

WISE TOWN COUNCIL
Tuesday, May 23, 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
Jeffery Dotson
Robin Dotson
Caynor Smith, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / INVOCATION:

Boy Scouts of America members led the Pledge of Allegiance. Reverend Jim Collie provided the invocation.

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 April 25, 2023 regular Council meeting and the May 3, 2023 continued Council meeting, the April 2023 Police, Water Plant, and Fire Department Reports, and the May 2023 Recreation Specialist, Planning Department, and Special Events Reports. Councilman Jeffery Dotson seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

Tony Bates, former Town of Wise Police Chief, opined that there were current Town of Wise Police Department employees with over 20 years of experience who were well qualified to fill the upcoming vacancy in the Police Chief position. He shared his belief that bringing in a new employee as Chief in a small-town department, in which employees have close relationships, would be detrimental to the Department.

Tammy Bates, resident of 310 Nottingham Avenue, thanked Council for all they have done for Wise Youth Sports. She informed 367 children participated in the program this year, the largest number to date. Bates stated that the program would not be possible without support from Council, particularly allowing use of the Town of Wise Sports Complex.

Thomas Kennedy, resident of 303 Spring Avenue SE and owner of Wise Lumber & Supply Company as well as several investment properties in Town, addressed Council regarding the upcoming vacancy in the Police Chief position. He advised, as a resident and business owner in Town, he had the opportunity to work with the Police Department over the years and hoped that consideration for the position of Chief would be given to interested employees of the Department who have shown loyalty through many years of service to the Town.

REQUEST FROM THE HEALTH WAGON:

Cori Gilmer, on behalf of The Health Wagon, requested Council approval for the use of the Town of Wise Sports Complex for its 2023 Summer Food Service Program. She advised The Health Wagon had secured a grant-funded program partnership with Feeding Southwest Virginia. Gilmer added the purpose of the grant was to ensure the children of Southwest Virginia had ample opportunity to receive free meals during summer months. She informed the program is available to children ages 1-18 and those with mental or physical disabilities or a standing Individualized Education Program ages 19-22. Gilmer stated the Sports Complex would be used as a grab-and-go location for food box pick-up during the hours of 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. on designated Mondays in June, July, and early August. Town Manager Laura Roberts advised that she and Recreation Specialist Doug Bates had met with The Health Wagon staff to discuss the program in order to avoid scheduling conflicts with other events at the Complex. Council approved the request for use of the Town of Wise Sports Complex.

HOMETOWN HERO AWARD PRESENTATION - RESOLUTION #26, 2023:

Councilman Caynor Smith, Jr. honored Tammy Bates for her diligent work with Wise Youth Sports. He read RESOLUTION #26, 2023, and thanked Bates for her selfless commitment. A plaque displaying the Resolution was presented to Bates. There being no further discussion Robin Dotson moved to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA NAMING TAMMY BATES A HOMETOWN HERO FOR THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA". Ben Conway 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 - FY 2023-2024 BUDGET:

There being no one from the public audience wishing to comment, Mayor Adkins closed the public hearing and advised a vote would be held on the FY 2023-2024 Budget during the June 27, 2023 regular Council meeting.

WISE FIRE DEPARTMENT - DUANE PHILLIPS:

Update on Aerial Fire Truck:

Fire Chief Duane Phillips informed that he had been unable to secure funding from Wise County or grant sources for the purchase of a new Aerial Fire Truck, estimated at \$1.5 million, for the Wise Fire Department. He cited a lack of funding commitment from localities other than the Town of Wise as the reason he had been unable to acquire grant funding. Councilman Smith questioned if Phillips had continued to seek other grant opportunities. Phillips confirmed he was actively seeking grant opportunities and attempting to meet with a grant writer familiar with emergency services grants. Mayor Adkins asked if the Department had funds available to apply toward the purchase of the truck. Phillips stated the Fire Department had approximately \$40,000.00 in a savings account. Councilman Jeffery Dotson suggested Phillips attend a Wise County Board of Supervisors meeting with a Council member to present facts, such as total calls answered outside of Town limits and the amount of County-owned property located in the Town. Vice-mayor

Conway stated the financial burden was not the Town taxpayer's responsibility to bear alone. Phillips agreed to attend a Wise County Board of Supervisors meeting to request funding for the purchase of an Aerial Fire Truck.

RESOLUTION #27, 2023:

Duane Phillips, Wise Fire Department Fire Chief, advised that temperature monitoring equipment repairs were needed at the Burn Building, which is used for firefighting training purposes. He explained the equipment needed to be updated to pass an upcoming State inspection. There being no further discussion, Jeff Dotson made a motion to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AUTHORIZING A GRANT APPLICATION TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS ON BEHALF OF THE WISE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR TEMPERATURE MONITORING EQUIPMENT REPAIRS". Robin Dotson seconded the motion. 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 #28, 2023:

Town Planner Reagan Walsh informed The Rapha Foundation had awarded a grant to the Town in the amount of \$50,000.00 toward the installation of a Fitness Court and Studio to be located at the Town of Wise Sports Complex. There being no further discussion, Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA ACCEPTING A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$50,000.00 FROM THE RAPHA FOUNDATION AND AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE GRANT AGREEMENT". 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"

Audit/ Finance Committee Report - RESOLUTION #29, 2023:

Town Clerk/Treasurer Sarina Collins summarized the meeting of the Audit/Finance Committee held to discuss the award of the Accounting Services Contract. She noted the committee recommended that Council award the contract to the firm of Larry D. Sturgill, P.C. for the period of June 30, 2024, through June 30, 2026, with an option to extend the contract for a period of three successive one-year periods if both parties agree. Said contract was in the amount of \$10,275.00 per year. There being no further discussion, Jeffery Dotson moved to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA APPROVING AN AGREEMENT WITH LARRY D. STURGILL, P.C. FOR THE PROVISION OF SPECIFIED ACCOUNTING SERVICES". Ben Conway 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”

PROCLAMATION #5, 2023:

Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion to adopt "A PROCLAMATION BY THE MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA DESIGNATING JUNE 4-10, 2023 AS "NATIONAL GARDEN WEEK". Robin Dotson seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

PROCLAMATION #6, 2023:

Jeffery Dotson made a motion to adopt "A PROCLAMATION BY THE MAYOR OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA RECOGNIZING THE WEEK OF MAY 21-27, 2023 AS "EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK". Ben Conway seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

Economic Development Committee Report:

Town Manager Laura Roberts summarized the meeting of the Economic Development Committee held to discuss potential board members to serve on the Town of Wise Economic Development Authority. She added the Authority will consist of seven directors as mandated by Virginia Code and hoped to have a final list of the proposed directors by the June 27, 2023 regular Council meeting.

Public Works Committee Report:

Caynor Smith, Jr., Chair, summarized the meeting of the Public Works Committee held to discuss a proposed VDOT Feasibility Study on a potential VDOT VTrans safety project referred to as the UVA-Wise Connector Road. Smith advised the committee did not recommend moving forward with the feasibility study for the project as presented. Councilman Robin Dotson requested additional information regarding the committee's recommendation. Smith advised the project would require numerous homes to be demolished, causing Town citizens to be displaced. He also cited the construction of a large bridge through Town as an unfavorable aspect of the proposed project.

CLOSED SESSION:

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

Personnel – 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 as permitted by Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(1)

OPEN SESSION:

Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion to reconvene in open session. Vice-mayor Ben Conway seconded the motion that carried 5-0.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION – CM RESOLUTION #8, 2023:

Sarina Collins, Town Clerk/Treasurer, read Closed Meeting Resolution #8, 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, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Robin Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

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

Caynor Smith, Jr. made a motion acknowledging receipt of the following appointee report:

1. Cumberland Airport Commission regular meeting from May 18, 2023.

Jeffery Dotson seconded the motion that carried 5-0.

COUNCIL COMMENT:

Robin Dotson congratulated Tammy Bates on her recognition as Hometown Hero and thanked her and spouse, Doug Bates, for their commitment to youth sports.

Caynor Smith Jr. expressed excitement for upcoming summer events, such as Chillin' and Grillin'.

Jeff Dotson stated that new playground equipment recently installed at Arrowhead Park and the Town of Wise Municipal Swimming Pool were both looking good.

Teresa Adkins informed that Lawton Mullins, on behalf of The Virginia-Kentucky District Fair, had contacted her requesting the Town's assistance with hanging a sign, listing the dates of the Fair, over Norton Road. Town Manager Laura Roberts advised the Town would assume responsibility should the sign fall into the roadway. Councilman Caynor Smith suggested Public Works Superintendent Adrian Dale inspect the sign and proceed with hanging it if he deemed it safe. Council concurred with Smith's suggestion.

STAFF/MANAGER COMMENT:

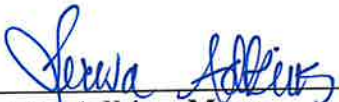
Town Manager Laura Roberts informed that Special Events Coordinator Natasha Proulex had been contacted by Central High School regarding the Town Public Works Department hanging Class of 2024 graduate banners on light poles throughout Town. She informed that this would take place in the Spring of 2024. Roberts stated Central High School would be financially responsible for having the banners made. Council agreed to accommodate the request. She also informed that 3 qualified engineering firms had submitted proposals to be on retainer for the Town. Roberts questioned if Council desired to interview the 3 firms or request proposals for retainers from each

of them. She added there would be no cost to retain the firms and only agreements between said firms and the Town would be needed. Council agreed to keep Thompson & Litton, The Lane Group & Engineering Services on retainer.

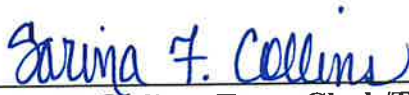
Town Clerk/Treasurer Sarina Collins provided a brief update regarding the codification of the Town's ordinances, noting the estimated date of completion was unknown.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no additional discussion by the Wise Town Council, Jeffery Dotson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ben Conway seconded the motion that passed 5-0.



Teresa Adkins, Mayor



Sarina F. Collins, Town Clerk/Treasurer