

**WISE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2020; 7:00 P.M.
WISE MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
501 WEST MAIN STREET - WISE, VIRGINIA 24293**

Minutes

Members Present:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice Mayor
Ben Conway
Jeffery Dotson
Caynor Smith, Jr.

Members Absent:

None

Pledge of Allegiance / Invocation:

Councilman Caynor Smith, Jr., led the Pledge of Allegiance. Pastor Mike Winters of the Wise Baptist Church provided the invocation.

Consent Calendar:

Laura Taylor-Baugh made a motion to approve the consent calendar, which included the minutes of the July 28, 2020 Regular Council Meeting, the July 2020 Police, Water Plant, and Fire Department Reports, and the July-August Planning Department Report. Ben Conway seconded the motion that passed 5-0.

Public Expression:

Payton Rogers, son of Town Attorney Leonard Rogers, presented Police Chief French a handmade wooden flag displaying his support of the Wise Police Department.

Public Hearing on “An Application to be Submitted to the USDA Rural Development for Financial Assistance to Purchase a Dump Truck and a Pipeline Camera Inspection System”:

Beverly Owens, Town Manager, advised that a public hearing was the next step in the process of applying for financial assistance from the USDA Rural Development for the purchase of a dump truck and pipeline camera, which Council approved at the July meeting. Caynor Smith, Jr. voiced his support of the application for funding for what he considered an important purchase. Mayor Adkins opened the floor for the public hearing. There being no one from the public audience wishing to comment, the public hearing was closed.

ORDINANCE #5, 2020:

Beverly Owens explained that during the current public health emergency, making purchases for the continued operation of the government had become increasingly difficult due to the scarcity of resources. Owens noted that all COVID-19 related purchases were eligible for reimbursement from CARES Funding, but those purchases must be in compliance with procurement policy, which was nearly impossible with the current state. She added that it was for these reasons that it was necessary to suspend the Town’s current procurement requirements. Town Attorney Leonard Rogers added that he drafted the ordinance under consideration based on a code section that would provide for the continuity of government during an emergency. Following a brief discussion, Caynor Smith, Jr. moved to adopt “AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA SUSPENDING ALL PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS, MANDATES, RESTRICTIONS AND PROCEDURES DUE TO THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FOR THE CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT”. Jeff Dotson seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Resolution #22, 2020:

Police Chief Danny French briefly reviewed the bids received for the purchase of three new police utility vehicles. Following a brief discussion, Vice-Mayor Taylor-Baugh made a motion to adopt “A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AWARDDING A CONTRACT TO FREEDOM FORD OF WISE, VIRGINIA FOR THREE 2021 FOR UTILITY POLICE INTERCEPTORS”. Councilman Conway seconded the motion and the vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Discussion of an Alley Beside Friendship Home Health:

Beverly Owens advised that the request for the Town to patch potholes or to repave the alleyway beside Friendship Home Health had been discussed for a couple of months. She added that in order to determine ownership, the Town would have to pay the Town’s attorney to research the property and supplement with a survey. Councilman Jeff Dotson voiced his opinion that it would be better for the Town to spend the money to patch the potholes rather than spending money on legal fees. Other members of Council agreed with his opinion.

Discussion of Delinquent Utility Accounts:

Town Treasurer/Clerk of Council Robin Meade advised that as an effort to provide assistance to Town residents during the current health emergency, Council adopted a resolution in April suspending the disconnection of utility service for non-payment until August 1st. She advised that she and her staff had prepared letters to delinquent account holders, notifying of the status of their account and offering payment schedules to those affected by the pandemic. She also stated that she would be notifying customers of the list of agencies available to provide possible assistance to help them pay their delinquent accounts. Meade explained that it was suggested that she bring the matter back to Council before actually mailing the notices. Following a brief discussion, Council instructed Meade to continue with the Treasury Department normal procedures regarding delinquent accounts. Mayor Adkins added that normal procedures barring no additional moratorium on disconnections issued by Governor Northam.

Discussion for Potential Business Assistance/Grant Programs for Local Businesses Through CARES Funding:

Laura Roberts, Planner, provided a written list of potential CARES Funding Options that the Town could offer to assist local business owners. Following comments from Council members, Mayor Adkins instructed Roberts to move forward with 1) reimbursement grant, 2) Town acting as a purchasing/supply/distribution agent for the businesses, and 3) Town to supply social distancing/informational posters/signage and PPE (gloves and masks) to the businesses. Mayor Adkins also suggested that the Wise Business Association be contacted to see if they had any ideas for incentives to assist businesses.

Discussion of Funding Request for Fall Fling:

Laura Roberts advised that the Wise Business Association would be hosting a virtual Fall Fling event during the second weekend in October and had requested a partial disbursement of 50% of the Town’s normal donation. Following a brief discussion, Councilman Dotson made a motion to donate \$3,000 to the Wise Business Association for the virtual Fall Fling. Vice-Mayor Taylor-Baugh seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Closed Session:

Councilman Dotson moved to convene into a closed session 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).*

Councilman Smith seconded the motion that passed 5-0

Open Session:

Councilman Dotson made a motion to reconvene in open session. Councilman Smith seconded the motion. The vote was recorded by roll call:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Certification of Closed Session – CM Resolution #8, 2020:

Town Clerk/Treasurer Robin Meade, read Closed Meeting Resolution #8, 2020, “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:

Teresa Adkins, Mayor	“Aye”
Laura Taylor-Baugh, Vice-Mayor	“Aye”
Ben Conway	“Aye”
Jeffery Dotson	“Aye”
Caynor Smith, Jr.	“Aye”

Council Comment:

Ben Conway stated that he would like for Council to explore additional means of providing information to the public other than only the Town’s website.

Caynor Smith, Jr. stated he was glad that the Wise Business Association was pursuing a virtual Fall Fling.

Jeff Dotson thanked the Town’s staff and employees for the work they do and for all they contend with on a daily basis.

Teresa Adkins thanked the Town employees for a job well done during the current health crisis.

Staff/Manager Comment:

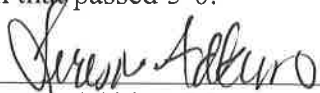
Town Manager Beverly Owens stated that she would begin employee training on the Town's Infectious Disease Control Plan that she had recently completed.

Police Chief French thanked Council for their continued support of the Town of Wise Police Department.

Town Clerk/Treasurer Robin Meade thanked Council for their support of the Treasurer's Department and their continued collection efforts. She added that she was very proud of the strength demonstrated by each member of Council, especially during the face of adversity.

Adjournment:

There being no additional business to come before the governing body, the meeting was adjourned on a motion made by Caynor Smith, Jr. Jeff Dotson seconded the motion that passed 5-0.



Teresa Adkins, Mayor



Robin R. Meade, Clerk of Council