

**Minutes
Spruce Pine Town Council
Monday, May 10, 2021**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on May 10, 2021. Present were Mayor Pro Tem Larry McKinney and Council Members Rocky Buchanan, James Acuff, and Jackie Rensink. Staff in attendance included Darlene Butler, Shelley Buchanan, Phillip Hise, Libby Phillips, Michael Briggs, and Michael Wood. Also attending was Russell Lankford.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tem Larry McKinney 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

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the agenda as presented. 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 April 26, 2021. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Parks & Rec

- Parks & Rec Director Michael Wood distributed and presented the Parks & Rec Director's Report, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes, and updated the Council on what has been going on in the parks the last several weeks.
- Michael stated that shelter reservations are picking up and that the bathroom renovations at Brad Ragan have been completed and are now open to the public.
- Council Member James Acuff asked Michael who is in charge of the pool staff on a daily basis, to which Michael responded that he and another seasoned staff member will be supervising the pool staff during pool hours of operation.
- Michael's final comments to the Council were thanking them for their support of the parks and recreation department.

Main Street

- Main Street Director Libby Phillips distributed and presented the Spruce Pine Main Street Director's Report, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Libby mentioned that there has been a lot of movement in downtown and interest in industrial/art type space.

Police Department

- Police Chief Billy Summerlin was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Captain Michael Briggs gave an update on the police department in his absence.
- Captain Briggs stated they are getting ready to fill a full time officer position with a candidate getting ready to graduate from Basic Law Enforcement Training in August, as well as a part time reserve officer.
- James Acuff asked if the police department is getting anywhere with their initiative to crack down on drugs in the community. Captain Briggs replied that were working wide open and have been very successful thus far.
- Captain Briggs thanked the Council for the new police vehicles and for assigning cars. He elaborated that this really helped the morale in the department and personal responsibility for these vehicles. Rocky Buchanan and James Acuff both expressed the importance of implementing a checklist or inspection routine to make sure these cars being taken care of. Briggs stated that Chief Summerlin is planning to have a meeting on this soon and start this process.

Water & Sewer

- Veolia Project Manager Russell Lankford distributed and presented the Veolia Monthly Operations Reports for April, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Public Works

- Public Works Director Phillip Hise distributed open and closed work orders for the last thirty days.
- Phillip mentioned that the 19E sewer line project has gone very well and is close to being finished. The plan is to tie in the lower end on Wednesday morning of this week.
- He has been working closely with Ms. Ethel Stafford to resolve the water line issue on Hickey St. They have come to an agreement that both she and the Town are happy with.
- Phillip stated brush work orders have slowed down significantly and they are focusing more on mowing.

Finance

- Finance Officer Crystal Young was absent for this meeting. Fourth quarter financials are incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT- none

ACTION AGENDA

Darlene Butler presented Budget Amendment #3 to the Council. This amendment to the General Fund included an increase in appropriations to the Police Department salary due to overtime caused by Covid, Spruce Pine Fire Department for increase in tax amount of HCA buy out, Brad Ragan pump track, and the Riverside Story Trail Project. Larry McKinney made a motion to adopt the Budget Amendment #2. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Said budget amendment is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Darlene Butler present the Council with the Water Line Replacement Capital Project Ordinance Project for adoption. Said ordinance is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes. Rocky Buchanan made a motion to adopt this ordinance. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPOINTMENTS- none

TOWN MANAGER

- ✓ Town Manager Darlene updated the Council on the Fourth of July fireworks. She has received a quote from a fireworks technician from Newland for an 18 minute show on July 3rd, using 4 inch shells, including clean up and insurance for \$14,000.00. It was the consensus of the council that Darlene proceed in booking this company to perform the Town's fireworks display for 2021.
- ✓ The planning and Zoning Board is set to meet this week on Thursday with the intent to discuss a recommendation to change the zoning in the downtown area.
- ✓ Darlene then asked the Council to consider being a part of the Brad Ragan Pump Track grand opening happening on May 22nd.
- ✓ She will be meeting with the PARTF Grant Regional Advisor for a site visit this week on Wednesday.
- ✓ Darlene stated she had spoken the Town's attorney concerning Pat Dale and Tim Sweeny offering to return the land in which the Beaver Creek Dam sits on. It was his opinion that we have no valid reason to accept this land back. And in relation to his question about the town making sure the land on Stroup Rd remains a park forever, the Town would have to convey a conservation easement to a conservancy.
- ✓ The Walking Bridge Project has been delayed due to the enormous inflation of building material prices. They will revisit in the colder months when prices return to normal.
- ✓ Darlene informed the Council we have until June to complete a Risk Assessment and Emergency Response Plan. She advised she had received a quote from Withers Ravenel of \$22,000 to complete. However after speaking with Russell Lankford, she believes he has the resources to get this done at no cost.

MAYOR/COUNCIL REQUESTS / COMMENTS- None

ADJOURNMENT

Rocky Buchanan moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 PM.

Shelley Buchanan, Town Clerk

ABSENT
Darla Harding, Mayor

Larry McKinney, Mayor Pro Tem

Rocky Buchanan, Council Member

James Acuff, Council Member

Jackie Rensink, Council Member