

Town of Hurt Meeting Minutes  
September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Hurt, Virginia

The Town of Hurt Council members held its monthly business meeting on Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at Hurt Town Hall. The meeting opened at 6:00 PM by Mayor Gary Hodnett with a quorum present.

**Roll Call**

Member's present were Mr. Collin Adams, Mrs. Kathy Keesee, Mrs. Shirley Barksdale-Hill, Mr. Gary Poindexter, and Mr. Donney Johnson via phone call.

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: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill                      Passage: Unanimous

Council entered closed session at 6:01PM.

Council exited closed session approximately 7:02PM.

A motion was made 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. Adams                      Passage: Unanimous

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Invocation: Mr. Poindexter

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Hodnett.

**New Hire**

Mayor Hodnett ask if there are any outcomes from closed session?

A motion was made to bring on Joseph Smith as the new hire to the Town as our public works.

Motion: Mr. Adams                      Second: Mrs. Keesee                      Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett states welcome aboard Joseph, we appreciate your application, and we look forward to working with you. Mayor Hodnett states he will contact Joseph tomorrow about a start date.

**Employee Handbook**

Mayor Hodnett states that Mr. Johnson and Ellen Brumfield have spent a lot of time on this, and he appreciates all their hard work to get it updated. New Policies were implemented that need to be voted on.

A motion was made to accept the handbook and policies as written with the exceptions of any typos.

Motion: Mr. Johnson

Second: Mrs. Clay

Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett states that they are working on all the paperwork that they need to file with the Town and working towards getting their business license. They will probably be here at the October meeting to present all their paperwork.

Mayor Hodnett states to the Public Works committee that the water tank must be cleaned and must be done between now and the end of the year according to our contract. Mayor Hodnett states that someone on the public works committee needs to coordinate that with Suez and the requirements for it. Mr. Johnson states that he will do that.

Mayor Hodnett states we will be doing a shop with the cop fundraiser and will be having a Brunswick stew on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Hodnett asked Mrs. Clay if she will talk to Audie Meadows and get a band for the event. Mrs. Clay asked Chief Lovelace what time? Chief Lovelace states that it is 11am-3pm.

Mayor Hodnett states to council that we need an Economic Development Authority for future development within the Town. Mayor Hodnett asked Attorney Eller how firm are the requirements for the Board of Directors? Attorney Eller states they are solid, that you can get the general assembly to reduce it, but it is 7. Attorney Eller states that it is up to the council to vote and decide where the limits are, that it can go out and into the county within 3 miles. He states with a 3-mile radius we can have the 4 out of the 7. Mayor Hodnett states that the council appoints the directors and then the directors elect a chairman. Mayor Hodnett states we will talk more about it at the next council meeting.

Mayor Hodnett states that we have decided to take grass cutting away from public works, and that everyone agrees with Mark Kidd finishing out cutting the grass around Town Hall and other surrounding areas that is owned by the Town for the remainder of the grass cutting season. Attorney Eller states that for next season to advertise it. Mr. Poindexter stated that next year it needs to be discussed for a budget item.

### **Consent Agenda**

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated she had already got with Kelsie to make a correction.

A motion was made to approve August 3<sup>rd</sup> minutes.

Motion: Mrs. Clay

Second: Mr. Adams

Passage: Unanimous

### **Hearing of Citizens/Public Comment Period**

Dixie Poindexter made a comment about the Economic Development Authority if the Town would consider working with Motley or Grit, that some of the outside the Town limits parents may be interested. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated she wanted to thank Mr. and Mrs. Poindexter on how well the newsletter flyer looked.

### **Report from Legal Counsel-Attorney Eller**

Attorney Eller states that he got the email about the inoperable vehicles, he states look at the vehicle and see if it does not have tags, wheels or has expired tags then it can be considered an inoperable vehicle. If it has an expired plate, then it is an inoperable vehicle and if it has an expired inspection sticker that has been expired for over 60 days then it is an inoperable vehicle. Mr. Adams asked that if either one is expired then it is inoperable? Attorney Eller stated yes, that must be expired for 60 days. Mr. Adams asked that if you could still have a car outside that is covered, if it is just one that is allowed a cover? Attorney Eller states that one vehicle is allowed covering. Mr. Poindexter stated we need go through all these ordinances and get book updated and the website PDF updated. Mayor Hodnett asked Mrs. Barksdale-Hill how far she has gotten on updating the book. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated not far at all, that she has had other things going on. Attorney Eller stated that the website has been updated. The book in Town Hall is not updated. Attorney Eller asked if council agreed to do this and ask Delegate Adams to add Hurt to the list of towns in section 15.2-905 which means the vehicle must have a valid tag and a valid state inspection.

A motion was made to add Hurt to the list of towns in section 15.2-905 for inoperable vehicles.

Motion: Mr. Adams

Second: Mrs. Clay

Passage: Unanimous

### **Reports from Staff**

Administrative: Ellen Brumfield, Treasurer reported that all bank reconciliations are up to date and in Balance which is a huge accomplishment for the Town. Brumfield states that the handbook revisions have been made with me, Mayor Hodnett, Mr. Johnson, and Mike Jones. Brumfield states that she is still working on the policies and getting them in place such as the Drug Free workplace policy, reasonable and suspicion check list, and disciplinary action form. Lastly Brumfield states she is working on setting up the Mandatory Requirement for the Covid Recovery Funds ARPA as new non-entitlement units of Government.

Administrative: Kelsie Sligh reported that she updated a new slideshow on the website. Sligh reports that she is going to start working towards Personal Property Taxes in Southern off the book she received from Robin Goard over in the County. Sligh states she collected over \$1000.00 from one delinquent tax bill that went back to 2017. Lastly Sligh reports that as of today we have collected 35.6% water bills, to keep in mind we still have 2 weeks left to collect. The last day before penalties is September 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **Public Works**

Public Works: No comment

### **Police Department Report**

Chief Jason Lovelace reported that the call for service:

Civil Complaints-5, Suspicious Person-3, Public Service-19, Vandalism/Destruction of Property-1, Larceny-1, Suspicious vehicle-3, Animal Complaint-1, Disabled Vehicle-1, Assist other Agencies-0, All other offenses-1, Automobile accident-1, Domestic-1, Identify theft-1, Trespassing-3, Counterfeiting/Forgery-2, Disabled Vehicle-2, Breaking and entering-1, traffic stops-3.

Other: Miles Driven-1173, Training-CPR training for Officer Sawyer and Chief Lovelace

Assist other Town Departments-0

Use of Force-0

Department/Officer Complaints-0

Department Updates: Fundraising stew on November 6 for children in need at Christmas. VDOT application has been completed and submitted. Facebook page has been created for the PD. Lastly currently working on a safety initiative for HES, on 09-07-2021 VDOT confirmed that they will complete this as soon as possible.

Mr. Adams stated that he would like to see more of community policing and would like a monthly report to council as far as nuisance ordinances. Mr. Poindexter asked if it was any update litter patrol, he states it has got bad again on E Hurt road. Chief Lovelace states he has contacted VDOT and has not heard back. Mr. Adams states he has contacted someone about the school zones signs and that he mentioned littering signs, but they have quit putting those signs up, but he would get back with him.

#### **Public Safety/ Assistant Town Manager- Mike Jones**

Deputy Town Manager/Public Safety Director Report  
September 7, 2021

- 1) Remember 9/11: I suggest that the Town commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Having been involved in that attack, it is also very personal to me.
- 2) Please review the proposed part time Police Service Aide position description. This position would provide a "utility" person for the town that would serve all departments and would be a uniformed employee. It would also increase the visibility of a uniformed person patrolling our town. This concept is becoming more utilized to increase eyes and ears on patrol as the number of police officer's decline.
- 3) Please review the requested ordinance regarding inoperable vehicles and blight. Please see Mr. Eller's comments. I request that the Council approve Mr. Eller's amendments to the ordinance and authorize enforcement after a period of public education with a public hearing. The amount of blight, debris and inoperable vehicles is excessive and is an eyesore.
- 4) Police coverage of the town has increased significantly. This has resulted in several favorable comments made to me by local law enforcement leaders as well as friends of mine who live in the area. Additional police activity will increase the activity numbers but that is to be expected.
- 5) Final comments are being written into the Town of Hurt Emergency Action plan. I will be sending it out for council and mayoral review in early October.
- 6) Radford University Dept of Criminal Justice has indicated a desire to partner with our PD in terms of short term internships and possible job candidates sent to us. Chief Lovelace will be following up with them.
- 7) I have been reaching out to leadership of local and regional minority and female group organizations in an effort to expand our reach for applicants for future police and town positions. Response has been moderate.
- 8) Continuing to work with the Mayor on Economic Development opportunities.

- 9) Please note that the Police Dept schedule is available to all Council members and town employees. However, the schedule is NOT for public distribution.
  - 10) Encourage the use of Good RX to our citizens. Good RX is a prescription savings program that is available to all citizens. It is a true savings for prescription drugs. Other jurisdictions are informing their citizens of this free opportunity.
  - 11) Please remind your friends and neighbors of our drug take back box in front of town hall.
  - 12) Where are we on the DMV Stop for delinquent accounts?
  - 13) New Polices for Town to comply with fed and state grant requirements needed.
- END OF REPORT

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated that she has 3 people interested in this Police Aide, she states she wants to know if there is a position open for this, she states she has one guy who calls a couple times a month. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated she hasn't given out a lot of information about this position, Mike Jones states it is not up to him to create a policy, that it is up to council to decide if they want to create a position to go forward. Mike states that it is an excellent idea, and creates more eyes on everything, but Jones states that council makes the policies, he just suggested the idea. Mayor Hodnett asked Mrs. Barksdale-Hill what their job duty would be? Mrs. Barksdale-Hill states she has not given out any details. She stated that the one guy interested is a retired policeman, but he understood that his duties would not be the same as policing duties, but he was familiar with Policeman Aide duties. Mayor Hodnett asked would they be getting paid or not? Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated according to Mike Jones it would be \$15.00 an hour for a part time job. Mike Jones states this is a council decision, that the salary would be up to \$18.00 an hour with 32 hours work week. Stacey Ward is the guy who keeps asking about the job, Mike states he told him it was up to council. Mayor Hodnett asked if they must go through the same background check as a real police officer, Mike Jones states yes. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked council if we want to do this or not? Mr. Poindexter stated we can't do it in this current year due to budget line items. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated to council that we aren't quite there yet, and she will update Stacey Ward.

Mr. Adams stated to Mike Jones, cemetery road, can we discuss that and give everyone an update? Mike stated that cemetery road is a right way, so we cannot block it off, however it stops at certain points, and we can block it with the consent of the landowner and have it accessible for fire and emergency use only. Mike states it can be dangerous, that people could get stuck up there and that landowners may not even be aware of the night traffic. Jones states that if a vehicle were to catch on fire down there it could spread down the hill. Attorney Eller questioned if we were going to force them towards spring street and what the people on spring street were going to say about that? Mr. Adams states that he thinks when we block off 7 tenths of a mile it will stop all the traffic. Chief Lovelace states we will have to notify all the property owners on cemetery road and figure out where exactly the right way is. Attorney Eller states that VDOT owns half a mile of the right way. Mayor Hodnett stated that this sounds like a project that is going to need someone to take it own. Mr. Adams and Mike Jones stated they would do it. Mayor stated a good place to start would be calling James Kent.

Mr. Adams stated that there still was a lot of houses in Town that did not have house numbers and wants to know how we can get residents to put house numbers on the house? Mike stated that the county has an ordinance that requires that, and we can adopt an ordinance that requires it.

### **Reports from Membership, Boards, and Commissions**

Administrative: Kathy Keesee stated that Kelsie did add a new slideshow and that the website allowed for an additional slideshow. Mrs. Keesee stated that the slideshows showed various scenes from around town and each slideshow holds 17 images. Mrs. Keesee states that she will sending a newer slideshow to Kelsie tomorrow to replace the older images. The new Town Logo is on the website and if it is not on Facebook, we need to put it there also. Mrs. Keesee states that last meeting they have discussed about the landscaping that was going to be at the New Town sign and down by wayside park, she states that originally, she said the materials would be \$1000.00 but looking now it is going to cost a little more, so we are looking at \$2500.00 she stated keep in mind this labor is being done free of charge. She stated that a lot of this cost is going towards approximately 8 tall trees. Mrs. Keesee stated we also will need a poly tank so that we can water the plants when they have been planted, and the cost of those is around \$200.00.

Mrs. Clay asked if the landscaping would interfere with the railroad and the tunnel? Mrs. Keesee stated no not at all. She states that they will grow past the tunnel and have room to grow. Keesee also states that we will plant seasonal flowers as needed. Mrs. Clay asked if the person we hired to cut the grass if they are responsible to maintain the upkeep. Mrs. Keesee stated no it would be up to the Town. Mrs. Keesee states that we are getting a good deal. Mr. Poindexter stated that we have not used any of the infrastructure budget line item, and that it lists \$5000.00 in it.

A motion was made that we use \$2000.00 for the Landscaping at the New sign and \$500.00 of it for the Wayside Park Landscaping with a total of \$2500.00.

Motion: Mr. Poindexter

Second: Mr. Adams

Passage: Unanimous

Mrs. Keesee stated thank y'all so much, Mayor Hodnett stated good job Mrs. Keesee this is money well spent.

Community Development- Mrs. Clay asked had anyone looked at the frozen BBQ left over from the Memorial Saturday event and if we wanted to try and do anything for the fall? Mayor Hodnett stated it was too late to try and plan something, that October is a busy month for people.

Finance: Mr. Poindexter stated he wanted to continue to thank the staff for all their hard work.

Public Works & Planning/Zoning Commission: Mr. Adams stated that he met with Mr. Gibson from Matco Guardrail Construction about getting a guardrail in front of the Pump Station, a guardrail along the highway would cost about \$15,000.00 and a guardrail along the side of the fence cost about \$1500.00-\$2500.00. Mr. Adams stated that VODT told him they could possibly do it for safety issues incase of a wreck, but he was waiting on a call back from them. Adams reported that he called Steve who works for the southern railroad, he is supposed to be getting me a guy's number who handles all the maintenance and trims back all the weeds, grass, and bushes along the railroad. Adams states he would like to see a lot of the roads cut back, and if the railroad can't do it then maybe VDOT can. Adams states as much trouble we have had about the barge we have not done anything about boats, we need to do something about how to control the size of the boat the stickers on it and tags on the trailers.

Attorney Eller states they can be nuisance to the Town if they are filled with water, could possibly carry a disease. Lastly Adams reports that a lot of dogs roam his street freely, how can we adopt a leash law? Mrs. Keesee stated 15 years ago it use to be on a ballot and that it was voted down. Mr. Poindexter stated we parallel with the county ordinance and that they do not have a leash law.

#### **Report from Mayor Hodnett**

Mayor Hodnett reported that Dogwood Trailer Park has apparently been sold, she his question to Attorney Eller is if we can go ahead and put in a new water meter for the entire trailer park and have the owner pay the water bills? Attorney Eller states we can try. Mayor Hodnett reports that the solar farm has passed along some information, 5 megawatts installed in the Town of Hurt property is equivalent to 1,094 homes powered by solar energy for the year, life of the project is 30-40 years. The solar will reduce the admissions of 6640 tons of carbon dioxide. The solar farm is the first step of turning the Town of Hurt green. Mayor Hodnett thanked everyone for coming.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:34pm

Kelsie Sligh  
Clerk

Gary Hodnett  
Mayor