

**WISE TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL-CALLED MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2020; 7:00 P.M.
WISE MUNICIPAL BUILDING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
501 WEST MAIN STREET - WISE, VIRGINIA 24293**

Minutes

Members Present:

Jeffery Dotson, Mayor
Teresa Adkins, Vice-Mayor
Laura Taylor-Baugh
Billy Bartlett, Jr.
Caynor Smith, Jr.

Members Absent:

None

Pledge of Allegiance / Invocation:

Mayor Dotson led the Pledge of Allegiance. Robert Adkins provided the invocation.

Public Expression:

- Clarence Peters, 6108 Crystal Lane, Wise, Virginia – Applauded Council for taking such a bold stand to represent the people’s rights. He announced that the group “Wise County Second Amendment Supporters” would be hosting a *Second Amendment Rally* on Friday, January 10th, 7:00 p.m. at the old Appalachia High School building. Peters stated the group planned to take three buses to Richmond on January 20th for Lobby Day.
- Aaron Cathell, 232 Grandview Drive, S.E., Wise, Virginia – Encouraged Council to adopt the resolution pertaining to the United States Constitution’s Second Amendment. He provided statistics on the number of deaths by firearms. He speculated that if the law was passed by the General Assembly, tourism in Virginia would decrease.
- Mark Caruso, Norton Vice-Mayor, thanked Council for taking a bold stand, along-side over 100 other municipalities, against what he referred to as the direct assault on citizen’s rights granted them by the United States Constitution.
- Robert Adkins, Wise County Board of Supervisors’ Member – Encouraged Council to adopt the resolution to make the Town of Wise a Second Amendment Sanctuary, just as Wise County and many other localities had done.
- James Shortt, 12489 Cottonwood Road, Pound, Virginia - Spoke in support of adoption of the Second Amendment Sanctuary Resolution. He added that taking away the right to bear arms would only hurt the “good” guys because the criminals would not abide by the law.

Resolution #1, 2020:

Resolution #1, 2020 was read in its entirety by Councilwoman Laura Taylor-Baugh, who introduced the resolution. Following the discussion, Laura Taylor-Baugh made a motion to approve “A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA AFFIRMING THE OATH OF OFFICE AND DECLARING THE TOWN OF WISE, VIRGINIA A SECOND AMENDMENT SANCTUARY”. Councilman Billy Bartlett, Jr. seconded the motion. Prior to call for the vote, Council members offered the following comments:

Councilman Caynor Smith, Jr. appreciated the excellent public comments. He stated his primary concern was with the loss of one Constitutional right, comes the threat of losing other rights.

Billy Bartlett, Jr. stated that it was shameful that in the beloved Commonwealth of Virginia the first act of the newly elected General Assembly was to take something from its citizens. He emphasized the need for everyone to vote in public elections in order to protect constitutional rights. Bartlett reflected that

he could not believe that he may have to stand up against the government to protect his rights, after twenty-six years of serving in the military, to protect rights.

Vice-Mayor Teresa Adkins spoke in disbelief that the freedoms granted to the people by the Constitution of the United States were under a threat of being taken away.

Councilwoman Laura Taylor-Baugh stated that she was pleased to have worked on the resolution for the citizens of the Town of Wise. She shared a personal experience that proved to her that a criminal would always find a way to do harm. She told of the 2016 incident whereby her 65 year old father, who suffered from black lung, was stabbed multiple times in his own driveway in Wise because he was unarmed and not able to defend himself. She stated that she does not want her right to protect her family to be taken away.

Mayor Jeff Dotson, who worked in law enforcement for over thirty-three years, learned that you must protect yourself because police officers cannot be everywhere at one time. He stated that he realized that controls and regulations were needed, but he opposed the extreme sanctions being introduced by the Governor.

Following the comments offered by Council, Mayor Dotson called for a vote, which was recorded by roll call:


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| Jeffery Dotson, Mayor | "Aye" |
| Teresa Adkins, Vice-Mayor | "Aye" |
| Laura Taylor-Baugh | "Aye" |
| Billy Bartlett, Jr. | "Aye" |
| Caynor Smith, Jr. | "Aye" |


The resolution passed unanimously.

The public audience applauded Council's adoption of the resolution.

Adjournment:

There being no additional business to come before the Wise Town Council, Mayor Dotson adjourned the meeting.


Robin R. Meade, Clerk of Council


Jeffery W. Dotson, Mayor