

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE WYTHEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.**

Members present: Beth A. Taylor, Cathy D. Pattison, Mark J. Bloomfield, Holly E. Atkins, Gary L. Gillman

Members absent: None

Others present: Town Manager T. Brian Freeman, Assistant Town Manager Elaine R. Holeton, Town Clerk Sharon G. Corvin, Town Attorney Michelle Workman Clayton, Town Treasurer Michael G. Stephens, Police Chief Joel Hash, Police Lieutenant Tommy Lester, Patrol Officer Kyle Counts, Candice Johnson, Andrew Sawyers, Joseph D. Vance, Tim DeGuise, Matthew Marshall, Steve Primm, James Pauley, Alfred Rosenbaum, Stephen Holston, Chris Crockett, Ryan Patton, Blaine Wheeler, Jordan Wheeler, Michael S. Davis, Mark Bass, Carl Crouse, Hunter Cable, Troy Black, John Allison, V, James Thompson, Glenda Eans, Kerry Eans, Solomon Crockett-Eans

**RE: CALL TO ORDER, QUORUM, PLEDGE**

Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order and established that a quorum of Council members was present. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Bloomfield.

**RE: CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Taylor presented the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of June 13, 2022. She inquired if there was a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented or to somehow be amended. A motion was made by Councilman Gillman and seconded by Councilman Bloomfield to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of June 13, 2022, as presented. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion to approve the consent agenda, as presented. 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.

**RE: PUBLIC HEARING – APPROPRIATIONS TO FISCAL YEAR 2021-22 BUDGET**

Mayor Taylor advised that the meeting constituted a public hearing (due notice having been given) to consider appropriations to the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget. Mayor Taylor inquired if there were citizens who desired to speak during the public hearing. Vice-Mayor Pattison stated that she would like to request Town Treasurer Stephens to come to give the Council more information about the report regarding the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget amendments.

Town Treasurer Stephens explained that when the Town adopts departmental budgets, by State law, the Town cannot exceed its departmental budgets. He noted that there are various departments that exceeded their budget by at least one percent. Councilwoman Atkins inquired of Town Treasurer Stephens if any of the money appropriated to the line item labeled “Town Council” went to any of the Town Council members. Town Treasurer Stephens clarified that this line item is only labeled “Town Council” and that it was for recording purposes only. He noted that the money budgeted under this line item went to Town employees. Town Treasurer Stephens continued to explain the 2021-22 Budget amendments to the Council. Councilwoman Atkins

inquired of Town Treasurer Stephens if he could explain the Auto Pool line item in the budget. Town Treasurer Stephens reiterated that the Auto Pool line item consists of fuel for the Town vehicles, repairs for the vehicles, etc. He expressed that most of the cost is for fuel because of the increased fuel prices. Town Treasurer Stephens continued to explain the budget amendments. Mayor Taylor thanked him for his comments.

Ms. Candice Johnson was recognized and stated that she resides at 250 Hillcrest Road in Wytheville. She stated that she attended the Council Work Session held prior to the Town Council meeting, and she may be wrong, but she can probably guess why most of the people are attending this meeting. Ms. Johnson remarked that when she gets up to go to work every day, her street is clear. She stated that while she is at work, she sees several of the men who are attending this meeting standing out in the hot sun working while almost everyone else in the Council meeting room works in the air conditioning. Ms. Johnson commented that if Town employees are due for a raise, then she would request the Town Council to do the right thing and give them a raise. She stated that she is a Town tax paying citizen, and if the Town has the money to provide their employees with a five percent raise, then, do what is right. Ms. Johnson noted that she knows what it is like to work from the bottom all the way up. She remarked that she worked for it, and she did not have anyone give her anything. Ms. Johnson stated that some of the gentlemen attending the meeting have worked for the Town longer than she worked for the State. She expressed that if the Town has the funds to give the Town employees a five percent raise, then please do it because there seems to be money for everything else. Ms. Johnson stated that her concern is for the employees.

Mayor Taylor inquired if there were any other questions or comments. There being none, Mayor Taylor declared the public hearing closed and proceeded with the agenda.

### **RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is Citizens' Period. She inquired if there were any citizens attending the meeting who wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period.

Mr. Timothy DeGuise was recognized and stated that he resides at 84 Shewey Valley Road in Bland. He advised that he is a Town employee, and he has worked for the Town Council for 10 years. Mr. DeGuise noted that most of the people who are attending the meeting are from the Public Works Department. He commented that there are truck drivers, equipment operators and mowers who weed all day, every day. Mr. DeGuise explained that the Public Works employees have heard rumors that the Town employees could receive a three to five percent pay increase or a cost of living pay increase. He remarked that the employees were then given a form on Friday to fill out that had to be returned by Tuesday that was so ambiguous that most of the Public Works employees could not complete the form without help. Mr. DeGuise stated that it covered nothing to do with their job positions or what they do outside of their job positions. He explained that there may be a crew building curb and sidewalk one day, and the next day, the crew may be picking up dead deer. Mr. DeGuise noted that another day, the crew will be checking storm drains because it is pouring rain and it has flooded. He inquired of the Council as to who they believe does this work. Mr. DeGuise stated that there are men who dig graves and bury the dead, take care of the town streets, pick up the brush, mow the roadsides so the citizens are not hitting deer because the grass is waist deep, and, if a deer does get hit, the Public Works crews must pick them up. Mr. DeGuise noted that the Public Works Department is also taking care of things in the Parks and Recreation Department, and that is not even their department. He continued to note all the job duties that the Public Works crews must do in their department. Mr. DeGuise commented that it was a bad feeling when the Public Works employees received a piece of paper and were

instructed to complete it, so that they could then discuss whether they would receive a pay raise. Town Manager Freeman stated that he thinks there is a misconception about this. He noted that the Town employees are receiving a three percent pay raise that is already included in the 2022-23 budget. Town Manager Freeman explained that the purpose of the form they received is to give employees the opportunity to speak for themselves about the duties they perform. He stated that the intent of the Compensation and Classification Study is to ensure that employees are being compensated properly. Mr. DeGuise stated that he appreciates that the study is being conducted. He commented that from the point of view of the Public Works employees, they feel as if there are many behind the scenes actions that leave them with questions about the form and why they were told to fill them out online to prove if they are worth their wages or worth more. Town Manager Freeman advised that there should have been an opportunity for employees to fill out an online copy or a hard copy, whichever would benefit them. Mr. DeGuise commented that he sees other Town staff every day and feels invisible. He stated that he risks his life every day for the Town whether it be disease, traffic conditions or weather conditions. Mayor Taylor stated that she understands the situation, however, Council is trying to allocate money so that employees can be compensated properly before they consider another possible raise. She noted that their hard work in all conditions is appreciated.

Councilman Bloomfield advised that the form was not intended to cause anxiety to Town employees. He noted that he was aware of a situation where it was thought that if the form was not filled out a certain way, then positions would be eliminated. Councilman Bloomfield stated that he wants to be sure that information regarding the form is communicated with department heads. Town Manager Freeman explained that he has worked in a Public Works Department before, and he understands the comments and concerns of the Public Works employees. Councilwoman Atkins advised that she had requested employees receive a raise higher than three percent, and she expressed her concerns about multiple Public Works employees quitting at one time. She stated that she sent an email that others did not find appropriate, but she does appreciate the employees in all departments. Mayor Taylor advised that it does not help lower paid staff to receive across the board raises, instead their wages need to be brought up before another raise would benefit them. Mr. Joseph Vance inquired of the Council regarding when the Compensation and Classification Study will be completed. Town Manager Freeman stated that it should be completed in about 11 weeks, but initial feedback should be given before that time. A brief discussion was held regarding employee raises. Mr. Alfred Rosenbaum stated that he has been employed with the Town for 36 years. He advised the Town Council that on behalf of himself and his fellow workers, they would like to receive more information from the Council members. Discussion continued regarding the employees and the Classification and Compensation Study.

Mayor Taylor inquired if there were others who wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period. There being none, she proceeded with the agenda.

### **RE: NEW BUSINESS**

Under New Business, Town Manager Freeman reported the following:

1. The Town of Wytheville Municipal Offices will be closed and all services curtailed on Monday, July 4, 2022, in observance of Independence Day.
2. The next Council Work Session will be held on Monday, July 11, 2022, at 4:00 p.m., in the Council Conference Room, followed by the Council meeting at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers.

**RE: ORDINANCE NO. 1410 – FISCAL YEAR 2022-23 BUDGET**

Mayor Taylor presented Ordinance No. 1410, the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2022-23, on third and final reading. She stated that a public hearing was held at the Town Council meeting on June 13, 2022, regarding the Budget Ordinance, and the ordinance is now before the Town Council on third and final reading. A motion was made by Councilman Gillman and seconded by Vice-Mayor Pattison to adopt Ordinance No. 1410, the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2022-23, on third and final reading. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if any other members would consider a different amount regarding the raise, or if three percent is the final decision. Town Manager Freeman stated that he does not think that would be an option since this version of the budget has been advertised, but it can be considered after July 1, 2022. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if this budget can be amended. Town Manager Freeman advised that this budget has to be passed and will not take effect until July 1, 2022. Councilwoman Atkins inquired if this matter may be put on the next Town Council meeting agenda. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any further discussion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting results, by roll call vote:

FOR: Beth A. Taylor, Cathy D. Pattison, Mark J. Bloomfield, Gary L. Gillman

AGAINST: Holly E. Atkins

ABSTENTIONS: None

Ordinance No. 1410 was adopted on third and final reading.

**RE: RESOLUTION – NEW RIVER REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to adopt a resolution to approve amendments to the Member Services Agreement with the New River Regional Water Authority, including Carroll County, Wythe County and the Town of Wytheville. The resolution was entered into the record as follows:

**RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE SERVICE AGREEMENT AMONG THE NEW RIVER REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY, CARROLL COUNTY, WYTHE COUNTY AND THE TOWN OF WYTHEVILLE**

1. The Service Agreement dated June 1, 2006, as amended by Amendment dated June 1, 2008, and Amendment dated August 1, 2015, (the "Service Agreement") among the New River Regional Water Authority (the "Authority") and the County of Carroll, the County of Wythe and the Town of Wytheville, and consented to by the Carroll County Public Service Authority, should be amended by a Third Amendment (the "Third Amendment"), the form of which has been presented at the meeting at which this resolution is adopted and is hereby approved.

2. The Town Manager is authorized to execute and deliver the Third Amendment, with such changes, insertions or omissions as may be approved by the officer executing the Third Amendment, whose approval shall be evidenced conclusively by the execution and delivery of the Third Amendment.

3. The Town Manager is authorized to execute and deliver such other instruments, documents or certificates, and to do and perform such things and acts, as he shall deem necessary or appropriate to carry out the transactions authorized by this resolution or

contemplated by the Third Amendment, and all of the foregoing, previously done or performed by such officer, are in all respects approved, ratified and confirmed.

4. This resolution shall be effective immediately upon its adoption.

A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Pattison and seconded by Councilman Gillman to adopt a resolution to approve amendments to the Member Services Agreement with the New River Regional Water Authority. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion to adopt the resolution. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition, by roll call vote:

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

AGAINST: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

**RE: APPROVAL OF APPROPRIATIONS TO THE FISCAL YEAR 2021-22 BUDGET**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is the approval of the appropriations to the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget including the 2021-22 Cares Fund Budget in the amount of \$31,000; General Fund Budget in the amount of \$1,305,000; Wastewater Fund in the amount of \$100,000; American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fund in the amount of \$1,500; Park Amenities Fund in the amount of \$2,000; and, Perpetual Care Fund in the amount of \$15,000. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor Pattison and seconded by Councilman Bloomfield to amend and appropriate the following to the Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget: Cares Fund Budget in the amount of \$31,000; General Fund Budget in the amount of \$1,305,000; Wastewater Fund in the amount of \$100,000; American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fund in the amount of \$1,500; Park Amenities Fund in the amount of \$2,000; and, Perpetual Care Fund in the amount of \$15,000 to the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion. There being none. The motion was approved with the following voting in favor an there being no opposition, by roll call vote:

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

AGAINST: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

**RE: ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to be discussed, a motion was duly made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting (7:11 p.m.).

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Beth A. Taylor, Mayor

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Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk