

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, on Monday, March 19, 2007, 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, Alfred V. Tucker, 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, Nicholas C. Kuzmiak, Police Chief, J. Larry Palmore, Town Manager, Joan R. Palmore, Town Clerk, Charles C. Wells, Finance Director

Those Absent: None

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

AUDIT REPORT

Paul Lee, from Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates, presented the 2005/06 Audit Report to Council. Mr. Lee reviewed the Audit Report. He stated that the General Fund finished up with a positive amount of money coming in. We have closed out some of the capital projects as well as some that were utility related. The Town's tax collection ratio is very high and is a couple of percentage points higher than usual, which is good. This coming year-2007- the Town will have to be prepared for SAS-212 which is a new auditing standard. One of the things involved is how much assistance can an auditor give and still be considered independent. He added that Chris Wells and his assistant went to a session a few weeks ago on beginning the implementation of SAS-212.

Councilman Hill asked Paul Lee to change page 7, paragraph 3 from County to Town.

Councilman Tucker entered the meeting.

Councilman Hill asked about the decrease in the proprietary funds.

Paul Lee answered this is primarily because of transfers.

Councilman Hill asked about the limit on the amount of money the Town can be in debt and how that affects the Enterprise Funds.

Paul Lee explained the legal debt margin and how it is figured.

Mayor Coleburn asked about the long term debt and what kind of feel does he have about our finances in Blackstone?

Mr. Lee answered that the General Fund budget is \$3.2 million and the fund balance of the General Fund was about \$308,000, which is about 10%. He stated that 20% to 25% surplus is ideal. It is hard to give a fast and firm percentage but 20% is where we want to start.

Mayor Coleburn thanked Mr. Lee for his and his firm's assistance.

Councilman Hill made a motion to accept the Audit as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and approved unanimously. Vote:

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

MINUTES

Councilman Wilson made a motion to dispense with reading and approve as presented the Minutes of the February 26, 2007, 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
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

VISITORS

1. Myra Quicke, representing the Blackstone Rotary Club, addressed the Council regarding the 2nd Annual “Picking-up-our-Pride” in Blackstone day. They would like to hold this on Saturday, April 21st and she asked that the Town pickup the trash after the cleanup, as we did last year.

On motion by Councilman Wilson, seconded by Councilman Green, to approve the Blackstone Rotary Club holding the Annual “Picking-up-our-Pride” in Blackstone Day on April 21st and for the Town to help with garbage collection. Vote:

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

2. Linda Moore, Crenshaw United Methodist Church, addressed Council regarding Good Friday, April 6th. The members of the Ministerial Association would like to walk through Town carrying the Cross from 6:30 a.m., to 8:30 p.m., as they have done the last few years.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve the above request. 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
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

3. Bob Maxey, 706 Nottoway Avenue, stated he is here regarding an issue with his property on Nottoway Avenue.

Manager Palmore stated that he met with Councilwoman Thompson the other day on this issue. He explained to Mr. Maxey that no land was taken away from his mother's property during the VDOT project. This right-of-way was done about two years after the construction was complete on this project.

Mr. Maxey feels that the Town should provide Mr. Byron Lee with a free hookup (*tap fee*).

Manager Palmore explained that it is not fair to the taxpayers of Blackstone to give a tap fee on this property if we aren't going to give everyone in Town a free tap fee.

Mayor Coleburn suggested that the Town Manager and Mr. Maxey meet and discuss this issue further.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Ray Armes presented the Fire Chief's report for February and asked if Council had any questions. He stated that he handed in their budget request for turn-out gear to the Town Manager

Manager Palmore stated that they received a bid of \$12,743.94 for the turn-out gear and that the Fire Department will have a budget shortfall of \$3,743.99, if they purchase the turn-out gear.

Council discussed this further.

Councilman Hill made a motion to take the money out of one of the Fire Department's repair line items. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and approved unanimously.
Vote:

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

Mayor Coleburn asked the Town Clerk to include on the Agenda for the April Council Meeting the offer by the Fire Department to allow us to use their building for a Town-wide voting precinct and for the Council to come to the meeting prepared to discuss this offer. He also wants to discuss the Rescue RAM.

Council discussed the change in the Town-wide voting precinct.

Fire Chief Armes stated that on April 19th at 7:00 they are going to have a retirement dinner at the Fire Station for Dillard Johnson. He added that Dillard has been a member of the BVFD for 60 years.

Manager Palmore asked Council for a motion to transfer \$3,743.99 from the General Fund to the Fire Department Capital Outlay to pay for the turn-out gear.

On motion by Councilman Hill, seconded by Councilwoman Thompson, to transfer the funds from the General Fund into the Fire Department Capital Outlay to pay for turn-out gear for the Fire Department. Vote:

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

Fire Chief Armes asked if Alberta has requested one of our old air compressors.

Manager Palmore answered that he did receive a letter on this request.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to give the old air compressor to the Alberta Fire Department. 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
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Councilman Quicke made a motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$267,725.96. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hill.

Council discussed the bills.

Vote:

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Health and Ordinance Committee - Councilwoman Wynn stated that her Committee has not met but she plans to have a report on the banner request for Council at the April Council Meeting.

RESOLUTION - DR. EDWARDS

Councilman Green made a motion to approve the attached Resolution for Dr. Edwards. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and approved as follows. Vote:

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

Council discussed presenting this Resolution to Dr. Edwards at the June Council Meeting.

BINDING SYSTEM FOR COUNCIL PACKETS/GRANT APPLICATIONS

Council discussed the binding system.

Manager Palmore stated that one way this will save money is the cost of green-bar paper because we will be printing the bills and copying them onto regular paper.

Councilwoman Thompson made a motion to purchase the binding system in the amount of \$7,091.00. 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
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

MEDICAL CENTER

Manager Palmore gave Council a copy of a new Resolution on the Medical Center that we will need to consider adopting tonight. He stated that this Resolution includes a different budget figure than the one we previously presented to Council and he reviewed this figure with Council. Manager Palmore stated that we tried hard to have a representative from Bon-Secours here tonight but they couldn't make it. He will let Council know when we can schedule a face-to-face meeting with them. He showed Council a map of a long range plan. He stated that this also shows the road that VDOT is going to pay for in the 2020 plan. He added that this is eventually how Brown Street will look. He feels that we have got to do some planning on the look of the outside of the building.

Council discussed this plan as well as the budget sheet that the Town Manager passed out.

Manager Palmore stated that the amount we will need to borrow is \$1.87 million which he reminded Council, under our agreement, would be paid back in ten years.

Councilman Hill asked if we have a letter of agreement from Bon-Secours.

Manager Palmore answered that we have a Memorandum of Understanding from Bon-Secours. He added that he recently heard from a dentist who is very interested in this project.

Council discussed the cost of rent per month that Bon-Secours would have to pay.

Councilman Green is very disappointed that we do not have a representative here tonight from Bon-Secours.

Manager Palmore stated that he did everything including beg, as Mayor Coleburn can attest, for a representative to come tonight. He is certain that we will have a meeting with them within the next week or so.

Mayor Coleburn reiterated that taxes will not be raised one cent because of this project.

After further discussion, Councilman Green made a motion to approve the attached Resolution presented on the Medical Center Project. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Thompson and approved unanimously. Vote:

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

Councilman Wilson reminded everyone that we can also attract dentists by a program that will pay them a salary, and also will pay for their school debts.

ON-GOING PROJECTS

Manager Palmore reported on the following *On-Going Projects*:

Armory Authority - Assistant Town Manager Dunn stated that the Armory Authority went to Emporia last week and toured a facility. We need to have a Building and Property Committee meeting to discuss the roof.

Bus Shop - We are moving along.

Carriage Museum - He was told that we have to wait another week for the final approval from VDOT.

Downtown Revitalization - We are moving forward

AMERICAN VELVET

Manager Palmore stated that he had a meeting with Fred Lidsky with American Velvet and they will be undergoing some changes soon. Their business is going to change to an import/export company which means they are going to stop their dying process. The Town will take a big hit because of this in the amount of approximately \$17,500 a month in utilities. He wishes them the best and he knows they will give it a 100% effort. He added that American Velvet may have to reduce their workforce temporarily but they hope to increase back after they get going and will hopefully be bigger and better than ever. They have been an outstanding partner with the Town and a great company to work with.

Councilman Wilson asked if we should recognize this with a Resolution.

Manager Palmore answered that he thinks this would be a wonderful thing to recognize their efforts.

BROADBAND WORKSHOP - June 6th (VUMAC)

Manager Palmore stated that this workshop will be held on June 6th. Please attend if you can.

UTILITY SERVICE COMMUNICATIONS - LICENSE AGREEMENT

Manager Palmore stated that we are getting a little revenue back on one of our water tanks in the amount of \$15,695.40. He referred Council to a check we recently received from Utility Service Communications.

PARADE PERMIT - HERITAGE HALL (May 14th); CLOSE SIXTH STREET FOR SENIOR OLYMPICS (May 17th from 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)

Councilwoman Wynn made a motion to approve the requests from Heritage Hall to allow them to hold a parade on May 14th and also to close Sixth Street for the Senior Olympics on May 17th from 8:30 a.m., to 11:30 a.m. The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson. Vote:

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

GRANT APPLICATION - POLICE DEPARTMENT RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Police Chief Kuzmiak stated that this is the Third Phase of their Records Management Program grant application. He explained the grant and the different items they will be able to purchase with the grant money.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to apply for this grant. 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
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

NIMS (NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM) TRAINING

Manager Palmore stated that this training is being put on by a consultant hired by Nottoway County and is going to be very informative. He feels that it is very important that we attend.

MAYOR’S MINUTE

There were no comments from Mayor Coleburn at this time.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no comments from citizens at this time.

CLOSED SESSION

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

- Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711
- Sub Section A.
- Economic Development
- Personnel

The motion was seconded by Councilman Green and approved as follows:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilman Quicke | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Wynn | - | Aye |
| Councilman Green | - | Aye |
| Councilman Wilson | - | Aye |
| Councilman Hill | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Thompson | - | Aye |
| Councilman Tucker | - | 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 Councilwoman Wynn and approved as follows. Vote:

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

Councilman Quicke asked about the airport meeting on May 7th and how are we with that.

Manager Palmore answered that he feels that we are in a working atmosphere right now. We provided them with other joint-use agreements from across the United States so hopefully we can move forward. He added that he had lunch with General Newman last week and he is on board. Manager Palmore stated that he asked General Newman to spend more time in Town and try to improve his relationship with this Council.

Councilman Quicke asked if the Stockholders approve it and Dollar General is sold, will that affect our negotiations with them.

Manager Palmore answered that he will certainly check on this.

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Coleburn declared the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

MAYOR
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

_____ APPROVED AND ADOPTED

TOWN CLERK
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

