

**TOWN OF INDEPENDENCE
REGULAR SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2022
6:00 P.M.
INDEPENDENCE FIRE DEPARTMENT
329 DAVIS STREET; INDEPENDENCE, VA 24348**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor E.F. “Butch” Reeves, Vice Mayor Tom Maxwell, Ronald Sexton, Jason Cassell, Ronald Sexton, Buddy Halsey, and Jim Meier.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Jeff Miller.

TOWN STAFF PRESENT: Roger Brooks, Town Attorney, James Wagoner, Police Chief, Kim Farmer, Town Clerk, Terry Osborne, Utility Director, and Mary Ann Halsey, Special Events Coordinator.

CITIZENS & GUESTS: None.

CALL TO ORDER:

The Council Meeting was called to order by Mayor E.F. “Butch” Reeves on this 11th day of October 2022 and declared that a quorum was present.

GUESTS

None.

MINUTES for September 13, 2022, public hearing, September 13, 2022, regular scheduled meeting, and September 27, 2022, special called meeting were presented for approval. **COUNCILMAN JIM MEIER made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, COUNCILMAN RONALD SEXTON seconded; motion carried with all ayes.**

MONTHLY FINANCES were presented in the amount of \$111,804.47. Town Clerk Kim Farmer stated that included in the payables was \$15,000 for the Independence Volunteer Fire Department which was pass through money received from the Department of Fire Program, loan payment of \$15,197.50 and \$10,872.77 to Boggs for working on the blowers at the WWTP. Mayor Reeves asked if the loan payment was included in the budget. Town Clerk Farmer stated that it was. Vice Mayor Maxwell asked about how the blowers were holding up at the WWTP. Utility Supervisor Osborne stated that they are getting another one rebuilt in the very near future to have as a backup. Councilman Jim Meier asked Utility Supervisor Osborne what the actual water usage bill should be from the VCWA. Utility Supervisor Osborne stated that the normal cost for the bill for this past month would have been \$6,108.27. Councilman Jim Meier asked Utility Supervisor Osborne if the Town was doing more to use the water from the VCWA. Utility Supervisor Osborne stated that he has cut back usage of the wells. Councilman Jason Cassell asked Town Clerk Farmer to check around about getting quotes for the employee’s medical insurance.

COUNCILMAN JIM MEIER made a motion to approve the finances in the amount of \$111,804.47. COUNCILMAN JASON CASSELL seconded; motion carried with all ayes.

POLICE REPORT

Police Chief James Wagoner stated that the police report was in council packets. Police Chief Wagoner commended Officer Mullins on a rape case that he worked by himself. Police Chief Wagoner stated that Safe Halloween would be on Monday, October 31st, 4:30 to 7 pm, on Courthouse Street and the 1908 Courthouse. **VICE MAYOR TOM MAXWELL made a motion to close the Town Office on Monday, October 31st, at 3:30pm. COUNCILMAN RONALD SEXTON seconded; motion carried with all ayes.** Police Chief Wagoner stated that the Drug Take Back program will be on October 29th, at the Food City Pharmacy.

UTILITY SUPERVISOR:

Utility Supervisor, Terry Osborne, stated the Town used 400,000 more gallons of water from the VCWA this month. Some of the wells had to be brought back on due to the hurricane. Utility Supervisor Terry Osborne stated that special testing has to be done every other week with a cost of \$600 per test. The testing has to be done for one year. Public works put up the Halloween lights, poured some of the sidewalk on 21. The dump truck is still being worked on and the transmission in the white Dodge had to be fixed. The unaccountability rate for this past month was 26%. There was a problem at the Farmers Market with water coming out of the building.

Utility Supervisor Osborne got quotes for the roofs at the Town Hall, Police/Public Works office, and the Pro Clad building. The estimate for the Town Hall was \$65,000. Supervisor Osborne has another company coming to get another quote for spraying on the roof. Councilman Jim Meier stated the structure needs to be fixed not covered up.

Councilman Buddy Halsey asked if the VCWA had a meeting set? Utility Supervisor Osborne stated that he had not heard from anyone if there had been one set. Utility Supervisor Osborne stated that if they were only doing one every three months the next one would not be until December.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Mayor Reeves stated that he had run into Mary Ann Halsey, and that she was planning on staying as the Town's Special Events Coordinator.

Mary Ann Halsey, Special Events Coordinator, stated that the Mountain Fall Foliage Event is scheduled for Saturday. Sixteen vendors have signed up, 4 confirmed outhouse teams, axe throwing, toilet paper toss and other activities are happening that day as well.

MANAGERS REPORT:

- 1) DOC/prison meeting:
- 2) ARPA Funding:
- 3) Farmer's Market:
- 4) Penn Court:
- 5) North Park:
- 6) DHCD:
- 7) Sewer I & I Project:
- 8) Rural Development Audit Notification:
- 9) DEQ Non-Competitive Litter Prevention and Recycling Grant:
- 10) Election Ordinance:

- 11) APCO:
- 12) VCWA:
- 13) DHCD:
- 14) Solid Waste Ordinance:
- 15) Manager Days Worked

TOWN ATTORNEY:

Town Attorney Roger Brooks stated that Councilman Jason Cassell had provided the address to send for the easement at Penn Court.

MAYORS REPORT:

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilman Ronald Sexton stated that Independence Cares met prior to this meeting and the letters will be sent out soon for getting donations for the toy/coat drive.

Councilman Ronald Sexton stated that himself, Renee Nester, and Kitty Watson are working on getting a fundraiser together for Councilman Jeff Miller. The fundraiser will be on November 19th. Councilman Sexton stated that he would give council more details when it all gets worked out.

COUNCILMAN JASON CASSELL made a motion for Council to go into closed session citing VAFOIA Section 2.2-3711, to discuss personnel, and contract negotiation asking the Town Attorney Roger Brooks to stay. VICE MAYOR TOM MAXWELL seconded; motion carried with all ayes.

Councilman Jason Cassell made a motion for Council to go into open session citing VAFOIA Section 2.2-3712 that only matters in closed session were convened for and permitted under was discussed. Mayor Butch Reeves asked for a roll call vote:

**Jim Meier-I So Certify
Tom Maxwell-I So Certify**

**Buddy Halsey-I So Certify
Jason Cassell-I So Certify**

Ronald Sexton-I So Certify

COUNCILMAN BUDDY HALSEY made a motion to hold a Special Called meeting next Monday, October 17, 2022, 6:00pm at the old Town Hall located at 136 East Main Street, VICE MAYOR TOM MAXWELL seconded; motion carried with all ayes.

Utility Supervisor Terry Osborne stated that Rural Development offered a grant to the Independence Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$75,000. The Fire Department is wanting to use the grant for purchasing a cab for the tanker truck. **COUNCILMAN JIM MEIER made a motion to grant permission for the IVFD to apply for the \$75,000 grant from Rural Development. COUNCILMAN BUDDY HALSEY seconded; motion carried with all ayes.**

With no other business Mayor Reeves closed the meeting.