

Town of Hurt, Virginia
Council Meeting Minutes
November 21, 2023

Hurt Town Council held its monthly business meeting Tuesday, November 21, 2023, at the Hurt Town Hall. The meeting opened at 6:00pm by Mayor Gary Hodnett with a quorum present.

Roll Call

Members present: Mr. Gary Poindexter, Mr. Bob Majure, Mr. Steve Worley, Mr. Paul Johnson and Mrs. Kathy Keesee

Members Absent- Mr. Michael Blackstock

Closed Session

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. Poindexter

Second: Mr. Majure

Passage: Unanimous

Council entered closed session at 6:02pm and exited closed session at approximately 7:10 pm.

A motion was made to return to open session and to certify that only personnel, real estate, 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 Gary Hodnett

Welcome/Opening Remarks

Mayor Hodnett stated I want to thank everybody for coming on this rainy and cold evening.

Additions to the Agenda

Mayor Hodnett added a request from Rocco Blackstock, and we will bring that up when we get to the business section.

Opening of Public Comments

No comment

General Business

Mayor Hodnett stated Rocco Blackstock did the air conditioning upstairs and is going to do the air conditioning downstairs as well. He went ahead based on the schedule we had given him and we fell behind upstairs, and we fell a little behind downstairs as well. He purchased both air conditioners and he has asked that we go ahead and pay him for the second air conditioner for the basement so that he doesn't have to keep holding out paper. I don't know how you guys feel about it, I think we probably should. John brought up a point that maybe we want to ask him to bring the air conditioner down here, so if we are paying for it we have it in our possession and have it here when he got ready to put it in.

How do you guys feel about that? Mr. Johnson stated he is good with paying for it, and either bringing it here or taking pictures of it to show proof that way if something should happen to it, its documented that its on their property. Mr. Poindexter asked if we have a suitable place to store it in the basement until its installed or in the other building? Mayor Hodnett replied we can put it across the street but I'd vote to just put it in the basement, that way we have it right here and don't have to handle it. He's not asking for it all up front, he's asking for half now and then other half after installation. Mr. Worley asked if it was just for the unit? Mayor Hodnett replied yeah just for the unit. Mr. Worley stated well he is under contract to do the work. If he keeps the unit it is his responsibility. If we bring the unit down here in our possession, and it gets damaged or it gets hurt, then we're responsible. I think all of us know Rocco, he already has a signed contract, just let him be responsible for the unit if something happened to it while he's got it, then he is on the hook. If we bring it down here and it gets damaged then we might be on the hook. Attorney Eller stated we don't have any insurance that would cover it? Mrs. Brumfield replied if we added that portion in because I have increased by \$200,000 for these renovations with the property value, that didn't include anything in the basement. The basement has not been added. Mayor Hodnett stated that would be something that we basically purchased by paying him half of it, we would have ownership of it, right John? Attorney Eller replied that is the idea, get possession of it since you paid for it. Mrs. Brumfield replied I can check on that since its partial ownership. Mr. Poindexter asked if we have any kind of time frame of when it will be installed and operating? Mayor Hodnett replied it will be however fast Jason, Joe, and I can do the work in the basement other than what we are going to sub out. We are ready to start ASAP. Attorney Eller stated the main thing is we know its in existence and you can identify where it is. It doesn't have to be in the basement, but my main thought was what if you have to move it further, where is it. Mr. Johnson replied general consensus with construction as long as is the contractors provide documentation, pictures showing where it has model, serial numbers, everything with their responsibility, and for payment. Mayor Hodnett responded we can always go up and take a picture of it and write the serial number down. Mr. Johnson stated and like Steve said just let him store it until he's ready to put it in. Mayor Hodnett stated he sent me the full price with installation, I think it is \$11,000 and change. We are talking about half of that. Mr. Majure asked if he was asking us to sign work complete? Mayor Hodnett replied no.

A motion was made to pay half of the \$11,000 for Blackstock heating and cooling air conditioning for our basement and asked that a serial number and pictures for documentation of its existence.

Motion: Mr. Majure

Second: Mr. Johnson

Passage: Unanimous

Land Purchase Contract

Mayor Hodnett stated this is coming out of closed of a land purchase contract, John do we need to discuss that or go for a motion? Attorney Eller replied I think you should tell the terms of the contract, that we are buying the 26 acres of land for \$80,000 in order to save \$120,000 on the water project. Mayor Hodnett replied actually \$280,000. Mr. Majure stated this is part of phase 2 water project., in order to decrease the amount of contaminants in the water system we are actually going to come across the railroad track on the southern end of town as the cheapest option for us to get in compliance with Virginia Department of Health. This is part of our phase 2 plan, purchasing this land is actually going to be \$208,000 cheaper for us. The plan is to spend \$80,000 to purchase this 20 acres, and then we will use that to do an open cut to place a pipe for that water or underneath the railroad tracks to come across and finish that connection. That's something I'm in favor of. Is there any other discussion town council members? Mr. Poindexter stated well for the sake of clarity, may not be familiar, the approximately

\$200,000 saving is over time that is less money we would have to borrow to complete phase 2 and therefore smaller loan to service and therefore less money that would have to be in the water budget over the next several years to service that loan. The benefit is the 20 some acres of land for the Town to decide at some point in the future of what to do with but it gives us the right away, the easement that we've had a very difficult time of getting. It has taken us months to get to the point where we could find a way to get across Main Street and the railroad without it costing more. It is a sizeable out lay at the moment, but over time the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. Obviously, the phase two of the water project has got to go forward to meet Health Department requirements. Perhaps not everyone's familiar with the scope of that, that involves pumps and control systems at the pump house. It involves a aeration device at the tank and it involves the line we are talking about coming down hill and under main street to increase the volume and pressure all along main street for current and future customers. I don't see another good way to do it and it's the thing that we can't afford not to do is my take on it. Mr. Johnson stated to probably put it in perspective and Joe can correct me if I'm wrong and my understanding of it. Anytime you have water that does not flow, you have microbials that can grow, they contaminate your water and for us to be in compliance with the state, the way you approach that is to make a loop that will actually flow, you will be able to agitate the water at the tank, so it's constantly in movement with the new pumps and the VFD's, it allows one on efficiency of electrical, it operates those at an efficiency with the pressure required. They will ramp up and down as needed versus just running wide open all the time or not running at all, but it will also allow us to get on this side of the tracks so as we want to grow our footprint or bring in business here, then we got a 12 inch water main out here to feed anything that goes up Prospect. Mr. Poindexter stated in addition to that if there was a failure or malfunction in the tank we don't have to take the system down because the pumps are self controlled. These automated devices will maintain proper pressure irrespective of the tank. We've never had that type of feature before. That's a huge advantage. Mayor Hodnett stated the real advantage is we are paying .25 cent on the dollar for this project. That is a big plus, any more discussion? No comment. A motion was made to ratify the contract and discussed for the Durham property in closed session in the amount of \$80,000.

Motion: Mr. Poindexter

Second: Mrs. Keesee

Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett stated we will move forward with that.

Staff Raises

Mayor Hodnett stated December is always the time of year we talk about staff raises. We are going to do this as a general, we have parity with our pay scale here so that everybody makes the same thing, so that no one individual feels like that they are more important than anybody else. Bob, I think you started the conversation. Mr. Majure stated as part of the budget that was passed this year, we incorporated an 8% raise as what we were putting in our budget. That's something I'm in favor of and enacting for all of our employees at this time. Mr. Worley stated I don't mean the bad guy I guess in this situation, but I think everybody knows that our economy has pretty much been tanked and everything is on the increase. Heat and oil is up about 7%, food and groceries are up about 4%, and all of us have to pay it. I wish that everybody could get a 8% raise every year, but in the real world that doesn't happen. I'm not saying that the Hurt employees are not worth it, I'm just saying I don't know where the funds will come from, other than increasing taxes on the citizens. I wish I got a 8% raise, but I won't be getting one. I realize we have to try and keep the employees here, and I think all of them are doing a good job, I do, but having said that I wonder where the funds will come from without increasing the taxes on the

people that are already struggling to make ends meet. In my own case, I can't depend on a 8% for the year, so I have to make do with what I do have. Sometimes we have to make decisions that are unfavorable or undesirable in order to make ends meet, so that's pretty much where I stand. Mayor Hodnett asked do you have a thought of another number as opposed to 8% or are you just saying no to raises? Mr. Worley replied last year was 8% right? Mayor Hodnett replied it was 8% last year and put 8% in the budget this year. Mr. Worley replied so that is 16% in two years. At my employment where I was at I was lucky to get about 6% in three years, and again I am not saying that the employees for the Town of Hurt do not deserve a 8% raise, I am not saying that, what I am saying is can the Town of Hurt afford that. If it can afford the 8% raise without making the people of the Town of Hurt so call suffer from it that's one thing, but we know in the future the citizens of Hurt are going to be dealing with water situations, that is inevitable that's going to happen. The tax situation, we might have a little control over that if we make due until we get on our feet a little bit more with what we have. I guess as far as an 8%, raise or a figure I would say maybe for now just leave it as it is and I'm just one guy, I understand that.

Mr. Poindexter stated I will weigh in the annual pattern to that before we try to make a decision. Each year in the Spring is when we draft, develop, propose, and go through the motions of passing the budget for the upcoming fiscal year to begin July 1. It is at that point that we decide on an amount to budget for. What I am saying is we passed a budget probably in May or June that includes a 8% raise increase, but with a delayed effective date in January, so where we would pay for it has already been in the budget that we have already passed based on the projected revenues of this falls tax billing cycle. Now the question beyond that is how many years is that amount sustainable. That is a conversation for this coming Spring when we go to develop the budget again, then we are going to have to discuss what kind of percentages. We did 8% the time before last because that was national inflation rate, we were all seeing the spike in everything. It was a little more cost of living much less anything meritorious for their performance. We continued that this year on both the basis of cost of living and merit. Now this coming Spring, we have to have that conversation every Spring just like were talking about everything else. I think the question tonight is how much of that 8% to actually do January 1, 2024. I can't imagine not doing any, I don't think I could quite have the vocabulary to what that would feel like if I were an employee to not do anything at all. I think we need to do something. I am not sure where we need to set the number, but we have already passed a budget based on projected tax revenue that's just been billed and in the process of coming in between now and December 5th. That's where the money is for now, continuing beyond that, that's a topic for next budget year. I can't imagine doing less than something on the scale of four or five. These people who have bent over backwards. They've been spread extremely thin, and have dealt with some extremely adverse circumstances here in the building. Better than 90% of people in this town are likable, reasonable, congenial people like us, but unfortunately, they have had to deal with the opposite end of the spectrum and have basically been treated like dirt, and we all know that when you deal with the public that is part of the job. There is such a paradigm shift in the program that's being run here now than what was here a years ago. I don't see where there is anything we have to talk about, I think we have to do something in order to take care of good people and keep them. Its unconscionable not to do something.

Mrs. Keesee stated that's my take on it, I feel like since we have budgeted and conversed about this several times while the budget was going on, I see no reason why we can't go ahead and do the 8% this year. Now next year is a different subject, we'll address it when we get to it, but I think they are all

deserving of it. The things they've had to deal with over the last year, they've overcome some huge obstacles and I really feel like 8% is fair. We will address it again next time we do the budget.

Mr. Johnson stated for me, I lean towards more of a 4% and the only reason I say that, in my 35 years of doing construction work, I've never got a 8% raise. I've never got a 5% raise and I have worked for some fortune 500 companies. With that being said, because I also look at things here where it was budgeted and I am sitting here looking at the miscellaneous that is \$16,340 over budget. It was budgeted \$723 for the year, so I am thinking we don't know where inflation, its up and down right now. Everybody is hurting at the grocery store like Steve said, and everybody in this room can remember the 08 recession and I know how it effected our household because I know school teachers in Campbell County that didn't get raises at all for several years. Everybody is worth a raise a every year, yes everybody would love to get 8%, 10%, 12%, but like Steve said at what cost. If we look at the budget and where we have over shot some marks and water, we have no control over water. Water is going to go up, that's a given. Water is going to go up because we don't use enough of it and everybody in this town is going to pay more on their water bill. My heart tells me 4%, that's where I am at. I understand 8% was budgeted, I understand that, but there's a lot going on, not just in our town, but in our country. That's where I am at and that's all I have.

Mr. Worley stated the 23 budget, that was 6%? Mayor Hodnett asked the last budget year or the last approved budget? Mr. Worley replied the last budget year. Mr. Poindexter replied the one we are in now, began July 1st, it goes through June 30th, that one includes 8%, so did the one before it. We usually make whatever change effective half way through it in January, but both of them were 8%. The one we passed in the spring of 22, and we had some conversations about that because the national inflation rate was low actually about 8.1, 8.2 during that time, and we were trying to keep up with that. Mr. Worley asked what did you do? Mr. Poindexter replied we passed 8% in that budget even though it fell a little bit shorter than the national rate, we passed 8%. We continued the same thing again for the one we just passed earlier this year. That budget is the one that is enforced right now, it runs through this coming June. Again a conversation about whether to do that again or whether to do a different number would be on the table when we go into budgeting after New Years. That's a February, March, April timeframe conversation as to whether we want to talk about 4, 6, 8, or whatever number it might be for the next cycle. Like Kathy said, we have budgeted 8% for the current cycle. That has already been passed. It is based on the projected revenue for the current tax billing. Even if we do the whole 8% right now, that itself is not going to cause taxes to go up next year. It is already covered at the current tax rate. Now, Spring budget time we will have to look at that and we will have to look at everything else because we are dealing with a real estate reassessment and that is going to get hard, all of us. Needless to say we had a shock when we got our mail when the spike of assessment came, so its going to have to be some hard conversations here in the Spring about where to set the real estate in view of the reassessment increase so that it is not totally off the charts. That is a conversation for the next cycle. What we pass here tonight or don't if that's the case may be, people are paying tax bills right now for 2023, so its not going to effect the current tax bill. What we passed in the Spring will determine what people get billed for next fall on the taxes. That's just our annual pattern, it is for all local governments. A motion was made to do a across the board 8% raise to all Town of Hurt employees effective January 2024.

Motion: Mr. Majure

Second: Mrs. Keese

Passage: 3-2 vote

Questions & Answers from November 9th Meeting

Mrs. Brumfield stated that Gary had asked about the reporting of the LGIP which is your local government investment pool. I have those numbers and I will be glad to report that, we have 4 accounts. The water account we have \$316,053.45, infrastructure we have \$233,479.72, general we have \$188,533.93, and the PD we have \$5,303.99. The statements we have in the books are for October so I reached out to them and this is as of yesterday. Mayor Hodnett stated I'd like to bring up, Ellen was working on that today, and I went back and looked where we were December 31st 2019, we were at \$457,437, it took us 50 years to get to \$457 and in the last three years we have gone from \$457 to \$741. We have made a huge improvement in our infrastructure accounts and in our reserves. Having the conversation today with the Virginia Health Department, this is what they are looking for. They see growth here and they see much better management. Mr. Majure asked we are doing these improvements for our phase 1 and phase 2 of our water system, at some point these improvements are going to be end of life as well, do we have a estimate of where our reserves need to be at the end of life of these improvements? Mayor Hodnett questioned if he was talking about when we move onto the fire hydrants? Mr. Majure replied no, our current improvements we are making to the water system, like the pumps, the aeration tank. At some point they will be at end of life, I hope we are planning for that now. Mayor Hodnett replied yeah, and that will be part of the Davenport study because they are going to come in and tell us where we need to be. I don't think anybody should be surprised if they come back and say we need to go to a minimum base rate quarterly, because that's what the state does and a lot of other municipalities as well. I suspect we are going to see that. Mr. Majure replied but they are going to be giving us those numbers? Mayor Hodnett replied yes they will be given us estimates, because like the water system I think the number that they toss around a lot for that is about 40 years on a system for that we have to start doing the work that we're doing, and we're a little bit older than 40. That's why we are seeing so many breaks, Joe can tell you about that, he probably deals with a break every other week. Mr. Majure stated I just want to make sure that another four years we don't have to do anything crazy to get the improvements done. Joe replied the capital improvement plan will put so much into that, it should equal out. Mayor Hodnett replied hopefully the next 40 years we will do a better job than we did the first 40. That's what we are talking about right here, going from \$457,000 to \$741,000. That move is already being made. We're financing the reserves now, so that we don't get caught with our pants down later. Joe said the magic words, capital improvement plan, most municipalities have those. To my knowledge we have never had, never felt good about that, but its in the past. If we don't learn, we all know the famous quote, if we don't learn from history, we're doomed to repeat it. Now, we wouldn't be in this sticky situation that we are in today if a capital improvement plan had been set up 40 years ago on the water system and some money put aside continuously knowing that down the road, things are going to have to be done. Then when that time comes, you have some cushion, you have some means of doing things. Maybe without going in debt or without having to do a mega project at a time. That was never done and oh we got to keep everything by a minimum. I mean, I didn't like having to pay \$150 for three months worth of water for two people, but reality is reality. Mayor Hodnett replied that brings up another thing because we're talking about the water. One of the things that we've heard a lot lately is well, I'm going to go back on my well. Joe you want to tell us what the guys told us today about that? Joe replied it's illegal for anyone to go back on the well because, wells believe it or not are full of containments. They are also full of PFAS and now they are in the ground. That's another form of contamination. They never go away, they are all around you. PFAS are chemicals that they use on your clothes, shampoo bottles, anything that you deal with that has a protective coating, waterproofing,

Teflon, anything like that, that's PFAS. That is another thing we are going to probably have to start testing for. Its affecting all the water treatment plants now, and they are testing for it now. We are not testing at this time because we are a distribution system. Attorney Eller stated the town has always had a mandatory connection ordinance. You don't have a choice. Joe replied we don't have any ordinance in place of what will happen if we do. Attorney Eller replied it's a misdemeanor, or you could go to jail, or if the judge put you in jail for it, you can get up to a year. You can't do it, it's illegal under our ordinance. Joe replied he told us that he said if you have it in there that says you can't and we told him we did, he said what are your repercussions for that. We told him we didn't know and he said you need to talk to the attorney and see if you can write them out. Attorney Eller replied it is a class one misdemeanor, could go to jail. I don't know that the judge would actually put somebody in jail, could just fine them. Joe replied they also don't realize the cross contamination our system and everybody's water. Mr. Poindexter stated it is important to keep in mind that municipalities, small and large everywhere have these type of ordinances and requirements. We're not out there out in left field somewhere, this is the main golden thing most places. We can't just carve out an exception because we don't like or don't want to live in the current time period. Now, it's amazing to me and I know we all have things in life that we have trouble processing and I'm no exception, but it's amazing to me that sometimes there's some kind of deep rooted resentment or bitterness of sort somewhere out there. It hasn't personally been brought to me, but I hear about it periodically, over the water system. Some suppose whoever they are, forced it on us. It's my understanding that it went through due process. It was voted on as a referendum and all the boxes were checked. Do we need to keep arguing about what went on 40 years ago, or do we need to work on what we need to be doing for the next 40, that's my take on it. Attorney Eller stated we did a referendum and it passed, we had the mandatory connection fee, a mandatory requirement and it was tested in court, somebody challenged it, we went to court and the court upheld our ordinance, and they would again. Mayor Hodnett replied that explains it.

Mr. Johnson stated to follow up on Bob's point of capital moving forward, I think we need to have some kind of verbiage that the capital doesn't get changed. It is solely for keeping our water straight and that's what it's for, not to be picked apart for other things and we will pay it back and then we got no way to pay it back. It needs to be earmarked straight for that. Mr. Poindexter replied good point, and along that line these numbers right here in the reserves that Ellen just quoted for us. If you notice, there's different categories now. One of those is specifically for water projects, and that's why we call it the water reserve, sometimes infrastructure, same type of thing. The general reserve, we have places in the budget that we do the very same thing for non water projects. We are supposed to put away, even if we just buy Joe a brand new truck or Jason a brand new police car, as soon as you put that vehicle on the road it starts aging, gaining mileage, and deappreciating, so you start putting aside a few \$1,000 a year for the next one, because you know that inside of 10 years, you're going to need another one and then you have an ability to pay for it. Mr. Johnson replied mine goes a step further because I live in a world of capital and expense. You have capital, that's for your long term, big, large improvements, and you got your expenses, Joe's truck broke down. It comes from two different funds, capital and expense. That's, how I have always saw it. Mayor Hodnett replied that's pretty much the way we are structured now. One thing that I would like to bring up for the Durham land purchase at \$80,000. I would like to take half of that from water, since it's going into the loop system coming under the railroad tracks part of the consent order and the other half actually from general, because it is industrial land that could be used for industrial development. That way you're not pulling so much from one side of our reserves. Mr. Poindexter replied along that line I certainly agree with you about the water, I think at least half of it

would come out of the water because it's basically a water system project. Mayor Hodnett stated with the land being a secondary use, we could use it for industrial or use it for a park or anything like that. Mr. Poindexter stated that part is a slam dunk, but the other hand for whatever fraction, I would just ask the question, should we not consider that as more infrastructure than general, because water systems when you study municipalities, water systems fall under the category of hard infrastructure. They are the support network that is there to drive economic development and housing development and everything else that you want to do. The water side of it covers the need to meet Health Department standards. The infrastructure side of it is part of our plan to make it attractive to business industry, and so forth. It to me infrastructure goes more hand in hand with economic development, which is the secondary reason. Mayor Hodnett replied how should we split it between the funds? I understand what your saying. We've got to have the water for the infrastructure, but we've also have to have the land port as well and the land is a general item. Mr. Poindexter replied I can see that too and I can live with it either way. Mayor Hodnett replied I am trying to avoid hitting one so hard when we could split it between the two and the secondary purpose of the land. If we were to do a park or something up there that's going to be the general fund. It's going to be like a taxable thing, not water revenue. That's how I'm thinking about it, so what do you guys want to do, split it or leave it all in one? Mr. Johnson stated how do you feel about 40 for water and 20 from infrastructure and 20 from general? Mayor Hodnett replied splitting it out, I don't have a problem with it all, I'm just saying stay away from hitting one. Mr. Poindexter replied I am good with that. Mr. Majure replied that is fine with me as well.

A motion was made to take \$40,000 from the reserve water, \$20,000 from the infrastructure reserve, and \$20,000 from the general reserve to purchase the Durham land.

Motion: Mr. Johnson

Second: Mr. Majure

Passage: Unanimous

Mrs. Brumfield stated I would like to clear something up, when I gave you that \$738,067.10, that did not include PD \$5,303.99. If anybody was doing their math should have saw that those figures didn't add up. That's why PD is not included in that \$738,067.10. Also at the November 9th business meeting it was brought up about the budget vs actual, it was questions asked about work mans comp in general, was at 141%, the reason that is over, if you recall we purchased an additional workman's comp of \$500. Mr. Poindexter replied that's that new one we discussed while we were building that budget and didn't know where to put it. Mrs. Brumfield replied yes, and you said to put it all in this and these figures came in late, so that is where it hit, that additional \$500. Mr. Poindexter replied all good, just wanted to know. Mrs. Brumfield replied you had a question about the LODA, why that was so high to 66% over, if you recall we did not have those figures in, previous year we only had one police officer, then we added Tom Sawyer if you recall, and then we put in for 3 which was a part time and two, that's why that's a increase. Mr. Poindexter replied that why, that was an after the fact. That right now is going to be near impossible to forecast. Unless, you know that you've got two and half police officers for the upcoming FY ahead of time. Mrs. Brumfield replied LODA whether you are full time or part time it doesn't matter, because an accident can happen regardless, they charge to same rate, because I checked on it as well. It's charged based on the number of officers. The other question we had was the building and grounds and that was up 672%. That had the Amulet bulletproof, that final payment in that. We didn't have these other accounts at the time. Mr. Poindexter replied that was ARPA money for the building renovations. Mrs. Brumfield stated you questioned also southern software, why that was up 131%, the conversion of the personal property taxes, they charged us \$1,500 which we did not have that figure at that time. The generator maintenance contract that was at 98%. Joe and I pulled that and went back and looked at that, because we put in there \$1,512, they actually had to do some maintenance on one of

those generators and charge to \$732. That's where that came into play. Miss utility we're at 50% on that we use that CPS (cable protection service) that is combined in that same GL Code and there's \$1,000 per month, so those two are in that. Mr. Poindexter replied so that is a matter of coding. Mrs. Brumfield stated the rule water association, the dues went up \$50, that's why it is .14% increase. Back to the miscellaneous that we are over, and Paul just referenced that too as well, that was the retaining check we paid for the purchase of the Plaza for \$16,500, I don't think Mr. Eller will mind me mentioning that the check was voided and that is why there is a minus sign there. That actually went back in. Mr. Poindexter replied so that was a place holder because it isn't anywhere else. It is usually a catch small things, not a \$16,000 things. Mrs. Brumfield replied exactly and the purchase of the Plaza, we didn't have that finalized when we were doing the budget and that's where it hit, we put it in there, but that check was actually cancelled. Mr. Poindexter asked if that will come back off? Mrs. Brumfield replied it's been taken off, the transaction was there, but apparently the way this budget versus actual is going to show that as a minus, which is confusing, but we do know for a fact that is what happened. That's the \$16,500 that we paid for the retaining check. Mayor Hodnett replied one thing I would like to say about all of this, which you just heard is the reason we get good audit reports now. Mrs. Brumfield stated anytime you have questions, I'll be glad to answer them.

Old Business

December 3rd Christmas at Town Hall

Mayor Hodnett stated December 3, don't forget Christmas at Town Hall, so invite everybody and bring the kids, Santa's going to be here and all that.

Also I don't know if you guys saw Facebook today about the Town of Altavista not picking up more than one trash can at a home. That is going to be in effect immediately, so don't set out two cans because only one will be picked up, the brown issued can from the town. Our contract only calls for one can per household and they are enforcing the contract.

Mr. Majure asked if we know the price for the Christmas party? Mrs. Keesee replied yes, \$35 per person and then the Town Council members will split the cost of our guest. Mayor Hodnett replied yes, same as last year. Mrs. Keesee replied the former mayors and their spouse, ill get back to you on how much each council member has to pay to support that.

Mr. Poindexter stated I have a few relatively small things just here, conversationally. I want to compliment the work on the new building, this is the first time I've had a chance to visit and get in here and look around. It's very refreshing. I think it was a good use of ARPA federal money. It's a huge step forward for this town and for us to be able to do that and not go in debt for it. The safety features look good. I mean, the overall and I will be honest is just a paradigm shift from what we had before so thank you to everybody who had a role. Mayor Hodnett stated the people coming in and paying the water bills, the taxes has been 100% complimentary on what they see when they come in now. I haven't heard a bad report from anybody. Everybody likes it so that's real good. Mr. Poindexter replied I'm very happy to hear that because there's always no matter who you are, someone that is in the city is going to say why'd y'all do that it's a waste of money. In this case, you can call Congress and the President and blame them because they paid for it, but anyway what we did was through federal taxes. Now that we're back here in the council chamber, I would just like to ask, and I'm just one person out of seven. I'm not insisting on anything, but we went to this configuration here, I'm assuming due to COVID, and small group committee meetings and things like that. What does everybody think about doing some

rearranging more back to where everybody can see each other? Mayor Hodnett replied how so, we tried setting these tables across here and that didn't quite work because of the leg somebody would have the legs. Mr. Poindexter replied that is something we can work out here, just a thought I had so that everybody can see each other's faces and might be more comfortable. Mayor Hodnett replied anybody's welcome to come down here and put them in any configuration you want. Mr. Poindexter stated once the finish up and clean up is done in the building, I think it would be nice to see an updated slideshow of all that on the website if somebody can find a few minutes to take pictures. That would be some good PR right there, it wouldn't cost any extra money. Mayor Hodnett replied sure, anybody else have anything? No comment. Mayor Hodnett stated thank you all for coming. Also don't forget we are having a called meeting Tuesday night at 6:00pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.

Kelsie Anderson

Kelsie Anderson-Clerk

Gary Hodnett

Gary Hodnett-Mayor