

**Minutes  
Spruce Pine Town Council  
January 11, 2016 5:30 PM**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on January 11, 2016. Present were Mayor Darla Harding and Council Members James Acuff, Rocky Buchanan and Larry McKinney. Staff in attendance included Richard Canipe, Darlene Butler, Dave Lindsey, Bill Summerlin, Phillip Hise and Michael Wood. Others attended, including Libby Phillips, Russell Lankford, Laura Verla, Jimmy Phillips, Wes Foy and David Purtell (Mitchell News-Journal).

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Darla Harding called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Rocky Buchanan gave the invocation. James Acuff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the agenda adding appointments for Laura Verla and Josh Boone. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 14, 2015. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor. Larry McKinney moved to approve the minutes of the closed session of December 14, 2015. Rocky Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPOINTMENTS

Laura Verla, CPA, presented the completed financial audit for fiscal year 2014/15. She noted that the audit went smoothly and thanked the staff for their assistance. She touched on the management discussion, the net position decrease, budget to actual for the general fund, net position for the water/sewer fund, the income statement for the water/sewer fund, detail on budget-to-actual, the water/sewer capital projects fund, the new police building capital projects fund, and tax collection detail. She pointed out a 94.51% collection rate of property taxes. The audit contains a finding for segregation of duties. She recommended that the town consider developing a comprehensive policies and procedures manual.

Josh Boone, representing Spruce Pine fire was unable to attend.

CONSENT AGENDA - none

ACTION AGENDA - none

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Water and Sewer

- Russell Lankford distributed a water and sewer report for December. Said report is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- American Water is looking at the bar screen problems.
- Watershed monitoring is being done by American Water now. Per Richard Canipe, the Town will not hire someone else at this time.

Parks & Rec

- Michael Wood updated the Council on the parks for December. He noted that mowing has been completed, as well as leaf removal and trimming.
- Brad Ragan Park has been winterized. The heated restrooms at Riverside Park are still open.
- Richard advised that the work planned for the intersection of Highways 226 and 19E is scheduled by NCDOT for March.

Public Works

- Phillip Hise distributed open and closed work orders. He noted that there are 101 completed and 10 open work orders.
- Leaf pick up is slowing down. Water and sewer issues are ongoing. The Dale St. sewer line repair was completed.

- Renovations to the Public Works building are coming along.
- The street sweeper is working okay for the time being.
- Phillip received his Wastewater Grade 1 certification, and would like to get grade 2 as well.
- There is a sewer problem on Lower St. that originates in the alley behind Twisted Laurel Gallery. The grease trap at Tokyo Restaurant is not a good one. Grease is an ongoing problem.

#### Police Department

- Chief Bill Summerlin distributed a monthly calls report, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- He noted that the police department had a good month, and is happy to be moving into the new police department.
- The department is having to search further when a medical examiner is required.
- The new police vehicles are at Light-N-Up, and will be ready in early February.
- He is looking for a secure location to place seized vehicles. He has considered the Sewer Plan property.
- Chief Summerlin asked the press to help communicate that the police department has moved to 193 East Valley Rd.

#### Main Street

- Libby Phillips distributed a Spruce Pine Main Street Executive Director's Report for the period since November, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Rocky Buchanan noted that a problem with trash is all over town, and asked if volunteers could be found to help clean up.
- Council noted that the Town Clock is 10 minutes slow. The area behind it seems fairly stable.

#### Finance

- Dave Lindsey distributed a Financial Summary for the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 months of the 15/16 fiscal year. Said summary is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
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#### TOWN MANAGER

- ✓ Richard Canipe noted the new police cars can be picked up on February 5<sup>th</sup>. The environmental assessment of the old town hall came back clean. The assessment notes that the old furnace needs to be disposed of.
- ✓ The Town still needs to use the \$300,000 ARC Grant for bulk chemical storage at the water plant, and a generator at the North Toe Intake. The bids came in over budget, and he is working to reduce the cost.
- ✓ James Acuff noted that he will be attending the upcoming Council class in Asheville.
- ✓ On March 15<sup>th</sup>, an education bond referendum will be voted on that could benefit Mayland Community College over \$4 million.
- ✓ Lower St. Tavern has closed. A new owner, Jarrod Hughes, will reopen it as a private club and is filling out his paperwork for his ABC permit. Richard Canipe and Bill Summerlin have met with him and outlined the Town's expectations regarding law and order.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Jimmy Phillips commented about the Christmas Lights in town this year. He felt they were the best ever.

#### MAYOR/COUNCIL REQUESTS / COMMENTS

Mayor Darla Harding discussed her desire to reinstate the second Council meeting of each month. She would like to use one meeting per quarter for communication with downtown merchants and businesses. Another meeting per quarter could be used for citizen communication. She would like to use Main Street, the Mitchell Chamber, and social media to increase awareness and attendance at these meetings. Consensus was to begin the second meetings per month in February.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by motion of Rocky Buchanan at 7:01 PM.

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Darlene Butler, Town Clerk

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Darla Harding, Mayor

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James Acuff, Council Member

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Rocky Buchanan, Council Member

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Larry McKinney, Council Member