

Town of Hurt, Virginia  
Council Meeting Minutes  
February 7, 2023

Hurt Town Council held its monthly business meeting Tuesday, February 7, 2022, at Town Hall. The meeting opened at 6:05 PM by Mayor Gary Hodnett with a quorum present.

**Roll Call**

Members present: Mr. Gary Poindexter, Mr. Bob Majure, Mrs. Kathy Keesee, and Mr. Luke Perdieu via phone call.

**Closed Session**

A motion was made to enter closed session to discuss personnel and prospective business as authorized by VA FOIA § 2.2-3711 A (1, 3, 5, 8).

Motion: Mr. Poindexter

Second: Mr. Majure

Passage: Unanimous

Council entered closed session at 6:07 PM and exited closed session at approximately 7:13 PM.

A motion was made to return to open session and to certify that only personnel and prospective business matters were discussed during closed session, as required by VA FOIA § 2.2-3712 (D).

Motion: Mr. Poindexter

Second: Mr. Majure

Passage: Unanimous

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Invocation: Mr. Poindexter

Pledge of Allegiance: led by Mayor Hodnett

**Welcome/Opening Remarks**

Mayor Hodnett thanked everyone for coming. If you would like to speak please sign up on the sheet on the podium. You will have three minutes to talk.

**Consent Agenda**

Mayor Hodnett: additions to the agenda, January minutes, and expenditures – do I hear a motion to approve? A motion was made to approve the January minutes and January expenditures as presented.

Motion: Mrs. Keesee

Second: Mr. Perdieu

Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett stated I would like to add the SRIFFA Memorandum of Agreement that was in the packet, as well as an additional comment at the bottom of our water cutoff forms.

**Public Comments**

Michael Blackstock discussed his business at 301 Prospect Rd., stating I would like to put on the agenda for the next business meeting an amendment of his special use permit to allow my son Michael Wayne Blackstock to run his business, Blackstock Heating and Air, to be taken over Blackstock Construction as I will be retiring. It will be more funding for the town, bringing in tax income because the equipment is more expensive.

Kim Johnson stated she wanted a update on the chicken/rooster issue brought up back in the fall. Mayor Hodnett stated we will take that up after the public comment period.

Steve Worley discussed reading in the paper that Council is considering going back from 6 to 4 members, and as it is set up now it can be 4 to 11. In my opinion I would hate to see it come back to 4. I know it is hard to get people. Hopefully we can get 11, but I know it's a thankless job. The other thing is, I'd like to see the door unlocked, I can go anywhere in Hurt from 8-10 at night and walk right in. If we were in New York, then I might could see it, but this is Hurt. You might have your reasons for locking the door, but when I come down I like to open the door and walk in. I know I am just one person speaking. I would like to say that this gentleman here, he stays busy, I see him everywhere. In fact when I come down and couldn't get in, he opened the door and let me in. just wanted to let you know you're doing a good job.

Public comment period closed.

### **Chickens**

Mayor Hodnett stated we got the ordinance passed that you can have 12 chickens, no roosters, and the pen is limited to a certain size. You have to take the waste products out of town and have to apply for a permit. Kim Johnson asked who is enforcing it? Mayor Hodnett replied we are. Kim replied well they still have them next door at 611 Lynn St.; the roosters sing all night, and there are more than 12 there. Mayor Hodnett replied we will take a look at it.

### **General Business**

*Council Appointments:* Mayor Hodnett stated the new interim councilmember appointees, if they accept, are: Christian Tyree – if you accept we will offer it to you, and you will have to get sworn in. Christian replied she will accept. The second one is Jeremiah Knowles – if you will accept. Jeremiah replied I will accept. All of those in favor of Christian, all stated I. All in favor of Jeremiah, all stated I.

*March Public Hearing Advertising:* Mayor Hodnett discussed we are going to have a public hearing in March on moving council membership from 6 to 4. A citizen asked why we are doing that and going from 6 to 4? Mayor Hodnett replied if you come down to Town Hall one day, I will be happy to have a conversation with you about it, but I don't want to discuss it in a meeting where we have so much business to cover. Mrs. Worley stated the main thing is to find out why it is happening; I know he said it is a thankless job, but why are we having such a turnover? Mayor Hodnett replied I am not going to debate it here tonight, we have other stuff going on, same thing come and talk to me and I'll be glad to have a conversation with you. There's a lot of reasons why. Mr. Blackstock stated I think this is why the majority of us are here, we shouldn't have to come down one on one and talk about it. Mayor Hodnett replied we are not going to keep going back and forth. We have too much business to cover tonight. We have an open door policy; anybody is welcome to come down and talk and discuss it. A few citizens replied you don't have an open door policy because the door is locked. Mayor Hodnett discussed that there is a difference between an open door policy and a locked door; we keep the door locked for security. Mr. Worley stated it is a police station. Mr. Merricks stated we have to stand out in the rain. Mayor replied they are not here 24/7. I am not going to debate this, we have a meeting to take care of. Mrs. Mayhew stated I heard a few minutes ago that the ratio for Council can be 4 to 11, and we have had multiple people apply for the 2 open positions that you just filled. If you have multiple people willing to apply, why are we cutting it back to 4, instead of going forward. Mayor Hodnett replied it is extremely difficult to keep people on council. Since I have been down here, 2 years going on 3, it has been 10-12 people through the doors, who serve a little time and leave. It is totally disrupting to council and trying to get business done. Mr. Brown asked do we know why they are leaving? Mayor Hodnett stated I am not going to keep going back and forth. This is our meeting and we are going to move forward. I told

you, come down here and I will be glad to talk to you. Mrs. Johnson replied but this is our town. Mayor Hodnett stated that's right, but this is our business meeting. Mr. Worley replied when you say our meeting, that means everybody in here right? Mayor Hodnett replied no, how many of you are on council, raise your hand. Mr. Brown stated I served for 6 years. Mayor replied well that doesn't count right now. Mr. Brown replied well how many have you served? Mayor replied 2 going on 3 years. Mr. Brown stated this is our town as much as it is yours; you're not a dictator and maybe you are the problem. Mayor Hodnett replied would you like to stay or leave? Mr. Brown stated you need to reexamine yourself. Mr. Merricks stated we need leadership. Mr. Blackstock stated if we leave, they win. Mr. Worley said you are sitting up there grinning Gary; you might as well be spitting in our face. Mayor Hodnett replied I'm not spitting in your face Steve. Mr. Worley replied I said you might as well be with that big grin of yours. Mayor Hodnett replied why, why am I spitting in your face. Mrs. Worley stated this is serious. Mayor Hodnett replied this is serious, I agree with you 100%. We have a agenda full of stuff to cover tonight. An open door policy is you can come in and talk any business with management; any grievances/problems you have, and they will talk to you and help you. A locked door is for security; you don't know how many threats the people in this room have had. Mike Jones and I got one the other day when we were out. Mrs. Worley stated what did the threat detail? Mrs. Johnson stated give an example. Mayor Hodnett replied the threat was worded "If someone from the town comes on my land, they will be met with a gun." Mrs. Johnson said so get a ring camera and post no-trespassing signs. Mayor Hodnett replied I told you we are not going to do this. I told you if you want to come down, I'll be glad to talk with you. We are not going to keep disrupting the meeting. Mr. Worley stated we are not trying to disrupt a meeting; we are just trying to have our say. The sign on the door says it was an open discussion; I read your sign before I came in here. Mayor Hodnett replied there is no open discussion. Mr. Worley said let me go read it again; if I'm wrong I'll tell you. Mr. Perdieu stated won't there be a public hearing at the March meeting about this? Mayor Hodnett replied yes, moving from 6 to 4 council members. It will be a public hearing where you can come in and voice your opinion all you want to, that is the proper place to come and do it. You will have three minutes to talk about why you want to or why you don't want to.

*School Zone Camera Ordinance:* Mayor Hodnett asked do I hear a motion to move forward with the school zone camera, to put it into play?

A motion was made to move forward with section 7-37 as presented.

Motion: Mr. Majure

Second: Mrs. Keese

Passage: Unanimous

*Grounds & Safety:* Mayor Hodnett stated we had the people from VRSA come down here and look at our grounds and they said we were lucky that the town hadn't been sued because it was a disaster. We are going to have to put in stairs going from one level to another and a handicap walkway, and make some changes down here because of our insurance. That is going to be coming up very soon.

*Dogwood Mobile Home Park SUP:* Mayor Hodnett stated the owner is going to apply for an SUP because he can't get 12 foot wide trailers anymore. He wants to put new trailers in there, so we are going to have to address an SUP for that. It isn't anything we have to address tonight, but it will be within 30-60 days. Mr. Poindexter asked backing up to our earlier conversation about mobile homes, that will be a separate SUP for each one? Mayor Hodnett replied yes, for each spot, because our ordinance states a defined footage between each mobile home. We will have to address it based on individuals.

## **Old Business**

*Nuisance Violations:* Mike Jones lengthily discussed about nuisance violations and getting residents to come into compliance. The purpose of a nuisance ordinance is to ensure things such as automobiles that are inoperable or have no engine aren't leaking oil and/or other fluids into the ground. It's designed for abandoned materials, trash, garbage, and sofas that are left out in the rain. We started last week issuing notices. We are not trying to cause anybody a problem, but it's to give them an opportunity to clean up their properties. Everyone is a taxpayer, and to live beside someone with a nuisance, your property will be devalued. I will work with everyone. Mike stated for anyone who doesn't know him, he holds the record of being Chief of Police more than anybody in the state of Virginia. My family has a long history in law enforcement. When I ask people to clean up, I explain, this is what you need to do. I will help you to the extent that the law allows me; I will work with you. Some people are elderly, and cannot clean it up. Some people have renters and don't know what to do. That does not make them immune to the law, but I will work with them. The Town ordinance was created by Town Council. During my time, I have had some of the worst things said to me and threatened against me, including being shot at. Not something you would expect from a civilized Christian person. The idea is to make the town more beautiful. I have tried to bring economic development prospects to the town. When they come here and see six cars and an engine in one yard, they ask themselves if they really want to move here and bring their family here. I am trying to gently get people to come into cooperation. I will work with them any way I can. We want voluntary compliance. The fine is \$25. If they refuse to do it, then a warrant is obtained for a class four misdemeanor, and the judge will order them to do it. If they refuse to do it, then the town will come in at the expense of the property owner and have the items remediated, but we don't want that. We want people to do what people should do to their property. Those who have a need for help due to health, we will do everything within the town's ability to do so. However, that's not the town's responsibility to spend your tax money on cleaning up other people's mess. It is truly a public safety thing. I have had rats run out of piled up bricks, a building that I touched and literally half of it fell down, that could have killed or hurt someone. We have children that run around and play. You can call me and I will help any way that I can. We're happy to answer any questions. It's not it's not at an intent to hurt anyone. It's an attempt to be fair and equitable and make it better for you. Mrs. Johnson asked if this includes the entire property or just the front where you can see? Mike replied it includes the entire property and I'd be happy to send anyone a copy of the ordinance. For example, certain things you can cover up, and that will make you in compliance. Part of my job is to educate people because most people don't go around reading ordinances for fun. What I do is I help explain what you can do. I do not go on anyone's property unless I have permission. A threat that was made that we will not tolerate was, if anyone came onto their property they would grab a rifle and go to the second part of their house and start shooting, not at me but anyone that walked or rode by. I am 100% by the book, and I will do everything I can to get voluntary compliance. Mr. Blackstock stated Mr. Jones it is good to see you at the meeting, where do you reside at this point? Mike replied I am not sure why that's material but I live in Midlothian, Virginia. Mr. Blackstock stated I came down a few months ago and got a FOIA of your contract. I have been down to the Town Council meetings and I have heard you talk over the speaker phone, and in that contract you make \$30,000 a year from the town, correct? Mike replied I will let the Mayor answer that. Mr. Blackstock stated that is your consultant fee, that is what is on the contract, and also seeing where you are the Public Safety Coordinator for the town. I went up and spoke with the Assistant Chief of the Fire Department and asked had they seen Mr. Jones, as one of the items on your list of consulting work that you have done is the 911 services and the Fire Department. Ed had told me that they had talked

with you one time during your tenure here while you was consulting for the town. I would think that in Midlothian, Virginia it would be hard to do much consulting for the Town of Hurt. I appreciate your love for the town and area, but it would look like to me that our Police Department would be more informed and better able to take care of that kind of business. Mike replied are you asking me a question or making a statement? Mr. Blackstock replied my question on your contract two of your responsibilities was 911 services and for the Fire Department services. How do you coordinate Fire Department services and 911 service for the town? Mike replied to answer that question, do you know what a consultant does? Mr. Blackstock replied they give advice, and they haven't received any at the Fire Department.

There was a brief discussion on the West Piedmont Planning District Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Flood Foundation Plan that involves the Fire Department; these have been neglected over the years. Mike stated he has personally worked with the Fire Department to get them more grant money. He discussed how he worked with the Fire Department on training and getting more equipment. For someone to say I am not doing my job, I keep record of the phone calls that I get day and night to show what I do. I have told any and everyone they can call me at anytime day or night. So you will know as to whether I can do consulting from Midlothian, I worked from Philadelphia to Savannah with cities as big as Baltimore to towns as small as Hurt. I will come down here whether it is day or night to assist with things, work on getting grant money, also assisting with water and sewer. All of these things involve public safety. I bring resources here that most of you don't know anything about regarding public safety resources, architects and engineers, people who specialize in certain types of events, so that we have a safe town. If you want to know something ask me, I will give you my personal cell phone, you can call me anytime of the day or night; should the county or the town need anything else, I have amazing number of contacts across the country. I bring that to the Town of Hurt at a much discounted rate than what everybody else gets. Do I make \$30,000 a year? Yes. Do you get \$30,000 worth of work? Yes, much more than that. Why? Because I love this town, I want to see it succeed, and I want to help each and every one of you. In case of a disaster this is why we have the West Piedmont Planning District's Hazard Mitigation Plan. Hurt was left out, but we are not anymore. Mr. Blackstock stated you said on your social media page that Hurt was one of the safest towns in the state of Virginia. Mike replied, absolutely and it is. Mr. Blackstock replied if our town is one of the safest, then why do we have this door locked? Mike briefly discussed the importance of keeping our door locked. Mike asked do you keep your home locked or your car? Unlike the resident who left that gun unlocked in their car, which is stupid. That's also a civil liability. One of the things I do is I do what's called "standards of practice." Standards of practice for government facilities which cover state, local, and federal buildings. The practice is like the Mayor so eloquently said – we have an open door policy, but an open door policy doesn't mean anyone could just walk in here. Your documents, information of personal value for you, are stored in this this building. Do you want those stolen for identity theft? Absolutely not. We lock these doors because people have threatened to hurt our Clerk, the Police officers, and me. They are not paid to get threatened or hurt. I came down here and witnessed a person who was angry over getting their water cut off because they refused to pay, and I've never heard such cursing. Now, we have a duty under OSHA to protect our employees. OSHA requires us locking the door as a standard of practice. It's also the standard of information protection. It's also the standard for protecting the funds that are kept here. It's also part of the insurance requirements placed upon us by our insurer. We are working on trying to get an overhead so that you don't have to stand in the rain or snow. We care about you all, that's why I have been in law enforcement for 42 years. Kim Johnson stated I do appreciate you presenting to us the large picture of everything that you do and how you do it. I think that gives everybody a deeper understanding as to

where you're coming from. I look at the surrounding communities and their police stations and government buildings and they are not locked. My house is locked because it is a private entity. Other public entities are not locked. Which brings me to my next question, if the problem is safety, and the fear of someone coming in here, because we don't have an officer in here at all times and before I proceed, I want it to be understood that I don't expect the two we have to be here 24/7. That is unreasonable, but my question is have you explored the possibility of a third officer to have coverage here every day and every night, and if not, have you explored the possibility of contracting with Altavista and have somebody from over there cover when our two here cannot cover? Mrs. Worley said something similar to a resource officer. Mike discussed the importance of mutual aid and what it was. Mutual Aid is allowing us to have this law enforcement program where we have mutual aid agreements with the counties, state police and other entities that in the event that we do not have police officers here, which we don't at times, they will come in and provide coverage. Police officers are expensive, we have looked, we have even looked for volunteers. A lot of departments are short handed, and we are not going to work our two 14 hours a day; it's not safe. We are one of the safest communities and what do we do to stay safe? It's called prevention. Mr. Worley asked so you work with Altavista? Mike replied I speak with Tommy Merricks on a regular basis and I was Chief there. Mr. Worley asked is their Town Hall locked? Mr. Merricks stated my cousin works there, I can walk in there anytime I want to. Mike replied you can only walk into the lobby; you can not walk into the manager's office or the police. Mr. Merricks stated that girl let me in. Mike replied yes, she let you in. Mrs. Merricks and Mr. Merricks discussed how it is an unfriendly position. It used to be where you could come down, open the door, hand your bill, and talk with the clerk and now we have lost that. It is not right that people have to come down here and wait in the rain for the door to be unlocked. What about the handicapped and elderly, now we have to wait for someone to come to the door. Most of the time you've got Jason sitting in the office. Mike replied well most of the time Jason is not sitting there. These people here, it only takes a second for a nutjob with a gun to walk in. What is coming, is there is going to be a button that you press and a person recognizes you and buzzes you in, like the schools. Is that too much to offer these people; do you want them to get home at the end of the day? Mr. Merricks replied well they don't check us when we come in now. Mike replied they don't need to check you because they know you. Mr. Worley stated if somebody wants to come down and threaten these people or Council, a locked door is not going to stop them. They are going to shoot through the window and come on in. If it's that much danger, put them behind locked doors. Mike replied the world has gone nuts, and these people have the right to be protected under OSHA. When this is done you walk up, you press the button and you'll be buzzed and you walk right in. Mike briefly discussed that we don't want to inconvenience you but we want you to be safe. Mr. Haynes said you already stated that this is the safest town; am I right did you say that? Mike replied yes, statistically. Mr. Haynes replied statistics say this is a very safe community or town, but still it is so safe, we lock it out. I have been here for 87 years; I was born here, and I have never heard of anything going on in the Town of Hurt. Is this a violent place? Mike replied no this is not a violent place. Mr. Haynes well you keep saying all these people are going to come in here and start shooting, I'm confused. Mike replied I just had someone threaten to shoot up the town to me. Mrs. Merricks stated well that's not here in the Town Hall. Mike replied and you don't think that they won't come down here? Mrs. Worley stated well you are not here; this is not your office. Mike replied its not me I'm worried about, its our staff. Several residents asked did we catch the person who made the threat. Mike replied we are handling it. Mrs. Merricks stated then he is out of the picture. Mrs. Keesee spoke up and said that is one person.

Mike stated when you look at safety, the best thing about safety is prevention. That's why we put locks on the doors and blinds on our windows. That's the standard of practice. I'm not apologizing for what the architectural standards for government buildings are. Mrs. Merricks replied I think you're doing most of the big city stuff. I'm not saying things can't happen in this little town. I was a teacher a long time and my life was out there too. We've been there, we know what you're talking about. This is our little town and we feel pretty safe here. I'm not asking for someone to come in here and shoot these people, of course not, but you're turning something into what it's not. Mayor Hodnett stated you say you feel pretty safe. Our police are working cases that involve the Feds and on down. You have no idea what is in this town right now, while you're sitting down here. The cases that they are working on, the drugs, and the illegals. It's everything that New York City has, it's in our town right now. They're working on cases that they cannot talk to you about. The DEA is in here. Every agency that is involved in any law enforcement has been in and out of this town in the last six to eight months because of what's going on in it. That's why what's going on here is going on. I can't make it any simpler than that. Mrs. Merricks stated well I can still say that I feel pretty safe. Mayor Hodnett replied you feel safe up until the point something happens to you. Mike discussed I will not apologize for keeping staff or you safe when you come in here. You'll see when the renovations are finished. That it will be as comfortable as it can be for the people. We love to talk to you. You are the people that we serve, but the people who serve you have to meet that level of protection. I can promise you it will be an easy fix. I believe in your safety. Mr. Blackstock stated that you can have a open door with a foyer and just lock the doors. Mike replied if you want to add triple the cost and you've got to make sure you meet architectural standards. We are looking at doing a push button buzz-in. We'd love to have a new Town Hall, but we're not gonna spend that money. We would rather spend the money on you guys. Mr. Worley asked a push bottom lock, how does that work? Mike briefly discussed how it would operate, with pushing a button and a camera being out there and in the clerk's office to see who it is and allow you in; 9 times out of 10, they recognize you anyway, one of the benefits of living in a small town where everybody knows everybody. Mr. Worley stated well maybe yall should keep the door unlocked until yall get that in place. Mike replied no, I'm sorry but what I think you're doing is irresponsible. A resident asked how long do you think it will take to get this in place? Mike replied it won't take long to install and get the parts in. Mayor Hodnett replied we haven't gotten the parts ordered yet. We have to do the asbestos test first before we can do any renovations. Kim Johnson commented about her being a teacher and having to do lockdowns, but if someone has the intent to hurt or harm, they will shoot right through the windows at the teachers and kids. Are you going to put in bullet proof windows? Mr. Merricks stated you might as well have metal detectors too. You don't check them for gun, knife, or weapon now so what good is the door locked? You can walk in and start shooting just like they do at schools and different places. Mike responded I'd love to have a lengthy discussion with you on that, but it's called levels of protection. First off, most people are safe here but as far as having metal protection that requires three people. We are not going to put three people out here on the payroll. Mr. Harding stated I will make you a deal, no person in here personally knows more about guns, weapons, rifles, pistols more than I do. I'll come down here everyday and stand guard with you if you think somebody is going to hurt them and use my guns and stand right at the front of that door, and take less than minimum wage to do that. Do you want to hire me? Mike replied I don't do the hiring. Glenn Mitchell spoke up and stated I've heard all of this here tonight. I can't believe having to wait to open one little lock is going to make everyone think they are going to drown in the rain. My wife worked down here years ago and they had money back there and she was scared to death because she had nobody here. I don't want to come down here one day and

look around and see Kelsie over in that office beat all to pieces or cut all to pieces or even shot. That lock on that door is a minor thing if you're looking to save somebody's life. It is not going to hurt anybody to stand out there and wait a minute for someone to open the door. You don't know what people are going to do; it's different than what it was Steve when you and I were growing up. It wasn't like this; people are crazy and they don't care. They will shoot you for looking at them wrong. Mr. Worley stated I agree with you 100% but that person you are talking about, that locked door will not stop them. Mr. Mitchell replied it may not, but it may help save somebody's life. Gary sits back there with a gun, somebody could run in there and kill Kelsie and then kill Gary and then get everything in here. Mr. Worley stated all these people that you are talking about, a locked door is not going to stop them. Mike replied when you walk into Altavista you turn and see the receptionists, who are behind bulletproof glass. Mrs. Worley stated well that's what we should have in front of the ladies. Mayor Hodnett stated I've got a Clerk sitting right here crying, because of this conversation going on right here. She has been threatened, like you can't believe, you are willing to put her life in jeopardy, and she is sitting here crying. Ill be lucky if she shows up to work tomorrow. Well done. Mr. Worley asked the people that are threatening this girl, have they been caught? Mayor replied no, they have more rights than you and I have. Mrs. Merricks asked have yall ever thought about putting a stamp and envelope in with the water bill? Mayor replied you can go online and pay it with a credit card. Mrs. Merricks stated if you did that then nobody has to drive down here or see anybody, they can just mail the water bill in, just like we can mail the tax bill. Mayor Hodnett stated you can call and give it to her over the phone as well.

Mike discussed the new buzzing security that we have in the works. He discussed how he wants everyone to be safe, including staff and the residents, and that he will not apologize for protecting them. We want to prevent crime. Mayor Hodnett stated we are working trying to get more safety in the Town Hall, because government buildings are having issues everywhere. Mr. Majure asked does everyone feel like they have voiced their opinion enough on this matter, because if so I would like to see us move forward with the agenda as we have discussed this enough. Mr. Perdieu discussed that the locking of the door is a temporary measure to protect our staff based off threats we have received in the recent past, not something that happened 10 years ago. Some of this was here recently. We are trying to up the security in the building to not only protect the cash, documents, staff and whatever else may be stored here, but to also make it more user friendly for the public. With the door being locked we understand that it defeats the purpose of having a Town Hall. Keeping our staff safe is a top priority. Money will always be an ongoing issue, but we are trying to make it more user friendly and allow residents to be able to walk in once we get the security measures in place. The citizens agreed that they want to know what is going on in the town and that we could have saved a discussion had we just said the town is working on getting some safer measures in Town Hall.

*Special Elections:* Mayor Hodnett discussed that the special elections take place in November; anyone who wishes to run for them can.

*Food Truck Ordinances:* Mayor Hodnett discussed that he has not spoken with the new RAGE (Staunton River) Plastics company down here, but we are bringing food trucks here in the town. We will have some sitting at the plaza and some at SRP since we don't have restaurants. We're going to do this for your convenience if you want to grab a sandwich, and for the people at SRP so they can come out in the parking lot and don't have to leave.



Mayor Hodnett stated the Memorandum from SRIFFA, do I hear a motion to pass as is?

A motion was made to pass the Memorandum as is.

Motion: Mrs. Keesee

Second: Mr. Poindexter

Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett stated the water cutoff 10-day notice – we added at the bottom that you have to pay with cash or a check. Based on state standards, you cannot cut water off until after 90 days.

A motion was made to pass the addition to our water cutoff notice as presented.

Motion: Mr. Majure

Second: Mr. Poindexter

Passage: Unanimous

### **Reports from Staff**

Treasurer Report: Mrs. Brumfield reported we currently have \$781,523.59 of that is \$526,606 in Federal ARPA funds. That leaves us with an operating budget of \$254,917.59. Councilmembers, everyone should have received a budget vs actual for the end of January. Also you have received the December 2022 and January 2023 check list; these are the payments that were made during those months, any questions?

No comment. For record keeping, I need each councilmember to sign off on those checks that are being cleared from the bank each month. Brumfield stated all the year-end reporting with the federal and state taxes, closing out the year, W2s, and 1099's has all been filed.

Clerk Report: Kelsie Anderson-no report. Mayor Hodnett stated you guys might get mad and come down here and think that we're not doing things and think that we don't have your best interest at heart, but we absolutely 110% do. There are certain things that we cannot discuss with the public because they are confidential. I wish we could tell you everything, but I'm sorry we can't. If you want to know everything, get on council and we will be able to discuss it and tell you, but everything can't get out in the public or it could blow the deals.

Public Works: Joseph Smith reported we got a call the other day about the culvert down at the bottom of Spring Street and West Spencer; I went out and there were a couple of knee-sized holes. The other side looked like someone drove over it and cracked the pavement. I checked the pipe and contacted VDOT; the next day they checked out the whole pipe and put stone around the one side. They say this was caused by groundhogs. They moved the tree piles down by the trestle back and out of the way, and we moved the tree that fell down over by 103 West Hurt, and pushed that back. I've done the normal routine inspections on the sewer pump stations. The generator light was flashing down at the pump station, and it was due to water being on the inside, so cleaned it up and it was running properly. Also a school bus was turning around at the end of Spring Street, and I guess when they were doing a K turn it kind of pushed the fire hydrant over sideways. I called a company and they are going to come out and repair the hydrant. It's not as simple as standing the hydrant back up; they have to dig down and make sure nothing was busted or the lines ruined. Also I am still working on identifying everyone's water lines, so if anyone could take a picture of the valve coming in their house that will help me know if it is copper, plastic, or what other material. Mr. Fore stated it is a mandate that we have to prove that the Town of Hurt has no lead in its system. It is a requirement of Federal law. We have filled out the application and we are waiting to see if we get \$250,000 from the state that will allow someone to come in and dig these holes for the people that don't let us know what kind of line they have. Some people have already stated that they don't want us on their property, but we have to identify what it is. When we can't, we will have to state on the paper that the homeowner won't allow us on the property and then hand it over to the EPA – most of them now carry guns. We wouldn't come on your property but let someone

else handle that. We also got a call from 911 that the pumping station was on fire. When we got down there, nothing was on fire; everything was working. The three wires on the top of the building – when they were repaired a few years back, they were put in reversed. The copper has to be on top. What happens is the aluminum, when it gets wet, starts to corrode. It falls down and eats the copper and corrodes the copper. The copper rod was corroded and so I cut that off and replaced it. They said we shouldn't have any more problems. Thank goodness it wasn't on fire, but a resident did call and say they had seen sparks. Mr. Fore states he has been in the water business for 42 years and it has been a pleasure working with Joe and training him. His license is hanging up on the wall there and this has been the first water license in the Town of Hurt in thirty-some years. He goes above and beyond; he met a lady this evening before the meeting, helping her with a water leak. He is 24/7 for this town, and we've got a great guy here.

### **Police Department: Feb. 2023 Report**

#### Calls for Service

Civil Complaints - 3  
Suspicious Person - 0  
Public Service - 5  
Vandalism/Destruction of Property - 1  
Breaking & Entering - 1  
Suspicious Vehicle - 0  
Domestic - 1  
Embezzlement - 1  
Disorderly Conduct - 1  
Assist Other Agencies - 0  
Mutual Aid (LE) - 6  
Traffic Stops - 12  
Sex Offenses - 0  
Motor Vehicle Accidents - 0  
Animal Complaints - 0  
Drug Offense - 1  
Mental Subject - 2  
Weapon Violation - 1  
Runaway - 1  
Disabled Vehicle - 1  
Trespassing - 0  
Family Offense (Nonviolent) - 1  
All other Offenses - 1

#### Other

Miles Driven - 1733  
Training - none to report  
Assist Other Town Departments - 0  
Use of Force - 0  
Department/Officer Complaints – 0

### Department Updates

Jason stated we are here to protect you and keep you safe; if the door is locked, knock on it and come on in and we will help you in any way we can, or at least point you in the right direction if I can't. The school zone will run for 30 days and then start sending out warnings. Mike stated we were the first in Virginia to start that process, so it shows you that we are staying ahead of the game and looking out for the children's safety.

Mayor Hodnett stated that Mike's salary has been questioned and questioned, \$30,000 a year. He has saved us a lot of money over the years (more than it has cost us), and brings much value to the town.

Public Safety: Mike Jones stated the worst mistake you can make is by not asking me. I will answer every question at any time day or night. I will fight for you even if you are mad at me.

Mayor Hodnett stated thank you for coming, we are adjourned at 8:45 PM.

*Kelsie Anderson*

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Kelsie Anderson, Clerk

*Gary Hodnett*

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Gary Hodnett, Mayor