

WISE TOWN COUNCIL
Monday, February 24, 2025; 7:00 P.M.
WISE MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
501 WEST MAIN STREET - WISE, VIRGINIA 24293

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Caynor Smith, Jr., Mayor
Laura Taylor
Teresa Adkins
Robin Dotson
S. Duane Phillips

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / INVOCATION:

Police Chief Kevin Yates led the Pledge of Allegiance. Phillip Bates, pastor of Wise Trinity United Methodist Church, provided the invocation.

AGENDA CHANGES:

Town Manager Laura Roberts advised that there were no changes to the agenda.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Robin Dotson made a motion to approve the consent calendar, which included the minutes of the January 27, 2025 regular Council meeting, the December 2024 and January 2025 Treasurer's Financial Reports, and the January 2025 Police, Water Plant, and Fire Department Reports. Duane Phillips seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION:

There being no one from the public audience wishing to comment, Mayor Smith closed the public expression.

CREATIVE COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP GRANT REQUEST:

On behalf of the Pro-Art Association, Executive Director Michael McNulty requested the Town's continued support through the Virginia Commission of the Arts Creative Communities Partnership Grant. He informed Pro-Art was in its 48th season and reviewed the upcoming scheduled programs. McNulty noted the Association looked forward to managing the programming at Big Glades for Fall Fling in 2025, as it had the previous year. Smith advised the request for monetary support would be discussed during the FY 25-26 budget review process.

RESOLUTION #6, 2025:

Town Manager Laura Roberts advised the Town's raw water intake pump and line, essential to the production of treated drinking water, needed immediate replacement due to issues with the aging equipment. There being no further discussion, Duane Phillips moved to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AUTHORIZING THE EMERGENCY PURCHASE OF A NEW RAW WATER PUMP AND INTAKE LINE REPLACEMENT". Teresa Adkins seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Caynor Smith, Jr., Mayor	"Aye"
Laura Taylor	"Aye"
Teresa Adkins	"Aye"
Robin Dotson	"Aye"
S. Duane Phillips	"Aye"

RESOLUTION #7, 2025:

Town Manager Laura Roberts informed a "Request for Bids" was recently advertised for paving and three proposals were received. She added Bizzack Construction submitted the lowest bid, which fell within the budgeted amount. Following a brief discussion, Vice-Mayor Taylor made a motion to adopt "A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AWARDING A CONTRACT TO BIZZACK CONSTRUCTION FOR COMPLETION OF THE TOWN'S FY 2024-2025 PAVING SCHEDULE". Councilman Dotson seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

Caynor Smith, Jr., Mayor	"Aye"
Laura Taylor	"Aye"
Teresa Adkins	"Aye"
Robin Dotson	"Aye"
S. Duane Phillips	"Aye"

PUBLIC PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT:

Robin Dotson, Committee Chairman, summarized the Public Property Committee's February 5, 2025, meeting held to discuss a request to close a portion of Tacoma Avenue to traffic. He informed the Town had received a request to close the portion of Tacoma Avenue from the intersection of East Main Street to the intersection of Water Street due to safety concerns during a project. Dotson added the potential project timeline had changed since the request was made and the Committee recommended a public hearing be held and a decision made regarding the closure only if the project moved forward. Duane Phillips made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendation as presented. Laura Taylor seconded the motion that carried 5-0.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT:

Caynor Smith, Jr., Chair, summarized the Public Safety Committee's January 29, 2025, meeting held to discuss the following:

Request for Fire Truck:

Smith informed the newest fire truck owned by the Wise Fire Department was a 2005 model and no longer met NFPA standards. He added the Department had three trucks in need of costly repairs and the pricing for a new truck was steadily increasing, with a wait time of four years from the time of order to delivery. Smith stated the Committee recommended that the Town work with the Wise Fire Department to begin discussions to move forward with the purchase of a new pumper rescue truck.

Request for Additional Funds for Rescue:

Smith advised a request had been received from Wise Rescue Squad for an additional \$35,000 to cover costs through the end of the current fiscal year. He cited heating repairs to the Squad's

building, expensive ambulance repairs, and an increase in overtime pay due to rising call volume as reasons for the need, which were provided by Captain Tim Dotson. He informed the Committee recommended the donation of an additional \$35,000 to Wise Rescue Squad to be funded from General Fund Contingencies.

Following a brief discussion, Laura Taylor made a motion to accept the Committee's recommendations as presented. Duane Phillips seconded the motion with the vote recorded by roll call:

Caynor Smith, Jr., Mayor	"Aye"
Laura Taylor	"Aye"
Teresa Adkins	"Aye"
Robin Dotson	"Aye"
S. Duane Phillips	"Aye"

AUDIT FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Laura Taylor, Chair, summarized the Audit Finance Committee's February 6, 2025, meeting held to discuss a cost-of-living adjustment for fiscal year 2025-2026. She informed revenues for the upcoming fiscal year were discussed, along with anticipated increases in expenditures. Taylor advised various scenarios were presented, including both step and COLA increases, and reported the Committee recommended a 2.5% cost-of-living adjustment for all employees in addition to the 3% automatic step increase for eligible employees. Following a brief discussion, Duane Phillips made a motion to accept the Audit Finance Committee's recommendation as presented. Teresa Adkins seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Caynor Smith, Jr., Mayor	"Aye"
Laura Taylor	"Aye"
Teresa Adkins	"Aye"
Robin Dotson	"Aye"
S. Duane Phillips	"Aye"

DISCUSSION OF EMPLOYEE GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL:

Laura Roberts provided an overview of the Town's employee health insurance renewal for fiscal year 2025-2026. She informed there would be an 8.3% increase in premiums for the new fiscal year. Laura Taylor moved to approve the renewal of the Town's health insurance as described in a written memorandum from the Town Manager dated 2/24/25 as follows:

- 1) *Offer Key Advantage 250 Plan and Key Advantage Expanded Plan.*
- 2) *Fund 90% of the cost of the Key Advantage 250 Plan with comprehensive dental coverage. Provide employee option to buy up to the Key Advantage Expanded Plan and option to elect either comprehensive dental coverage or less expensive preventive and diagnostic dental coverage.*
- 3) *Designate eligible enrollees as:*
 - a) *Full Time Employees – persons regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours per week, year-round, for no definite term.*
 - b) *Part Time Elected Officials – Town to pay 50% of the amount contributed for full time employee at all membership levels.*

- c) *Part Time Employees – persons regularly scheduled to work at least 20 and not more than 29 hours per week, year-round, for no definite term with the Town to pay 50% of the amount contributed for the full-time employee at all membership levels.*
- d) *COBRA Qualified Beneficiaries (Per Federal Law, COBRA enrollees will pay a 2% Administrative Fee in addition to the monthly premium)*
- e) *Early Retirees not Eligible for Medicare*
- 4) *Provide one month of coverage for surviving eligible dependents of a deceased employee/retiree to allow time for them to get their affairs in order following a tragic loss.*

Duane Phillips seconded the motion with the vote recorded by roll call:

Caynor Smith, Jr., Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor	“Aye”
Teresa Adkins	“Aye”
Robin Dotson	“Aye”
S. Duane Phillips	“Aye”

CLOSED SESSION:

On a motion made by Robin Dotson and a second by Laura Taylor, the Wise Town Council moved to convene into closed meeting for the purpose of and including:

Legal Matters – Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel as permitted by Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(8).

OPEN SESSION:

Robin Dotson made a motion to reconvene in open session. Laura Taylor seconded the motion that carried 5-0.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION – CM RESOLUTION #2, 2025:

Sarina Collins, Town Clerk/Treasurer, read Closed Meeting Resolution #2, 2025, “Resolving and certifying 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 closed meeting to which this certification resolution applied, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Town Council of the Town of Wise,” and the vote was recorded by roll call:

Caynor Smith, Jr., Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor	“Aye”
Teresa Adkins	“Aye”
Robin Dotson	“Aye”
S. Duane Phillips	“Aye”

COUNCIL COMMENT:

Laura Taylor expressed condolences for the family of Raymond Dale, Town citizen and father of Public Works Superintendent Adrian Dale, who had recently passed away.

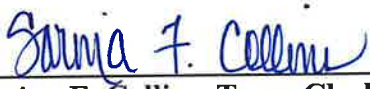
Duane Phillips commended Town employees and emergency services personnel for their exceptional service during recent inclement weather conditions. Phillips also offered condolences to the Dale family.

Teresa Adkins reiterated Phillips' comment regarding the hard work of Town employees and emergency personnel and also offered her condolences to the Dale family for their recent loss.

Mayor Smith agreed with all previous Council comments and expressed his desire for all Council members, along with some staff, to attend the Virginia Municipal League Annual Conference, scheduled for October in Roanoke.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no additional discussion by the Wise Town Council, Laura Taylor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Teresa Adkins seconded the motion that passed 5-0.



Sarina F. Collins, Town Clerk/Treasurer



Caynor Smith, Jr., Mayor