

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL WORK SESSION OF THE BUDGET AND FINANCE
AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEES HELD IN THE COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM
ON MONDAY, MARCH 28, 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, Downtown Wytheville Executive Director Todd Wolford, Tammie Lowry, Donna Stroupe, Officer Newman

Persons absent: None

The following topics were discussed at the Work Session:

1. Ms. Tammie Lowry attended the meeting to hold a Meet and Greet Session with the Committee to be considered for appointment to the Tree Advisory Committee. After the Meet and Greet Session, the Committee advised Ms. Lowry that the Council would consider her appointment to the Tree Advisory Committee at the April 11, 2022, Town Council meeting.
2. Downtown Wytheville Executive Director Todd Wolford joined the meeting to discuss the revised Façade Program. Town Manager Freeman explained that he had asked Director Wolford to revamp the Façade Program, and he will now be administering the program. Mr. Wolford explained the various facets of the program. He noted that in the past, the Council had allowed businesses outside the B-2DT Business District to participate in the Façade Program, however, under the Virginia Main Street Program, they do not allow this. He explained that contractors hired under the new Façade Program will have to follow the construction plans exactly, or no payment would be made. He noted that there is a process for deviations from the original design, however, deviations cannot be made without approval. A discussion was held if a property owner could have more than one building in the Façade Program at one time, and it was the consensus of the Committee that a property owner could have multiple buildings in the program at one time, and it was noted that two storefronts in one building would be considered as one building. Mr. Wolford presented a listing of businesses who had either expressed an interest in, or were previously approved for, the Façade Program. It was noted that Anders Salon and the former Baldwin Building were already approved for the program by the Town Council when it was suspended, and they are supposed to be able to complete the program. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if the owners of Anders Salon had not used their total \$15,000 for the program if they would be eligible now to finish using that amount of money. It was the consensus of the Committee that the owners of Anders Salon could finish using their allotted \$15,000 if they had not done so. It was the consensus of the Committee that Anders Salon could now be paid for the façade improvements, once all their paperwork was submitted for reimbursement. A brief discussion was held regarding the Wytheville Training Center and the parsonage on Main Street, and Town Manager Freeman advised that it had been previously approved that the parsonage would not be required to meet the 50/50 match for this program. Director Wolford stated that he would also like for the Committee to consider reinstating the Sign Grant Program where a business could receive up to a \$500 match for their signage. Town Manager Freeman commented that there is \$2,000 in the current budget for this program, but the program has not been reinstated to use the money, but it could be carried over in the budget. A brief discussion was held on the contract that will be used for this program, and Town Attorney Clayton noted that she would like to receive a copy of the contract to review. A discussion was held on the amount

of funds to be placed in the budget for the Façade Program. Town Manager Freeman noted that to cover all the businesses that have been approved or want to participate in the Façade Program, the amount is \$135,000, and this would cover the funding amount through June 30, 2023. Councilwoman Atkins stated that she would like to table action on the Façade Program until the next work session. Town Manager Freeman noted that the Committee had already approved paying Anders Salon for their participation in the Façade Program, so this would not be part of the tabling until the next meeting. A motion was made by Councilwoman Atkins and seconded by Councilman Bloomfield to table discussing the Façade Program until the Work Session scheduled for Monday, April 11, 2022. The motion was approved with the following voting results: For: Beth A. Taylor, Mark J. Bloomfield, Holly E. Atkins, Gary L. Gillman. Against: Cathy D. Pattison.

3. Councilwoman Atkins inquired regarding the alley behind King's Produce and if this area had been cleaned up. Town Manager Freeman noted that Building Official Spraker reached out to the property owners. He explained that Mr. Joe Faraci has contacted Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated Director Todd Wolford who has indicated that Mr. Faraci will have the debris in the alley cleaned up even though it is not his. Mr. Wolford stated that if the area is not cleaned up with a week and a half, he will contact Mr. Faraci.
4. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if any televisions have been placed in the Town Shop for employees to receive information. Town Manager Freeman noted that all employees who indicated that they wanted email were provided with it, so the televisions were not installed.
5. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if current fulltime employees could be considered to work in other departments to help the short staffing problem. A brief discussion was held about the overtime pay that would be required if fulltime employees work in other departments. Town Manager Freeman stated that this is a good idea, and he would ask department heads if they need help. Town Attorney Clayton advised that she would send the Council members a copy of the Fair Labor Standards Act regarding this matter. Town Manager Freeman advised that he would look into this issue.
6. Councilman Gillman stated that he received a complaint from a citizen on Ridge Road about flooding down the creek from Food Lion to Ridge Road. He noted that the citizen stated that the flooding is causing stream bank erosion. Town Manager Freeman explained that a study was done of this issue previously, and the Town could not get all the landowners involved to sign an easement. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if there is anything the Town can do. Town Manager Freeman explained the various techniques that landowners could do to help with the erosion, including not mowing all the way to the creek bank. Town Manager Freeman continued to review the path of the creek, etc. with the Committee. Town Manager Freeman stated that Town staff can revisit this issue and see if any funding is available, and he noted this will be a slow process.

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. (5:38 p.m.)

A motion was made by Councilman Bloomfield and seconded by Mayor Taylor to reconvene the meeting. Town Manager Freeman 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. (6:28 p.m.)

7. Mayor Taylor advised that the Wythe County Board of Supervisors adopted the GO Virginia work zone lights for schools and construction zones. She indicated that if drivers go ten miles over the speed limit in these areas, they will be fined. She stated that the County is also reviewing to determine if they can install these work zone lights in the interstate construction areas.
8. Mayor Taylor stated that the Ministerial Association has rented a small room at the Meeting Center on May 5 at 7:00 p.m. She remarked that if the Ministerial Association determines that a larger room is needed, they may request the fee be waived for the rental of a larger room. She noted that she wanted to give the Committee notice that a request may be made. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if they mentioned anything about security. Mayor Taylor remarked that they did not talk about security, but she will ask them at the next meeting.
9. Mayor Taylor stated that the County Treasurer has advised that the real estate reassessment notices have been mailed.
10. Mayor Taylor advised that she has been asked to place the Polling and Precinct Place change to Spiller School in the Mayor's Corner, and Wythe County will be advertising it in the newspaper so that citizens will be aware of the change.
11. Mayor Taylor noted that she could place in the Mayor's Corner that there may be less paving this year due to the cost. Town Manager Freeman advised that the paving funding will not stretch as far due to the price increases. He stated that the paving normally starts in October and November.
12. Mayor Taylor requested that all Town Council members be given a copy of the Capital Improvements Plan. Town Manager Freeman advised that he would send the Capital Improvements Plan to all Council members.
13. Mayor Taylor requested that at the next Work Session, all Committee members be given a copy of the current Freedom of Information Act regulations. Town Clerk Corvin noted that she will provide this to the Committee members.
14. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if the comments from the Employee Comment Boxes are given to the Town Council members. Town Manager Freeman noted that the Council is not given a copy of the comments because they do not want to receive them. Town Manager Freeman inquired if the Council desired to receive a copy of the comments. It was the consensus of the Council that they did not desire to receive a copy of the comments from the Employee Comment Boxes and that the Committee that reviews the comments could address any issues.
15. Councilman Bloomfield inquired if the Virginia Department of Transportation limits paving. Town Manager Freeman explained how the VDOT street maintenance payments work, and he noted that the Council determines how this money is spent. He noted that there is a Maintenance Sharing Program, and he explained this to the Committee. He advised that the Town budgets \$600,000 to \$700,000 each year for paving, and the remainder of the maintenance payment is used for the maintenance of Town streets.
16. Councilwoman Atkins inquired as the possible waiving of the fee for the Ministerial Association for a larger room and how this is determined. Town Manager Freeman advised that it depends on what organization is making the request. He noted that for the Ministerial Association event, it has to do with domestic violence and the judicial system.

He noted that this event is also connected to animal abuse. Councilwoman Atkins stated that if the waiving of fees is started, it may continue from other organizations. Town Manager Freeman stated that the Town could adopt a policy for waiver of fees for use of the Meeting Center rooms, and it could be followed if there is a request. The Committee discussed various other groups for which the room fee has been waived. Councilwoman Atkins noted that she knows of a group that requested the fee waiver, and they were denied. Councilman Bloomfield stated that he preferred that Town Manager Freeman and Director of Public Information/Tourism Jude make the decision on when the room fee should be waived, and the requests not come to the Town Council. Town Manager Freeman explained that sometimes, the Town partners with groups for events, and that is how the fee is waived. Councilwoman Atkins noted that she will check with the group that received the waiver of fee to see why they were denied.

17. Town Manager Freeman noted that the Town has received a request from Executive Director Randy Martin with the Wytheville Redevelopment and Housing Authority for a letter of support for a HOME fund application. After discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Gillman and seconded by Councilman Bloomfield to provide a letter of support to the Wytheville Redevelopment and Housing Authority for their HOME fund application. Town Manager Freeman inquired if there is 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.

18. Town Manager Freeman stated that the Town received a request from Walk for Life to conduct a walking event on Saturday, May 7, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. He noted that the Event and Safety Committee reviewed and approved the request. A motion was made by Mayor Taylor and seconded by Councilman Gillman to approve the request. Town Manager Freeman 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.

19. Town Manager Freeman stated the next agenda item is to continue the discussion regarding Appreciation Pay for retirees. He noted since the last meeting, Town staff has spoken to the auditors who noted that it is acceptable to pay the retirees if the Town Council desired. He explained that there are nine retirees who could receive the Appreciation Pay. After discussion on the matter, a motion was made by Mayor Taylor and seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison to pay the Appreciation Pay to the nine retirees for all hours worked in 2021. Town Manager Freeman inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none, a roll call vote was taken with the following voting results:

FOR: Beth A. Taylor, Cathy D. Pattison, Holly E. Atkins, Gary L. Gillman

AGAINST: Mark J. Bloomfield

ABSTENTIONS: None

20. Town Manager Freeman stated that the next agenda item is to discuss the Community Garden Plots. He stated that the Committee needs to discuss the fee that will be charged this year. A discussion was held about the fees for previous years. After discussion, a motion was made by Vice-Mayor Pattison and seconded by Councilwoman Atkins that the first garden plot would be free, and the second plot would be \$10. A discussion was held about the number of plots a person could request. Vice-Mayor Pattison amended her

motion, which was seconded by Councilwoman Atkins, that the first plot would be free, the second plot would be \$10, and there would be a maximum of two plots allowed per person. Mayor Taylor inquired if there is 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.

21. Town Clerk Corvin reviewed the Committee vacancies and noted that there are vacancies on the Wytheville Recreation Commission, the Wytheville Industrial Development Authority and the Wytheville Redevelopment and Housing Authority. A brief discussion was held regarding possibly reducing the number of members on the Wytheville Redevelopment and Housing Authority and the Wytheville Industrial Development Authority. Mayor Taylor advised that the two Town members who serve on the Joint Industrial Development Authority are willing to also serve on the Wytheville Industrial Development Authority. Town Attorney Clayton advised that she would review if the number of members on the Wytheville Industrial Development Authority could be reduced. It was the consensus of the Committee to place the appointment of the Town's two Joint Industrial Development Authority members on the next Town Council meeting agenda for appointment to the Wytheville Industrial Development Authority. Town Attorney Clayton noted that she would like for the name of the Wytheville Industrial Development Authority to be changed to the Wytheville Economic Development Authority. She noted that it would take an ordinance revision to change the name.
22. Assistant Town Manager Holeton gave an update on the Events and Safety Committee. She noted the number of street closing requests/events for 2018 -2021. She stated the Committee's next meeting is April 5, and they will be reviewing the street closing application to suggest changes to it. Assistant Town Manager Holeton stated that she will report back to the Committee with the suggestions from the Events and Safety Committee.
23. Councilman Bloomfield stated that the Housing Committee met, and they will meet again next week. He stated that they discussed incentives for contractors, and they reviewed mapping of the inventory of properties in town.
24. Town Manager Freeman stated that he gave the Council a Public Works Committee update. He stated that the Budget and Finance Committee met to review the developing budget. He stated that this week, he and the Town Treasurer will be meeting with some of the department heads to review their budget requests. Town Manager Freeman stated that at the next Work Session, he hopes to be able to present the budget projections.
25. Donna Stroupe stated that at the last Work Session, she was misquoted in the minutes about a seasonal employee. Town Clerk Corvin advised that she will listen to the recording to determine if the minutes need to be corrected.

There being no further business, the Work Session was adjourned. (7:13 p.m.)

T. Brian Freeman, Town Manager

Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk