

**Council Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**December 9, 2024 - 6:30 p.m. - 502 Front St. E, Coeburn, VA**

**Attendees:**

Upon roll call, all members of council were present. Cathy Sharpe - Clerk/Treasurer, and William Sturgill - Town Attorney, were also present. Jimmy Williams - Town Manager, was not present.

**Call to Order:**

Mayor Deventae Mooney called the meeting to order. Pastor Matt Rose, Crab Orchard Baptist Church, gave the invocation. The group remained standing for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mr. Mooney.

**Public Expression:**

There was no Public Expression. Public Expression was closed.

**Response to Public Expression:**

There was no Response to Public Expression.

**Approval of the Agenda:**

Mayor Deventae Mooney asked Town Attorney - William Sturgill, to review the ordinance that was sent to council during his report and to read the resolution.

Vice Mayor Sharon Still made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Joe Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

**Reports:**

Fire Department

There was no representative from the fire department present. Mr. Mooney asked Mr. Sturgill if there is a law regarding the requirements for the placement of vendor tents. Mr. Sturgill said he is not aware of any such state code, that if there is something in place it should be done on a local level. Ms. Still said the vendor paperwork that the Town of Wise uses requires weights on their vendor tents.

Police Department

Mr. Travis Mullins, Police Chief, reported that the call volume was lower than last month, and the department was working on several lengthy cases. The hiring of additional personnel is allowing

the department to get caught up, and in service for the latest officers is finishing up, making all the officers up to date on in service hours. Chief Mullins said that overall, everything is going well, and they are making adjustments to the SOMA system; it is helping the reporting needs of the department, making data more accessible which will be helpful when gathering information for grant requests. With the weather getting colder, the department is seeing an increase in the homeless population and in trespassing issues, and patrols have been increased to address this issue.

Mr. Joe Still asked if the number of car accidents involving deer is typical or has the number of incidences increased. Mr. Mullins said the month of November usually has a higher number of accidents, but the number is about average.

Mr. Still also asked about the progress of camera installation. Mr. Mullins said he is waiting on quotes and is checking on grant funding.

Mr. Jeff Kiser suggested that the police department check on the parks during the night, as he has seen late-night activity at Ringley Park. Mr. Kiser also said there are people accessing the outside power sources at the Rally Shack and the Depot Stage. He said there is damage to the outlets, and he questioned if maybe the outlets need to have the ability to have the power cut off to them. Ms. Still asked that officers make a note of any burned-out lights they notice during patrols. Chief Mullins said that lights and damaged signs are marked on a spreadsheet that is shared with the town manager.

Mr. Mooney asked when the newest hire starts at the academy. Mr. Mullins said that he would start mid-January. Mr. Mooney asked how the new secretary is working out. Chief Mullins said she is doing well. Mr. Sturgill asked if Chief Mullins was doing one of the agreements for the people that have gone to the academy. He reported everyone had signed an agreement.

#### Water Plant

There was no representative from the water plant present.

#### Town Manager

Mr. Jimmy Williams, Town Manager, was not in attendance. Mayor Mooney shared some things that Mr. Williams thought may come up at the meeting. Mr. Williams said that the Shannon Isaacs garbage pick-up situation could be solved by having the small truck pick up trash if the cans were brought to the end of the driveway or having the big truck pick it up on the main road. The condition of the road prevents the big truck from safely accessing the pickup location near the home. Council members were all given pictures of the location to review. Mr. Mooney said he agrees with this solution based on the pictures.

Mr. Williams informed Mr. Mooney that no letters addressing cleaning up business properties have been sent out.

The Airport Commission appointment was September 2024 and is appointed yearly.

Southern Software has made some changes and the system is working faster than it was previously. Ms. Cathy Sharpe said there is still one more update to be made.

VDOT will be waiting until spring to close the bridge near the depot for repairs.

The VRS options for Short-Term and Long-Term Disability will be discussed later during the meeting.

The second quote for a chopper pump has not been received.

Mr. Joe Still said he observed that the old Pack More truck, minus the packer, was being moved and asked if the packer was in the process of being installed on the other truck. Mr. Jeff Livingston said the department is working on that now.

The report regarding the lead and copper pipe survey has been submitted to the state to correct the Tier 3 Violation. All water customers have been sent a letter to assist with the collection of information regarding the survey. Several letters have been returned to town hall and need to have the data entered into the system. Mr. Mooney said that needs to be done sooner rather than later and not be left to the last minute. Mr. Still asked what happens if the information is not in by the 31<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Chris Mullins, Lane Group, said that is not known and Ms. Still said there could be an \$800.00 fine. Mr. Mullins said that is possible. Mr. Jeff Kiser asked what the next step in the process is after the data collection. He also asked what the ultimate goal of the survey is and how the State Health Department will go about taking care of the problem. Ms. Still said she asked about that at a meeting and what happens if the homeowner can't pay to replace their lines. She said there were no answers to that question at that time. Mr. Matthew Robinette, town employee, said that it was stated at that meeting that there would be funds of up to \$2,500.00 available. Mr. Mullins said he advises that the town does its part and then waits to see what happens next. Mr. Kiser said that if he understands correctly, the town was involved because the PSA got the town involved with this project. Mr. Mullins said that is not necessarily true that the information would be gathered anyway, but the PSA involved local municipalities and received a \$250,000.00 grant. Mr. Kiser asked if the grant was for logistics and how was that money distributed. Ms. Still said that the PSA made a program for the towns to use. Mr. Robinette asked if all the unknowns must be known by the end of the year. Mr. Mullins said no. Mr. Robinette said that at some point he is sure they will have to do some digging to get the needed information. Mr. Kiser said that he often uses his situation as an example. He said he is aware of the type of pipes in his house but has no idea where the water line is outside or what type of pipe it is. Mr. Robinette said it is possible to have multiple types of pipes running into a home, and Mr. Kiser agreed because the town has run into that situation before. Mr. Mooney advised Mr. Livingston to have Mr. Robinette enter those letters into the system by the end of the month.

There is a request from VRA for the town to raise utility rates over the next three years. Mr. Chris Mullins will speak on this topic during his report.

### Public Works

Before Mr. Jeff Livingston presented his report, Mayor Mooney asked him to come forward while Mr. Chris Mullins was available and discuss the extra manhole discovered at the residence beside the Still's. Public works removed a boulder from the manhole, and it is now working. Mr. Mullins said that manhole needs to be put on the sewer map. Mr. Livingston said the manhole is flowing good at this time. He said that the field house needs to have guttering installed. Mr. Mooney said he would take care of that.

Mr. Jeff Livingston, Public Works Superintendent, reported that the manhole near the field house was repaired. Water leaks were repaired at Retford Road, Chalet Drive, Dungannon Road, Centre Street and Horne Street. The sewer was repaired at town hall and 147 work orders were completed.

Mr. Still pointed out that the Christmas Decorations had also been put up. Mr. Livingston said that was correct and that public works also assisted with the Home for the Holidays event and the Christmas Parade. Mr. Livingston asked Council if the employees would be receiving a Christmas bonus this year. Ms. Still said there has been no discussion about a Christmas bonus at this time.

Mr. Still asked if public works was aware of a leak near the McElrath property. Mr. Livingston said that the leak has been repaired. Mr. Still asked if Mr. McElrath's driveway was damaged, and Mr. Livingston said the leak was repaired the next day with no damage to the driveway.

Mr. Kiser mentioned that there is still a bale of hay out by the Welcome to Coeburn sign on the St. Paul side, and that bale of hay will need to be picked up before it becomes a problem. He thanked public works for getting the water on at the Rally Shack. Mr. Kiser noticed the water is still on in the Rally Shack and will need to be turned off. Mr. Livingston said that they will check it in the morning.

Mr. Kiser's neighbor was working on a water leak and mentioned that he also had a sewer issue. Mr. Livingston said he hasn't seen a work order for anything like that at this time.

Mr. Mooney thanked public works for decorating the town for Christmas and doing so in a timely manner and told Mr. Livingston that the town looked great.

### The Lane Group

Mr. Chris Mullins, The Lane Group representative, reported that he had spoken with Mr. Spencer Berry, VRA, before the meeting and discussed the sewer project. VRA is suggesting that the town consider establishing an annual increase in rates done by a resolution. Mr. Mullins suggested wording the resolution to state that the town would have an annual review of the rates and make annual increases to meet funding agencies and lending requirements for rate conveyance. This will include the fiscal years 2026-2028. Mr. Mullins said that this wording would not make the town increase the rates but would have them review the rates yearly and make sure the town is in compliance and can pay the bills. VRA would like to make sure the town can meet its financial obligations for future projects. Mr. Mullins said that if rates do not increase it could affect the town's ability to get grant funding. Mr. Kiser encouraged Council to consider the minimum bill

and that the increase affects the people using a minimum amount of water and suggested leaving the minimum the same. Mr. Mullins said that the rate structure can be changed as the town sees fit. Mr. Mooney asked Mr. William Sturgill to work on that resolution. Mr. Mullins said he needs the resolution by next Friday. Mr. Mooney said that Council will need to have a special called meeting to vote on a resolution. Mr. Mullins said that he can present the meeting minutes stating that the town has agreed to a resolution stating that a review of rates will be done yearly. Mr. Mullins will speak to VRA to inform them that it will be January 13, 2025 before a resolution is voted on. Mr. Mullins said that he will ask Ms. Cathy Sharpe to forward the meeting minutes to show that the increase was voted on in the budget meeting for Fiscal Years 24-26. Mr. Mullins said that the PSA will be advertising the project in January. Mr. Kiser recapped the meeting with PSA and the agreement that PSA would put in 1,200 feet of line and would assume the sewer customers if the town defaulted on the loan. Mr. Mooney said that there have been meetings since then and that had not changed. Mr. Mullins thinks it is a good idea to sit down and discuss the project with PSA before moving forward. Mr. Mooney asked Mr. Mullins to email him after he spoke with VRA.

Mr. Mullins discussed the issues with the Maytown Pump Station. He said that the problem is the thin walled, glued together water line. The line is old and is not designed for high pressure and as leaks are fixed the pressure causes new leaks in different parts of the line. Mr. Mullins would like to ask Council for authorization to make a funding application to the Virginia Department of Health to replace that line. Council agreed.

#### Treasurer

Ms. Cathy Sharpe, Clerk/Treasurer, reported a posted cash balance of \$215,932.27 as of 12/6/2024. She reported outstanding checks in the amount of \$55,090.50, accounts payable due in the amount of \$9,132.00 and interim accounts payable in the amount of \$101,404.04. After deducting the accounts payable due and outstanding checks, the reconciled balance was \$151,709.77.

Ms. Sharpe presented meeting minutes for November 12, 2024, regular meeting.

Ms. Sharpe reported two additional deposits since reports had been presented for the meeting. Friday's deposit was \$9,525.07 and today's deposit was \$22,637.40 making the total cash availability \$183,872.24.

Mr. Mooney asked Ms. Sharpe what the railroad license fee for the Railroad Management Company is exactly. Ms. Sharpe is not sure what all that is for. Mr. Jeff Kiser is thinking that it is a fee from the railroad for running water and sewer lines under the railroad track. Ms. Sharpe thinks that is correct.

Mr. Mooney clarified that the carriage rides, the personalized ornaments and the DJ listed under the interim accounts payable are all things that have been paid for by donations from the money in the Home for the Holidays account and one more \$500.00 check is expected. The Home for the Holidays account still has a balance of \$1,359.00.

Mr. Joe Still asked Mr. Livingston about the Boggs Municipal payment of \$7,296.00. Mr. Mooney said that amount is probably why Mr. Williams thinks that pump has been repaired. He asked Mr. Livingston to find out what that amount was for.

Mr. Still asked Ms. Sharpe about the deposit into the Redi Access account. Ms. Sharpe said that transfer is done monthly to account for deposit refunds.

Mr. Mooney asked about the status of the audits. Ms. Sharpe said that the pre-audit is underway, and the audit should be done by the end of the month.

Sharon Still made a motion to approve the total accounts payable due as presented. Joe Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

Sharon Still made a motion to approve the interim accounts payable as presented. Joe Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

Sharon Still made a motion to accept the November 12, 2024, regular meeting minutes as presented. Joe Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

Mr. Jeff Kiser stated that the account balance is going up but cautioned that this is temporary and advised all departments to watch the spending and not buy anything that is not needed.

#### Attorney Report

Mr. William Sturgill, Town Attorney, mentioned that the Conflict of Interest and FOIA training is coming up and he has been looking at the calendar for a good time to schedule those training courses and would like to schedule the FOIA training during the workshop meeting in January or February. Mr. Sturgill will provide links to the online Conflict of Interest training website.

Mr. Sturgill has been working on the Store Front Window Ordinance and wanted to review a couple of changes made to the ordinance dealing with the compliance and fines for noncompliance. Also, Mr. Sturgill added a clause stating that any part of the ordinance deemed unenforceable would not affect the portions deemed enforceable. Residential properties are excluded from the ordinance. There will need to be a public hearing before the ordinance is voted on and there will need to be a notice for two weeks in the local paper beforehand. Mr. Mooney asked if Mr. Sturgill and Ms. Sharpe could work together to get the public hearing scheduled before the January 13, 2025, meeting.

Mr. Mooney asked if the reorganizational meeting must be held January 1, 2025. Mr. Sturgill said that the only issue would be if something happened that needed action between the first and the thirteenth. If that happened, a special called meeting could be held. Mr. Sturgill suggested that Council make a motion to hold the reorganizational meeting at the January regular meeting. Mr. Kiser suggested there is a concern that if there is a national emergency, there would not be anyone in charge and if that happens the mayor would be in charge. Mr. Sturgill said that there is a concern that, however unlikely, it may be difficult to call a meeting, but that should not be a problem. Ms. Still said that she is more comfortable having the meeting sooner rather than later.

Mr. Mooney said he would schedule the reorganizational meeting after he speaks with the new member of Council.

Mr. Sturgill read Resolution 2024-006 Recognizing Jeff Kiser for his service to the Town of Coeburn. The resolution recognized Mr. Kiser's service to the town since 2012, his leadership, and his work that improved the community. The town thanked Mr. Kiser for his outstanding service to the town.

Sharon Still made a motion to accept Resolution 2024-006. Joe Still seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Carles Collins - Aye  
Jeff Kiser - Abstained  
Deventae Mooney - Aye  
Joe Still - Aye  
Sharon Still - Aye

Mr. Jeff Kiser addressed the group and thanked them for the resolution and expressed his pleasure at working with everyone. Mr. Kiser thanked Ms. Cathy Sharpe for all her work for the town; saying her hard work and diligence is matched by no one. Mr. Jimmy Williams was not in attendance, but Mr. Kiser thanked Mr. Williams for all his work for the town. He said Mr. Williams puts everything into the town and people have no idea of the ins and outs and what it takes to do that job. He thanked Mr. William Sturgill for his work as the town attorney, and said he goes above and beyond. Mr. Kiser thanked Mr. Jeff Livingston for his many years of service to the town. He thanked Police Chief, Travis Mullins, for the job he's done in his short time at the town, saying that hiring him was a good move for the town. He said Chief Mullins has done a great job getting the department up to where it needs to be and is sure the department will flourish under his leadership. Mr. Kiser thanked all the town workers for all their hard work. He said he loves the Town of Coeburn and always will. He said that just because he will no longer be on Council doesn't mean he won't be involved with the town. Mr. Kiser said he will still be working with the Coeburn Improvement Association and said you never know where the path will lead him in the future.

#### **New Business:**

- A. VRSA Lincoln Options for Short- and Long-Term Disability - Ms. Sharpe said that based on the current employees and their earnings the payment for Long-Term Disability will be \$415.91 per month. The catch up for that will be approximately \$21,000.00 but that was reduced to \$9,000. This will allow the town to cover all employees, not just the hybrid employees. The Short-Term Disability will be \$57.27 each month. The catch up would have been \$6,800.00 but that was reduced to \$3,000.00. Going forward, that would make the cost for catch up \$12,000.00 and the monthly cost for short and long-term disability \$473.18. That amount will change based on new hires or changes to payroll. Ms. Still asked what long-term disability is, stating that if one was drawing long term disability, they would be drawing a disability check. Mr. Sturgill said that there are many definitions of long-term disability. Ms. Sharpe said that coverage is required for hybrid employees and

this would cover all employees. Ms. Still asked if employees were previously covered, and Ms. Sharpe said they have not been and that's why there is a catch-up amount. Ms. Sharpe found out that there was mandatory coverage on hybrid employees at a meeting she attended.

Deventae Mooney made a motion to pay Lincoln Financial through VRSA the catch-up payment of \$12,000.00 and adopting the monthly payment of \$473.18 for short-term and long-term disability coverage. Sharon Still seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Carles Collins - Aye  
Jeff Kiser - Aye  
Deventae Mooney - Aye  
Joe Still - Aye  
Sharon Still - Aye

Mayor Mooney would like to add under Old Business (A.) Recommendation of Committees. Vice Mayor Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

**Old Business:**

- A. The Recommendation of Committees - Mr. Mooney is waiting to hear from Mr. John Wright but, in the meantime, is presenting a list of members and term limits. Recommending approval for the top four names and staggering the term expirations.

Mayor Mooney made the recommendation to appoint Jibber Ward, Travis Perry, and Carles Collins to the Coeburn Planning Commission for a term expiring 12/31/2028 and Todd McReynolds to a term expiring 12/31/2026. Mr. Jeff Kiser seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Carles Collins - Aye  
Jeff Kiser - Aye  
Deventae Mooney - Aye  
Joe Still - Aye  
Sharon Still - Aye

Mr. Mooney said there are three names submitted for the Coeburn Revitalization Committee, and he is going to try to get the word out and hopes to fill that committee in January.

Mr. Still was given the Board of Zoning Appeals and received several rejections from people who had previously served on the board. The terms of the board members have expired. Mr. Still did receive three acceptances but thinks that he will need to reach out to recruit two more people. Mr. Still said that Rick Sturgill, Marty Puckett, and Rosemary Holbrook accepted. Two more people will complete the board. Mr. Sturgill said that these recommendations will need to be voted on by Council and approved and sworn in by the

Circuit Court. Mr. Mooney suggested making these three have a four-year term and the next town members have a two-year term. Mr. Still agreed.

Joe Still made the recommendation to appoint Rick Sturgill, Mary Puckett, and Rosemary Holbrook to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a four-year term expiring 12/31/2028. Carles Collins seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Carles Collins - Aye  
Jeff Kiser - Aye  
Deventae Mooney - Aye  
Joe Still - Aye  
Sharon Still - Aye

Ms. Sharon Still reached out to the Coeburn Economic Development Authority and all members wanted to stay. She added herself and Alan Atwood as the final two members.

Vice Mayor Still made the recommendation to appoint Charles Kiser, Charles Ward, to a term ending 12/31/2026, the Coeburn Town Manager to an indefinite term, and herself and Alan Atwood to a term ending 12/31/2028. Mr. Joe Still seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Carles Collins - Aye  
Jeff Kiser - Aye  
Deventae Mooney - Aye  
Joe Still - Aye  
Sharon Still - Aye

**Closed Session:**

Mayor Deventae Mooney 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 discuss with legal counsel pertaining to specific legal matters. Vice Mayor Sharon Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

Immediately following closed session, Ms. Cathy Sharpe read “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 as follows:

Carles Collins - Aye  
Jeff Kiser - Aye  
Deventae Mooney - Aye  
Joe Still - Aye  
Sharon Still – Aye

Jeff Kiser made a motion to authorize a \$225.00 Christmas Bonus to all employees that have been with the town for two months or longer. Sharon Still seconded the motion. Aroll call vote resulted as follows:

Carles Collins - Aye  
Jeff Kiser - Aye  
Deventae Mooney - Aye  
Joe Still - Aye  
Sharon Still - Aye

**Council Comments and Concerns:**

Carles Collins - Mr. Collins had no comments or concerns.

Jeff Kiser - Mr. Kiser had spoken earlier, but thanked everyone again and said it has been a pleasure working with them for the past twelve and a half years.

Joe Still - Mr. Still said he appreciates working with everyone and agreed with Mr. Kiser when he said earlier in the meeting that they may not always agree but are always united. Mr. Still appreciates Mr. Sturgill's attention to all legal matters and appreciates all the work the different departments do. Mr. Still said that he hopes that Mr. Kiser does not make himself scarce, because he knows there will be times he will want to call him for advice. Mr. Kiser said Mr. Still has his number.

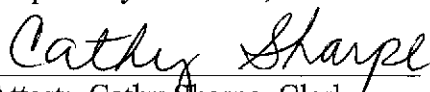
Sharon Still - Ms. Still wished everyone a Merry Christmas and said that she would approve a bigger bonus if she could but hopes everyone appreciates that Council is trying. Ms. Still appreciates the work everyone does every day. She said that she has been on Council for ten years with Mr. Kiser and hates to see him go and appreciates all he has done.

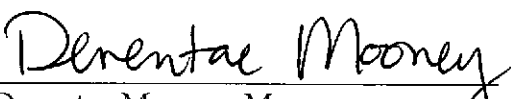
Deventae Mooney - Mr. Mooney said there will be a reorganizational meeting Thursday, January 2, 2025, at 10 a.m. There will be a public hearing on January 13, 2025, prior to the regular meeting. Mr. Mooney said that Mr. Kiser led the way to getting Coeburn back on track when he and Ms. Still took their place on Council. He said he would miss Mr. Kiser and thanked him for his time on Council.

**Adjournment:**

Mayor Deventae Mooney made a motion to adjourn this meeting. Vice Mayor Sharon Still seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Attest: Cathy Sharpe, Clerk

  
Deventae Mooney, Mayor