

**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE STEPHENS CITY TOWN COUNCIL
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2023
6:00 PM**

Mayor Diaz called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Diaz asked that we observe a moment of silence.

Roll was called with the following members present:

Mayor Diaz, Vice-Mayor Fravel, Councilwoman Smith, Councilwoman Swygert-Smith

Staff present:

Mike Majher, Town Manager; Kelly Thatcher, Town Clerk; Steve Rickards, Town Treasurer; Dave Griffin, Town Attorney; Bill Copp, Police Chief; Timothy Vaught, Fire Chief; Chris James, Police Sergeant

Guests:

Marshall Werner, Steve Ritter

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Diaz asked if anyone from the public had comments. There were none.

MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 3, 2023

Vice-Mayor Fravel moved for approval of the minutes of the regular Town Council Meeting of January 3, 2023. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

Bowers- Absent	L. Fravel-Aye
P. Fravel-Aye	Smith-Aye
Stevens- Aye	Swygert-Smith-Aye

TREASURER’S REPORT – Report attached

Town Treasurer Steve Rickards stated that it had been a resilient month. It was not as robust a months past due to the very high sewer bill from Frederick water. Business licenses have been trickling in and have been receiving Newtown Heritage Festival donations. The budget process is ongoing with the work on next year’s budget. A zoom meeting with auditors went well and we are hopeful that the audit will be done by June.

POLICE REPORT – Report attached

Chief Copp asked if there were any questions about the report. He informed Council that Officer Cody Arbogast’s father had passed away and our thoughts and prayers were with him and his family. Sergeant James will be working with him to catch him u on the classes he has missed in the Academy. Chief Copp has talked to the instructors at the Academy and they are confident he will be fine because he is such a solid student.

SCVFD REPORT- Report attached

Chief Vaught read his report. He stated that the fire at the CVS Fruit property had destroyed the abandoned building. He thanked Mayor Diaz for attending the Banquet and administering the oath of office. The banquet was a good time for all with good food and fellowship. Mayor Diaz thanked Chief Vaught for giving him the honor of having him administer the oaths.

ACTION AGENDA

2nd and 3rd reading of Ordinance to Amend Chapter 6 of Town Code

Mayor Diaz asked the Town Clerk to do the 2nd reading by title only. The Clerk read "An ordinance to amend portions of Chapter 6 of the town fire prevention and protection code to harmonize the ordinances with enabling legislation and to reflect current and planned operations." Vice Mayor Fravel made the Motion to adopt the 2nd reading. The Motion passed with the following VOTE:

Bowers- Absent	L. Fravel-Aye
P. Fravel-Aye	Smith-Aye
Stevens- Aye	Swygert-Smith-Aye

Mayor Diaz asked the Town Clerk to do the 3rd reading by title only. The Clerk read "An ordinance to amend portions of Chapter 6 of the town fire prevention and protection code to harmonize the ordinances with enabling legislation and to reflect current and planned operations." Councilwoman Swygert-Smith made the Motion to adopt the 3rd reading. The Motion passed with the following VOTE:

Bowers- Absent	L. Fravel-Aye
P. Fravel-Aye	Smith-Aye
Stevens- Aye	Swygert-Smith-Aye

Town Clerk Kelly Thatcher asked if it would be okay to add a Resolution of Appreciation for Adrian O'Connor to the agenda. All were in agreement.

Mayor Diaz read:

WHEREAS, Adrian O'Connor served the Town of Stephens City, for many years, as a leading member of the Newtown Heritage Festival Committee, serving with energy, dedication, and a love for Stephens City's heritage and;

WHEREAS, Adrian O'Connor worked for 30 years at the Winchester Star editing the editorial page and penning a weekly column, Valley Pike, frequently writing about his beloved small town, Stephens City and;

WHEREAS, Adrian O'Connor was an active member of the community, dutifully and faithfully volunteering as a Big Brother through the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, mentoring High School students, involvement in Rotary Club, Blue Ridge Food Bank, and Kids Voting and;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and all members of the Stephens City Town Council do hereby take this opportunity on behalf of the citizens of the town to express our sincere sympathy to the family and friends of Adrian O'Connor for their loss. We wish him Godspeed.

This being approved by motion of the Town Council at their regular meeting of February 7, 2023.

Councilwoman Swygert-Smith made the Motion to approve the resolution. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

Bowers- Absent	L. Fravel-Aye
P. Fravel-Aye	Smith-Aye
Stevens- Aye	Swygert-Smith-Aye

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance Committee - Linden A. Fravel, Chair

Meeting: The work on the budget is all coming together and will be presented once it is finalized.

B. Personnel Committee - Pete Fravel, Chair

No Meeting: No Comments

C. Public Safety Committee - Ron Bowers, Chair

No Meeting: No Comments

D. Public Works Committee - Mariah Smith, Chair

No Meeting: No Comments

E. Ordinance and Governments Committee - Regina Swygert-Smith, Chair

Meeting: Minutes attached.

F. Parks and Recreation Commission - Tina Stevens, Chair

No Meeting: No Comments

G. Planning Commission - Linden A. Fravel Jr. Chair

Meeting: Vice-Mayor Fravel stated that there had been an application for Townhouses on Comer Drive. This is an allowable use for the property. There was also a request to vacate Newtown Street. Planning Commission made the recommendation to approve the Townhouses and vacate Newtown Street. To vacate Newtown Street there will need to be a Public Hearing , the expense being paid for by the applicant.

H. Newtown Heritage Festival Committee

Meeting: Marshall Werner, a member of the committee, informed Council that there is an event survey online that will survey which events the public would like to see. He stated that Rick from the museum was working on a new tour for this year. As always they are in need of volunteers. The committee is also trying to improve the handicap parking.

Councilwoman Stevens made the Motion to approve the Committee Minutes and Reports. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

Bowers- Absent	L. Fravel-Aye
P. Fravel-Aye	Smith-Aye
Stevens- Aye	Swygert-Smith-Aye

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT

First of all, Mike Majher wanted to acknowledge the loss of Adrian O'Connor. Adrian was a significant member of the community. He will be missed and it will be difficult to fill the gap that his passing has made.

Town Manager Mike Majher reported:

1. It has been very busy with INI studies and repairs on the area we think is the source of the flow problems.
2. Zoning Permits are nonstop. 83 permits were issued in January.
3. The CVS Fruit property fire had us busy trying to figure out who now owns it. No one will admit to owning it. They already owe \$3000 in back taxes, and we will now be adding a bill for the work that our Public Works department had to do.
4. Newtown History Museum has informed us that they are trying to get the Minnick Zirkle freightwagon that is in Williamsburg. This wagon is one of the only wagons left that was made in Stephens City. It would not be given to the Town but would be a long term loan.

Councilwoman Stevens made the Motion to have a resolution of support and letters from the Town Manager and the Mayor in favor of allowing the museum the loan of the wagon. The motion carried with the following VOTE:

Bowers- Absent	L. Fravel-Aye
P. Fravel-Aye	Smith-Aye
Stevens- Aye	Swygert-Smith-Aye

CLERK'S REPORT

Town Clerk Kelly Thatcher had nothing.

MOTION FOR CLOSED MEETING

Councilwoman Smith made the Motion to convene a closed session pursuant to section 2.2-3711.A.1 of the Code of Virginia. The Motion carried with the following recorded Vote:

Aye-L. Fravel, P. Fravel, M. Smith, C. Stevens, R. Swygert-Smith
Nay- none
Absent- R. Bowers
Abstain-None

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

Councilwoman Smith moved for the certification of the closed session. The Motion carried with the following recorded VOTE:

Aye-L. Fravel, P. Fravel, M. Smith, C. Stevens, R. Swygert-Smith
Nay- none
Absent- R. Bowers
Abstain-None

COUNCIL COMMENTS/CALENDAR

The March Calendar is one day off and needs to be fixed.

There being no further business, Vice-Mayor Fravel made a motion to adjourn at 7:04 pm and the motion carried unanimously.

Michael A. Diaz, Mayor

Kelly Thatcher, Town Clerk