

Hurt, Virginia

March 5, 2019

Town Council held its regular scheduled meeting Tuesday, March 5, 2019, at Town Hall in Council Chambers. The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m. with a quorum present.

Roll Call

Members present were: Watson, Clay, Adams, Johnson, and Saunders

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation: Mrs. Dixie Poindexter

Pledge of Allegiance: led by Mayor Poindexter

Consent Agenda

There were a couple of corrections that were needed to the February 5, 2019 minutes: (1) page one, removing "counties" and adding "localities" under the mayor's address for SRRIFA meeting, and (2) on page two correcting Ms. Kathy Ward's address from Smith Road to Dogwood Lane. A motion was made to approve previous meeting minutes with corrections and February's accounting report as presented.

Motion: Clay Second: Saunders Passage: unanimous

Appointments/Resignations

Chief Rowland read his letter of retirement that was previously presented. He came forward this morning and rescinded his earlier notification. Mayor Poindexter advised that he had conferred with Attorney Eller earlier in the day concerning this development and that no further action is needed.

Hearing of Guest Speakers

None

Citizen Recognitions/Public Comments

Mayor Poindexter explained citizen comments/complaints are always welcomed. However, due to time for this meeting each person would have three minutes to speak. One exception was for Ms. Kathy Ward, as she had previously requested additional time and would be given five minutes.

Ms. Siglinde Allbeck of Lynn Street, asked why it is so difficult to speak with the Mayor. She described a situation that happened several years ago when the cable being run and there was a problem with her driveway. She requested Mayor Poindexter to come to her residence to see what her complaint was. There was no resolution and she feels as if her issue was ignored. Mayor Poindexter explained he did not recall the incident and apologized if he failed to get back to her. He would not knowingly disregard her or not get her an answer.

Ms. Kathy Ward of Dogwood Lane thanked Mayor Poindexter and council for what they do. She commended each staff member/department for all they do and for improvements that have been made. She had a couple of displays that she shared. One showed the positives for the community and what she loved about the Town of Hurt. The second showed the things she did not like which consisted of the dilapidated Staunton Plaza.

Mr. Collin Adams read a statement he had prepared: "I took the oath to represent the Town of Hurt to the best of my ability; I consider this a serious commitment. During my time on the council, we have addressed issues that I am very passionate about. Number one being the appearance of our town... Being council members, it is our responsibility to ensure our town's appearance as a community is appealing to those who enter whether it be residents, visitors or a future business prospective. As a reminder, conversations with Matt Rowe and other business interests from Fortune 500 companies turning away due to the appearance of our town. My thoughts are as follows... not only the council, but our police department are not doing a thorough job at keeping the town's appearance up to par. We as council have discussed property guidelines many times over and over with each other and with our police officers. It is up to the police officers to enforce the town's bylaws by communication to the residents of the community and it is up to us as council to direct and supervise the police department to ensure they are staying on track of their responsibilities. Goals and job specifications should be openly discussed, charted and tracked to ensure we are getting results! Improving the condition of our town not only will attract the possibility of a new business in the area, but will also protect the investment of our homes and property. It's time for change in the positive direction. No more going down rabbit holes with no outcome. We as council need goals set for us and in turn, we need to incorporate goals for our police department. It will be a win-win for all."

Clerk-Treasurer's Report

Mrs. Frazier advised council, in case they receive complaints, utility bills are being returned damaged (torn) and must be reprinted and mailed out again. This can cause the postage and office supplies budget to increase.

Police Report

Chief Rowland reported 145 calls for service; 16% were traffic stops resulting in six summonses. He commented on Mr. Adams statement, the police department has been addressing the issue since 2012. When he assumed the position as Chief of Police, he had three goals for the department: 1) To be the best small-town police department in the state of Virginia, 2) To get a handle on the speeding in the town, and 3) Clean up the town so it would prosper and grow.

Mr. Watson spoke to the Chief about "trying to find a solution that works for both sides".

There was much discussion about properties that needed to be cleaned up. Attorney Eller suggested taking pictures of these properties to present to council and maybe council can declare them public nuisances or send letters requesting the owners come before council to advise them of their plans.

Chief Rowland updated everyone on the delivery of the new police cars. He was advised the end of the previous week the dealership had lost several technicians which has delayed the process. The tentative delivery time is early April.

The police radios need new batteries. The current batteries are nine years old and are no longer holding charge for an entire shift. They run about \$100 each. Council agreed to order new ones.

Public Works Report

Mr. Hodges shared he had spoken to Mr. Richard Hicks with Pittsylvania County Administration, and it will be fine to take the trash from litter pickup crew to the convenience center in Motley.

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Valve installation on Tanyard Road has been completed. Water repairs at the pumphouse on Ricky Van Shelton Drive are underway. Cold patch has been ordered and is being used for Prospect Road. He reported that more valve repairs are needed but the budget for this fiscal year is almost gone. He and Mrs. Frazier will look at the financial report to see what can be scheduled, if anything, before the end of the fiscal year.

A Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 7, 2019. Notices will be sent out Monday of next week.

The lawn mower has been taken to the shop for annual maintenance. More water samples will be taken over the next few weeks.

Altavista's CCR has been received and we will start on the Hurt CCR as soon as water payments slow down. An engineering study will be requested for the town to be removed from Altavista's clearwell.

Legal Counsel Report

Attorney Eller asked if there are two different people from AT&T contacting the town regarding the cell tower lease. Mr. Hodges said one person is from Utility Services who is giving the ok for changes to be made to the cell tower and the second is from AT&T about the lease.

Mr. Eller advised the information the town received from AT&T is discussing a long-term lease, 15 years. Mr. Hodges said he had one request, to be notified if ANYONE climbs the tower.

A Court order for a November special election is needed to fill the two open council seats.

Mayor Poindexter asked if the release is being worked on for the Uncle Billy's Day fireworks to be held at McCormick's Riverside Arena.

Attorney Eller advised the advertisement had been placed in the paper to fill Mr. Bivens seat until the November 2019 special election.

Membership Reports

Budget & Finance: Mr. Watson has received the financial section of the USDA Grant for the purchase of the police cars. He contacted Mr. Robert Wilson, USDA Area Specialist, to ask some questions and get some guidance on the report. He plans to return it to the clerk the first of next week.

Mr. Watson also shared there will be a closed County meeting Thursday, March 7, 2019, to discuss the County Public Library. They would like to have someone from council attend.

Economic Development: None

Human Resource, Legal & Police: None

Public Works & Relations: a meeting needs to be scheduled to discuss upcoming water system work.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Poindexter shared some additional information on the library meeting. The county would like to establish small branches throughout Pittsylvania County.

An agreement had to be made before the Department of Corrections can proceed with litter pickup.

Council agreed and thinks it is a good idea. Work may begin later this month.

Runk & Pratt has either postponed or cancelled their plans for a retirement village. Auction signs have been placed. Mayor Poindexter feels the number one issue may be the cost of running water and sewer to the property.

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Mrs. Beth Simpson from New Prospect Baptist Church sent a request to use Roosevelt Mattox Park for their Easter egg hunt on Saturday, April 20, 2019. They would also need to use the town hall’s restroom facilities, grill (they will supply the propane) and possibly the basement area to set up food in case of inclement weather. A motion was made to approve the request.

Motion: Watson Second: Johnson Passage: unanimous

Mayor Poindexter received a letter from the Chatham High School ‘s After Prom Parents (known as CHAPPS) asking local communities and businesses for donations to provide an alcohol and drug free after prom party. He asked council for their input since he works for the school and did not want any potential conflict. Mrs. Mary Beth Laney of Ridge Street and an 11th grade teacher at Altavista High School shared that Altavista also has a similar program and she will check with Gretna High School to see if they do. Council agreed to keep donations, if any, more local.

Mr. Saunders asked if a decision was made on a dog ordinance. Mayor Poindexter advised this was an issue previously discussed, but with no decisions reached. He will place it on the April agenda to revisit.

Ms. Kathy Ward asked Attorney Eller if the condition of the Staunton Plaza could be a fineable offense and about declaring a leash law in the town. Mr. Eller advised this is something that council can look in to and discuss.

A motion was made to enter closed session to discuss personnel, real estate, and prospective business, as authorized by VA FOIA Sec. 2.2-3711 (A)(1)(3)(5).

Motion: Watson Second: Clay Passage: unanimous

Closed session began at 8:17 p.m. and concluded at 8:58 p.m.

A motion was made to certify that only personnel, real estate, and prospective business were discussed during closed session, as required by VA FOIA Sec. 2.2-3712(D).

Motion: Clay Second: Adams Passage: unanimous

Mayor Poindexter thanked Chief Rowland for his hard work and for staying with the town.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Susan Frazier

Susan Frazier, Clerk

Gary Poindexter

Gary Poindexter, Mayor