

**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, August 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:	Keltie Kerney
Council Member:	Teresa Tilson
Council Member:	Wendell Tipton

Others: Penney Capps – Clerk, Donald Harding, III - Police Chief, Frank Tittle – Public Works

**ABSENT:**

Council Member:	Zackary Salyer (working out of town)
Treasurer	Rhonda Neeley (medical leave)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES and FINANCIAL REPORT:**

The Mayor asked for a combined Motion to accept the Meeting Minutes and the Financial Report, as listed below, in one vote was made by **Teresa Tilson**; seconded by **Eileen Deckard**:

**July 16, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes**

**July 2024 Financial Report**

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

**Mayor Report and Comments:**

The Mayor had no new comments to address at this time, so he gave the time to our guest, John Kilgore, Executive Director of Scott County Economic Development Authority who by request of the Council shared the current status of the Riverside Property (formerly known as The Bray Farm) and economic development opportunities within Weber City town limits. The area was developed years ago with Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to expand the “enterprise zone” along the Hwy 23 Corridor including Town of Weber City limits. The nearly 99 acre property was a mixed use development with approximately 15 acres in the front for commercial use, and the remaining acres for technology, light industrial, or housing.

Tax grants are available for qualifying businesses. Those in manufacturing, industrial research, or technology willing to invest \$1 million and high volume of jobs, or tourism and retail companies willing to invest \$100,000 and create at least 10 jobs can qualify. The Riverside Property was purchased by the county with a loan through the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority (VCEDA), and special approval through them is necessary before anything else can be put there. The loan restricts the use to industrial job creation or new investment, not retail. The road, water, and sewer systems were constructed through grants for a technology park so if there became a change in usage, those systems would have to be reevaluated for approval.

The 4-5 acres of road frontage is the only portion within the Town of Weber City limits. It is currently occupied by renters with retail establishments, (Mike's Garage, Calvin's Body Shop, and Weber City Discount Tire) who provide the funds to the county for the utilities at the Technology Park.

A feasibility study was conducted by the county that determined that it is a prime location for a hotel/motel chain and restaurants. The fact that a Starbucks is now located in the Town of Weber City within Food City is a plus.

Council members then began to discuss possibilities with Mr. Kilgore for ideas they have. Council commented that an "anchor" business needs to come in that would attract other businesses, and start the process.

TeleTech was the original "anchor" business but then the COVID pandemic hit and the more than 100 jobs on location there, changed to work-from-home since people could not work in close quarters like that.

The Council suggested entertainment venues like a movie theater, activity centers like trampoline parks or roller rinks, and popular chain restaurants would be a welcome change to the property remaining vacant and unused. Mayor Addington commented that if the county could pay off the loans with strict restrictions, and encourage new businesses up there, many entities stood to benefit from it. Mr. Kilgore stated that at this time there are no funds available from the county for commercial incentives or such a loan payoff.

Council members stated that Scott County residents are limited to some types of businesses available here, and travel across state lines to Johnson City, Bristol, and Kingsport to frequent these establishments. They travel right through the 23 Corridor to get there. If businesses could be opened here, the money would stay here, benefiting area towns and the county. Mr. Kilgore encouraged the Council to attend any of the EDA meetings since they are open to the public every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Scott County Administrative Offices.

Business ideas mentioned by the Council were: ACE Hardware, Rural King, McDonalds, Chick Fil A, and other popular retail companies. Mr. Kilgore said that he will have his Executive Secretary, Penny Horton, send us the list of current economic incentives to encourage businesses to open in our area so that we can all work together. The Council thanked him for his thorough information and for coming tonight. They encouraged him to come back at any time.

(29:44)

**Old Business:**

**Fire Department (Roland Street) Guttering and Roof Repair**

Maintenance Committee member, Jeff Flanary, reported that he inspected the gutter damage on the Fire Hall and suggested that the Town allow Frank to repair the existing gutter system rather than purchase new at a large cost to the Town. He also stated that he has been unable to determine the location of the roof leak since he cannot be there when it rains. Council Member, Eileen Deckard, stated that Travis Neeley, who repaired the roof leak in 2023, has already returned to the fire hall and repaired a different leaking area at no charge to the Town.

A motion was made by Keltie Kerney and seconded by Teresa Tilson to repair the damaged guttering on the Roland Street Fire Hall building up to **\$1,000.00** instead of purchasing a new commercial guttering system.

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

**Town Match for Byrne/Justice Grant Award**

A motion was made by Wendell Tipton and seconded by Keltie Kerney for the Town to agree to support the Police Department's Byrne/Justice Grant Award with the required 25% town match in the amount of **\$17,812.00**. The total grant award, including the town match is: **\$71,254.00**. Council asked where the funds would be coming from. The Finance Committee met with Chief Harding to review the FY25 Budget. The Council voted May 14, 2024 to allocate \$100,000.00 in ARPA funds to the Police Department renovation. There is still approximately \$30,000.00 in ARPA funds available after that allocation. A portion of that could cover this cost. A Council member reminded the council that the remaining ARPA funds were being considered for town street repair.

Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, suggested that the \$17,812.00 be taken from the \$100,000.00 set aside for Police Department use. The grant is to purchase equipment, which is an allowable ARPA expense. At this time, a licensed contractor has not been contracted for the renovation work, so the money could be spent on the purchase of the necessary equipment, still leaving over \$80,000.00 earmarked for the Police Department renovation. The motion was amended to include the use of ARPA funds that was already earmarked for Police Department renovations to pay the **\$17,812.00**.

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

**Gift Card Purchase for Scott County Worker**

Mayor Addington addressed the Council regarding the hard work performed by our assigned Scott County Program Worker, Mike. He works daily for our town with Frank in our Public Works Department. Recently, Mike assisted with the success of the Police Department event, National Night Out, on August 6<sup>th</sup>. Justin asked that the Council vote to purchase a gift card for Mike as a thank you. A motion was made by Eileen Deckard, seconded by Teresa Tilson, to purchase a Food City gift card in the amount of **\$100.00** as a 'thank you' from the Town of Weber City.

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

Verizon Connect GPS Fleet Monitoring System

A motion was made by Teresa Tilson, seconded by Wendell Tipton, to cancel the Verizon Connect Fleet GPS System, on the basis that the product was not useful for what the Town needed for their vehicles.

Motion passed with 4 voting AYE, 1 voting NAY, 1 ABSENT, 0 Vacant, 0 Abstentions

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Purchase On-Site Security Paper Shredder

Council member Wendell Tipton presented some information to the Council suggesting the purchase of an on-site paper shredder and canceling the current Shred-It service that costs the Town \$71/month. The Aurora AU120MA 120 sheet Auto Feed High Security Micro-Cut Paper Shredder can be purchased through Amazon for **\$176.40**. For Town and Police Department use.

A motion was made by Keltie Kerney, seconded by Jeff Flanary to purchase the suggested unit from Amazon.

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

Purchase of Snow Plow Truck

A motion was made by Teresa Tilson, seconded by Jeff Flanary to allow Frank Tittle, Public Works Maintenance worker to research and purchase a suitable truck for snow removal by the Town up to the amount of **\$11,500.00** to allow the Town to bid for a VDOT snow removal contract by the deadline of September 2, 2024.

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

**Legal Affairs – by Attorney Mike Carrico**

Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, had a few items that will be addressed in Closed Session and announced that the Writ of Election has been completed for the November 2024 election for the two council seats that were appointed to be elected. He also said that the Registrar's office stated that two people have added their name to the ballot.

**Committee Reports:**

***ARPA Committee Report: Teresa Tilson and Zackary Salyer***

No new items to present

***Finance Committee Report: Teresa Tilson and Wendell Tipton***

No new items to present.

***Personnel Committee Report: Eileen Deckard***

No new items to present.

***Planning Committee Report: Eileen Deckard and Zackary Salyer***

No new items to present.

***Street Committee Report: Jeff Flanary and Wendell Tipton***

There have been 2 requests for guardrail installation at two residences in town. We made the formal request to VDOT who forwarded the request to their engineer. They determined that the guardrails cannot be installed at those locations due to the steep ground, utility lines, and product that VDOT has available. Everyone recognizes the hazardous condition of the road at those locations, but it is just not feasible to install the guardrails. Council member Eileen Deckard will notify the resident of Church Street. The 2<sup>nd</sup> resident on Chapel and Click Streets has been notified.

***Maintenance Committee Report: Jeff Flanary and Frank Tittle***

Scott County PSA is still working on the water line improvements around town. They are nearing completion on Blanton Drive. A repair project for the drain system at the top of Blanton Drive is still necessary. Frank asked if he can begin getting bids for the job. The Mayor told him to begin gathering the quotes, and that item would be tabled until a future meeting.

Frank also spoke about recent work orders completed by VDOT and reports a good working relationship has formed with him and their road maintenance department. Council members asked if VDOT could come through town with a street sweeper. We have put in that work order before, but they do not have the equipment.

Frank then presented the information received from our area VDOT maintenance supervisor about obtaining a snow removal vendor contract to clear the VDOT streets as well as our own during a snow event and being paid by VDOT for the service. The current Ford F150 truck we have is not large enough and would not pass VDOT inspection. The equipment must be comparable to what they use. He is shopping for a used, larger truck, hopefully equipped with the plow and salt spreader already. The Town has updated our ID # with eVA (Virginia Department of General Services) which was required to complete an electronic Plow4VA Snow Removal Agreement Application. It also requires a current vehicle registration of the vehicle the town plans to use. The deadline for these submissions is: Monday, September 2, 2024. A truck must be purchased before that date to upload the registration for consideration. Then an appointment will be scheduled to inspect equipment for approval with VDOT before September 27, 2024. This is required to be eligible for the first 50% pre-season bonus payment of \$2,000.00. There is an end of season 50% bonus payment also. The hourly rate received for work depends on the type of equipment used but would be no less than \$125.00/hour. An "hours worked on VDOT roads" recording device is placed in the truck for reporting purposes. There is a minimum guaranteed payment amount for each bid line approved, so the town would receive no less than \$5,000 for the season. The Maintenance Committee requests that the Council vote tonight for an allowable amount to purchase a truck and authorize Frank to do so when one is found.

***Police Department Report:***

Chief Donald Harding, III gave the report. He thanked the Council for their support of the National Night Out event that took place August 6, 2024, and acknowledged the area businesses and sponsors of the successful event. He said that now their focus will

shift to preparing for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Santa Cop Program that benefits Weber City location Head Start.

He announced that Officer Scottlin Baker will be graduating from the Academy on Thursday, August 29, 2024 at 1 pm, if any Council members are able to attend. He also informed the Council of hiring for part time, Justin Miller, a certified officer and former Police Chief of Gate City. Officer Miller has already reported for duty and is doing a fantastic job. In the coming months, Chief Harding will have some guests attending the Regular Council Meetings when he is able to present some of the information regarding items the Department has been working on in recent months.

**Fire Department Report:**

Matt Ison, Captain of the WCVFD informed the Council that installation of the garage doors has begun at the new building. Installation of the HVAC units is still ongoing as the installer has time. The Fire Department also asked that the Town continue to consider giving additional funding to the department this year, and especially the next budget year.

**Public Comment:** *Opened 8:29 pm*

Bruce Cross, owner of Enterprise Nursery, spoke on his concerns of the transient community that is camping in the woods behind his business and Burger King and the many that are coming through our town lately. There has been an increase in transient activity since the demolition of the West End Inn, Kingsport, TN. He is quite concerned about the safety of the employees and the possibility of burglary at both businesses and others in town. He is requesting an increase in Police presence during the night hours when these folks tend to misbehave.

*Public Comment Closed 8:34 pm*

**CLOSED SESSION**

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

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

(part 2, 0:12)

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

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

**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 **Eileen Deckard**, Council member, and roll call vote made with these **5** members voting "AYE" were:

Jeff Flanary, Wendell Tipton, Teresa Tilson, Eileen Deckard, Keltie Kerney  
Voting "NAY" were: **0** with **1** Absent (Zackary Salyer)

**ACTION FROM THE CLOSED SESSION:**

A motion was made by **Teresa Tilson**, seconded by **Eileen Deckard**, to approve a **\$1.00** per hour raise to the Public Works maintenance employee, Carl Frank Tittle, beginning with the next pay period, due to completing his 90 days new hire probation. Motion passed with **5** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **1** ABSENT, **0** Abstentions

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion to adjourn was made by **Teresa Tilson**, seconded by **Keltie Kerney**. Motion passed with **5** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY **1** ABSENT, **0** Vacant, **0** Abstentions

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**Mayor: Justin Addington**

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**Town Clerk: Penney C. Capps**