

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, October 17, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

There Were Present:

Mayor: William D. Coleburn

Council Members: Annie Scott, Lonnie Morgan, Nathaniel Miller, Eric Nash, Jake Allman

Town Staff: Philip Vannoorbeeck, Town Manager; Jennifer Daniel, Town Clerk; Jennifer Hardy, Finance Director; Chris Mathias, Sergeant

Town Attorney:

Those Absent: Dion Tomer, Carolyn Williams, Shelia Jones

Mayor Coleburn called the October Council Meeting to order.

Mayor Coleburn delivered the Invocation.

Mayor Coleburn led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Increased Compensation for Council & Mayor

TOWN OF BLACKSTONE NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Blackstone Town Council shall hold a Public Hearing on October 17, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Council Chambers located at 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to consider a proposal to increase the compensation of Town Council members and the mayor. More specifically the proposal is to increase the Town Council members' annual compensation to \$3,500 and the mayor's annual compensation to \$4,000. In compliance with Virginia Code Section 15.2-1414.7 these proposed increases would become effective for the incoming Town Council beginning January 1, 2023. The Town Council may act on this proposal following this Public Hearing. Any person who desires to speak for or against this proposal should do so at the above stated date, time, and location.

Mayor Coleburn said this was his idea, a proposal to raise the pay of the next Mayor and Council, because you cannot raise your own pay. He said this would let Council go from \$1,500.00 to \$3,500.00 a year, and the Mayor would go from \$2,000.00 to \$4,000.00 a year.

Mayor Coleburn said the current rates being paid have been in place since the middle of 2006. He said he proposed this because of the work this Council does, with increased Committee Meetings, the way government has flowed pretty smoothly here, and what other local governing bodies are being paid.

Mayor Coleburn opened the Public Hearing and asked if there was anyone here to speak for against raising the pay of the next Mayor and Council.

Mayor Coleburn closed the Public Hearing.

Councilman Nash asked about what other localities made. Mayor Coleburn said Burkeville was free, and he believed in Crewe, the Council Members were free and the Mayor makes \$5,000.00. Finance Director Hardy said she did a study a few years ago, and the Town of Blackstone was low.

Councilman Allman said he called seven other localities, all within our population and the numbers presented were on par.

Mayor Coleburn said the last veto he did was in March 2018 on raises for Council and the Mayor, but times change. He said Council does most of the heavy lifting.

Councilman Nash said his concern was doing this mid-year, and asked Manager Vannoorbeeck where he would find the money. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied, Council Discretionary. Councilman Nash said it should not be a burden on the taxpayer to compensate anyone who sits up here. He recommended it start next July.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve the increase in pay for Council to \$3,500.00 annually and the Mayor to \$4,000.00 annually, effective July 1, 2023. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Scott.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

MINUTES:

Councilman Nash made a motion to dispense with reading and approve as presented minutes from the Regular Council Meeting on September 19, 2022. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

VISITORS:

Mayor Coleburn said he wanted to interject and recognize some visitors in the audience, Mr. & Mrs. Glancey. He said he would like to ask the Town Manager to contact the Blackstone Post Office and find out what is going on with mail delivery.

Mayor Coleburn said the local carriers are awesome, but he has heard Sandston is only getting half the mail here. Mrs. Green said she heard Blackstone would be getting a new Postmaster in December.

Mayor Coleburn said Congresswoman Spanberger has agreed to an investigation.

Mrs. Glancey said they knew Monday was a Holiday, but they did not receive mail the whole week, and received 15 pieces on Saturday.

Mayor Coleburn said every Tuesday, he labels every newspaper and takes them to the Blackstone Post Office. He said his staff goes to Crewe, Burkeville, McKenney, Dinwiddie, Church Road and Lunenburg, and all of them get their paper with their coffee the next morning. He said last week he dropped them off on the loading dock at 6:00, and at 3:00 they were sitting in the same place he dropped them off the next day.

Mr. Michael Bagley

Mr. Bagley said he received a letter from the Town saying he had used an astronomical amount of water. He said he contacted a plumber, and at that time he had used over 15,000 gallons of water. He said he was here tonight to ask for a little leniency because he owes the Town over \$800.00 in utility fees, he has paid the plumber to come to his house twice, which has been in excess of \$670.00.

Mr. Bagley said there was a valve broken underground in his yard. He said the plumber replaced the outside spigot. He said the total he owes right now is \$1,481.00, which includes the plumber.

Councilman Nash said Mr. Bagley has proof that it was outside, and not going in the sewer, the sewer charges could be removed. Mayor Coleburn said in the past we have given people as much as 6 months to pay.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said if the plumber will fill out a form, the Town will remove the extra sewer costs.

Councilman Nash made a motion, pending the certification from the plumber, that Mr. Bagley's sewer charges be waived to the minimum due, and have 90 days to pay the water portion of the utility bill. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:

There were no officers present tonight.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Mayor Coleburn stated the bills that have already been paid are in the amount of \$666,300.42.

Councilman Morgan made a motion to approve the bills that have already been paid in the amount of \$666,300.42. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Councilman Nash questioned two individuals with unclaimed property. Finance Director Hardy said they cut checks during the year, and if the check is never cashed, she has to reconcile that, so they try to reach out to them and recut the check. She said it is a reissuance of a check already approved.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

Mayor Coleburn stated the bills not yet approved, and to be paid, are in the amount of \$409,017.55.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve as presented, the bills not yet paid in the amount of \$409,017.55. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Councilman Nash said there is now a latrine in the Cemetery. Manager Vannoorbeeck said yes, it is for the guys working in the Cemetery. Clerk Daniel said it is located on the backside of the Cemetery.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

APPROPRIATIONS:

Appropriation #1 – Fire Department = \$668.00

Finance Director Hardy believed the Fire Department needed more uniforms, and hadn't used all their Fire Prevention Funds, so it is just an internal transfer.

Councilman Nash believed Deputy Chief Beares was trying to get everyone Class As, which means a jacket for funerals.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the appropriation 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	-	Absent
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Absent
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Employment & Police – met 10-6-22 – minutes included in October’s Council Packet

CDL Licenses

Councilman Miller said the Committee discussed the current Electric Department Agreement and agreed to use it for CDL Licenses. He said this class will be offered to anyone, but they have to make themselves available to push snow.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Committee agreed on two years to stay employed with the Town, and if they leave, they pay a pro-rated share.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve the CDL Agreement as presented, and allow any employee to take the class, but making themselves available on a call list. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

Closed Session – Personnel – Street Department

This will be discussed in Closed Session later tonight.

2. Buildings, Property & Cemetery – met 10-11-22 – minutes included in October’s Council Packet

Closed Session – Prospective Industry - Town Square

This will be discussed in Closed Session later tonight.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Blackstone Community Harvest Festival – Street Closure – 10-31-22

Clerk Daniel said this is a request from Councilwoman Jones and her church, along with other organizations doing a Trunk or Treat at the Primary School Parking Lot.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve closing Powell Street from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. for the Trunk or Treat. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

Clerk Daniel asked if Brunswick Avenue would be closed this year. Mayor Coleburn said last year the Town did not close Brunswick Avenue, but did have two speed bumps.

Councilman Nash said leave the streets open and put down traffic calming devices, because the Police Officers will be out enforcing.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Nottoway School Building Agreement

Manager Vannoorbeeck said there was an Agreement included, that has not been executed. He said the motion from last month's meeting was to modify the date for demolishing the one story building to January 2024, because this is not in the Budget. He said the motion passed, but he had a council person come to him wanting to revisit this.

Councilman Nash said he left early last month, and his only concern was fairness, the Town is enforcing the Blight Policy, we have a person four doors up, where the Town has pretty much confiscated their home on Oak Street to tear down. He said no offense to the County, but the Town is going to bail them out by tearing down their building at no cost, and they will still own the land.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said at last month's meeting, it was presented to Council if they wanted to proceed as a blighted structure, but the consensus was that might be a nuclear option and they did not want to do that.

Mayor Coleburn said in May 2007 the County did allow the Town to lease the property for building Wigglesworth Stadium, so there is good will on the County's part.

Mayor Coleburn said if the Town finds someone interested in the two story building, it will be presented to the County. Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is supposed to be done by 2025.

Councilman Nash said what is to stop the County from saying, the Town tore down the one story building, and now there is a prospect for the two story building and them saying no. Mayor Coleburn said that happened in 2017, when they said if there are apartments there, that may house sex offenders.

Councilman Allman asked if the County would give the Town the property. Manager Vannoorbeeck said they have not indicated they were interested in doing that. He added they did a lease for the land where the ballfields are.

Councilman Miller suggested getting together with the School Board to discuss again.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the School Board is the current owner of the property, and if they were to give the Town the property, they would have to declare it surplus, and then it would transfer to the Board of Supervisors.

Councilman Nash asked why has there been so much talk from an individual on the Board of Supervisors as to what goes on with the property. Mayor Coleburn replied, that person is a retired educator who is beloved and he believes if there is a tornado or earthquake, at one point he thought students could be put in those buildings. He said the fact is trailers would be purchased as soon as possible to put kids in mobile units. He said the Town has even agreed to do water/sewer hook-ups.

Councilman Allman said out of fairness to the others the Town is enforcing the Blight Policy on, we should meet with the County again.

Councilman Nash asked what the cost would be to tear down the one story building with a contractor. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied, \$100,000.00, including disposal.

Councilman Nash said there are two Capital Improvement Projects at the Fire Station and one at Schwartz Tavern, and we are having to pick and choose because the Town cannot do the roof at the Fire Station, a building that belongs to the Town. He said this would be taking on somebody else's Capital Project, and we already have so much going on.

Mayor Coleburn said the Town asked for that property for recreation. Councilman Nash said the Town has held their end up. Mayor Coleburn said we are recreating for the entire County.

Mayor Coleburn said this Agreement is not a burning issue for the School Board. He said there are some officials that live in the area, as anyone would be, that have concern about apartments.

Mayor Coleburn believed two Council Members and two School Board Members would be fine to meet and discuss.

2. Nottoway County Water Supply

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he and Councilman Allman have attended a few meetings with Crewe, Burkeville and the County, and where it was left last was the Town of Blackstone would provide a definitive figure to Crewe and Nottoway County, with Nottoway leading the negotiations with the Department of Corrections, Piedmont, VCBR and General Services. He said a year ago he presented to the Department of General Services \$12.00 per 1,000 gallons for bulk treated water. He said Prince Edward County is providing water at \$11.00 per 1,000 gallons.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town's figures are based on those customers paying 100% of \$9,670,000.00, which represents the upgrade of a booster station at Pickett, the replacement of the water line on Tenth Street in Pickett to the Main Gate, skip over new water lines at the National Guard Armory, but replace to Main Street in Blackstone. He said the Raw Water Line from the Reservoir to the Treatment Plant is not included, only a prorated share of being in the system.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Mr. Mac Bugg provided \$8.75 for operations and based on estimates from other correction facilities, where consumption was not as expected, so an additional \$3.26 to cover that portion of improvements, which brings the Town of Blackstone to \$12.01 per gallon.

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked for authorization to present this information to Nottoway County at \$12.01 per gallon, with not less than \$594,000.00 annually being paid to the Town of Blackstone to cover the debt service. He said this is based on a 30 year note at 4.5% for \$9.6 Million.

Councilman Nash said what happens if 10 years into the note, Crewe goes default. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the note has to be paid.

Councilman Morgan made a motion authorizing Manager Vannoorbeeck to present these figures to Nottoway County for the water line. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he would present this tomorrow morning.

3. USDA – Ladder Truck

Manager Vannoorbeeck said there is a letter included from USDA agreeing to pay 55% of the total project, including equipment. This also includes a \$40,000.00 grant from the State. He said the total of the project complete is \$1,920,128.00, with the truck itself being \$1,744,000.00. He said they multiplied the entire amount by 55% and subtracted the Spanberger money, the difference increased from \$36,000.00 to \$132,133.00 in grant monies. He said the Town will service \$520,000.00, and includes the County's \$200,000.00, so the Town will owe cash \$104,000.00, with \$70,000.00 being saved last year from Apparatus Funds and the rest will be the match for the grant. He said we are not paying any more money than originally planned.

Councilman Morgan made a motion to authorize execution of the necessary documents and accept the additional grant funds from USDA. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Manager Vannoorbeeck believed arrival would be around July of next year.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

4. Nottoway County Leachate Rates

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Leachate Agreement had been signed with the County. He said we used last year's delivery numbers, which are included. He said in June 2021 they were billed for 2,934,000 gallons and did not believe that was correct. He did not believe our estimations were going to hold true, because the first two months of this fiscal year have been under 200,000 gallons.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said by the signed Leachate Agreement, they are still waiving the Town's Sludge Fees. He said Finance Director Hardy did not include a specific line item in the budget for leachate rates.

5. Award Surface Treatment Bid

Mayor Coleburn said the low bid was from Whitehurst Paving in the amount of \$2.43 per square yard. Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is for two shots of tar and gravel, and will include Lester Street, Powell Street and Jackson Street.

Mayor Coleburn asked who did Fourth and Lunenburg, it was starting to have some kinks in the armor. Manager Vannoorbeeck said Whitehurst Paving, and this work is really just a sealant.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the East End project area will get pavement.

Councilman Nash made a motion to award the low bid for Surface Treatment to Whitehurst Paving in the amount of \$2.43 per square yard. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

6. Award Milling & Paving Bid

Mayor Coleburn said the low bid was from Southern Paving in the amount of \$278,431.50.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said there was a big split in the cost, and Colony Construction has been doing this work with the Town for years. He confirmed with Southern Paving that their price was correct. He said he contacted Colony Construction and said Southern Paving does sub work for them and has no problems.

Councilman Nash made a motion to award the low bid to Southern Paving for Milling and Paving in the amount of \$278,431.50. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

7. Award Tree Removal Bid on Patterson Street

Mayor Coleburn said a bid for removing a tree was received in the amount of \$16,800.00.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he was recommending to reject the bid, because he did not have the cash available. He said it was a massive willow oak tree on private property, where the Town was getting ready to work on the house as part of Weatherization.

Councilman Nash made a motion to reject the bid. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

8. USDA Loan Resolution – Police Vehicle

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town has been awarded a grant from USDA in the amount of \$27,200.00, with a loan in the amount of \$22,300.00 for a police vehicle, and included in the Budget.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Chief Kuzmiak has been ordering Explorers, but cannot be ordered until mid-2023, and police cars have been taking a year to get here. He said Chief Kuzmiak has located a Pursuit Rated Pick-Up Truck that is currently available, with the Town being responsible for \$5,000.00 more.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said in the event the Town does decide on Animal Control, then there is already a truck.

Mayor Coleburn asked if his letter went to the County on Animal Control. Clerk Daniel replied no, Mayor Coleburn asked that Manager Vannoorbeeck and Chief Kuzmiak review, and she had not received any response from them.

Councilman Miller made a motion to adopt the Loan Resolution and Code of Conduct for the 2022 Police Vehicle as presented, with the Town being responsible for the estimated \$5,000.00 difference for the Pursuit Rated Pick-Up Truck. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

9. Sidewalk to Walmart

Mayor Coleburn said he took a picture in his other capacity, of a pedestrian walking along the Clay's Garden Center side of the street. He said Mr. Michael Bagley has very consistently said he worries if the sidewalk is built on the other side of the street, people will continue to walk on the east side of the street. He said the Town Manager has pointed out the budget would be double or triple to put sidewalk on the Clay's Garden Center side.

Mayor Coleburn said he had never seen public opinion run so strong, it was either only do the east side or do both. He said he worried no matter how much VDOT says this is safe, the worst thing for this Council or the next Council is to have the street widened with sidewalk, and see mama with the baby stroller using the same path they have always walked. Manager Vannoorbeeck said then we do both.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Mr. Jack Hodge provided an estimate of \$4 Million in 2015 for sidewalk on the east side.

Councilman Nash said it would not be so much the pole relocation, but the grade, that cost is tremendous, it will never get done, the Town cannot afford it.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Mr. Jason Walker's estimate for curb and gutter on the west side was \$800,000.00.

Mayor Coleburn said he just wanted Council to be aware, you cannot be held hostage by public opinion, but a lot of times when the opinion is so strong, they are not wrong. He said he would rather have status quo, than go out and spend whatever the cost is and say look at the nice sidewalk not being used. Councilman Nash said so we will wait until somebody does get killed or injured before we do anything, when we should at least give an option.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the plan is to put a third lane there, he said the project on the west side doesn't put a third lane in.

ON-GOING PROJECTS:

1. Dilapidated Buildings

Manager Vannoorbeeck said 415 Oak Street was declared blighted, and the Town now owns it. He said the property owners surrendered it. He said Mr. Wallace Akers was not comfortable tearing it down, so we will have to pay a contractor. He said the sale of the property is intended to cover the Town's cost of asbestos abatement and the demolition, as well as any legal fees.

Councilman Nash asked if there were any liens that transferred. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied, no, he did the Title Search himself.

Councilman Morgan made a motion to proceed with removing the asbestos, demolish the structure and list the property for sale. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

2. Meals Tax / Lodging Tax

Mayor Coleburn said there were two outstanding Meals Tax and one outstanding Lodging Tax.

3. Street Improvement Projects

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the S. Main Street Project Phase II, should be completed by the end of November. He believed the project was substantially complete now, once paving is done.

Mayor Coleburn asked about the traffic calming devices on Pickett Court. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the contractors would be here this week.

Councilman Nash said if grass seed is going to be put down, now is the time on those properties affected by this construction.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said striping Downtown will be done with the paving.

4. Wrigglesworth Sports Complex / TAP 21

Mayor Coleburn said antique lighting was being installed around the football field and turf is being replanted and fertilized.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said once the stadium lights are installed the fence would be put back up.

5. East End Neighborhood Project

Mayor Coleburn said there are two homes on Harris and Fitzgerald Streets that should be completed in the next 30 days.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said there was a house on Broad Street being renovated. He said this would make ten homes in the East End, with one more being approved by the Rehab Board.

6. Taylor Bottom Block Grant

Councilman Nash asked about a bill for Cornelius Walton for \$16,228.00, it just says Taylor Bottom. Manager Vannoorbeeck said that is a half payment to a contractor who renovated a home in Taylor Bottom, using Program Income Funds. He said this home was on Carver Street, and included a roof and handicap bathroom.

7. Armory

Mayor Coleburn said the Town is seeking \$581,000.00 from the Tobacco Commission. He said there was also an ad out seeking bids for asbestos abatement.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Mr. Francis Gilmore put the scope of work together for the asbestos abatement. He said there would be three bids to include asbestos abatement, lead based paint removal and removal of the underground storage tank.

Councilman Nash made a motion to adopt the Resolution seeking grant funds from the Tobacco Commission as presented, and advertising for the three bids for asbestos abatement, lead based paint removal and removal of the underground storage tank. The motion was seconded by Councilman Morgan.

Mayor Coleburn said he had received messages with people being concerned about the Town selling the Armory. He said he reassured them that is not the case. He said Mr. Patel wants to have a hand in the curriculum planned to help staff his facility. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Armory would not be eligible for grants if the Town sold the property.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the match was already shown in the application which is the \$2.25 Million in ARPA Funds. He said the Town had already put \$32,000.00 towards preliminary costs.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

8. Weatherization

Mayor Coleburn said the home at 816 Falls Street had been demolished.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the four corners had been set and were waiting for the footer to be dug. He said this is being done through Weatherization, which is Town money from last fiscal year and this year. He said this will be a new two bedroom home.

Councilman Nash asked about the house that had the tree fall through it. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he provided the documentation to Attorney Bacon on this property. He said the owner signed an agreement to let the Town tear it down, because it is condemned, but didn't notarize his signature. He said Attorney Bacon was going to take him to court for a condemned building.

Mayor Coleburn said a few months ago we heard an impassioned appeal from Ms. Taylor Wulff, about her home on South Main Street. Manager Vannoorbeeck said at this time we do not have access to any grant funds. He said we plan to apply for Scattered Site Funds, but the application has not been submitted. He said with Weatherization Funds, you have to make a payment.

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked to have six months to find something for the Wulff House.

Mayor Coleburn asked Manager Vannoorbeeck to look at Fifth and Brunswick. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he has been working with the owner at the intersection of High Street and Dinwiddie Avenue.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Lakeview Cemetery – Headstone Request

Mayor Coleburn said this is a request from the family of the late Anita Wilborn.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is a two grave section, and there is already an upright headstone there. He said it would still be aligned in the north south direction.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the headstone request for Mrs. Anita Wilborn 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	-	Absent
Councilman Morgan	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Absent
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye

COMMITTEE REFERRALS:

1. Utilities – Payment Agreements & Extensions

Mayor Coleburn referred this request to the Health and Ordinance Committee.

2. Transition Solutions – Annexation Request

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Mr. Eric Paul has 26 acres adjacent to Town on Courthouse Road. He said this property is on Town water, sewer and electric currently. He said Mr. Paul wants to be in Town to help with grant applications and his subdivision requirements would be much reduced if inside the Town.

Mayor Coleburn referred this request to the Health and Ordinance Committee.

MAYORS MINUTE:

Mayor Coleburn said the Color Run went well.

POLICE REPORT:

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Chief Kuzmiak informed him the Town did not receive the COPS Gant, this would have helped in hiring the additional position.

Councilman Morgan said when he started at the Police Department it was fully staffed at 15.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Mr. Michael Bagley asked if the pink slips had dropped down to 300. Clerk Daniel said there were 305 from last month.

Mr. Bagley said when you talk to the County about the old school building, can you mention blight and safety. Councilman Allman asked Mr. Bagley if he could rally people to go to the School Board to support us. He said that is the problem, we are fixing somebody else's issue, that will cost our taxpayers.

Mr. Chris Page said when you do meet with the School Board, remind them they are the ones with the \$29-\$32 Million Budget. He said they spend more than that in June trying to spend up their Budget, they could throw in \$100,000.00.

Councilman Nash asked the cost for the Forest Drive project in front of Ms. Joyce Dooley's house. Manager Vannoorbeeck said about \$10,000.00. Councilman Nash asked where that money would come from. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied, he did not know, but probably cash on hand or VDOT money. He said the Policy used to be if the property owner pays for the pipe, then the Town does the rest.

Councilman Allman asked if the third party HR Position had been bid out yet, it was voted on to proceed. Manager Vannoorbeeck said it was in the Budget, and he would bid it out.

Finance Director Hardy said this process had already been bid out once, and was turned over to Attorney Bacon. She said we need specifics on what is to be bid out. She asked if Attorney Bacon had rejected the first bids. She added there is an open RFP on eVA for this request.

Mayor Coleburn said we will talk to Attorney Bacon tonight during Closed Session.

Councilman Allman asked about the Business License Audit. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he would talk to Treasurer Harris and report at the next meeting.

CLOSED SESSION:

Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711

- 5/ Prospective Business or Industry – Town Square
- 1/ Personnel – Street Department
- 7/ Legal Matters

Councilman Nash made a motion to go into Closed Session for Discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community, Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body, and Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.

Mayor Coleburn asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

Councilman Nash 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 Morgan.

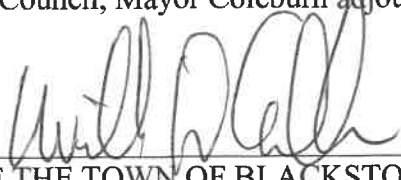
Mayor Coleburn asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Allman	-	Certify
Councilwoman Scott	-	Certify
Councilwoman Jones	-	Absent
Councilman Morgan	-	Certify
Councilwoman Williams	-	Absent
Councilman Miller	-	Certify
Councilman Nash	-	Certify

Mayor Coleburn said the person to discuss the Town Square was not present tonight and no action was taken. He said an employee matter was addressed, and there is a legal matter that our Town Attorney is working on that dealt with a recent police situation.

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Coleburn adjourned this meeting at 9:16 p.m.


MAYOR
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

November 21, 2022 APPROVED AND ADOPTED


TOWN CLERK
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA