

**Minutes**  
**Spruce Pine Town Council**  
**Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

A meeting of the Town Council was held on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Present were Mayor Darla Harding and Council Members James Acuff, Rocky Buchanan, and Jackie Rensink. Staff in attendance included Darlene Butler, Shelley Buchanan, and Crystal Young. Others attended, including Chad Donnahoo, Kelly Georgeou, Lori McIntyre, Lex Georgeou, Sarah Cole, Noah Worley, Phillip Hise and Dori Settles.

**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**

James Acuff 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 October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

**APPOINTMENTS**

Dr. Kelly Georgeou attended the meeting to give an update on the Spruce Pine Community Enhancement Project, or skatepark. She noted they have raised close to \$12,000, repaired the cracks in the tennis court surface, and installed a sign at the entrance of the area explaining the risks and rules of using the park. They have plans to hold more fundraising events and want to install some temporary equipment. Darlene cautioned Dr. Georgeou that the Town's insurance adjuster would need to inspect any equipment installed, and that temporary structures were not part of the original Memorandum of Understanding. The group also plans to use some of the funds raised to sponsor less fortunate kids who have an interest in skating but cannot afford the equipment. Mayor Harding mentioned the ongoing issue of kids skateboarding in the streets and down the sidewalks of downtown. Noah Worley asked if the Town has plans of putting no skateboarding signs and the consequences if caught. To which Darla replied that is the plan. Darla thanked Dr. Georgeou for their hard work on this project for our youth.

**ACTION AGENDA**

Crystal presented a list of Town owned property to be declared as surplus. This will allow her to advertise on GovDeals and auction the items off online. This property includes the playground equipment located beside the Brad Ragan pool, merry go around, swing-set, slide, and climber. Phillip Hise mentioned that the merry go around has been in the community for many years and he would like to see it stay in Spruce Pine. James Acuff made a motion to declare these items as surplus. Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor. Rocky Buchanan made a motion to instruct Crystal do set up a GovDeals account and auction the surplus property off. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

Crystal requested the Council consider changing financial institutions from Wells Fargo Bank NA to a more local institution. She has received a banking proposal from Hometrust Bank and is waiting on a proposal from United Community Bank. Both institutions are paying higher interest on deposit accounts and have better fraud protection in place. She noted that with Hometrust the Town would earn approximately \$13,000 more in annual interest. Mayor Harding agreed this was an excellent idea. It was the consensus of the Council that Crystal move forward with switching financial institutions.

Crystal made the Council aware of new requirements on bonding for finance officers. The current requirement is that a finance officer must be bonded for at least \$50,000. The new requirement demands that a finance officer be bonded for 10% of total budgeted expenditures, which would be \$500,000 for the Town of Spruce Pine. She advised there is more information to come and she will keep the Council informed.

**PUBLIC COMMENT- none**

**MAYOR/COUNCIL REQUESTS / COMMENTS- none**

TOWN MANAGER

- ✓ Libby and Darlene will be attending their final class in Boone for the Rural Community Capacity Building grant this week.
- ✓ The Land Use Plan Committee held their second meeting on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Several things were discussed, including the Land Use Plan survey link which is now available online and will be printed on this month's water bills. Drew Plettner with HCCOG shared that he had received 180 survey responses so far.
- ✓ The splash pad equipment has been delivered and bids for installation will be taken through Friday.
- ✓ The new basketball goals have been ordered.
- ✓ Chief Summerlin has been working hard to help decorate downtown for Christmas. He is hanging Christmas lights on the buildings in the downtown area.
- ✓ The parks and rec department is gearing up to help with the upcoming Hilloween event at Riverside Park.
- ✓ The shelters at Brad Ragan Park have been repaired and painted and look wonderful.
- ✓ The unheated restrooms at Riverside Park have been winterized, but the heated ones are still open for use.
- ✓ Darlene asked the Council for their direction on the issues of sewage dumping into the city sewer system. She explained the town needs to get their measures in place to help this situation. She noted that cost for fencing and a key fob system at the designated dump site is \$6,300. They also need to decide who exactly will be allowed to dump. She also suggested that if they decide to allow vendors from outside our county dump then the town would need to purchase a grinder to chop up large debris and other items that can harm the system. The cost of this machinery would be around \$20,000. It was the consensus of the Council for the town attorney and Darlene to move forward with creating an ordinance only allowing Mitchell County-based businesses to dump into the town sewer system and to put the security measures she suggested in place.

CLOSED SESSION #1

Mayor Harding asked for a motion to enter into closed session. Jackie Rensink made a motion to enter into closed session citing NC G.S. 143.318.11a (3)(7). Rocky Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.


CLOSED SESSION #2

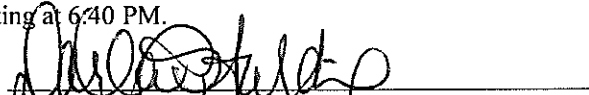
Mayor Harding asked for a motion to enter into closed session for a second time. Rocky Buchanan made a motion to enter into closed session citing NC G.S. 143.318.11a (3). Jackie Rensink seconded the motion, which carried with all present in favor.

Upon return to open session Darlene asked that the official meeting minutes reflect that the alleged criminal misconduct being discussed during the closed session was criminal acts against the Town of Spruce Pine and not by the Town of Spruce Pine.

ADJOURNMENT

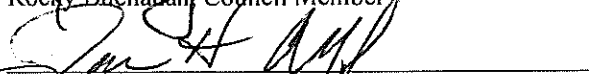
Jackie Rensink moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 PM.

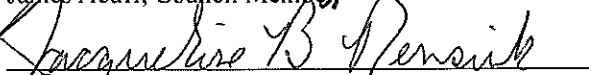
  
Shelley Buchanan, Town Clerk

  
Darla Harding, Mayor

Absent  
Larry McKinney, Mayor Pro Tem

  
Rocky Buchanan, Council Member

  
James Acuff, Council Member

  
Jackie Rensink, Council Member