Paul Maddox has given the town ten tons of salt to utilize for this past week's snow. He said out of the ten tons the town received, seven has been used. Mr. Williams said the cost of that salt was \$91.92 per ton. Mr. Kiser asked if public works was only doing the town's streets. Mr. Livingston said yes. Mr. Williams said public works was told not to drop the blade or spread the salt if it wasn't a town road. Mr. Kiser asked if public works employees know which are town roads. Mr. Williams advised that Jeff went over the roads with them and they have a color coded map. Mr. Williams said there is a packet in the mail that he hasn't received yet. It is a contract that is only good for a season. He said if things continue as they are a new contract will have to be done next season. Ms. Still said she read that there is no guarantee the salt will be approved in the future. Mr. Williams said that is correct. Council agreed

the town will have to have a plan for the long term. Mr. Brooks said he heard that if the towns had the equipment they would be paid to salt the roads. Ms. Still said the town didn't have their vehicles inspected because Mr. Williams said they won't pass the inspection. Mr. Kiser said if the town doesn't have to he doesn't see spending money on a retention pond, building, walls and the whole nine yards for it. Mr. Mooney asked what happens next year if VDOT says the town can't have salt. He asked what council going to tell the citizens then. Mr. Kiser advised that they should wait and see how the political environment is going to go in the next three or four months. He said there are some conversations that have to happen with the representatives; the salt along with some other issues. Mr. Kiser said he would hate to have the equipment and be able to contract next year with VDOT and have spent \$30,000.00 or \$40,000.00 to put up a salt tent. Mr. Mooney said he is not going to take the fall for not being able to salt the roads like with the first snow when the town was putting down sand. Mr. Brooks said he got a lot of complaints. Mr. Williams advised everyone to send their complaints to town hall so he can refer them to VDOT.

- D. Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (CESF) – Ms. Still advised Mr. Brooks that a vote can't be done on the funding tonight but Mr. Brooks can talk about it. Mr. Brooks referred to the paperwork that was presented in the council packets. Mr. Brooks went over the narrative for the funding. It said the state of emergency that the Governor placed on the Commonwealth of Virginia last year left the Town of Coeburn in a hardship by not being allowed to collect past due monies or disconnect fees on water service provided by the town which is the main source of income for the Town of Coeburn. The money collected from the disconnect fees and late fees on a normal basis provided the town the means to pay the police department for overtime work. The town has remained in financial hardship and is still trying to recoup owed monies to the town which has impacted paying for overtime work. The town maintains a demand for increased patrols and police presence during this pandemic. The Coeburn Police Department is unfortunately the lowest paid police department in the Southwest Virginia area. It said that the police department employees make \$10.00 per hour and the ability to work overtime and be compensated for it is for the most part officers' and staff's only means and ability of providing for themselves and their families. All police work comes with unforeseeable overtime. It said with limited to no overtime compensation available from the Town of Coeburn, this has been an extreme financial hardship for all the employees of the Coeburn Police Department. If the CESF funds are awarded to the department it would be used to provide the Coeburn Police Department officers and staff with much needed overtime compensation. Each officer and staff will be compensated at \$30.00 per hour overtime work and for forced overtime shifts to maintain 24/7 police coverage during the pandemic.

Mr. Kiser asked if the above is what was submitted to them. Mr. Brooks said yes. Ms. Still asked if the grant starts on 1/1/2022 and goes through the whole year. Mr. Brooks replied yes. He also stated the police department only received \$25,000.00 this year because so many other agencies were reaching out for it. Ms. Still asked if it was the same grant that the department received last time. Mr. Brooks said yes. He said this year it will be overtime specific, not scheduled overtime. Ms. Still said she would not approve it if it wasn't for overtime that had to be worked, not for overtime work that was planned. She

advised that \$10.00 an hour is against the law because minimum wage is now at \$11.00 per hour. Mr. Brooks said the lowest paid employee at the police department is \$11.00 not \$10.00. Ms. Still asked if council has to agree to \$30.00 per hour. Mr. Brooks said yes because that is what was applied for. Mr. Brooks said he would argue all day long that the officers deserve the \$30.00 an hour. He said he will not agree to any less than that. Mr. Kiser advised that council may not agree to that. Mr. Williams said the grant doesn't specify \$30.00 an hour. That amount comes from what the police department put into it. He said it is up to the governing body to determine the rate. He advised that a regular overtime rate is feasible and will last longer throughout the year. He said the police department would just have to submit a change through the grant administrator. Mr. Brooks said not to ask him to do that because it isn't happening.

Mr. Kiser advised that in order for himself to agree to this CESF Grant council has to have an absolute 100% assurance that the \$25,000.00 would not be used the way the last \$50,000.00 was used. Mr. Kiser said the last time it was utilized it wasn't to the benefit of the town. Mr. Brooks said there will be no extra shifts worked; it will only be for necessary overtime. Mr. Kiser asked who is overseeing the schedule. Mr. Brooks said Ryan Gardner is and then he, himself approves it after Mr. Gardner looks at it. Mr. Kiser asked if Mr. Brooks looks over it with a fine tooth comb. Mr. Brooks said yes but the one council is looking at tonight just came out so he hasn't gone over it yet.

- E. Text My Gov. – Mr. Williams advised he is working on a mass text for customers who sign up to be alerted when they need to pay their bills, what areas are being worked on, etc. He said it can be grouped as public works, water plant and police department, etc. He said it can also be done by areas of the town such as South Coeburn. Mr. Mooney said he thinks it is a good idea but doesn't know if it is the right thing for Coeburn. He said he doesn't like the price and doesn't feel like it will be used enough for paying that much for it. Ms. Still advised that it is a good idea for texters like herself but she thinks an all call would be better for land lines. Mr. Williams advised that he brought that to council in the past and it was too expensive. Mr. Kiser said he feels like even if a person gets a text or a call they are going to call town hall anyway. Ms. Still asked how many customers the town has. Mr. Williams said he thinks around 1,980. Ms. Still asked how long it would take to use 25,000 text messages. Mr. Williams said not long. Ms. Still said the town would have to pay for additional text messages. Ms. Still said it is too expensive as well. Mr. Mooney and Ms. Still said to contact Gary Lawson or Scott Kiser to see what the school uses.

Ms. Still asked about wifi for the town. Mr. Williams advised that Scott County can't do anything more right now because what they have done is driven by a grant. He is checking with Xfinity to see what it will cost. Ms. Still said she would like to have wifi at the pool. She said she feels like it would be safer to have cameras there because she knows people climb over the fence. She said the cameras should alert the police department. Mr. Williams advised that broadband is part of the American Recovery Funding.

Old Business:

There was no old business to discuss.

Jeff Kiser made a motion to enter into closed session in accordance with Virginia Code §2.2-3711 (A1) to discuss performance of Town of Coeburn personnel and §2.2-3711 (A8) to consult with legal counsel pertaining to specific legal matters. Deventae Mooney seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

Closed Session:

Immediately following the closed session, William Sturgill, Town Attorney, read the “Certification of Closed Meeting”, which is attached to these minutes and made a part hereof. A roll call vote certifying that only business matters that were identified in the motion convening were discussed or considered. The roll call vote resulted in all Aye.

Council Comments and Concerns:

Deventae Mooney – Mr. Mooney had no comments or concerns.

Joe Still – Mr. Still thanked everybody for the work that they do. He said he thanks them very much for everybody’s work and input.

Sharon Still – Ms. Still said thanks to everybody in every department for all they do and for all they do for the citizens and for keeping the town safe. Thanks for working on the water lines and all the ventures that keeps the town prosperous.

Jeff Kiser – Mr. Kiser said to stay safe because covid is rampant.

Adjournment:

Jeff Kiser made a motion to adjourn this meeting. Sharon Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,


Attest: Cathy Sharpe, Clerk


Jeffrey G. Kiser, Mayor