

Minutes
Spruce Pine Town Council
Monday, January 9th, 2023

A meeting of the Town Council was held on January 9th, 2023. Present were Mayor Darla Harding and Council Members Rocky Buchanan, James Acuff, Larry McKinney, and Jackie Rensink. Staff in attendance included Darlene Butler, Michael Wood, Libby Phillips, Billy Summerlin, Russell Lankford, Crystal Young, and Shelley Buchanan. Others attended, including Chad Donnahoo, Lynn Holler, Dori Settles, Jim Settles, Matthew Ward, and Noah Worley.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Darla Harding called the regular meeting to order at 5:35 PM. Jackie Rensink gave the invocation. Larry McKinney led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the agenda with the addition of the adoption of a resolution for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Feasibility Study. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rocky Buchanan moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on December 12th, 2022. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

APPONTMENTS

Matthew Ward with the Mitchell County EDC attended the meeting to solicit the support of the Council for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Feasibility Study. Matt explained how this project would greatly benefit the quality of life for the citizens and tourists that come to this area. As outdoor recreation is this community's greatest asset this would provide a safer connection to the Blue Ridge Parkway. He noted he has received letters of support from the Mitchell County Commissioners as well as the HCCOG. He stated he is not looking for monetary support only the Council's blessing for the study to be conducted.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Parks and Rec

- Michael Wood presented his report for the month. Said report is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Darlene mentioned she and Michael had received an email from the baseball coach at Harris Middle School. He asked that the Town consider allowing the school to construct a batting cage at the baseball field at Riverside Park. Darlene explained this would require a MOU between the school and the Town for its uses and intent. She noted he does understand it would also be available for public use. It was the consensus of the Council to proceed forward with discussion and a memorandum of understanding for the batting cage.

Mian Street

- Libby Phillips presented the directors report for December. Said report is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.
- Darlene commended Libby for securing another \$250,000 towards the walking bridge project.

Finance

- Crystal gave the Council a copy of the quarterly financials from the ABC Board.
- Crystal presented the second quarter financials and noted that the Town is much better shape on the water and sewer fund than last year. Taxes collected as of December 1st were at 76.6% and are currently over 90% collected.
- She shared what she had learned when she attended the Capital Management Trust meeting in Morganton last month.
- Mavis at Mitchell County let Crystal know that due to more Covid money being received, she will not be asking the Town for the full \$15,000 they pledged for funding the Pine Line this year.
- The audit has been accepted by the LGC.

Public Works

- Russell Lankford presented his report for November and December. Said report is incorporated by reference and attached to these minutes.

Police Dept

- Billy updated the Council on his department. He stated that things have slowed down quite a bit due to the colder weather. He mentioned his newest hire is fitting well and he is happy having a full staff again.
- Billy discussed with the Council how, although the trash pickup initiative worked very well back in summer the litter is sadly piling up along our roads once again. He asked that the Council and citizens start this start this volunteer project back up and keep it going through the winter. Rocky Buchanan mentioned he would like to see it advertised in the Mitchell News Journal.

ACTION AGENDA

Jackie Rensink made a motion to release 2015-2018 business personal taxes for the Wireless Center in the amount of \$115.97. James Acuff seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Jackie Rensink made a motion to release 2022 business personal taxes for Johnson's Fleet Service in the amount of \$106.49. Rocky Buchanan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Mayor Harding presented a resolution to support the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail Feasibility Study. Jackie Rensink moved to give the Town's support of this study and adopt this resolution. Larry McKinney seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT- none

Town Manager

- ❖ Christmas lights in Town have been taken down this week. Whitson Electric will also be putting up the new bridge lights. Darlene requested the Council's permission to add a \$10,000 line item to next year's budget for new Christmas decorations for Town and new bows for the bridge. She has secured a discounted rate through a vendor for these items. It was the consensus of the Council to agree to this purchase.
- ❖ Ella Edwards will be back to work next week from her short-term disability. Darlene commended the office staff for picking up the slack and working extra hard while being short-handed.
- ❖ Darlene shared her appreciation of the Public Works Department for their hard work during the Christmas holiday. The crew was called out over 50 times due to dangerously low temperatures. As a token of appreciation, she offered each employee a floating holiday that may be taken with Russell's permission.
- ❖ Restroom construction at Riverside Park is well underway. Engineer Stan Cook approved the stability of the old concession stand, which will be renovated for storage for Parks and Rec.
- ❖ The slash pad equipment has been delivered and is in storage.
- ❖ Sibelco volunteers have burned the brush on Stroup Rd.
- ❖ The skateboard park group met with Chad and Darlene today and had a very productive discussion of the Memorandum of Understanding and where everyone is.
- ❖ Darlene stated that all septic discharge businesses have been notified of the new ordinance and its effective date of January 13th, 2023.

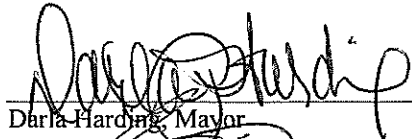
MAYOR/ COUNCIL COMMENTS/REQUESTS-


- James suggested that in the future the Town build its own storage for the Christmas decorations instead of paying Whitson Electric to store them for us.
- Rocky Buchanan asked for an update on the house that has been condemned on S. Dale St. Chad advised he is waiting on a report from the building inspector before we can proceed.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further discussion Larry McKinney moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 PM.

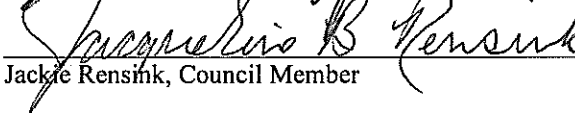

Shelley Buchanan, Town Clerk


Darla Harding, Mayor


Larry McKinney, Mayor Pro Tem


Rocky Buchanan, Council Member


James Acuff, Council Member


Jackie Rensink, Council Member



Parks and Recreation Department

Office (828)765-3012

Cell (828) 385-2179

Town of Spruce Pine Board Meeting

January 9, 2023

General Park Maintenance

- Morning and Night check list completed each day
- Trash pick-up in town

Brad Ragan Park

- Both playgrounds have been removed and sold
- Fence around both playgrounds have been removed and placed on Gov deals to be sold
- Removed old concrete trash can pads
- Cleaned out flower bed at park entrance for the installation of the new Brad Ragan Memorial Park sign which will be in place in a few weeks
- Cleaned out leaves of the creeks

Riverside Park

- New restrooms are being built
- Starting the remodeling of the concession stand and old restrooms to convert it into a storage shed
- Old storage shed was removed and sold on Gov deals
- Storm drains have been cleaned out multiple times due to pine needles
- New compost bins have been placed by the Giving Gardens organization

Shelter Reservations

- Reservation books have been made. Will start taking reservations for the 2023 season the first full week of April which will be April 3rd

Pool

- Have one new lifeguard that completed training. That brings the total to 3 lifeguards

Town

- Hung new brackets on town hall for the lanterns
- Took back all Christmas decorations from main street to the Whitson building
- Picked up trash along sidewalks and blew off sidewalks

Other Business

- Waiting on quotes for some tree removal at riverside park and brad ragan park
- Did preparation for the cold weather
- Took new truck to get serviced

Spruce Pine Main Street Directors Report

PR- We hosted small business Saturday in November where we hosted a wreath fundraiser and gave away downtown dollars and live Christmas trees. There have been lots of tourists in town during the month of December. I am currently working on calendar of events for downtown for 2023. Starting to get sponsorships in the mail for park programming and I have been working on details for Fire on the Mountain festival. I am trying to get a ribbon cut scheduled for the new tattoo shop on February 2nd. The Chamber used the park for holiday activities in December.

D&B- Decorations have been taken down and put away for next year. The first phase of the mosaic mural is up and Emma is working on the second phase, which will be a rainbow trout. We now have QR codes installed beside mural that will tie back to the website. I am still waiting to get the budget back from DOT since it has been amended for inflation. I asked Pittman Signs to reprint the wayfinding sign at the end of the bridge as it has been sprayed or paint has faded off. I am in touch with Verdin Clocks to get a paint match to touch up the paint on the base of the town clock.

ERC-Sadly, David Wylie passed away last month. Plans are to continue running the business with staff on hand but downsize accounts. There's a large office suite available in the Wylie building where Edward Jones used to be. Roof repair is scheduled to begin on the building beside Live Oak this month. Several businesses closed for the holiday season and are starting to open back up with limited hours for the winter season. Southwest Trading is continuing to sale items for close out. To my knowledge, they do not have anyone interested in purchasing the business but are open to the opportunity. Building rehab and improvements continue on these properties; Three Peaks, Wellborn's, AMY Wellness building, Cross Street Commerce, and Eben Concepts. The next round of DEAP coursework begins at the end of January at the SBC.

Organization- Darlene and I have completed the RC2 curriculum and received a grant for almost \$50k. The board had their annual workshop last month and has finalized the last part of the plan of work. Paperwork for accreditation has been submitted to the state. TDA is working on getting protocols in place and set goals for 2023. Many thanks to these folks for their generous donations to our organization; Steve Pitman, Darlene and Live Oak Gastropub.

Town of Spruce Pine Financials
Ending December 31st, 2022
2nd Quarter
FY 2022-2023



2022-2023 Budget Figures				
		<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>Y-T-D December 31st,</u>	
		<u>Budget</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>Percent</u>
General Fund Revenue				
Levied Taxes and Penalties		\$1,469,500	\$1,248,552	85.0%
Local Sales Tax		\$701,100	\$396,138	56.5%
Franchise Taxes		\$285,000	\$141,003	49.5%
Powell Bill		\$80,000	\$88,453	110.6%
Interest Earned		\$1,000	\$31,970	3197.0%
Recreation Park Revenue		\$26,000	\$10,673	41.0%
Revolving Loan Repayments		\$7,500	\$3,100	41.3%
Misc Income		\$80,015	\$25,166	31.5%
Grants		\$23,962	\$2,215	9.2%
Fund Balance Appropriated		\$0	\$0	
General Fund Revenue		\$2,674,077	\$1,947,270	72.8%
General Fund Expenditures				
Governing Body		\$22,682	\$10,603	46.7%
Total Administration & Finance		\$258,520	\$148,829	57.6%
Cost of Elections		\$0	\$0	0.0%
Tax Collections Fees		\$5,000	\$2,274	45.5%
Economics		\$158,728	\$51,363	32.4%
Total Public Building & Facilities		\$79,630	\$51,234	64.3%
Fire Department		\$149,000	\$0	0.0%
Building Inspections		\$28,500	\$7,108	24.9%
Police Department		\$1,016,973	\$523,960	51.5%
Public Works		\$233,760	\$87,432	37.4%
Powell Bill		\$95,295	\$14,918	15.7%
Sanitation		\$83,909	\$35,645	42.5%
Parks & Recreation		\$343,242	\$140,314	40.9%
Library		\$111,577	\$51,483	46.1%
Trac Grant		\$5,000	\$5,000	100.0%
Cemetery		\$36,850	\$28,712	77.9%
Loan Disbursements		\$0	\$0	0.0%
Covid Relief Fund		\$0	\$0	
Contingency		\$45,411		
Total General Fund Expenditures		\$2,674,077	\$1,158,876	43.3%
<i>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over Expenditures</i>		\$0	\$788,394	

Town of Spruce Pine Financials
Ending December 31st, 2022
2nd Quarter
FY 2022-2023



	<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>Y-T-D December 31st.</u>	
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>2022-2023 Budget Figures</u>			
<u>Water & Sewer Fund</u>			
Charges for Water	\$1,584,000	\$816,062	52%
Charges for Sewer	\$1,044,000	\$570,822	55%
Water & Sewer Taps	\$3,000	\$6,650	222%
Water & Sewer Interest	\$250	\$0	0%
Misc Revenues	\$30,500	\$37,729	124%
Retained Earnings Appropriated	\$0	\$0	0%
Water & Sewer Revenue	\$2,661,750	\$1,431,264	54%
<u>Water & Sewer Expenditures</u>			
Water & Sewer Debt	\$94,383	\$3,399	4%
Water & Sewer Administration	\$1,264,918	\$572,962	45%
Water Expense	\$641,983	\$326,130	51%
Sewer Expense	\$532,377	\$273,975	51%
Contingency	\$128,089		
Water & Sewer Expenditures	\$2,661,750	\$1,176,465	44%
<i>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over Expenditures</i>	\$0	\$254,798	

Town of Spruce Pine
 Analysis of Current Year Tax Levy
 12/31/22
 excluding vehicle taxes

	Property Valuation	Town-wide Rate	Amount of Levy
Original levy:			
Real property	58,626,070	\$0.46	
Building property	260,098,900		
Personal property	54,373,712		
Public service companies	17,849,971		
Penalties			
Exemptions	84,627,243		
	<u>306,321,410</u>		<u>1,409,078.49</u>
Discoveries:			
Current year taxes	3,023,966		13,910.24
<i>Rounding</i>			<i>0.43</i>
Prior year taxes	9,163,815		46,735.46
	<u>12,187,781</u>		<u>60,646.13</u>
Abatements			
Min Bill	28,021		128.90
Releases (Curr)	462,424		
Releases (Prior)	96,363		
Total property valuation	<u>308,854,931</u>		
Net levy			<u>1,422,860.26</u>
Uncollected taxes at			<u>332,425.77</u>
Current year's taxes collected			<u>1,090,434.49</u>
Current levy collection percentage			<u>76.6%</u>

Town of Spruce Pine Monthly Report

November/December 2022

Public Works Department

Works Order Summary for November/December:

Unlock and turn on meter 11/9

Turn off and lock meter 15/13

Brush 28/7

Leaves 20/24

Locates 53/26

New Meters 7/1

Meter Checks 23/79

White Goods 3/2

Cardboard (weekly)

Water Leaks 6/10

Sewer Leaks 5/2

Water Taps 2/3

Sewer Taps 0

Graves 1/1

November Misc. work summary:

We had to replace 145 feet of 4-inch sewer line on Hollifield Street. I had my staff to move two-meter boxes to the top of the hill on Spring Street. It was a safety hazard. Danny Staton's meter box off the side of the road on highway 19E needed major work. Those 3 meters were on the side of a hill straight off. We built a box around those meters and put dirt in it. Then we insulated the boxes. We serviced our 2017 F-250. We also put new brake lights on the sweeper truck. We unstopped two lines at the waste plant with our jetter. We received 24 tons of salt and mixed that with 24 tons of sand for the roads. We also mixed up our left-over salt from last year a couple times. We have purchased 2800 dollars of tools we needed from our capital budget. Thank You. We definitely needed them. I sent information to the DOT for all the water and sewer crossings from Earl Smith Road to Beaver Creek. I had the fire department run a flow test on the bean tree hydrant and the hydrant across from Mitchell Credit for the 208 Oak Avenue construction job. That will consist of 9 apartments with a laundry and 1 retail store.

December Misc. work summary:

We repaired two salt spreaders. We repaired a fire hydrant on Ridge Road. We salted all the town roads the Friday before Christmas. A couple needed it again Saturday. We scrapped the waste plant road and filled in some pot holes. That road needs to be crowned with a motor grader after July 1st. I met with the Engineers that are working with the county on the Middle School on Ledger School Road a couple times. We are trying to resolve some issues with that. We serviced two of our trucks the 2012 and 2013 Fords. You bought us new tires for the 550-dump truck. We removed all the playground equipment that was auctioned off. The fence is done for the septic dumping ordinance

change at Carters Ridge. The key fob lock system and cameras will hopefully be installed this month. The Henredon water station upgrade is moving along. One new pump is up and running and the other is scheduled to be put in this month. The heat, the power, the lights and 75 percent of the piping has been upgraded also. Completion should be soon. We helped Veolia pull both pumps at the maintenance lift station. We also removed 5 broken bolts from the volute on one of the Carters Ridge pumps. Matt Miller is going to replace a broken door frame assembly at the library. We patched three places in the road where we had water leaks. We are almost done with a big job on Ollis road that involved a tile under the road being connected to an existing storm drain. A town PO was issued to Phillips Grading to repair a storm drain that runs beside the house on 84 English Road from Hillcrest Circle. It was too big a job for our crew. We did a couple small jobs for Main Street. We made a drain so they could run their water in the bathroom when it was really cold and worked on the bridge lights. The Habitat for humanity is getting close to state approval for the water line they are wanting to run at Ledger then turn over to us.

Safety:

The NCLM risk lady came to train us on traffic safety and made us certified flaggers on November 15. We all got new hard hats.

Staff Education:

Travis Phillips and I went to water distribution school.

Russell Lankford

Public Works Director

Release Notice

Taxpayer name: Wireless Center
 Address: PO Box 2110 Banner Elk
 Account #: 555554592
 Parcel #: Business Personal
 Reason for Release or Refund: was discovered to Russell Cellular
in 2020
 Date: 12-20-22

Year	Bill #	Real Value	Personal Value	County Tax	Fire Tax	Total to be Released	Penalty Adjustment	Cost of Advertising Adjustment	Interest Adjustment
2018	16729	-	2865	16.56	-	16.56		3.00	9.66
2017	16591	-	3277	19.01	-	19.01	1.90	2.76	11.16
2016	16607	-	3961	20.99	-	20.99	2.10	3.04	14.97
2015	17280	-	4782	25.34	-	25.34		2.05	18.28

Amount to be Refunded: _____
 Authorized by: [Signature]
 Affirmed by: [Signature]
 Chairman Mitchell County Board of Commissioners
 Clerk to the Mitchell County Board of Commissioners

Town Release. Town of SP
 \$ 115.97

Release Notice

Taxpayer name: Johnson's Fleet Service
 Address: 200 Summit Ave Spruce Pine
 Account #: 002083012
 Parcel #: Business Personal
 Reason for Release or Refund: Business Dissolved 2021

Date: 12-20-22

Year	Bill #	Real Value	Personal Value	County Tax	Fire Tax	Total to be Released	Penalty Adjustment	Cost of Advertising Adjustment	Interest Adjustment
2022	68480	-	21,046	117.86	-	117.86	4.38		

Amount to be Refunded: _____
 Authorized by: Blair Byrd Town of S.P.
 Affirmed by: Eric J. D. Town Release
MS 106.49
 Chairman Mitchell County Board of Commissioners
Clayton McCarney
 Clerk to the Mitchell County Board of Commissioners