

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE WYTHEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON TUESDAY, MAY 28, 2019, AT 7:00 P.M.**

Members present: Beth A. Taylor, Jacqueline K. King, Joseph E. Hand, Jr., Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison

Others present: Town Manager C. Wayne Sutherland, Jr., Assistant Town Manager Stephen A. Moore, Town Clerk Sharon G. Corvin, Town Attorney Christopher R. Menerick, James Bilbry, Jamie Claypool, Tammy Terry, Mae Shannon, Anita King, James Davidson, Mickey Bass, Stacy Terry, Dwight Arnold, Ronnie King, Chad Matthews, Lucas Arnold, Alma Watson, Mike Forrest, Chris Fox, Debbie Reeves, Kendra Eastwood, Janet Sue Kirby, Olivia Deal, William Deal, Millicent Rothrock with *The Wytheville Enterprise*, Eric Miller with *WDBJ Channel 7 News*, Chief Rick Arnold, Patrol Corporal Troy Cockram, Patrol Officer Darren Umberger, Patrol Officer Jonathan Lackey, Patrol Officer Dallas Shumate

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 Joseph E. Hand, Jr.

RE: CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Taylor presented the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of May 13, 2019, and the request of Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated to close Main Street, between Fourth and Fifth Streets, and to close Tazewell Street, between Main and Monroe Streets, from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 4, 2019, for the 4th of July Celebration. Mayor Taylor inquired if there is a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented or to somehow be amended. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilman Bloomfield to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of May 13, 2019, and the request of Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated to close Main Street, between Fourth and Fifth Streets, and to close Tazewell Street, between Main and Monroe Streets, from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 4, 2019, for the 4th of July Celebration, 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, Jacqueline K. King, Joseph E. Hand, Jr., Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison. Against: None.

PUBLIC HEARING – BUDGET ORDINANCE

Mayor Taylor advised that the meeting constituted a public hearing (due notice having been given) to consider the Budget Ordinance for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019, and ending June 30, 2020. She noted that there is no one listed on the sign in sheet who stated that they wished to address the Council during this public hearing, however, if there is anyone who wishes to do so, they may come to the podium at this time. Mayor Taylor remarked that she would wait a few moments to give the citizens who are coming into the meeting a chance to speak regarding the budget, if they wish to do so. Mayor Taylor inquired, again, if there is anyone who wished to address the Council during the public hearing, and noted that now would be the time to do so. There being none, she 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 stated that the sign in sheet indicated that there were citizens who wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period, therefore, she would begin with the first name listed on the sign in sheet who noted that they wished to speak. Mayor Taylor requested that each citizen who wished to address the Council to please come to the podium and state his or her name and address so that the minutes could be properly recorded.

Mr. James Bilbry was recognized and stated that he lives in Max Meadows, Virginia, near the Ruritan Club building. He noted that he was proud that the Council invited him to speak at the meeting because he has felt like he needed to see someone in the Town who is responsible for beautifying the Town of Wytheville. Mr. Bilbry commented that he is thrilled when he drives down Main Street and all over town to see what all has been accomplished in the last few years. He noted that it brings back memories. Mr. Bilbry continued to tell his story of when he first came to Wytheville in 1949 from Fries, Virginia, to start his family with his wife in Max Meadows, Virginia. He explained that he took a job with Longyear, which required him to work out of town.

He noted that he and his wife traveled with the job from Georgia to Maine and as far as Missouri. Mr. Bilbry explained that after traveling with five children for a while, he realized that he had to settle down, and he was offered a job in Illinois where he settled down for 27 years. He commented that during that 27 years, he would often say that he would love to go home, but he knew he had to finish his retirement before heading back home. Mr. Bilbry stated that when he reached the time he could retire, he told his company he was going home to Wytheville to where he started his family. He remarked that he has been retired for 30 years, and he is so proud of Wytheville. Mr. Bilbry stated that he is so proud of the Wytheville Town Council and the Town staff, which is why he requested permission to come and address the Council face to face just to show how appreciative and proud he is of Wytheville. Mayor Taylor stated that the Town Council would like to thank Mr. Bilbry, as well, for attending the meeting and expressing his thoughts with the Council. Mr. Bilbry continued to express his thoughts and appreciation to the Council regarding his love for Wytheville. Vice-Mayor King thanked Mr. Bilbry for his kind words.

Ms. Alma Watson was recognized and stated that she lives at 580 East Withers Road in Wytheville. She noted that she understands that a portion of this meeting will be to consider the recommendation from the Planning Commission regarding the Town of Wytheville Zoning Ordinance to amend Article III-Definitions by adding Section 3-42.2 Homestay, and to add the use of Homestay to several districts. Ms. Watson commented that the proposed amendment does not include the R-1M Residential Zoning District, which was included in the original draft. She remarked that on behalf of 18 residents and homeowners of Withers Road, she is presenting a petition that is in opposition with the decision to omit their properties from the Homestay Ordinance. Ms. Watson stated that the 18 residents and homeowners request that the properties on Withers Road be included in the Homestay Ordinance and noted that she is entering the petitions for the record. Mayor Taylor thanked Ms. Watson for her comments.

Mayor Taylor noted that there are no other citizens listed on the sign in sheet who stated that they wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period, however, if there are others who wish to speak, now is the time to do so.

Dr. William Deal was recognized and stated that he lives at 515 Withers Road in Wytheville. He explained that he had addressed both the Planning Commission and the Town Council several times regarding the proposed Homestay Ordinance. Dr. Deal noted that Ms. Watson has, as well. He explained that the issue is that their protection of the R-1M Zoning will be fractured by introducing any type of commercial activity into a premier residential neighborhood. Dr. Deal commented that he has discussed this with the Planning Commission and the Council several times before. He continued to explain why, in his opinion, any type of commercial activity will damage the R-1M Residential Zoning District. Dr. Deal commented that it will continue to become more difficult to deny future requests for commercial activity once the Council approves the first request. He noted that unless there would be an overwhelming need for a zoning variance, which he does not believe that there would be, he feels that the Council should not include the R-1M Residential Zoning District in the Homestay Ordinance. Dr. Deal thanked the Council for allowing him to speak. Mayor Taylor thanked Dr. Deal for his comments.

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

RE: OLD BUSINESS

Under Old Business, Town Manager Sutherland reported the following:

1. The next Council Work Session will be held on Wednesday, May 29, 2019, at 7:00 a.m., in the Council Conference Room.
2. The Public Works Committee will meet on Wednesday, May 29, 2019, at 10:30 a.m., in the Council Conference Room.
3. Mayor Taylor stated that she would like to recognize the Wytheville Water Treatment Plant at this time. She noted that the Virginia Department of Health's Office of Drinking Water (ODW) has awarded the Town of Wytheville Water Treatment Plant the 2018 Excellence in Waterworks Operation's Gold Award. Mayor Taylor explained that this award indicates that the Town of Wytheville Water Plant met the Virginia Optimization Program goals for clarification, filtration and backwash during 2018. She commented that the Town of Wytheville is one of only 15 surface water conventional filtration plants, out of 132 eligible plants in the State of Virginia, to receive a Gold Award in 2018. Mayor Taylor remarked that the Town of Wytheville Water Plant has consistently achieved this award since the program was initiated and at the gold level since 2008. She expressed that the Council is pleased to receive notification of this award and applauds the hard

work and dedication of its Water Treatment Plant employees. Mayor Taylor stated that recipients of this honor exceed minimum standards for clarification, filtration and backwashing processes set forth by the ODW. He noted that to meet the requirements for the gold level, the Water Treatment Plant must consistently produce water that is 300 percent clearer than the standards set forth by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Mayor Taylor commented that a combination of training, equipment innovations and over 100 years of combined operator experience make it possible for the Town to supply Wytheville and the surrounding areas with some of the highest quality drinking water available in the area. She remarked that the Town of Wytheville and its Water Treatment Plant employees strive to go the extra mile each year to make sure that citizens and customers are provided with the best possible water in the area. Mayor Taylor advised that she thinks that it is significant that the Town continue to receive this award and, certainly, she would like to take the opportunity to applaud the hard work and dedication of the Town's Water Treatment Plant employees.

RE: BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Vice-Mayor King, reporting for the Budget and Finance Committee, stated that earlier in the meeting, the Council conducted a public hearing to consider the adoption of the budget for fiscal year 2019 - 2020. She noted, again, this year, real estate and personal property taxes will see no increases. Vice-Mayor King commented that the budget is balanced, as presented, and is approximately \$26.2 million. She explained that the budget will be considered, again, at the June 10, 2019, Town Council meeting, and, as the Committee has noted before, the budget can be amended at any time prior to its adoption. Vice-Mayor King advised that it is the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee that the budget, as presented, be adopted on second, but not final, reading when it is considered later in the meeting.

Vice-Mayor King, also, reported that for some period of time now, the Council has received comments from concerned citizens who have noted that there are some properties where criminal activity occurs on a routine basis. She explained that upon checking, the Council found that there are certain addresses where criminal activity does occur, particularly with regard to drug activity. Vice-Mayor King stated that the Budget and Finance Committee asked Town Attorney Menerick to review this matter and to determine if there was any way that property owners could be held responsible for the criminal activity occurring on their property. She noted that as it turns out, Virginia State law does provide that property owners can be held responsible for ongoing criminal activity on their property. Vice-Mayor King advised that later in the meeting, the Council will consider an ordinance that makes such blight a criminal matter. She commented that under the provisions of the ordinance, the Town can identify these problems to a property owner and require them to make certain improvements to assure that ongoing criminal activity will not occur. Vice-Mayor King expressed that the Committee realizes that there may be a learning curve in implementing this provision of law, but the Council believes that it is important that the Town begins somewhere. She advised that when the ordinance is considered later in the meeting, it would be the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee that it be adopted on first and final reading, and that it be implemented immediately. A copy of the Budget and Finance Committee report is attached and made part of these minutes.

RE: PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT

Councilman Bloomfield, reporting for the Public Works Committee, stated that over the past year, the Wytheville Town Council has gone to great lengths to review ways to improve fire services for the citizens of the town. He expressed that the Town Council has given great consideration as to how these goals can be achieved and has taken actions such as hiring a professional Fire Chief, as well as requesting a study, which was conducted and later presented to the Town Council, from the Virginia Fire Services Board regarding the Town's Fire Department. Councilman Bloomfield noted that as everyone has noticed, fire departments all over the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the country for that matter, have seen a decline in volunteerism in recent years. He commented that despite the hard work of its volunteers, Wytheville is no exception to this trend. Councilman Bloomfield explained that with the decline in volunteerism, the Town Council hired a fire chief and paid fire staff in order to keep up with the needs of the community. He stated that this is certainly not a reflection on the Town's current volunteers, but rather a response to the changing times. Councilman Bloomfield explained, furthermore, upon review of Virginia Code 27-10, the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department has, unfortunately, not been able to meet the State requirement of 20 effective volunteers for some time. He stated that in light of this, the Town Council has decided to dissolve the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department, due to not having the required number of volunteers. Councilman Bloomfield noted that the remaining business of the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department will need to be resolved utilizing their Bylaws at its next meeting. He advised that effective immediately, volunteers will no longer report to emergency calls. Councilman Bloomfield

explained that the Town Council has not made this decision lightly, recognizing that the volunteer firefighters have served the community well for many years. He remarked that the Town Council, also, hopes that this dissolution is only temporary, as volunteer firefighters certainly have a valuable place in the Town's fire department. Councilman Bloomfield explained that the Council looks forward to the day when these trends are reversed, and the Town may, once again, reorganize the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department. He commented that the Town Council of Wytheville sincerely thanks the volunteer firefighters for their years of service in firefighting in the town and surrounding areas. Councilman Bloomfield expressed that the Council is truly grateful for their dedication and hard work. He advised that it is the recommendation of the Public Works Committee that the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department be dissolved pursuant to Virginia Code 27-10, due to not having 20 effective members for a period of three months. A motion was made by Councilman Bloomfield and seconded by Councilman Hand to approve dissolving the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department for not having at least 20 effective members for a period of three months as required by State Code Section 27-10. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion to approve dissolving the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department. Mayor Taylor stated that she would like to reiterate that the Town Council has not made the decision lightly with whatever the vote returns, recognizing that the volunteer firefighters have served the community well for many years. She noted that despite the hard work of its volunteers, Wytheville is no exception to the decline in the volunteerism. Mayor Taylor commented that the Town Council hired a fire chief and paid fire staff in order to keep up with the needs of the of the community, and this is certainly not a reflection of the current volunteers, but, rather, a response in the change in times as was previously stated. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any further discussion on the motion to approve dissolving the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department. Ms. Kendra Eastwood inquired if the Wytheville Volunteer Firefighters were allowed to speak on their behalf. Mayor Taylor advised that Citizens' Period was the time that anyone wishing to address the Council should have spoken. Vice-Mayor King explained that this is just discussion among Town Council on the motion that is on the floor. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any further discussion. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition: For: Beth A. Taylor, Jacqueline K. King, Joseph E. Hand, Jr., Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison. Against: None.

Councilman Bloomfield, also, reported that after more than one year, it appears that the construction on East Main Street is nearing completion. He explained that at a progress meeting held on May 21, 2019, the contractor reported that they will seek substantial completion of the project during the month of June. Councilman Bloomfield noted that it is anticipated that during the first week of June, milling operations will commence, and, shortly thereafter, new pavement will be installed. He commented that the painting of stripes on this portion of roadway will be performed immediately after. Councilman Bloomfield remarked that the project will actually not be closed out until midsummer or fall because there are certain landscaping materials that are currently not available. He explained that the Town has also discussed with the contractor the need to mow, weed eat and make the roadway look more presentable. He stated that the contractor has agreed that he would perform such activities. Councilman Bloomfield noted that this project is a combined effort of the Town of the Wytheville and the Virginia Department of Transportation. He remarked that the Virginia Department of Transportation paid one half of the cost of the construction, and the Town of Wytheville paid the other half. Councilman Bloomfield commented that the Public Works Committee realizes that this has been an inconvenience for more than a year, but the Committee does believe that the end product will be worth all of the Town's efforts. He advised that there is no action required of the Council at this time, but the Public Works Committee did want to make everyone aware that the East Main Street Improvements Project is nearing completion. A copy of the Public Works Committee report is attached and made part of these minutes.

RE: ORDINANCE NO. 1361

Mayor Taylor presented Ordinance No. 1361, the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2019-20, on second reading. She continued to explain the budget process. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilwoman Pattison to approve Ordinance No. 1361, the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2019-20, on second, but not final, reading. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion to adopt the ordinance on second, but not final, reading. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition:

FOR: Beth A. Taylor, Jacqueline K. King, Joseph E. Hand, Jr., Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison

AGAINST: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

Ordinance No. 1361 was approved on second, but not final, reading.

RE: ORDINANCE NO. 1362

Mayor Taylor presented Ordinance No. 1362, an ordinance amending and reenacting Chapter 9, Offenses – Miscellaneous, by adding Article VI. Abatement of Criminal Blight on Real Property, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, on first reading. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilman Pattison to approve Ordinance No. 1362, an ordinance amending and reenacting Chapter 9, Offenses – Miscellaneous, by adding Article VI. Abatement of Criminal Blight on Real Property, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, on first, but not final, reading. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion to approve the ordinance on first, but not final, reading. Vice-Mayor King and Councilwoman Pattison advised they would withdraw their motion. A motion was then made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilman Bloomfield to suspend the rules and adopt Ordinance No. 1362, an ordinance amending and reenacting Chapter 9, Offenses – Miscellaneous, by adding Article VI. Abatement of Criminal Blight on Real Property, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, on first and final reading. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion to suspend the rules and adopt the ordinance on first and final reading. There being none, the motion was approved with the following voting in favor and there being no opposition:

FOR: Beth A. Taylor, Jacqueline K. King, Joseph E. Hand, Jr., Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison

AGAINST: None

ABSTENTIONS: None

Ordinance No. 1362 was adopted on first and final reading.

RE: PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION – PLACEMENT OF SMALL-LOT/SMALL-HOME OVERLAY ZONE

Mayor Taylor advised the next agenda item is to consider a recommendation from the Planning Commission regarding placing the Small-Lot/Small-Home Overlay Zone on certain properties bounded by: (a) West Jefferson Street, Railroad Avenue and South 8th Street; (b) West Jefferson Street, South 14th Street, South 18th Street and West Washington Street; and, (c) West Jefferson Street, South 12th Street, South 10th Street and West Union Street, all in R-3 Residential or M-1 Industrial Zoning Districts. She noted that it is necessary to set a public hearing for the Town Council to consider the placement of this Overlay Zone, which could be held at the June 24, 2019, Town Council meeting. Mayor Taylor inquired of the Council if there was any objection to scheduling the public hearing for the June 24, 2019, Town Council meeting. It was the consensus of the Wytheville Town Council to schedule a public hearing for the June 24, 2019, Town Council meeting, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Wytheville Municipal Building to consider a recommendation from the Planning Commission regarding placing the Small-Lot/Small-Home Overlay Zone on certain properties bounded by: (a) West Jefferson Street, Railroad Avenue and South 8th Street; (b) West Jefferson Street, South 14th Street, South 18th Street and West Washington Street; and, (c) West Jefferson Street, South 12th Street, South 10th Street and West Union Street, all in R-3 Residential or M-1 Industrial Zoning Districts. Mayor Taylor advised that the public hearing will be held on June 24, 2019, and Town staff would advertise accordingly.

RE: PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION – CASSELL-SMITH PROPERTY REZONING

Mayor Taylor advised the next agenda item is to consider a recommendation from the Planning Commission regarding rezoning the Cassell-Smith property, which is located on the west side of Community Boulevard, between Lithia Road and Cassell Road, from A-1 Agricultural and R-3 Residential to B-2 Business. She noted that it is necessary to set a public hearing for the Town Council to consider the rezoning of the Cassell-Smith property, which could be held at the June 24, 2019, Town Council meeting. Mayor Taylor inquired of the Council if there was any objection to scheduling the public hearing for the June 24, 2019, Town Council meeting. It was the consensus of the Wytheville Town Council to schedule a public hearing for the June 24, 2019, Town Council meeting, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Wytheville Municipal Building to consider a recommendation from the Planning Commission regarding rezoning the Cassell-Smith property, which is located on the west side of Community Boulevard, between Lithia Road and Cassell Road, from A-1 Agricultural and R-3 Residential to B-2 Business.

Mayor Taylor advised that the public hearing will be held on June 24, 2019, and Town staff would advertise accordingly.

RE: PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION – HOMESTAY ORDINANCE

Mayor Taylor advised the next agenda item is to consider a recommendation from the Planning Commission regarding the Town of Wytheville Zoning Ordinance to amend Article III–Definitions by adding Section 3-42.2 Homestay, and to add the use of Homestay to Article V–Agricultural District A-1; Article VII–Residential District R-2; Article VIII–Residential District R-3; Article VIII–A–Residential District R-3MH; Article X–Business District B-1; Article XI–Business District B-2 (General); and, Article XI-A–Business District B-2DT General Business District–Downtown. She noted that it is necessary to set a public hearing for the Town Council to consider these amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, which could be held at the June 24, 2019, Town Council meeting. Mayor Taylor inquired of the Council if there was any objection to scheduling the public hearing for the June 24, 2019, Town Council meeting. It was the consensus of the Wytheville Town Council to schedule a public hearing for the June 24, 2019, Town Council meeting, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Wytheville Municipal Building to consider a recommendation from the Planning Commission regarding the Town of Wytheville Zoning Ordinance to amend Article III–Definitions by adding Section 3-42.2 Homestay, and to add the use of Homestay to Article V–Agricultural District A-1; Article VII–Residential District R-2; Article VIII–Residential District R-3; Article VIII–A–Residential District R-3MH; Article X–Business District B-1; Article XI–Business District B-2 (General); and, Article XI-A–Business District B-2DT General Business District–Downtown. Mayor Taylor advised that the public hearing will be held on June 24, 2019, and Town staff would advertise accordingly.

RE: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be discussed, a motion was duly made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting (7:30 p.m.).

Beth A. Taylor, Mayor

Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk

BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

MAY 28, 2019

1. Earlier this evening, the Council conducted a public hearing to consider the adoption of the budget for fiscal year 2019 – 2020. Again, this year, real estate and personal property taxes will see no increases. The budget is balanced, as presented, and is approximately \$26.2 million. The budget will be considered, again, at the June 10, 2019, Town Council meeting, and, as we have noted before, the budget can be amended at any time prior to its adoption. It is the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee that the budget, as presented, be adopted on second, but not final, reading when it is considered later in the meeting.
2. For some period of time now, we have received comments from concerned citizens who have noted that there are some properties where criminal activity occurs on a routine basis. Upon checking, we find that there are certain addresses where criminal activity does occur, particularly with regard to drug activity. We asked Town Attorney Menerick to review this matter and to determine if there was any way that property owners could be held responsible for the criminal activity occurring on their property. As it turns out, Virginia State law does provide that property owners can be held responsible for ongoing criminal activity on their property. Later in the meeting, the Council will consider an ordinance that makes such blight a criminal matter. Under the provisions of the ordinance, the Town can identify these problems to a property owner and

require them to make certain improvements to assure that ongoing criminal activity will not occur. We realize that there may be a learning curve in implementing this provision of law, but we believe that it is important that we begin somewhere. When the ordinance is considered later in the meeting, it would be the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee that it be adopted on first and final reading, and that it be implemented immediately.

Jacqueline K. King

Cathy D. Pattison

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT

MAY 28, 2019

1. Over the past year, the Wytheville Town Council has gone to great lengths to review ways to improve fire services for the citizens of the town. The Town Council has given great consideration as to how these goals can be achieved and has taken actions such as hiring a professional Fire Chief, as well as requesting a study, which was conducted and later presented to the Town Council, from the Virginia Fire Services Board regarding the Town's Fire Department.

As everyone has noticed, fire departments all over the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the country for that matter, have seen a decline in volunteerism in recent years. Despite the hard work of its volunteers, Wytheville is no exception to this trend. With the decline in volunteerism, the Town Council hired a fire chief and paid fire staff in order to keep up with the needs of the community. This is certainly not a reflection on our current volunteers, but rather a response to the changing times. Furthermore, upon review of Virginia Code 27-10, the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department has, unfortunately, not been able to meet the State requirement of 20 effective volunteers for some time. In light of this, the Town Council has decided to dissolve the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department, due to not having the required number of volunteers. The remaining business of the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department will need to be resolved utilizing their Bylaws at its next meeting. Effective immediately, volunteers will no longer report to emergency calls.

The Town Council has not made this decision lightly, recognizing that the volunteer firefighters have served the community well for many years. The Town Council, also, hopes that this dissolution is only temporary, as volunteer firefighters certainly have a valuable place in our fire department. We look forward to the day when these trends are reversed, and we may, once again, reorganize the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department.

The Town Council of Wytheville sincerely thanks the volunteer firefighters for their years of service in firefighting in the town and surrounding areas. We are truly grateful for their dedication and hard work. It is the recommendation of the Public Works Committee that the Wytheville Volunteer Fire Department be dissolved pursuant to Virginia Code 27-10, due to not having 20 effective members for a period of three months.

2. After more than one year, it appears that the construction on East Main Street is nearing completion. At a progress meeting held on May 21, 2019, the contractor reported that they will seek substantial completion of the project during the month of June. It is anticipated that during the first week of June, milling operations will commence, and, shortly thereafter, new pavement will be installed. The painting of stripes on this portion of roadway will be performed immediately after. The project will actually not be closed out until midsummer or fall because there are certain landscaping materials that are currently not available. We have also discussed with the contractor the need to mow, weed eat and make the roadway look more presentable. The contractor has agreed that he would perform such activities. This

project is a combined effort of the Town of the Wytheville and the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Virginia Department of Transportation paid one half of the cost of the construction, and the Town of Wytheville paid the other half. We realize that this has been an inconvenience for more than a year, but we do believe that the end product will be worth all of our efforts. There is no action required of the Council at this time, but we did want to make everyone aware that the East Main Street Improvements Project is nearing completion.

Joseph E. Hand, Jr.

Mark J. Bloomfield