

**Minutes
Spruce Pine Town Council
Monday, October 14, 2019**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on October 14, 2019. Present were Mayor Darla Harding and Council Members James Acuff and Jackie Rensink. Staff in attendance included Richard Canipe, Darlene Butler, Libby Phillips, Bill Summerlin, Crystal Young and Michael Wood. Others attended, including Chelsea Wilson Thayer, Jimmy Hinshaw, Jaqueline Hinshaw, Jimmy Phillips, William Wygand, Claire Wygand, Sandy Phillips and Corey Spiers (Mitchell News-Journal).

CALL TO ORDER

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Jackie Rensink moved to approve the agenda, removing the Public Works report. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Jackie Rensink moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 9, 2019. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPOINTMENTS

Chelsea Wilson Thayer requested a Solicitation Permit for Mitchell High Performing Arts. The request is to solicit funds on November 2, 2019 at the intersection of Highways 226 and 19E, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Jackie Rensink moved to approve the permit request. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor. Ms. Thayer noted that 20% of collected funds will go to this year's production, and 80% to the planned trip to NYC.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Public Works

- Phillip Hise did not attend.

Main Street

- Libby Phillips presented the Spruce Pine Main Street Executive Director's Report for October, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Main Street hopes to raise enough money to sponsor an Artificial Ice Rink for 2 days during the Christmas season. The cost is \$6900.
- She has been working on a social media comment policy for Main Street, and an application for special events downtown.
- Council Member James Acuff asked if the Carolina Theater Sign could be used for Main Street advertising. He will speak to the owner, Millie Hudson, about permission to work on the sign, order letters and use it.

Police Department

- Chief Bill Summerlin thanked Finance Officer Crystal Young for help with grants this year.
- The canine truck is almost ready. The dog is doing well.
- Town break-ins are still being investigated.

Finance

- Finance Officer Crystal Young presented Financial Reports Ending September 30, 2019 for the General Fund and Water/Sewer Fund. Said reports are incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- She also presented the Analysis of /Current Tax Levy, showing the property tax collection rate for 2019 at 15.4%. Said report is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Staff has been working on updating customer contact information. If we have cell phones and carriers, we can send notification texts through our email.
- Ella and Crystal will attend a debt set-off training on Wednesday.
- The auditors have finished their work and are waiting on some state forms.
- Highland Craftsmen has paid off 2 revolving loans.
- The paperwork is submitted to start taking on-line payments.

Parks & Rec

- Michael Wood updated the Council on park work for September. August shelter reservations totaled 31, September reservations totaled 28.
- Mowing is slowing. His crew has been cleaning out flower beds.
- He expressed his thanks to the Public Works crew for work at Riverside Park.

Water & Sewer

- Russell Lankford distributed the Veolia Monthly Operations Report for September, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Beaver Creek is full and overflowing..

CONSENT AGENDA - none

ACTION AGENDA

James Acuff moved to re-appoint Mac Robinson to the Spruce Pine ABC Board for a 3-year staggered term. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Claire Wygand asked about the status of the appearance ordinance. Per Darla, Lloyd Hise will attend the next meeting. Per Jackie Rensink, they have been looking at other towns' ordinances. The proposed standards will have to go before the Planning and Zoning Board for a recommendation. Ms. Wygand expressed her frustration with the debris from the destruction of an old mobile home on Hwy. 226 S, as well as the Terminix building.

Jacque Hinshaw thanked the Council for their resolution for WAMY. She advised that they were awarded the Housing Coalition Grant, but not the food and security grant. She described the Santa For Seniors program that WAMY is organizing for Christmas. WAMY will hold a fundraiser, the Winter Ball, on New Year's Eve at the Cross Street Building.

Sandy Phillips invited the Council to the Blue Ridge Bluegrass Festival this weekend.. There will be gift packages for veterans. The event will be held on October 19th at 2:00 PM.

TOWN MANAGER

- ✓ Town Manager Richard Canipe noted that plans will be submitted by November 1 for the 19E Sewer Line Improvements.
- ✓ Appearance standards will be adopted through the Planning and Zoning Board.
- ✓ Trick or Treat will be held from 5-7 downtown.
- ✓ Richard is waiting for a response from Trey Oakley from YMCA.
- ✓ Clean up of the old Hampshire Hosiery building on 19E will continue.
- ✓ The owners of the Pizza Shop did a great job on the clean up from the fire that destroyed the building.
- ✓ Mitchell County has no permitting process for demolition. Richard has asked the County Board to consider.

MAYOR/COUNCIL REQUESTS / COMMENTS

Mayor Harding updated those present on a miniature golf course under construction near 226S. She expressed her appreciation for owner Kim Oberhammer.

Mayor Harding read a thank you card from the Shirley Hise family.

Council Member Jackie Rensink proposed that the Town consider matching funds for Main Street's attempt to bring an artificial ice-skating rink to a private parking lot on Upper Street. The two-day cost for the rink during the Christmas season would be \$6900.00. Jackie requested \$3500, Darla upped the amount to \$5000. After Finance Officer Crystal Young noted that there was money in the budget due to the delay in hiring a part time employee for Main Street, Mayor Harding asked for a motion for the Town to fund the entire \$6900.00. Jackie Rensink moved to subsidize fully the skating rink. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

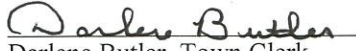
Jimmy Phillips commented that anything you can do to help kids downtown is worthwhile and will bring parents.

Jimmy Hinshaw commended leaving the set up and operation of the rink to experts.

William Wygand reminded Council that there is no "off the record" provision during open meetings. He was assured that it was just a figure of speech, and that the press is aware of that.

ADJOURNMENT

Jackie Rensink moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 PM.

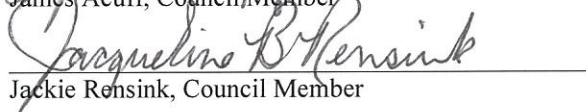

Darlene Butler, Town Clerk


Darla Harding, Mayor

absent
Larry McKinney, Mayor Pro Tem

absent
Rocky Buchanan, Council Member


James Acuff, Council Member


Jackie Rensink, Council Member