

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Work Session
September 24, 2019**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a Work Session on Tuesday, September 24, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall located at 112 Huffard Drive, Bluefield, Virginia.

TOWN COUNCIL PRESENT

Don Harris, Mayor
Ron Holt, Councilmember
Chuck Presley, Councilmember
Anglis Trigg, Jr., Vice-Mayor
Jarrod Bailey, Councilmember

ALSO PRESENT

Mike Watson, Town Manager
Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk
Matt Freedman, Town Attorney
Billie Roberts, Comm. Dev. Coordinator
Rachel Looney, Administrative Asst.
3 Members of Public

ABSENT

Jimmy Jones, Councilmember

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Harris opened the Work Session at 5:45 p.m.

Charter Amendments

Mr. Watson asked council if they were wanting to go to a Public Hearing on adding a member and the mayor's vote.

Mayor Harris stated that the big change was majority present.

Mr. Freedman stated that the other changes was removing some language and adding the ability to act by oral motion, ordinance or resolution. He stated that the green was what was crossed out and the red was the new language.

Mr. Watson stated that a Public Hearing would be needed for this.

Mr. Freedman stated yes and that he had learned that when it was presented that it would require to be done by a resolution and not voice.

Companion Animals

Mr. Watson stated that an ordinance was drafted creating for health and safety (Sec 6-94).

Mr. Freedman stated that this ordinance was the same as last time but he had taken out biting, scratching, etc. He stated that it was the lowest of misdemeanors and left the Police Department to impose a \$50 Civil Penalty. He stated that he would list the language for a Public Hearing and all though we were not required to have one he would recommend one since it would be constituting a public nuisance. He stated that if council did not want to have a Public Hearing then he could go ahead with the 1st Reading but if they did they could vote at the October 8th meeting to go to Public Hearing.

Mr. Watson asked council if they wanted to go to Public Hearing or if they wanted to just go ahead and pass it. He stated that it did not require a Public Hearing and that the information could be put in the newsletter to let everyone know.

Mayor Harris stated that if they did a Public Hearing then it would fulfill their obligation to let everyone know.

Mr. Presley stated that it needed to be worded correctly.

Mr. Freedman stated that the language would mirror what was in the ordinance as a companion animal as defined under VA Code.

Mr. Watson stated that the ordinance added the ability if it created a nuisance in some way with animals. He stated that there was an issue previously about a guy and crows and they had to talk to him.

Mr. Presley stated that he liked the ordinance.

Mr. Watson stated that it needed to state they could not create unsafe/unsanitary conditions.

Mr. Freedman stated that they could vote to go to Public Hearing at the October 8th meeting and he would do the 1st Reading in November but they needed to have 3 on the board who wanted to go to Public Hearing.

Mr. Presley asked Mr. Watson what he thought.

Mr. Watson stated that the issue they were addressing was a lot different than before and personally he would go on with it. He stated that the notice in the paper would state: to change Section 6 of the Code of Virginia to include unsafe/unsanitary conditions for companion animals. He asked why it was defined as companion animals.

Mr. Freedman stated that it was requested by the board and the benefit of it was they would have a statutory definition of what that was. He stated that if it only said animals they would have to bring back what type.

Mr. Watson stated that either way was fine.

Mr. Freedman stated that it would provide notice to the public by definition.

Mayor Harris stated that it was people feeding them.

Mr. Freedman stated that feral was included under companion animals.

Mr. Trigg suggested that they not tinker with it too much.

Mr. Presley agreed to go to a Public Hearing.

Council agreed.

Political Signs

Mr. Watson stated that if council desired to remove a section then a Public Hearing would have to be held to repeal it.

Mayor Harris stated that David Anderson and Charlie Stacy had both followed the 45 days.

Mr. Bailey stated that David Anderson's had been out for a while.

Mr. Presley stated that he had someone to tell him that it was their personal right to put them out when they wanted to do so but he told them about the 45 days.

Mr. Trigg stated that they had already been doing this and did not see the problem with it and they should leave it alone and continue to send out letters asking to wait 45 days and if they wanted to do it or not was up to them. He stated that he did not think they should take it off of the books.

Mr. Presley stated that it only became a problem when he put his signs out.

Mr. Trigg stated that if he had not done so then the others may have not put theirs out.

Mr. Presley stated that he was second to last to put his out but that the 2 Sheriffs, David Anderson and Plasters did not wait until the 45 days. He stated that litigation could take over in the future if it were to be challenged.

Mr. Bailey stated that the principal of it was there were rules that they had to enforce to its fullest and this was limiting freedom of speech.

Mr. Holt stated that in fairness to Mr. Presley he had called Mr. Freedman in April/May because he was told that someone had moved into Town and they were complaining that they could not put up their Trump sign but he told them that technically they could. He stated that he had asked Mr. Freedman if it could be enforced and he said no that it could not be enforced and was unconstitutional.

Mayor Harris stated that he was old school and that they had had all abided by it during the last election. He stated that he had not had a complaint over the years that he had been there regarding the 45 day rule. He asked if they could do a Public Hearing on October 8th.

Mr. Freedman stated yes it would be a Joint Public Hearing.

Mr. Holt asked if they would vote on the 22nd.

Mr. Freedman stated that November 4th was the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meeting and they would have to make a recommendation to council so it would be on the November 12th agenda for its 1st Reading and November 22nd for the 2nd Reading and adoption.

Agenda-Fire Hydrants

Mr. Bailey asked about the fire hydrants.

Mr. Watson stated that he was going to address it under the Town Manager's Report but that he had spoken to the Fire Department and they had guidelines on it. He stated that he sent Pete Sleeman out and he tested both hydrants on Fairway and that both worked fine. He stated that he would like for them to start checking the valves and wanted to get some equipment to know where we were. He stated that there were approximately 200 fire hydrants in the Town and having one that did not work was bad but they had a tanker truck that carried 1500 gallons of water. He stated the Louthan's home that they had to go through the neighbor's yard but it was the same distance and they had other resources there. He stated that they did replace and fix it with American Darling for \$1,800/\$2k because it could not be rebuilt. He stated that he was sent some information on fire hydrants but he needed to do some more research first. He stated that the guys were putting in the new water line on North College which would take around 3 weeks to do. He stated that the goal was to buy a laptop that had GIS marking to test the meters but that after hours was probably not the best time to do so.

Mr. Bailey stated that it would take a lot longer to do.

Mayor Harris stated that there was a lot of other things going on.

Mr. Bailey stated that he understood.

Mr. Trigg asked how far they would be going out with the new water line.

Mr. Watson stated to the end of Town limits. He stated that this was money put into an LGIP when it was put in at the Industrial Park. He stated that there was a 25% surcharge and a 25% surcharge on the sewer. He stated that this money was put in a side account to use for a joint project between the city and the town. He stated that \$72-\$75k would go towards this project which would allow them to sell more water to Falls Mills. He stated that they were putting a pump station in at Yards right now and the agreement was cost plus. He stated that he was looking for some type of management system to put in for Public Works to assign duties.

Mr. Trigg asked about the Water Plant in Pocahontas.

Mr. Watson stated that it was rough and they did not have a lot who could run it.

Mr. Trigg asked about the prison.

Mr. Watson stated that they did not have enough operators to run it and that the PSA was in the process of taking over their system and that the water was being fed through the PSA in Tazewell. He stated that we did not want to sell all of our volume and could not commit to them. He stated that the pump station on 460 pumped to Pocahontas but the issue was with the flow and they could not service the prison and Pocahontas.

Water CIP

Mr. Watson stated that the bids came in high on the Water CIP. He stated that we had not received the official letter for the additional money and terms but he was looking for ways to save money on it. He stated that we had built two well houses in house and by doing North College in house it saved us quite a bit of money.

Mr. Trigg asked about the old pump house near Jim Dudley's office and if we used it.

Mr. Watson stated that we had one pump station on Mountain Lane that we used. He stated that we took down 2 tanks in Town and gave them away.

Mr. Presley asked if one was on Chopra's property.

Mr. Watson stated no that these were put in 20 years ago and set at the same elevation and having different sized lines created a problem. He stated that they never worked right.

Mr. Trigg asked if there was any way to build them up to get better flow coming in

Mr. Watson asked if he was talking about the one beside Dudley Law Office that he had never been out there to see that one.

Mr. Trigg stated that there was good flow there.

Mr. Watson stated that the DEQ told him at the Rich Property that with any type of recreational facility they could use it for storage vs. damming it up. He stated that they could clean the intakes without a problem but could not work in the stream of the water.

Mr. Bailey asked if they could drench part of the pond and use it as backfill.

Mr. Watson stated that he would have to check but he hoped to create a project there to look at in the future.

Tour du' Parc

Mr. Watson stated that Tour du' Parc was today and they had 146 kids. He stated that Rachel and Kim did a station on recycling and that it was a good event.

Tentative Dates

Mr. Watson stated that a tentative date of December 7th had been set for the parade unless the football team was still playing. He stated that the Volunteer and Christmas dinners would be back at Fincastle this year and that we closed on Fincastle on the 30th. He reminded council that VML was October 6th-8th and if there were any changes to let staff know. He stated that the Sanders House Bean Dinner was rescheduled for the 22nd and they encouraged staff and council to attend.

Fincastle Committee Meeting Update

Mr. Bailey stated that the committee met yesterday and that John and Jess had been working hard getting stuff done but they needed to know for sure on the logo and name. He stated that they had come up with two other logos and asked if council had any other logo ideas.

Mr. Holt stated that he liked the one originally discussed if they could clean it up and maybe use a professional to fix it.

Mr. Bailey stated that the committee was shown some samples that were put on shirts and the logo looked good.

Mr. Holt asked if there was a digital copy that could be sent to council.

Mr. Watson stated that the person who did it he thought was a professional but he would send out a copy.

Mr. Bailey stated that right now this was holding them up and they would like to get things in place as soon as we took ownership. He stated that Fincastle would be closed on the Tuesday and Wednesday to clean and right after they opened back up they had meetings/parties scheduled soon after.

Mr. Holt stated that he thought they had agreed on the name.

Mr. Bailey stated that he believed it needed to be voted on.

Mayor Harris asked if council was ok with the logo.

Mr. Holt asked if it looked good on the shirt and would look good on business cards, etc.

Mr. Bailey stated yes.

Mr. Holt stated that he was not opposed to it if it looked good on the shirt.

Council agreed on the logo attached in the minutes.

Mr. Freedman stated that they would need to vote on the name Fincastle and to adopt the paperwork submitted for the logo.

Mayor Harris stated that it would be moved under the Town Manger's report for a vote.

Mr. Watson stated that Mr. Bailey would be the chair of the Fincastle Committee and would be giving regular updates. He stated they were currently looking at a software company that would give us the server/equipment if they were allowed to sale two different tee times daily.

Mr. Bailey stated that it was \$6k upfront and \$1k month and the company was allowed two tee times to sale and if they sold or not it was on that company.

Mr. Watson stated that it was a one year contract and they had looked at another company that was going to be \$18k/year. He stated that it was possible that we may be able to run the existing software till the first of the year and they would leave the computers after the first of the year.

Mr. Bailey asked if the software would "trump" other software because we did not want an influx of people right out of the gate.

Mayor Harris stated that it was surprising to see the amount of reservations already.

Mr. Bailey stated that they were already ordering food for the first week of opening events.

Mr. Watson stated that they would be doing a good overhaul in January of cleaning, etc

Mr. Trigg asked about the roof.

Mr. Watson stated that he was waiting on a quote but that staff was going to look for grants. He stated that the committee would look at the cost such as pricing things, etc.

Mr. Holt stated that he would like to know for the annual membership.

Mr. Bailey agreed but stated not on the menu items, etc.

Mr. Holt stated that was up to the manager and the reason for the committee.

Mayor Harris stated that John and Jess had been working hard upstairs at Town Hall every day.

Mr. Watson stated that we were down to the wire and that all was working well and we should close on the 30th.

Mr. Bailey stated that it was voted to give Mr. Watson the authority to move forward.

Mayor Harris stated that the papers had been signed tonight. He stated on a side note that he had talked to Jason from Dominion and they were drilling 9 more holes and he asked him if council could tour the Bath County Facility. He stated absolutely that it could accommodate 7 people and to let him know in advance if it was something they would like to do.

ADJOURN

Mayor Harris adjourned the Work Session at 6:56 p.m.

Don Harris, Mayor

Kim Hernandez, Town Clerk

