

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, March 21, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

There Were Present:

Mayor: William D. Coleburn

Council Members: Annie Scott, Shelia Jones, Lonnie Morgan, Carolyn Williams, Nathaniel Miller, Eric Nash, Jake Allman

Town Staff: Philip Vannoorbeeck, Town Manager; Jennifer Daniel, Town Clerk; Brittany Harris, Treasurer; Jennifer Hardy, Finance Director; Dion Tomer, Fire Chief; Nicholas Kuzmiak, Police Chief

Town Attorney:

Those Absent:

Mayor Coleburn called the March Council Meeting to order.

Councilman Nash delivered the Invocation.

Mayor Coleburn led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Coleburn said today was a great day, Congresswoman Spanberger came down and dropped of a \$923,000.00 check. He said that coupled with a \$500,000.00 loan and grant from USDA, and \$200,000.00 County. Manager Vannoorbeeck corrected the amount and said it was \$1,020,000.00 loan and grant.

Mayor Coleburn said at one time what was going to be a \$1 Million debt, to purchase a new ladder truck, will now be very minimal.

MINUTES:

Councilman Nash made a motion to dispense with reading and approve as presented minutes from the Regular Council Meeting on January 24, 2022 and the Special Called Meeting on February 16, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Abstain
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Mayor Coleburn welcomed the newest Council Member, Mr. Jake Allman.

VISITORS:

Ms. Claudia Kelly – 104 N. Amelia Avenue

Ms. Kelly said she was concerned about her light bill, for one month it was \$933.00. She said her house had been weatherized, almost five years ago.

Mayor Coleburn asked if the bill was just for one month, because he and his wife wait until the last minute to pay the bill, so their bill shows the previous amount also. Ms. Kelly said she was on Budget Billing. She said when she gets her check on the third of the month, she pays her electric bill, plus her weatherization bill.

Mayor Coleburn said some facts he has done some research on, the Town has not changed the rate, but we did have the third warmest December on record, followed by the coldest January since 2018. He said Dominion Power's fuel adjustment charge, which is a pass through, tripled. He said last fall this Council did absorb one month.

Mayor Coleburn asked Ms. Kelly what she keeps her thermostat on. Ms. Kelly replied 75 degrees.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Ms. Kelly's bill, the biggest part is the base rate charges. He said the Power Cost Adjustment was included on electric bills, and started last year.

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked to have a third party vendor test some meters, perhaps a half dozen. Mayor Coleburn believed that would be fine.

Mayor Coleburn said near our budget season, he would like to find out what the true cost of living is in Blackstone, compared to other areas with our population.

Mayor Coleburn said people talk about having to pay town and county taxes, but every town in Virginia that has a government, charges town and county taxes. He said the county taxes fund the public school system, the landfill and help supplement some of the Sherriff's deputies. He said Town taxes go to pay fire rescue and other town services.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town of South Hill's real estate tax rate is \$.34 per 100, the Town of Blackstone is at \$.22. He said the personal property tax rate in South Hill is \$1.50 per 100 and the Town of Blackstone is at \$.85.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town of Farmville's real estate is \$.13 per 100 and their personal property is \$1.50 per 100.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said if Ms. Kelly's meter reads correct, the Town could do a payment plan to help.

Mayor Coleburn said people have been calling him frantically about high electric bills, he has been telling them to contact Town Hall to set up a payment plan.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said if someone has a big bill, we will ask them to make a good faith effort and pay something. Treasurer Harris said we try to collect half and work with customers, plus they offer (2) 10 day extensions within a 12 month period, on top of the 15 days already in place. She said the Town allows 45 days for utility payments.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said looking at the actual kilowatt hours purchased by the Town through VMEA for the month of November 2021, we purchased 3,282,000 kilowatt hours, in December we purchased 3,400,000 kilowatt hours and in January 2022, the Town purchased 4,943,000 kilowatt hours.

Ms. Kelly said she received a letter saying her Budget Billing True Up was going to be \$760.10, and had to be paid by April 30th. Manager Vannoorbeeck said we can figure out a plan to help offset that cost. Treasurer Harris said the letter Ms. Kelly received was an automated letter to all the Budget Billing customers with overages.

Mayor Coleburn told Ms. Kelly we will look into this and get you more answers.

Ms. Tonya Booth – 713 Second Street

Ms. Booth said she came to a previous meeting for the Walk A Thon and it was originally starting at Crenshaw United Methodist Church. She said it is now being moved to Shiloh Baptist Church, with the date and time being the same on April 23, 2022 starting at 8:00 a.m. She said this is a non-profit organization and would like the community to be involved. She said the route had been worked out with the Police Department.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:

Chief Tomer said they had applied for a few grants and still waiting to hear back. He said more people are using their meeting room, and it would be nice to have an AED in there, so they applied for a grant with Walmart for an AED.

Chief Tomer said Engine 3 was at the station, it was picked up from Pierce on Friday. He said it still needed to be equipped and would not be in service until completed, and everyone was trained on the vehicle.

Chief Tomer said he and Deputy Chief Beares attended a kick off meeting with Emergency Services hosted by Mr. Buddy Hyde. He said this meeting was to address emergency concerns, and formulate a plan for the future.

Chief Tomer said the house numbering was interesting, there were several requests for different colored numbers, because they didn't want the black numbers already on their house. He said this is very valuable, but thought there needed to be another avenue pursuing either compliance with the Ordinance or evaluating it to see if the Town is going to keep it.

Councilman Nash said he has always believed there are lots of Ordinances that are not enforced, why have them.

Clerk Daniel said a few years ago Charlie Atkinson was keeping a list, and asked if we can make these people get the numbering.

Mr. Michael Bagley said the color should not matter, but perhaps they should be reflectorized, as to be seen at night.

Chief Tomer said everything involves liability and Deputy Chief Beares did not want to be drilling into people's brick or concrete homes.

Mayor Coleburn suggested issuing an RFP to have someone do the work. Manager Vannoorbeeck said 30 years ago, the Town provided numbers to everybody in Town. He said he would work on this.

Chief Tomer said there was some confusion in the packet last month, the request for the fire tax was not intended for the Town, it was meant for Nottoway County, and what he is trying to pursue through them.

Chief Tomer said the Truck Committee was meeting on a weekly basis for the aerial device. He said April 2023 may be the soonest they could get the aerial device. He said they had been looking at a stock unit, which means it is already planned for production, they can fine tune it some.

Chief Tomer said they recruited Mr. Carl Bassfield as the department's photographer, and he has been to a few calls already. He said Mr. Bassfield used to be a junior firefighter.

Chief Tomer said Daunte Brown passed his EMT state test and Corey Murphy passed his Paramedic class.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Mayor Coleburn stated the bills that have already been paid are in the amount of \$717,784.76.

Councilwoman Jones made a motion to approve the bills that have already been paid in the amount of \$717,784.76. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Councilman Nash asked about Sheehy Ford for a \$36,000.00 truck, is this reimbursable. Manager Vannoorbeeck said they usually use scrap metal money and the interest off a money market account to pay for trucks. He said this truck was ultimately purchased to be for animal control but we are not at that point, so it is currently being used at the Water Treatment Plant.

Councilman Nash said he noticed the Southside Electric bills were higher this month, so the Town is not the only place with high bills.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Mayor Coleburn stated the bills not yet approved, and to be paid, are in the amount of \$205,528.42.

Councilwoman Jones made a motion to approve as presented, the bills not yet paid in the amount of \$205,528.42. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller

Councilman Nash said there was a fuel purchase for \$18,000.00 this month and asked if this was a dramatic increase from previous fuel the Town has been getting. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the fuel is purchased from State Contract and it may be \$1,000.00 more.

Councilman Nash asked about the projector that was paid for, will we start using it now. Clerk Daniel said Code Blue gave a demonstration and the way the cameras are set up, the audience can see it, but people watching online cannot.

Mr. Bagley said when he has watched the videos, he cannot hear the public speaking.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

APPROPRIATIONS:

Appropriation #1 – Aeration Project – Interim Financing = \$1,009,100

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the price is half of the \$1,009,100.00, but this is the two transfer totals.

Mayor Coleburn said years ago if you rode over the Pickett Reservoir on Route 46, you could see water bubbling, which were tubes placed on the bottom of the Reservoir to help improve water quality. He said these have not been working for some time now. He said he talked to a former employee, and asked if the Town was sure they needed to be replaced. Manager Vannoorbeeck said our Engineer and Lead Operator both say they are not working. He said they work, but not reliably.

Finance Director Hardy explained the \$504,550.00 has to be transferred to the Water/Sewer Fund and is being used as interim funding until we hear about the VDH Grant.

Councilman Nash said instead of seeking a loan for this project, the Town has been saving money very diligently, and decided to pay the Town back and save on interest.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the money being used is ARPA Funds, which is eligible, and is being used as interim financing, in hopes of getting a favorable response with a 50% Grant and 50% Loan.

Mayor Coleburn asked if there would be a warranty on this work. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied yes, for the workmanship and materials, there would be a year warranty.

Councilman Allman asked what the lifespan was. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied, we did this project in 1998, so probably less than 24 years.

Mayor Coleburn said it looks like Blackstone, for now, is only selling water to the Town and Pickett, and questioned siltation. He said the 311 acre lake was built in 1942, how much has the capacity shrunk. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town has a withdrawal permit, so we don't take all the water, but are permitted to take up to 9 million gallons.

Mayor Coleburn asked if 5 million gallons was there. Manager Vannoorbeeck said as far as the Health Department is concerned, yes.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said raising the dam is not ecologically possible.

Appropriation #2 – ARPA Premium Bonuses = \$121,753

Mayor Coleburn said the Town gave \$1,000.00 bonuses using ARPA Funds that totaled \$92,533.00.

Finance Director Hardy explained to Council that they approved the \$60,500.00 in bonuses, but when the \$1,000.00 included take home pay, that increased it to \$92,533.00.

Councilman Nash asked to vote separately on the appropriations.

Councilman Morgan made a motion to approve the appropriation for the aeration project in the amount of \$1,009,100.00 as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Jones.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Councilman Morgan made a motion to approve the ARPA Bonus appropriation in the amount of \$121,753.00. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Scott.

Mayor Coleburn explained Town staff worked through COVID and other localities provided bonuses as well.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Nay

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Employment & Police – met 3-7-22 – minutes included in March’s Council Packet

Closed Session – Personnel – Admin

Mayor Coleburn said most of this meeting was in Closed Session, but there was a recommendation to advertise an RFP to outsource for a Human Resources position, independent from Town Hall.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve seeking RFPs for outsourcing a Human Resources position to be included in the upcoming budget. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Jones.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Insurance – met 3-8-22 – minutes included in March’s Council Packet

Health Insurance Rates

Mayor Coleburn said the Committee recommended renewing health insurance with the TLC Group, and the Town absorbing the increase. He said they also discussed the Town contributing more towards the Family Plan, but due to the increase, that will not take place this year. He said the increase this year is 9%. Finance Director Hardy clarified it was going to be an 11% increase.

Finance Director Hardy said the Health Insurance will be 100% for the employee, 79% for plus one, 71% for the family and if someone buys up it would be 95%. She said this worked out where no employee has an increase out of pocket. Councilman Nash added, the \$1,000.00 Family Plan will cost the Town roughly \$28.00 a month extra, per employee.

Finance Director Hardy said the Town currently pays roughly \$57,000.00 a month. Councilman Nash said the Town would not be able to do 6% across the board cost of living raises, and we made it known this would help the employees out.

Councilwoman Jones made a motion to renew the Health Insurance with the TLC Group and the Town absorbing the increases. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Account & Finance – met 3-15-22 – minutes included in March’s Council Packet

Leachate Rates

Councilman Nash said they had a Joint Meeting with Supervisor Shekleton, Administrator Costin and Assistant Administrator Tomer, there was no conclusion on anything. He said as the Committee Chair, he would like to request a meeting with the County, and not about leachate rates, he wanted to talk more in depth about the school property.

Councilman Nash said their goal was to lessen the burden on our citizens, and not take over what is a County issue to begin with, that shouldn’t be a Town expense. He said we have the bird in hand and need to get done what we need done.

Mayor Coleburn said we need to have a conversation, with leachate as part of it, landfill fees, and the blight at the school property.

Councilman Nash said we don't want recourse from the County, and we do not want to be unfair.

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked for clarification if the Town would be charging \$.1 for 100% of the leachate for budget purposes. Councilman Nash said yes, but did not think the Town was at that point to sign an agreement with the County.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said if the leachate is increased, it would take effect with the Budget.

Health Insurance Renewal

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

Budget Calendar

Councilman Nash said this was just informational.

Revised FY23 Bus Budget

Councilman Nash said the Bus Budget has changed since what was voted on last month, because of the increase in fuel prices. He said DRPT is giving the Town the opportunity to revise the Budget, so the new budget reflects an increase of \$135,237.00. He added there is no extra charge to the Town.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the revised Bus Budget, which includes a fuel adjustment of \$135,237.00, but no change in the Town's portion. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Finance Directory Hardy said this does include the Town's Use of Fund Balance going up, but there was nothing actually coming out of the Town's pocket.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Capital Improvement Plan

Clerk Daniel advised Council that this would go to the Planning Commission first, and then be presented to Council.

Accounting Software

Councilman Nash said Finance Director Hardy and staff are requesting approval for new accounting software. He said this is going to be user friendly and include apps. Finance Directory Hardy said it is estimated to be around \$125,000.00, but she has not cast a full net yet.

Councilman Nash made a motion authorizing Finance Directory Hardy to issue an RFP for new accounting software. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Town Telephone/Utility Audit – Troy & Banks

Councilman Nash said this company goes through the Town’s bills and may find duplicates or items we don’t use anymore, so the Committee recommended approving this.

Finance Director Hardy said if they find cost savings, they get 24% of that. She said since switching phone carriers and upgrading phones, she just wants to make sure nothing was missed.

Mayor Coleburn questioned the procurement, but believed Troy & Banks was a specialized firm.

Councilman Allman made a motion to proceed using Troy & Banks for a telephone and utility audit for the Town. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Jones.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Procurement Policy

Mayor Coleburn said this would be worked on during the Budget process.

CONSENT AGENDA:

There were no Consent Agenda items.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Goals

Mayor Coleburn said he was a goals guy when he took office, but has since learned there are so many moving parts here at the Town, you can plan all day long and do nothing.

Mayor Coleburn read the proposed goals: tourism, staffing the museums, completing the Armory in 2-3 years, help current developments and determine what those revenue streams will be, DBi position being hybrid and also be a Town employee, better health care services, affordable housing, more diversity, beautification, human resources, following through with Town concerns, town wide clean-up, respond better to work orders, concerns with race, quarterly bus rides to look at the Wards, recreation for the elderly, and have a Blackstone night and cookout in Seay Park.

Mayor Coleburn asked to add to the list a request from Mr. Robert Thomas, he would like to take the Mayor and Council on a tour of the museums. He asked to try to do this before June 1st.

Mayor Coleburn did not know if people around Town knew what was going on. He said the drycleaners has closed, BB&T was sitting empty and Trend was closing. Clerk Daniel said this is where the monthly Town Manager Report will be helpful.

Councilman Nash asked to have them printed so Council can check off items that get completed to show pride.

Councilman Morgan made a motion to adopt the list of Goals presented and post them on the Town’s website for the public. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

2. BABS Lane – Sale of Property

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Council had set a deadline for final documentation from the two interested parties by March 15, 2022. He said this is for the last 40 acres in the Town’s Industrial Park. He said one individual is proposing to build a solar farm, and the documents enclosed are the same as what was presented originally. He said the second proposal is from SWCI, and he clarified in this proposal that within 12 months of closing, the purchaser would establish a leasable secured area with utility connections. He said within 24 months of closing the land purchaser would construct a structure based on the tenant specifications.

Councilman Nash asked what happens if his proposal does not happen. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the agreement would need to have a rollback clause to purchase it back at the same price they paid the Town.

Councilman Nash asked what the gentleman with the solar farm proposal needed from the Town. Manager Vannoorbeeck believed this person did not have an answer from Southside Electric or Dominion to confirm.

Mayor Coleburn said the only upside of the solar farm is the annual revenue for the Town, but is vague.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said one offer is a proposed purchase agreement from SWCI for \$1,800.00 an acre. He said the second offer is to lease the property to build a 7 megawatt solar farm, and offered to pay the Town \$36,000.00 a year for a lease for 20 years. Councilman Nash added Mr. Walker of SWCI’s proposal would be for \$63,000.00.

Mrs. Diana Mitchell asked how long the battery component lasted. Manager Vannoorbeeck did not know. Mrs. Mitchell said you cannot recycle the component, it has to go to a specific place, and asked if there was a specific place in Virginia to take them, because they cannot go into our landfill. Mayor Coleburn added that is toxic waste and nobody at the courthouse has an answer.

Mayor Coleburn said with the Town having a Renewable Energy Ordinance, he believed Mr. Walker had a better deal for the people of Blackstone.

Mayor Coleburn said the offer is from an appraisal from five years ago. Manager Vannoorbeeck said we can have the property reappraised.

Councilman Morgan made a motion to have the property in the Town's Industrial Park reappraised before moving forward with an offer. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

3. Award Re-Bid – Gators Concession Stand

Manager Vannoorbeeck said last month a bid of \$99,800.00 was presented, and was the only bid received. He said the concession stand was rebid and two more prices were received.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the low bid was from Divine Builders of Amelia in the amount of \$66,825.00. He said we can make this work, the Town has \$50,000.00 cash, which is the residual from the interest of the CD. He asked Council to allow him to work with Finance Director Hardy to find the other \$16,000.00.

Councilman Nash asked to get a full cost of the entire project, and we need to include Town time. Manager Vannoorbeeck said this bid only includes four walls.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the price is going to be appreciably more, we will need to outfit it, and the Rec Association paid for much of the upgrades for the baseball field.

Councilman Miller said the Gators were providing an ice machine. He asked what other equipment will be needed. Manager Vannoorbeeck said freezers and refrigerators. Councilman Miller said the Gators don't expect everything to happen overnight, so some costs can be defrayed until there is money. He said the Gators are just wanting a place to play and announce the games.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the building is going to be a 32x13 rectangle, with no walls on the interior, there will be no lighting, and they will share bathrooms with the existing baseball concession stand. He said we do need to trench in a water/sewer line. He said the Rec Association installed air conditioning, but maybe the first year fans can be used.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he asked the Gators how much they had to contribute and was told they were strapped. Councilman Miller said insurance is \$20,000.00 a year. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Rec Association paid for their scoreboards.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said eventually there would be a scoreboard and perhaps they could work with Pepsi. Councilman Miller said Pepsi doesn't do that anymore, but once the Gators get established, Pepsi would be the provider for drinks.

Councilman Miller made a motion to accept the low bid for the Gators Concession Stand from Divine Builders of Amelia in the amount of \$66,825.00. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Jones.

Councilman Allman asked how much has been spent so far. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied \$108,000.00 for the field.

Councilman Allman asked if there was another place in the County to play recreational football. Manager Vannoorbeeck believed they were being asked to move from the high school. Councilman Nash said another reason to talk with the County. Manager Vannoorbeeck added the County had been asked for \$50,000.00, but there was no response yet.

Councilman Nash said he just wants to know what the Town is really paying for.

Mayor Coleburn said the Nottoway Rec Association is preparing for spring soccer, and Burkeville just sent out a message, there will be no soccer there this year because of the construction on the Train Station. He said the Town may be getting calls about soccer in Blackstone.

Mayor Coleburn said there is a lot of money being spent, but this is another thing that brings people to Blackstone.

Councilman Miller amended his motion for the Gators Concession Stand, anything over \$75,000.00 has to come back to Council for approval. The amended motion was seconded by Councilwoman Jones.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Councilman Nash asked Manager Vannoorbeeck to find a way to fund this before submitting an appropriation.

4. Award Bids – Reservoir Aeration

Mayor Coleburn said the low bid for this project is from T.A. Loving out of Goldsboro, NC in the amount of \$504,550.00. He said this includes 11,000 linear feet of lines, basically 2 miles of lines that shoot out bubbles on the bottom of the Reservoir. He added this was recommended by our Engineers.

Councilman Morgan made a motion to accept the low bid from T.A. Loving in the amount of \$504,550.00 for repairing the Reservoir Aeration. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

5. ARPA Compliance Approvals

Mayor Coleburn said the Town has been awarded \$3.4 Million in ARPA Funds, and to date the Town has received \$1.7 Million. He said Finance Director Hardy is requesting approval of the funds obligated to date, which include:

- Utility Relief Program - \$568,535.00
- New Water Meters - \$116,298.45
- Premium Pay Bonus for Employees - \$92,532.52
- Taylor Bottom PER - \$25,000.00
- Armory Project - \$2,200,000.00

Finance Director Hardy said these items are obligated, but not fully expended.

Councilman Nash said this leaves the Town with \$451,000.00 not designated. Finance Director Hardy said it was being designated with the interim financing for the Reservoir Aeration project. She said if the Town gets the Health Department Grant, the interim financing will go back into the ARPA Funds.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the ARPA Compliance List as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

6. USDA Loan Resolution – Fire Department Ladder Truck

Mayor Coleburn explained there is a \$520,000.00 loan, and a \$500,000.00 grant. Manager Vannoorbeeck said you also need to add \$923,000.00 that was provided to the Town by Congresswoman Spanberger and factor in the \$200,000.00 from Nottoway County.

Councilman Nash asked if the money was in hand. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied no, it is received after the truck is delivered.

Mayor Coleburn asked what the interest rate would be on this loan. Manager Vannoorbeeck did not know, but the last two loans were at 2.1% on equipment and 1.3% on water and sewer.

Councilman Nash made a motion to adopt the Loan Resolution as presented with the loan amount being \$520,000.00 and the grant being \$500,000.00 for the Ladder Fire Truck. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Chief Tomer said the Town is getting more money than planned, and after talking with Ms. Delaney of USDA, the truck could be outfitted with this money as well. He said with this money, no funds will have to come from the Town or County to outfit the apparatus.

ON-GOING PROJECTS:

1. Dilapidated Buildings

There was nothing to report.

2. Meals Tax / Lodging Tax

Mayor Coleburn said there were two outstanding Meals Tax, with one being three months behind. Treasurer Harris said the one three months behind, paid today. She said the other business is never delinquent, so she would check into it.

3. Street Improvement Projects

Mayor Coleburn said Colony Construction has agreed to do the paving again this year in the amount of \$864,775.00, with the paving of Main Street to be done at night.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is informational, and will start tomorrow morning with milling up Church Street.

Councilman Nash asked to have a Code Red message sent out.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Main Street would be paved when there are consistent nights over 40 degrees and would be from Irvin Street to Dinwiddie Avenue. He said the next few days would be one block on Amelia Avenue, one block on Jackson Street, then Brown Street from Nottoway Avenue to Church Street. He said Church Street would start at Wilkerson Tire to Main Street.

4. Wrigglesworth Sports Complex / TAP 21

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the concrete was done and the Electric Department would be installing the antique lights.

5. East End Neighborhood Project

Mayor Coleburn said there would be a cook out tomorrow at 5:30 p.m. at the old Levi's Building. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Police Department would be doing the cooking.

6. Weatherization

Mayor Coleburn said doubling the reconnection fee would be revisited in May.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Ms. Chastiddy Bryant spoke with DHCD today about Program Income that Nottoway County has, and we have asked for \$50,000.00 of that. He said we were assured we would get a response relatively quickly from the State.

Councilman Miller believed Nottoway got the money, but it was only for Burkeville, so the County has to get approval from the State.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Metal Detecting

Mayor Coleburn said Mr. Robert Foster is requesting to metal detect at the Carriage Museum and the property around the Armory. He said as a matter of policy, we do not allow detecting at Schwartz Tavern.

Mayor Coleburn said Mr. Williamson made some interesting finds at the old school property, lots of silver coins.

Councilwoman Jones made a motion to approve Mr. Foster to metal detect at the Carriage Museum and the property around the Armory. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Williams.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

2. Department of Health – Water Grant

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is a grant and loan application. He said it would be the permanent financing for the diffuser and aeration system.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town is applying for \$566,000.00, that also includes engineering on top of the \$504,000.00.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the second application, which has already been submitted to the Health Department, and is due by April 8, 2022. He said the amount is \$12,591,000.00, which will replace all water lines in Taylor Bottom and replace the raw water line from the Reservoir to the Water Treatment Plant. He said the pipe is currently 80 years old. He said this is in application form and the Town is not obligated to accept.

Councilman Nash said this would double the debt the Town currently has. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he was expecting half of this in grant, so it would increase it 50%.

Councilman Nash asked how the Town would fund \$6 Million. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the system will have to pay for it.

Mayor Coleburn asked how old the line from the Water Treatment Plant to the Town is. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied, the same age, but we ran a second line at the bowling alley.

Councilman Nash asked if there were other funds out there to help with the \$6 Million. Manager Vannoorbeeck said sure, it would be reduced significantly.

Councilwoman Jones made a motion to approve submitting the two grant/loan applications to the Virginia Department of Health, one in the amount of \$566,000.00 and the other in the amount of \$12,591,000.00. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

3. Board of Zoning Appeals / Planning Commission Members

Mayor Coleburn said now that Mr. Jake Allman is on Council, this creates an opening on the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals.

Councilman Nash suggested Mr. Allen Queen for the Planning Commission.

Councilman Nash made a motion to appoint Mr. Allen Queen to the Planning Commission. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Jones.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Mayor Coleburn asked to have the nomination for the Board of Zoning Appeals at the next meeting.

Clerk Daniel said there was a Board of Zoning Appeals meeting on Monday and believed Councilman Allman may still be able to serve that night, just because of all the circumstances lately on Council. She said we may need him for a quorum. Mayor Coleburn asked to have Attorney Bacon sign off on this.

4. Cash Overages/Shortages Policy

Treasurer Harris said the Town did not currently have a policy for cash shortages and overages. She said the counter is a lot busier, with more cash coming and going out. She was requesting approval of the Policy so the Town has something in writing.

Councilman Miller made a motion to adopt the Cash Overages/Shortages Policy as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

Councilman Nash asked if there were any violations with current staff. Treasurer Harris replied, no.

Treasurer Harris said a lot of the utilities are paid with check or cash, because of the charge for using a card.

5. ARPA Project Approval Request

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the interim financing with ARPA Funds for \$504,000.00 for the Reservoir Aeration. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Councilman Nash said the Town would reimburse ourselves with the proposed grant, if received.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilwoman Scott	-	Aye
Councilwoman Jones	-	Aye
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

COMMITTEE REFERRALS:

Mayor Coleburn said he received two calls today about traffic calming devices, and he had the perfect neighborhood to try them in, Pickett Court. Councilman Morgan suggested Oak Street.

Mayor Coleburn referred traffic calming devices to the Street & Light Committee.

MAYORS MINUTE:

Mayor Coleburn said how great Congresswoman Spanberger's staff is. He said if more people in Washington had the heart and spirit of service that our Congresswoman has, it would be a lot more enjoyable to watch the news. He said she is a true public servant.

POLICE REPORT:

Mayor Coleburn said it was great to see Chief Kuzmiak back in the Chambers.

Chief Kuzmiak said it was great to be back and thanked Council for their continued support.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Councilman Nash asked about the Irvin Street stoplight, he knew the timing strips were messed up, and we were going to buy cameras. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the material has been ordered, but is not in yet.

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Coleburn adjourned this meeting at 8:46 p.m.


MAYOR
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

May 16, 2022 APPROVED AND ADOPTED


TOWN CLERK
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

