

**Minutes
Spruce Pine Town Council
Monday, May 9th, 2022**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on May 9th, 2022. Present were Mayor Darla Harding and Council Members James Acuff, Larry McKinney, Rocky Buchanan and Jackie Rensink. Staff in attendance included Darlene Butler, Michael Wood, Rick McDonald, Crystal Young, Billy Summerlin, and Shelley Buchanan. Others attended, including Russell Lankford, Chad Donahoo, Ethan Hollifield and Halley Bursleson.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Darla Harding called the regular meeting to order at 5:55 PM. Jackie Rensink gave the invocation. James Acuff led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Larry McKinney moved to approve the agenda. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on April 25th, 2022. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ZONING REQUEST

Mayor Darla Harding recused herself from the discussion due to conflict of interest and turned the floor over to Mayor Pro Tem Larry McKinney. Larry asked if there was any discussion or questions regarding the zoning change request. Council Member James Acuff made a motion to table the vote until the next regular meeting. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Main Street- Libby Phillips was unable to attend.

Parks and Rec

- Michael Wood presented his report for the month. Said report is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes. The Council thanked Michael and his staff for continuing to pick up trash in Town. Michael also noted the broken slide at Riverside Park has been ordered with an expected ship date of August 2022. It may be necessary to put a more permanent barrier up to keep people off the slide until it is replaced. He also mentioned that he is having some staffing issues which may result in cancellation of extra activities at the pool, such as swimming lessons.

Police Department

- Police Chief Bill Summerlin gave an update on his department. His officers continue to make drug busts and are working hard to clean up Town.
- He praised the volunteers he has had come out to help with his Trash Pickup Days. They have collected over 1,000 pounds of litter so far.
- Chief Summerlin also mentioned he has asked the businesses in Town to consider staying open a little later at least one day a week this summer to give locals more time to patronize their business.

Water and Sewer

- Russell Lankford presented his water and sewer report from Veolia. Said report is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Finance

- Finance Officer Crystal Young presented the fourth quarter financials. Said reports are incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Crystal advised that 97.2% has been collected to date on property taxes. Advertisement of unpaid taxes were published in the Mitchell New Journal which brought in an additional \$1,500.
- She advised the Council the NC Debt Setoff Program continues to be an asset. The Town recently collected \$500 on delinquent water bills.
- She will present the proposed budget the last meeting in May and plans to present the budget for adoption at the June 27th meeting.

Public Works

- Rick McDonald advised it has been a busy month with brush work orders.
- A new employee was hired to fill a vacant spot. Jonathon Williams is from Connecticut and began work today.
- The Public Works department is now fully staffed again.

ACTION AGENDA

Budget Discussion items: Crystal spoke with Mavis Parsley at the County concerning funding for the Pine Line. She asked Crystal to present to the Council an agreement to split the cost 50/50. They will bill the Town \$3,000 per month not to exceed \$15,000 over the course of five months. It was the consensus of the Council to agree to these terms. Mavis will present to the Board of Commissioners at the County's next regular meeting. Crystal spoke with Mitchell Allen and let him know the Council agreed to appropriate \$6,000 to the library. She presented the Council with the model and mileage of vehicles in the Parks and Rec, Police, and Public Works departments. Rocky Buchanan advised they have decided to fund a new truck for the Parks and Rec Department this year. Mayor Harding mentioned a request she received from the AMY Wellness organization for any funding the Town may be able to offer. James Acuff asked what the current Public Works Director's salary is. Crystal replied that is currently \$55,057.90.

Rocky Buchanan made a motion to adopt the Town of Spruce Pine Budget Amendment #2. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Said amendment is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Jackie Rensink made a motion to adopt the ARPA Special Revenue Fund Budget Amendment #2. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Said amendment is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Jackie Rensink made a motion to adopt the Town of Spruce Pine Capital Project Ordinance PARTF Grant for Brad Ragan Park. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. Said Ordinance is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Town Manager

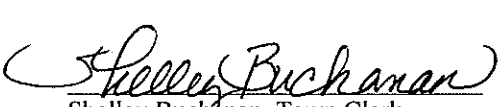
- ❖ Darlene and Libby applied for and were awarded a grant to attend sessions at Appalachian State University for the Rural Community Capacity Building Program. This will enable Spruce Pine to move up the ladder in receiving grants in the future.
- ❖ The library has recommended that the Council appoint Julia Kind from Greenwood Road to the Spruce Pine Public Library Board. Rocky Buchanan made a motion to appoint Ms. Kind to the SPPL Board. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.
- ❖ Darlene updated the Council on the SCIF Grants. She has completed the quarterly performance reports. She has met with vendors for playgrounds, basketball court improvements, and fencing for Brad Ragan Park. She is working with the engineer on plans for the new restrooms at Riverside Park as well as proposals on a splash pad. She and Michael Wood met with a representative from Sibelco about plans for the Stroup Road Park.
- ❖ The PARTF Grant projects are in motion. Vendor meetings have gone well. We have advertised for bids on the shelter renovations but there were no bids taken. We received one proposal on the Tennis/Pickle Ball Courts. This quote came in at \$92,305 and included fencing, net posts, pickle ball surface prep, crack repairs, line painting, and net refurbishing. It was the consensus of the Council to move forward with this proposal.
- ❖ Darlene has submitted four grant applications to the NCDEQ totaling \$21 million.
- ❖ Chad and Darlene met with Kelly Georgeou this afternoon concerning the skate park. Chad is going to draw up a Memorandum of Understanding for the parties involved. The group currently does not have a 501C3 in place. The meeting was positive overall and Chad believes Ms. Georgeou understands the next steps in this process.
- ❖ The EDC Board has interviewed candidates for EDC Director. This position should be filled soon.
- ❖ Locust Street paving project is set to begin mid to late May.
- ❖ Darlene attended the Mitchell County Development Foundation meeting where there were proposed changes to some of the bylaws.

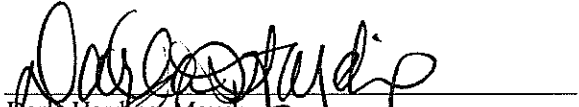
MAYOR/ COUNCIL COMMENTS/REQUESTS

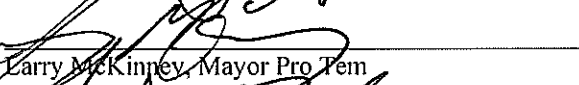
- Darla asked if the fireworks have already been scheduled for this year. Darlene said they are scheduled for July 2nd.

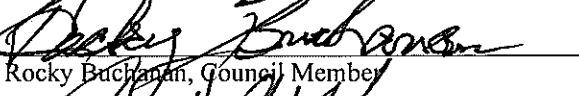
ADJOURNMENT

With no further discussion Jackie Rensink moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 PM.

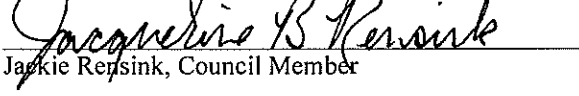

Shelley Buchanan, Town Clerk


Darla Harding, Mayor


Larry McKinney, Mayor Pro Tem


Rocky Buchanan, Council Member


James Acuff, Council Member


Jackie Rensink, Council Member