



Minutes of Council Meeting  
Work Session  
Buchanan, VA

March 3, 2022

Present: Mayor Craig Bryant  
Vice-Mayor Chris Witt  
Councilmember James Manspile – by phone  
Councilmember Chris Petty  
Councilmember Marlon Rickman

Mayor Craig Bryant opened the March 3, 2022 Council Work Session at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Bryant stated there would be no public comments taken during the work session. There is a speaker for the evening to discuss an Agenda item. Mayor Craig Bryant requested Town Manager Susan McCulloch take roll call to establish a Quorum. Mayor Bryant made a motion to amend the agenda to table item D the Budget Update until we get better information, amend Item G from Adjournment to Other Business, and add Item H Adjournment. Vice Mayor Witt seconded the motion. Mayor Bryant asked for further discussion. With no further discussion, the motion was carried by a vote of 5 – 0.

Next on the Agenda was the 2020/2021 Audit Review. Mr. Scott Wickham, partner in charge of the Town's Audit, stated that he would go through some high points of the audit then take questions. Starting on page 2, the independent audit report, you have a good clean opinion. An unmodified opinion is the best you can do, basically that means the numbers presented within are accurate, so a good report for the Town. The next few pages are the management's discussion and analysis give you good comparative data of the entire audit report. Exhibit one on page eleven is the Statement of Net Position. This includes everything in the Town. This is the primary Governmental Activities, the Business-type Activities that include water and sewer, and at the bottom, the net worth of the Town. Mr. Wickham stated that the Town assets are listed. The main debts for the Town are the loans for the water and wastewater. The amount for pension is from the Town joining the VRS net pension program. With that, you get a net pension item reported. Most places are reporting a net pension liability. Because Town is newer to the process, there is a net pension asset. Essentially, if you cash out, VRS would owe Town \$3000.00. Mostly, you will see that item swing quite a bit. In future years, you will see a substantial liability as participation grows. Mayor Bryant asked what scenario causes the Town to have to pay for that. Mr. Wickham stated that there are no scenarios where Town would have to pay that. The scenario is as the liabilities grow the contribution rate would increase. Exhibit 3 is the Balance Sheet for the General Fund. This is using a modified accrual basis accounting. The ARPA funds were

added at the end of the year. That will be recognized as revenue as it is used for eligible expenses, but it was reported as unearned revenue this year. The fund balance is very strong financial position. Mayor Bryant stated that is because of the ARPA funds being in there. Mr. Wickham stated that the fund balance does not include the ARPA money, the cash balance would. Mr. Wickham stated that exhibit 5 is the Income Statement. There was a decline of revenues and a transfer resulting in the balance. Mr. Wickham stated that exhibit 7 is a detail view of the water and sewer funds. All water and sewer activity are done in the full accrual basis of accounting. That includes all long-term payables and loans as well. The water fund is in a very strong position. The wastewater fund is ok, but not as strong as the water fund. There is a pooled account across the funds that has a cash balance. Exhibit 8 is the income statement for water and wastewater funds. Mr. Wickham stated that he wanted to point out that does include depreciation of infrastructure is significant in the amount of \$360,000.00 across both funds. This results in a decline of about \$200,000.00 in net position for the two funds. That means that in exhibit 9: statement of cash flows, the funds are generating around \$270,000.00 total. A lot of that goes towards capital improvements and outstanding debt. So, the net results are very minimal change to the outstanding cash in those funds. Mr. Wickham stated that there is a lot of information in the notes. There is a whole lot about the VRS pension fund that Town has joined. Mr. Wickham jumped to page 43 of the audit. The ARPA funding is mentioned. Below that is upcoming pronouncements. Leases, Statement number 87, are a big change for the upcoming year. We originally did not expect this would be a significant impact on the bottom line. It still won't have as huge an impact on the bottom line. Mr. Wickham stated that capital leases have always been reported in the financial statements, but operating leases have always been disclosure items. Now there will no longer be a determination between capital and operating leases. All leases will be reported in financial statements. The biggest impact to this so far is the administrative impact on gathering leases. Leases can be on copy machines, vehicles, computers, buildings you are leasing or leasing to someone else, there are all kinds of leases out there. There are times when water and sewer entities will lease capacity, tanks, and infrastructure. Mr. Wickham stated that his firm will be sending out documentation soon. The main thing is to start gathering this information soon to have it for the next audit. Mr. Wickham stated that he recommends Town implement SBITA (Subscription Based IT Arrangements), that will fall right in with the lease changes. Mr. Wickham stated that in exhibit 10, this is a copy of the budget versus actual. This shows the changes throughout each year. Since the Carnival was not held in 2020 due to COVID, that was a big part of the miscellaneous which was down this year. The Carnival from last year will be in the 2021-2022 audit. Local taxes had done better than expected. The next few exhibits are for VRS and its funding. Few more detailed exhibits on budget versus actual for the general fund. Then there is the second opinion on the financial reporting. Mr. Wickham stated that there is one item that has been reported. Each year, they report on the segregation of duties or lack of segregations of duties. In small Towns it is a very common issue finding an appropriate system of checks and balances. The Town has made strides in this issue, but there are still risks and some concerns. In addition to the overall audit report, there are additional management recommendations. The Towns QuickBooks software has become challenging to use as the Town has grown. It is worth looking at other accounting software. Mary Earhart's accounting firm who helps with preparing the audit and taxing agrees. Mr. Wickham stated that the retirement should be allocated based on proportionate share of salaries. The salaries in the water and sewer fund are not material as far as the plan overall, but they should be allocated ideally based on where the salaries go. Mr. Wickham stated that Town needs to make sure the VRS and ICMA are properly withheld pre-tax from payroll. Overall, the audit went very well. The staff was great to

prepare everything. Mr. Wickham stated the books are in great shape, and the Town is in great financial shape. He then asked if there are any questions. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she wanted to commend Town Treasurer Tina Kingery for her hard work preparing for the audit. Mr. Wickham stated that if anyone had any questions to contact him. Mayor Bryant thanked Mr. Wickham for coming, and Town Manager McCulloch for inviting Mr. Wickham. Mayor Bryant asked if the Conference phone can be turned to help callers hear and be heard.

Next on the agenda was health insurance review and discussion. Mayor Bryant requested that Council have a hard stop at 8:30 this evening. Councilmember Rickman stated that Ray Sloane wants to use the food stand at the Town Park Memorial Day. Mayor Bryant stated that discussion is on the agenda. Town Manager McCulloch stated that looking at the budget for 2021-2022, the insurance for the Town was really high. It is around \$1000.00 per person. An employment recruiting tool is that the Town pays 100% of the employee's insurance. The Town is currently in the Anthem Small Business Group which is Anthem Platinum Plan, or the "Cadillac plan." Currently we are paying \$6541.74 per month, or 78,5000.88 per year. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she has been exploring other plans through Our Insurance Options, Ray Blevins and his team, and Local Choice. We basically filled out forms and acted like we were signing up. We received various numbers from Virginia Farm Bureau small business groups, but it is roughly the same amount as our plan. Even the worst (high deductible) plan was over \$1000.00 a month per employee because we are just too small. The Innovate Insurance group was the same scenario. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the Local Choice, which is through the Virginia Department of Resource Management, is the most cost-effective plan. There were a few plans, we went through the different plans, the best choice seems to be the Local Key Choice Advantage 250. It is through Local Choice. One person is \$785.00, Employee plus family is \$2120.00. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she suggests continuing to pay 100% for the employee. But for the family or plus one, the employee pays the difference. With the new plan the Town will be saving \$523.34 a month per employee. At six employees, that would be \$3140.04 per month for all employees, or \$37,680.48 per year. Town Manager McCulloch stated that it would be a 29% savings from the current plan. The Local Choice Plan includes vision, dental, mental health and prescriptions. The next step would be to vote to accept the plan. We are getting a revised quote from Local Choice because there is an age difference from the original quote and it may be less. Town has restarted on March 1 with Farm Bureau, but that plan can be cancelled at any time. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Town can sign up with Local Choice once Council has voted. Vice Mayor Witt asked how many employees are needed to get a reduction per employee. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she did not ask for that information because she could not see the staff being increased in the near future. Vice Mayor Witt stated that he asked because other municipalities could join to get the group rate and each pay a percentage based on the number of employees they have in the plan. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she asked Fincastle and they do not offer insurance. She asked Boones Mill and they do connect with Franklin County. Town Manager McCulloch stated she talked to Scottsville and they recommended Local Choice. Vice Mayor Witt asked that since Boones Mill connects with Franklin County, can Town connect with Botetourt County? Town Manager McCulloch stated that Town can ask. Vice Mayor Witt stated that it would be great if Town can give the employees the best package we can preferably at a reduced rate. Councilmember Rickman stated that a lot of the school bus drivers are retirees that work there for the insurance. Vice Mayor Witt stated asked if the County is offering better insurance that what the Town is offering, he would like to keep the insurance at the level we have at a reduced rate if at all possible. Town Manager McCulloch asked Councilmember Manspile if his wife, Nicole Manspile, is on Botetourt

County insurance. (There was no response). Mayor Bryant stated that Vice Mayor Witt has a very valid question. Can we find out this information, and if it is something worth more discussion, Council can table it at the meeting. Vice Mayor Witt stated that he doesn't want the insurance to lapse. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the Town is locked into the current plan, but can cancel at any time. Vice Mayor Witt stated that it is worth looking into. Mayor Bryant asked if Council is good with having this on the Council meeting agenda, but tabling it if joining the County plan is feasible. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the Local Choice is just like a co-op. It is a bunch of localities and small towns all over Virginia going into one plan. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the plan is to check with Botetourt County, if it is way too high, stay with Local Choice for the next agenda. If it is worth debating, add it to the next work session.

Next on the agenda was the leadership/communication quotes. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the final item for the October 12, 2021 resolution is to look into training sessions to provide best practices, strategies, and tips for effective communication with such training to be conducted by a qualified third-party provider. Town Manager received quotes from third party providers. The first was from Business Results Training for \$5350.00, the second was Strategic Talent Results for \$6400.00, and the third was Fortify Leadership Group which was \$19,515.00. Looking into what they are offering, the items considered was the scope of the training that they offered, the amount of people to attend the training the preference is to have the training available for staff, Town Manager, and Council, the cost of the training, and any additional offered training. In reviewing everything and really considering the price, her recommendation is the Business Results Training. Town Manager McCulloch stated that there would be 11 1-hour interviews with each person, 4 three-hour leadership communications training sessions with the Town Manager, staff and Council, 3 two-hour coaching sessions with the Town Manager, and then Life Orientation Training which is a ½ day training for Town Manager and Staff about communication styles and leadership. Vice Mayor Witt asked based off of the guidance, which one do you feel would be most beneficial to you and staff? Town Manager McCulloch stated that the one described is the best option. Mayor Bryant asked for any other thoughts? Mayor Bryant stated that he likes this because it gives everyone the opportunity to learn. Vice Mayor Witt stated that it is Town Manager McCulloch's staff, she has daily interaction with them, so she knows what is needed most in her office. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she feels it will help everyone not just at work but in life such as networking. It will provide needed skills. Staff was happy that everyone will be interviewed. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she and staff continue to have weekly staff meetings. Vice Mayor Witt asked if this is approved, what is the time line for implementing this. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she would have to talk to Business Results Training to establish a timeline. He is currently in Seattle. The sooner the better. Vice Mayor Witt stated that with Carnival season coming, this needs to be started. Mayor Bryant stated that with such detailed information, the Resolution needs to state that Council authorizes the Town Manager to spend \$5,500.00 on leadership training so that you have flexibility to work with that person. Vice Mayor Witt asked if we need to do that now or does she need to set up a meeting to finalize numbers first? Mayor Bryant stated that the resolution could be done for the next Council meeting.

Next on the agenda was the briefing on the sewer needs for the Groendyk building. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she had spoken to Doug at CHA prior to any exploration. He recommended that Town go out and measure and see what is in place. If it is less than 8-inch line, that it would need to be replaced. The existing line from Groendyk is 8 inches and it extends to Main Street. Once it gets to

Main Street, it goes into a 4-inch pipe and turns left toward Town Hall. It extends 502 feet and connects to 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Main Street where it joins a 10-inch line. The man hole is across the street from the LES parking area at the corner of the lot for Anchorage House. Town Manager McCulloch asked Doug from CHA the cost of replacing the 4-inch section of the line to an 8-inch line. Doug stated that what would be sufficient for 22 apartments and a brew pub, a rough estimate would be \$150,600.00. Then the laterals would need to be connected. The next step to move forward would be to do a survey and design the new line. CHA can do it or we can work with Sycamore Properties and their engineers and procure it as required. Town Manager McCulloch stated that we could possibly team up with Sycamore Properties as they are replacing their line extension from Groendyk to Main Street. Their 8-inch line is old and needs to be replaced. To share cost and it might be cheaper since it will be a larger project if the Town wants to take on this expense. Doug Hudgins of CHA stated that some towns add a condition as upsizing this line to be held by the developer. Town Manager McCulloch stated she does not know how Council would feel about that. She is concerned that this condition would kill the project because Sycamore Development is looking for every dollar they could squeeze. Doug of CHA suggested that they could put in a flow meter to check the I&I for capacity for rain. Town Manager McCulloch stated that any storm water plans for the development up by Sycamore would go through Botetourt County and the developer would be responsible for it. Doug from CHA stated the developer is responsible for water. Sycamore Development would need to test the fire hydrant, do a fire flow test and residential pressure test and submit those to the health department. At 200 gallons per unit per day, 4000 per day, Doug does not see a problem with the water. Councilmember Rickman asked if each apartment would have a meter. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Public Works worker Andy Newcomb stated that he thought it would be metered at the building, then go out to the road. She is not sure if there would be individual connections. Mayor Bryant stated that since this is expanding and developing property, and this has been challenging for the last 20 years, there is potential for future development in that area. By upgrading this line, will it help Town with future development in that area? Town Manager McCulloch stated that was correct and there is another space that could expand into a business. This is also an economic development project and can be funded by ARPA funds because it is replacing old and insufficient lines. Town Manager McCulloch stated that a few people have mentioned this is the biggest development of its kind in 25 years. It will basically be a neighborhood. The brew pub will be a recreational business that could bring revenue and new people and residents to the area. A lot of people come here to canoe and kayak and end up moving here. We have seen that before. The gentleman who bought the parsonage on Lowe Street is an Appalachian Trail hiker. Vice Mayor Witt asked if since the pipe runs into a 10-inch pipe, why not go ahead and make it a 10-inch line instead of an 8-inch line. The ground will already be open and the cost should not be that much higher. If ARPA funds can be used, there is no point in possibly scaring off developers, do it. Town Manager McCulloch stated that is a good point about the 10-inch line. Mayor Bryant stated that he likes the idea of being able to show that Town did this to help new growth and development. Vice Mayor Witt stated that he doesn't understand why the pipe drops to 4 inches. Especially since there is so many other things out there. Vice Mayor Witt asked if it was 100 to 115 yards from where the 4-inch pipe begins to where it connects at 15<sup>th</sup> Street. Town Manager McCulloch stated it is 502 feet. Councilmember Rickman stated that it will be a big plus for Buchanan. Mayor Bryant stated that it has been a long time since Town has had this type of opportunity. Councilmember Rickman stated it would get rid of the eyesore that the Groendyk building has become. Vice Mayor Witt stated that a lot of citizens are excited and asking about when this is going to happen. Mayor Bryant asked Town Manager McCulloch what she needs

from Council to move forward with this. Town Manager McCulloch stated that we need to discuss with Sycamore Development about working with them doing the plumbing at the same time. She doesn't know if it will be easier for them to have the infrastructure in place. If Sycamore Development does not want to partner, we can take ARPA funds to survey and design it. CHA can do it. We are already working with CHA, so we would not have to procure another company. Councilmember Rickman stated that Town will have to get a contractor anyway, we may as well work with Sycamore. Vice Mayor Witt stated that Town Manager McCulloch should take to the discussion that Town would be ARPA funds that could be used elsewhere to fund the project. Sycamore Development could have their engineers design it while they are working on the building. That is a 50/50 with both parties contributing. Councilmember Petty asked if partnering with the developer will it mess up using the ARPA funds. Town Manager McCulloch stated that as long as we are billed separately, and place it under ARPA funds stating it is to upgrade under capacity sewer lines. It will be two separate jobs. Vice Mayor Witt stated that if the developer gives us the engineered plans, we are using the ARPA funds for the actual job. Town Manager McCulloch stated that they have been very liberal with what ARPA funds can be used for. Vice Mayor Witt asked if the sewer line runs in the street. Town Manager McCulloch stated that it does run under the street. Mayor Bryant asked if there should be a resolution for the Council meeting. Town Manager McCulloch stated that a resolution for spending the money like what has been done for the jetter. Vice Mayor Witt stated that the Town Attorney should be asked about a resolution. Mayor Bryant stated that more information is needed for the ARPA fund use and the partnership before any action can be taken.

Next on the agenda was the new personnel policy. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she was not going over it, but we received a clean version. If everyone individually can look over the policy changes, decide if there needs to be changes, and we can add this to the next work session, or add it to the agenda to approve and adopt the new personnel policy. Mayor Bryant stated that since this is a personnel policy which the Town Manager should have most of it under control and in her scope working with the Town Attorney, can we commit to look at it between now and the Council meeting? As long as there are no issues, plan on voting on it. Town Manager McCulloch stated she would add it to the March Council meeting agenda.

Next on the Agenda was the Arbor Day information. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the Arbor Day Proclamation is done yearly. Second, the list of trees, the list is 7 trees. The wish is to replace the trees that have died on the Town Park. Also, to have a fall planting to add to the trees near the brush collection on Parkway Drive. If you agree, it will be added to the April Council Meeting. Vice Mayor Witt stated that the key words are to replace the dead trees. Councilmember Petty stated that there are 7 trees that are dead. We will be pulling them out and putting the new ones in the same holes. Vice Mayor Witt stated that he knows Town gets a whole bunch of trees and awards for our Arbor Day efforts. If we have the ability to get these trees, and we don't have places to put them, the gateways have been on the Planning and Zoning Commissions list to beautify the Town. If the trees, shrubs, whatever we can get from the Arbor Day funds can go towards that, we should look into it. People come from all over to look at the cherry trees in bloom. Vice Mayor Witt stated that asking Businesses and Residents to plant cherry trees would help the Town. The owner would have to maintain, but it would be great if we could have Cherry trees on all the streets. Vice Mayor Witt stated that we don't have to keep putting them on Town property if other options are available. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Town would have to check to see if it can do that. The grant is for public property instead of

private. That is something that needs to be explored. Town Manager McCulloch stated that as a community development and economic development goal, she and Community Developer Harry Gleason will start master planning. Part of the master plan will include gateway plans and neighborhood design plans. Town would want the plans in place for the designs for the different looks for each neighborhood before a tree program could be introduced. Vice Mayor Witt stated that is feedback he had not received yet. Town Manager McCulloch stated that this is new. We have a comprehensive plan, a lot of goals, but not a master plan. The master plan is tooled to take to funders to get money. There are quite a few funds we can work with, and can even hire design firms to write the grants and implement them. Vice Mayor Witt asked if this is something that is started by Council, or Planning and Zoning Commission. Town Manager McCulloch stated that there are RFQ's due March 8<sup>th</sup>, the first order of business for that is to do the Flood Plan. The other piece we will bring the chosen consultant here to meet with Planning and Zoning and Council. There are quite a few grants we can use, but you have to have a master plan in place or they won't help you. It is also community driven. The community will have a say in what they want and what they hope to see. Vice Mayor Witt stated that everything that Town Manager McCulloch just discussed has been discussed on Council and in Planning and Zoning for the last 3 years. That is why we wanted you in that position.

Next on the agenda was other business. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Community Developer Harry Gleason are requesting \$857.47 to replace the pots that are deteriorating on Main Street. She and Mr. Gleason had a discussion about watering. Town Manager McCulloch suggested that Town scale back because of the volunteer hours needed for watering. The idea is to have the baskets from the Methodist Church to the bridge. Where they use to have to go down one side of the street then refill the water tank to go back up the street, it will only take one tank of water. Town will also save money on flowers because there won't be as many baskets. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the money saved on flowers could go toward new pots. The master plan may recommend something totally different. They may want the design of the community, the brand, or a logo change are possible. These are smaller pots so they will be easier to water. Councilmember Rickman stated that they won't rot either. Vice Mayor Witt recommended that if we agree on these, buy as many pots as possible so that if needed, Town has replacements. Mayor Bryant asked why we are scaling back? Lots of positive comments and it looks nice spread all the way up Main Street. Councilmember Petty stated that in his opinion, it is because a Councilmember doesn't like it. His kin don't like it. Part of the problem is when they ride up the street and holler stuff at me and Mr. Gleason as we are watering. It does take a lot of time watering. The other thing is they talk about the time Mr. Gleason puts in to water the plants. Councilmember Petty stated that in his opinion, public works should be helping to water the plants. Their sole job is not water and sewer. Vice Mayor Witt stated that the citizens don't like to see plants being watered on tax payer's dime. Even though Mr. Gleason has volunteered his time now, he used to be paid to do it. We cannot make our Town employees volunteer. Vice Mayor Witt stated it does look good. Councilmember Rickman stated that we may as well put the pots all the way up Main Street. You aren't going to make everyone happy in Town, just keep doing what we are doing. Councilmember Petty stated that he still thinks Public Works can water in the mornings unless they have an issue to take care of? Vice Mayor Witt stated that he doesn't understand why residents and store front owners cannot put their own plants and water into the pots. It makes their property value go up by beautification. Mayor Bryant asked Town Manager McCulloch for her perspective. Town Manager McCulloch stated that there were a lot of negative comments to the point that Mr. Gleason did not want to volunteer. Even before the season started, he wasn't sure if he should order plants. To scale it back

would be a compromise. Mr. Gleason feels that the plants won't be watered if he doesn't do it. Town Manager McCulloch thought to scale it back would save time. This is something that he feels he is being forced to water the plants. Councilmember Rickman stated that the plants have made a difference in the Town. Mayor Bryant stated that his concern is that an employee feels that he is forced to do it, then he is not doing it on his own time. Maybe we should not do it at all until a plan is in place. Vice Mayor Witt recommended that it not be done. Then see how many complaints you get for it not being done. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she recommended that last year. The volume of the feedback will determine how valuable the project is. It's not the pots, it's the hanging baskets that are so time consuming. Councilmember Petty stated that with the equipment in place now, it is easier to water. Councilmember Rickman recommended the fire department to water. Mayor Bryant said no. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she asked Mr. Gleason if leaving at 4:00 and being paid an hour to water would help. Mr. Gleason stated that would help a lot. Councilmember Petty stated that it goes back to his original suggestion that the Public Works staff water the plants. Town Manager McCulloch stated that goes back to the tax payer dollar issue. Vice Mayor Witt stated that if we go back to that, it defeats the purpose of what we have in place because Harry was doing it to be paid. If you pay one employee to do it, you have to pay all employees to do it. Then how many man hours in volunteer time does Mr. Gleason have to do it. Vice Mayor Witt stated that since we have consistently gotten negative feedback, and the way Mr. Gleason feels about it, we can go without it the plants for a year and see how the citizens feel about it. We can start the project back up depending on the feedback. Mayor Bryant stated that his concern is that there is no plan in place to do this project. Staff is saying they feel forced to do this, but Council is saying they are volunteering. That is sending mixed messages. Town Manager McCulloch stated that it depends on the day as to how Mr. Gleason feels. Councilmember Petty stated it depends on how much flack he gets when he is doing it. Town Manager McCulloch stated that since Councilmember Petty has started helping him, Mr. Gleason feels much better about the project. Councilmember Petty stated that he will water them. He enjoys seeing them all up Main Street. Councilmember Rickman stated he would drive the truck for him. Councilmember Petty stated that he can see Mr. Gleason's point. If he came in here every day and all you catch is flak from individuals, he would have the same attitude. Councilmember Rickman stated that a lot of Towns would like to have Mr. Gleason. Mayor Bryant stated that the question is do we compromise? Mayor Bryant stated that he prefers to see the plants all the way up Main Street. It is a huge benefit to this Town. No one came to Council to complain as a whole. Mayor Bryant stated that he received positive feedback about the planters and baskets. But we are kidding ourselves if we think the Town is out of any ownership with someone doing on it on their own time. Councilmember Petty asked what the difference is in Public Works mowing grass and watering flowers? It is the tax payer's money paying for mowing the grass. What is the difference? Town Manager McCulloch asked Councilmember Petty if there were complaints when his father worked for Public Works and they watered the flowers. Councilmember Petty stated that he had never heard of anything. It was just part of their daily chores. Vice Mayor Witt asked if you were doing a comparison between public works versus the Community Developer's hourly rate. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the Community Developer's rate is higher than the Public Works employees. Vice Mayor Witt stated that the cost of the pots, flowers, and dirt are bought by tax payers dollars. If that is the case along with the trees, grass maintenance and everything that goes to maintaining the beautification of the Town and Main Street, then yes Town staff should take care of it. But as Town Manager my guidance would be figure out the cost/benefit ratio of which staff members are doing it. Having the right people at the right price point doing it. Councilmember Rickman stated it



is called maintenance. Vice Mayor Witt stated that it is maintenance. Everyone has had someone complain about the flowers, I have checked and told them their tax dollars paid for the pots and the flowers but the watering is volunteer, and the tax dollars that are generated because of those flowers are there. Councilmember Petty stated that when they were watering there were way more compliments than complaints. Councilmember Rickman stated that no matter what you do you will get complaints. Vice Mayor Witt stated that as long as the flowers are alive, being maintained, and after they die, they are gone, there are far less complaints. Councilmember Petty stated that the pots are deteriorating and need to be replaced. Vice Mayor Witt stated that the biggest complaint now is the pots falling apart. Vice Mayor Witt asked how many pots are needed and what will they cost? How many more can we put out? Town Manager McCulloch stated 26 pots is the halfway point. Vice Mayor Witt stated that 50 would be the entire street. Mayor Bryant asked if we want to space them farther apart to cut back on the watering and keep the numbers manageable. Maybe have the Town Manager check what the numbers would be spacing them out every other pole and be ready to discuss at the meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she had mentioned that as well. Councilmember Rickman asked if it would be easier and cheaper to get top soil instead of potting soil. Vice Mayor Witt stated that if it is such a plain pot, turn it into an art project with students at the schools. Citizens are less likely to complain when their children's or grandchildren's artwork is involved. Councilmember Petty stated that is true until the vines from the plants cover the artwork. Vice Mayor Witt stated that when they are picked up after the season, spray them with primer, and send them back to the schools to be redone. This could be a project like VDOT does with the snow plow blades. Councilmember Petty stated the only problem is that you would have to empty the pots every year. That would mean higher soil costs. Vice Mayor Witt stated that you could dump them into a pile and use the soil next year. Mayor Bryant stated that everyone has some good ideas. Maybe Councilmember Petty could present some ideas to Town Manager McCulloch to present at the Council meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Bryant stated that Councils direction is to support the flowers up Main Street. I don't know if that needs to be a resolution or not. Maybe we need to talk and word it correctly, then come back with a purchase plan. Councilmember Petty asked just the planters, or the baskets. Mayor Bryant and Vice Mayor Witt stated that they thought the baskets were not being changed. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the hanging baskets and the pots would stop at the Methodist Church. Councilmember Petty stated that the hanging baskets on the poles further up Main Street are pulling the brackets out. Mayor Bryant stated that the hanging baskets will stop at Della Hylton's and the pots will go all the way up Main Street. Vice Mayor Witt asked if the pots will obstruct the pedestrian traffic? Councilmember Petty stated that these will be smaller than what is out there. Mayor Bryant asked for anything else. Town Manager McCulloch asked if anyone wanted a phone extension at Town Hall. Vice Mayor Witt stated that he did not. Councilmember Rickman and Councilmember Petty stated they did not want one. Town Manager McCulloch stated that only 1 Council member wanted a phone extension. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she met with Mr. Boblett this week about the veteran banners. He would like for Town to apply for the Dominion applications. There is a fee but Mr. Boblett says Dominion is going to waive the fee. There is a fee to look at the engineering and to inspect each pole. Mr. Boblett stated that the Veterans will put the banners up and take them down. His goal is to start on Main Street then go down Lowe Street. Mr. Boblett wants a year-round permanent Veterans banner display. Town Manager McCulloch stated she has emailed Dominion Energy for the form and the pricing for the application and if that would have to be done for each individual pole. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Mr. Boblett stated he did not want to do the project unless the banners would be

displayed year-round and permanent. Councilmember Rickman stated that it would look good. Vice Mayor Witt stated that the banners would probably take the place of the hanging baskets if this is approved. Vice Mayor Witt asked if Mr. Boblett had gotten permission from Verizon. Town Manager McCulloch stated that he had gotten permission to use Verizon's poles. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she had met with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) at the Gauge Dock on Tuesday. We learned we have to fill out a form because the Gauge Dock was dug out in 2019. That is a violation form. We then have to fill out a form saying the filling process had started lately. We can not do anything else to it without a permit including taking out the concrete. DCR recommends that we hook on with the flood plan study, the resiliency plan we discussed in closed session, to do a plan for the gauge dock. It would involve the cost analysis of either filling it in, or, their recommendation of taking everything out and turning it into a venue. DCR stated it could cost \$100,000.00 to fill it back in, but \$10,000.00 to dig it up. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she is learning more about the grant application. When the RFQ's come back next week, we will ask the consultant to add the Gauge Dock to the Flood Plan Study and resiliency plan. The Gauge Dock can have its own section as part of that wider plan. We can also apply for implementation money. Mayor Bryant asked Town Manager McCulloch to refresh his memory, she said because it was dug out in 2019? Town Manager McCulloch stated that Town was supposed to get a permit to dig out the Gauge Dock. Mayor Bryant asked what Town had done to the Gauge Dock in 2019. Town Manager McCulloch stated it was 2013, not 2019. Town had dug it out and tried to explore the rocks behind the wall and tried to find the floor. Town needed a permit from the DCR. So, we have to fill out a violation form because it was dug out. Then, we have to fill out a violation form because we filled it back in. They are working with us, not against us, they are helping us resolve it. There needs to be a hydrologic study to assess the impact of filling the Gauge Dock. If the water rises 1 inch it can be denied because it is in a flood way. All the permission forms will go to FEMA as well. Town Manager McCulloch stated that was horrible news based on Town goals. But, if we had not done it, we could have gotten a violation from FEMA, and citizens flood insurance could have gone up. I don't know how citizens would react to their flood insurance going up because Town filled the Gauge Dock. Town Manager McCulloch stated that even though the DEQ stated that concrete and nothing that decays can go in there, DCR stated that only dirt can go in there. The concrete can become a projectile if the flood waters move fast enough. Vice Mayor Witt asked what DCR stands for. Town Manager McCulloch stated it is the Department for Conservation and Recreation. They are actually doing a huge grant in carbon credits either \$4,000,000 or \$4,000,000,000. Vice Mayor Witt asked if this is conservation of the waterways, not necessarily historic sites? Councilmember Petty stated that they were over both. Town Manager McCulloch stated that they have an eye on both. They loved the Gauge Dock and its history. Vice Mayor Witt stated that he was trying to figure out what gave them jurisdiction over the Gauge Dock. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Town is violating FEMA rules by disturbing the floodway and flood plane by doing anything with the Gauge Dock. We need their permission to do anything with the Gauge Dock. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she did not know if Council wants to have a separate Work Session on this issue. Vice Mayor Witt stated that it needs to be discussed more. Then Council needs to talk with the committee that is doing the improvements after Council has their discussion on how to move forward. Last item is Fairview Cemetery using the food stand for their Memorial Day Event. Bobbi Sloane, who has worked in the food stand for many years, has requested the use of the food stand. However, Town has only allowed non-profits to use the stands for large events like the County Fair, not single non-profits. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she wanted to ask Council for consideration. She has asked Mrs. Sloane to fill out the pavilion rental

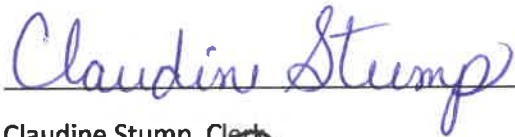
application with details for what they want to do in the food stand. This is setting a precedent because of pricing, if there are other non-profits in Town that would want to use it. This is something Council needs to consider. Vice Mayor Witt stated that it isn't because Council has denied it or accepted it in the past, it is because a single non-profit has never asked before. Mayor Bryant stated that it has not been allowed. This has been discussed before. It is probably best if we get the information from Town Attorney Jon Puvak about the pros and cons of a single agency using it that is not affiliated with the government. Vice Mayor Witt stated It is one of those things where once you allow it, you cannot restrict what goes on at the Town Park. Councilmember Manspile stated that they usually use the Community House. Mayor Bryant stated that they could rent the Pavilion. Town Manager McCulloch stated that they could serve meals under the Pavilion. Mayor Bryant stated that this is one of those things where we can not discriminate. Councilmember Rickman asked if they are filling out an application. Town Manager McCulloch stated that they are filling out an application, but since using the food stand is not on the application, she requested they explain what they would be doing in the food stand. Mayor Bryant stated that going back to the Gauge Dock, from the Council as a whole, there is some work to figure this out. Mayor Bryant asked what Town Manager McCulloch is requesting from Council. Town Manager McCulloch stated that the request is to be patient until we learn more. DCR is saying that they will not consider either option until an analysis is done. Council's approval to go ahead and apply for the Gauge Dock study and grant application in the flood planning and resiliency study and grant application that is due early April. Mayor Bryant asked on March 14, 2022, be prepared to discuss that plan. We have already voted to fill the Gauge Dock. Town Manager McCulloch stated that unfortunately we are being told we have to do both. A regulating agency is saying that we have to have plans for either filling it in or keeping it. Vice Mayor Witt stated that Town Manager McCulloch's recommendation is to hold the project until the government agency tells us what we can or can't do. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Town has to apply for the plan. This is all part of that. Can we please add that as part of the scope for what the engineer will do as part of the resiliency plan and planning grant application? This will really enlarge the scope. Vice Mayor Witt stated that Mr. Burton wants to have a booth at the Civil War weekend. Vice Mayor Witt would recommend putting a hold on that. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Mr. Burton had gotten his application today. He will only be talking about the history of the Gauge Dock. Vice Mayor Witt stated that as long as he has the guidance of sticking to the history of the Gauge Dock, and he knows that this project is on hold. Town Manager McCulloch asked if Mr. Burton could be told about the DCR. Councilmember Rickman stated he should be told because he has donated a bunch of money to it. Vice Mayor Witt stated that it is public record, it is recorded. Councilmember Petty stated that it may change the Gauge Dock Committee's entire plan. Mayor Bryant stated that right now, Town does not have the authority to do anything with the Gauge Dock. Vice Mayor Witt stated that with the Gauge Dock being a very volatile issue a year or two ago, Council needs to make a public statement on the Gauge Dock situation. That way the citizens know what is happening. Mayor Bryant stated that the response is we are working through the regulation to do any work on the Gauge Dock. Vice Mayor Witt stated that we want to, but we can't. Councilmember Rickman stated that we had voted last year to buy a lawn mower, the John Deere mower has had it. It is all to pieces. Public Works needs a new mower. Vice Mayor Witt stated that was why Town got one last year. We bought one because one mower was on its last leg. Mayor Bryant stated that one of them fits on the trailer. Vice Mayor Witt stated that the Town Manager should look in to it. Mayor Bryant stated that there had been some discussion before Town Manager McCulloch joined the staff about replacing the John Deere mower. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Public Works staff had mentioned that

and the mower runs about \$12,000.00. Mayor Bryant asked if Town Manager McCulloch would bring the mower up at budget discussion. Town Manager McCulloch stated that she would.

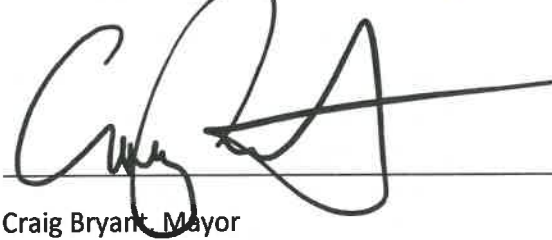
Last on the agenda was Adjournment. Vice Mayor Witt made a motion to adjourn with Councilmember Petty seconding the motion. With no further discussion, the vote was carried 4-0.

Adjournment was at 8: 47pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Claudine Stump, Clerk



Craig Bryant, Mayor