

Minutes  
Town Council Meeting  
October 10, 2023

The Town Council held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, in the council room of the Town Hall. Those joining the assembly were Brian Laine, Mayor; Oscar E. Parker, III, Council President; Frances Chamber, Michael Kessinger, and Dennis Mason, Council Members; Pat Bowden, Fire Chief; Robyn Croft, Treasurer; Bonita Meyers, Clerk.

**Call to order:** The mayor called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. Everyone present recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**Roll Call and Adoption of Agenda:** The clerk called the roll; all members except Darlean Whiting and Brian Wills were present.

Mr. Kessinger moved to adopt the agenda as presented, and Mr Parker seconded; the Council voted unanimously by raised hands to accept the motion.

**Announcements: None**

**Minutes:** Mr. Mason moved to dispense with the reading of the September minutes and to approve them as presented. Mrs. Chambers seconded; the Council voted unanimously to accept the motion.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mrs. Croft presented the treasurer's report as follows:

Balance on hand in the General Fund as of September 30, 2023 - \$151,384.80

Bills introduced for payment as of September 30, 2023 - \$7,344.99

Mr. Kessinger made a motion to accept the treasurer's report as presented, Mr Parker seconded the move, and the Council voted unanimously by raised hands in favor of the action.

**Citizen Statements:**

Danielle Nikolaisen from Brown Edwards presented the Auditor's report for the Fiscal Year Ending June 2023. The report received the highest rating as it was deemed to be "presented fairly." She recommended that the Council review and approve all journal entries based on the audit's recommendations. Additionally, Mrs. Nikolaisen mentioned that any ARPA funds must be utilized by December 31, 2024. Otherwise, they must be returned.

**Committee Reports:**

**Fire Department:** None

**Sussex Service Authority:** Smoke tests are being performed throughout the town this month to check the sewer system for leaks.

**Airport:** Mr. Kessinger reported that they still need to perform hanger inspections and will schedule a meeting with the airport committee.

**Ballpark/Recreation:** None

**Budget/Finance:** None

**Cemetery:** Mrs. Chambers has requested to have the wall and fountain power washed. Additionally, she has asked to have the trees' low-hanging limbs at the cemetery entrance trimmed back as they scrape the top of her vehicle when driving in the lane.

**Emergency Services/Safety:** Mr. Kessinger reported that the new deputy for Wakefield will begin patrols by November 1st, as soon as the new car is ready.

**Personnel:** The mayor said he talked with Mr. Jonathan Ervin, who currently works as a seasonal worker for the town. The mayor proposed hiring Mr. Ervin as a full-time employee to relieve the burden on the current staff and eliminate the need to advertise for a seasonal worker each spring. Mr. Ervin agreed to the proposal. Mr. Kessinger proposed to change Mr. Ervin's status from part-time to full-time. Mr. Parker seconded the motion, and the Council unanimously voted in favor of the action by raising their hands.

**Planning Commission:** No report. Mrs. Chambers provided an update on the VCU Capstone Project intern. She informed the Council that he would attend the Foundation's Family Day event on October 14th and the Fall Festival at the Diner on October 21st. His purpose is to gather information from Town members about the types of businesses they would like to see in the area.

Mrs. Chambers announced that Santa would be available for the Town's Christmas tree lighting on November 30th at 6:30 pm.

It was agreed that the town would celebrate Halloween on October 31st from 5–8 pm.

**Property Maintenance:** The mayor asked Mrs. Croft to email the bank that owns the property located at 105 Wilson Avenue. The garage at the back of the property must be demolished, as it has been deemed unsafe by the County authorities. Following some discussion, Mrs. Chambers suggested purchasing the property now that it is in foreclosure and transforming it into a parking lot. Mr. Parker proposed contacting the bank to inquire about the asking price to which Mrs. Chambers has volunteered.

**Streets/Beautification:** Mr. Mason suggested the town purchase some flags to put up during non-holiday periods.

**Utilities:** Mrs. Chambers reported that Lane Chambers spoke with Jonathan Thompson from Recor, and he will send the official proposal within 7-10 business days.

The mayor requested that Mrs. Croft send the updated pole agreement from Mr. Popovich to Mr. Chambers for review and asked her to schedule a meeting with the Utilities Committee.

**Vehicle Maintenance:** None

**Zoning:** None

**Events:** Mr. Hellyer informed the Council that The Peanut Harvest Festival has been rescheduled from its initial date due to tropical storm Danielle. The festival, previously scheduled for September 23rd, will now be held on November 4th. All the flyers, websites, signs, and radio spots have been updated to reflect the new date. Thanks to the governor's declaration of a state of emergency, the date on the ABC license has also been changed accordingly. The band has agreed to reschedule, so no additional costs have been incurred.

**Legal:** None

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**Executive Session:** None

**Adjourn:** With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.

---

Brain M. Laine, Mayor

*Bonita JC Meyers*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bonita Meyers, Clerk