

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, November 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 Tucker, J. A. Wilson, Jr.

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:

Council Member: Constance T. Wynn

Mayor Coleburn called the meeting to order and Councilman Quicke 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 as presented the Minutes of the October 22, and October 30, 2007, Council Meetings. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke.

*Discussion:* Councilman Green asked the Town Clerk to include a list of sixteen questions that he asked the night of the October 30<sup>th</sup> Special Called Council Meeting on the new Medical Center Lease. He also wanted to call to Council's attention and to the Town Clerk's attention that the Finance Committee has worked on this lease agreement over 20 hours and this was not reflected in the Minutes. He stated that if he was to look at these Minutes it would appear to him that it was a quick meeting and the Council turned it over to the Mayor and left. He

feels for Council's reference, for public information and for history, he would like to incorporate these questions or to state in the Minutes that quite a bit of time was involved at the meeting on the lease agreement.

Town Clerk Palmore asked Councilman Green for clarification on what he is asking for. She asked if he wanted it stated in the Minutes how much time the Finance Committee spent on conference calls or in meetings with Bon-Secours.

Councilman Green answered that he thinks these meetings have been pretty intense.

Town Clerk Palmore stated that she included the time the meeting began and when it ended which shows the meeting lasted almost two hours.

Councilman Green would like reference made in the Minutes of the October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting as to how many committee meetings the Finance Committee has had on this issue and how many hours have been invested. He feels it has been over 20 hours and asked the Town Manager if that is correct.

Manager Palmore answered, he does not have a clue how many hours have been spent on this issue.

Councilman Green asked the Town Manager does he agree that there has been a tremendous amount of time spent.

Manager Palmore agreed but stated that we have not kept track of how much time we have spent in meetings on this.

Town Clerk Palmore stated that the number of hours spent on the Medical Center lease was not discussed at the October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting. She explained to Councilman Green that these Minutes are a record of what actually happened at that meeting.

Councilman Green answered, well then, just drop that. He is just trying to get across his point that a lot of time was spent and he agreed that the Town Clerk is right, this was not discussed at the October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mayor Coleburn asked Mr. Green if he has a copy of those questions he wants included in Minutes for Council to review.

Councilman Green answered that he did not have copies for Council tonight. *(He provided the Town Clerk with a copy)*

Councilman Wilson asked Councilman Green if these questions were asked in the October 30<sup>th</sup> meeting and answered by the Town.

Councilman Green answered, yes sir.

Councilman Wilson stated that he does not feel that we need to get specific on the Minutes or to put down every question asked.

Councilman Green stated that he is not asking for that. He does not want these questions in the Minutes, he just has them if someone wants to look at them. He would like a little bit more detail in the Minutes of how many questions were asked and answered and the time they put in. He stated again that if you looked at these Minutes you would think that the Council deliberated over just a few things and then turned it over to the Mayor.

Mayor Coleburn asked Councilman Green does he want the questions included to represent to the citizens who may look back in ten years to say that Council did have considerable give and take with legal Counsel because this was such a big project.

Councilman Green answered, yes.

Town Clerk Palmore asked the Council if they want these questions attached to the Minutes or would they like for her to redo the Minutes entirely?

Mayor Coleburn suggested attaching the questions in next month's Council Packet and let the Council Members have an opportunity to look them over and then Council could adopt the Minutes at the next meeting. He asked if this was okay.

Manager Palmore stated that if you are going to attach the questions, you also need to attach the answers.

Mayor Coleburn suggested leaving this up to the Town Manager's discretion because there was a Special Meeting Called to review and discuss the lease and history will show whether or not we are doing something that is the greatest thing since sliced bread or not.

The motion made and seconded to dispense with reading and approve the Minutes as presented was approved as follows. Vote:

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

## VISITORS

1. Cyndi Taylor-Longest, resident of Oak Street, addressed Council and stated that she is a sixth generation citizen of Blackstone. She loves Blackstone and would not want to live anywhere else. She added that her fifteen year old son has plans to finish college and return to Blackstone and help run it. She stated that unfortunately, her son Drake is only fifteen and Blackstone needs help now. Mrs. Longest stated that of the many services that Blackstone should provide to its residents the most important is security and public safety. She stated that she has great respect for the Blackstone police force but she feels as a unit they are failing greatly. She wishes she could obtain an accurate report of how many unsolved crimes there are in Blackstone. She decided instead to speak from her own personal knowledge. Mrs. Longest stated that on the night of September 1, 2006, she was working an extra night shift for Brother's Pizza. She was attacked and robbed on Gravatt Avenue. When her assailant took off, she called 911 immediately. She gave dispatch a detailed description of the attacker and told them the direction the man was running. Two officers responded, very quickly. She spent the night in the hospital. Early the next morning she met with the State Police at the police station. They attempted to make a composite drawing, which she said, looked nothing like the person that robbed her. Over the next few days she cooperated fully with the police. She was shown a few line ups in the weeks that followed, but none was the man that robbed her. The only thing she has heard about her case was over a year ago. She stated that back in August of this year, there was a big drug bust here in Town. Several people were arrested and their photos were in the local paper. She immediately identified the individual that robbed her from the picture in the paper and called the police department and told them that this was the individual that robbed her. A few days later an officer showed up at her house and she positively identified the person as her assailant. That is the last she has heard about her case. She stated this is a 14 month old case. Mrs. Longest feels it is up to the Town Council to fix what is wrong with the police department. She wonders why we have a dog warden, an SUV, and a motorcycle but we have not had an investigator in over two years. She personally dealt with seven different officers on her case. None of them knows what the other one is doing. She suggested that the Council go down to Oak Street, talk with Noel Shekleton and Dallas Powers and beg them to come back or at least take out an Ad and hire an investigator who can solve a case and get a prosecution. She feels changes must be made in Blackstone to keep us safe.

Mayor Coleburn stated that he did write Mrs. Longest a letter. He added that he has spoken to the Police Chief about this matter but that this matter is under investigation at this time and therefore we cannot publicly comment on it. Mayor Coleburn stated that violent crime in Blackstone this year is down considerably. He explained that the police officers cannot prosecute the case or ask themselves questions on the witness stand. He again added that we need to be careful about how we respond publicly but stated that we do hear Mrs. Longest and her complaint.

Councilman Green asked that Joe Allman and Lafayette Dickens come forward and address Council at this time.

2. Joe Allman, Chairman of Downtown Blackstone Incorporated and Mr. Lafayette Dickens a resident of Brunswick Avenue came forward to the podium. Councilman Green introduced Mr. Dickens and informed Council that DBI has offered Mr. Dickens the job of Executive Director for Downtown Blackstone Inc., and he has accepted and will be starting on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Mayor Coleburn welcomed Mr. Dickens and stated that we look forward to working with him.

Councilman Green spoke to Council about Downtown Blackstone Incorporated. He stated that they would like to have a total of six main street community signs and right now they have two so they need to purchase four more. He would like for DBI to purchase two of the signs and he requested that the Town purchase two with the understanding that the Promotions Committee will meet with the Town Manager and decide on the exact location of the signs. The cost of these signs, double-sided, will be \$302.00 each.

Councilman Green made a motion to provide \$604.00 to purchase two signs for DBI; for them to erect the signs and for the Promotions Committee to meet with the Town Manager to determine the location of the signs. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke and approved unanimously. Vote:

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

Councilwoman Thompson asked for a donation from the Town for the Christmas Parade.

Mayor Coleburn asked where is the money used that the Chamber of Commerce made on Arts and Crafts Festival and can some of that money be used for the parade.

Joe Allman stated that the Chamber of Commerce is helping with the Parade this year but this will be the last year the Chamber will be doing this. It will be handled by DBI next year.

Councilman Hill made a motion to give \$400.00 to be used for the Christmas Parade and this will be taken out of DBI funds. The motion was seconded by Councilman Tucker and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	Aye
Councilman Green	-	Aye

Councilman Wilson	-	Aye
Councilman Hill	-	Aye
Councilwoman Thompson	-	Aye
Councilman Tucker	-	Aye

**FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT**

Fire Chief Tony Bradford gave the report for the Fire Department for the month of October.

Mayor Coleburn stated that he is impressed with the department’s seven to ten minute response time reflected in the report.

Fire Chief Bradford stated that on December 1<sup>st</sup> the Blackstone Women’s Club will be sponsoring lunch with Santa at the Fire Station. Stew will be available that day to be cooked by Sam Lloyd. On December 6<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m., there will be a Memorial Service for Edgar Johnson. Chief Bradford informed those present that Mr. Johnson is the only Firefighter that we have lost in the line of duty. He died in a brush fire on December 6, 1962. Chief Bradford also informed Council that on December 8<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m., the Fire Department will hold its annual Christmas dinner at the Memorial Center. He invited Town Council and Staff. Chief Bradford informed Council that the Junior Fire Department Officers are listed as follows:

Ben Hogg	-	Junior Chief
C. J. Wilson	-	Assistant Junior Chief
Will Bradford	-	Captain
Aaron Garber	-	Lieutenant

Chief Bradford added that these guys are putting in a lot of time and effort to get their certification. He stated that they are having to travel to Goochland and Powhatan in order to pass this class which is now a 110 hour class. He added that Senior Firefighter membership is up to 46 members now and the Juniors are at thirteen. Chief Bradford wished the Town Council and Staff a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Councilman Wilson made a motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$800,509.89. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Thompson.

Discussion: Councilman Hill and Councilman Green asked several questions on the bills.

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

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

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*DBI* - The Council decided to take up the Minutes of the DBI meeting at the next Council meeting so they will have time to review.

Councilman Quicke asked the Town Manager about Broadband. Will we be going through alleys or tearing up sidewalks when we install.

Manager Palmore answered that there may be some of that but his understanding is that they are going to go overhead on the poles.

**NEW MEDICAL CENTER**

Manager Palmore reported that the Finance Committee met again last week and it came up in that meeting that Bon-Secours has made some guarantees to other groups on money that has been borrowed by Bon-Secours. The Finance Committee raised a question about them giving the Town some guarantees and we are waiting on an answer. He added that the dentistry portion is back to being funded by a federal grant and the dentist will be paid on a sliding scale and will mainly see low to moderate income patients but he added, we will not know if Bon-Secours has received the grant until July of 2008. Manager Palmore stated that they have agreed that Bon-Secours will lease the entire 10,000 square feet. It may be two different divisions of Bon-Secours but they are willing to provide a dentist.

Mayor Coleburn stated that he spoke to the Town Manager about this on Friday on the concerns of the dental community. He added that he has spoken to all the dentists in Blackstone and there is some concern among the dentists in Town but what he is hearing the Town Manager say now is that this will be a dentist who will see mainly low to moderate income patients.

Dr. Leroy Bradshaw, DDS, North Main Street, addressed Council and stated that he does not have any problem seeing a new dentist come in as long as the dentist will be seeing mainly low to moderate income patients. He has no problems with a fee for service dentist except that it could cause some of the other dentists in Town to struggle.

Mayor Coleburn clarified that Bon-Secours would be applying for this grant, not the Town. He then asked does Bon-Secours have any idea on how many people would qualify for pro-bono dentistry in the area.

Administrative Assistant Beck answered that Nottoway County is 80% low to moderate income so these people would qualify.

Councilman Green asked what if Bon-Secours applies for this grant and does not get it, what happens then, will they rent the entire 10,000 square feet.

Manager Palmore answered, yes sir.

Councilman Green asked what are they going to do with the other 1,500 square feet.

Manager Palmore answered, that would be up to the Council. Under the lease agreement, the Town Council has 45 days to approve what they do within the 1,500 square feet. He added that they have assured him that if we get this building built by August 1<sup>st</sup> there will be some type of use for it.

Councilman Green asked the Town Attorney if Council would have veto power on who Bon-Secours rents to.

Town Attorney Walden explained there is nothing in the lease that addresses this other than it does say that we have a certain amount of time to lease it, and if we can't within that time frame, than we will notify them and they have 30 days from the date of that notification to find someone to lease the 1,500 square feet. At that point, we would negotiate a lease with that tenant. If we cannot come to a agreement, then the whole lease is gone. It doesn't drop back to a 8,000 square foot building. The lease is terminated with Bon-Secours.

Manager Palmore explained that under Bon-Secours rules, they cannot rent over 80% of a building but another division of Bon-Secours can.

Mayor Coleburn stated that the Finance Committee, Town Attorney and Town Staff deserve kudos on this because it has been a year long process. He then asked the Town Manager, if things proceed as we hope, does he envision a ground breaking in 2007.

Manager Palmore answered, he certainly hopes so but he is real nervous about the date.

Councilman Green asked how are we doing on the December 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Manager Palmore answered that we need to get this under contract with DHCD and have a signed lease agreement before we can proceed with any more work. He added that we are not going to sign the lease until the Finance Committee is comfortable with what they asked for on Friday afternoon.

Councilman Green asked if there is any possibility that we will be stuck with paying for this building.

Manager Palmore stated that you have got to have faith in the people that you are working with and he feels certain that we will not have to pay this. He stated that he is comfortable and will be more so when the guarantee comes about. He added that the Town Attorney and the Finance Committee have done an outstanding job working on this.

Councilman Green stated that he does not have a lot of faith in Bon-Secours attorneys and this makes him nervous.

Councilman Wilson stated that we are trying to get more guarantees and get this pinned down so that we don't have to go on faith.

Mayor Coleburn stated that in some decree, we may be endorsing a project that will be competing with existing dentists in Town.

Manager Palmore answered that he does not see it that way because this dentist would be doing work on a sliding scale basis. That is the way the grant is structured.

Councilman Quicke feels that we need to thank the local dentists for their support on this project. He feels their understanding on this will take some of the indigent off of the hands of the local dentists.

Councilman Green stated that we have two hurdles to jump. We have to get a grant and we have to hire a dentist. He asked if the Town Attorney is happy with where we are right now.

Town Attorney Walden stated that we have to let them know by December 15<sup>th</sup> if we don't have a tenant and then they have 30 days to get a tenant. We have got to either bid an 8,000 square foot building or a 10,000 square foot building and we have got to know that now. We need to redo this to say that if we are going to bid a 10,000 square foot building then Bon-Secours is going to have to agree to rent the 10,000 square feet. We can't wait until July to find out. He stated that we have got to add this back into the Agreement.

Councilman Hill stated that we are still negotiating with Bon-Secours and this agreement will not be approved and signed until we get all these issues worked out.

Council agreed by Common Consent.

## AEC - PHILIPS SUPERFUND SITE SETTLEMENT

Manager Palmore stated that we handed this information out to Council last month and we are at the point that we need to decide whether we are going to pay this. He stated that he does not know where this is going to stop. He knows with the other law suite, Carolina Transformer, we have saved a lot of money in the long run by going the route that we went.

Councilman Green asked if this is a South Carolina issue.

Manager Palmore answered, yes it is. The State of South Carolina has agreed to take it on and not involve EPA at this time.

Councilman Hill asked if any other environmental consultant can come back in the future and find something else on this?

Town Attorney Walden stated he recommended on the Carolina Transformer issue that we pay what they asked but like last time, we must be prepared that they may come back and ask for more money. If the State cleans it up and the Feds are happy with the clean up that is going to be it.

Councilman Quicke stated that we deal with this stuff every day, ten or fifteen years from now, who is going to come back and bite us on the testing we are doing at the Medical Center.

Councilman Green asked are we going to go after the people who do not join and pay into this group.

Manager Palmore answered, yes sir, we are right now. He explained the situation with the Carolina Transformer group. We have committed as a group that we will go after other communities. There are 200 that are out, and 54 that are in the group.

Councilman Hill asked for the Town Attorney's recommendation.

Attorney Walden stated that as long as it is not going up to \$39,000.00 he is in favor of it but there is no guarantee it will not go up.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to pay \$3,149.00 and to sign the release. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hill and approved as follows.

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

Assistant Town Manager Dunn stated that by Federal Law, we will be absolved of any liability or any lawsuits, of which the government has knowledge now. If they come back in ten years and find something else, that is a new deal.

### **BLACKSTONE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Mayor Coleburn recommended that Ryan Gunn be appointed to the Blackstone IDA.

Councilman Green made a motion to appoint Mr. Ryan Gunn to the Blackstone Industrial Development Authority and for his term to expire on January 28, 2010. The motion was seconded by Councilman Quicke and approved unanimously. Vote:

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

### **2010 CENSUS**

Mayor Coleburn asked at the October Council Meeting that each member of Council bring him a name of someone they would like appointed to the 2010 Census Committee.

Councilman Quicke recommends Terry Conley.

Councilman Green recommends Richard Nichols, College Road.

The rest of the Council Members did not have a name for the Mayor yet.

Mayor Coleburn asked for names before the next regular Council Meeting in December.

### **MEMORIAL CENTER/ARMORY**

Manager Palmore stated that there are no funds out there that will enable us to build the type buildings that are needed. The Armory Committee has put in many hours on what they see should happen with the building. If you go back and look at the amount of money we spent over the last twelve months it is very costly to maintain.

Councilman Green stated that figure is \$37,111.63 over the last twelve months.

Manager Palmore stated that he knows a lot of good people have worked long hours to figure out what to do with the Armory but there is just no money out there. He feels we could get

money to build a new center easier than we could to refurbish the existing building. He strongly feels we should sell the Memorial Center and tear down the Armory. It is time for us to decide whether we are going to keep spending money or tear the building down.

Councilman Green stated that we met with the Armory Authority and we promised to give them an answer. The problem is the money. He feels we should require the Armory Committee to bring us a report telling us how much money they think they are going to need and how they are going to go about raising that money and bring it to Council for approval or we put it on the ground. Those are the only two options he can see.

Council discussed this further.

Mayor Coleburn feels that it is time to sit down and make a decision.

Councilman Quicke feels that we need to give the Armory Authority a chance to give us some figures.

Councilman Green wants the Authority to give us their ideas on funding.

Councilman Wilson stated that we don't have the money in the budget to tear it down so he feels we should let the Armory Authority work on their ideas.

Mayor Coleburn would like for Council to consider giving some consideration to allowing basketball practice in the Armory.

Councilman Hill asked when will basketball practice start.

Mayor Coleburn stated from the second week in January to sometime in March.

Councilman Hill feels it is easier for Town Staff to do scheduling rather than to turn it over to the Armory Authority.

Manager Palmore recommends that the Building and Property Committee meet with the Armory Authority. He explained that Seay Park was once all volunteer, now the Town does it. There are many different projects that started out as volunteer, and they are now the Town's responsibility. The only way we are going to be able continue to do this is to raise taxes. His fear is that the Authority will find the money and then two years from now, who will be stuck with paying for it—the Town, and we just don't have the money for the upkeep on the building. He stated that we can use the Officer's Club and the Fire Department building for different functions when we need to.

Mayor Coleburn agreed with the Town Manager.

Councilman Green does not think there is any way the Authority can raise the money. He would like to see any money that is currently going into the Armory to be put to better use. All we are doing is throwing good money after bad. We can meet with those folks, but that is not going to change.

Councilman Wilson made a motion to inform the Armory Authority that Council plans to demolish the Armory when funds are available. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hill and approved as follows. Vote:

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

Councilman Hill asked if we will continue to let the kids practice basketball in the building.

Manager Palmore answered yes sir. His understanding from Council tonight is that we are not going to continue to spend money on the upkeep of this building.

Councilman Green made a motion to surplus the Memorial Center. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Thompson.

Discussion: Councilman Quicke asked what happens when we surplus this.

Manager Palmore stated that it will be put up for auction or sealed bid.

Councilman Green amended his motion to surplus the Memorial Center at the time of the Town Manager's choosing within the next six months. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Thompson. Vote:

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

Councilman Wilson feels that we need to look at setting a minimum price.

### **ON GOING PROJECTS**

*Bus Shop* - Everything going great.

*Carriage Museum* - **Still making progress**

*Castles Trailer Park* - Moving forward

*South Main Street Reconstruction* - We have raised some issues with the contractor that need to be addressed. He thanked all the citizens in Blackstone for their patience. He also stated that the Town workers, David Ostrander and his group did an outstanding job.

Manager Palmore stated that the narrow lanes is a tool for calming traffic and slowing it down and the wide turning lanes are to help keep traffic flowing.

Councilman Quicke asked the Police Chief how is this helping with traffic and will the Police Department help the catholic church with parking.

Police Chief Kuzmiak answered, it has helped and he will be more than happy to work with the churches.

*Fire Sirens* - We just received authorization to seek bids.

*Ball Park (Recreation Association)* - Several months back he asked for a recommendation from the Recreation Association on what they would like to see at the ball park. Last Thursday, we received a letter from Denis McCarthy, President of the Recreation Association on a plan of what they need and would like to see.

Mayor Coleburn asked if we are reapplying for the Safe Access to Schools Grant.

Manager Palmore answered that would be up to the County to apply for that grant.

Mayor Coleburn asked should the Town's Parks and Recreation committee meet with the Recreation Association.

Manager Palmore answered, that would be fine. Our start date would have to be after the last ball game of next year.

### **CHRISTMAS PARADE PERMIT**

Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve the Christmas Parade Permit. The motion was seconded by Councilman Tucker and approved unanimously. Vote:

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

**FIRE MARSHALL**

Manager Palmore recommends that Council appoint Sam Nunnely as the Blackstone Fire Marshall. He stated that Sam is very dedicated and qualified for this position and this comes as a recommendation from the Fire Chief.

On motion by Councilman Quicke, seconded by Councilman Green the Council unanimously approved appointing Sam Nunnely as the Blackstone Fire Marshall. Vote:

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

**CHRISTMAS BONUSES**

Councilman Hill made a motion to approve the Christmas Bonuses for the Town Employees. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Thompson and approved unanimously. Vote:

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

**MAYOR'S MINUTE**

Mayor Coleburn asked the Council to please read the letters he has written that are included in the Council Packet.

Mayor Coleburn stated that he has never seen the leaves stay on the trees as long as they have this year. He asked if we are adjusting the leaf pickup schedule to accommodate this.

Manager Palmore answered, that we will continue to pickup leaves until they are all up.

Mayor Coleburn stated that Governor Kaine is proposing six regional technical training facilities all across the State of Virginia. He has communicated with the School Board and he feels we should look into seeing if we can get one here in Nottoway County.

Manager Palmore asked is this for school kids that are already in school.

Mayor Coleburn understands this is for children that are in school but aren't on a college track. This would give technical training to these children.

## **POLICE REPORT**

Councilman Hill commended the Police Department on the job they did on Halloween.

Chief Kuzmiak thanked the Committee for getting together with him and coming up with a plan.

Councilman Green asked what are we doing about getting an investigator and how can Council help.

Chief Kuzmiak answered that he does not think that Council can do any more than they already have. He stated that the Police Department has been understaffed for so long, but he hopes by January we will have a full-time investigator. He apologized to Mrs. Longest for not doing a better job of communicating with her on where we are on her case. He added that he would like nothing better than to stand up and tell Mrs. Longest that we have solved the case. He asked Mrs. Longest if she would have the time to sit down with him and talk about where we are on the case she was involved in.

Mrs. Longest agreed to meet with the Chief.

Mayor Coleburn stated that he knows the Police Chief and Sergeant Mathias are working many long hours.

Police Chief Kuzmiak stated that they are working long and hard to solve as many crimes as they can.

Councilman Green asked the Police Chief several questions about a report he had asked him to prepare.

Mayor Coleburn added that crime is down in this community and we appreciate everything that the Police Department does.

Police Chief Kuzmiak stated that the Town has an active police force that is trying very hard to meet the goals and needs of the entire community. He added that when we have a victim of crime, the police department takes it personally and they want to solve these crimes.

Manager Palmore stated that before we leave this topic, he needs to make a request. He added that he did not know anything about this list of questions that was given to the Police Chief from Councilman Green until about 30 minutes before the meeting tonight. He stated that this is not a problem, but he doesn't think it was completely understood. He stated that if he is going to have supervisors working for him, the questions need to come through him to them. He added that is the only way that he can operate and he thinks this is the only way that they (the department

heads) can operate. He stated that we had this discussion before and he hopes we can follow this along. Manager Palmore stated that Chief Kuzmiak spent the entire weekend from Friday afternoon, preparing this report. He feels that a little more notice would be appropriate. He added that Chief Kuzmiak has been overworked and that no one really knows the total hours he and his department spend over there. Manager Palmore stated that in order to keep everyone on the same page, he would like to be aware of what questions are asked and when they are asked.

Mayor Coleburn asked for clarification on what the Town Manager is saying. He stated that for example, he got a call last week from a constituent, and he feels bad because he doesn't want to bother the Town Manager or Joanie, the Clerk. He added that he has people call him all the time and if someone had told him when he ran for Mayor that he would be getting light bill calls at least once a week... He added that they ask you questions and a lot of times he doesn't know the answer so he calls Brenda, but he doesn't want to get Brenda into trouble.

Manager Palmore answered that any of us can answer, it's no problem. He stated that you can call me and I will get you the answers. The problem is this type report. He added that the thing about the Marines coming out tonight can slash our ... it can really hurt and it's those type things that we need to take care of before they happen.

Mayor Coleburn stated one thing about a small Town, you will bump into somebody and they will say I just have a quick question, but he asked the Town Manager again, would he prefer that if the Council Members or the Mayor gets approached by a constituent, does he want the question to come directly to him?

Manager Palmore answered, to us or to the department head that can answer the question. He added that he will be glad for you all (the Mayor and Council Members) to answer the question also. He stated that what he is talking about is when a Council Member goes directly to a department head and starts directing them to do things. That's when we have problems because the employees are not sure who they are working for. We just need to work this out and have an understanding.

Mayor Coleburn stated, no problem, he understands and agrees.

### **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

Dr. Bradshaw thanked the Council for their work on the Medical Center and he commended the Council. He added that there is no way that he can express to the Town Manager how much he appreciates him.

Richard Eaton spoke to Council in regards to the addition of the center lane on Main Street. He has seen drastic improvements because of this wide center lane. One of the things that effects him personally is when people try to pass on the right side. He feels that the wide center lane has corrected this problem and he is very happy with the improvements on Main Street.

Bill Mason asked about the Armory being open for youth basketball practice.

Mayor Coleburn stated that practice will be held in the Armory.

Councilman Quicke welcomed his son Morgan Quicke to the meeting. He stated that Morgan is a student at Virginia Tech and is majoring in Urban Affairs.

**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  
- Legal Matters

The motion was seconded by Councilman Wilson and approved unanimously. Vote:

Councilman Quicke	-	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 Wilson 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 Tucker and approved as follows. Vote:

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

Manager Palmore stated that he would like to do a Resolution thanking the Marines for all they have done for the citizens of Blackstone. He stated that these men have worked very hard on the excavation on Bird Road and have spent many hours rebuilding the skateboard park. They also cleaned the Amelia Avenue Bridge and did an outstanding job.

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Coleburn declared the meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR  
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVED AND ADOPTED

\_\_\_\_\_  
TOWN CLERK  
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA