

Council Meeting Minutes

May 9, 2023

The Tazewell Town Council met in an executive session at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

Present:

Absent:

Mayor Michael Hoops

Vice Mayor Glenn Catron

Councilmember Jonathan Hankins

Councilmember Zach Cline

Councilmember Emily Davis

Councilmember David Fox

Councilmember Joe Beasley

Staff present were: Town Manager, Todd Day; Town Attorney, Brad Pyott; Customer Service Associate, Sabrina Schooley.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

RESOLUTION

Motion made by: Cline

Resolution Number: ES230509

Motion Seconded by: Hankins

Meeting Date: 23 May 09

Vote: All voted Aye

Purpose: Personnel Matters

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

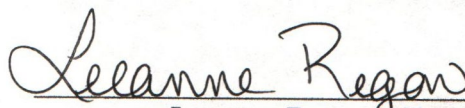
Ayes: Catron, Hankins, Cline, Davis, Beasley, Fox

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

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

PUBLIC HEARING 7:15 PM

PUBLIC HEARING – 2023 / 2024 BUDGET

Mayor Hoops read the notice of public hearing. Manager Day discussed the proposed FY 24 budget and reviewed the revenues and expenditures of each fund. He stated that it is a balanced budget. Mayor Hoops opened the floor for questions or comments, having none he closed the public hearing.

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 Emily Davis

Councilmember David Fox

Councilmember Joe Beasley

Staff present were: Town Manager, Todd Day; Town Attorney, Brad Pyott; Police Chief, David Mills; Zoning & Property Maintenance Official, Chris Hurley; Customer Service Associate, Sabina Schooley.

CALL TO ORDER

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

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS/REQUEST

YMCA UPDATE

Shawn Durham with the YMCA came before council to give an update. He first thanked the Town for their support. He stated that there have been more kids for soccer and basketball than there had been in the past. They actually had to ask the Town if they could use the Old Junior High Gym because there were so many kids in sports. He stated that he had asked to be on the agenda about a month ago. He spoke in favor of the sports complex. He stated the YMCA has been here for 14 years now and they wouldn't be here without the support of the Town. He was proud to say that the YMCA is now debt free. He asked for them to please consider the sports complex. He stated that it will not hurt the YMCA. They would be very fortunate and blessed to have it. He stated that Vice Mayor Catron is on their board and Councilmember Beasley is on their board as well. He thanked the council again.

TAZEWELL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ATHELETIC/ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Lauren Keene broke the record for the 3200 race that has been held by Charity Young Hurst for 37 years. The new record set by Lauren is 11:58.72. Lauren also won the class 2A 1000-meter race in the VHSL indoor track state championship.

Abigail Rhudy won the class 2A 500-meter race in the VHSL indoor track state championship.

Maddie Day scored her 1000th career point in her home basketball contest against Marion.

Taryn Stiltner and Jaden Redd placed 7th in the state DECA Competition in Business Solutions. Taryn and Jaden competed in Orlando, Florida during the week of April 22 –April 26 for the national DECA Competition.

Tazewell High School FBLA members attended the Virginia FBLA State Leadership Conference in Reston, Virginia. During the Awards of Excellence program held on April 1, THS FBLA received designation as a Virginia FBLA Honor Chapter. Riley Nunley received 2nd place in International Business; Abigail Rhudy received 2nd place in Graphic Design; Ian Rhudy received 3rd place in Coding and Programming; and Audrey Brown and Layla Cecil received 5th place in Broadcast Journalism.

Landri Lallande broke the former THS record held since 2012 by Kasey Adair for the discus field event at the Judy Thomas Invitational, with a throw of 133 feet 3 inches that also broke the meet record. Landri additionally broke the Six Rivers Relays oldest standing girls record that stood for 42 years. The previous record was 134 feet 9 and $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The record now held by Landri is 135 feet 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

NEW BUSINESS RECOGNITION

TESSA’S PRECIOUS PAWS

Mayor Hoops introduced Tessa Farrell with Tessa’s Precious Paws. Ms. Farrell stated that her business is located at 130 Walnut Street. They offer grooming services and will soon offer boarding and training services. Council welcomed her to our town.

THE BOX CHARC, LLC

Mayor Hoops introduced Tiffany Pauley with The Box Charc. This business is located at 113 Shire Lane and they offer charcuterie to go services for the everyday to-go and special events for a unique culinary experience.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilmember Beasley, seconded by Vice Mayor Catron to approve the minutes of April 11, 2023. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Catron and seconded by Councilmember Hankins to approve the financial statements for April 2023. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Councilmember Davis stated that the Planning Commission had applications from two businesses. One is for an air bnb and the other is for selling storage buildings. They will be voted on later tonight.

FENCE AT KIDZONE

Manager Day stated that he has gotten quotes for fencing and materials for a fence around Kidzone. He does not have an estimated labor cost. He asked the council for direction on this matter. Councilmember Davis stated that she has spoken with Public Works Director, Donny Pruitt and he gave an estimate of two weeks for installation from his crew if it were a wooden fence. If it were a chain link fence it could be a days. Motion was made by Councilmember Davis to approve a fence at the playground. Councilmember Fox seconded the motion. Councilmember Beasley stated that he doesn’t see the need for a fence. Councilmember Davis stated that as a parent she would love to have a fence. If we did green chain link and matched the pool fence, you could see right through it. Councilmember Fox stated that handicapped children often take off and he feels that a fence would be good for the kids and especially kids with

special needs. He is in favor of the chain link fence. Councilmember Davis stated that out of everyone she has spoken to about a fence were in favor all but three who said they didn't want a fence there. Councilmember Cline stated that we don't have a legal requirement to incur the cost of a fence at \$16,000. Councilmember Davis stated that we took a fence down, we should put a fence back. As a mother, it is usually the mother that is out there with their kids by themselves and the park is for young children, not teens and those younger kids can disappear quickly, so that's why she feels we need a fence. Councilmember Fox stated that as a foster parent some kids can run off and they will go up to strangers. He suggests having something for the smaller kids. Councilmember Cline stated that he has been to other parks that doesn't have fencing.

The mayor called for a vote. On a roll call vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, nay; Councilmember Cline, nay; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Beasley, nay. Having a tie vote, Mayor Hoops must now cast a vote to break the tie. Mayor Hoops votes nay. Councilmember Davis stated that she would bring it back up.

UPDATE ON SHADE SAILS FOR KIDZOWN

Manager Day stated that we are looking at some shade sails for Kidzown. He has given pricing for those shades. Councilmember Beasley stated that when this was brought up he didn't realize how expensive it would be. Manager Day stated that we will keep looking or even build another shelter. Councilmember Beasley stated we should keep what we have for now.

SOCCER COMPLEX/SPORTS COMPLEX DISCUSSION

Vice Mayor Catron stated that he is not opposed to a soccer complex however after last month's meeting he starting receiving messages as to why we killed the sports complex. He stated there was no vote for that to happen and stated that the mayor doesn't have the authority to make that happen. He stated that there were three independent feasibility studies. It was shown that this could bring in \$3-\$4 million annually to our town. He stated that our mayor sits on the Cumberland Plateau board and he never voiced his support for this project to that board. We had always planned on getting grants and working with Thompson and Litton to help do that. Council voted unanimously to give Manager Day permission to look into this. A soccer field would create one job and that would be funded by the town. A sports complex is a win, win, win. Soccer fields would be more or less a burden. \$3 or \$4 million dollars a year would increase our budget by 50%. He stressed the fact that we had three different studies done that showed this could be successful. Mayor Hoops asked Manager Day if he could paraphrase the email he received about funding. Mayor Hoops stated that with the soccer fields he was including all outdoor sports, little league sports too.

Danny Willis stated that you have to spend money to make money. Councilmember Cline stated that the track was not going to be able to be used for track meets. Coach Keene asked, who said that the track wouldn't be sanctioned for events. He then spoke about travel fees and said that he is tired of hearing its all about the kids, he then asked what are you doing for the kids? Councilmember Cline asked if the town is responsible for the debt, what amount of money is the appropriate amount of money. Is it \$5 million? \$10 million? He doesn't think that it's a bad idea, but the challenge we are faced with is how much debt should the town take on.

Dr. Brown spoke and said that he wants this for the community and for the kids. He doesn't think that it is going to be the savior of the Town but we do need an anchor. If it was easy then everyone would do it. Don't just stop short, give it a vision. He stated that this has a chance of changing the supply and demand of our area. Councilmember Beasley asked if there were still application out there and stated that we wanted the sports complex. Dr. Brown stated that you can't take the easy way out. You have to have a vision and if we don't we will fail. Councilmember Cline stated that if we can't afford a waste water treatment upgrade, how can we afford a sports complex. Dr. Brown pleaded to them, to at least try for it. Manager Day stated that you have to get 100% behind whatever is decided and he stated that we had never applied for funding. Councilmember Davis stated that she does not want to kill the vote or the complex. Vice Mayor Catron stated that we needed a motion and a second and move on with this project or kill it. Councilmember Cline stated again, how much debt is the town willing to take on. Vice Mayor Catron stated that he thinks it would be a good idea to have a town hall meeting and he stated we don't know until we try to see what kind of funding we could get.

Dr. Mullins spoke and stated that he supported using the Ramey lot for the sports complex and that he was in favor of the sports complex. He would like to see the Town proceed. He named multiple programs the center could be used for such as, basketball, track, wrestling, soccer, cheerleading, pickleball, etc. and said it could be used 365 days a year. Not just during one certain season, all year round. People that come to the events at that center would shop here, eat here, buy gas here and it's already been said what this could do for our town.

Councilmember Beasley stated that the vote last month was just for a plan b. If there are still opportunities for funding then we should re-evaluate as a council. If we don't have funding then we will need to have a plan b. Dr. Brown stated that we need to champion this and get behind it. Vice Mayor Catron stated that we needed to look at the YMCA, they just said tonight that after 14 years, they are now debt free.

Estella Catron spoke and stated that she coached a travel team and they put on basketball tournaments in order to fund their travel expenses. One particular tournament they held made \$20,000. She said that they don't need to discard the idea of the sports complex. They need to come together and want it. We need something that is going to create revenue.

David Saunders III spoke and stated that Back of the Dragon has brought in a lot of people to our town. Imagine what a sports complex could bring in.

David Saunders Jr. stated that he was in favor of the sports complex and it would be good for the kids and the community. He stated that we needed to look at it with a positive attitude, as if it is going to work. He also said that it needed to be put out to the public in a better way that way the community can join in. He said we need to let them know what's going on and how the community could benefit from it.

Another lady from the audience spoke and stated that she was originally from McDowell County and she talked about the ATV trails and how many people that brought to the area. She stated that she always asks people where they are from and some have been from New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, etc. she also encouraged us to try for the sports complex.

Travis Cook stated that he was one of the one percent that had to leave to find work to support himself. Having a sports complex would be good for the economy in our area.

Brittany Davis spoke about the getting the community involved. She stated that she has previously worked with Roanoke College and helped them get funding for things and they would call their alumni and their community to help get funding. We should try that here so we are able to see the sports complex come in and be in our community. She believes the community would be happy to help fund some of it but we need to let them know and make them aware of what's going on.

Erin Keene spoke and said as a new restaurant owner she would be excited to have a full restaurant of people from out of town and give them a new experience. She believes this would be a huge game changer for our businesses in town.

After hearing input from the audience, Mayor Hoops stated that we still had other items on the agenda that we needed to get to. He stated that he doesn't think there needs to be a vote on this from what he understands. Vice Mayor Catron asked if they were continuing to pursue the sports complex or not. Councilmember Fox suggested having a vote at the next meeting. Vice Mayor Catron asked what the direction was that they were giving to the town manager, to pursue it or not. Councilmember Fox stated that he thought we needed to have other people's input for this issue. He stated that he would love to have this but we need to get our roads and water lines fixed. He strongly voiced his concerns for the senior citizens that were trying to make a living every month on what they are given. He stated that a sports complex is a good thing to have and he would be glad to fight for it. He is for the kids. He is for sports. But he is very concerned about our roads and the age of the water lines and he is very concerned about the senior citizens in our town. Consensus from council from the last vote they had was to give Manager Day permission to pursue forward with the sports complex.

MOWING SERVICES AT LINCOLNSHIRE PARK

Manager Day discussed the struggles of cutting grass and trying to find employees. He stated that there was a bid put out for mowing services for Lincolnshire Park. In 2014 the cost was \$6,000 a week for the entire town. The bids that came in are in the council packet. The low bid came in at \$4,999.99 a week. Our present cost is \$29,000 using VODT loaded rates. His recommendation is to use funds from line item 001-035-4011 to cover the cost and we will do a budget amendment next fiscal year to make adjustments. Adam Herald is the company with the lowest bid. Councilmember Beasley made a motion to approve the lowest bid. Vice Mayor Catron seconded the motion. Councilmember Fox asked if they would be drug tested. It was answered that they are an independent contractor and that it would not be required to pass a drug test from the Town. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

EMS SIGN ON BONUS

Manager Day stated that this is not a bonus that would disrespect current employees. As you know we increased our salaries to be more competitive. They would have to stay for a year. We are struggling to get employees at all levels. Motion was made by Councilmember Davis to approve the terms. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Cline. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

SET PUBLIC HEARING FOR SPECIAL EXCEPTION PERMIT REQUEST FOR AIR BNB AT 999 RIVERSIDE DRIVE FOR JUNE 13, 2023 AT 7:15PM

Zoning & Property Maintenance Official, Chris Hurley stated that there is an application for an Air BNB at 999 Riverside Drive. The applicant has come before Planning Commission and discussed her plans. They plan to allow parking at the back of the house. Motion was made by Vice Mayor Catron to approve. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Beasley. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

APPROVE APPLICATION FOR NEW BUSINESS IN COMMERCIAL AREA AND DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT AT DUNFORD DRIVE

Zoning & Property Maintenance Official, Chris Hurley stated that there is an application for new business in the overlay district at Dunford Drive. The applicant has come before Planning Commission and discussed their plans. They plan have a business selling portable storage buildings and utility trailers. Motion was made by Vice Mayor Catron to approve. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Beasley. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye. Councilmember Beasley thanked them for sitting through the whole meeting. Mayor Hoops also thanked them and apologized it had taken so long.

REVIEW FEES FOR AQUA PARK, POOL, KAYAKS, AND PADDLE BOARDS

Manager Day spoke about the aqua park, pool, kayaks and paddle boards. They held discussion and decided to keep the pricing at the same rates as last year.

APPROVE JUNETEENTH RESOLUTION

Mayor Hoops read the resolution to designate the third Saturday in June as Juneteenth. Motion was approved by Councilmember Fox. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Davis. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mayor Hoops stated that there are two recommendations for filling vacant seats on the IEDA. Recommendations are Justin Takach and Cara Spivey. Motion was made by Vice Mayor Catron to approve. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Beasley. On vote, Vice Mayor Catron, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Beasley, aye.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:25pm.