

**Minutes
Spruce Pine Town Council
April 25, 2016 5:30 PM**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on April 25, 2016. Present were Mayor Darla Harding and Council Members Larry McKinney, James Acuff and Rocky Buchanan. Staff in attendance included Richard Canipe, Darlene Butler, Dave Lindsey, and Michael Burlison. Others attended, including Libby Phillips, Rich Biaga, Beth Byerly, Jimmy Phillips, Jarrod Hughes, Denise Cook, Luther Stroup, Bruce Pitman, Leland Riddle, Jan Godwin, Peter Franklin, Keith Garland, Clarence Lockamy and David Purtell (Mitchell News-Journal).

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the agenda adding an appointment for Leland Riddle. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2016 regular meeting. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Larry McKinney moved to approve the minutes of the April 04, 2016 special meeting. Rocky Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the minutes of the April 07, 2016 special meeting. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

APPOINTMENTS

Leland Riddle approached the Council on behalf of the Mountaineer Shrine Club. He requested a solicitation permit for the date of May 6, 2016, at the intersection of highways 19E and 226S from 9:30 to 3:00. Larry McKinney moved to grant the solicitation permit. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA – NONE

ACTION AGENDA

Clarence Lockamy of Wooten and Company, described phase II of the Water Plant Project. He noted that additional grant funds from ARC were available for the project, which includes a back-up generator at the raw water intake and bulk storage for caustic chemicals. Phase II was advertised as a separate project. Wooten worked with the lowest bidder to modify the work and cost to get within budget. They reached a \$285,000 negotiated price, which is covered by ARC grant funds. Larry McKinney moved to award the contract for Phase II of the Water Plant Project to Brushy Mtn. Contractors of Lenoir. Rocky Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Rocky Buchanan moved to provide water to Pat Yong at 555 Old NC Hwy. 226 at outside rates with no annexation. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

- Town manager Richard Canipe presented a façade grant request from Southwest Trading for façade improvements totaling \$1800, of which \$900 would be reimbursed. Rocky Buchanan moved to award the façade grant. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- The fireworks contract is ready to sign. The date is July 4th, the price is \$10,500. Consensus of the council was to proceed.
- Finance officer Dave Lindsey distributed a copy of the delinquent tax listing advertisement that will be in this week's paper. Also distributed was the analysis of current year tax levy, showing the tax collection rate at 94.30%.

Mayor/Council

- ✓ Mayor Harding noted that the Town Council still has a vacant seat. Although in the past, the council normally appointed someone who ran unsuccessfully in the past election to fill a vacancy, the current council did not agree on that action. In light of that fact, she requested that the Council consider an application process for filling vacant seats. Consensus of the Council was to compile examples of other towns' applications for approval and advertisement.

- ✓ Mayor Harding requested that staff check on the cost of a phone communication system to convey important information such as water low pressure advisories. More education on advisories is also desirable.
- ✓ The National Day of Prayer will be held on May 5 at Riverside Park at noon.
- ✓ Larry McKinney moved that he be replaced on the Main Street Board by James Acuff. Rocky Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- ✓ Rocky Buchanan noted that there are issues at the Public Library with weather stripping and the men's restroom stall door.
- ✓ James Acuff asked if the town should revisit mixed zoning on Summit Avenue.

PUBLIC COMMENT / Business Owner Communication

Mayor Harding scheduled August 22, 2016 as the next business owner/Council meeting. She noted that since the last meeting, curbs were replaced along the railroad and a decision was made not to close the street for the car show.

Libby Phillips– The Blacksmith Festival is Saturday. Exhibits are set up at TRAC and Twisted Laurel. Main Street has been busy with a big town clean-up (thanks to volunteers). There will be a blacksmith reception Friday in the TRAC Gallery. The summer concert series is going well. Central Park is using the last of its grant funds. Main Street committees have been working on sidewalk connector plans. Libby asked for merchant feedback on how to control cigarette butts downtown. Consensus of the group was to try flower pots with cat litter outside buildings. Jan Godwin mentioned a need for a more professional board at central park for events.

Denise Cook – TRAC is open 10:30 to 5:00. A small grant was received from the Wayne C Henderson Folk Art School. The Toe River Studio Tour is in its 23rd year. Toe River Chamber Ensemble will hold its spring concert on May 24. TRAC has been working with Northstar Destination Strategies on a branding project, Toe River Arts. She expressed that TRAC appreciates the support from the Town of Spruce Pine, especially the police department.

Bruce Pitman – thanked the Town for snow removal this past winter. He noted that traffic has become more of a problem, as it is excessively fast. He asked if the town has an ordinance that prohibits driving on the sidewalk. It is a problem in front of Mayland Armature. U-turns are also a problem. He asked if the town has homeless persons in town. Officer Michael Burleson noted a couple of instances of homelessness, two gentleman living under the 19E Bridge, and one on First Baptist Church property. Mr. Pitman asked about merchants' garbage in town and Town Manager Richard Canipe noted that merchants provide their own trash pickup. Mr. Pitman noted that only two businesses were open on a recent Sunday besides Knife and Fork and El Ranchero. Jan Godwin noted that traffic is terrible on Sunday mornings. Per Richard Canipe, Earl Ponder and Feldspar trucks are running on the bypass now. The Town has no Jake brake ordinances. The Council could consider.

Luther Stroup – There will be a July 4th parade by Kiwanis club, which will honor veterans. He stated that there are no police officers in town during lunch, 11:00 to 1:00. He is having a problem with vehicles parking on the sidewalk. There will be an election on June 06 for Supreme Court of NC justice and US House of Representatives.

Peter Franklin – He works for Foxfire Real Estate. He stated that last year's fireworks were awesome. He noted that he is selling the area as much as a house. He wants the town to promote fireworks. He requested that the town consider an ordinance against panhandling and banning smoking. He noted a problem with dog poop in the parks and wondered if the town could enforce leash laws in the parks and perhaps build a dog park or section.

Jan Godwin – Ms. Godwin asked if there was a problem with music on sidewalks. Town manager Richard Canipe advised that if there was proper clearance and no amplification, there was no problem.

Mayor Harding thanked merchants for attending and reminded that the next merchant/council communication will be August 22.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by motion of Larry McKinney at 6:58 PM.

Darlene Butler, Town Clerk

Darla Harding, Mayor

James Acuff, Council Member

Rocky Buchanan, Council Member

Larry McKinney, Council Member