

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE WYTHEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2020, AT 7:00 P.M.**

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

Members absent: Joseph E. Hand, Jr.

Others present: Town Manager C. Wayne Sutherland, Jr., Assistant Town Manager Stephen A. Moore, Town Clerk Sharon G. Corvin, Town Attorney Christopher R. Menerick, Mike Forrest, David Kause, Holly Atkins, Patrol Officer Chastity Russell, Police Department Intern Nicole Ramirez

**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 February 24, 2020, and the request of the American Heart Association to conduct a Heart Walk on Saturday, June 6, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented or to somehow be amended. A motion was made by Councilman Bloomfield and seconded by Councilwoman Pattison to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the regular meeting of February 24, 2020, and the request of the American Heart Association to conduct a Heart Walk on Saturday, June 6, 2020, at 9:00 a.m., as presented. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion to approve the consent agenda. 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, Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison. Against: None.

**RE: CITIZENS' PERIOD**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is Citizens' Period. She advised that there is one citizen listed on the sign in sheet who wished to address the Council during Citizens' Period. She asked that Mr. Mike Forrest please come to the podium so that the minutes could be properly recorded.

Mr. Mike Forrest was recognized and stated that he lives at 630 East Withers Road in Wytheville. He noted that later in the meeting, the Council will be discussing the EMS Billing and Rate Schedule, and he would like for the Council to consider not carrying on the practice of soft billing that the Wythe County Rescue Squad had in the past. Mr. Forrest explained that historically, the three rescue squads in the county only receive about 30 to 40 percent of their billable dollars, and that has put all three rescue squads in a financial hardship. He noted that if people think that they can get away without paying, then they will do so, which is not fair to those who do pay. He continued to express his thoughts regarding the EMS Billing and Rate Schedule agenda item. Mr. Forrest thanked the Council for allowing him to speak. Mayor Taylor thanked Mr. Forrest for his comments.

Mayor Taylor stated that there were no other citizens listed to speak during Citizens' Period, however, if anyone has changed their mind and wished to speak, now is the time to do so. There being no one else to address the Council during Citizens' Period, 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 Tuesday, March 10, 2020, at 7:00 a.m., in the Council Conference Room.
2. The Wytheville Planning Commission will meet on Thursday, March 12, 2020, at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers.
3. The New River Regional Water Authority will meet on Thursday, March 19, 2020, 10:00 a.m., in the Council Chambers.
4. Mayor Taylor presented a proclamation to the Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre on Thursday, March 5, 2020, in honor of their 20 year anniversary.

## **RE: BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Councilwoman Pattison, reporting for the Budget and Finance Committee, stated that the new Wytheville Fire and EMS Department became operational this morning at 7:00 a.m. She noted that sixteen new personnel have been employed to provide fire and rescue services. Councilwoman Pattison explained that the Town of Wytheville will have professional fire and emergency medical services available 24 hours per day. She remarked that the vehicles previously operated by Wythe County Rescue Squad have been given to the Town for this purpose. Councilwoman Pattison commented that the Town has performed certain work to these vehicles to make them operational. She stated that as the Committee reported at the last Council meeting, there are a few logistics and procedural measures yet to be taken. Councilwoman Pattison noted that one of them is the adoption of a resolution setting forth policies and procedures and billing schedules that is required by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management Services. She advised that later in the meeting, such a resolution will be on the agenda, and it would be the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee that it be adopted and forwarded to the appropriate State agencies. Councilwoman Pattison stated that the Council is very excited that the Town has been able to provide these new 24 hour a day services to its citizens.

Councilwoman Pattison reported that the Town's employees are covered under health insurance by a State program administered by Anthem. She noted that each year, participating jurisdictions are rated and new rates for the upcoming year are established. Councilwoman Pattison explained that the rate for each locality is established based on their usage of the policy through the year, as well as the combined rate with all other agencies across Virginia. She remarked that preliminarily, it appears that the Town has had a very good year, and the rate increase for the upcoming year will be 2.3 percent. Councilwoman Pattison explained that this is a very low premium increase, as compared to other communities over the years. She stated that the Council is pleased that the Town will be able to continue providing this healthcare service to its employees. Councilwoman Pattison noted that later in the year, it will be necessary for the Council to adopt this formally, and to establish the rate at which the Town will pay and what rate the employees will pay. She remarked that the Town has not yet received the official written copy of the increase, but that should be available within the next week. Councilwoman Pattison advised that the Budget and Finance Committee would expect that by the next meeting of Council, the Committee will be in a position to make a recommendation on the Town's health insurance programs. 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 the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) now uses a system known as Smart Scale to evaluate and establish priorities in the construction of roads throughout the Commonwealth. He explained that there are six factors that are involved in the selection of particular projects, and one of the more important factors is "safety." Councilman Bloomfield noted that the Virginia Department of Transportation has suggested two portions of roadway in town that would be considered under the Smart Scale Program. He remarked that one program involves certain safety measures in the realignment of Monroe and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets, and the other is the relocation of a ramp on North Fourth Street for reentering southbound I-81 traffic. Councilman Bloomfield stated, with regard to both of these projects, the Public Works Committee thinks the improvements at 12<sup>th</sup> and Monroe Streets have some value, except the Committee does not believe that any excessive right of way should be obtained that would negatively impact any business. He commented that VDOT has agreed that it will consider such a request. Councilman Bloomfield explained that on North Fourth Street at the location of the ramp, VDOT has suggested that the construction of a new ramp to I-81 southbound may be very expensive, but they would be willing to do other turn lanes and safety improvements on North Fourth Street to accommodate the unimproved flow of traffic. He stated that it is worth noting that both projects, if approved, would not be constructed until at least 2029 or 2030. Councilman Bloomfield commented that during this period of time, obviously, the Council will have the opportunities to review the proposals as they go forward and to accept or reject the plans provided by the Department of Transportation. He advised that there is no other action needed by the Council at this time, but the Committee wanted everyone to be aware that the Town had participated in the Smart Scale Program and had provided comments to the Department of Transportation on these two proposed projects.

Councilman Bloomfield reported that the Wytheville Garden Club has contacted the Council seeking permission to install several bird houses that will be part of a bluebird habitat. He explained that according to their information, the birdhouses should be located approximately 125-150 yards apart with at least a minimum of five birdhouses. Councilman Bloomfield

remarked that the Public Works Committee believes that the only property that the Town has that could meet these criteria would be located at the Homestead Museum on Tazewell Street. He stated that the Public Works Committee sees nothing wrong with this request and would authorize the Garden Club to proceed. Councilman Bloomfield noted that, additionally, the Garden Club has inquired about making certain donations such as a bench or performing other beautification activities including the planting of flowers, and, again, the Public Works Committee sees no issue whatsoever in cooperating with the Garden Club in performing these activities. He advised that in general, the Public Works Committee does not have any problems with any of these requests and will allow the Staff and the Garden Club to proceed, unless the Council has other concerns. A motion was made by the Public Works Committee, which does not require a second, to approve the request of the Wytheville Garden Club to establish a bluebird habitat at the Homestead Museum property and to proceed with other beautification activities around town. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion to approve the request of the Wytheville Garden Club. 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, Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison. Against: None. A copy of the Public Works Committee report is attached and made part of these minutes.

Mayor Taylor advised that, recently, the Department of Museums had a guest speaker from Virginia Tech visit the Homestead Museum property and speak to the Garden Club regarding the birdhouses. She noted that the Garden Club plans to install 15 birdhouses.

#### **RE: RESOLUTION – HAYDEN H. HORNEY**

Mayor Taylor advised the next agenda item is a resolution honoring the life of Mr. Hayden H. Horney. Mayor Taylor stated that the resolution read as follows:

#### **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Hayden H. Horney, an esteemed citizen and community leader departed this life on the thirteenth day of February, 2020; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Town Council of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, desires to express its great appreciation for the dedicated service of Mr. Hayden H. Horney to the citizens of the Town of Wytheville and Wythe County; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Horney faithfully served as Wythe County Clerk of the Circuit Court for 34 years providing assistance to the citizens; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Horney was a member of the Virginia Circuit Court Clerk Association and served in many positions including President; and,

**WHEREAS**, prior to serving as Clerk of the Circuit Court, Mr. Horney owned and operated Horney Angus Farms; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Horney loyally served his community as a member of the Wytheville Lions Club and the Ivanhoe Masonic Lodge AF & AM #235; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Wytheville Town Council, through the adoption of this resolution, expresses its deep sorrow, esteem and respect.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town Council of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, officially recognizes the outstanding life and accomplishments of Mr. Hayden H. Horney and recognizes his outstanding service to the citizens of the Town of Wytheville and Wythe County.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Town Council of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, tenders its sincere sympathies to the bereaved family, relatives and friends of Mr. Hayden H. Horney.

Mayor Taylor inquired if there is a motion to adopt the resolution honoring Mr. Horney. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilman Bloomfield to adopt the resolution honoring the life of Mr. Hayden H. Horney. 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: For: Beth A. Taylor, Jacqueline K. King, Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison. Against: None.

**RE: RESOLUTION – EMS BILLING AND RATE SCHEDULE**

Mayor Taylor advised the next agenda item is a resolution adopting the EMS Billing and Rate Schedule. Mayor Taylor stated that the resolution read as follows:

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Wytheville, Wythe County and the Wythe County Rescue Squad entered into an Emergency Services Agreement whereby the Town of Wytheville took over the emergency services operations and coverage area for the Wythe County Rescue Squad; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Town entered into an agreement with Credit Bureau Systems, Inc. d/b/a Ambulance Medical Billing to perform the emergency medical services billing for the Town of Wytheville; and,

**WHEREAS**, it will be necessary for the Wytheville Town Council to set and adopt the EMS Billing and Rate Schedule that will be used by Ambulance Medical Billing in their performance of emergency medical services billing for the Town of Wytheville.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town Council of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, hereby adopts the attached EMS Billing and Rate Schedule that will become effective immediately.

Mayor Taylor inquired if there is a motion to adopt the resolution for the EMS Billing and Rate Schedule. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilman Bloomfield to adopt a resolution setting the EMS Billing and Rate Schedule. 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: For: Beth A. Taylor, Jacqueline K. King, Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison. Against: None.

**RE: APPOINTMENTS – WYTHEVILLE TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Mayor Taylor advised that the next agenda item is to consider the reappointment of a member to the Wytheville Tree Advisory Committee to fill the expiring term of Mr. David Richert (term expires May 14, 2020). Mayor Taylor explained that Mr. Richert is eligible for reappointment, and he has indicated a willingness to serve again, if reappointed. A motion was made by Vice-Mayor King and seconded by Councilwoman Pattison to reappoint Mr. David Richert to the Wytheville Tree Advisory Committee for a four year term, which expires May 14, 2024. Mayor Taylor inquired if there was any discussion on the motion to appoint Mr. Richert to the Wytheville Tree Advisory Committee. 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, Mark J. Bloomfield, Cathy D. Pattison. Against: None.

**RE: ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to be discussed, a motion was duly made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting (7:14 p.m.).

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Beth A. Taylor, Mayor

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Sharon G. Corvin, CMC, Town Clerk

## **BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

**MARCH 9, 2020**

1. The new Wytheville Fire and EMS Department became operational this morning at 7:00 a.m. Sixteen new personnel have been employed to provide fire and rescue services. The Town of Wytheville will have professional fire and emergency medical services available 24 hours per day. The vehicles previously operated by Wythe County Rescue Squad have been given to the Town for this purpose. We have performed certain work to these vehicles to make them operational. As we reported at the last Council meeting, there are a few logistics and procedural measures yet to be taken. One of them is the adoption of a resolution setting forth policies and procedures and billing schedules that is required by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management Services. Later this evening, such a resolution will be on the agenda, and it would be the recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee that it be adopted and forwarded to the appropriate State agencies.

We are very excited that we have been able to provide these new 24 hour a day services to our citizens.

2. The Town's employees are covered under health insurance by a State program administered by Anthem. Each year, participating jurisdictions are rated and new rates for the upcoming year are established. The rate for each locality is established based on their usage of the policy through the year, as well as the

combined rate with all other agencies across Virginia. Preliminarily, it appears that we have had a very good year, and the rate increase for the upcoming year will be 2.3 percent. This is a very low premium increase, as compared to other communities over the years. We are pleased that we will be able to continue providing this healthcare service to our employees. Later in the year, it will be necessary for the Council to adopt this formally, and to establish the rate at which the Town will pay and what rate the employees will pay. We have not yet received the official written copy of the increase, but that should be available within the next week. We would expect that by the next meeting of Council, we will be in a position to make a recommendation on our health insurance programs.

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Jacqueline K. King

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Cathy D. Pattison

## **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT**

**MARCH 9, 2020**

1. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) now uses a system known as Smart Scale to evaluate and establish priorities in the construction of roads throughout the Commonwealth. There are six factors that are involved in the selection of particular projects, and one of the more important factors is “safety.” The Virginia Department of Transportation has suggested two portions of roadway in town that would be considered under the Smart Scale Program. One program involves certain safety measures in the realignment of Monroe and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets, and the other is the relocation of a ramp on North Fourth Street for reentering southbound I-81 traffic. With regard to both of these projects, we think the improvements at 12<sup>th</sup> and Monroe Streets have some value, except we do not believe that any excessive right of way should be obtained that would negatively impact any business. VDOT has agreed that it will consider such a request. On North Fourth Street at the location of the ramp, VDOT has suggested that the construction of a new ramp to I-81 southbound may be very expensive, but they would be willing to do other turn lanes and safety improvements on North Fourth Street to accommodate the unimproved flow of traffic. It is worth noting that both projects, if approved, would not be constructed until at least 2029 or 2030. During this period of time, obviously, the Council will have the opportunities to review the proposals as they go forward and to accept or reject the plans provided by the Department of Transportation. There is no other action needed by the Council at this time, but we wanted everyone to be aware that we had participated in the Smart

Scale Program and had provided comments to the Department of Transportation on these two proposed projects.

2. The Wytheville Garden Club has contacted the Council seeking permission to install several bird houses that will be part of a bluebird habitat. According to their information, the birdhouses should be located approximately 125-150 yards apart with at least a minimum of five birdhouses. We believe that the only property that the Town has that could meet these criteria would be located at the Homestead Museum on Tazewell Street. We see nothing wrong with this request and would authorize the Garden Club to proceed. Additionally, the Garden Club has inquired about making certain donations such as a bench or performing other beautification activities including the planting of flowers, and, again, we see no issue whatsoever in cooperating with the Garden Club in performing these activities. In general, the Public Works Committee does not have any problems with any of these requests and will allow the Staff and the Garden Club to proceed, unless the Council has other concerns.

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Joseph E. Hand, Jr.

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Mark J. Bloomfield