

Town of Hurt, Virginia  
Council Meeting Minutes  
April 12, 2022

Hurt Town Council held a called meeting on Tuesday, April 12th, 2022, at Town Hall. The meeting opened at 6:00 PM by Mayor Gary Hodnett with a quorum present.

**Roll Call**

Members present: Mr. Gary Poindexter, Mr. Donney Johnson, Mrs. Shirley Barksdale-Hill, and Mr. Luke Perdieu; Members absent: Mr. Collin Adams and Mrs. Kathy Keese

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Invocation: Mr. Poindexter

Pledge: led by Mayor Hodnett

**Opening Remarks**

Mayor Hodnett stated I do appreciate everyone coming in. I know we've had a busy schedule last Tuesday and Thursday, now Tuesday, and the Planning Commission is going to be meeting next week; anybody that wants to come is welcome and get a handful of that. Mr. Johnson asked what day is that? Mayor Hodnett responded Tuesday, April 19 at 7:00 PM. It will be about the solar farm SUP up here at SVMP. Mr. Poindexter asked not the one for the KIC yet? Mayor Hodnett stated no. Mr. Poindexter stated so two different ones, ok. Mayor Hodnett stated they have two, totaling about 30 acres and it's two of them. Mr. Poindexter stated okay so two small ones. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked if this is public too, right, because I've had some calls asking about this. Mayor Hodnett asked what? Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated about the Planning Commission's meeting about the solar farm. Mayor Hodnett stated yeah, it's a public hearing, so anybody that wants to come down and say anything about it is welcome to do so.

**New Items**

Mayor Hodnett stated he wanted to add two things to the agenda for tonight. The Regional Mutual Aid Agreement, and also everyone should have at their table a water bill adjustment policy. At the May meeting we will have the policy for the Hurt meeting procedures. Donney and I have got that ready; at this point it is 20 pages long, so we are ready to go with that. It will come out with your packet. The Mutual Aid Agreement, all of you had copies in your information at the Thursday meeting, I think the resolution. I am going to go out on a limb and make an assumption, hopefully everybody read it. Mayor Hodnett asked any questions? Mr. Poindexter stated I don't recall anything standing out, as a concern or flag, or anything like that. We've had these from time to time before and have had to renew them to keep in force. It's a no-brainer that we would want to do that; we've got to collaborate with adjacent departments. Mayor Hodnett stated I'm talking about the Bond Counsel; did I say Mutual Aid? I'm sorry. I'm 65 years old; I'm losing my mind. Mayor Hodnett stated let me go back and clarify, the Bond Counsel resolution, so everybody has read that, everybody okay with it? Any questions? Do we have a motion to approve as written? Mr. Poindexter asked if this is something you need to document opening and closing a public hearing on for the record. I don't know the requirement; I just want to make sure. Mayor Hodnett stated I mean we don't have anybody here that has signed up, but we can.

### **Public Hearing**

Mayor Hodnett asked, Dixie, would you like to speak? Dixie responded no sir. Mayor Hodnett stated we are opening the public hearing on the Bond Counsel resolution at 6:06 PM. Mr. Poindexter stated I see no comment. Mayor Hodnett stated okay so we will close that at 6:06, 30 seconds.

Mayor

Hodnett stated Bond Counsel, no questions? A motion was made to adopt the Bond Counsel resolution as presented.

Motion: Mr. Poindexter

Second: Mr. Johnson

Passage: Unanimous

### **Mutual Aid Agreement**

Mayor Hodnett stated now the Mutual Aid Agreement. Mayor Hodnett stated well it's one of those things that Lynchburg and everybody else has already agreed to, and it's just a formality. Mr. Perdieu asked, we have one already, it's just expired or getting ready to expire? Mayor Hodnett stated yes, it is Amherst County Sheriff's Department, Appomattox County Sheriff's Department, Bedford County Sheriff's Department, Campbell County Sheriff, City of Lynchburg Sheriff, Nelson County Sheriff, Pittsylvania County Sheriff, Town of Altavista, Town of Amherst, Town of Bedford, Town of Brookneal, Town of Chatham, Town of Hurt, and City of Lynchburg. Mr. Poindexter stated I'm surprised Gretna didn't join. We've had those in place for a long time; I can't recall when the last one was that we approved during my administration. I'm thinking it was either '18 or '19. It's not an every year thing, is it? Isn't it like every other or every 3 years? Mayor Hodnett stated yeah, it's every 2-3 years. Mr. Poindexter stated I didn't think it was every year. Mayor Hodnett stated its every 5 years. Mr. Poindexter stated that puts it at '17; I didn't think it had been quite that long. Mayor Hodnett stated it will expire April 30th, 2027. Mr. Poindexter stated okay so this is April 2022-April 2027. Mr. Perdieu asked if the mayor and Jason looked over it. Mayor Hodnett stated yeah it runs May 1, 2022 through April 30th, 2027; yeah, he is happy with it. Mike, I know that you have looked at it, do you want to make any comments on it? Mike Jones stated it is pretty good; just in essence, having done so many of these, its particularly applicable to us because we have chronic short staffing, and that allows the police of the jurisdictions as signatories to come in and provide police services to the town, under the town's authority. For example, if someone from Altavista comes in, they do not have police authority in Hurt without this LOU, and vice versa. What it does, it is called a sharing provision, that if a person providing mutual aid is injured while performing duties for us, and vice versa, if we are performing duties for another jurisdiction, it essentially says each jurisdiction will bear their own expenses - that's part of it. Believe it or not, a key economic development document because industries ask for that, especially in small towns where staffing is light, and when we have that, we make sure to tell them that we have that, and we have such a wide range. It's a very good document, it's well researched, and it's wanted by the Attorney General and the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the judges, so it's a good thing and I appreciate your support and attention to it. We use it much more than it uses us.

A motion was made that we accept the Mutual Aid Agreement as is.

Motion: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill

Second: Mr. Perdieu

Passage: Unanimous

### **Water Loss/Adjustment Policy**

Mayor Hodnett stated you guys take a minute to look through that, if you want to move on it tonight, we can; if you want to wait, we can wait. Mr. Perdieu stated my only question about this is do we need

to charge a small administration fee, with having to deal with going out, because I know a lot of the times Joe has to go out to these places and help them. Should we charge a little bit to try and recoup there? Mayor Hodnett stated well one of the ways you can look at it this, with the radio read meters, he's not out in the field as much as he would be for reading the meters, so he has some time there, but he doesn't have a lot of time to spare. I would personally hate to charge a resident for us to come out and look. Mr. Perdieu said I agree with what you're saying. A lot of other municipalities probably do. Mr. Poindexter stated probably larger ones; I understand the concept, but I don't know that it's quite the character of a small town. Mr. Perdieu stated I don't want to charge them, but I was just asking. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked do we have a time frame for when the notifications will go out, will it be immediately, when it's detected. Mayor Hodnett responded that what we are going to do is set aside like Monday mornings to check the system. Were not going to check them every day; we will do it once a week and then he will gather all the ones showing leaks at that point in time and put them in the mail on Tuesday. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated okay. Mayor Hodnett stated and that's provided he's not on an emergency; were not going to stop emergencies to read it, but we are going to do our best effort. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated so pretty much the next day. Mayor Hodnett stated yeah, as soon as we know it, the next day we hope to notify them. Mr. Poindexter asked how long do you anticipate it will take them to run this check through the software system, just a few minutes? Mayor Hodnett stated five minutes, it's like instant. Mr. Perdieu stated the software should already know; we would just have to read it. Mr. Poindexter stated it should be just a matter of pulling a quick report. Mayor Hodnett stated all we do is search it by water loss report because it's already embedded in the system, so we just pull that report and it's instantaneous. The biggest thing is going back and looking at the individual residents to see exactly when they started because we can go back and look at the data and tell you Luke, yours started 3 weeks ago at 1 in the morning, so we can be that precise with it. That takes more time than anything else. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked can the system be set up to notify you, like you get an email notification? Mayor Hodnett responded no, it will not do emails, but individuals in town can get a login for the system and can read their own, because we've got a couple of people doing that, so they can keep up with it themselves if they want to. Mr. Poindexter stated that's good to know; we might want to put that in the next newsletter. Mayor Hodnett stated we've already done it. Mr. Perdieu stated I didn't get my newsletter because my bill got lost in the mail. Mayor Hodnett stated we've advised everybody to do it, that's how the 5 or 6 that are doing it, called in wanting to. Mr. Poindexter stated for some reason I just don't remember it. Mr. Perdieu stated it's the first I'm hearing about it. Mr. Poindexter stated I would ask the question then, due to the fact that it only takes a few minutes, is once a week often enough or should we do Monday and Thursday? Mayor Hodnett once a week, as with everything else that's going on, once a week is enough, and that's why I clarified with her, we are going to make our best efforts to do it on Monday. I'm not guaranteeing it because we have a lot of other stuff that he is involved in. Mr. Perdieu stated should we put in that we are not responsible for finding them leaks, we are doing this as a service, public service thing, if we miss it or miss a day? Mayor Hodnett stated well most people call and choose not to believe us when we send them the notice, unfortunately, and we are batting 1000 on them. You can't make people fix something that they don't want to fix. Like I say, we probably have seven or eight that are still leaking, that have been leaking for at least two cycles. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked, have they contacted you about any hardship on them? Mayor Hodnett stated no. Mr. Perdieu asked do we know for a fact that they are getting the notices and talked on the phone? Mayor Hodnett

stated we've been out to see them; I've been out personally to see 4 of them. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked what about McCormick, what was decided about him and his situation? Mayor Hodnett stated his is going to be a special situation because he didn't have a radio read meter first go round, and he indicated that he did, but he didn't. I think council, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you guys talked about his average billing that he had and using that, and then we are going to make him pay for the water cost that we pay from Altavista for the loss and all. Mr. Poindexter stated it should cover the cost and not the regular price. Mr. Perdieu stated we never agreed on anything, we just said, Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated we didn't, that's why I asked. Mr. Perdieu stated we never agreed, and we never made a motion we just said after we got this, we could revisit him. Mayor Hodnett stated okay well let's revisit him. Mr. Perdieu stated what you said is what I remember and what I thought we should do. Mayor Hodnett stated yeah, I thought that's what you guys talked about and said, kind of leaned that way. Mr. Johnson stated we did, but we didn't vote on it. Mayor Hodnett stated well I don't think you want to get into voting on everyone of these water losses. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated his is a special situation, that's why I brought it up, so we are not going to recoup anything, any of our cost at all, not even a small percentage? Mayor Hodnett stated we are recouping 100% of our cost, if you're talking about profit, Mr. Johnson stated it's just no margin, Mayor Hodnett stated yeah. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked what happened, did he really not get it, because the stuff he was passing around, he passed around that other notice that had nothing to do with that; I got this and you saying you sent that, Mr. Perdieu stated he's saying its still leaking, Mrs. Barksdale-Hill everybody got that, so he didn't even fix it? Mr. Perdieu stated that's what he said. Mayor Hodnett stated he had a leak, knew where the leak was; I think you said you rode by and saw the water puddled up; Mr. Perdieu stated its still wet right there, Mayor Hodnett stated so he pulled that entire line out going to the house, he replaced from the pump to the house, alright then he thought that took care of it, that's where the water leak was at. We told him I think yesterday that he still had a leak, so he looked in the house and he found where something was dripping a little bit, so he thinks that's where it's at and he's going to fix that. It wasn't a big leak yesterday, here you got about 3-4 gallons going through it at 2-3-4 in the morning, so he is going to get on that. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked did it show up on our water loss report? Mayor Hodnett stated yeah, that's how we knew he still had a leak. Mr. Perdieu stated we can pretty much apply this, minus the time 14-day period, we can apply this. Mayor Hodnett stated yeah because the stuff that was going through, I didn't get it and didn't check the mailbox and all, he gave us the address, Colleen had the address, Colleen wrote it down wrong, put it in the system wrong, and that's why he didn't get the bill where he wanted to, but the other side of it is, it was going to the place up here and where he wasn't checking the mailbox, if you had been checking the mailbox, you would have got it. First thing we hear every time we do billing is I didn't get my bill; that's standard operating procedure. Mr. Perdieu stated that's what I would say, it's what I did say. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated that's what happened to mine too; mine had gone somewhere. Mr. Perdieu stated I'll get it in 6 months. Mayor Hodnett stated I don't know of anything to do but tell people to talk to the post office, because we mailed them. We can apply this, but his isn't going to be cut-and-dry. Mr. Perdieu stated I would say do your best judgment; I don't think we need to vote on every single one of them. Mr. Poindexter stated the idea was to have a policy, to have a framework where really only the exceptions should come up, the unusual exceptions would come up for a vote. Now something like his was a curve before we adopt the policy, we probably should make a decision on that particular case. Mayor Hodnett stated I think Luke summed it all up, use our best guess, our best estimate based on the information we have and all his average readings, we can pull all of that out of the system and let Joe make a decision on it. Councilmembers all agreed to that.

Mayor Hodnett stated if you look at the policy, it sums it out 7 and 14 days; after that they own it if they are not going to get it fixed or aren't making an attempt to fix it. Mr. Perdieu stated I can understand somebody not being able to get to you within 14 days, within 30, or 28 I mean. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated and let you know. Mayor Hodnett stated yea if somebody is working with an active leak, we had a lady up here on Prospect, and I know I was at the house 4 or 5 times, Joe was there, she called me 3 times with plumbers standing there and they couldn't find the leak. We kept telling her you got a leak, its not in the line coming to the house, you have a leak in your house and the last phone call, she was standing by her wall in her basement, and she said hey, hold on a minute, I think I hear something, she went over and listened and she could hear water running inside of the block. Finally, they got to looking at it, and the water was running with a pipe down, a drainpipe that she had with that down to a building behind the house coming out. That is why they didn't see it in the yard, so we worked with her. We weren't going to charge her for that, we were trying to work with her and get it fixed and they can't find it, its kind of hard to do anybody like that if they are working on it. Mr. Perdieu stated if they are working on it; but we just don't need to pay for it if they aren't trying. Mayor Hodnett stated oh we are not going to.

A motion was made to adopt the water loss adjustment policy as presented.

Motion: Mr. Perdieu

Second: Mr. Poindexter

Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett stated we will get that implemented right away. Mr. Poindexter stated I can get this on a form with the new letterhead so she can post it if you like. Mayor Hodnett stated yeah, we can do that tomorrow; we can get that out right on the website and Facebook, and probably should include it with the next water billing in the newsletter. Mr. Poindexter stated yes, that's coming up next month, time is flying. Mayor Hodnett stated make sure everybody sees it.

### **Other**

Mayor Hodnett stated I will take the resolution to Chatham tomorrow and get certified with the court. We are going to get started on the rest of the information with the agreement and he's going to help with that with Virginia Resource Authority, the finance and funding agreement so he's going to work on that too. Mr. Poindexter stated I have two or three little things; one on the finances - I have received most if not all the information that we need from the commissioner's office for the use in forecasting the tax revenue, so I'll be working on that later in the week. Mayor Hodnett asked are they using the same thing they did last year? Mr. Poindexter stated they are for real estate because they are using the same valuation basis from 2021, but personal property is different every year because people buy, sell, and trade vehicles and mobile homes and other things like that. That one is more fluid, but the real estate should be essentially the same thing as last year. I've gotten just about everything that I need to get those line items taken care of. I would just like to inquire about any updates on Municode; where are we with that? Mayor Hodnett responded, Luke did you ever get a quote direct from Municode? Mr. Perdieu responded no. Mayor Hodnett stated yeah you might want to jerk that chain again. Mr. Poindexter stated because it would be good to find a way and get that done in the current fiscal year with any extra money and not have to build it into the budget for the next cycle, just have it done with. Any update on our building renovations pursuits? Mayor Hodnett stated we are trying to get 4 contractors now, to bring them in, and essentially put it out for bid. We are trying to get them down

here ASAP; one of them is these people over here. Mr. Johnson asked what people? Mayor Hodnett responded the developers. Mr. Johnson stated oh; what about the security deal with the keypad, that we were talking about, are we going forward with that when we do renovations, and do it all at one time or are we going to try and get something in here? Mayor Hodnett stated I think we ought to go on and move on the keypad. Mr. Johnson stated I do too. Mr. Perdieu stated I thought we had already decided on that. Mayor Hodnett stated I think we did; we can go back and look at the minutes, but I think we voted on that. Mr. Johnson stated we did. Mr. Poindexter stated we voted on that in March if I remember right. Mayor Hodnett stated the problem we've had, is the auditors aren't coming out to do on-site work; they left us with like 29 different things that they needed scanned and emailed to them, which included every check, every receipt, and everything else, so we just finished up today with that; we will get on some other stuff, but they have been fighting that. Mr. Perdieu asked about the mirror for the tunnel - what is the status on that. Mayor Hodnett stated we have it downstairs and been trying to get the brackets to hook it up. Mr. Johnson stated I got a phone call about that last week. Mr. Perdieu and Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated they've had several. Mr. Poindexter stated it has been a matter of concern and it is a safety issue. Mr. Perdieu stated I've almost been run into 2 or 3 times. Mayor Hodnett stated going back to talking about that stuff with the audit, Ellen, I'm trying to be tactful, give me a second to get my thoughts together, we are struggling with getting our ARPA funding, getting into their database and all to do all this stuff, the government, the state won't recognize us, adding Ellen as the Treasurer, because they go back and on our accounts; they're showing for the town they have people going back all the way to Fran Lawhorne, still active in the town's system, Ronald Rowland, Susan, Fran, they go back and say that we can't get in the system because we already have users in there. The users that are in there are no longer with the Town of Hurt, and you know how arguing with the government is. We have yet to be able to get in and do the reporting that we need to do on the ARPA funds. Mr. Poindexter stated I wonder if there is any other way to get an inroad with that, somebody somewhere has to have the ability to overpower that stuff. Mr. Perdieu asked is there no customer support line? Mayor Hodnett stated that Ellen is on it every day. She has been told that it has been corrected and its not corrected when you go back to go in it, you can't get in it. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated I was told in the short time that I was helping down here, several times, oh yeah, we have taken this one out and taken that one out and replaced them with whomever I was requesting, then you got to go back and go through it again every time. Mr. Perdieu stated that is a waste of time. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated, and I have contacted people, and then you talk to them and then they are there maybe for one conversation and then someone else next time, well I talked this one and then it just got so confusing because it was so many different things. Mayor Hodnett stated well we are working on it; we have a deadline of the 30th of this month we have to file the report. Can't get the people off the system, it is a nightmare. Mr. Perdieu asked the people that are still on the system, like Fran, can she still login, can we get her and ask her if she can come login in for an hour, to get the account opened and switched over? I don't know if that will work. Mr. Poindexter stated well one thing it would be a security breach, but I'm wondering if we need to see if someone, say Les Adams's staff, needs to be a contacted because people who have connections in Richmond could contact some of these people; there is a deeper level. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked do you think John would know? Mayor Hodnett asked John who. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated Eller, or anybody we could turn to in Altavista. Mayor Hodnett stated we have talked to other towns around here that are having the same problem, can't get the stuff set up. They have actually changed twice the modules for the government reporting. Here is the first one you use,

that didn't work, but then they changed it to another one, that didn't work, so now they got another one. Like I said everybody has some of the same problems, and we are that small unit, non-government entity or something like that is what we fall under because of our size. The girls in Gretna and Chatham are all having the same problems. Mr. Poindexter stated that is discouraging. Mr. Johnson stated that is sad. Mayor Hodnett stated yeah, it's truly sad, and Ellen can call and talk to them, well not really call, they won't take your call, if you call you get nobody. If you email them, then they say they will get back to you, and it just takes, if you text or email today you probably won't get an answer today, it will be tomorrow. I know she has been told 4 or 5 times that the system is fixed and ready to go but it isn't. Going back to what you talked about Les Adams, he would get about as far, anyway, no comment. Just something we have to work out and work through, but you know it eats up time and that's the reason I'm putting it out there. So much time goes into this stuff that isn't working right, shouldn't be the way it is. Ron Rowland is still on it, and I don't even think it was set up right to start with because from what I understand about it, we should have one entity. The Town of Hurt has 4 different entities; whoever has done this in the past, somebody has set up the pump station as a government entity, somebody set up one of the sewer plants as a government entity. It's a mess, the police department is in as a government entity, and I don't think they should be in there. I think it is a single entity for the Town of Hurt and then everything revolves around it, but you have one registrar to set up and that's it, and Jason is PD and can work off of that, and Ellen as Treasurer can work off of that, but everybody uses the same location. Mr. Poindexter stated multiple entities are what's causing that; that's creating redundancy in the database. Mayor Hodnett stated well the multiple entities as well as the multiple people listed in the system. Mr. Perdieu stated it just confuses it even more than it already is, is what it sounds like. Mr. Poindexter stated we need to get IT involved in that, that's something at a deeper level going on there. Mayor Hodnett stated anyway, that's why some of this other stuff isn't getting done as fast as we would like, because we are getting sucked into that black hole. Mike Jones asked what state agency are we dealing with, is it the department of accounts? Mayor Hodnett stated I will have to get Ellen to confirm it. Mike Jones stated if you don't mind, ask her to give me a call, I might be able to contact the state to help out somewhat. Mayor Hodnett stated okay; I'll have her call you first thing. Mayor Hodnett stated anybody have anymore questions? No comment.

Mayor Hodnett stated thank you for coming, we got a lot done, and got us a water loss policy.

Meeting adjourned at 6:37 PM.

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Kelsie Sligh, Clerk

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Gary Hodnett, Mayor