

**Minutes**  
**Spruce Pine Town Council**  
**Monday, March 09, 2020**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on March 09, 2020. Present were Mayor Darla Harding and Council Members Rocky Buchanan, James Acuff, Larry McKinney and Jackie Rensink. Staff in attendance included Darlene Butler, Bill Summerlin, Phillip Hise, Crystal Young and Michael Wood. Others attended, including Christy Hemenway, Peggy Dale, and Corey Spiers (Mitchell News-Journal).

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Darla Harding called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Rocky Buchanan asked Michael Wood to give the invocation. Larry McKinney led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Jackie Rensink moved to approve the agenda as presented. Rocky Buchanan 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 February 11, 2020. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Water & Sewer

- Veolia Project Manager Russell Lankford distributed the Veolia Monthly Operations Report for February, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Russell noted that divers inspected the screens at Beaver Creek Dam, and are working on the river intake. We will need to dredge Beaver Creek Dam in the next few years.

Public Works

- Public Works Director Phillip Hise distributed completed work orders. There were 9 open, and 107 closed work orders.
- His crew has salted icy streets this season, but has pushed no snow.
- Phillip distributed copies of the grease control ordinance for Council to look at later. He is visiting all food preparation facilities on our sewer system about grease traps. He noted that Mitchell House still causes a problem with debris in the sewer lines.
- Mayor Harding suggested giving a copy of the ordinance to the owner of the old Tokyo Restaurant building. Phillip advised that the ordinance would pertain to the restaurant operator in that case.

Main Street

- Main Street Director Libby Phillips is at the NC Main Street Conference this week.
- Her report was distributed and is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Police Department

- Police Chief Bill Summerlin noted that his crew is working on drug enforcement.
- The Coronavirus is the big news around town. The chief checked with the hospital for information. Hourly CDC reports are received by the Blue Ridge Regional Hospital.
- His officers continue to conduct extra patrols.

Finance

- Finance Officer Crystal Young presented Financial worksheets for the general and water/sewer funds. She also presented an Analysis of Current Year Tax Levy through February 29, 2020. The tax collection rate is 96.3 %. Said reports are incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- The delinquent property tax advertisement should be published in the Mitchell News-Journal on April 22..
- The Town has received \$1987.00 from the NC debt set off program.
- On line bill payments have totaled \$11,125.20 to date.
- Crystal discussed tentative budget kick-off meeting dates. She noted that the Local Government Credit Union could possibly pay for the meal. Consensus of the Council was to set that meeting for April 9th at 5:30 PM.
- The phone tree was tested. 1853 calls were made, with only 25 bad numbers identified.

Parks & Rec

- Parks Supervisor Michael Wood updated the Council on park work for February.
- He has been working on playgrounds, getting them ready for warmer weather. He will begin taking shelter reservations next month for May through August.
- Harris Middle School is getting ready to begin softball season, which will run through April, at Riverside Park ball field. He drags the field at Riverside Park only.
- The Brad Ragan Park ball field is used for T-ball and coach-pitch ball through Mitchell County Recreation League.
- Darla asked if the ball field was reserved. Michael responded that the field is first come/first served. Mayor Harding suggested that a sign noting first come/first served be posted on the field backdrop.

APPOINTMENTS

Peggy Dale, representing Mountain View Correctional, approached the Council about the 2020 Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics North Carolina. She introduced herself and distributed a handout.

CONSENT AGENDA - none

ACTION AGENDA

Rocky Buchanan moved to release 2014 and 2015 business personal property taxes for River's Edge Outfitters in the amount of \$21.08. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

Larry McKinney moved to award the Fiscal Year 2019/2020 audit contract to Combs, Tennant & Carpenter P.C. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Christy Hemenway asked if the second meeting this month would be held. Consensus of the Council was that it would.

TOWN MANAGER

- ✓ Town Manager Richard Canipe is at the NC Main Street Conference this week.

MAYOR/COUNCIL REQUESTS / COMMENTS

Council Member Rocky Buchanan would like a city ordinance on littering to be amended to charge \$500 plus costs of enforcement.. Staff will check with Lloyd Hise. Mayor Harding would like a town clean up, not just downtown.

Staff will write a letter to the Community Service Program about getting workers to help with garbage pick up.

Mayor Harding requested that we contact the owner of the property on Pine Avenue with the garbage situation weekly.

Council Member James Acuff mentioned that water is running under the old Not Bob's Antiques building, and wondered if the town could help remedy that situation.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Darlene Butler  
Darlene Butler, Town Clerk

Darla Harding  
Darla Harding, Mayor

Larry McKinney  
Larry McKinney, Mayor Pro Tem

Rocky Buchanan  
Rocky Buchanan, Council Member

James Acuff  
James Acuff, Council Member

Jackie Rensink  
Jackie Rensink, Council Member