

## October 10, 2023 Council Meeting Minutes

This meeting was available on Zoom.

Mayor McPhaul asked everyone to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman T. Jones led the prayer.

Mayor McPhaul called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. with four members of Council present, Councilman K. Jones was absent. Town Attorney Richard Matthews was also present.

### **Adopt Agenda:**

On a motion by Council President Cox, seconded by Councilman T. Jones and carried the agenda was approved as presented.

### **Presenters:**

There were no presenters.

### **Citizen's Wishing to Appear:**

- A. **Dr. Phillis Tolliver** – Thanked Councilwoman Norris for coming out and taking team photos last week. Dr. Tolliver stated they are planning an awards banquet on November 4, 2023 for the soccer teams.

### **Clerk's Report:**

- A. **Reading/Approval of September 12, 2023 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes** – On a motion by Councilman T. Jones, seconded by Council President Cox and carried the reading of the September 12, 2023 meeting minutes were dispensed with as they are a matter of public record and previously provided to Council and were approved as presented.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

- A. **Treasurer's Report** – Amanda Morman gave a brief update on the status of the general operating fund as of October 1, 2023. Mrs. Morman informed Council she had met with Mr. Headley yesterday and received the tax data. Mrs. Morman also advised that once the bills have been proofed, printed and sorted the hope is to have the 2023 tax bills in the mail by November 1, 2023. The audit will begin as of November 6 via online then the following week they will be in person. Mrs. Morman also noted that the Water Sale money that was invested with the state in the VIP fund has accrued over \$24,000 in interest since July 1, 2023. On a motion by Council President Cox, seconded by Councilwoman Norris and carried the Treasurer's Report was accepted as presented.
- B. **Bills Paid and Presented for Payment** – On a motion by Councilman Bernstorff, seconded by Council President Cox and carried the Bills Paid and Presented for Payment were approved as presented.

### **Sussex Service Authority Report:**

Frank Irving was present. Mr. Irving advised that the Service Authority hired a firm to monitor flows in the waste water pipes and they have identified some concerned areas. Mr. Irving advised the Service Authority is in the process of going door to door placing door hangers to advise residents of smoke testing that will take place in the near future.

### **Planning Commission Report:**

Secretary, Yvonne Williams advised the Commission had a meeting on October 5, 2023, where they reviewed updates to the amendment for Commercial and Industrial Uses and are planning to hold a Public Hearing on November 2, 2023. Ms. Williams also stated they were provided an update for the Restoration Bio-Products plant being constructed on W. Main St. across from the old Masonite.

### **Zoning Administrator:**

Mayor McPhaul advised Mr. Copeland continues to stay busy with junk, trash and debris and grass violations. Mayor McPhaul advised the Town will be taking down the house at 626 W. Main St once the permits have been issued and have been contacted by the owner to take down a home on Oak St as well as on Maple St.

### **Mayor's Report:**

Mayor McPhaul reminded everyone of Oktoberfest this upcoming weekend, October 14, 2023, at the Carpenter Museum. There will be a kid's event from 3pm – 5pm, then the adult portion is from 5pm – 9pm.

### **Departmental Reports:**

- A. **Police** – Sheriff Giles was not present and no report was previously provided.
- B. **Public Works** – Mayor McPhaul advised Public Works has been spending majority of their time at the Carpenter Museum property cleaning up and building an additional stage for Oktoberfest. They continue to keep the grass cut and maintain the cemetery, park and the community garden.

### **Standing Committee Reports:**

- A. **Health & Safety** – Councilman T. Jones advised at the November meeting he hopes to have a representative from Horizon Health to speak on the importance and have hand out information regarding the “Know Your Numbers” campaign.
- B. **Finance** – Councilman Bernstorf advised he had nothing further to report.
- C. **Memorial/Beautification** – Councilwoman Norris advised her idea of adopting a pole to decorate for Halloween has had quite a bit of interest, and at last check there were only a few poles left. Councilwoman Norris advised if this goes well there may be decorating for Christmas as well.
- D. **Public Property** – Council President Cox advised he was reporting on Public Property as well as Streets. Council President Cox advised the Town does not currently have a contact person with Norfolk Southern whom we can call upon for issues. Council President Cox also advised McDonald's Corporate is not willing to grant an easement to install a crosswalk without being compensated.
- E. **Streets** – Councilman K. Jones was not present, but Council President Cox presented alongside his report.

### **Old Business:**

- A. **Carpenter Museum** – Mayor McPhaul stated the Board of Directors has been established and regular meetings are taking place. It was decided that the Carpenter Museum would host Oktoberfest.
- A. **Angel Tree** – Mayor McPhaul advised starting October 11 Angel Tree Angels will be available for adoption through Sussex County Social Services. Mayor McPhaul also advised we have contacted with the nursing home and they have an Angel Tree program for their residents as well, and we plan to contribute to them as well.

- B. **USDA – Rural Business Development Grant** – Mayor McPhaul stated this is \$150,000 that the Town could loan up to \$20,000 to individuals who wish to open a business in the Town or expand an existing business. This will be an interest bearing loan when being paid back. At this time the funds have not yet been deposited to our designated bank account.
- C. **Industrial Revitalization Fund Grant** – Mayor McPhaul stated this grant is specifically designated for the Brewery and things are slowly progressing.
- D. **Economic Development Authority (EDA)** – Mayor McPhaul the EDA will be the Board that oversees the various grants we have been awarded once the money has been deposited and distributions start taking place.
- E. **Update to Town Code** – Mr. Matthews advised an editor has been assigned and the initial draft is being worked on. There are hopes of having completion by late spring 2024.

**New Business:**

- B. **Community Block Loan Grant** – Mayor McPhaul stated this grant is a \$50,000 grant that follows an 8 week program where individuals are taught how to write a business plan, use social media and billing software and tips on how to become a successful business owner. Then at the end of the program you will be given the opportunity to explain why your business is important and a panel will determine how much funding you may qualify for.

**Closed Session:**

Council President Cox moved that Council go into Closed Session at 6:57 p.m. under Section 2.2-3711(A)(1)(7) of the Code of Virginia to discuss legal matters and to include in this session the Council, Mayor and Town Attorney. This was seconded by Councilwoman Norris and carried on a roll call vote with four members of Council present and voting in the affirmative. Councilman K. Jones was absent.

**Rise and Certify Closed Session:**

Council Rose from Closed Session at 7:28 p.m.

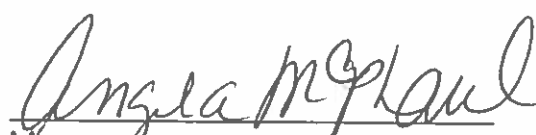
Council President Cox moved that Council certify the Closed Session under Section 2.2-3712(d) that to the best of each member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under this chapter and only such business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Session was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the public body. This motion was seconded by Councilman Bernstorf and carried on a roll call vote with four members of Council being present and voting in the affirmative. Councilman K. Jones was absent.

**Closed Session Report:**

There was no Closed Session report.

As there was no further business to come before Council the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m. on a motion by Councilman Bernstorf, seconded by Councilwoman Norris and carried.

  
Clerk of Council

  
Mayor