

**Town of Stantonsburg
Regular Board Meeting
December 9, 2024**

Mayor Coley Rhodes called the monthly Town Council meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The following council members were present: Donnie Bass, Ben Harper, Steve Mooring, and Eartha Butler. Also present was Town Manager Brian Hawley, Town Clerk/Interim Finance Officer Alexis Whitley, Finance Officer KayCee Stencil, and Town Attorney Slade Rand. Council member Jackie Grice was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer: Mayor Rhodes led the Pledge of Allegiance and opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of Agenda: Mayor Rhodes requested that "Board Packets" be added as a discussion item under Old Business as it has been previously discussed. Councilman Mooring made a motion to approve the agenda. Passed unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes: *November 18th Regular Board Meeting Minutes:* Councilman Mooring requested to add that Melonie Bryan is with the LGC on page 3, second to the last paragraph before New Business. He requested the removal of employee names regarding Christmas Bonuses on page 3, paragraph 3 under New Business. Councilman Mooring requested the change on page 5, paragraph 5 under Manager's Report: *"He has concerns about the town having the capacity to handle that many houses with the number of houses that are being built on Sand Pit Rd."* to *"The number of dwellings is undetermined, and the Town Engineer stated that the town has the capacity for only 300 more."* Minutes were approved as amended.

November 18th Closed Session Minutes: Approved as written

Public Comment: Mark Whitley, who resides on Thompson Avenue, was present to speak on his behalf as the chair of the Appearance Commission and wanted to thank the town employees for all of their help preparing the town for Christmas.

Alan Howard, with S.W. Contracting and Consulting, was present to express the company's interest in helping with town projects.

Presentations: There were no presentations.

Financial Reports: Manager Hawley presented an amendment to the October Financial Summary. The wire transfer portion of the summary for the Duke Energy check was incorrect and was amended in the amount of \$12,338.90. Councilman Mooring clarified that the total of the wire transfers also changed due to the amendment.

November: Monthly Receipts: \$395,106.13 Disbursements: \$260,139.13 Difference: \$134,967.00. Report referred to our auditors.

Invoices for Payment: Town Clerk/Interim Finance Officer, Alexis Whitley, provided information on six invoices prior to the meeting.

Manager Hawley presented two invoices for approval to pay Ryan Marlar, CPA and Edmunds GovTech Logics for Quarterly charges. Councilman Mooring and Manager Hawley discussed the Logics invoice in detail.

Councilman Harper made a motion to approve the invoices for Ryan Marlar, CPA and Edmunds GovTech Logics. Passed unanimously.

Manager Hawley provided two spreadsheets to the council tracking the expenses for Ryan Marlar and Grant projects. He will provide one for Danna Layne.

Old Business: Manager Hawley discussed the CDBG Grant and RSM and Associates to provide housing services. Land Surveys will need to be reposted, and we are awaiting an update on title opinions to verify which homes will be cleared. Town Attorney Slade Rand discussed title opinions.

Councilman Mooring asked Manager Hawley if there was an indication of an extension for the CDBG Grant after he spoke with the State. Manager Hawley and Dennis Patton have discussed this option and will be reaching back out to the State.

Discussion on SELC Solar Pilot Test Agreement was tabled until January. We are waiting for SELC's input.

Manager Hawley discussed the consideration of compensation for gap coverage in town hall. The council requested to go into closed session for further discussion.

Mayor Rhodes has concerns regarding board packets. The council is not receiving the entire board packet on the first delivery. She stated that things are added to the packet at the last minute, items are missed, and the board packet is sent out too late.

Councilman Mooring agreed with Mayor Rhodes and stated that it puts the council in a bind when the packets are sent later in the week.

Manager Hawley stated that things will improve since the new finance officer has started now. He is unsure if sending the packet a week in advance is feasible. The council and Manager Hawley agreed that Tuesdays would be best. Mayor Rhodes asked the council if there was something included in the packet that isn't needed. Councilman Mooring was in favor of continuing to receive credit card statements as part of internal controls. The council requested that additional items not be added to the packet but to their table before the meeting if needed.

Councilman Mooring requested to see the monthly statement from Agri and Hardware Supply.

Councilman Mooring discussed additional old business items. He requested a compilation of all costs associated with the new energy policy that was discussed in the November 18th meeting.

He requested an update on abandoned properties. Manager Hawley has mailed out letters to the homeowners but has not received a response.

He discussed the property at 312 South Main Street and the tree and shrubbery removal that is needed along with the fence on the property. Manager Hawley stated that the adjacent homeowner will be moving his fence off the property of 312 South Main Street and the fence behind the building has been cleaned up from falling.

Councilman Mooring asked if there was any interest in the Façade Grant. Manager Hawley stated that at least one has shown interest in applying.

Councilman Mooring asked if Danna Layne provided a new target date for the completion of the 2022 audit. Manager Hawley stated that a new target date has not been provided as she has been working on her county's current audit. The water and sewer inventory were off in the fiscal year 2021 audit, which flagged Danna when she was working on the 2022 because no purchases were shown from the town for water and sewer department to make up the difference. Roger helped pull information to correct this. He stated that a better tracking system for assets will be in place to count inventory for the Electric Department.

Councilman Mooring clarified with Manager Hawley that there is currently no procedure in place to monitor inventory/usage of supplies in the Electric Department. Manager Hawley stated that wire is the only thing being tracked in the system but as far as poles and transformers there is nothing in the system. He is working to update all of this.

Councilman Mooring discussed Beverly Stroud being present to help train KayCee, the new finance officer. Manager Hawley and Mayor Rhodes mentioned the email that was sent out. Melonie Bryan, with LGC, recommended that Beverly help train KayCee.

Councilman Mooring asked if Carr, Riggs, and Ingram would make the adjustment for the discrepancies in the 2021 audit without a contract. Manager Hawley stated that Danna Layne, who the town is currently working with, will help with the process and let the town know how to proceed.

New Business: Manager Hawley presented the new meeting and holiday schedule and the resolutions to adopt once they are accepted. The council requested that the board meetings begin at 6:30pm instead of 7:00pm.

Councilwoman Butler asked if anyone will be receiving an extra day if the holiday falls on a Friday since they are already off. Manager Hawley stated that they do not receive an extra day and that the council agreed to do away with that.

Councilman Harper made a motion to approve the holiday schedule. Passed unanimously.

Councilman Harper made a motion to approve the meeting schedule with an adjusted time of 6:30pm. Passed unanimously.

Councilman Mooring had additional new business items. He mentioned the RFPs for contracting services for 312 S Main Street. He requested that the town wait and post RFPs in January so those involved have time to review the final plans before they go out for bids. He asked what platforms the town will be advertising on. Manager Hawley stated that it will be posted on the state's Electronic Vendor Portal and any other outlets the council requests.

Councilman Mooring confirmed that the bids would follow a formal bidding process in which they remain closed and will be opened during the board meeting. Manager Hawley stated that the town will be following the formal bidding process. The council discussed the bidding process.

Councilman Mooring discussed the medical equipment in the building at 312 S Main Street that could or could not have value that needs to be removed. He asked if anything has been done regarding the equipment. Manager Hawley has not reached out about the equipment but will do so.

Manager Hawley will be sending the council compiled information for the 911 calls.

Councilman Mooring asked to be recused for the following discussion with Town Attorney Slade Rand. Councilman Harper made a motion to recuse Councilman Mooring from the discussion. Passed unanimously.

Town Attorney Slade Rand reported on his findings regarding recently discovered running water meters that have been running for more than ten years in some instances, but which have not been in the town's billing system. While some of the meters indicated actual water usage, staff is unable to determine the actual specific dates that water was used. Although the Town is legally obligated to collect unpaid utility bills, there is a three-year statute of limitations on collection. Since the Town cannot determine if the water was actually used during the past three years, it could not prevail in a court collection action against any customer having property with one of the relevant water meters. That being the case, Rand recommends that the Town not try to pursue collection for any possible past use for these specific customers, but that the Town add these meters to its billing system going forward. Councilman Harper made a motion to waive collection of past water use connected with the newly discovered water meters. Passed unanimously.

Department Reports: *Water/Sewer Department:* Public notices were required to be mailed 30 days after the Initial LSLI was submitted. There were 312 notices that were sent and were sent out on time. These notices were required to be sent to customers who had either Galvanized Requiring Replacement, or Unknown service lines. We are offering lead testing kits to the 72 customers that received a GRR notice. So far 6 customers have requested kits, 3 have been tested and no lead was detected in the sample. Results for the other 3 have not been received yet. These testing kits are \$19.95 each and are tested at our contract lab. Brian and I have discussed that if lead testing request rises to a certain level, we will discuss a possible fee for the testing kits.

The last 17 lots have been sold on Sand Pit Rd. All tap fees were paid, and all water meters have been installed. This only leaves about 15 water meters in inventory. We will need to prepare to purchase more water meters next FY. I do believe we will have enough to make it through this year to replace damaged/failed water meters.

All required reports and water testing for the month of November were completed on time with no violations.

The PLC controller for the R.A.S. pump station at the WWTP failed and was damaged due to a possible power surge. This caused all automatic controls of the station to be lost. We had a technician from Sanford Electric come out and he was able to get the pump station running but it must be run manually. This causes challenges for operating these pumps due to the changes in flow rates during the day and night. We have two quotes, and I am waiting on a third to come in to repair the equipment.

All required reports and sampling were done for the WWTP on time with no violations.

Parks and Rec: Crews maintained grounds.

Public Works: Mulch is being placed out around town. Christmas lights were placed and the department provided extensive horticultural services on the public grounds across from Town Hall. Angels have been placed around town. The parade route has been prepared and cleaned with a few places to still touch up this week.

Electric Department: They were tasked with identifying and cutting limbs. They had all the angels up prior to Thanksgiving. They assisted with placing lights on the Christmas Tree. They assisted by placing lights on the library building. They updated timers and photocells for specific angels and Christmas decorations.

Manager's Report: The new Finance Officer, KayCee Stancil, started Monday November 25, 2024.

Danna Layne is working quickly on our audit. She started her field work on Oct 30, 2024, with Ryan Marlar and staff. Ryan has continued to work on the FY23 process for the FY23 audit. Ryan has finalized the FY23 bank reconciliations to prepare for Danna's field work. Danna has one item left that is needed from the town and that is inventory CRI, or the town employees would have done for FY22. Manager Hawley has been compiling data for the electric department and Roger has provided what he had on file for FY22 Water/Sewer.

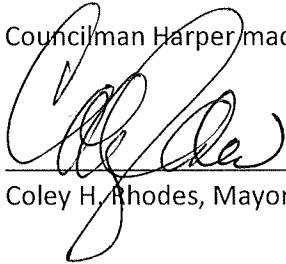
Storm Water plan support meeting was held with the EPA and ERG.

Councilwoman Butler made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143.318.11 a (3)(7). Passed unanimously.

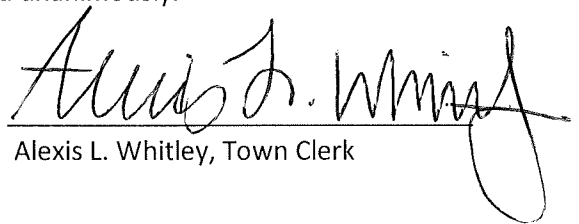
Councilman Harper made a motion to go into open session. Passed unanimously.

Councilman Mooring announced that Town Attorney Slade Rand sent Wilson Times an article regarding the Lead Service Line Inventory.

Councilman Harper made a motion to adjourn at 9:45pm. Passed unanimously.



Coley H. Rhodes, Mayor



Alexis L. Whitley, Town Clerk