

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, February 20, 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 (arrived at 7:36pm)
Council Member:	Teresa Tilson
Council Member:	Wendell Tipton
Others:	Donald Harding III - Police Chief, Rhonda Neeley - Treasurer, Penney Capps - Clerk

ABSENT: None (council member Zackary Salyer arrived at 7:36 pm, the total of votes reflects this)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES and FINANCIAL REPORT:

Motion to accept the **January 16, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes** was made by **Derek Percy**; seconded by **Teresa Tilson**.

Motion passed with **5** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **1** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions

Motion to accept the **January 2024 Financial Report**, was made by **Teresa Tilson**, seconded by **Wendell Tipton**.

Motion passed with **5** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **1** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions

Mayor Report and Comments: (given by Justin Addington)

Nothing new to report.

Old Business:

Police Department Renovations

Discussion began regarding this, with comments from several council members. Teresa Tilson asked if any new bids have been submitted to consider. The Mayor said that a contractor has communicated with him some interest in the project but has not

submitted a bid. The contractor has requested preferred guidelines and details be provided before creating a bid. The Mayor asked if anyone would like to entertain a motion to untable this item for discussion and a vote. Jeff Flanary requested to leave this item tabled until next month.

Eileen Deckard stated that bids need to be received for both ideas presented so far; the department remaining in the basement, or the department moving upstairs. There were comments made regarding the plan itself. What are the details needed to bring the Police Department up to state requirements? No matter it's new location, the Police Department is required by the State of Virginia to have a secure, evidence closet/room built by the state's specs. What options are available regarding space in the Town Hall building, or possible use of the Fire Department building located on Roland Street (currently occupied by the WCVFD)? Questions regarding OSHA, and ADA compliance items required for any space decided upon were also brought up. The addition of a rear door and staircase for an emergency exit at the rear of the building. Jeff Flanary suggested tabling the vote and discussion again. Derek Percy asked how long the renovations have been in discussion and tabled. The answer was 1 year so far. There has been public interest again of renting the Council room for events, classes, etc. as it has been done in the past. However, the area would ideally be located away from Town Administrative offices, and not include storage of sensitive, confidential records. It must also be considered the amount of time the construction would take and how it affects the day-to-day operation of the Police Department. The PD must have a workable space provided, even during construction. If ARPA funds are being considered for this project, they must be allocated by the end of 2024 or forfeited. No motions were presented, so the discussion was closed by the Mayor, moving the meeting forward.

Ordinances regarding Noise and Leash Laws

Derek Percy made a motion to untable the Ordinance updates from the January meeting for discussion, seconded by Eileen Deckard.

Motion passed with 5 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY, 1 ABSENT, 0 Abstentions

The Council began the discussion of improving both ordinances. Town Attorney, Mike Carrico stated that the Council need only to inform him of the changes they wish to include, and he would draft the new ordinances. Then a Public Hearing would need to be scheduled regarding them.

A motion was made by Teresa Tilson, seconded by Derek Percy to draft the Noise Ordinance to reflect a set time for quiet hours within Town limits from 11 pm to 7 am.

Motion passed with 5 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY, 1 ABSENT, 0 Abstentions

A motion was made by Derek Percy and seconded by Eileen Deckard to draft the Leash Law Ordinance to reflect that animals within Town limits are to be under the control of the owner either by command, on a leash, or contained within a secured area of the owned property.

Motion passed with 5 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY, 1 ABSENT, 0 Abstentions

NEW BUSINESS:

Health Insurance Provider Renewal

A motion was made by Teresa Tilson, seconded by Derek Pearcy to accept the 2024-2025 Renewal proposal from The Local Choice for Employee Healthcare Coverage.

There were no changes in the proposal, and no increase of premium cost.

Motion passed with 5 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY, 1 ABSENT, 0 Abstentions

Jeff Flanary addressed the Council about a conversation he had with the Mayor of Gate City, Jamie Lawson, regarding the possibility of joining forces for trash service to both towns. Utilizing grant opportunities available for purchasing trucks, supplies, and resources for the job. In previous discussions with Gate City, no progress was made. With a new Mayor, Mr. Flanary asked if he could set up a meeting to discuss this further with Gate City and the Town of Weber City Council.

No motion was made.

Check Writing Policy

A motion was made by Teresa Tilson, seconded by Eileen Deckard to adopt a check writing policy to reflect that the check preparer is to be a separate person other than one of the two required bank signees for checks created, distributed, and paid on behalf of the Town.

Motion passed with 5 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY, 1 ABSENT, 0 Abstentions

Creation of a Public Works Department

The Finance Committee approached the Council with a proposal to create a Public Works Department. They met with the Treasurer and Clerk this month, to discuss funding for the new department in the existing budget of FY2023-24, and for the new budget for FY2024-25. The department would hire 1 full-time employee possessing various skills, to perform daily maintenance tasks within the Town to include but not limited to, simple road maintenance/repair, vegetation maintenance, and building maintenance. The Town already owns a 2015 Ford F150 pickup truck to use in this department. Day by day operations to be overseen by the Mayor, with on-site management carried out by the Treasurer.

A motion was made by Wendell Tipton, seconded by Derek Pearcy to create the Public Works Department for the Town of Weber City.

Motion passed with 5 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY, 1 ABSENT, 0 Abstentions

Video Security System Purchase

A motion was made by Teresa Tilson, seconded by Zackary Salyer to approve the purchase of a Video Security System that will monitor both the Town Hall location and the Police Department. Three quotes were presented to the Council for the cost to purchase the necessary cameras, recording station, and necessary supplies. The installation would fall under the current IT contract the Town has with Bright Technologies. The motion stated the price of **\$4,389.99**.

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

Flooring Quotes for Town Hall Offices

A motion was made by Zackary Salyer, seconded by Derek Percy, to get quotes for new flooring for the two offices in Town Hall to replace the dry rotted carpet that exists there. There was some discussion to use ARPA funds for this purpose.

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

Fleet GPS Tracking System for All Town Vehicles

A motion was made by Derek Percy, seconded by Zackary Salyer to get quotes to purchase or contract for a Fleet GPS tracking system for all Town vehicles, to be implemented in time for the Public Works Department duties to begin. There was much discussion as to who would be responsible for monitoring the system. The motion is to just get quotes for the system, not to implement it yet.

Motion passed with 5 voting AYE, 0 voting NAY, 0 ABSENT, 1 Abstentions

Legal Affairs – by Attorney Mike Carrico

Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, asked Kevin Helms, the newly elected Scott County Treasurer, who was present for the meeting, if he would like to address the Council on how things are going since taking office. Mr. Helms, stated that the Treasurer's office has invested \$10 million in the State investment fund so far, allowing for a greater return on investment. He urged the Council if there are Town funds available for investing, it is convenient, easily accessible, and a much larger return than local bank accounts.

Mike Carrico asked the Council to adopt an ordinance for the Clerk of the Court to assess an additional \$5.00 fee on court costs which would be set aside by the Clerk of the Court for the specific use of purchasing an E-Summons system for the Weber City Police Department. These funds would be maintained by the Clerk of the Court until enough is accumulated to purchase the system. The total would be included in the monthly report from the Clerk's office. The Town Attorney will submit a letter to the Clerk of the Court to notify that office of this change.

The motion was made by Derek Percy to approve this, seconded by Teresa Tilson.

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

The Council asked for an update regarding the Meals Tax owed by Firehouse Diner. Mike said that he has not addressed the issue with the owners yet, with the assumption that the restaurant might soon be closing. Since that is not the case yet, decisions will be made how to go forward with demanding collection of the tax owed.

Committee Reports:

ARPA Committee Report: Teresa Tilson and Zackary Salyer

Nothing to report at this time.

Finance Committee Report: Teresa Tilson and Wendell Tipton

Teresa Tilson asked the Treasurer, Rhonda Neeley to address the Council regarding Town funds being moved from the Town's general checking account at New People's Bank to a Money Market Investment Account also at New Peoples's Bank as discussed in the Finance Committee meeting.

Rhonda Neeley stated that as of 2-20-2024, she moved \$600,000.00 from the General Fund checking account to a new Money Market Investment Savings Account, earning 4.5% interest, opened at the same bank. The average interest earned each month in the checking account was around \$40.00. The new account rate will produce nearly \$2,000/month interest earned. The money is easily accessible if needed back in the checking account. The Council voted previously to invest the bulk of the funds in the State investment fund, and the Treasurer awaits the paperwork drafted by the Town Attorney. This local Money Market Account allows the Town to draw more interest until that happens. This item was given as information only, no vote required.

Maintenance Committee Report: Jeff Flanary and Derek Percy

Nothing to report at this time.

Personnel Committee Report: Eileen Deckard and Derek Percy

Nothing to report at this time.

Planning Committee Report: Eileen Deckard and Zackary Salyer

A draft copy of the zoning was sent digitally to each Council member for review and input. Eileen Deckard stated that the Planning Committee has asked the office staff to generate a new version of the document, that is easier to update and have on file. Anyone wishing to submit changes or ideas, is asked to get those to the Committee while this document is being updated.

Street Committee Report: Jeff Flanary and Wendell Tipton

Jeff Flanary mentioned several street lights in town that are not working, and asked how to go about getting the bulbs changed, and working lights changed to LED bulbs. Rhonda Neeley advised that if the Street Committee could provide a list of pole numbers and locations, office personnel would make a request to Appalachian Power for repair. As lights are being repaired, some are being updated to the LED bulbs, but not all as of yet. This would need to be an item for discussion with Appalachian Power to see if there is a cost associated with the upgrade. Derek Percy asked if a Public Hearing was necessary to allow the residents to give their input on the increased lighting.

Jeff has also asked for an updated list of the responsible party (Town, VDOT, County or Private) for each street located within Town limits. Especially regarding those categorized "Private Street". The Town is not responsible for maintaining Private drives, but if they have been re-categorized in years past, a new list would be helpful. Office staff has created a list using information from a Scott County map dated 2017. Until the map is updated from the County, this is the most thorough information available at this time.

Police Department Report:

Chief Harding stated that he would make a brief update. He acknowledged that Town Attorney, Mike Carrico already touched on the E-ticket program they wish to implement. He told the Council that he has received 12 applications for uncertified officers, only 5 are confirmed and the testing process will begin this Saturday, February 24, 2024.

Per a request from Council, Chief Harding listed Pros and Cons of moving the Police Department upstairs as opposed to renovating the current space in the basement. Among those are: additional administrative help, a more professional look, efficiency for Town business, with shared office equipment, new healthier environment, and the space brought up to State of Virginia requirements for an open, active precinct. He did state that one Con for the suggestion of moving the precinct to the building on Roland Street, (currently occupied by the WCVFD, is that there is no access to Town administrative staff and shared office equipment. The Town recently invested in a new server/backup system for Town Hall and the Police Department, and for that to work efficiently, needs to be in the same building.

Teresa Tilson asked Chief Harding to give an update on how the department is currently doing with the officers that are on staff. He stated that although short staffed, the Department has quality officers. In light of recent shootings of officers in the US, they do not take the seriousness of their jobs lightly, nor the dangers. The crime prone area of Lynn Garden, Tennessee, has been "bleeding over" into our area due to the close proximity, and that has prompted more arrests with drug charges, etc. Traffic enforcement is a priority item, but with short staff issues, it has been challenging at best. Since the beginning of this year alone, the department made 4 DUI arrests, and nearly 100 citations. To compare, in 2023 there were 297.

He also thanked the group for the baby shower gifts he received that night, for his son who will be born in March.

Fire Department Report:

Matt Ison gave an update for the Fire Department which has received a \$5,000 grant from the railroad and an additional \$5,000 from Scott County for the doors project at the new building. They are still requesting any assistance that the town can give them on that project.

Public Comment: Opened: _____ Closed: _____

No one present for comment.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion to enter INTO Closed Session to discuss personnel and legal issues was made by **Derek Percy**, Council member. Seconded by **Eileen Deckard**, 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 **Zackary Salyer**, and seconded by **Teresa Tilson**.

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 **Derek Percy**, Council member, seconded by **Zackary Salyer**, Council member, and roll call vote made with these **6** 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 Wendell Tipton and seconded by Teresa Tilson, to advertise for the new Public Works position at \$16.00 per hour, full time with benefits.

Motion passed with **5** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **0** ABSENT, **1** Abstentions, **0** Vacant

A motion was made by Teresa Tilson and seconded by Jeff Flanary, to change the Treasurer's required hours to total up to 32 hours per week, with continued full benefits. The change is to be noted in the Employee Handbook with a change from 32.5 hours to 32 hours even.

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

A motion was made by Eileen Deckard and seconded by Zackary Salyer to allow the Clerk position to provide administrative services up to 50 % of the work week to the Weber City Police Department as agreed upon and coordinated by the Town office staff.

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

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