

August 14, 2018

MINUTES OF THE BROOKNEAL TOWN COUNCIL

7:00 PM – The regular meeting of the Brookneal Town Council

The municipal government of the Town of Brookneal met with the following members present:

Phyllis Campbell, Mayor
James Nowlin, Vice Mayor
Barbara Laprade, Mark Wilkes, Robert Jean, Richard Adams, and Joseph B. David, Jr., Council Members
Richard Baldwin, Chief of Police
Russell Thurston, Town Manager
Mike Crews, Public Works Director
Bobbie Waller, Clerk/Treasurer

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon motion by Robert Jean, seconded by Joseph David, and unanimously carried, Council approved the agenda for the August 14, 2018, regular meeting of the Brookneal Town Council.

MINUTES

Upon motion by Richard Adams, seconded by Mark Wilkes, and unanimously carried, Council approved the minutes for the July 10, 2018 Town Council meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mayor Campbell asked that the August 2018 treasurer's report be filed for audit.

PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF INVOICES

Be it resolved that motion was made by James Nowlin, seconded by Mark Wilkes and unanimously carried, authorizing the payment of the invoices for the period of July 11, 2018 to August 14, 2018, in the amount of \$19,211.93.

POLICE REPORT

Police Chief Richard Baldwin presented the police report for July 2018. He said of the 54 calls for service, 44 were answered by the Brookneal Police Department.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Mike Crews, Public Works Director, said that he had hired a new part time employee, Noah Bomar. He said the TTHMs in the finished water were well below the limits for July 2018. He applauded Ryan Deitterick at the water treatment plant for this.

- **FLUORIDE**

Mr. Crews talked about fluoride use in the Town water. He said Ryan Deitterick at the water treatment plant has made a recommendation to discontinue using fluoride in the water. He said that when the upgrade at the water treatment plant was done years ago, some grants were received to purchase the fluoride equipment and the chemicals. He said over the years some of the equipment has been replaced. He said that the use of fluoride is not mandated by the Office of Drinking Water. He said he wanted the Council to think about whether or not they would like to continue feeding the fluoride into the drinking water. He said that a recommendation and a vote from the Council are required to stop using fluoride in the water. Councilperson Jean asked how expensive the fluoride is. Mr. Crews was not sure of the cost, but said he would find out and let the Council know at the meeting next month. Councilperson Adams asked if anyone from the public has commented on this issue; Mr. Crews said he has not received any comments from the public about this.

Mr. Thurston told the Council that he and Mr. Crews would get with all the localities in Region 2000 and find out who uses the fluoride and who doesn't and why they do or why they don't. He said they would bring back that information at the next meeting along with costs of using the fluoride.

Mr. Crews said that his senior maintenance workers are concerned that there is no one to take over the duties of the trash truck and the backhoe if they retire. He asked Council to be thinking about this.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Town Manager Russell Thurston said that he and Mayor Campbell had a long meeting with Mr. Richard Ingram, Vice President of Womack Publishing in which he encouraged the Town and Council to support and buy local. He said Mr. Ingram said that some weeks they have no ads to run in the local paper. He said letters were written for some properties on Cook Avenue that John Vincent had expressed concern about at a Council meeting a few months ago.

- **WATER AND SEWER ORDINANCE**

Mr. Thurston said that he has been working on revising the water ordinance. He said the General Assembly made some changes to the water ordinance allowing localities to charge a deposit up front. -He said this would help when account holders default on their agreements. He said he was going to distribute the revised ordinance to Council members tonight to review before the next Council meeting. He said that a lot of water customers commit fraud against the Town to get out of paying very high water bills. He said thousands of dollars are lost in unpaid water bills; he said that the Town cannot afford to lose money in the utility fund.

Upon motion by James Nowlin, seconded by Joseph David, and unanimously carried, the Council voted to hold a public hearing at the September 2018 Council meeting concerning repealing and replacing Chapter 50, water and sewer service rates and charges.

- **BROADBAND INTERNET**

Mr. Thurston also told Council that the broadband internet project is moving forward. He said he met with the “last mile provider” last week, and he said that the Town is going to receive internet service at no cost to the Town.

Upon motion by James Nowlin, seconded by Robert Jean, and unanimously carried, the Council voted to authorize Russell Thurston to proceed with the agreement allowing SCS Broadband to use the water tower for the mounting of equipment that will enable wireless high speed internet services for Brookneal and part of Halifax County.

ITEMS FROM TOWN COUNCIL

Councilperson Laprade said that since the last meeting, she reached out to Region 2000 and Mike Davidson, Economic Development Director for Campbell County concerning the potential for a hotel in Brookneal. She said that after speaking to Mike Davidson, he offered to reach out to Megan Lucas of Region 2000. She said that she had looked at Cobblestone Franchises which is suitable for small towns. She said at some point Cobblestone was interested in Brookneal, Altavista, and Appomattox. She said she contacted Cobblestone directly, left a message but has not heard back yet. She passed out a packet of information from Cobblestone and some information from Gary Christie about the Town of Bedford’s exploration into a hotel. She said she has a meeting scheduled for this Friday, August 17, 2018 with Mike Davidson to get started on this project. She said she is working on establishing a committee and contacting the Chamber of Commerce to get someone from that group as well. Councilperson Wilkes said he could be on the committee if it meets in the late afternoons. Vice Mayor Nowlin said he could be at the 1st meeting on Friday morning, August 17. Mayor Campbell said it would be nice to add a citizen to the committee also. Councilperson David and Mr. Thurston suggested the committee be named “the economic development team”. Ms. Laprade said she also had a few locations in mind.

Councilperson Wilkes discussed the potential for the Staunton River and the idea of getting a grant to build a pavilion and have festivals on the river like Lynchburg does. Mr. Crews said that the Town only owns a small piece of land where the radio tower is located; Joe Lunsford, the radio station and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries each own some land in the area of the boat dock.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Mark Wilkes, seconded by James Nowlin, and unanimously carried, Mayor Campbell announced that August 14, 2018 Council meeting was adjourned.

Bobbie A. Waller
Clerk/Treasurer

Phyllis Campbell
Mayor