

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Council of the Town of Blackstone, Virginia, held in the Council Chambers located at 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, Virginia, on Monday, December 15, 2008, at 7:00 p.m.

There Were Present:

Mayor: William D. Coleburn

Council Members: L. Benjamin Green, John W. Hill, Jr., C. Duncan Quicke, Barbara Thompson, J. A. Wilson, Jr., Constance T. Wynn

Town Attorney: Kennon C. Walden, Jr.

Town Staff: Jennifer H. Beck, Administrative Assistant; David Dunn, Assistant Town Manager; David Ostrander, Director of Public Works; J. Larry Palmore, Town Manager; Joan R. Palmore, Town Clerk; Charles C. Wells, Finance Director

Those Absent:

Council Member: Alfred V. Tucker

Mayor Coleburn called the meeting to order and led in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Coleburn led those in the Chambers in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES

Councilman Wilson made a motion to dispense with reading and approve with correction the Minutes of the November 12th and November 17th, 2008, Council Meetings. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

Mayor Coleburn stated that Councilman Tucker is still in rehabilitation because of an accident that occurred on October 30th. He is in our thoughts and prayers.

VISITORS

1. Sam Moncure stated that he read in the paper that the Town lost money on our bus system but he also read that we made money so he is trying to figure that out.

Mayor Coleburn and Manager Palmore answered that the bus is never going to make money.

Manager Palmore explained that the figures listed include grant funds from the State.

Mr. Moncure then asked the following questions:

**How much is the Town's total contribution to the bus system?*

**How many busses do we have?*

**How many grants are tied up in this package?*

**What is our matching contribution on the bus shop?*

**What would happen if, because of the crunch we are in right now, these grants stopped, where would we be?*

**How long do these grants run?*

**What is the Town's obligation to the bus system in the coming years?*

**If the bus system became too expensive, how could we get out of these obligations and how deeply are we tied into it?*

Mr. Moncure also asked what is our total cost, salary and up keep on the truck, etc., for the animal control officer and is this cost worth it to us.

Mayor Coleburn thanked Mr. Moncure for the questions and stated that we would get him the answers.

2. Todd Hulings asked the Council how much does it cost the Town to pick up trash outside of Town.

Manager Palmore answered that he does not know without looking into it.

Mayor Coleburn answered that he doesn't really know how we could gauge this.

Councilman Green informed Mr. Hulings that the Town does not require out-of-town residents to use our garbage service.

Manager Palmore stated that the out-of-town residents came to us and asked us to serve them but we haven't added any additional out-of-town customers since the 1960's or 70's.

Mr. Hulings stated that he does business in Town, shops in Town, works in Town, etc., and he feels it is important to buy local and by his calculations, the Town is only making about \$200.00 a month serving out-of-town customers. He added that it would cost out-of-town customers more if he were to pickup their garbage.

Mayor Coleburn asked if out of Town residents are required to have the Town pickup their trash.

Manager Palmore answered, no sir.

Councilman Hill asked Mr. Hulings wasn't the Town picking up garbage for out-of-town residents before Mr. Hulings went into business.

Mr. Hulings answered, yes sir but does that mean the Town should continue.

3. Francis Gilmore addressed Council and handed them a copy of a prepared statement. He wished Council a very Merry Christmas. He stated that he is passing out copies of three different requests that he has submitted to the Town of Blackstone for information associated with the CDBG project, specifically the facade improvement program. He stated that he requested this information when the consultant did not meet the scope of work outlined in the program documents. He asked Council why does he not have all the documents that he has requested from the Town. He stated that since asking for this information, he has heard through the grapevine that he is a trouble maker or someone that cannot be satisfied or possibly that he is trying to discredit B & B Consultants so that he can receive the work that B & B Consultants gets from the Town. He stated that none of these things are true. He is embarrassed to say that this demonstrates the childish, name calling, bullying tactics that this Town is known for using when someone asks too many questions. He referred to Item #1, which is highlighted in the information he handed to Council, and stated again that he has not received all the information that he has requested.

Mayor Coleburn asked Mr. Gilmore has he been told why he has not received the information he has requested.

Mr. Gilmore answered, no he has not, but he added that he has requested a lot of information over the past month and the Town has done a great job of providing most of what he has requested but this one specific piece of information (he has referred to in the documents he presented to Council) has not yet been provided. He stated that as a business owner and resident of Blackstone he feels he should be entitled to receive what he has asked for.

Manager Palmore asked the Mayor what is item #1 in the information Mr. Gilmore gave to the Mayor and Council but did not provide to him.

Mayor Coleburn did not answer Manager Palmore or give him a copy of the information Mr. Gilmore had provided to Council. He asked Mr. Gilmore to continue.

Manager Palmore stated that he would just like to know what Mr. Gilmore is referring to so he can address it.

Mr. Gilmore continued and stated that he is again, asking for the fourth time, for a copy of the contract between the Town of Blackstone and their consultants concerning the planning and implementation of the facade improvement program. He stated that he is not trying to start trouble and he is not looking into matters that he should not. These were taxpayer dollars spent to provide a service as a business downtown. He added that he recognized early on that the services that are being provided do not match what was spelled out in the program guidelines and he simply wanted to see what the consultant has been asked legally to perform and apparently paid in excess of \$50,000 to provide. He is a concerned citizen who wants to be involved and he is asking the Council to make sure that he receives this information.

Mayor Coleburn asked Mr. Gilmore if he could answer some questions.

Mr. Gilmore asked is that appropriate for him to field questions at this time.

Manager Palmore stated that he will be glad to answer Mr. Gilmore's questions. He stated that he has spoken to Mr. Gilmore numerous times and he told Mr. Gilmore that we do not have the specific document that he wants because it does not exist. He then explained to Council and Mr. Gilmore the history on how we got started with Downtown Revitalization. He stated that back in 2004, LMW Consultants, a company out of Roanoke, was awarded the original bid from DHCD and the Town but LMW did not put enough money into the project to cover what needed to be done so we had to go back and issue another RFP and this time the Board chose B & B Consultants to do the work. Manager Palmore explained that we already have B & B Consultants under contract with the Town as our engineers as well as Volkert & Associates who takes care of our streets and transportation. B & B Consultants takes care of our water and sewer and the Downtown Revitalization.

Mayor Coleburn asked for clarification on what Board Manager Palmore was referring to.

Manager Palmore stated that the Board did not have a name but was a group of people organized specifically to administer the grant early on during the beginning when we first got the grant. He stated that at that time, back at the very beginning, we cut back the scope-of-work. He explained the document that Mr. Gilmore is referring to was copied from Floyd County and in that document it said that the consultants would provide renderings of each building. He explained that we used Floyd County's document as a template. We did not have the money to

produce renderings of each building, so we went back and talked with the above mentioned board and B & B Consultants about what we could do and they presented us with a scope-of-work (which has been given to Mr. Gilmore), and Manager Palmore said that he told B & B Consultants to go to work. We didn't give them anything in writing but he doesn't give them anything in writing when he tells them to work on a drainage problem he may have in Town. So, he stated again, that he cannot produce a document that does not exist.

Mr. Gilmore stated that when this Town decides to spend State and Federal funding it is lawful that these expenditures be backed up in black and white so if a question comes up, then it can be produced in black and white and shown what is expected. He stated again that his request to Council still stands. He expects the Council to produce for him the scope of work that authorized the expenditure of those funds between the Town of Blackstone and B & B Consultants. Mr. Gilmore stated that he does not have a problem with B & B Consultants. He has worked with B & B in the past and he believes that they are extremely capable and very professional. What he is looking for is this information so he and other businesses Downtown can move forward.

Councilman Green called the Council's attention to contract 06-35, an agreement between the Town of Blackstone and the Department of Housing and Community Development. He explained that here in this agreement, it states that the grantee is the Town of Blackstone and on page 7 of this document it refers to accounting records and it states that the grantee shall establish and maintain separate accounts within its existing accounting system or set up accounts independently which are in conformity with the requirements of federal regulations. He then referred to the DHCD Manual requirements and any other written notices from DHCD. He continued to read-- that all costs, including paid services charged to the grant shall be supported by properly executed payrolls, time records, invoices, contracts, vouchers and any other accounting documents should be clearly identified, readily accessible and separate and distinct from all other such documents. Such documents shall reside at the offices of the grantee locally. Records-- the grantee shall maintain such records as prescribed in the manual and should be readily accessible to DHCD and the appropriate State and Federal agencies and the general public during the course of this project and should remain in tact for five years. He stated that he has a question. Tonight the Council is going to be asked to approve the bills and one of the bills is to B & B Consultants in the amount of \$59,000. He asked were we invoiced for this \$59,000 and how do we know what we are paying for.

Manager Palmore answered that they have fulfilled their obligation in the scope of work that they provided to us and again, Mr. Gilmore has a copy of that scope of work. He explained that we took the scope of work and met with B & B Consultants after they were chosen as engineers on the Downtown Revitalization project, to decide what we could afford to do. He then told B & B Consultants to go to work. He stated that if this was done incorrectly, he is sorry.

Councilman Green stated that we are clearly in violation of the agreement that we have with DHCD.

Manager Palmore answered that DHCD is on board with us and they understand where we are. He added that we are meeting with each property owner and talking to them about what is involved with their bids. We have also asked the contractor to give us a schedule of values for each business owner that has requested one. He added that we will continue to work with everyone. He has heard from Mr. Gilmore and Mr. Allman that there are so many people who are dissatisfied with the project, but he has heard none of this from any of the business owners.

Councilman Green stated that the business owners are intimidated by the Town Manager and that is why they won't tell him how they feel.

Manager Palmore stated that he has met with the Downtown property owners and he does not understand what Councilman Green means when he says they are intimidated by him. He had not gotten that impression from any of them. He stated that he wants to work with all the business owners.

Councilman Green stated that the business owners don't want to fall from his favor. He then referred to a survey that was done recently by Mr. Allman.

Manager Palmore stated that DHCD told him that they wished they had, had the survey Councilman Green is referring to so they could have gone down each question in the survey during the last meeting and answered some of the questions asked. He stated that surveys can be interpreted many different ways, it is all in how you ask the questions. He feels that the thing to do is for us to continue to move forward. If there are people who want to continue to stir up problems, than forget it, we can absorb all the money from the Coca-Cola building down and also the "Hole" but that is not what we want to do. We want to work with every property owner so we can resolve these issues.

Mayor Coleburn asked Mr. Gilmore if the only issue he is not satisfied with is that he has not received documents that he has requested.

Mr. Gilmore stated this is the root of the problem. He doesn't think this was being conducted very well and he doesn't feel that he is getting his money's worth so his logical request is to get the scope-of-work. He then stated again that his request still stands because he knows it is out there somewhere.

Mayor Coleburn stated that he can see that we are not going to be able make Mr. Gilmore happy tonight.

Manager Palmore asked for clarification on Mr. Gilmore's statements. He asked Mr. Gilmore if he is saying that he is being untruthful when he told Mr. Gilmore that the document he is looking for does not exist.

Mr. Gilmore answered that he wants something in writing from the Town Manager stating that the Town does not ever sign written contracts with consultants because if that is the truth then he is going to go to the State.

Manager Palmore replied that if you do this, you will kill the entire project.

Mr. Gilmore stated that may be what needs to be done because then maybe they can get some issues resolved and some real dialogue going.

Manager Palmore stated again that he is in constant communication with DHCD and they are aware of all of this and everything we are doing and they want us to continue to move forward. He reiterated that he is not going to produce a document that doesn't exist. When he called B & B Consultants and told them to go to work, they went to work. If Mr. Gilmore doesn't believe that, then that is his choice.

Mr. Gilmore stated that his problem is he doesn't know what B & B Consultants went to work for.

Manager Palmore answered, the scope-of-work he has already provided to Mr. Gilmore.

Councilman Green asked when can we discuss this issue further. He doesn't want this to be dropped, he wants it resolved. He feels we may need a Council work session. He stated there is too much involved here and he doesn't want anything to stop it from going forward.

Manager Palmore replied that we are going to make this Town what it should be and he is not going to be the one to kill this project. He added that what Mr. Gilmore is saying tonight doesn't bother him in the least because he knows that he is trying to confuse everyone.

Councilman Green would like to get all the parties involved and have a work session with Council.

Manager Palmore stated that DBI's part of this project is done.

Councilman Green stated that DBI is not out of this, according to the documents that the Mayor was authorized to sign.

Manager Palmore stated that the contract the property owners will be signing is going to be between the Town of Blackstone, the contractor and the business owner.

Councilman Quicke stated that DBI should be involved as a liaison.

Manager Palmore stated that DBI has been involved and has done an outstanding job but the way it has been explained to him is that DBI should no longer be involved.

Councilman Green feels that the Town Attorney should look at these documents so we can get this straight.

Councilman Green wants the Town Manager to continue on with what he is doing. He does not want to delay anything.

Mr. Gilmore feels that the Town Attorney should look at the documents before we continue on and before we pay B & B Consultants for their most recent invoice.

Mayor Coleburn is concerned that there is some dissension in the ranks. He doesn't like to have more meetings but he feels we need to come together and meet on this. He asked the Council if they feel that something could be accomplished if we have a Council work session.

Councilman Green stated that Chairman Joe Allman would like for his thoughts to be brought before the board and a copy of his letter is attached.

Manager Palmore asked Council if they wanted him to proceed.

Councilman Green asked if we have paid B & B Consultants.

Manager Palmore answered, yes.

Councilman Green asked have we broken the law.

Town Attorney Walden stated that he would like the opportunity to review the documents.

Manager Palmore stated that the Council has awarded the contract to the low bidder. We have asked them for a schedule of values. We are prepared to issue contracts on some of the properties. He has agreed to begin work with a letter of intent for the remainder of the property owners. He feels that once we get started, all this confusion will go away. He added that DHCD said that the survey that was done recently, was one sided.

Mr. Joe Allman, addressed Council and stated that he talked to the Town Manager about the survey prior to it being given to Matt Fitzgerald with DHCD. He stated that during the Management Team meeting the survey was discussed openly. He added that the bottom line is that he wants the best for the project and he knows that is what the Town Manager wants also. Mr. Allman stated that he and the other nine members of the DBI Board feel that there is a disconnect between the property owners and Town government. He agrees with what Councilman Green said that the property owners feel intimidated. He feels this is partly because

of statements like what the Town Manager said earlier about taking all the money and putting it into the Borum Property and leaving everyone else out. Things like this scare people. He asked Manager Palmore what does he mean when he says “we.”

Manager Palmore answered, the Town.

Mr. Allman stated that this is a \$754,000 project with \$280,000 coming from the State. The rest of it is coming out of the check books of the property owners Downtown. That’s almost \$500,000. He stated that this is their project. They are the “we.” He added that the Town is not putting a water line down Main Street and he understands the Town Manager’s position and its hard to keep everyone satisfied but these people feel an extreme disconnect. They feel like if they don’t cooperate they will lose the program. They also feel if they don’t agree to everything we will lose the funding and the rest of the property owners will get mad. This is a big issue and he understands that the Town Manager’s phone rings off the hook all the time and no one is ever satisfied but he has been working on this project for three years. He added that we have to change the way we operate if we want change.

Mayor Coleburn feels that we need to have a meeting.

Mr. Allman stated that we need to make things right with the property owners. He added that they increased participation from 40% to 100% but as facade management, they didn’t do what they agreed to and now we are expecting the property owners to write the checks. We are now trying to play catch up.

Mayor Coleburn stated that if we do have a meeting, then everyone needs to be open and grown up about all of this. He wants everyone to be willing to communicate what their problems are. He stated that later tonight, during this meeting, he is going to come up with a date for another meeting to discuss the issues brought out tonight.

Mr. Allman stated that he is not here to attack Town Council, Manager Palmore or anyone else. He just wants this project to work and to move forward.

Councilman Green stated that some of the property owners have been told by B & B Consultants not to mess with this project or to cause dissension.

Manager Palmore asked for Council’s consensus about moving forward on the project.

Councilman Green stated that he does not have a problem with this other than with B & B Consultant’s recent bill.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Fire Chief Tony Bradford made the report for the Fire Department for the month of November. He thanked the Council Members and Town Staff who attended the recent Fire Department Christmas dinner. He stated that Philip Armes won First Responder of the Year, Fire Fighter of the year, and the Anderson Mayton Award which is for the individual that answers the most fire calls. Philip Armes answered 334 out of 444 EMS calls and he answered 238 out of 244 fire calls. He stated that it is outstanding for an individual to be able to answer that many calls and he really appreciates Philip's help. He stated that Ray Armes was given his lifetime membership award at the same banquet and they also remembered Edgar Johnson who died during a fire in 1962. He stated that they recently changed their bylaws to make it so that if anyone gives their life in the line of duty, then they will be given life membership with the Fire Department. Fire Chief Bradford also informed Council that Bubba Hart won Officer of the year and he added that they now have 50 members which is the most that they have ever had in the history of the Department. He also thanked the Mayor and Town Council for the plaque given to the Fire Department which lists all of the members.

Councilman Quicke asked how many junior members does the Fire Department have now.

Fire Chief Bradford answered, currently we have 6 or 8 junior members. The reason the number is down is because they had four juniors who turned 18 within the last several months. He added that they have two more applications in now.

Mayor Coleburn stated that the Board of Supervisors is having a special meeting on Wednesday in the health department building at 4:00 p.m., and they are going to discuss recycling and emergency services.

Fire Chief Bradford wished the Council a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous new year.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Councilman Wilson made a motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$734,935.98. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke.

Discussion:

Councilman Hill asked several questions about the bills.

After further discussion, Councilman Green asked about the bill we are requesting payment for to B & B Consultants. He is concerned with the cost estimate provided. If we have paid the \$45,000, where does it show what we have paid for.

Manager Palmore answered that you have to look at what they have already done.

Mr. Allman stated that the Design Phase is over and that bill has been paid. He stated that he asked Mr. Bugg in the Management Team meeting if we will be billed at the hourly rate and his understanding of the answer was yes because the additional meetings were beyond the original scope of work.

Manager Palmore stated that he agrees with Mr. Allman's statement 100 percent.

Councilman Green asked what did we get for the \$1,000 per facade.

Manager Palmore answered that what we have gotten is the engineers have had several meetings with the property owners. They met with most everyone two or more times and in some cases as many as five times. They have not billed us extra for those hours, that he knows of. They also submitted the documents to **DHR** and they didn't charge us for that and they worked many overtime hours that they have not charged us for. He stated that B & B Consultants has worked very hard on the project and as even offered to meet with Janette Baranishyn this Sunday. He does not believe that Mac Bugg is going to charge us an hourly rate for something that we are questioning.

Councilman Green asked the Town Manager to review the first page of the bills with regards to the Downtown project.

Manager Palmore went through the list of bills with Council.

Councilman Green stated that he cannot justify voting to approve these bills until we have something to identify to the taxpayer what we are paying for.

The motion to pay the bills was approved as follows.

Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Nay
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Manager Palmore stated that a group of people recently traveled to Bedford County to look at how they started a recycling program. He feels that we should continue to pursue this. The main thing that we need to work out is where the school can be involved. He recently learned that the County is going to release a document on recycling sometime next week.

REPORT ON NEW JAMES S. HARRIS MEDICAL CENTER

Manager Palmore reported things are going wonderful. The glass is going in the windows and our next goal is to try and get heat into the building. The partitions are in and you can see how the building will be laid out. He stated that they are ahead of schedule.

Mayor Coleburn asked about the sleep clinic.

Manager Palmore answered, that as of right now we will not have a sleep clinic at the new medical center. They are looking at other options such as a dentist office.

Councilman Wilson asked about the bricks. Are we still selling bricks.

Manager Palmore answered, yes but we need for everyone who is interested in buying a brick to go ahead and do this so we can get the design underway.

Councilman Wilson asked the Town Manager to set some kind of deadline to purchase bricks.

Councilman Green stated that he forgot to mention that the Street and Light Committee met after the last Council Meeting with regards to Brother's Pizza.

Manager Palmore showed Council a map of the Brother's Pizza property and what we have agreed to swap with them. He explained that this map shows the road as it will be.

Mayor Coleburn is concerned that the road may not end up quite as nice as it is shown on the map. He hopes this will work out. He stated that a lot of traffic is going to be generated by the new medical center.

Mayor Coleburn thanked the Committee for their hard work and he also thanked Councilwoman Wynn for sitting in on the Committee for Councilman Tucker.

DEPT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS - Resolution; Letters of Support from Burkeville and Crewe

Manager Palmore stated that Adjutant General Newman has been saying that one of the reasons he needs to move the headquarters to Sandston is because the people in Southside Virginia are all a little slow and don't know what they are doing. Manager Palmore stated that he just wants to make sure the Adjutant General knows that we know what he is saying about us.

Councilman Wilson suggested running an ad in the local paper welcoming the troops at Fort Pickett.

Manager Palmore recommended a banner across Main Street welcoming the troops.

After further discussion, Councilman Green made a motion to appropriate \$1,500.00 to have a banner put up on Main Street welcoming the troops. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

SURPLUS PROPERTY SALE

Mayor Coleburn stated that included in Council's packet is the list of equipment that the Town sold at public auction on November 8th.

COMMITTEE TO HONOR FOUNDERS OF THE BLACKSTONE FAMILY PRACTICE CENTER

Mayor Coleburn asked Council for a few more days to get this list together. He stated that he has talked to Chuck Beale and Jane Lee Wright and they have agreed to serve on the committee. He plans to ask several others.

MAYOR COLEBURN'S RESPONSE TO LETTER FROM BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Mayor Coleburn asked for Council's input on his draft letter of response to the Nottoway County Board of Supervisors. He did not feel like he got a good consensus from Council at the last meeting, on whether or not we should include the water issue in the letter.

Councilman Wilson feels this is a great letter and the Mayor handled it very well.

Councilman Green and Councilman Quicke stated that they also liked the letter.

Manager Palmore would like the Mayor to include the stump problem especially on the Oak Street property.

Mayor Coleburn stated that he mentioned five items in the draft letter and they are as follows:

1. Fire Department
2. Library
3. Dilapidated/Dangerous Buildings
4. Recycling
5. Water

Councilman Hill asked about the water and what is our obligation to Fort Pickett.

Manager Palmore answered 2.5 million gallons and the Town uses around 300,000 gallons a day.

Councilman Hill asked if the West end of the County causes the usage to go up to a point where we could not meet the capacity, are the citizens of Blackstone going to have to pay this bill.

Manager Palmore answered, no sir. Issues like this would have to be handled through contracts and would have to be paid for by those who are using the excess capacity. He does not feel that we should ever go below the million gallons a day mark. He added that it should not be up to the taxpayers of Blackstone to pay for any upgrades if an upgrade becomes necessary in order to provide water to the other end of the County.

Councilman Hill feels that we should take the water issue out of the letter.

After further discussion by Council, Mayor Coleburn asked how much water is Fort Pickett using now.

Finance Director Wells answered their bill averages between five and six million gallons a month which figures to be around 300,000 gallons a day.

Councilman Green agrees with Councilman Hill to take the water issue out of the letter to the County.

On motion by Councilman Green, seconded by Councilman Wilson to remove item #5 which is the water issue, and to send the letter with the stump issue to be included.

After further discussion, the motion was approved as follows. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

MAYOR COLEBURN'S LETTER TO HOSPITALS IN AREA

Mayor Coleburn asked Council for their thoughts on the draft letter he had prepared to area hospitals.

Councilman Green made a motion to ask the Town Clerk to send the letter to the list of area hospitals.

Councilman Wilson feels we should send the letter to Bon Secours first out of courtesy and give them an opportunity to respond before we send it to everyone else.

Councilman Green feels that if there is any way that we can get a hospital here than we should do it.

Manager Palmore feels that this is a great idea and we should give Bon Secours a heads up that this is coming. He feels we should remove the eight hours a day sentence out of the letter. He added that we don't want to do anything that might cause any confusion.

Councilman Green rescinded his motion.

Mayor Coleburn asked Council to agree by Common Consent to send this letter to area hospitals but only after we talk to Bon Secours first.

Council agreed by Common Consent.

**RESOLUTION - VDOT (BROWN STREET) RATIFY POLL TAKEN ON
DECEMBER 2ND**

Councilman Wilson made a motion to ratify the following poll taken on December 2, 2008, to adopt the attached Resolution.

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye

Councilman Hill - Aye
Councilwoman Thompson - Aye

The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke - Aye
Councilwoman Wynn - Aye
Councilman Green - Aye
Councilman Wilson - Aye
Councilman Hill - Aye
Councilwoman Thompson - Aye

Manager Palmore mentioned that he received a letter from VDOT today about a public hearing on Monday, January 12th at 6:00 p.m., on VDOT funds. He asked Mayor Coleburn to attend, if at all possible.

Mayor Coleburn stated that he would try.

NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM

Mayor Coleburn stated that you can now buy flood insurance in Blackstone. He thanked Councilman Quicke and his committee for their work on this and he also thanked Assistant Town Manager Dunn.

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU - CENSUS 2010

Mayor Coleburn stated that there are 15,000 jobs available with the Census Bureau to prepare for Census 2010 and he added that this is a very important thing for Blackstone.

Council discussed having a work session around the first week of January.

Mayor Coleburn called a work session for Wednesday, January 7th at 7:00 p.m., to discuss the Downtown Revitalization Project.

Council discussed changing the date of the January Council Meeting.

Councilman Green made a motion to change the regularly scheduled Council Meeting in January to Tuesday, January 20th at 7:00 p.m., due to the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday on the 19th. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn. Vote:

Councilman Quicke - Aye
Councilwoman Wynn - Aye
Councilman Green - Aye
Councilman Wilson - Aye

Councilman Hill - Aye
Councilwoman Thompson - Aye

CURRENT LIST OF GOALS

Mayor Coleburn stated that he thought Council was going to discuss the new list of goals.

Town Clerk Palmore stated that at the November Council Meeting, Council asked her to provide them with a list of the current goals for this meeting.

Council discussed having a work session in early January and maybe the new goals could be talked about at that meeting.

ADS ON BUS

Councilman Hill made a motion to table this issue. The motion was seconded by Councilman Green. Vote:

Councilman Quicke - Aye
Councilwoman Wynn - Aye
Councilman Green - Aye
Councilman Wilson - Aye
Councilman Hill - Aye
Councilwoman Thompson - Aye

ON GOING PROJECTS:

Castles Trailer Park - This project continues to go well and things are moving forward on the houses.

Downtown Revitalization - Manager Palmore asked for Council's disposition on the attached revised Facade Improvement Program Design.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve the attached revised Facade Improvement Program Design. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Thompson. Vote:

Councilman Quicke - Aye
Councilwoman Wynn - Aye
Councilman Green - Aye
Councilman Wilson - Aye
Councilman Hill - Aye
Councilwoman Thompson - Aye

Councilman Green made a motion to adopt the attached updated Project Management Plan. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke and approved as follows. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

BUS SHOP RIBBON CUTTING - January 14, 2009, 11:00 a.m.

Mayor Coleburn stated that the Bus Shop Ribbon Cutting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 14th at 11:00 a.m.

RESOLUTION - GENERATOR FOR JAMES S. HARRIS MEDICAL CENTER

Councilman Hill made a motion to adopt the attached Resolution to be included in the USDA grant application to request funding to purchase a generator for the James S. Harris Medical Center. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

SENATE BILL 751 - Out of Town Water and Sewer Rates

Mayor Coleburn stated that someone has proposed a bill to the Senate that basically says that if you serve water and sewer to out of town customers you could not charge them more than 50% of the cost and Blackstone charges 100%.

Manager Palmore stated that we should not sit here quietly but he doesn't feel this will move forward.

On motion by Councilman Wilson, seconded by Councilman Quicke, the Council unanimously approved supporting Leesburg on this issue. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

Manager Palmore stated that we will send a letter of support from Council.

MISCELLANEOUS

Manager Palmore stated that we need to thank Bobby Daniel for all his hard work with the park and the train rides. He also thanked DBI for their hard work. He then thanked the Town Council for all they have done and continue to do for the Town employees during tough financial times.

Manager Palmore added that he pledges himself 100% to do whatever he can to make the Downtown Revitalization project successful. He feels that two years from now we are going to look back at this project and say Wow!

Mayor Coleburn stated there is nothing we can't do as long as we work together.

Councilman Green stated that the Grand Illumination and the First Annual Downtown Blackstone Open House was a wonderful thing. He thanked Francis Gilmore, Grace McDonald and Joe Allman and others for all they did to make this a success.

Mayor Coleburn agreed that this was a great event and he thanked everyone involved.

Manager Palmore reminded Council about the barbeque lunch on December 23rd at 12:00 noon at the bus shop.

MAYOR'S MINUTE

Mayor Coleburn feels we need to explore expanding the radius for the right hand turn onto 10th Street off of South Main Street.

Manager Palmore stated that we talked about doing this in the third phase of the six year plan but unfortunately with the budget cuts, this may not happen for a long time. He added that he will be happy to talk to the property owner about expanding the radius as he feels that this would improve the property. He also doesn't see it costing the Town that much money. He added that we need to put some type of sidewalk where people can walk on both sides of the street.

Mayor Coleburn stated that the only property owner he feels we need to talk to is Mr. Weller who owns the property on the corner. (Former Joe Levy residence)

Mayor Coleburn asked have the auditors come yet or are they planning to come at all in December.

Finance Director Wells answered that he has spoken with Paul Lee but we are not on their schedule yet.

Mayor Coleburn asked how are we doing on the line of credit.

Manager Palmore stated that we expect to pay down another \$70,000 this month on the \$600,000 line of credit.

Mayor Coleburn asked can we make a phone call and ask the auditors to come here earlier.

Manager Palmore answered that he will contact the auditor.

Councilman Wilson feels that since our statements are reconciled and up to date, then we are in a position to ask them to come earlier. He added that Robinson, Farmer, Cox are the best auditors we have ever had since he has been serving on Council.

Councilman Hill stated that they are a little later each year getting the audit report to us.

Mayor Coleburn would like to have the proposed budget unveiled prior to the May Council Meeting and for the meeting to only be about the budget.

POLICE REPORT

There were no comments on the Police Report.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

CLOSED SESSION

Councilman Wilson made a motion to go into Closed Session according to the following:

- Virginia Code Session 2.1-344
- Sub Section A.
- 3. Disposition of Real Property
- 2. Personnel

The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye

Mayor Coleburn declared the meeting back in Open Session.

Councilman Green made a motion to certify that to the best of each member’s knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened, were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hill and approved as follows. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye
Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye

MISCELLANEOUS

Manager Palmore spoke to Council about Ward Transformer and handed out information. He stated that the bottom line is that we are going to have to write a check and this is going to be another long drawn out process before we find out how much that check is going to be. Blackstone and 22 other localities/businesses have asked the lawyers to tell us what we owe.

Mayor Coleburn thanked Council. He stated that we have had a good and challenging year. He looks forward to another great year. He also thanked the Town Manager, the Town Clerk and the Town Attorney.

Manager Palmore thanked the Council for all they do and he stated that he has great people working for him.

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Coleburn declared the meeting adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

MAYOR
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

_____ APPROVED AND ADOPTED

TOWN CLERK
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA