

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

Mayor Diaz called the meeting to order at 6:00 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, Councilman 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; Cody Arbogast, Police Officer

Guests:

Marshall Werner, Newtown Landing; Cormac Dodd, Winchester Star

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Diaz asked if anyone from the public had comments. Marshall Werner expressed his concern that when tax bills come out that some Mortgage companies don't realize that there are separate town taxes and was wondering if there was any way the town can remedy that.

MINUTES – Regular Meeting of October 3, 2023

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

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

TREASURER'S REPORT – Report attached

Town Treasurer Steve Rickards informed council that he had attended the VGFOA fall conference last week and had learned a lot and made many new connections. He asked if council would authorize him to send out RFP's to get bids for an auditor for 2024. Vice-Mayor Fravel made the Motion to authorize the Treasurer to send out RFP's to get bids for an auditor for 2024. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

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

POLICE REPORT – Report attached

Chief Copp asked if there were any questions about the report. Both Veteran's events went well. Chief Copp complimented Councilwoman Smith on helping organize the Appreciation Day and her speech on Memorial Day. Halloween was uneventful with no emergency calls. Sergeant James and his wife Katrina helped to give candy to the trick-or-treaters. Mountain View Christian Academy brought a group of kindergartners to visit the station. Saturday November 18th we will be assisting Kimmie at Trinity Lutheran Church handing out Thanksgiving meals. Last week the department had nighttime firearm training.

SCVFD REPORT- Report attached

Chief Vaught read his report. He added that the committee members will be leaving at the end of November to finalize specifications. He also wanted to reiterate the importance of practicing cooking safety during the upcoming holiday season.

ACTION AGENDA

Appoint Brian Woodruff to Council to replace Ron Bowers

Vice-Mayor Fravel said that he would proudly make the Motion to appoint Brian Woodruff to council to replace resigned councilmember Ron Bowers. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

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

Nominate New BZA Member

Councilwoman Swygert-Smith made the Motion to nominate John Ireland to BZA. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

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

Approve Proposed Rules of Decorum for Citizen Comment

After the Town Attorney watched how some meetings in the area had gotten out of hand, he felt it would be wise if the Council Members adopted rules of decorum for public comments. Councilwoman Swygert-Smith made the Motion to Adopt the Rules of Decorum for Public comments. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

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

Schedule Public Hearings for Ordinance to Amend Chapter 17, Chapter 23, Chapter 2, and Chapter 19

A public hearing needs to be scheduled for ordinances to amend chapter 17, chapter 23, chapter 2, and chapter 19. It was decided that the Public Hearing could be held at the next Council Meeting December 5th.

Authorization to Enforce Local Ordinances

Vice-Mayor Fravel made the Motion to appoint our Zoning Administrator and Town Manager/Assistant Zoning Administrator with the authority under Virginia Code Section 15.2-1512.5 to enforce local ordinances within the scope of their position by issuing summonses for misdemeanor violation of ordinances, except those offenses listed in Title 18.2 or Chapter 8 Section 46.2-800 or those violations of local ordinances for offenses that are substantially similar to such offenses. Included in this motion is that this authority be granted immediately. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Finance Committee - Linden A. Fravel, Chair

No Meeting: No Comments

B. Personnel Committee - Pete Fravel, Chair

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

No Meeting: No Comments

F. Parks and Recreation Commission - Tina Stevens, Chair

No Meeting: No Comments

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

No Meeting: No Comments

H. Newtown Heritage Festival Committee

Meeting: Marshall Werner, speaking as a member of the committee, stated that the Car Show was a go for next year. They are still looking for a non-profit to do the food as a fundraiser. They are finalizing the craft and vendor applications so they can be uploaded to the website. They have been in contact with members of a chess club to see if it was something that could be an event at the old schoolhouse. A plan is being made to find a new place to be able to shoot off fireworks.

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT

Town Manager Mike Majher reported:

1. Thank you to the Fire Department for a good breakfast. Also a big Thank You to councilwoman Smith for both the Veteran's Appreciation event and for speaking at the Veteran's Day Ceremony.
2. Ron Bowers is finally back at home.
3. The construction drawings have been delayed on the Old School. They ran into some issues with the addition where the elevator would be going. They feel everything is fixable, it will just take a little longer. They should be done by January.
4. It is necessary to open 3 new bank accounts. The auditors feel this would make things more efficient and transparent and are best practices. The accounts would be one for NHF, one for The ARPA funds for the Police Department and Utility Operating account. The Police department will also request a debit card. Vice-Mayor Fravel made the Motion to approve the opening of the accounts. In the discussion that followed it was determined that Town Manager Mike Majher, Treasurer Steve Rickards and Finance Chair Butch Fravel be named signatories. Vice-Mayor Fravel amended the Motion to include the signatories. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

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

5. The visitors tonight are looking for Eagle Scout projects and would like some ideas that may Be possible. A couple of ideas that were thrown around were flagpole for town flag, tree line at the school and bonfire pit.
6. Christmas tree lighting will be on December 1st at 6pm.
7. Leaf pick up will occur on Mondays through November.
8. The 2014Taurus needs to be surplused and approval to advertise for sale. Councilwoman Swygert-Smith made the Motion to surplus and the advertise the sale of the 2014 Taurus. The Motion carried with the following VOTE:

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

9. Public Works has been busy replacing manual read meters to radio read.
10. 258 zoning permits have been issued so far this year.
11. 26 zoning violations have been issued with 21 of them being remedied.
12. Received approval from VDOT for the sidewalks. No date has been set for the start of the project.

CLERK'S REPORT

Town Clerk Thatcher wanted to thank council once again for okaying the new radio read system. The data logs have helped a lot with explaining high water bills to residents.

COUNCIL COMMENTS/CALENDAR

Mayor Diaz asked if there were any other comments. Chief Copp stated that the fuel tanks at the old Aylor school will be remaining. Councilwoman Swygert-Smith was concerned about the Hero banner in front of her house blowing off. It will be getting repaired. Mayor Diaz complimented the Veteran's Day service saying that it was beautiful. He thanked the Chief for getting it started and Mariah for speaking. He also stated that in January he would be giving an annual report on all that has happened and has been accomplished in the town in 2023.

There being no further business, Vice-Mayor Fravel made a motion to adjourn at 6:52 pm and the motion was carried unanimously.

Michael A. Diaz, Mayor

Kelly Thatcher, Town Clerk