

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WEBER CITY, VIRGINIA

The Town Council of the Town of Weber City met in a Regular Meeting Session at **7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 23, 2024**. The meeting was held in the assembly room of the Weber City Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by **Mayor Justin Addington**, and opened with Prayer by **Eileen Deckard, Council Member**. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by: **Mike Carrico, Town Attorney**, and joined by all in attendance.

PRESENT:

Mayor:	Justin M. Addington
Town Attorney:	Michael Carrico
Council Member:	Eileen Deckard
Council Member:	Jeff Flanary
Council Member:	Derek Percy
Council Member:	Zackary Salyer
Council Member:	Teresa Tilson
Council Member:	Wendell Tipton
Others:	Donald Harding, III Police Chief, Rhonda Neeley, Treasurer

ABSENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES and FINANCIAL REPORT:

Motion to accept the **November 21, 2023 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes** regarding trash service changes was made by **Zackary Salyer**; seconded by **Teresa Tilson**. Motion passed with **6** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **0** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions, **0** Vacant

Motion to accept the **November 21, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes** was made by **Teresa Tilson**; seconded by **Zackary Salyer**. Motion passed with **6** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **0** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions, **0** Vacant

Motion to accept the **November 28, 2023 Special Called Meeting Minutes (hiring new officer)** with vote total correction amendment (as requested by Council Member Eileen Deckard regarding her vote), was made by **Derek Percy**; seconded by **Zackary Salyer**.

The correction will be made to section "Action From Closed Session", Eileen Deckard felt that the item being voted on should have been divided into two motions. One to hire the officer, and one to approve the use of a police car for daily commute. Since the motion was NOT divided, she voted to Abstain.

Voting totals to read: 3 voting Aye, 0 voting Nay, 2 Absent, and 1 Abstention. Motion passed with **6** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **0** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions, **0** Vacant

Motion to accept the **November 2023 Financial Report**, was made by **Teresa Tilson**, seconded by **Eileen Deckard**.

Motion passed with **6** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **0** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions, **0** Vacant

Motion to accept the **December 2023 Financial Report**, was made by **Teresa Tilson**, seconded by **Zackary Salyer**.

Motion passed with **6** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **0** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions, **0** Vacant

Mayor Report and Comments: (given by Justin Addington)

It's been a couple months since our last meeting in November, so we have a lot of ground to cover tonight.

First, I hope everyone did ok through our last snow event. It was a lot more snow and ice than we have had recently, and it took a while to find a Snow Removal vendor to service the Town streets. That process began in August of 2023. The streets in Town consist of VDOT maintained streets, Town of Weber City maintained streets, and some categorized as "Private" streets, by Scott County officials. We will be addressing the need to clarify services for those areas with the new Snow Removal company, for future snow events.

Despite popular belief, Scott County taxes do not get applied to Town services. Town taxes fund Town services. County money, funds County services. And State money funds state services.

Many folks commented that they want to know where their tax money is going, and how they benefit from paying it. I have some items to share with the citizens. A few examples of Town services are: Trash service through the end of 2023, street lights in town, daily operation of Town Hall and our local Police Department. The cost for only a few of these services already exceeds the average Property Tax amount collected per parcel. The delay in clearing the streets of ice and snow wasn't a funding problem as much as it was difficult to find a vendor. We have resolved this with the agreement reached with our new private vendor and anticipate good service for the next snow event.

New Council member, Jeff Flanary asked the moderator if he could share a Statement of Commitment to the job for which he was elected, and to thank the citizens for putting their confidence in him. He promises to serve the community of Weber City to the best of his abilities and looks forward to it.

Old Business:

Snow Plow Contract – with the new agreement for this season with our new vendor, we hope to have this resolved, and will vote on a contract at a future meeting.

Police Department Renovations

A decision was made to table the subject of Police Department Renovations until the next meeting.

Ordinances regarding Leash Laws and Noise

These were reviewed for current status. Derek Percy stated that he has been asked by several citizens if a Leash Law exists and the penalty for having dogs running at

large within Town limits. The Leash Law ordinance was repealed in 1992 and would require being reinstated before being enforced. Chief Harding informed us that the Noise Ordinance remains current on the books but is not enforceable the way it is written. Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, said that the Town could draft new ordinances with correct wording for enforcement, and schedule a Public Hearing to review the Ordinance changes, before Council can vote them in. Teresa Tilson asked if the original wording on the Leash Law Ordinance could be used again. The Town Attorney said that he would review the ordinances and let the Council know. The items were tabled until a future meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

A snow removal agreement has been reached for the remainder of this winter season, and the Council will be reviewing what to do regarding streets categorized as "Private" If the street has not been adopted by the Town at any time, then it is illegal to use Town funds to clear them. Many "Private" streets in town bear family names, from original property owners (i.e. Blanton Drive). Through the years, those properties may have been sold, and are no longer occupied by family groups. A review of town records may be necessary to see if such streets have been given to the town. Teresa Tilson confirmed with Mike Carrico, until the street status is confirmed, residents on Private streets would be required to make arrangements to clear them.

Legal Affairs – by Attorney Mike Carrico **Will be addressed in closed session**

Committee Reports:

Mayor Justin Addington made the following Committee appointments, who will report at the next council meeting.

ARPA Committee Report: Teresa Tilson and Zackary Salyer

Teresa Tilson commented that the Police Department renovations will be funded by ARPA money, and once the project bids are received, they will be planning for the use of those funds. Final plans to obligate the money must be submitted by the conclusion of 2024, with the money spent by 2026.

Finance Committee Report: Teresa Tilson and Wendell Tipton

New Council member, Wendell Tipton, volunteered for this committee.

Maintenance Committee Report: Jeff Flanary and Derek Percy

Justin Addington, Mayor, appointed Jeff Flanary as the newest member of this committee.

Personnel Committee Report: Eileen Deckard and Derek Percy

Justin Addington, Mayor, appointed Derek Percy as the newest member of this committee.

Planning Committee Report: Eileen Deckard and Zackary Salyer

Council members have requested a copy of the proposal from the Zoning/Planning Committee to review.

Street Committee Report: Jeff Flanary and Wendell Tipton

Justin Addington, Mayor, appointed Jeff Flanary and Wendell Tipton as the newest members of this committee.

Police Department Report:

Chief Harding had nothing to report at this time.

Fire Department Report:

Matt Ison gave an update on current projects at the new Fire Hall location in town. The weather has been a factor in the delay to getting the HVAC systems operational. The Fire Department is also working on the interior of the building preparing a venue for rent to the public. They presented the Council with a quote for garage bay doors, in the amount of **\$31,993.00** from **Doors Unlimited, LLC**. Matt informed the council that they have been able to negotiate that amount down to \$22,993 and are seeking assistance from the Town of Weber City to purchase the doors before there is a price increase. Council members asked when the unoperational heat pumps were purchased originally. Fire Chief, Bruce Cross, responded with a time frame of July through September. He also commented that the installation company has been short staffed and covered up with work, so the Fire Department is just waiting their turn for installation. He also informed that the bathrooms have been plumbed for, and new concrete needs to be poured before building further. Focus is on getting the venue area completed and open to the public for rental income, then the next phase will be completing the garage bays for the trucks. Council member, Derek Percy, asked for a timeline that the Fire Department aims to vacate the current Fire Hall building owned by the Town. Fire Chief Cross said that they would like to move the trucks as soon as possible due to hazards with the trucks on the steep hill during snow and ice. This is the main reason for requesting assistance from the Town for purchasing the doors needed. Even if the whole fire department area is not ready, he would like to have a climate controlled garage area to house all the trucks in one place. The Town Council understood that agreeing in 2023 to assist with the HVAC systems purchase would help expedite the relocation efforts. Fire Chief Cross said that they were able to secure a good price on the doors, and would like to purchase them now, even if it is next year before they are able to install them. Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, asked Chief Cross if he was willing to share with the Council the financials for the Fire Department, as part of the decision making process. Chief Cross said that he was unable to answer that question at this time. He will take that request to the Fire Department Board. The Council has helped with former purchases, with the understanding that it would allow the Fire Department to move from the Town owned building, so that the Town could explore other uses for the building located on Roland Street. The Council assured the Chief that the Town desires to work together on these projects, but must be cautious with funds as well.

Public Comment: opened 7:34 pm

David Castle – 148 Victory Street

Questioned the Council about the use of funds budgeted for trash services, since those services are no longer provided by the town. What are those funds being used for now? Mayor Addington responded with a summary of average Property Tax costs per land parcel, and what services those funds are able to cover. Teresa Tilson, Finance Committee member, also responded with figures they use for budget purposes which the Finance Committee is responsible for. The budgeted amount for trash paid through December 2023. The Council voted in November to allow citizens in Weber City to choose how to handle their trash instead of a mandatory charge for all properties. Council member Jeff Flanary commented that there have been negative comments about the trash Convenience Centers filling up too fast now, and he would like to see the County create a Convenience Center in the Weber City area. The Town Attorney stated he has spoken with a County official and they are trying to approve a trash pick up sight located in Weber City.

Mr. Castle then asked if the Town has hired any policemen. Officer Jesse Jones was hired in December 2023, and we are receiving applications through February 14, 2024. The availability of Certified officers is scarce, and putting uncertified officers through the Academy is costly to the town. It is a process that is the works. The Police Department would like to have 4 full time officers on staff. But with the increase in salary offerings with surrounding agencies, it has been difficult to recruit new officers. He also inquired if the Town still owned their own salt/plow truck. The Town does not.

Then there was an inquiry if Scott County inmates could be used for work within the town limits. The Town has considered this in the past and uses the Scott County Services Program for some things. However, road maintenance is not allowed in certain areas, due to liabilities.

Another citizen of Meadowlark Street brought up her concerns of regular street maintenance. Her street is a VDOT street, and the Council was able to answer her questions. It is our understanding during the snow event in January that VDOT cleared all the streets they maintain at least ONE time, but when the snow continued to fall that week, those streets may not have received a second pass. The Mayor said that the town now has this agreement with a vendor, and will be supplying the salt for them to use. He also stated that he would inquire around to get a good price on a pallet of salt before the next big snow. Chief Bruce Cross stated that during the snow, there were emergency calls that could not be answered because the streets in the county, etc were not cleared enough for safe passage.

Public Comment Closed 7:58 pm by Mayor Addington.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion to enter INTO Closed Session to discuss personnel and legal issues was made by **Teresa Tilson**, Council member. Seconded by **Derek Pearcy**, Council member.

Motion passed with **6** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **0** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions, **0** Vacant

A motion to go OUT of Closed Session and back into Regular Session was made by **Teresa Tilson**, and seconded by **Zackary Salyer**.

Motion passed with **6** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **0** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions, **0** Vacant

CERTIFICATE OF CLOSED SESSION

The Mayor, Council Members, and the Town's Attorney entered into Closed Session.

A motion to certify that only lawfully exempt matters, for which the closed meeting was convened, were heard, discussed, or considered in the meeting by the Mayor and Council members, was made by **Teresa Tilson**, Council member, seconded by **Derek Percy**, Council member, and roll call vote made with these members voting "AYE" were: Eileen Deckard, Jeff Flanary, Derek Percy, Zackary Salyer, Teresa Tilson, and Wendell Tipton.

Voting "NAY" were: 0 with 0 Absent

ACTION FROM THE CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made by Zackary Salyer and seconded by Derek Percy, to accept the resignation of Officer Spencer St. Cyr, effective December 14, 2023.

Motion passed with 6 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY, 0 ABSENT, 0 Abstentions, 0 Vacant

A motion was made by Jeff Flanary and seconded by Derek Percy to require former employee, Matthew Bledsoe, to pay reimbursement to the Town of Weber City for the cost of his attending the Police Academy as subject to the signed employment contract. The amount to be repaid is \$13,500.00, with a payment schedule of \$200.00 per month. Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, will meet with Matthew Bledsoe to convey this payment arrangement, and draw up the repayment agreement.

Motion passed with 6 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY, 0 ABSENT, 0 Abstentions, 0 Vacant

Before entertaining a motion to adjourn, Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, reminded the Council to keep the Weber City Volunteer Fire Department Financials, that were received, confidential.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by **Zackary Salyer**, seconded by **Teresa Tilson**.

Motion passed with 6 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY 0 ABSENT, 0 Abstentions, 0 Vacant

Mayor: Justin Addington

Town Clerk: Penney C. Capps