

**WISE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2021; 7:00 P.M.
WISE MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
501 WEST MAIN STREET - WISE, VIRGINIA 24293**

Minutes

Members Present:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice Mayor
Jeffery Dotson
Ben Conway
Caynor Smith, Jr.

Members Absent:

None

Pledge of Allegiance / Invocation:

Councilman Ben Conway led the Pledge of Allegiance. Adrian Dale, Pastor of the Norton First Church of God and Town of Wise Street Superintendent, provided the invocation.

Consent Calendar:

Councilman Smith made a motion to approve the consent calendar, which included the minutes of the November 17, 2020 regular Council Meeting, the December 28, 2020 Special-Called Meeting, the September and October, 2020 Treasurer's Financial Reports, the November, December, and Yearly 2020 Police Reports, the November and December, 2020 Water Plant Reports, the August, 2020 Fire Department Report, and the November – January Planning Department Reports. Vice-Mayor Taylor-Baugh seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

Public Expression:

Sandra Adkins, stated that she and her husband Larry had been residents of Wise for sixty-three years and avid supporters of youth athletics. She referred to an alleged list of items, compiled by Chip Brickey, President of Wise Little League, that he wanted to remove from the Dotson Park fields, including equipment from the concession stands, light fixtures, dugout benches, bleachers, and other items belonging to the Town of Wise. Adkins informed that she had spoken to a member on the Board of the Wise Little League who was not aware of any list of items being requested. She added that the board member indicated that such a list had not been brought before the board, nor voted on by the board. She encouraged town officials to not allow the removal of anything from Dotson Park, considering the park belonged to the citizens of the Town of Wise, for the children of the community.

Thomas Kennedy, 303 Spring Avenue, S.E., stated that he was speaking as a taxpayer of the Town of Wise, Vice-President of Wise Youth Sports, and a donor of Wise Little League. He stated that although he cannot speak on behalf of everyone who had donated to the Wise Little League, he could speak for many when he said that donations made to the little league organization was a donation to all youth in the community. As a donor, Kennedy added that he wanted the children of the community to benefit from the continued growth of Dotson Park. He stressed that he would be very upset if any items were removed from the park, especially items attached to the fields or buildings. Kennedy suggested the Town draft a type of Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Wise and taxpayers and/or donors, explaining that all donations were made to benefit the Dotson Park fields, which were owned by the Town of Wise.

Ryan Adkins, Wise Youth Sports Safety Director, stated that he personally knew that youth sports meant the world to the majority of the children who participate. As owner of Adkins Lawn Care, Mr. Adkins volunteered to maintain the Dotson Park fields by mowing and weed eating for a period of one year to help the Wise Youth Sports league.

Tammy Bates, reflected on her days of serving as President of the Wise Little League. She said she was involved in the development of Veldon Dotson Park. She emphasized that the time, energy, and money she devoted as President of the organization was not to benefit the Wise Little League, but rather the youth of the community. She stressed that it was her belief that nothing at Dotson Park belonged to any individual person, but rather the community. Bates stated that the program was not the same as in years past and she questioned the motives of the current President of the Wise Little League. She also noted that the bleachers and other items given by the Town of Wise was for the children in the community, not a particular organization.

Councilman Jeff Dotson thanked everyone who spoke during public expression.

Mayor Adkins added that she was pleased to see so many people in attendance who were interested in Town events.

Councilman Smith spoke to those in the public audience, telling them that there would be no further discussion regarding Little League business during the open meeting.

Public Hearing on Resolution #1, 2021:

Laura Roberts reviewed the conditional use permit application and preliminary site plan submitted by the Town of Wise for the construction of a public works facility on Town owned property on Lake Street. Following a detailed summary, Roberts reported that the Planning Commission recommended that Council approve the application for a conditional use and site plan subject to the following conditions: 1) That a fire hydrant be added to the site plan; 2) That an accessible sidewalk be constructed along the outside of the administrative building from the visitor parking lot to the reception door. Mayor Adkins opened the floor for public comment. There being no one from the public audience wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed. Following a brief discussion, Councilman Jeff Dotson made a motion to approve "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA APPROVING THE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION AND PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN OF WISE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A PUBLIC WORKS FACILITY TO BE LOCATED ON A VACANT 11 ACRE PARCEL LOCATED ALONG LAKE STREET, NW IN AN I-L LIMITED INDUSTRIAL ZONING DISTRICT AND IN AN R-B MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENCE ZONING DISTRICT." Councilman Caynor Smith seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	"Aye"
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	"Aye"
Ben Conway	"Aye"
Jeffery Dotson	"Aye"
Caynor Smith, Jr.	"Aye"

Discussion of Food Concession Services Agreement:

As a follow-up to discussions at the special-called meeting on December 28, 2020, whereby Council instructed the Town's Attorney to draft an agreement for the hiring of a Director of Food Concessions at Dotson Park, Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion to approve an agreement between the Town of Wise and Sandra Adkins to serve as Food Concessions Director. Laura Taylor-Baugh seconded the motion, with the vote being recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Resolution #2, 2021:

Town Planner Laura Roberts informed that VDOT had authorized the combining of phases 2 and 3 of the Norton Road Pedestrian Improvements Project, into one contract and the advancement of funds for phases 2, 3, and 4 so that the entire project could be bid at the same time, rather than individual phases. She explained the reason for the change was to save time and money by allowing contractors to bid one large project, with the intent to attract larger contractors and more competitive bids. Roberts added that due to the project change, Thompson & Litton was requesting their original 2019 contract be amended to include additional funds for Construction Administration and Inspection Services for the entire project in the amount of \$150,400. She stated that there would be a \$120,000 total project budget cost savings from combining these services. Following the summary, Councilman Caynor Smith moved to adopt “A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO A CONTRACT WITH THOMPSON & LITTON, INC. FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE NORTON ROAD PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT – PHASES 1-4”. Vice-Mayor Laura Taylor-Baugh seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Resolution #3, 2021:

Laura Roberts, Town Planner, explained that Economic Development Strategic Planning was an eligible activity under the Rural Development Business Development Grant Program. She added that the grant was a 100% grant program, meaning there was no required local match. Roberts stated the town’s staff requested authorization to submit an application to Rural Development for funding for the purpose of securing funds to engage the expertise and professional services of a consultant specializing in strategic economic development planning. Following a brief discussion, Laura Taylor-Baugh moved to adopt “A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA APPROVING AUTHORIZING PREPARATION AND SUBMITTAL OF A RURAL DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT GRANT APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND PREPARATION OF AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA”. Jeff Dotson seconded the motion, that required a roll call vote:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Resolution #4, 2021:

Robin Meade, Town Clerk/Treasurer, explained that the contract for accounting services, which included preparation of the Town's yearly financial statements, expired on June 30, 2020. The contract, she stated, included a three-year extension clause if agreeable by both parties. Following the discussion, Laura Taylor-Baugh made a motion to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA APPROVING EXTENSION OF A CONTRACT WITH LARRY D. STURGILL, P.C. FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIFIED ACCOUNTING SERVICES". Jeff Dotson seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	"Aye"
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	"Aye"
Ben Conway	"Aye"
Jeffery Dotson	"Aye"
Caynor Smith, Jr.	"Aye"

Discussion of Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Grant Program:

Laura Roberts, Town Planner, informed that the Virginia Department of Transportation had announced an upcoming application period for the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Grant Program (formerly known as Transportation Alternative Program). She explained that the program required a 20% locality match with 80% funding from the State and Federal Highway Commission. She stated that the pre-application was due by July 1, 2021 and if selected to move forward, full applications would be due by October 1, 2021. She requested that Council decide if they wished to apply for the grant funding, and if so, what area of Town that Council wished to improve. Following several suggestions for areas to focus on, Councilman Dotson suggested approving the application for the grant funding, but recommended the matter be referred to the appropriate committee for decision as to what area of Town should be considered for improvements. Other members of Council concurred with Dotson's suggestion.

Administrative Committee Meeting Report:

Robin Meade, Town Clerk/Treasurer, presented the Administrative Committee's review of proposals for replacement of the town's current landline phone system with a Voice over Internet Protocol phone system. She noted that after a thorough review, the committee recommended the Town approve the proposal submitted by Encore Technology Group and "piggyback" on the Wise County School System's contract with the company, just as Wise County had done. Vice-Mayor Laura Taylor-Baugh mentioned that during Wise County's testing of the system, she was impressed with the clarity of the phones.

Resolution #5, 2021:

Following the brief summary of the Administrative Committee Report, Jeff Dotson made a motion to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AUTHORIZING COOPERATIVE PROCUREMENT OF A VOICE OVER INTERNET PROTOCOL (VoIP) PHONE SYSTEM AND SERVICE THROUGH A CONTRACT COMPETITIVELY PROCURED BY THE WISE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM WITH ENCORE TECHNOLOGY GROUP". Ben Conway seconded the motion that was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	"Aye"
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	"Aye"
Ben Conway	"Aye"
Jeffery Dotson	"Aye"
Caynor Smith, Jr.	"Aye"

Annual Reports (Informational Purposes Only) – Acknowledgement of Receipt:

The Town of Wise Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals submitted annual reports for calendar year 2020 for Council review and acknowledgement of receipt. There being no questions or comments, Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion acknowledging receipt of the annual reports. Laura Taylor-Baugh seconded the motion, which carried 5-0.

Closed Session:

On a motion made by Councilman Conway and seconded by Councilman Smith, the Wise Town Council moved to convene into closed meeting for the purpose of and including:

Legal Matters – Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel as permitted by Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(8).

Open Session:

Laura Taylor-Baugh made a motion to reconvene in open session. Ben Conway seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

Certification of Closed Session – CM Resolution #1, 2021:

Town Clerk/Treasurer Robin Meade, read Closed Meeting Resolution #1, 2021, “Resolving and certifying that to the best of each member’s knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applied, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Town Council of the Town of Wise,” and the vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Appointee Reports (Informational Purposes Only) – Acknowledgement of Receipt:

Laura Taylor-Baugh made a motion acknowledging receipt of both the Cumberland Airport Commission report from the regular meeting held January 21, 2021 and the C-N-W Board Meeting Report from the regular meeting held December 2, 2020. Jeff Dotson seconded the motion that carried 5-0.

Council Comment:

Caynor Smith, Jr., encouraged all members of Council to always speak their minds, reminding that council members are representatives of the citizens. He thanked his fellow councilmembers for a very productive meeting. He commended the Street Department employees for their snow removal efforts.

Laura Taylor-Baugh stated the Street Department crew had done an exceptional job of snow removal this winter.

Jeff Dotson reiterated previous commendations regarding snow removal and requested that Acting Street Superintendent Adrian Dale pass along the positive comments to the employees.

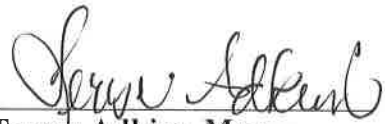
Staff / Manager Comment:

Town Planner Laura Roberts informed that Greg Cross had tentatively scheduled the Chillin' & Grillin' event for July 16-17. She asked whether she should proceed with scheduling musical events for that weekend. Mayor Adkins and other members of Council conceded that music should be tentatively scheduled and contracts should include a cancelation clause in the event of any state mandated restrictions or prohibitions in regard to the Covid-19 virus. In addition, Mayor Adkins instructed Roberts to schedule a couple of music events for the weekends following the barbeque competition.

Adjournment:

There being no additional business to come before the governing body, the meeting was adjourned on a motion made by Vice-Mayor Taylor-Baugh. Councilman Conway seconded the motion, which carried 5-0.


Robin R. Meade, Clerk of Council


Teresa Adkins, Mayor