

## Town of Hurt Meeting Minutes

November 9, 2020

Hurt, Virginia

The Town of Hurt councilmembers held a meeting on Monday, November 9, 2020 at Hurt Town Hall. The meeting opened at 6:00 PM by Mayor Gary Hodnett with a quorum present.

### Roll Call

Members present were Mrs. Shirley Barksdale-Hill, Mr. Jeff Bowling, Mr. Colin Adams, Mr. Steve Watson, Mrs. Rainy Clay, and Mrs. Kathy Keesee.

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: Mrs. Clay

Second: Mr. Watson

Passage: Unanimous

Council entered closed session at 6:06 PM and concluded at 7:30 PM.

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. Watson

Second: Mr. Adams

Passage: Unanimous

### Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation: Mr. Watson

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Hodnett.

### Outcomes of Closed Session

There was nothing from closed session coming out to be presented in open session.

### Consent Agenda

Mrs. Kathy Keesee reported on a correction to the October 6, 2020 minutes. Under Community Development, the total was misprinted as \$8,00 and should have been \$8,000.00. The correction was made immediately.

A motion was to accept the minutes from October 6, 2020, with the correction made in Community Development.

Motion: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill

Second: Mr. Watson

Passage: Unanimous

### Mayor

Mayor Gary Hodnett stated he wanted to retroactively hire Holly Saunders as Full-time Clerk/Treasurer.

Motion: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill

Second: Mrs. Clay

Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett stated he wanted to retroactively hire Kelsie Sligh as Part-time Office Assistant.

Motion: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill

Second: Mrs. Clay

Passage: Unanimous

A motion was made that an offer be made to Colleen McGrath for the position of Public Works Director.

Motion: Mr. Watson

Second: Mrs. Keesee

Passage: Unanimous

Mayor Hodnett stated that he wanted Mrs. McGrath to sign a two (2) year contract. She was welcomed by the council. Also, the contract will state that she will have to have a Class 5 Water Certification within six (6) months.

Mayor Hodnett asked council about offering the police officer position to Mr. Jimmy Lacy or to keep exploring other options.

The consensus of council was to continue the search for a police officer and explore other options.

#### Hearing of Citizens/Public Comment

Mr. Tim Dudley congratulated the new employees.

#### Legal

Attorney John Eller reported on the status of the OptoTraffic Contract. Chief Merricks and Mr. Eller spoke with the gentleman from OptoTraffic and made changes to the contract. Several days later, Mr. Eller received the revised contract, but he did not accept it. Mr. Eller then wrote in exactly how he wanted the contract to read and OptoTraffic representative re-sent Mr. Eller a final version. Mr. Eller accepted the final contract. A copy is available for the Council to read.

Mr. Eller stated we will have to have an officer trained to handle the reports that the machine generates. The Town is anticipating setting up the OptoTraffic scanner at both schools (Hurt Elementary and Faith Christian Academy) but will have to get the speed limit changed. FCA would have to be designated as a school zone. Mrs. Clay introduced the idea of putting one on School Road, beside Hurt Elementary School. Steve Watson stated it was not enough traffic to justify one on School Road and that a sign would be a better option.

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill inquired about a policy that states you should be in good standing with the Town of Hurt and no ordinance violations to be hired by the town. Mr. Eller stated that the Town can require that such people must be in good standing with the Town and must have their taxes paid up to date. The question arose as to what the definition of "good standing" involved. Mrs. Clay stated that breaking ordinances in the Town could be a possible disqualification. Mr. Eller stated that non-payment of taxes was cut and dry. In addition, he stated that we would have to find a person guilty or in violation of breaking an ordinance, then it should be a letter sent to the person stating they are in violation of such ordinance. If they proceed to challenge, we will have to go to court. Mr. Eller said they could be found in violation and fined.

#### Finance Committee

Mr. Steve Watson had nothing to report.

Mayor Hodnett reported on the 811 service that the County is covering for us now. Hodnett received an email from the lady in Richmond. She had been sending reports to us that we had not been receiving. We only had a few days to respond to these reports, so Mr. Reggie Harper came out and marked utility locations. Danville uses a service called ESP Cable and Mayor Hodnett suggested we use



the same service to relieve Mr. Harper. The cost for his service is \$1,000 per month. Mr. Watson commented that this would be good temporarily, until Colleen learns how to mark utility locations. A motion was made that we contract with ESP Cable to do the 811 markings.

Motion: Mr. Watson

Second: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill

Passage: Unanimous

### Public Safety

Chief Mike Jones reported that Mr. Cox had sold his place on Prospect Rd.

Chief Jones stated that he was well pleased with how the Town responded to the shut-down due to a possible Covid-19 exposure, we never missed a beat.

Chief Jones reported that during the month of October, we had one shooting in town, stemming from an ongoing dispute. One person was slightly wounded, and one person was charged with malicious wounding and a felony. There is no on-going threat from this event.

Chief Jones stated that our law enforcement has been limited due to Corporal Jason Lovelace's Covid-19 case.

Chief Jones reported that we have received a donation of stuffed animals from a local non-profit for children in need in traumatic situations.

Chief Jones reported that Corp. Lovelace successfully completed the FBI LEEDA training. The next part of the class had to be cancelled but will be rescheduled in December.

Chief Jones had a comment about Mr. Lacy but withdrew the comment.

Chief Jones and Corp. Lovelace are requesting support for a fundraiser called "Shop with a Cop." They want to have a Brunswick stew and a date needs to be decided. Council needs to determine the date based on the Christmas Tree lighting. Also, we need to set up guidelines for people willing to donate toward this project. Corp. Lovelace wants to take this on as his responsibility and will get with council members after his return to Town Hall.

Chief Jones had to reschedule his Holiday Crime Prevention presentation to Faith Christian Academy. He is working with Mrs. Lisa Moore to decide on another date.

Norfolk Southern reached out to Chief Jones about our overpass that is too dark. Jones stated that we need to "spruce" it up and add wall lights.

Chief Jones reported his concern for the potential traffic hazard at the intersection of Prospect Road and East Hurt Road. VDOT wants to resign both above ground signage and the pavement markers. We are not going to have to move the road but we need to change the intersection coming out, placing stop bars to make it a more perpendicular line, extending the double yellow line 40 feet into the intersection. This will hopefully prevent people from cutting it to close. We will have to install more yellow lines to make it clear.

Chief Jones reported on the study for the police department that recommends optimum staffing when we get new industry coming into town.

Chief Jones reinforced how well the Town is performing. He also stated that the Virginia Municipal League had given him very positive feedback on how the Town is doing.

### Public Works

Mr. Collin Adams reported on the new bridge between Hurt and Altavista. We are responsible for the lights on four of the polls on the bridge. Mrs. Barksdale-Hill reported that she had called Dominion Virginia Power to find out what we owed as our part of power to the four lights. Dominion stated they did not bill out in parts; they bill per meter and one meter would have to be calculated and divide the bill on your own. We are anticipating dealing with Altavista on this, possibly paying our part to them. Mayor Hodnett stated that he had spoken with Mr. Waverly Coggsdale about the matter and each municipality had to be billed separately. Attorney Eller stated there are 14 polls and we owe for four. We should be able to prorate bill to pay our part.

Chief Jones commented that we need to get someone to clean up the pedestrian tunnel and install proper illumination.

Mr. Adams stated we need to address what can be done about opening a road going to the Key Industrial Park.

Mr. Adams inquired about the status of the water vault at the trailer park. Mr. Eller had not finished his research on this project. Mr. Eller commented that the Code states since there are multiple tenants and one owner, the owner can be made to pay bill and then bill his tenants accordingly. Mr. Eller asked if everyone owned the trailers. Some people owned and some rented. Mayor Hodnett said we could give the meters to the park. Mr. Eller will draft a proposal for this project and send to Mayor Hodnett. It was discussed that the meter would have to go in the VDOT right away.

Mayor Hodnett requested that Mr. Adams coordinate taking care of meter readings. Billy Scruggs and Jeff Bowling will also assist with this. Colleen McGrath will start employment on November 10, 2020 and can also start assisting. There was a discussion about Mayor Hodnett and Billy Scruggs locating and reading meters on Darrell Lane.

Mayor Hodnett stated that with Staunton River Plastics coming, we may need to consider Street Scape all the way to the end of town. We should consider possibly putting in a sidewalk. Mr. Eller stated there was an estimate for a sidewalk drawn up at some point. Mayor Hodnett commented that years ago, the Town of Hurt was awarded money from the Tobacco Grant to clean up Pocket Road and the road going into the Key Industrial Complex. Later, Dan Sleeper came back and needed the money for another project at that time. He talked the Town of Hurt into releasing that money back to the County. Mr. Eller recalled this grant being received. Mr. Tim Dudley is willing to attempt to get this money back so we could use for Street Scape project. Mr. Eller reported that Pittsylvania County took the money back and had plans to release it the next year (basically swapping years) but we never received it. The Board of Supervisors changed members and the three new members voted against giving the money back to us. Mrs. Clay stated this happened around 2007-2008.

Mayor Hodnett reported we received 250 Badger Meters. We have sent a contract to Southern Software for the integration to move forward.

### Administration

Mrs. Rainy Clay had nothing to report.



### Public Relations/Community Development

Mrs. Kathy Keesee reported the website is coming along nicely and it should be ready to launch by the middle of December. She is very excited and happy about the progression of the new website and gave details on how it will be set up.

### Mayor's Report

Mayor Gary Hodnett reported on Cares Act Funding. We are collecting money from Cares funding for Badger Cellular Read Water Meters.

We had to retroactively vote to extend the Consent Order loan terms from 20 years to 30 years.

A motion was made that we retroactively vote on changing the loan terms from 20 years to 30 years.

Motion: Mr. Watson

Second: Mrs. Clay

Passage: Unanimous

In addition, we are submitting \$3,200 (Servpro bill) to Cares Funding. This is for the disinfection of the Town Hall after Covid-19 exposure and the police car.

Mr. Watson inquired about the status of the truck purchase. Mayor Hodnett we are still in the process of negotiating.

The Water Construction Project selection of the engineering firm Peed & Bortz was discussed. Mayor Hodnett discovered several emails were sent back to us due to typos by the previous clerk, reducing our original contract list by four firms. They were not re-sent and had to be disclosed in a report to VDH. Hopefully, this will have no effect on the status of the project.

Mayor Hodnett did a 30, 60, and 90-day report for the water bills. He was happy to report that we had collected a higher percentage of our bills than in the past few years. We still have some delinquent accounts. There was a discussion on how to proceed with such accounts.

Mrs. Barksdale-Hill reminded Councilmembers of a possible adjustment needed for employee's insurance benefits.

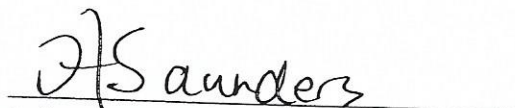
A motion was made that we pay 100% of employee health insurance premiums and 50% of the spouse/children portion.

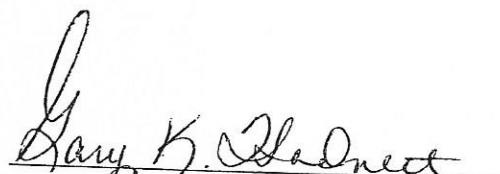
Motion: Mr. Watson

Second: Mrs. Barksdale-Hill

Passage: Unanimous

**The Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.**

  
Holly Saunders - Clerk/Treasurer

  
Gary Hodnett - Mayor