

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, October 15, 2024**. The meeting was held in the assembly room of the Weber City Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by **Vice Mayor Wendell Tipton**, 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:

Vice Mayor:	Wendell Tipton
Town Attorney:	Michael Carrico
Council Member:	Eileen Deckard
Council Member:	Jeff Flanary
Council Member:	Keltie Kerney
Council Member:	Teresa Tilson
Council Member:	Zackary Salyer (working out of town-joined via Eileen's phone @ 7:16 pm and Mike's phone @ 7:35 pm when the call dropped)

The vote count reflects these times.

Town Employees: Penney Capps – Clerk, Rhonda Neeley – Treasurer,
Frank Tittle – PublicWorks, Donald Harding, III - Police Chief,

ABSENT:

Mayor: Justin M. Addington

APPROVAL OF MINUTES and FINANCIAL REPORT:

A motion to accept the **September 17, 2024**, Special Called Workshop Meeting Minutes **with noted corrections** as requested by Council, was made by Jeff Flanary; seconded by Teresa Tilson.

Motion passed with **4** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **1** ABSENT, **0** Vacant, **0** Abstentions (2:40)

A motion to accept the **September 17, 2024**, Regular Called Meeting Minutes **with noted corrections** as requested by Council, was made by Teresa Tilson; seconded by Jeff Flanary.

Motion passed with **4** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **1** ABSENT, **0** Vacant, **0** Abstentions (8:45)

Motion to accept the **September 2024** Financial Report, was made by Teresa Tilson, seconded by Eileen Deckard. Keltie Kerney requested a chance to meet with a Finance Committee member for questions that she has since she is new to the Council. Motion passed with **4** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **1** ABSENT, **0** Vacant, **0** Abstentions

Mayor Report and Comments:

Vice Mayor, Wendell Tipton, stated he would be moderating the meeting tonight, in the absence of Mayor Justin Addington who is ill, and asked those present to remember him in their prayers. Vice Mayor Tipton mentioned that the recent disaster has brought to our attention the lack of an Emergency Response Plan for the Town of Weber City. He would like to see the Council create one for future use. He then yielded his report time to Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, who read aloud a *Declaration of A Local State of Emergency* to be issued by the Town of Weber City Town Council, effective September 30, 2024, due to the damages caused by Hurricane Helene that affected our Town and surrounding areas beginning Friday, September 27, 2024, causing widespread wind and tree damage, and power outages for many days. Some residents of the Town were without electricity for as long as 7-10 days. This caused a widespread loss of perishable items, water shortages, and hazardous conditions endangering the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Weber City. Both Scott County and the Town of Gate City have made Resolutions like this also.

Vice Mayor Tipton, then yielded the floor to WCPD Chief Donald Harding, III for his Department report and a special presentation of guest officers from the Kingsport Police Department. Chief Harding introduced Officer Scottlin Baker, and Officer Justin Miller as the newest full-time officers for the Town of Weber City. Officer Baker has completed the Police Academy and Officer Miller has accepted a full-time position after working for WCPD already as a part-time officer.

He then introduced his guests from the Kingsport Police Department: Officers Jacob Patton and Caleb Jeffers, Sgt Dustin Jackson. On June 24, 2024 these officers along with Lt. Jesse Jones of WCPD went above and beyond when they all assisted in the apprehension of a homicide suspect that ended in Weber City. The courageous acts of these officers is a steady reminder of what Law enforcement does on a daily basis to keep our communities safe. He then presented them with Certificates of Appreciation for a job well done. Council members were then given the opportunity to congratulate each officer for their service and welcome the new WCPD officers.

The Council members then presented our new WCPD officers with a Daily Devotional Book for those in Law Enforcement.

Old Business:

Council Member, Keltie Kerney, asked if the Council was ready to discuss an Old Business item regarding the Cutting of Trees on Town Property. Due to the absence of the Mayor, and those issues involving legal matters requiring a Closed Session, the item has been tabled again to the next Regular Meeting session.

Council Member, Keltie Kerney, also reminded the Council that several Town residents have requested additional law enforcement coverage within the Town limits due to an increase of vagrants in the area. Chief Harding stated that he would be happy to discuss that subject further in a Closed Session setting as previously discussed with the Town Attorney. Coverage will increase surely now with the addition of two full-time

officers. The Police Chief communicates directly with the Mayor about scheduling since he oversees day-to-day operations.

NEW BUSINESS:

Declare the State of Emergency

A motion was made by Jeff Flanary, seconded by Keltie Kerney to approve the Resolution document presented by Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, *Declaration of a Local State of Emergency*.

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

Hurricane Relief Donation Decision

The Town of Weber City became a hub for donations following the Hurricane Helene disaster. A local church in Scott County, brought a \$1,000 donation for the Town to purchase any items needed for residents of our Town, Scott County, and surrounding areas as the needs arose. But since this area was affected mainly by power outages and not flood damage, few items were distributed. The Council discussed returning the money to the church, purchasing non-perishable items to have on hand in the event the need changes, or using the funds to assist families most affected by the loss of food/groceries from the lack of electricity. Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, will contact DSS for a list of those families that can benefit from this generous donation.

The item was tabled for further discussion at the November meeting.

Close Visa Account with Bank of Marion

A motion was made by Teresa Tilson, seconded by Keltie Kerney to close the Bank of Marion VISA account, ending in 9673.

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

Change of Meeting Date for December 2024

A motion was made by Eileen Deckard, seconded by Jeff Flanary to change the December Regular Council Meeting to Tuesday, December 10, 2024 at 6:30 pm. The Clerk will notify the newspaper of the change.

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

Legal Affairs – by Attorney Mike Carrico

No additional items to add.

Committee Reports:

ARPA Committee Report: Teresa Tilson and Zackary Salyer

Teresa Tilson reminded the Council that we are on a time limit to allocate the ARPA funds by end of 2024. All projects must be outlined, then the Town has until 2026 to pay all the invoices for projects. The Police Department renovation has already been outlined as a use of ARPA funds. The biggest issue delaying the Police Department

Renovation Project is finding a contractor licensed in Virginia who is available to do the work, and within the approved dollar amount for the project. Chief Harding was recognized by Vice Mayor, Wendell Tipton, to give an update. Chief Harding has spoken with the Scott County Building Inspector, David Gilmer, who recommended that the Town employees demo the area themselves to save time and cost. He was also advised by Scott County Public Works Director, Bill Dingus, that if the Town of Weber City Public Works employee, Frank Tittle, can haul the debris to the land fill in the Town of Weber City truck, the Town would not be charged a dumping fee to dispose of it properly. The recent hurricane damage to our area has delayed the project slightly also. Chief Harding has a meeting scheduled with two separate contractors on Friday, October 18, 2024, in hopes of securing a contract for the work.

Finance Committee Report: Teresa Tilson and Wendell Tipton

The committee had no new information to add. Teresa Tilson acknowledged the new Treasurer's Report that was included in the Council packet. This report, prepared by Rhonda, will be helpful in keeping the Council up to date on financial matters, and is much appreciated. Teresa also reminded the Council that they need to discuss a Snow Plow Rate of pay for the Public Works Department now that the VDOT contract is in effect. This item will be discussed in Closed Session. Also, the question was asked what the next legal step is to collect the Delinquent Business License fees. The Business License renewal form indicates that the penalty and interest will be added for each month there is failure to pay but does not list further recourse. Town Attorney, Mike Carrico, volunteered to reach out to one individual whose Business License remains delinquent to resolve the issue.

Personnel Committee Report: Jeff Flanary and Keltie Kerney

Keltie Kerney said that she has had the opportunity to review the current Employee Handbook, and has determined that several updates are needed. She requested that a time be set up with fellow committee member, Jeff Flanary, to review the updates and discuss others, before the next meeting. Jeff Flanary said he would try to work out a time around his increased work schedule.

Zoning/Planning Committee Report: Eileen Deckard and Zackary Salyer

The Committee has not had a chance to meet since last meeting. There are a few items that need clarification before the draft is ready to present to the Council for vote. Teresa Tilson suggested a copy of the current rough draft be shared with the members for review to see if the Council may have additional input.

Street Committee Report: Jeff Flanary and Wendell Tipton

No new items to report. Wendell Tipton created a list of pothole repair needed on VDOT streets that will be requested by the Clerk online. Areas as follows: Fox Run Ave. and Locust St.; Roland Street; Deer Trail Ave. and Locust St.; Vantor Drive; and Blanton Drive.

Maintenance Committee Report: Eileen Deckard and Frank Tittle

Eileen Deckard stated that there have been numerous complaints on several properties that are not being mowed and maintained properly. Ordinance violation letters have been sent although the properties remain unchanged. A home on Delrose Street, has drawn much concern from its neighbors concerning the resident inside. The WCPD has done welfare checks at that location, and referred the resident to state workers for follow up.

Police Department Report:

Chief Donald Harding, III gave the report earlier in the meeting due to his guests needing to leave.

Fire Department Report:

Matt Ison, Captain of the WCVFD informed the Council that the new garage doors have been installed at the new US Hwy 23N location. There continue to be delays to complete the installation of the HVAC systems. He also reported that the new restaurant opening has been delayed by the storms. He reported 40 calls within the month of September and 178 calls during calendar year-to-date. Chief, Bruce Cross, has offered to work with a planning group to create an Emergency Response Plan for the future. The new Fire Hall location may be used for a Shelter since it has a back up generator for disasters.

Public Comment: *Opened 8:06 pm*

Mike Kerney 155 Locust Street, when will the streets be fixed? Regarding the mess created by the water line upgrade by PSA.

Public Comment Closed 8:07 pm

CLOSED SESSION

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

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

(Part 2 - :10)

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

Motion passed with **5** voting AYE, **0** voting NAY, **0** 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 **Jeff Flanary**, Council member, and roll call vote made with these **5** members voting "AYE" were:

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

ACTION FROM THE CLOSED SESSION:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Vice Mayor: Wendell Tipton

Town Clerk: Penney C. Capps