

Council Minutes
Special Called Meeting
February 24, 2025 - 6:30 p.m. - 502 Front St. E, Coeburn, VA

Attendees:

Upon roll call, the following members of Council were present: Deventae Mooney, Joe Still and Lisa Woodruff. Carles Collins and Sharon Still were absent. Jimmy Williams - Town Manager, Cathy Sharpe - Clerk/Treasurer, and William Sturgill - Town Attorney, were also present.

Call to Order:

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

Public Expression:

Mr. Michael Willis, 13836 Herald Road, representing Mi Hacienda restaurant located at 509 Front Street West addressed Council regarding the new ordinance concerning the unobstructed windows on Front Street. Mr. Willis feels there needs to be some sort of clarification on the wording of the ordinance when it addresses ample space on windows to provide clear and unobstructed visibility. Mr. Willis feels there is no clearly defined term, and he feels like what can be considered clear and unobstructed could vary from officer to officer. Mr. Willis provided pictures to the Town Manager and Mr. Williams said the windows were okay in his opinion. Mr. Willis feels the wording needs clarified and needs to include if tinting window is okay and to what percentage. He feels that something in writing will alleviate worries and will assure business owners that their windows are okay.

Mr. Mooney said there were several discussions before the public hearing and adoption of the ordinance and asked Mr. William Sturgill and Chief Travis Mullins if they had any thoughts on the issue. Mr. Sturgill said that anything open to interpretation would be in favor of the property owner, and ample space just allows officers to look into the window. Mr. Sturgill said he could look into the tinting issue and could be as specific as possible. Mr. Mooney said it is difficult to specify anything when all stores have different sized windows. Mr. Williams said that Mi Hacienda has painted the window on the top and bottom, but the center is open. He said that isn't a problem, and the business is willing to take everything off the window if need be. Chief Mullins feels that all these concerns are valid, and from the police department standpoint it is his plan to appoint one officer to look at any ordinance violation. The goal is not to work against any business owner but to work together. Mr. Mullins hopes this will open the door to having conversations about safety issues the businesses may have. Mr. Sturgill said the ample space wording has been in play in the State Code since 1968, and the intent of the ordinance is to clean up the town and work with citizens and businesses. Mr. Mooney suggested Chief Mullins and his designated ordinance enforcement officer visit Mi Hacienda to clear up any lingering questions.

Public Expression was closed.

Response to Public Expression:

There was no response to Public Expression.

Approval of the Agenda:

Mr. Joe Still made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Ms. Lisa Woodruff seconded the motion, which resulted in all Ayes.

Reports:*Fire Department*

Mr. Cliff Hawkins, Fire Department Chief, said the department has been covered up and that's why the reports have been behind. Chief Hawkins said the weather events have generated many unreportable calls, and being out for 8-10 hours in various locations counts as one call. Mr. Jimmy Williams informed Mr. Hawkins the town can save money on the fireworks delivery charges if the fireworks are delivered to Norton, and someone picks them up and brings them to Coeburn. Mr. Williams also said the town is looking for sponsors for the fireworks show and asked Mr. Hawkins to let him know if he knows of any sponsors. Mr. Hawkins said the only problem with the fireworks delivery in Norton is the transport of the fireworks to Coeburn would require a placard for explosives and transported by someone with a license. Mr. Williams said that is not what the company told him. Mr. Hawkins said he would want to make sure the fireworks are transported legally. Mr. Williams will verify the requirements for transporting fireworks. Mr. Mooney asked Mr. Williams and Mr. Hawkins to work together on the matter for Council to know the final cost of the fireworks show.

Police Department

Mr. Travis Mullins, Police Chief, reported everything is going well at the police department and the department has been extremely busy. Many cases have required the department to work with agencies in the area as well as outside the area. The department has been productive and expects to see several indictments as they close out some of these cases.

The department has worked on several cases with the fire department and Pro Med Ambulance and appreciates the work the fire department and Pro Med have done. Pro Med has responded very promptly to calls.

Chief Mullins has been working with Mr. William Sturgill to update ordinances. The local ordinances will be able to allow fines collected to be returned to the town. Mr. Sturgill appreciates the work Mr. Mullins has done on the ordinances and has put the information into an ordinance format and will have it ready for the March 10th meeting. Mr. Sturgill emailed Council the changes. Chief Mullins said they are working on the ordinances that are the most common issues for the town. Mr. Sturgill said there won't need to be a public hearing and the ordinances will be able to be voted on at the next meeting.

Town Manager

Mr. Jimmy Williams, Town Manager, reported he received an email from the Office of Drinking Water, and they are requiring another letter regarding the lead lines owned by the town. Mr. Williams said there is also some literature available for landowners that have lead pipes on their side. Mr. Mooney asked Mr. Williams to send a copy of the letter to all Council members.

Mr. Williams also has been in contact with Virginia Investment and distributed some information to Council. This is the program the PSA uses. Council will review the information.

Mr. Joe Still asked Mr. Williams about Grasshoppers and the salt. Mr. Williams said that Jonathan with Grasshoppers will order twenty tons of salt for the town for next season, and if the town needs more than that, he will need to notify them by October. Mr. Williams said there was a misunderstanding between Grasshoppers and the town regarding the amount of salt used. As a result, the town will pay for ten tons and Grasshoppers will pay for ten tons. Mr. Williams explained the issue. Grasshoppers said the town has used forty tons and public works is thinking it is more like eleven. Mr. Williams said there is not a written record on behalf of Grasshoppers or the town. Mr. Mooney asked if the town had paid for sixty tons. Mr. Williams said yes. Mr. Mooney said there still should be twenty tons left, and asked why the town would need to pay half of the next twenty ordered. Mr. Still said that is his question too. Mr. Mooney said any agreement made needs to be put in writing and there should be some sort of documentation where the previous sixty tons of salt were purchased, stating that he has seen that invoice. If the town paid for sixty tons of salt and only used forty, the town should not be paying for that twenty tons of salt. Mr. Williams will discuss the issue with Grasshoppers.

Mr. Mooney asked if Mr. Williams had the information regarding the pricing of materials to black out the lot by Lifecare. Mr. Williams said he has not gathered that information due to the bad weather that moved in. Mr. Mooney asked Mr. Williams to bring that information to the next meeting.

Public Works

Mr. Jeff Livingston, Public Works Supervisor, reported that leaks were repaired on Angel Lane and the lights were repaired on the excavator.

Mr. Livingston met with David Carter to discuss the repairs on the pool. Mr. Still said this work would include repairing the concrete around the edge of the pool and replacing the skimmers. Mr. Mooney asked if that was the concrete work the Job Corps was going to be asked to do. Mr. Still said the Job Corps had a bigger project in mind and that the Job Corps was thinking about replacing the whole concrete section around the pool. He said Mr. Carter estimated the curb around the pool to be about \$15.00 per foot and if the concrete was replaced that adjoins the curbing there would be no way to do that without disturbing the curbing. Mr. Still said Mr. Carter has a plan to be able to repair the damaged concrete. He said the Job Corps is looking for a concrete instructor at this time. Mr. Carter was told the town would need an itemized list of all the work to be done and the total cost. Mr. Williams said when he had spoken with Mr. Carter in the past, he wanted to have public works jackhammer the concrete out and Mr. Williams is not in favor of that. Mr. Livingston

said Mr. Carter told him if he does the job, the skimmers will need to be installed before the concrete is repaired. Mr. Carter told Mr. Livingston that he would jackhammer the concrete up and it would be cheaper if public works helped with the concrete, but Mr. Livingston said if Mr. Carter is going to do the job, he needs to do it all.

Public works completed 140 work orders.

Mr. Livingston distributed copies of the quotes for the heat pump.

Mr. Livingston is working on getting strobe lights for vehicles and safety vests for the crew. Mr. Williams showed Mr. Livingston some vests he had found and said he would need sizes before an order can be placed. Mr. Mooney asked if Mr. Livingston was getting pants for the flaggers as well as vests. Mr. Williams said they were. Mr. Mooney asked if there were TYVEK suits. Mr. Livingston said he did not have those. Mr. Mooney told him to add that to the list of things to order.

Mr. Mooney asked if the flagger training had been scheduled. He said that needs to be done by March 10th.

Mr. Livingston is still working on getting additional quotes for the roof repair at town hall. Mr. Williams said the most cost-effective route to repair the roof will be to go with the membrane roof. Mr. Mooney said he is fine with that but would like to see a few quotes.

The Lane Group

There was no representative from the Lane Group present. Mr. Williams said the bidding is still planned for July. He said that once VRA gets the information the town's side of the financial part will begin. RD will be notified, and it will be 4-6 months for RD to do what they need to do.

Treasurer

Ms. Cathy Sharpe, Clerk/Treasurer, reported a posted cash balance of \$164,165.37 as of 2/21/2025. She reported \$58,542.35 in outstanding checks, accounts payable due in the amount of \$3,238.34 and interim accounts payable in the amount of \$69,625.83. After deducting the accounts payable due and outstanding checks, the reconciled cash balance was \$102,384.68.

Ms. Sharpe informed Council the minutes from the February 10, 2025, regular meeting will be distributed with the March 10, 2025, Council packet.

Ms. Sharpe reported one additional deposit since reports were presented for the meeting in the amount of \$32,497.92, making the combined cash availability of \$134,882.60.

Ms. Sharpe informed Council that the town's auditor has retired, and his partner will be doing the audit for the town. Ms. Sharpe has spoken with the pre-auditor and said the paperwork will be finished on February 25th. Mr. Williams spoke with the new auditor about the town's concerns and told him the audit would need to be done to meet VRA's guidelines.

Mr. Mooney said he received a phone call from the owners of the raceway, and they are interested in looking into ways to incorporate the town and the raceway into each other's events. Mr. Mooney will set up a meeting and let Mr. Williams know when it is.

Attorney

Mr. William Sturgill, Town Attorney, said he would like to get the FOIA training done at this meeting and has found an online link to FOIA training for the absent Council members to do on their own so the town will be compliant. Mr. Sturgill said the required Ethics Training is done online and he will send the link to all Council members.

Mr. Mooney asked Mr. Sturgill to draft a resolution to be presented to Emma McReynolds, the new Miss Virginia Teen, at the March 10th meeting. Mr. Sturgill spoke with Mrs. McReynolds, Emma's mother, to get some additional information to include in the resolution. Mr. Mooney said he will confirm with Emma that she will be at the March 10th meeting.

New Business:

- A. Resolution 2025-002 Utility Rate Increase - Mr. Mooney said Council has passed something in the past but the wording was vague and VRA is requesting a resolution with an actual number in there. Mr. Mooney asked Mr. Williams to review the numbers, and it looks like Mr. Williams has suggested 5%. Mr. Mooney asked if this was sufficient for VRA. Mr. Williams said it would be sufficient for VRA and is what has been done in the past. Mr. Mooney wanted to be sure of the amount and wording to be sure to pass something that would work for VRA. Mr. William Sturgill suggested rescinding the previous resolution and adopting the new resolution and it would require a new resolution number. Mr. Mooney said Council will need to rescind 2025-002 because of its vague wording and adopt 2025-004 that states a 5% increase will be in place for 2026-2028.

Deventae Mooney made a motion to rescind Resolution 2025-002 in relation to utility rates. Joe Still seconded the motion. A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Deventae Mooney - Aye
Joe Still - Aye
Lisa Woodruff - Aye

Joe Still made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-004 in relation to a utility rate increase of 5% for fiscal years 2026-2028. Ms. Lisa Woodruff seconded the motion. Mr. Mooney asked for the record if a conversation was had with VRA, and the resolution read to them that there will be a 5% increase in utility rates for 2026-2028 and they said it was okay. Mr. Williams said yes. A roll call vote resulted as follows:

Deventae Mooney - Aye
Joe Still - Aye

Lisa Woodruff - Aye

Old Business:

- A. FOIA Training - Mr. Sturgill said the training is similar to the training that was done two years ago. He wanted to go over it with Council in case there were any questions. FOIA is the Freedom of Information Act and is part of the Code of Virginia and helps to ensure transparency, and that citizens have access to public records. There are exemptions that apply. FOIA dictates how meetings are conducted, what is considered a public meeting, what business can be discussed, what notices must be given, and makes sure that public business is not done in a secret manner. Mr. Sturgill also went over FOIA requests and types of responses.

Closed Session:

There was no need to enter into Closed Session.

Comments and Concerns:

Joe Still - Mr. Still said he appreciates everyone and the work they do. He said he knows each person goes above and beyond at times and he appreciates that. Mr. Still appreciates Mr. Williams contacting Bostic and Tucker. He appreciates Chief Hawkins and the work he does at all hours of the day and night, and Mr. Livingston too.

Lisa Woodruff - Ms. Woodruff said she agrees with Mr. Still and appreciates the police department, fire department and public works.

Deventae Mooney - Mr. Mooney echoed the statements of his fellow Council and said the town is blessed to have the employees and volunteers within the town.

Adjournment:

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

Respectfully Submitted,


Attest: Cathy Sharpe, Clerk


Deventae Mooney, Mayor