

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL WORK SESSION OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE
AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEES HELD IN THE COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM
ON MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2022, AT 4:00 P.M.**

Persons present: Mayor Beth A. Taylor, Vice-Mayor Cathy D. Pattison, Councilman Mark J. Bloomfield, Councilwoman Holly E. Atkins, Councilman Gary L. Gillman, Town Manager T. Brian Freeman, Assistant Town Manager Elaine R. HOLETON, Town Clerk Sherry G. Corvin, Town Attorney Michelle Workman Clayton, Chad Thomas and Cyan Belluccia with Mattern & Craig (electronically), John Matthews with the Joint Industrial Development Authority, Donna L. Stroupe

Persons absent: None

The following topics were discussed at the Work Session:

1. Town Manager Freeman noted that Mr. Chad Thomas and Ms. Cyan Belluccia were joining the meeting via Zoom to provide an update on the 20th Street Bridge. He noted that Mattern & Craig perform an annual inspection of the bridge, and the last inspection was in the fall of 2021. He advised that Town Engineer Hackler had asked them to work with him on the needed repairs to the bridge and provide a cost estimate. Mr. Thomas explained that the bridge deck and above is the Town of Wytheville's responsibility for the maintenance and repair. Mr. Thomas advised that the bridge is currently rated as a GCR 4, and this puts the bridge on the structurally deficient list. He reviewed VDOT funding that the Town could apply for since the bridge is rated GCR 4. A discussion was held by the Committee regarding requesting Norfolk Southern to take care of their portion of the bridge. Mr. Thomas stated that he can work with Town Engineer Hackler to prepare a listing of the higher priority repairs that need to be made to the portion of the bridge for which the Town is responsible. The Committee held a brief discussion on the weight load of the bridge. Town Manager Freeman stated that he would like for the Committee to consider taking care of the repair items on the bridge that are the Town's responsibility. Mr. Thomas stated that he would work with Town Engineer Hackler to prioritize the list of repairs. Town Manager Freeman thanked Mr. Thomas and Ms. Belluccia for updating the Committee on the 20th Street bridge and noted if the Committee had any questions, they would send those to Town Engineer Hackler.
2. Mr. John Matthews, Deputy Director of the Wythe County Joint Industrial Development Authority, joined the meeting to discuss the Fourth Street Civic Center and how it could possibly be used. He shared information with the Committee as to how the building could be constructed and possibly be used to house the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce, the Wythe County Joint Industrial Development Authority and the Small Business Development Center. Mr. Matthews reviewed several possible funding sources for the feasibility study with the Committee. He noted that the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce is supportive of the efforts for them to possibly use this building. Mr. Matthews requested the Town Council to permit the Joint Industrial Development Authority and the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce to apply for grant funds to be used for a feasibility study to determine the highest and best use for the building. A motion was made by Councilman Gillman and seconded by Councilman Bloomfield to grant permission to the Joint Industrial Development Authority and the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce to apply for grant funds to be used for a feasibility study to determine the highest and best use for the Fourth Street Civic Center. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: Beth A.

Taylor, Cathy D. Pattison, Mark J. Bloomfield, Holly E. Atkins, Gary L. Gillman. Against: None. Mr. Matthews advised that he would come before the Committee again when he found a funding source for the feasibility study. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if there was any rush for the Chamber of Commerce to move out of the Municipal Building. Mayor Taylor noted that there is no rush for the Chamber of Commerce to move out of the Municipal Building. Town Manager Freeman thanked Mr. Matthews for attending the meeting.

3. Councilman Bloomfield stated that he sent an email to all the Council members expressing his thoughts about the Recreation Department and how it should move forward. A brief discussion was held about the membership decline, etc. Councilman Bloomfield noted that with Director Showalter's resignation, he does not think that the Town should be in a hurry to hire a new director, and he thinks that there needs to be a committee formed to study the Recreation Center. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee to form an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of Councilman Bloomfield, Councilman Gillman, Town Manager Freeman and Assistant Town Manager HOLETON to study the Recreation Department and form some goals that they could present to the Town Council regarding the Recreation Department.
4. Vice-Mayor Pattison inquired if the Recreation Center roof is included in the 2022-23 budget. Town Manager Freeman noted that the Recreation Center/Meeting Center roof repair is a top priority on the Capital Improvements List. Further discussion was held on the leaks in the Recreation Center roof and the funding to be used for its repair.
5. Vice-Mayor Pattison noted that there are two applications in the Town Council meeting package to be considered for appointment to the Planning Commission. She advised that Mr. David Schmidt is the only applicant that is a Town resident. She advised that when this matter is considered on the agenda at the following Town Council meeting, she will make the motion for the appointment to the Planning Commission.
6. Mayor Taylor commented that she had a citizen ask her about the Town providing a wooden dance floor at Withers Park when the concerts were held so that people would have somewhere to dance. Discussion was held about renting a portable wooden dance floor to try it out this summer rather than purchasing one. It was the consensus of the Committee to continue to discuss this matter.
7. Councilman Bloomfield advised that the Town received an email from a citizen on 13th Street about the condition of their road, and their desire to have it paved. He commented that he viewed the street, and it does not appear to be in bad disrepair. Pictures of the road were reviewed. Town Manager Freeman advised that Town staff could look at the grass growing at the end of the street, drainage, etc. It was the consensus of the Committee for the street paving listing to be reviewed and prioritized before a decision is made about paving this portion of 13th Street. Town Manager Freeman stated that he will contact the citizen about the street.
8. Town Manager Freeman presented a request from District III Governmental Cooperative for waiver of fees for the use of Withers Park on Thursday, June 16, 2022, to conduct an Appreciation Day for Seniors of Wythe/Bland Counties. Town Manager Freeman disclosed that the application was submitted by his mother on behalf of District III, and he advised that she has been sending this request to the Town for many years. A motion was made by Councilman Bloomfield and seconded by Councilman Gillman to approve the request from District III Governmental Cooperative for waiver of fees for the use of Withers Park on Thursday, June 16, 2022, to conduct an Appreciation Day for Seniors of Wythe/ Bland

Counties. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: Beth A. Taylor, Cathy D. Pattison, Mark J. Bloomfield, Holly E. Atkins, Gary L. Gillman. Against: None.

9. Assistant Town Manager Holeton updated the Committee on the Events and Safety Committee. She advised that this Committee held their first meeting on March 1, 2022. She reviewed the various recommendations that the Committee has regarding the events/street closure applications; requiring insurance for groups asking to hold events; having set routes for parades, etc.; requiring more advanced time to review the applications, such as 90 days; possibly requiring all applications to be submitted at the beginning of the year; and, the Committee having a process to deny applications. Town Manager Holeton continued to discuss the Committee, and she noted that the Public Works Department often pays overtime for employees to work on weekends for events. Further discussion was held, and Assistant Town Manager Holeton advised that she would continue discussing this matter at another Work Session.
10. Town Clerk Corvin remarked that there will be two upcoming vacancies on the Tree Advisory Committee, and the one member is not eligible for reappointment. She inquired if the Committee would like to hold a Meet and Greet Session with the two applicants, Ms. Lee Johnson and Ms. Tammy Lowry. Further discussion was held, and it was the consensus of the Committee to hold a Meet and Greet Session only with Ms. Lowry. Town Clerk Corvin noted that Town staff will contact Ms. Lowry about attending the Meet and Greet Session.
11. Town Manager Freeman noted that the next agenda item is discussion regarding providing the Appreciation Pay for retirees. He noted that when the Committee voted to give the Appreciation and Retention Pay to current employees, the retirees were not considered at that time. A discussion was held regarding how the payment could be made if the Committee desired to provide it. Town Attorney Clayton advised that she would like to continue to research the legality of making this payment to retirees. Ms. Donna Stroupe was recognized and she noted that she thinks the retirees should be given the Appreciation Pay. She noted that there were seasonal employees who worked only one month of 2021 and received the Appreciation Pay. She noted that she worked for the Town of Wytheville through December 31, 2021, at which time she retired. Further discussion was held on the matter, and it was the consensus of the Committee to table this matter until the next Work Session.

A motion was made by Councilman Bloomfield and seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison to recess the meeting until after the following Town Council meeting. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: Beth A. Taylor, Cathy D. Pattison, Mark J. Bloomfield, Holly E. Atkins, Gary L. Gillman. Against: None. (5:56 p.m.)

A motion was made by Councilman Bloomfield and seconded by Councilman Gillman to reconvene the meeting. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: Beth A. Taylor, Cathy D. Pattison, Mark J. Bloomfield, Holly E. Atkins, Gary L. Gillman. Against: None. (6:16 p.m.)

12. Town Manager Freeman noted that the health insurance renewal was already considered and acted upon at the Town Council meeting, so he will proceed with the agenda.

13. Town Manager Freeman inquired if any of the Committee members would like to report regarding their Council committee assignments. Councilwoman Atkins briefly reported regarding the activities of the Wytheville Redevelopment and Housing Authority. She noted that the Housing Authority is replacing the waterlines in the Hedgefield apartments complex, etc. Councilwoman Atkins noted that the Housing Authority is meeting this week.
14. Town Manager Freeman noted that he will schedule meetings for the Public Works Committee, the Housing Committee and the Recreation Center Ad Hoc Committee.
15. Town Manager Freeman noted that Assistant Town Manager Holeton has been working on a Request For Proposal (RFP) for a Salary and Classification Study. He noted the study would be very detailed on a salaries and compensation plan. He advised that the RFP has been advertised, and the deadline is April 12, 2022. Further discussion was held.
16. Town Manager Freeman commented that the Request For Proposal (RFP) for the New River Regional Water Authority was advertised last week for the proposed work at the New River Regional Water Plant. Further discussion was held on this, as well as the Town now having a good RFP template to use each time it was necessary to send out an RFP.
17. Town Manager Freeman noted that there are several thank you notes attached to the package that are from employees who are thanking the Town Council for the Employee Appreciation and Retention Pay.
18. Councilman Bloomfield inquired if there was a change to the job description for the Building Official's Office. Discussion was held on this matter, and it was noted that Mr. Joe Vance accepted the position of the new Building Permit Tech.
19. Councilwoman Atkins noted that it is time again to check the employee comment boxes and to review them. Discussion was held regarding the comment boxes, and Town Manager Freeman remarked that the comments were being retrieved quarterly from the boxes. He advised that there are some concerns from the Department Heads regarding the comment boxes. Councilwoman Atkins invited the other Committee members to participate in the review and opening of the comments.
20. Town Manager Freeman advised that bogus emails from the Mayor have been going out to employees, etc. He noted that recipients of emails from the Mayor need to ensure that it is her email address before responding. Mayor Taylor stated that with the Computer Operations Department's help, she could write about the bogus emails in her Mayor's Corner that goes in the newspaper.

There being no further business, the Work Session was adjourned. (6:30 p.m.)

T. Brian Freeman, Town Manager

Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk