

Council Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2024

The Tazewell Town Council met in a budget work session at 6:15p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present:

Absent:

Mayor Michael Hoops

Vice Mayor Glenn Catron

Councilmember Jonathan Hankins

Councilmember Zach Cline

Councilmember David Fox

Councilmember Emily Davis

Councilmember Joe Beasley

Staff present were: Interim Town Manager, Lianne Regon; Executive Assistant, Susan Reeves, Attorney Brad Pyott; Water Clerk, Sabrina Schooley.

BUDGET WORK SESSION

Interim Manager Regon stated that this was a continuation from the budget work session last week. We will be going over the expenses for the general fund. She began to go over expenses. She stated that she did raise legal fees and attorney health insurance. She began going over the administration department. She stated that there is a 2.5% raise in for full time employees. Mayor Hoops asked if she had spoken with Public Works Director Pruitt about seasonal mowing employees. We are currently advertising at \$12 an hour. If we took it to \$14 we may pull more interest. She stated that they have talked about it and we could increase it to \$14 to improve our chances of hiring in house for summer mowing. There needs to be about 6 mowing employees to mow the lake. It is possible the numbers could change for part time salaries.

Councilmember Cline asked about the shop with a cop line item. She stated that there is a revenue line item to help offset this expense line item. Also, this year it is going to be shop with a hero. She stated that Chief Lampert has been searching for ideas to raise money for the program.

Interim Manager Regon moved to discussing the fire department budget. She stated that each year she has to perform an audit on the fire fund transfer. The fire department gets money from the state each year and it can go toward the purchase of PPE, equipment, turn out gear etc. They had a large carry over and Manager Day had told them it would be put in their FY 24 budget for them to use and clear out the carry over. They were made aware of this one time bump in their budget by letter from myself before the FY24 budget began.

They then moved to the EMS department. They discussed the 80/20 grant line item. This is for a grant that we have been awarded two years ago for an ambulance and we are still waiting on the ambulance to be built.

They then talked about the donation line item. They stated that we have been getting a lot of donation requests lately and it seems to be more than in the past. It was stated that they need to be more aware of how much they have in that line item when they receive these requests and be mindful when granting donations.

Next the Tazewell Today line item was discussed. In the last budget they were given \$100,000. In this proposed budget there is \$75,000. Councilmember Davis stated that Tazewell Today was working toward being able to offer façade grants to businesses on Main Street. This would be used from funds Tazewell Today has, not going through another agency. Councilmember Cline was in support of having funding allocated to Tazewell Today, however he stated that he had reviewed their financial report and that he felt \$100,000 was more than enough. Council held discussion regarding Tazewell Today funding. At this time, it was time for executive session. They will hold another budget work session to finish general fund expenses.

The Tazewell Town Council met in an executive session at 7:00p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made by Councilmember Davis to go into executive session. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Cline. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

RESOLUTION

Motion made by: Davis

Resolution Number: ES240312

Motion Seconded by: Cline

Meeting Date: 24 March 12

Vote: All voted Aye

Purpose: Real Property

CERTIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, the Tazewell Town Council has convened an executive session on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, 2.1-344.1 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this Council that such executive session was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Tazewell Town Council hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia Law were discussed in the executive session to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the executive session were heard, discussed or considered by the Tazewell Town Council.

VOTE

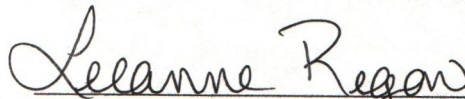
Ayes: Catron, Hankins, Cline, Fox, Davis, Beasley

Nays: none

(For each nay vote, the substance of the departure from the requirements of the Act should be described.)

Absent during vote:

Absent during meeting:



Leeanne Regon, Clerk

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Catron to come out of executive session. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Beasley. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye, Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

Mayor Hoops stated the reason they went into executive session was for Purpose: Real Property. He then read the resolution for Certification of Executive Session. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye, Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

The Tazewell Town Council met in regular session at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present:

Absent:

Mayor Michael Hoops

Vice Mayor Glenn Catron

Councilmember Jonathan Hankins

Councilmember Zach Cline

Councilmember David Fox

Councilmember Emily Davis

Councilmember Joe Beasley

Staff present were: Interim Town Manager, Lianne Regon; Town Attorney, Brad Pyott; Executive Assistant, Susan Reeves; Water Clerk, Sabrina Schooley; Police Chief, Stanely Lampert; Zoning & Property Maintenance Official, Chris Hurley; Asst. Fire Chief, Jason Kinser.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hoops called the meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance. Invocation by Pastor Nate Thomas.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION/REQUEST

MAIN STREET MERCHANTS

Greta Burton, President for Main Street Merchants came before council to introduce herself and the organization. She stated that they have applied for their non- profit status however it is still in

process. The businesses on Main Street have formed this organization and they want to be able to give back to the customers that support their businesses. They would like to be able to hold events and have some planned for 2024. They have had a chocolate crawl that was very successful and brought a lot of traffic to Main Street. She stated that Tazewell Today has done an excellent job of getting things going on Main Street. They hold meetings once a month and she looks forward to what is to come.

SKILLS USA COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Robert Steele of the Tazewell Career and Technical Center came before council and brought with him a team of Skills competitors. The team made a presentation for their project of Spike's Trike Track. They showed pictures and videos of the students doing work on the project. They stated that the project was still in progress and hoped to be completed soon.

WARHAWK PARK PROJECT UPDATE

Kondwani Patterson and Brittany Davis came before council to give an update. They stated that they were with Each One Teach One. They gave an update on the park which is located off of Carline Avenue. They have been able to raise some of the required funds and have received in-kind donations, such as work to clear the site. They also have organizations applying for grants on their behalf and that could lead to much needed funds to complete the park. They will also have basketball and pickleball courts.

VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION 4H CAMP REQUEST

Interim Manager Regon stated that we had received a donation request for the 4H camp. There would be 125 campers going. Each camper is required to pay \$50 deposit, then they can apply for camper scholarships to help with the additional cost. It was asked how many were from Tazewell. That information is not known at the moment however we will find out and bring it back to next months meeting.

THS DECA REQUEST

Interim Manager Regon stated that we had received a donation request for THS Deca. They just came back from state competition where 20 students attended and will have two students competing at Nationals. Councilmember Fox made a motion to approve \$700. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Davis. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

SWVA PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM REQUEST

Interim Manager Regon stated that we had received a donation request from Friends of Southwest Virginia, The Crooked Road and Round the Mountain. They are requesting \$1,500 in FY 25. Councilmember Cline asked what the funds would go toward. Councilmember Davis

answered signage, etc. Motion was made by Councilmember Davis to approve. Motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Catron. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

SWVA EMS COUNCIL REQUEST

Interim Manager Regon stated that we had received a donation request from SWVA EMS Council for \$500. They have funded for us: three ambulances, cardiac monitors, two stretchers, two Lucas machines (does compressions). Motion was made by Councilmember Davis to approve. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Fox. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

TAZEWELL COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OKTOBREWFEEST SPONSORSHIP REQUEST

Keisha Cole came before council to discuss sponsorship for Oktobrewfest. Councilmember Davis made a motion to sponsor at the \$500 level. Councilmember Fox seconded the motion. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, nay; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

TAZEWELL COUNTY FAIR REQUEST

Interim Manager Regon stated that the Tazewell County Fair Association had asked that we sponsor the fair and buy an ad as we usually do. They have asked for \$2,500 as a donation and \$300 for the ad on the flyer. Motion was made by Councilmember Fox to approve. Councilmember Davis stated that she would like to work it into the FY 25 budget. Held discussion. Councilmember Fox amended his motion to say that he approves the request and we will work it into the FY25 budget. Councilmember Davis seconded. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

THS ART CLASS D. C. TRIP REQUEST

Ms. Miranda Williams, art teacher, came before council to introduce students from THS Art Class. They came before council to make a presentation on their upcoming art trip to D.C. They spoke about the opportunity they have to go visit museums and monuments, etc. Ms. Williams stated that there would be 40 students going and they needed \$17,000 and they currently had raised \$4,000. Councilmember Beasley made a motion to approve \$500. Councilmember Davis seconded. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilmember Davis, seconded by Councilmember Beasley to approve the minutes of February 13, 2024. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Motion was made by Councilmember Hankins and seconded by Councilmember Cline to approve the financial statements for February 2024. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Councilmember Davis stated that they discussed demolition at 400 Thompson Street. They also discussed rezoning on Hillsboro Drive and around the high school.

INDUSTRIAL/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

IEDA Chair Cara Spivey came before council to give an update on IEDA. She discussed the bowling alley and stated that they had voted that it be demolished after getting the structural engineering report back. She asked if council had any issue with that. She also stated that the slab would be staying and that Phase II is covered by DEQ for future site use.

2nd READING FOR AMENDMENT TO ZONING ORDINANCE FOR INDUSTRIAL, GENERAL M-1 ZONE FOR SOLAR USE

Attorney Pyott read the amendment to the zoning ordinance. Motion to approve was made by Vice Mayor Catron. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Beasley. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

INDEPENDENCE DAY FIREWORKS DISCUSSION

Interim Manager Regon stated that Executive Assistant Reeves had been working on this and getting quotes. We have received two quotes. American Fireworks, July 3rd, show at 9:30pm, and cost of \$12,000. We also have a quote from Pyrotecinco. The show would be July 3rd, 15-20 minute show, cost of \$20,000. Council discussed the date. It was stated that we could not get July 4th and we started on this in January. It was stated that maybe we could start in October and possibly get it booked for July 4th. Motion to approve the quote from American Fireworks was made by Councilmember Davis. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Fox. Councilmember Beasley said he just wanted to make sure it was clear that there was nothing available on July 4th

It was answered that was correct. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

REVIEW PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO SET PUBLIC HEARING FOR A REZONING REQUEST FOR HILLSBORO DRIVE AND THE TAZEWELL HIGH SCHOOL AREA TO BE REZONED FROM A-1 TO R-1 AND R-2

Zoning & Property Maintenance Official, Chris Hurley stated that the Planning Commission has voted to send this matter to council for approval. The areas are currently zoned agricultural and the recommended change is to make them residential. Vice Mayor Catron asked if he thought the public hearing would need more than 15 minutes. Attorney Pyott stated that existing structures would be grandfathered in, new structures would have to comply with zoning. Motion was made by Councilmember Davis to set a public hearing at the April council meeting and begin at 6:45pm. Motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Catron. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

FISCAL YEAR 2024/2025 BUDGET REVENUE RECOVERY FUNDS USAGE

Interim Manager Regon stated that we are in budget preparation season right now. She has asked the department heads for budget requests for the upcoming years budget. We have an option where we could use our revenue recovery funds. We have discussed this a little bit in our budget work sessions. She opened the floor for discussion. Councilmember Davis stated that these are legitimate needs. She feels this is something we need to do. Councilmember Beasley stated that he wanted to be clear this was money that we had set aside for the sports complex. Interim Manager Regon stated that the town had received ARPA funds of \$4.2 million dollars. We chose to reimburse our salaries with that money. Our ARPA money has been used. However, that freed up the funds that we had budgeted for salaries and we took that money and put it in an LGIP account which is earning a high interest and set it aside for the sports complex. It was stated that there was also a few various items that those funds paid for. Such as the splash pad, a fire truck, etc. Councilmember Davis stated that she hated to see the sports complex go away but she believes this is more vital for our community right now.

Councilmember Hankins has written a statement. He then read said statement. He majority of people that he has spoken with, feels like the sports complex has already been moved away from. He feels that our citizens need to know what direction we are moving in. He is not opposed to a sports complex in town and doesn't feel that any councilmember was, however there were budget and funding concerns. He stated that in an email dated November 16, 2023 from our previous town manager, at that time he is considering the sports complex discussion closed unless he hears further direction from council. There has been no other discussion regarding it. The idea of a sports complex was a great idea a few years ago. However, he feels that with Mercer County moving forward with theirs, it would hurt our success if we moved forward with

one as well. By using these funds, he feels we can make immediate improvements to our town that would greatly benefit town citizens. He now made a motion to use some of the revenue recovery funds for capital improvements. Councilmember Cline seconded the motion.

Councilmember Fox stated that we need to get our roads fixed, our water lines replaced and our sewer plant fixed. As long as we get these items fixed, he will do whatever anyone wants to do even with the sports complex, but he wants to see these areas addressed. He stated that the sports complex in Virginia Beach is having trouble and he didn't want to see that happen in our town. We are just a small town. We need to build our town up. Sports complex is a good thing, maybe we could look at something on a smaller scale. He is concerned about our citizens and being able to afford the cost of living here.

Councilmember Davis stated that she wanted to reiterate what they were wanting to do. They were discussing taking funds that was set aside for the sports complex and using that to pay for capital improvement toward the town. It would not be going toward a sports complex it would be going toward department requests such as automatic door openers for the fire dept, training funds, PPE, police department, EMS, golf cart at the park replacing that with a side by side to take folks to the back of the lake if they would like, a big mower so we can mow our recreation park, a small paving machine so we can pave in house. These are the request that have been brought up, we are still discussing how it would be spent.

Councilmember Beasley stated he felt passionately about the sports complex. He thought it could have been fruitful. However, we started hitting road blocks and weren't getting anywhere. He does think that using these funds could answer immediate needs however, we could struggle to revenue in the future. Hopefully this will show others that we invest in our town and we are trying to improve our infrastructure.

Councilmember Hankins stated that he thinks this will help our citizens, our public works, our police department, our EMS immediately.

On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, Aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Carl Davis came before council and asked for some clarification on the medical facility that is going in out by Food Lion. He asked if it would be a medical facility with doctors or nurse practitioners or if it would be a SVITA center. Mayor Hoops stated that it will be a family medical practice with doctors and nurse practitioners. It will not be an urgent care or med express. Mr. Davis stated that he heard it was going to be a SVITA location. Council stated that Chris Wearmouth came before council last month and gave a presentation and there was no mention of it being that kind of facility. Mr. Davis stated that he spoke with someone who is over SVITA and they said they are coming there. Council stated that is not what has been presented to them. Also, the original plan for the number of doctors and practitioners had already increased, which was a good thing. They thanked him for coming to ask these questions.

COUNCIL COMMENT

None.

Interim Manager Regon stated that Taste of Tazewell is being held this weekend to promote our businesses and she encouraged everyone to attend. Also, she stated that the Easter Egg Hunt will be March 23rd at Lincolnshire Park and encouraged everyone to attend. Councilmember Davis stated that they would be filling Easter eggs tomorrow evening at the American Legion building and invited everyone to come help.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Fox made a motion to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Beasley. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

Meeting adjourned at 9:24pm.