

Town Council Meeting

January 11, 2022

The Town Council of Victoria, Virginia met on January 11, 2022 in the Town Municipal building with the Honorable Allen D. Smith, Mayor, presiding: Councilmember's in attendance were Ronald Mattox, Johnnie Brame, James G. Elam, Jr., Christopher Garrett, Sandra Jones and Chris Gill. Also attending were Town Manager Rodney Newton, Treasurer Diane Harding, Clerk Vickie McDaniel, Police Chief H. Keith Phillips and Assistant Fire Chief Chris Garrett.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Gill to go in to Public Hearing on the following ordinances. Mr. Newton advised updates were made to the penalties for these ordinances. Motion carried.

- Cutting of grass, weeds, and running bamboo; penalty
- Removal of trash, junk, debris, etc; penalty
- Inoperable motor vehicles on residential, commercial, or agricultural property; removal of vehicles

No comments were made.

Motion was made by Councilmember Brame and seconded by Councilmember Mattox to come out of Public Hearing. Motion carried.

Mayor Smith called the meeting of the Town Council to order.

The invocation was given by Councilmember Elam followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Mayor Smith asked if there were any additions to the meeting. Town Manager asked to have a closed session at the end of the meeting. Citizen Chris Garrett asked to speak on blighted property at 1414 Nottoway Blvd. Mayor Smith added Mr. Garrett under Information Items as 11 (e).

Mayor Smith asked if there were any Conflicts of Interest on matters being discussed on the agenda. Councilmember Christopher Garratt wished to abstain from Information Item 11 (e) on blighted property at 1414 Nottoway Blvd.

Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Garratt to accept the December 2021 regular meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Brame to accept the Treasurer's report for December 2021. Councilmember Brame stated we had a good report for end of year. Motion carried.

Chief H. Keith Phillips gave the Police Report. Chief Phillips stated they had 53 calls, two citations and one arrest. Chief Phillips advised the severities of the calls are starting to get more intense. We did recently interview a couple of candidates, but did not hire anyone at this time. Chief Phillips advised they have solved the issue with the caboose vandalism and charges are pending. Motion was made by Councilmember Mattox and seconded by Councilmember Gill to accept the Police Report as presented. Motion carried.

Assistant Fire Chief Chris Garratt gave the Fire/Rescue Department Report. He stated there were two Financial Reports. One report reflected FY2021 year end and the monthly December 2021 report. They had 1,655 total responses for year 2021 and continue to have a challenging year with COVID calls on a daily basis. They had 86 calls at Station 2 and Station 7 had 61 calls totaling 147 calls for the month of December. Assistant Chief Garratt stated most of the supplies have a one year expiration due to COVID challenges; therefore there is a constant turnover of supplies for their ambulances. Our members have done an outstanding job during this challenging year. Mr. Newton advised the negative carry over from 2021 is due to fee reimbursement and when they get the reimbursement funds back. Also, rates increase every calendar year by a certain percentage automatically. Motion was made by Councilmember Brame and seconded by Councilmember Jones to approve the Fire Department report as presented. Motion carried.

Informational Items:

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- a) Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Jones to adopt the three amended ordinances. Motion carried.
- b) Town Manager Rodney Newton advised the Town of Victoria Waterworks recently received the Water Fluoridation Quality Award from the CDC, U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources for 2020.
- c) Mr. Newton provided council a timeline on 1907 10th Street blighted property. This process began in February 2020. The Town Attorney has reviewed all the documentation and everything is in order. Mr. Newton requested approval for the Town Attorney to proceed with sell of the property. Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Garrett to proceed with the steps necessary to sell the property.
- d) Mr. Newton advised the work at 422 Court Street has been completed and the property is now ready for sale. This was also another blighted property that the town actually bought. We can sell by auction or either by agent listing. Once we do make the sell, we will have to hold a Public Hearing since it is deeded in the town's name. Mr. Newton advised the buyer will be responsible for all the closing costs. Motion was made by Councilmember Brame and seconded by Councilmember Mattox to advertise the property at 422 Court Street. Motion carried.
- e) Mr. Chris Garratt addressed council on blighted property at 1414 Nottoway Blvd. Mr. Garratt advised Garratt Ground Maintenance is in negotiation with the owner of the property and asked council not to take action on the property at this time. They will not know anything until the middle of February. Mr. Garratt stated a tremendous amount of repairs are needed. If the purchase goes through, Garratt Ground Maintenance will be submitting an accelerated plan to town council for improvements of the building and possible purchase of the alleyway. Also, all taxes and back taxes will be paid with the purchase of the property.

Town Manager Update:

- a) Mr. Newton provided council with the Bryne Justice Assistance Grant back in the December council packet; he did not note that an application had been submitted through the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services for five more driver feedback speed limit signs. Mr. Newton advised council that we have been notified that the grant was awarded to the town. The grant will pay 75% of the project. The project is \$16,045.00 for the five speed limit signs. The order will be placed within the next week and the first sign from the previous award has been ordered and hoped to be delivered by the end of January 2022. Mr. Newton has been in contact with VDOT for placement of the speed limit signs. Plans are for the first sign to go on Mecklenburg Avenue to follow-up on the traffic study. The other five signs will be place on 6th Street, 8th Street, Nottoway Blvd., Washington Avenue and Court Street. Councilmember Elam inquired about moving the 25mph speed limit sign on Park Avenue out to the corporate limits on Gallion Town Road. Mr. Newton advised we will have to petition South Hill then go to the board in Richmond and likely a resolution from council. Councilmember Elam requested Mr. Newton to look into it.
- b) Mr. Newton advised our town charter amendment that was council approved awhile back and after speaking with Delegate Wrights office; it has been assigned House Bill #2. This will be going through the General Assembly.
- c) Mr. Newton provided council a compliance report that was submitted to DEQ on December 30, 2021. Mr. Newton stated we are making progress. Last week when we had several inches of snow and rain, which gave us our first opportunity to look and monitor to see what we've done. Mr. Newton advised we still have work on Tidewater Avenue. At the east facility, we see the storm surge but we do not exceed. Also, on 1st Street and Washington at the bottom of the hill at 3rd Street and Lee Avenue, we are taking in a lot of water. The meeting with B&B Consultants has been rescheduled until next week to review the PER that was completed last year and look at modifications based on the

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repairs made thus far. Also will be scheduling a meeting with DEQ, Mr. Jeff Reynolds to let them know where we are now. Mr. Newton advised as of December 31, 2021 compliance schedule, we have to have everything done in two years. Mr. Newton is looking into infrastructure grants that could help the town with costs. Between now and June 2022, Mr. Newton advised we have to have our plan on paper. Mr. Newton received the influent for November and December for the West facility even though we had very little rain; it gave us a good view of what baseline flow into that plant should look like. Most days we averaged 40k to 80k gallons going in.

- d) Mr. Newton advised we are currently advertising for a Waterworks Plant Operator. Mr. Danny Dunn will be retiring the end of January 2022. We have received three applicants and cut-off is Wednesday, January 19, 2022.
- e) Mr. Newton updated council on property maintenance as follows:
- 1300 & 1304 8th Street- no updates at this time
 - 1516 6th Street – no updates at this time; still working with the new owner
 - 1414 Nottoway Blvd. – Mr. Chris Garratt with Garratt Ground Maintenance updated on possible purchase of property.
 - 1907 10th Street- discussed with council to advertise for sell
 - 1600 9th Street – no updates at this time
 - 1700 2nd Street-no updates at this time
 - 1116 Court Street (old shoe factory) - doors secured, large area of broken windows boarded up. Mr. Newton will be talking with IDA Chairman, Mike Walker about possibilities with this building next week.
 - 1401 5th Street- spoke with owner. Any windows that are broken will be boarded up by the middle of February 2022 and the cinder block shell of the garage torn down in the alley.
 - A & J Produce- will follow-up this month.

Motion was made by Councilmember Jones and seconded by Councilmember Garratt to go into closed session for discussion on:

- a. Acquisition of Blighted Property for the Town of Victoria, according to Code of VA §2.2-311(A)(3).
- b. Prospective Business in which there has been no public announcement of the business, according to Code of VA §2.2-3711(A)(5).

CLOSED SESSION January 11, 2022

Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Garrett to return to regular session according to Code of VA §2.2-3712 to certify that only business matters identified in the motion to convene and those lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed. By show of hands, all voted unanimous yes. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Councilmember Elam and seconded by Councilmember Garrett to authorize the Town Manager to negotiate the land deals that were discussed in closed session. Motion carried.

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Smith adjourned the meeting.

Vickie McDaniel, Clerk

Allen D. Smith, Mayor

Approved February 8, 2022

Rodney Newton, Town Manager