

Town Of Hurt Meeting Minutes

February 2, 2021

Hurt, Virginia

The Town of Hurt council members held a meeting on Tuesday, February 2, 2021 at Hurt Town Hall. The meeting opened at 6 PM by Mayor Gary Hodnett with a quorum present.

Roll Call

Members present were: Mr. Collin Adams, Mrs. Kathy Keesee, Mr. Steve Watson and Mrs. Shirley Barksdale-Hill via phone call

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation: Mr. Steve Watson

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Gary Hodnett

Consent Agenda

A motion was made to accept the Town of Hurt business meeting minutes January 5, 2021 with the corrections. Mayor Hodnett requested Mrs. Barksdale-Hill to email the mentioned corrections to him and Kelsie Sligh.

Motion: Mrs. Keesee

Second: Mr. Watson

Passage: Unanimous

Committee Changes term 2021-2022 Annual Appointments SRRIFA

Mrs. Keesee will chair the administrative committee with Mrs. Clay and Mr. Watson as members

Mrs. Clay will chair the community development & public relations committee with Mr. Adams as member

Mr. Watson will chair the finance committee with Mrs. Barksdale-Hill and Mrs. Keesee as members

Mr. Adams will remain chair of the public works committee with Mrs. Barksdale-Hill as members

Vice Mayor – Mrs. Shirley Barksdale-Hill - no changes

Planning Commission – Mr. Collin Adams - no changes

SRRIFA Board of Directors – Mr. Watson, Mrs. Barksdale-Hill, and Mr. Adams as alternate

No changes to the annual appointments

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill ask could two people be on the Planning Committee, that she has some interest but wants Mr. Adams to remain on the Planning Committee

A motion was made to add second person to Planning Committee if the By Laws have no stipulations prohibiting the request. Mayor Hodnett will check into the regulations for any prohibiting factors.

Motion: Mr. Watson

Second: Mrs. Keesee

Passage: Unanimous

New News from the Community

Tim Dudley, Pittsylvania Board of Supervisors reported that the Strategic Planning Committee met on last Friday for 10 hours. They have purchased and distributed \$300 laptops for DCC students.

New regulations on the Solar Farms must be 5 miles of each other, within transmission company lines; some lines may need upgrading to handle voltage

COVID getting more locations to administer the vaccines, maybe a large church like New Prospect in this area

Economic Development

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated that Matt said we would have a groundbreaking for the press but with limited numbers there.

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill said she wants something so that it will boost the town's moral

Legal

John Eller not present, legal counsel ordinance change

Solar Farm, Public Works and Gary Boggs organizing a meeting set for February 25, 2021

Administrative Staff Reporting:

Ellen – 2020 Tax collection \$196,000 which is 86.17% collected, notifications will be mailed out for delinquent accounts in an attempt to collect outstanding balances

Mayor Hodnett commented this is up 8-10% on collections.

Kelsie – reminded everyone to get her the information they need and want posted on Social Media.

Mrs. Keesee stated the information can be time sensitive for posting

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill asked about voting on social media content.

Mayor Hodnett stated it is not necessary to vote on social media. Kelsie and Mayor have admin permissions. Everything must be approved at Town Hall.

Public Safety

Chief Jones opened with congratulatory remarks for Michael Jason Lovelace's recent promotion to Police Chief for the Town Of Hurt

Chief Jones shared information on the following topics:

- Qualified Immunity for Police Officers

- Good Faith and Probable Cause Protection for Officers
- Keeping 599 Funding so that defunding of Police Departments by 20% will not occur and Elimination of School Resources Officers – moving under Mental Health Counseling and the full responsibility of Hurt Elementary School being on the local police department

Going forward Police Chief Mike Jones will serve as Deputy Town Manager & Director of Public Safety/Emergency Management

Mr. Watson asks about Chief Lovelace's continued training in the future

Chief Lovelace needs 40 hours continued training every 2 years, the training is mandatory for general instructors to teach verbal deescalating and be a "certified trainer", adds another shield to the level of chief protection when going before Judges

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill stated Jason cannot leave after we've trained him

Chief Lovelace replied I'm not planning on it

Chief Lovelace reported there were no major incidents requiring force and no traffic stops during January 2021, there were multiple unrelated petty larceny cases. Police everywhere are dealing with an increase in mental and domestic problems from the effects of Covid-19 pandemic.

Public Works

Colleen reported in 2 weeks utility collections on delinquent accounts totaled \$6,605 (1-week, 4 days w/holiday collection \$3,700)

Mayor Hodnett added to put into perspective one person paid over \$500 on account balance due, more has been collected in one week for delinquent debt than collected in 2015, it works staying on top of it and this has not been done in the past.

Additional contractors for Plumbing and Electrical: Hancock Electrical and The Town of Altavista

Colleen said that her first street clearing after the January 31 winter storm went well.

Mayor Hodnett and Mr. Watson both shared their appreciation for the snow removal.

Community clean-up day for February 20 with Main Street/Wayside Park and West Hurt Road/Under Pass being primary focus due to the amount of trash/litter (times and details have not been determined), we have vests and trash bags.

Mr. Adams mentioned inmates maybe able to pick up trash if not enough people volunteer

Chief Lovelace will look into the inmates, not sure if it is possible

Mayor Hodnett added that a Running Group from Altavista has expressed support in picking up trash.

Colleen getting mowing equipment maintained and ready for spring grass cutting

Administrative

Mayor Hodnett added that a Business License and Renewal tracking spreadsheet has been implemented and that the office staff is working together on cross-training.

Mrs. Keesee expressed her support for cross-training and the added value it brings when a staff member is out of work; she thanked Kelsie for her work on the town's website and Facebook

Mrs. Keesee ask Kelsie to work with the council members to create an individual profile (5 brief questions for them to answer) for the website, need photographs taken at the Portrait Place for Mayor Hodnett and former Mayor Poindexter to be placed on the wall at Town Hall.

Mrs. Keesee added with warmer weather arriving updating the signs throughout town and do some landscaping "Beautification"

Finance

Mr. Watson said the preliminary 2021-2022 fiscal year budget with Mayor Hodnett is underway which include personnel and police increases, he wants everyone to be prepared for an increase of 10% in water rates from Altavista and passed on to the Hurt residents, the state requires the town to meet certain financial criteria to qualify for grant and loan funding to help cover the cost for improvements on the water system.

Mr. Adams ask when is the 10% increase effective

Mayor Hodnett replied December this year

Mr. Watson said we need to budget high and plan for the worst scenario, no numbers now, the people need to know that a certain rate is mandated from the state to qualify for the consent order grant.

Mr. Adams added 20 -30 years ago no plans were made to prepare financially for the future repairs and maintenance.

Mr. Watson said we are not in bad shape now, just need to plan.

Mayor Hodnett 24/7 police protection is expensive.

Mr. Watson replied a town this size cannot afford 7 days 24 hours police protection.

Mayor Hodnett on the budget water rate increases and maintenance is a must.

Mayor Hodnett stated Care Funding we were able to get the truck, radio read meter's, and this will help next year's budget.

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill the W-2, W-3, 1096 and 1099 are all out for 2020

Mayor Hodnett a zoom meeting has occurred on the pump station project that the town has accepted funding plan option presented by the VA Health Department for a 30-year term at 2.2% interest.

Other Areas of Business

Mayor Hodnett going forward with the Solar Farms talks there are Town zoning changes, size of Solar Farm Small, Medium, and Large that applies to the Industries in Town, the Zoning Board is scheduled to

meet and vote February 25, 2021, Town Council is scheduled to meet and vote March 2, 2021, Gary Boggs going forward with the Planning Commission and Attorney John Eller for the paper

Motion: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill

Second: Mr. Adams

Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett moving the fire hydrant and installing a single water meter to supply Dogwood Mobile Home Park with its owner collecting from the tenants rather than the town's responsibility, the upfront cost estimated \$15,000 with \$3,000 - \$4,000 to install water meter vault, the town is owed approximately \$10,000 in delinquent water debt and there is constant changing in the accounts due to the tenants moving and leaving existing balances unpaid.

Mr. Watson feels good about the owner paying, give some type of discount to property owner as an incentive

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill ask will insurance discounts be affected by moving the fire hydrant?

Mayor Hodnett the fire hydrant is moving less than 100 yards and approved by Hurt Fire Chief

Mr. Adams said going forward do the same for other commercial properties owners (apartments and module home parks)

Motion: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill

Second: Mrs. Keese

Passage: Unanimous

Closing Comments

Mayor Hodnett said this is "close to my heart" inviting the citizens to become Citizen Advisors, ask for volunteers from the community, post it on Facebook, we can set a limited number to attend, and they will need to be screened before joining Council Meetings.

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill said she knew this was near and dear to him because she remembered him inviting the citizens to come down and meet and talk with him while he was running for major

Citizen Advisory Committee

Motion: Mrs. Keese

Second: Mr. Watson

Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett requested to reallocate Federal CARES Act funding by splitting between general and enterprise funds resulting in no budget changes

Motion: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill

Second: Mr. Watson

Passage: Unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm

Swearing In Chief Michael Jason Lovelace

Mayor Hodnett – Jason please raise your right hand and repeat "I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of The United States, and the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and that I will faithfully and impartially discharge all the duties incumbent upon me as Chief of Police according to the best of my ability, (so help me God)."

Chief Lovelace – "I do"

Mayor Hodnett – Thank everyone for coming.

Eller Brumfield
Treasurer

Gary D. McIntire
Mayor