

Town of Hurt Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2021
Hurt, Virginia

The Town of Hurt Council members held a meeting on Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at Hurt Town Hall. The meeting opened at 6:02 PM by Mayor Gary Hodnett with a quorum present.

Roll Call

Member's present were Mr. Collin Adams, Mrs. Shirley Barksdale-Hill, Mrs. Kathy Keesee, and Mr. Steve Watson.

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

Motion: Mr. Watson

Second: Mrs. Keesee

Passage: Unanimous

Council entered closed session at 6:05 PM.

Council exited closed session approximately 6:50 PM.

A motion was made that only personnel and prospective business matters were discussed during closed session, as required by VA FOIA § 2.2-3711 A (1)(3)(5).

Motion: Mr. Watson

Second: Mrs. Keesee

Passage: Unanimous

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation: Mrs. Keesee

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Hodnett.

Replacement Open Seat

A motion was made that Donney Johnson fill the open council seat on an interim basis until a special election can be held to elect November 2021 to fill the seat.

Motion: Mrs. Keesee

Second: Mrs. Clay

Passage: Unanimous

Gary asked Donney if he would accept the nomination to fill out the term for the remainder of the seats term until November of this year? Donney stated before he accepted, he would like to speak with Gary confidentially after the meeting. John Eller stepped in and stated that either Donney you would accept, or you withdraw, Donney stated he wanted to accept.

Gary asked Vincent and Tommy if they knew The Town was looking for people to work with Council on committees and that The Town would like for them to take the time to be the Citizen Advisory committee and work directly with Council and the committees, Gary stated The Town would really appreciate if they would consider doing that and coming to the meetings and stating their voices, ideas, and thoughts just like a council member does. The only thing that you guys would not have is a vote

when it came down to voting. Gary stated but you are heard, and your ideas and suggestions are worked with. Gary stated that they have his number, and all the council was impressed with them and that their interviews went, and The Town would love for them to consider that offer and that we hoped they will.

Tommy asked the question to Gary if she were to be apart of the Citizen Advisory Committee would she be apart of closed session, Gary stated that it would only be at open session.

New Clerk and Treasurer

A motion was made to appoint Kelsie as the Clerk and social media admin and Ellen as the Treasurer.

Motion: Mrs. Keesee

Second: Mrs. Clay

Passage: Unanimous

Gary stated Kelsie will be appointed Clerk and Ellen the Treasurer.

Solar Ordinance

Gary opened discussion on the Solar Ordinances.

A citizen expressed it was their first time to a council meeting and asked if Gary would explain what the solar ordinance was. Gary stated he would let Attorney Eller answer the question incase any legal questions came up.

Attorney Eller explained the Solar Ordinance to Mrs. Gibson.

Attorney Eller stepped in explaining the Solar Ordinance for the Town of Hurt's mirror Pittsylvania county. Small residential areas up to 5 acres are 40 kilowatts per home. Large private systems are 40 kilowatts, large industrial scales over 5 acres are megawatts.

The standard solar panel set up for a home is mounted on the roof and cannot hang off the eaves. The ground mounded systems are strongly regulated, and the builder is required to have a bond large enough to decommission the solar farm and remove it upon completion of its life cycle.

Tim Dudley ask Mayor Hodnett if the ordinance is on the Town Website? Mayor Hodnett states that it is on the Town Website.

Steve Watson adds that we are not recommending residents to get the solar system on their homes.

Brooke Gibson, a citizen in the audience asked if a license contractor would be installing the solar system?

Gary states that they would have to be licensed since they will be working with power lines.

Eller responded they will have to have a building permit and no rezoning permit is necessary. He states you can go online that there are lots of companies that have 30–40-year contracts.

Collin asked does the Town provide/ do the paperwork for the residences purchasing solar panels?

Tommy McCune asked if this was part of the planning commission? John Eller commented it is part of the agreements/contract responsibility.

Closed session approval for administrative salaries changes effective April 1, 2021

A motion was made for approval of salary increases for the clerk, treasurer, and public works coordinator.

Motion: Mr. Watson

Second: Mr. Adams

Passage: unanimous

Public Hearing Recommendations

Collin Adams recommended the approval of the draft ordinances as presented adjusting with an increase on the small-scale solar facility compacity limit from 25 kilowatts to 40 kilowatts.

Motion: Mr. Adams

Second: Mrs. Keesee/ Mr. Watson

Passage: unanimous

Consent Agenda

A motion was made to approve the minutes from February 2nd and February the 15th with no changes.

Motion: Mrs. Keesee

Second: Mrs. Clay

Passage: Unanimous

Scott Wickham, CPA with Robinson, Farmer, Cox, and Associates

Scott presented the audit for year end June 30th, 2020, summarizing the financial status of the Town of Hurt, booklets were provided regarding the facial year ending. In closing Wickham stated the report was delayed due to Covid pandemic, installation of the new software, and the staff turnover, the Town came through successfully and is in sound financial condition with fund balances and no debt.

Gary's comment to the auditor "thank you for your time and patience".

Report from Legal Counsel-Attorney Eller

John said that state parameters are in place due to Covid and must be followed for 2020 delinquent utility debt collection. The collection before covid during of 2017-19 delinquent balances is in question. He will follow up with additional information.

Reports from Staff

Administrative: Ellen Brumfield, Treasurer reported the Town of Hurt's balance in the general account. Delinquent payment collection on property tax is \$199,866.44. The collection percentage is 87.60% for the year 2020. The Town's monthly expenses are paid up to date. The basic life insurance for the Town employee's is being reviewed due to what appears to be a discrepancy with the employee's portion of the premium. The VRS hybrid 457 plan enrollments for April 1 are complete and the Town's payroll is running smoothly.

Public Works

Public Works: Colleen McGrath reported water billing went out on February 16th, 2021. As of today, the Town has received 65% of bills due (11 have paid in full that had large balances due). The lawn mower has been repaired, and I will be cutting the Town's grass soon. This Friday March 26th I will be riding with Altavista trash can pick up. Bitter Creek will start installing the cellular read meters this coming week, and we need to purchase expansion wheels with a cost of \$24 each (this will be an addition to the

\$14,000 installation of the meters). The Town will have 260 meters to install with another 100 on the way.

Mr. Watson asked is the \$14,000 part of the installation and the parts?

Colleen replied the \$14,000 is not apart of the install agreements.

Tommy McCune asked installing the water meters will this be an extra charge to the residents?

Colleen replied there will be no additional cost to the residents.

Mayor Hodnett replied the Town owns the meters, the Care Funds paid for the meters and there has been no cost to the residents for purchasing or installation of the meters.

Police Department Report

Chief Jason Lovelace reported that the call for service:

Civil Complaints-3, Suspicious Person-2, Public Service-1, Vandalism/Destruction of Property-2, Larceny-1, Suspicious Vehicle-1, Arrest-1, Alarms-3, Assist other Agencies-1, Mutual Aid (LE)-0, Traffic Stops-0, Sex Offences-0, Motor Vehicle Accidents-0, Forging Uttering-0

Other: Miles Driven-628, Training-0, Assist other Town Departments-1

Use of Force-0

Department/Officer Complaints-0

Department Updates: Chief Lovelace states that he is in the process of doing background checks on the applicants that have applied for the Police Officer Position. Lovelace states he has been in contact with Lisa Moore, she advised that she would be interested in beautification of the sign at the new bridge.

Mr. Adams asked about the PD applicants, Chief Lovelace responded he is waiting for the previous agencies to respond.

Tommy McCune questioned is the Town going to be hiring a full-time dispatcher? Chief Lovelace responded we share one dispatcher, Fire and Emergency use a different dispatcher.

Public Safety/ Assistant Town Manager- Mike Jones

Mike Jones reported that the Town survived another Covid case, the application process for Federal CARE Act Funding is in the works, this is in the early stages. Jones states that he is also working on the employee policies for the Town. He had his first meeting with the Town's staff earlier today with focus on workplace security.

Mr. Watson asked Jones if he would get him the amounts from the CARE Funds when he receives them.

Reports from Membership, Boards, and Commissions

Administrative: Kathy Keesee reported she wants to get pictures of the Town Council and a brief bio next week for the Town Website.

Mayor Hodnett replied that we are working on getting additional lights.

Mr. Adams said that trash is a big problem in the Town and wants to know if we can put up signs regarding littering.

Mayor Hodnett responded that we are exploring all options to stop this littering.

Mayor Hodnett Closing Comments

Mayor Hodnett the closing remarks in his “state of the town address”, “we must remember to watch closely and listen diligently to everyone, because there are people who still need our help. There are some among us who have struggled and received little to no support”. It is incumbent upon all of us to make sure no one is left behind as our Town moves forward. Our community is incomplete without the total sum of its parts strong. We must work together and walk together to preserve what we all love, our beautiful home “Hurt”. You can read the entire “state of the town” address on the Town Website under the Government tab, listed as Mayor’s Office.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35

____Kelsie Sligh_____
Clerk

__Gary Hodnett_____
Mayor