

WISE TOWN COUNCIL
Tuesday, February 28, 2023; 7:00 P.M.
WISE MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
501 WEST MAIN STREET - WISE, VIRGINIA 24293

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor
Ben Conway, Vice-Mayor
Jeffery Dotson
Robin Dotson
Caynor Smith, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

MOMENT OF SILENCE:

Mayor Adkins requested a moment of silence in remembrance of Elbert Ray Lawson, Jr., Town of Wise Hometown Hero Award recipient, who passed away on February 25, 2023.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / INVOCATION:

Ben Conway, Vice-Mayor, led the Pledge of Allegiance. Adrian Dale, Town of Wise Street Superintendent, provided the invocation.

WISE KIWANIS CLUB PRESENTATION:

Councilman Jeff Dotson, member of the Wise Kiwanis Club, presented a framed article he had written that was published in The Capital Kiwanian to Town of Wise Street Superintendent Adrian Dale. The article honored Dale for the construction of a Santa sleigh float for the Town's annual Christmas parade, which is sponsored and organized by the Wise Kiwanis Club.

AGENDA CHANGES:

Town Manager Laura Roberts advised that there were no changes to the agenda.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion to approve the consent calendar, which included the minutes of the January 24, 2023 regular Council meeting, the January 2023 Police, Water Plant and Fire Department Reports, and the February 2023 Recreation Specialist, Planning Department and Special Events Reports. Jeff Dotson seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Courtney Kiser, co-owner of Vitality Wellness, a family practice medical clinic located at 426 West Main Street, requested authorization from Council to place a "Blessing Box" in the Town of Wise at Big Glades or at an alternate location such as a local church or library. She informed that the box would be stocked with nonperishable food and personal hygiene items for individuals in need to take. Kiser stated that the box would cost approximately \$175 - \$300 and required roughly \$25 - \$35 per week to restock. She added that she was not requesting funding from the Town and had businesses willing to sponsor the cost. In addition she advised Council that she would take responsibility for the box and replenish it as needed. Councilman Robin Dotson suggested the box be placed in a location that had video surveillance. Councilman Smith opined that a church parking lot would be the best location. Mayor Adkins advised Kiser to speak with local churches first and reapproach Council if she still desired to place the box at Big Glades.

DISCUSSION OF DEPARTMENT HEAD REQUESTS:

Natasha Proulex, Special Event Coordinator, informed Wise County Department of Social Services had contacted her with a request to place blue bows on street light poles throughout Town in observance of Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. Proulex advised WCDSS would provide the bows but would need assistance from the Town's Public Works Department with hanging them on the poles. Ben Conway made a motion to approve the request. Jeff Dotson seconded the motion with the vote recorded by roll call:

| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | "Aye" |
| Ben Conway | "Aye" |
| Jeffery Dotson | "Aye" |
| Robin Dotson | "Aye" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |

PUBLIC HEARING - RESOLUTION #7, 2023:

Regan Walsh, Town Planner, informed Wise County had been working on a potential housing development at the former J.J. Kelly High School property located at 716 Birchfield Rd. Walsh advised that a Conditional Use Permit would be required if the property was developed. She stated an amendment to the 2022 Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Wise, Virginia to support Wise County in their efforts to develop the former J.J. Kelly High School property into a mid-range to upscale workforce housing development and/or community recreational site would aid in the support of such a development. A public hearing was held on "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AMENDING THE 2022 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA TO INCLUDE A NEW HOUSING OBJECTIVE". There being no one from the public audience wishing to comment, Mayor Adkins closed the public hearing. Robin Dotson moved to adopt Resolution #7, 2023 as presented. Ben Conway seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

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|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | "Aye" |
| Ben Conway | "Aye" |
| Jeffery Dotson | "Aye" |
| Robin Dotson | "Aye" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |

PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE AMENDING ZONING ORDINANCE:

Town Planner Reagan Walsh explained the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations of the Town of Wise, Virginia, adopted March 2, 1987, did not contain language regarding campgrounds. She informed the Planning Commission conducted research on amending said zoning ordinance to allow campgrounds as a conditional use in B-1, B-2, and R-B zoning districts and held a public hearing at its February 2, 2023 meeting. Walsh added the Planning Commission recommended that Council approve and adopt the ordinance under discussion, providing for campgrounds in the aforementioned districts as well as adding two new definitions to Article 11. She noted the significance of the Conditional Use Permit in providing Council with additional oversight on all campground establishments. Vice-Mayor Conway stated he wanted wording in the ordinance outlining the allowed length of stay to avoid having permanent residents in campgrounds. A public hearing was held on "AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AMENDING ARTICLE 4 SECTIONS 2.2, 4.2, AND 5.2

AND ARTICLE 11, SECTION 2 OF THE TOWN OF WISE ZONING ORDINANCE AND SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS ADOPTED MARCH 23, 1987 TO INCLUDE CAMPGROUNDS, AS A CONDITIONAL USE, IN THE R-B, B-1, AND B-2 ZONING DISTRICTS AND TO PROVIDE DEFINITIONS FOR CAMPGROUNDS AND CAMPING UNITS". There being no one from the public audience wishing to comment, Mayor Adkins closed the public hearing. Councilman Smith opined the Conditional Use Permit would be sufficient to address any concerns, including length of stay. Mayor Adkins concurred with Councilman Smith. Councilmen Robin Dotson and Jeff Dotson expressed concern regarding campgrounds being placed in residential areas. Following a brief discussion, Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion to adopt Ordinance #1, 2023 as presented. Mayor Adkins seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

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|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | "Aye" |
| Ben Conway | "Nay" |
| Jeffery Dotson | "Nay" |
| Robin Dotson | "Nay" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |

Adoption of Ordinance #1, 2023 failed. Council directed Walsh to take the matter back to Planning Commission to address the concerns discussed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHALLENGE GRANT REQUEST:

Town Manager Laura Roberts summarized the Creative Communities Partnership Grant of \$4,500 for fiscal year 2023-2024, which must be matched by the Town. She advised the Town previously allocated \$3,600 of the funds to Pro-Art, totaling \$7,600 after the Town's \$4,000 allocation and \$900 to the Lonesome Pine Library Gallery, totaling \$1,900 after the Town's \$1,000 allocation. Roberts informed Pro-Art had requested an additional \$400 for fiscal year 2023-2024 and inquired as to if Council desired to leave the Grant allocation amounts the same and provide the additional \$400 out of the Town's General Fund. Councilman Smith made a motion to increase the total fiscal year 2023-2024 allocation to Pro-Art to \$8,000 total, with the additional \$400 to be disbursed from the General Fund. Robin Dotson seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

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|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | "Aye" |
| Ben Conway | "Aye" |
| Jeffery Dotson | "Aye" |
| Robin Dotson | "Aye" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |

RESOLUTION #8, 2023:

Town Manager Laura Roberts informed that a "Request for Bids" for paving was recently advertised with two companies submitting proposals. She provided a written list of the streets to be paved in the fiscal year 2022-2023 paving schedule. Councilman Jeff Dotson made a motion to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AWARDED A CONTRACT TO BIZZACK CONSTRUCTION, LLC FOR COMPLETION OF THE TOWN'S FY 2022-2023 PAVING SCHEDULE". Caynor Smith, Jr. seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | "Aye" |
| Ben Conway | "Aye" |
| Jeffery Dotson | "Aye" |
| Robin Dotson | "Aye" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |

RESOLUTION #9, 2023:

Mayor Teresa Adkins expressed condolences for the death of former Town of Wise Attorney, Don R. Pippin on December 6, 2022. Adkins informed that a Celebration of Life would be held at the David J. Prior Convocation Center at UVA Wise on April 15, 2023, and therefore Council wished to declare the date Don R. Pippin Day in the Town of Wise. Councilman Smith moved to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA DECLARING SATURDAY APRIL 15, 2023 AS DON R. PIPPIN DAY IN THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA". Jeff Dotson seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

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|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | "Aye" |
| Ben Conway | "Aye" |
| Jeffery Dotson | "Aye" |
| Robin Dotson | "Aye" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |

Following the vote, councilmembers shared fond memories of Mr. Pippin.

RESOLUTION #10, 2023:

Town Planner Reagan Walsh explained the Town had been notified of its eligibility for grant funding from the National Fitness Campaign in the amount of \$30,000 for a Fitness Court and Studio, pending a resolution of support. She added the total cost of the project is estimated at \$190,000, with the remaining funds needed from donations, sponsorships, fund-raising, and potentially the Town's General Fund. Walsh advised Council the Town has no financial commitment until July 7, 2023, which provided time to fundraise and obtain sponsorships to determine if the Town wished to proceed with the project. Following a brief discussion, Jeff Dotson made a motion to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A NATIONAL FITNESS CAMPAIGN GRANT FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF A FITNESS COURT AND STUDIO TO BE LOCATED AT THE TOWN OF WISE SPORTS COMPLEX". Ben Conway seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

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|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | "Aye" |
| Ben Conway | "Aye" |
| Jeffery Dotson | "Aye" |
| Robin Dotson | "Aye" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |

DISCUSSION OF EMPLOYEE GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL:

Laura Roberts provided information regarding the Town's employee health insurance for fiscal year 2023-2024. In a written memorandum, Roberts indicated that premiums would not increase for the new fiscal year. Following a brief discussion, Councilman Smith made a motion that the

Town of Wise approve health insurance as described in a written memorandum from the Town Manager dated 2/28/23 as follows:

- 1) Offer Key Advantage 250 Plan and Key Advantage Expanded Plan.
- 2) Fund 90% of the cost of the Key Advantage 250 Plan with comprehensive dental coverage. Provide employee option to buy up to the Key Advantage Expanded Plan and option to elect either comprehensive dental coverage or less expensive preventive and diagnostic dental coverage.
- 3) Designate eligible enrollees as:
 - i. Full Time Employees – persons regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week, year-round, for no definite term.
 - ii. Part Time Elected Officials – Town to pay 50% of the amount contributed for full time employee at all membership levels.
 - iii. Part Time Employees – persons regularly scheduled to work at least 20 and not more than 29 hours per week, year-round, for no definite term with the Town to pay 50% of the amount contributed for the full time employee at all membership levels.
 - iv. COBRA Qualified Beneficiaries (Per Federal Law, COBRA enrollees will pay a 2% Administrative Fee in addition to the monthly premium)
 - v. Early Retirees not Eligible for Medicare
- 4) Provide one month of coverage for surviving eligible dependents of a deceased employee/retiree to allow time for them to get their affairs in order following a tragic loss.

Ben Conway seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | “Aye” |
| Ben Conway | “Aye” |
| Jeffery Dotson | “Aye” |
| Robin Dotson | “Aye” |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | “Aye” |

DISCUSSION OF COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

Mayor Teresa Adkins reviewed presented changes to Committee Assignments, which included listing Robin Dotson as Alternate on the Community Activities Committee and adding a Centennial Committee to plan the Town of Wise Centennial Celebration in 2024. There being no further discussion, Councilman Smith made a motion to update the Town of Wise Committee Assignments as presented. Robin Dotson seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT:

Ben Conway, Chair, summarized the meeting of the Public Utilities Committee held to discuss a request for a street light to be located on an existing pole at 608 Falin Street. Chief of Police Danny French stated the Police Department monitored the area and reported it lacked lighting and observed several walkers in the area. There being no additional comment or questions, Councilman Jeff Dotson made a motion to accept the Public Utilities Committee's recommendation to approve the installation of a street light at 608 Falin Street. Councilman Smith seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

| | |
|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | “Aye” |
| Ben Conway | “Aye” |
| Jeffery Dotson | “Aye” |
| Robin Dotson | “Aye” |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | “Aye” |

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT:

Town Manager Laura Roberts summarized the Finance Committee meeting held to discuss a Cost of Living Adjustment pay increase for eligible full time employees to be included in the upcoming fiscal year 2023-2024 budget. Roberts advised the Cost of Living Adjustment would be in addition to a 3% step increase for employees not topped out in their pay grade. Following a brief discussion, Jeff Doston made a motion to accept the Finance Committee's recommendation of a 3% Cost of Living Adjustment for eligible full time employees in addition to the annual step increase for those not topped out. Caynor Smith, Jr. seconded the motion with the vote recorded by roll call:

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|----------------------|-------|
| Teresa Adkins, Mayor | "Aye" |
| Ben Conway | "Aye" |
| Jeffery Dotson | "Aye" |
| Robin Dotson | "Aye" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |

CLOSED SESSION:

On a motion made by Robin Dotson and a second by Caynor Smith, Jr. the Wise Town Council moved to convene into closed meeting for the purpose of and including:

Real Property – Discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, as permitted by Virginia Code §2.2-3711 (A)(3).

OPEN SESSION:

Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion to reconvene in open session. Robin Dotson seconded the motion that carried 5-0.

Certification of Closed Session - CM Resolution #3, 2023:

Sarina Collins, Town Clerk/Treasurer, read Closed Meeting Resolution #3, 2023, "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" |
| Ben Conway | "Aye" |
| Jeffery Dotson | "Aye" |
| Robin Dotson | "Aye" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |

APPOINTEE REPORTS (Informational Purposes Only) - Acknowledgement of Receipt:

Caynor Smith, Jr. questioned if Council had any questions regarding the C-N-W Board Meeting. There being none, Robin Dotson made a motion acknowledging receipt of the C-N-W Board Meeting from February 15, 2023. Jeff Dotson seconded the motion that carried 5-0.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Robin Dotson stated this meeting was his first of not having a unanimous vote on a matter but noted the amicable discussion went a long way in making progress for the Town.

Caynor Smith, Jr. stated the Town was doing good and had a lot going on. He commended staff for doing an excellent job of moving the Town forward for years to come. Smith honored the memory of Elbert Ray Lawson, Jr., stating he was an outstanding citizen of the Town of Wise and would be missed.

Mayor Adkins shared a certificate of appreciation from UVA Wise for the Town co-sponsoring a men's UVA Wise Cavaliers basketball game on February 18, 2023.

Ben Conway informed a program was available through the Wise County Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Wise Works, and would be beneficial to the Town for both labor on the Bear Creek Reservoir trail project and litter pick up throughout Town. He stated the program allowed convicted nonviolent offenders to serve their sentences by working for employers in the community at no charge. Town Attorney Leonard Rogers advised the Town must enter into a written agreement with the Wise Works program if interested in obtaining individuals from the program to work with the Town. Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion for the Town of Wise to enter into an agreement with Wise Works and authorize the Town Manager to execute said agreement. Jeff Dotson seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

Jeff Dotson stated he enjoyed attending the co-sponsored men's UVA Wise Cavaliers basketball game. Dotson expressed his support for providing employees with a Cost of Living Adjustment.

STAFF COMMENT:

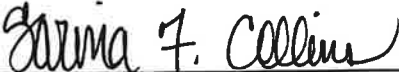
Town Manager Laura Roberts provided a status update on the Town's fiscal year 2021-2022 audit, with an estimated completion date of mid-March 2023. Roberts also requested Council schedule a Budget Workshop meeting to discuss Capital Outlay Expenditures submitted by department heads for fiscal year 2023-2024.

Reagan Walsh, Town Planner, thanked Council for feedback on the amendment of the Zoning Ordinance regarding campgrounds.

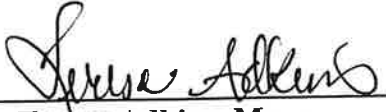
Town Clerk / Treasurer Sarina Collins provided a status update on the codification of the Town's ordinances, with an estimated legal review completion date of April 2023.

CONTINUANCE:

There being no additional discussion by the Wise Town Council, Jeff Dotson made a motion to continue the meeting until March 15, 2023 for a Budget Workshop. Ben Conway seconded the motion that passed 5-0.



Sarina F. Collins, Town Clerk/Treasurer



Teresa Adkins, Mayor