

Town of Stantonsburg
Regular Board Meeting
December 11, 2023

Mayor Coley Rhodes called the monthly board meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The following council members were present: Donnie Bass, Ken Horne, Ben Harper, and Steve Mooring. Also present was Town Manager Brian Hawley, Town Clerk Alexis Whitley, Town Attorney Slade Rand, Councilwoman Elect Eartha Butler, and Councilwoman Elect Jackie Grice. Councilman Walt Bynum was absent.

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

Approval of Agenda: Councilman Mooring made motion to approve the agenda, amending personnel in Closed Session.

Approval of the Minutes: *November 14th, 2023, regular session minutes were approved.*

Presentations: Tirence Horne with Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments presented an update on the Community Block Development Grant.

Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

Financial Reports: *November:* Monthly Receipts: \$364,632.70 Disbursements: \$293,418.18 Difference: \$71,214.52. Report referred to our auditors.

Invoices for Payment: Councilman Horne made motion to approve invoices for this month. Passed unanimously.

Old Business: Town Manager Hawley presented area light costs to the Council to see how they want to go about charging for area lights in the future.

Councilman Harper suggests providing different options for customers.

Our current area light is 30 watts, but Town Manager Hawley wants to look at providing different watts.

Town Manager Hawley addressed the property at 110 E Commercial Ave, the bidding process, and timeline from the purchaser for the renovations for the council to review.

Councilman Harper made a motion to sell the building at 110 E Commercial Ave. Vote 4 to 1. Councilman Mooring was the dissenting vote. Motion carries.

New Business:

Oaths of Office The following members were sworn in for their December 2025-December 2027 term: Mayor Coley H. Rhodes, Council Member Eartha Butler, and Council Member Jackie Grice

Organizational Meeting

The Council must vote on the Mayor Pro Tem each time a term renews. Councilwoman Grice nominated Councilman Bass and Councilwoman Butler nominated Councilman Mooring. Vote 3 to 2. Council members Bass, Grice, and Harper were for Councilman Bass and Council members Mooring and Butler were for Councilman Mooring. Councilman Bass elected as Mayor Pro-Tem, Motion Carries.

Councilman Bass was sworn in by Mayor Rhodes as Mayor Pro-Tem.

Town Manager Hawley presented the Resolution for the CDBG grant.

Councilman Harper made motion to adopt the CDBG Resolution. Passed unanimously.

Town Manager Hawley presented The Town needing to designate a bank contact/signer to replace Councilman Bynum. Councilwoman Grice nominated Councilman Mooring to be the new bank contact/signer. Passed unanimously.

The 2024 holiday and meeting schedule was presented to the Council for approval. Councilman Harper made motion to approve the holiday and meeting schedule for 2024. Passed Unanimously.

Manager Hawley talked about the heating system for the Water Treatment Plant. The heater has stopped working and it is critical for the area to be heated. He presented 3 estimates to the Council – Performance Heating and Cooling, Jackson and Sons, and Fire and Ice.

Councilman Harper made motion to go with the estimate given by Fire and Ice for the heater as they are also a local company and close by if needed. Passed unanimously.

Manager Hawley presented information and plans for the new Town Hall building. The council asked that he gather information on inspections such as asbestos, etc. The last inspection was done Friday. The final report has not been sent yet but the inspector believes there is no sign of asbestos. The building is the old medical LifePoint building. The Town was awarded a 500k grant that is specifically for the Town Hall. The Town is going through Turpentine Design as the architect to do test fits and such.

Town Manager Hawley went over the first test fit with the Town Council and discussed the Police Department.

Councilwoman Butler made motion to move forward – discussion continued.

Councilman Bass wants to know an update on the Seal building first before deciding on the purchase of the new Town Hall. Town Manager Hawley updated Councilman Bass on where we are with the Seal building and why it is taking a bit to get done.

Councilwoman Butler made motion to move forward authorizing Town Manager Hawley to make a formal offer to negotiate with LifePoint on purchasing the building for the new Town Hall. Vote 3 to 2. Councilman Bass and Councilwoman Grice were the dissenting votes. Motion Carried.

Department Reports:

The Water/Sewer Department: **Wastewater:** The problem was found at the WWTP that was causing the R.A.S. pumps not to restart after a power blink or failure. This part has been ordered. The UV bulbs for UV station #2 were changed in November. Approximately 30,000 gallons of Bio-Solids were removed by

Granville Farm's in November. A total of 72,000 gallons have been removed so far in FY 23-24. Normal operation and maintenance of the wastewater/collection systems occurred in November with no issues. All required sampling and reports were submitted on time with no issues or violations. **Water:** Southern Corrosion came out on November 7th to perform the annual tank inspection on the water tower. No major issues were found and overall, the water tower is in good condition. The inspection report was given to Brian. Normal operation and maintenance of the water system occurred in November with no issues. Approximately 20 water meters were changed in November. All sampling and reporting were submitted on time with no issues or violations. The Town met with Engineer Mike McCallister for the Lead service Line stuff. The Town was awarded 2.6M for the water infrastructure project this year from the State. Waiting to hear from DEQ.

For Park/Rec: a lock has been put on the fence gate at the park as it was getting left open often.

Public Works: They put out mulch across from Town Hall to get ready for the Christmas Festivities. Edging, trimming, and sweeping has been done along S. Saratoga, Julian, and Tyson Dr. Clean up has occurred behind the Seal Building to improve the appearance.

Electric Department: Jeff Barnes has been hired as a new experienced lineman from Fremont. He completed his DOT physical as well and has been added onto insurance. Capital outlay materials ordered for Briar Farm Phase II, minor adjustments in the cost for that. They are still getting the bulbs changed in all the angels, which will be done ahead of time next year before they go up. One of the light timers across from Town Hall needs to be replaced because it is not working correctly.

Police Report: Police report reviewed. An alarm went off at the school again this past month. Town Manager Hawley is going to talk to the County Manager regarding this as it has been triggered 19 times this year.

Manager's Report:

Lead Service team meeting was held the 5th of December.

Town Manager Hawley spoke with Gary Pittman regarding our books. He is in the month of May about to start June to help complete our 2022 Audit.

Comments from Mayor and Council:

Councilman Harper does not have anything.

Councilman Mooring complimented the work order spreadsheet the office has put together to track work orders. He also has concerns about the light on the front of Town Hall that faces the flag. Town Manager Hawley spoke with the Electric Department regarding the light. They had to order a different kind of light.

Councilman Mooring has concerns regarding the "salvage yard" behind the buildings along Commercial Ave and wants to know if there is something that can be done about it. Town Manager Hawley states there should be something in our ordinance and he will work on that.

Councilman Mooring has concerns regarding the shelter that was moved and the possible damage to the building. Town Manager Hawley did not see any damage or leaks. There is a concern that it was done through a surplus program. There is a question about that, if we acquire property through surplus, you

cannot move it from what location that property was awarded to. We are looking to surplus a few items out.

Councilman Mooring brought up expanding the public parking lot beside Truist. Town Manager Hawley presented the issue to the Council. Truist wants to expand their parking area closer to the police department building.

The only other concern is the area of the parking lot that holds water due to no drainage.

Council Mooring is concerned about the records in the building at 110 E Commercial Ave and wants to know what the plan is for those records.

Town Manager Hawley states we already pulled the record retention schedule which we must follow. There are things that can be destroyed but it all needs to be separated. The inspector that came to do the asbestos inspection also specializes in environmental controls. He has people that specialize in that and helps with public records that have been flooded and such. We do have a plan in motion. The purchaser of this property and Town Manager Hawley have discussed this.

Councilman Bass wanted to thank Councilman Horne and Councilman Bynum for their many years of service to the board and welcome Councilwoman Grice and Councilwoman Butler to the board.

Councilman Bass has a concern regarding the angel and or powerline by Jean's Antiques because the line truck has been there multiple afternoons. Town Manager Hawley states that there is an issue with the timers for the angels. He also has concerns about the lights across from Town Hall staying on – they are not on a timer.

Councilman Bass questions the street sweeper running and when it last ran. Town Manager Hawley states it has not been out since Christmas Festivities and that we need to figure something out to help keep the dirt and debris down, so it is not throwing it up at people's homes. Councilman Harper states this is possibly a speed control thing and that there is a water system option to help wet the dirt and debris to keep it under control.

Councilman Bass has concern about security for board meetings, and people possibly entering while we are handling business. We need a different entry way for the public to come and better security control.

Councilwoman Butler wants to thank the appearance committee and everyone who worked on the Christmas lights, and that the parade was the best parade ever in which many residents commented on.

Councilwoman Butler had questions about the budget but can meet with Town Manager Hawley and Finance Officer Victoria Lucas to discuss later.

Councilwoman Butler questioned the amount of arrests on the police report trying to understand if that would be considered a good month for our Town or not.

Councilwoman Grice does not have anything.

Mayor Rhodes wanted to echo Councilman Bass' comment about the outgoing council members and the incoming members. She and Town Manager Hawley welcomed the new members and let them know that they are available for any questions or concerns. The first thing Town Manager Hawley wants to do

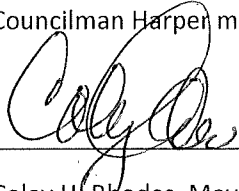
this year is apply for some funding to sustain the police department and he wanted to thank the entire Council for everything they do.

Councilwoman Butler suggests we write a letter or give a plaque to the outgoing members thanking them for their many years of service. The entire council agreed.

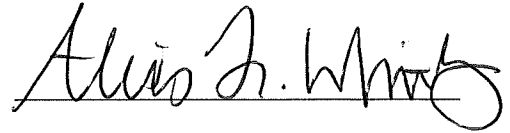
Councilman Harper made motion to go into closed session. Passed unanimously.

Councilwoman Grice made motion to go into open session. Passed unanimously.

Councilman Harper made motion to adjourn. Passed unanimously.



Coley H. Rhodes, Mayor



Alexis L. Whitley, Town Clerk