

**Minutes
Spruce Pine Town Council
Monday, July 11, 2022**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on July 11, 2022. Present were Mayor Darla Harding and Council Members Jackie Rensink, Larry McKinney, and James Acuff. Staff in attendance included Darlene Butler, Crystal Young, Michael Wood, and Libby Phillips. Others attended, including Russell Lankford, Jason Burnette, Michael Hale, Tim Kearns, Donna Kearns, Phillip Hise, Mandi Polly, Walton Shepherd, Dori Settles, Cynthia Sciacca, and Lynn Holler.

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

Larry McKinney moved to approve the agenda with the removal of Sherry Sautner and Chief Bill Summerlin. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Larry McKinney moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 27, 2022. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

Jackie Rensink moved to approve the minutes of the public hearing of the 2022/23 budget held on June 27, 2022. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

Jackie Rensink moved to approve the minutes of the public hearing for the Settles rezoning request held on June 27, 2022. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

James Acuff moved to approve the minutes of the closed session held on June 27, 2022. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

James Acuff moved to approve the minutes of the special called meeting held on June 30, 2022. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

Larry McKinney moved to approve the minutes from the closed session held June 30, 2022. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

APPOINTMENTS

Tim Kearns addressed the Council with a request to pave Pine Ave to Amethyst St, and also Walnut Ave due to tripping hazards. He also asked that the Council address the large dump trucks that travel through town. Mayor Harding assured him she will approach the trucking companies again about this issue. Darlene Butler added that she had received an email from Kenneth Verla in support of repaving Pine Ave.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Parks & Rec

- Michael Wood presented his Parks and Recreation Director's report for the month of June, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes. Michael reassured the public that the playground issues are being taken care of despite Facebook comments. Jackie Rensink added she had been inspecting the parks and that everything was looking fantastic. She commended the Parks and Rec department for their hard work. Darla recommended everyone pitch in to help keep teens and adults off of the playground equipment when in the parks. Jackie suggested Michael approach Sibelco or Quartz Corp to help improve the sitting dock at Riverside Park. Walton Shepherd, owner of L&L Furniture, thanked Michael and all of the town staff and Council for what they do that no one sees.

Main Street

- Libby Phillips presented the Spruce Pine Main Street Executive Director's Report for June, which is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes. Libby has been very busy with end of year statistics and she will be reporting these numbers to the Council at the next department head meeting. Darlene Butler advised that Moretz Paving will be repairing the street in front of the old Tokyo building late July or early August.

Finance

- Finance Officer Crystal Young presented the financials through the end of June, which are incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes. Crystal attended the NC Local Government Conference and the and the NC State Treasurers Conference virtually in June.
- Crystal advised that it is time to do an audit procurement as we have been with the same auditor for five years. She recommended we bid out the audit after this year.
- She noted she had visited NCCash.com where unclaimed property is held by the state. She filed a claim to receive funds held there for the Town of Spruce Pine totaling around \$200.
- Mitchell County let us know we will receive the property tax file by the end of July and we will bill by the end of August.
- Crystal and Darlene have been working on the splash pad project and will have numbers to present to the Council by the next meeting.
- The street sweeper is now paid in full.
- She advised auditors will be here in early August.
- She provided the Council with figures involving the police department salaries for their review at the request of Larry McKinney.

Police Department

- Chief Bill Summerlin was unable to attend.

Water & Sewer

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

Public Works

- Darlene Butler gave a report for the public works department. There were 5 open work orders and 128 closed for the last month. The Public Works Director position has been advertised and will be open until July 29th.

ACTION AGENDA

- ❖ Crystal presented the Annual Settlement of 2021 taxes and Order of Collection. Said memorandum is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes. Larry McKinney made a motion to approve the Annual Settlement memorandum and to direct Darlene Butler to continue as Tax Collector. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.
- ❖ James Acuff moved to table the Ordinance for a Moratorium for Private Sewage Dumping into the Town's Sewer System until the next meeting. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.
- ❖ Crystal presented a Mitchell County tax release notice for business personal taxes for Mineral City Metal Works in the amount of \$447.49. Larry McKinney moved to approve the tax release. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cynthia Sciacca approached the Council about the water main breaks and what the Town is doing to address them. She has lived here part time the last ten years and feels that there are a lot of boil notices and water main breaks. Mayor Harding responded that we do have an old system and we do have several miles of water lines. We address the breaks as they happen. Darlene Butler reiterated the reason and definition of a boil notice. She added that we do have grant applications out to help with replacing some of these lines. This is what the Town is doing to be proactive towards this issue.

Lynn Holler attended the meeting to follow up on her previous concerns on the MCAR funding in the Town of Spruce Pine Budget. She reached out to an employee and encouraged them to ask for an increase. She was happy to find out that Crystal had already reached out to them.

TOWN MANAGER

- ✓ Darlene and Libby have completed three days of Rural Community Capacity Training. The next session will focus on grant opportunities and processes.
- ✓ Lower Street paving is complete and went well. She has put in a call to Hickory Striping and has met with Moretz to clarify paving related to water and sewer leaks.
- ✓ Darlene updated the Council on the grants that have been received. The PARTF grant at Brad Ragan has made it possible to revamp the tennis courts beginning in the Fall. Darlene and Crystal have done site visits to different Town's playgrounds and they have met with fencers, and received a quote for cornhole. The SCIF grant progress at Brad Ragan includes meeting with vendors for playground and fencing. The SCIF grant at Riverside progress

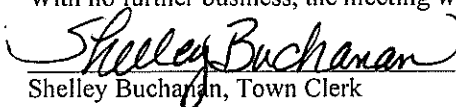
includes plans for new restrooms, and splash pad. Stroup Road Park is being cleared out by Sibelco volunteers and looks great.

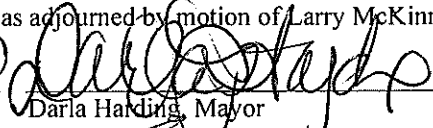
- ✓ The Memorandum of Understanding for the skateboard park has been executed and signed by all parties.
- ✓ The fireworks display by JECO went very well. She has contacted them to book for July 1st of 2023. We are waiting on a contract from them.
- ✓ Chief Summerlin's garbage pickups have gone very well and there are three days left to participate in this clean up.
- ✓ She advised the Council she will be out of town Thursday through Sunday of this week.

MAYOR/COUNCIL REQUESTS / COMMENTS- none

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by motion of Larry McKinney at 6:49 PM.



Shelley Buchanan, Town Clerk


Darla Harding, Mayor


Larry McKinney, Mayor Pro Tem

Absent
Rocky Buchanan, Council Member


James Acuff, Council Member


Jackie Rensink, Council Member