

The Richlands Town Council held a regular monthly meeting in the Richlands Council Chambers on February 16, 2021 at 6:00 pm with the following present:

Mayor: Paul Crawford
Town Manager: Tim Taylor
Town Clerk: Connie Allen
Council Members: Mary Ann Strong, Doug Ratliff
Rod Cury, Logan Plaster, Mike Street
Council Member Absent: Richard Brown
Town Attorney : K.W. McClanahan

Mayor Crawford opened the meeting.

Rod gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Crawford – Do we have any additions/deletions/corrections to the agenda?

Wayne – We need to add the Consideration of Appointment of the Town Attorney and renewal of his contract, and I have a few items to add to closed session agenda. Please add 2.23711(A) (7) Council has been asked to give legal information on the Fairfax property, 2.23711(A) (7) regarding nuisance abatement procedures, 2.2-3711(A) (29) Discuss award of a public contract.

Mayor Crawford - I would also like to make one (1) addition, under IV (a), the appointment of the new Town Manager and after number VII we will have Rick Chitwood.

Tim - We have the County Administrator Eric Young and Damon Ball the Director of Tazewell County Public Service Authority; they would like to talk to Council during closed session. Could we go into closed session a littler earlier to accommodate them? It is on the agenda to discuss in closed session.

Mayor Crawford - We want to take care of Mr. Stone and Rick; they have a long drive. Let's get thru "Scheduled Public Comments" and "Unscheduled Comments" and then we will go into closed session.

Mayor Crawford – I will entertain a motion to accept the agenda as amended.

Mary Ann - I make a motion to accept the agenda as amended, Rod seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford –Are there any corrections, additions or deletions to the minutes?

Rod - I make a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Logan seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford – Corbin Stone-Robinson, Farmer Cox Associates: Review FY 2020 Audit

Corbin – The audit went very well, particularly the issues with COVID. We did a lot of the audit remotely and we did work here on site for a few days. We don't know where we are going to be in a year or two from now in terms of the economy, we don't know what inflation is going to be. On page 1 you will see some financial information, general fund balance end of 2020 \$227,411, was restricted for specific purpose, below are the water & sewer net assets \$9,338,667, electric fund net assets \$3,167,050. When

we talk about net assets it is the entire value of the system plus the cash you have and depreciation value of your lines. The water and sewer were down a little bit and the electric fund net assets were up slightly. Total cash and investments - \$5,714,426 mostly water & electric. We would like to see a higher cash balance in the general fund. It would be good to have \$5 million cash in the general fund as a good reserve, 10% of your operating budget. You do have some reserve in your water/sewer/electric funds.

Doug - On the electric fund, \$3,167,050 is that just the net assets?

Corbin – That is everything, that is the net.

Doug – Are you talking lines?

Corbin – Lines, infrastructure, and its depreciated value.

Doug - What we have in reserve as far as liquid?

Corbin – Not reserve per say.

Doug - How much is cash?

Corbin – \$2,227,411

Doug - Is the reserve \$400,000 last year?

Corbin – Actual cash on the electric fund up \$6,000, \$34,000 in water and sewer.

Corbin - Total Debt and Leave Liabilities, will include water/sewer/electric and general fund which is \$3.5 million, pension and OPEB liabilities \$8,499,332. Long-term obligations per Capita \$2,294, the state average was \$2,607, it is lower than the state average.

Mayor Crawford - What was the state average again?

Corbin - \$2,607

Corbin - Reference page 2 - Summary of Original Tax Assessment- Annualized Growth Rates, Real Estate 0.874%, PSC Tax 5.343% with overall total of 1.130%. Results from a declining population.

Corbin - Reference page 3 – Audit Recommendations – nothing major the staff was very well prepared, and we didn't have any issues. There are a few things they can improve on current year. Reference page 4 & 5 - We audit your Virginia Retirement System just to make sure you are making the correct contributions for the correct people. The next couple of pages are required from the government. Starting with page 13 lists out some new accounting you will be required to do in the next few years. Overall, the audit went very well I think your staff does a really good job. We would like to see a little more money in the bank. A reduction in population and other things.

Doug - Would the budget have something to do with that also?

Corbin - You would have to take it into account.

Doug - If you have a trim budget.

Corbin - You would like to assess values and growth in your Town to offset the increases.

Doug - What I am saying if we trim the budget with things, we didn't need we would have more in the bank, plain and simple.

Corbin – Yes but it is difficult, an example, electric cost going up 2% a year.

Doug – Do you look at how much is being transferred out of each department like electric. If you look at that there is like a million dollars transferred out of the electric fund into another department.

Corbin - Into the general fund?

Doug – Yes

Doug - If you look at the taxes, \$600,000 and then taxed \$260,000, you have one (1) department, at least \$800,000 to \$900,000 that is being transferred out of the electric into the general fund.

Adrienne - He is talking about the shared resources.

Corbin - What I am trying to say if you have expenses going up 2% a year, if you grow 2% you are fine.

Doug - If you transfer out of on (1) department into another it is going to cause the electric to go up.

Corbin - The expense of the electric to go up.

Doug - If you do the audit, we are causing the electric fund to go up by taking \$800,000/\$900,000 out of the electric.

Corbin - You could be but if it is an allocation of cost and the allocation are reasonable

Doug – Do you look at the other departments when you audit? None of the other departments was taken out like that. You didn't take a big chunk of money out of the sewer/water, seems like the electric fund is running the whole show. If you look at the audit nowhere are they taking \$800,000/\$900,000 out of the sewer/water or any other department? They are using the electric fund as a crutch.

Corbin - If it is a reasonable allocation that is OK.

Doug – Reasonable?

Corbin - My point is if the costs are going up 2% a year and you have 2% growth they will offset.

Doug – When you audit you should take all the departments and look at them and see what is happening and make interpretations why certain things are the way they are.

Adrienne - Allocations of \$500,000, \$200,000 of that \$500,000 goes to electric only

Corbin - It is not unusual to allocate cost. Anytime you run a government you have a Central Service Department.

Doug - They lean too much on one (1) department. They take more than they should. With the new green deal the electric is going to have a lot of push back on it. It is going to go much higher than your water and sewer.

Corbin - Could very well be, the general fund just doesn't have that much in it. If you are not going to allocate some expenses to water/sewer/electric the money would have to come thru tax increases.

Doug - Cutting the budget where we don't need to spend.

Mayor Crawford - We are not in a budget hearing, let's move on.

Mary Ann - Basically you don't see a problem with how allocations are being handled?

Corbin – No as long as it is reasonable, it is fairly common.

Mary Ann - That is what Ms. Cordle has explained to us several times on how it is allocated across several departments.

Doug - What I am saying certain towns/cities in Virginia that have an electric system and my interpretations of it, is that we use as a crutch. No other Town uses it as a crutch. No other town has one. I think you should look at it during the audit to see if it is unfairly taken out of it.

Corbin - Some places that have a utility fund actually charge a tax to utility fund it is payment in lieu of taxes but actually assess taxes against it.

Doug - We have a separate tax we charge, \$260,000, we not only tax but we take the \$500,000 out of the fund.

Corbin - I think you did a great job, but it is going to be challenging for you. You are in the same boat that the Town of Tazewell is in and other Towns.

Mayor Crawford - The Council has extensively interviewed, discussed, and talked with the position of Town Manager. Tim Taylor's resignation is effective March 15, which I have accepted. We have interviewed and went thru a lengthy process to hire a new Town Manager. We have come to the conclusion that we are going to appoint John A. O'Daniel as Town Manager and at this time I would like to entertain a motion to that affect.

Logan - I will make the motion, Doug seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - With the passing of the previous motion I will now entertain a motion for me as the Town Mayor to execute the contract with John A. O'Daniel on the Town's behalf. Do I have a motion?

Logan - I will make the motion, Rod seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - In the passing of that motion we need to take up O-2021-02-01 – Amendment of Budget for Town Manager's compensation and to appropriate money there under.

Wayne - Read Ordinance O-2021-02-01 - Need a motion that the second reading of the ordinance be dispensed with as authorized by section 3.8 of the Richlands Town Charter.

Logan - I make the motion, Mike seconded the motion

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - I would like to entertain a motion to consider the passing of O-2021-02-01.

Rod - I make the motion, Logan seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - We need a motion to come effective upon its passage.

Rod - I make the motion, Logan second the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - We will have a new Town Manager on March 15.

Mayor Crawford - "Scheduled Public Comments" – It is a five (5) minute maximum, I will time each speaker and ask that you stay close to the mic if you will. If any speaker wants me to give them a 30 second notice of when you have 30 seconds left I will so you can cut it short if you need to. Please state your name and who you are representing.

Mayor Crawford - Ginger Branton – Richlands Area Citizens for the Arts, (CART): Funding request for Creative Communities Partnership Grant (Local Government Challenge Grant).

Ginger - Director of the Citizens of the Arts, I am here for my annual request for funding for the government challenge grant which is now called the Creative Communities Partnership Grant, it is a matching grant that the Town of Richlands has done for almost 40 years. It is a \$5000 match; the state matches \$4500 and the Town of Richlands matches \$5500.

Mayor Crawford - Do I hear a motion to that effect?

Rod - I make the motion, Mike seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Ginger - Thank you very much I appreciate it.

Mary Ann - I think the Town needs to show a lot of appreciation to you Ginger, CART has been around a long time and it provides outstanding entertainment. We would like to also wish you a Happy Birthday on Thursday.

Ginger - No Happy Birthday song, LOL?

Ginger - Thank you again for all you have done and especially you Tim.

Mayor Crawford – "Scheduled Public Comments" – Derek & Marie White – Cycling Event

Derek White – We were here last year, and you gave us approval for our event "Chasing the Wild Boar". I am Derek White, and this is my wife Marie. We had our permit approved last year from USA Cycling and as you know COVID happened so that pretty much ended everything. They cancelled all our permits the whole year. They did start letting some races go thru at the end of the year. They had some pretty good events go on, one in South Carolina. USA Cycling has pushed permits thru again and it is up to the communities whether or not we can have the events. Our event same as last year, we give the information to the Chief of Police , Town Manager and I didn't have a chance to follow up but there was a couple of routes in question. We talked to VDOT about one (1) of them because one (1) of the routes it will have to be on closed circuit. VDOT informed us that as long as it is in Town limits on Town maintain

roads for that particular race, we could close it as long as we know the day and the time. It is a three (3) day event going from Critterville into Baptist Valley and back, that will be on Saturday May 29. The criteria will be on Monday May 31. It will be a good day to hold because people will be out and about, government offices will be closed, and it will be a good opportunity for people to watch since it has to be on closed circuit. I have looked at a couple of different routes, on Front Street down to Grayson Avenue and come back up to Second Street and down to Norfolk and across and back around. It will depend on the age groups. A good backdrop on Suffolk Street for start and finish and presentation. The other route was a road race which is on Sunday, route in Bandy and Baptist Valley. Some of the routes I may change. USA Cycling said there was no issues, the insurance has already been paid and the permits. They are waiting on local approval to issue the permits, and local association approval.

Rod - I thought it was great last year and I still do. The road race will be on Sunday May 30, correct?

Derek White – Yes

Rod - So it will be May 29, 30 and 31.

Derek White – Yes

Rod - Have you talked to Chief Gilbert about the routes?

Derek White - I gave him the paperwork last year for the revised routes but did not follow up due to COVID.

Rod - I think it is a great thing; do you need a motion on that?

Mayor Crawford - Do you need a motion to approve this event?

Derek - Whatever seals the deal would be nice.

Mayor Crawford - Chief Gilbert could you come to the podium.

Chief Gilbert - We looked into this last year, then COVID hit.

Mayor Crawford - What needs to be done for Council to look at and approve this? Does Council need to approve, or does he just need to work with you?

Chief Gilbert - He just needs to work with me so we can get these routes established so we can make it happen safely.

Mayor Crawford - So Council does not need to have an action tonight?

Chief Gilbert – No sir, we just need to work together to come up with a safety plan.

Mayor Crawford - I think you have full Council support; you just need to work with Chief Gilbert.

Mayor Crawford - As I understand Raymond Arnold is not here.

Connie - That is correct.

Mayor Crawford - "Scheduled Public Comments" – Laura Mollo

Laura - I will time myself if you could give me 30 second notice at the end. I am going to talk quickly, I have quite a bit to say. The most important part that I am going to say, first of all I have heard you talk about blight, appreciate the time and concern that constitute in what is blight. An example for me would be during February, the political signs are still up. I have brought to Mike's attention previously,

no action. Not only does it look like shenanigans, but it makes us look lazy. You folks are putting fines on citizens for their property, but you guys should be sitting the example as Council people. I have stood at this podium almost a dozen times to address the issue with 911 dispatch. I spoke about the delay in service and the advantage of 911 Dispatch and how it would help the Town financially and when things go wrong, we are in the dark and we are in trouble. The what if's have become a reality, twice this year the Police Department has lost power and the generator failed. 911 Dispatch has a back up to their back up they are required to regularly test their equipment and their generator whereas if only when it needs repairs or breaks by that time it is too late. You have heard it from the Police Chief if phones are down for less than thirty minutes this is untrue. I personally have recorded for 47 minutes the phone rung busy. I would be happy to show that video to anyone. It is true that the Police Department provides 911 an alternate number to be reached but during that outage the number to a cell phone. So, phone lines are unreliable for dispatch and the most interesting fact to me though is our Richlands Police Department communicating 911 via walkie-talkie during outage. I am told by the Police Chief we are unable to communicate with 911 with radios but a walkie-talkie works just fine. The reason the radios don't work is our outdated equipment. I have showed you guys a grant where you are able to upgrade our radios and help the community effectively with 911 Dispatch Center. You are all aware of this, when a citizen has experienced a delay with Fire/EMS and Rescue they can sue this Town for negligence. It can now be proven of our negligence. Richlands has been known for kicking the can down the road after the flood issues that have not been resolved and a light pole you spoke about of 2018 that was posted and installed in 2006 and now this issue. Meeting in November we had an agreement with the County to move our Fire and Rescue to 911 Dispatch. The county, their request Police Chief to the meeting, it has been three (3) months and he has not called the county to set another meeting date taking us forward. Every day that you delay this you don't know when you are at risk with a lawsuit and putting lives in danger. Every second counts in an emergency. In February, WCYB, they have a saying that time is the longer you wait just a few minutes the larger the risk to the person causing damage. It is time for Richlands to accept that fact and act before more people in this Town are hurt by not updating the dispatch process. I am asking now for anyone on this Council to truly listen to me and get this second meeting set up. Please make a motion directing the Town Manager to have the Police Chief to set up this next meeting. If you don't get the time limit in a week or so we are going to be standing here three (3) more months kicking this can down the road. Very respected in this community and another perfect example is why dispatch is so important. Image a small child having an intruder in the house and they get the phone and calls, the house is quite so anyone close by would be able to hear the whispers, calls 911 dispatch, they ask for the emergency child says someone is in my house, 911 says hold on I will transfer you to Richlands a minute goes by and the intruder is in the bed room and the dispatch gets on the phone and ask what the emergency is the child has to explain again and the intruder hears them now the child has been found hurt, abducted or killed because that child had to be transferred and was forced to speak again .

Doug - Can I make that motion?

Mayor Crawford - You can.

Logan - I will second.

Mayor Crawford - The motion has not been made yet.

Doug - I will make the motion within the next thirty days that we have a meeting that our Police Chief will meet with the County and work this out so we can go to 911. Logan seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford - I am going to table that motion and second until our July meeting.

Doug - Can the Mayor do that?

Mayor Crawford - Absolutely

Doug - I am asking the Town Attorney.

Wayne - I don't know.

Mayor Crawford - It is in Roberts Rules.

Doug - Why do you have a Council? Could you Mr. Town Attorney, could you look that up.

Tim - Can I say something in respect to that?

Mayor Crawford - No, I want to cut it off right there.

Mayor Crawford – "Unscheduled Public Comments" - Joe McCracken, you have three (3) minutes.

Joe McCracken – We are still talking about ditches/drains, the Town did come over and replace one section of the drain pipe and I greatly appreciate it, they done that yesterday, helps but it is not the end of the solution. Part of the solution is a 24" pipe crammed up in a 36" pipe which is full of sediment which won't let the volume of water come thru What the Town done yesterday has helped that section. There is a section in front with a 24" pipe that runs in it, pushed up in in 36" pipe which cuts the volume of flow from reaching the big pipe. It is full of dirt/rock/debris. We run a camera thru it but had to tie a rope on the end to pull the camera thru it would not even go thru it. It is on this side of the railroad.

Tim - It's on your side.

Joe McCracken - It is still a Town drain.

Tim - We can get a flusher and try to flush it then we could camera it better.

Joe McCracken - What needs to be is a 36" pipe run up against a 36" pipe not a 24" pipe crammed up in it.

Tim - We will look at it.

Joe McCracken - I appreciate it and thank you all for returning the calls that were made in effort to help this situation.

Doug - I make a motion that we ask Mr. Taylor to check the 24" pipe and if all possible within 30 days to replace with a 36" pipe before those people get flooded in that section of the Town. Logan seconded the motion.

Tim - If it is under the railroad, I can't do that.

Joe McCracken - It is not under the railroad.

Tim - You have determined that?

Joe McCracken - Yes

Tim - That is all I wanted to know.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Joe McCracken - Tim the 36" pipe is under the railroad but the 24" pipe that is run into the 36" pipe is not.

Tim – Ok

Mayor Crawford - Eric Young, do we need to go into executive closed session for your part?

Eric - Mayor, I think it would be best.

Wayne – Need a motion to convene in executive closed session pursuant to 2.23711 (A) (29) – Discuss Contract Negotiations.

Mayor Crawford - Do I have a motion?

Rod - I make the motion, Logan seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - Will ask everyone to go to the hall, it is the only way we can maintain our distance.

Wayne- Mayor we need to entertain a motion that the Members of Council reconvene in open session and certify that the matters discussed while in executive session were those both lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements.

Mayor Crawford - I entertain a motion to that effect.

Mike - I make the motion, Logan seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - Rick Chitwood, Thompson and Litton Engineers: Update on Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation.

Rick – I am Rick Chitwood, Project Manager for Thompson and Litton, I have worked with the Town for numerous years, I actually worked with the Town when we did the Water and Sewer the first time and now again this time and the Water Plant. I wanted to give Council an update; there is some action that we need for Council to consider tonight. After discussions we have had with Virginia Resource Authority, for new Council members it is kind like the Bond Council for the State of Virginia with the DEQ and the Health Department. They will require certain actions to be taken on behalf of the Council before you can get your loan closed and grant. What I want to do tonight is give you a schedule and update and talk about it. This is on the Wastewater Plant. The letter I gave you, the older Council members has seen before; it is total loan of \$10,916,316 at 0.5% interest for 25 years with principal forgiveness portion of \$2,734,864 which is a grant. In the handout I have attached the project schedule, on page 2, it is my understanding that the Council had a cost of study completed by Mr. Brown and he made some recommendations in regards to your rates and Council has adopted those rates. What VRA wants Council to do tonight, they need to have Council's vote to put them into an implementation schedule when they will go into place. They don't want you to say they are just going to do it, they want to know when. What the schedule does and what we have talked about before it shows you will have one or two public hearings according to Mr. McClanahan but each July for the next three years you would have the rate adjustment come into play with what Mr. Brown recommended. Once you have adopted it I would say by ordinance you would need to have the schedule attached to the ordinance so they could send to VRS as part of the closing documents to get your loan and grant. It is a three (3) year process that you would have to implement these rates. The first one would go into place July 1, 2021, second on July 1, 2022 and the third on July 1, 2023. The first annual debt payment that would go back

to VRA from what I understand is six (6) months after completion of construction which would be September of 2023. These implementation schedule will give you time to start generating revenue toward that.

Tim - We got clarification from Bond Counsel request for information form VRA for the reserve funds, they have to be in place to by that time, they bill in three (3) year installments.

Doug - Do you have a list of the rates?

Tim - It is in the book we gave to you from Mr. Brown.

Doug - How much are they going up?

Rick - I can't remember Mr. Ratliff, I don't think, I think it was a pretty big jump on sewer but not on water.

Tim - Water actually went down on some of them.

Rick - Once it is done, about 3,500 gallons, around \$51/\$52 a month. I can't remember Mr. Brown did the study.

Tim - The study is what you have to adopt anyway because it has all that in it. The biggest thing they want to make clear, they won't just agree to adopt rates in July it has to be adopted for the three (3) year cycle in order to accomplish the entire loan now.

Rick - This would give customers a three (3) year period; get accustomed to the rate increase.

Tim - We have financing agreements, 50-page covenant you have to sign, a lot going on. The biggest thing they want is assurance the cost of service will be implemented. The loan closing is in August, they won't close the loan without that.

Rick - They really want to try to have this done as quickly as possible. I think the ordinance requires a couple of public hearings.

Tim - You could not do it on raises tonight you just have to vote on the implementations.

Rod - On page 2 - Town Council approves implementation schedule for rate adjustment that needs to reflect tonight's date.

Rick - Yes, I thought you were originally meeting last week.

Mary Ann - Do we need a motion tonight for the rate implementation?

Tim - To accept the rate implementation schedule and we will move forward to Bond Counsel and they will finalize hopefully soon the financial agreements so we can get those to Council as soon as possible. Quite a bit of covenants to that with debt reserves, cost of service analysis and certain amount of capital to keep for replacement, rate studies, inspections all kinds of things.

Rick - They initially wanted all up front which was a pretty big chunk.

Doug - Before you make the motion can I say something?

Mary Ann - I was just asking if we have to make a motion, which I think we do if we want to have progress.

Tim - I think that moves us to the next step.

Doug - Before anyone makes a motion everything is going up and I realize that we need improvements and we probably need this but Council needs to think about cutting the budget on certain things we don't need so we are not raising these rates but we need to look at other places that we can cut, money that we don't need to spend to give the citizens a break so they are not paying such high prices. Would Council consider if we vote for this and give the citizens a break and go to 911 save \$260,000 would help offset some of these rates that will be coming up. If Council can't do that then I am going to vote no. I don't know how much that matters but I am not voting no because of the project but we are putting so much on the citizens, we need to look at the budget and cut out things we don't need so we can offset some of the rates and give the citizens a chance to survive. Would Council consider going to 911 in a certain period of time like three (3) months and save money, and when the projects come up that we really need we can spend the money where it is really needed and not destroy our citizens.

Mayor Crawford - Enough said, are we ready to put this to a vote. They will agree to accept the schedule or not.

Doug - Will they agree before we take this vote?

Mayor Crawford - You can't ask them to vote on that on 911 in order for this to rely upon that.

Doug - I can do about what I want to.

Mayor Crawford - No you can't make a motion contingent upon another.

Laura Mollo - Made remark for audience.

Mayor Crawford - Ms. Mollo you are not allowed to speak.

Mary Ann - Logan & Mike you were not here to hear Mr. Brown's presentation it was quite lengthy but extremely through. He said our water and sewer rates are already very low, this is a gradual increase over three (3) years. We don't have a choice we have to upgrade our facility.

Rod - Doug I understand what you are saying but not in agreement or disagreement, but I think we should consider this motion separate from anything else. I think the issue with 911 will have to stand on its own regardless of this to me it is not a bargaining tool. That is how I feel about it.

Rod - I make the motion that the Town Council authorizes the implementation schedule for the rate adjustments, Mike seconded the motion.

Doug - How many votes do you have to have, is it four (4) for an ordinance?

Wayne - If Council is adopting rate schedule not a rate increase. Public hearing in consideration for an ordinance or a resolution so I would classify as parliamentary procedure which would require three (3) person vote of Council.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call -- Logan- No, Mike, Yes, Doug-No, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries -- 3/2

Rick - The other project I wanted to share with you is the Water Treatment upgrade. The Health Department is funding that they have offered \$28 million dollars, \$3, 889,000 for a term of 20 years to be 1% below double bond rate at the time of closing and \$400,000 grant toward that, we have met with the financial capital people, the funding side they have looked at the schedule, one of the things they are wanting me to add that we originally didn't have is high service pumps at the Water Plant. The Town did not have a chance to put the high service pumps in, We will ask the Health Department if they will let us include the high service pumps and water lines on the western end they have agreed to do that,

look at the cost and maybe they can adjust the overall cost so we are in the process of trying to pull that together. We are trying to keep it at the same amount of the overall project cost, we are working toward that, I just wanted to give Council an update, we are moving forward with it a lot of the schedule on page 3 as you can see ties directly in what you voted on for the Wastewater Plant with public hearings and different things and your first rate adjustment. Again it is a big chunk of money that you will be undertaking on the water and sewer but to be frank with you it is some of the best financing you can find on the market today, with the grant and the low interest loan. That is all I have unless the Council has any questions.

Mayor Crawford - Do you need a vote on that tonight?

Rick Chitwood – No, I just wanted to give you a review.

Mary Ann – Page 3 – Notifying as soon as possible no later than October 2020.

Rick Chitwood - That has already been done. Remember the first offer did not include the grant, we did a rate study and adjusted the rates to qualify to Town to get a \$400,000 grant

Mary Ann - That is a no brainer.

Rick - EPA sent out earlier this year this list of resilience requirements.

Tim - We did not get in the packet. We can explain what it is and forward to them.

Rick - When it first come out, the EPA is wanting the municipalities to do is start with the bigger ones and work their way down to the smaller ones, want you to analyze your overall system, they want to have this study done by June 30, Once the study is done they will take a look at it and they will come back and want an emergency response plan on how they look at your overall system, contamination, poison in the tanks and different things like that, that what they are looking at. They reason we are running a little later than we thought, a couple of months ago we had Towns and PSA and County, if we could get Cumberland Plateau to do on their own it would save money for all the Towns and Counties, it took 45 days to get word back that it has to be individual study. Now we are trying to play catch up. I just left Buchanan County and they authorized me to move forward with theirs, Town of Bluefield and Tazewell County PSA. I wanted to run by Council tonight, it is MOU not to exceed \$10,500, it is MOU #5 on the retainer agreement we have with the Town.

Tim - This is not an option it is required.

Rick - The reason we are late it is not because anyone was dragging their feet, we were just trying to figure out how we could get a bunch of people together so you could save some money.

Logan - Tim you will send to us in an email.

Tim – Yes

Rick - Once Council looks at it all I need is approval.

Tim - If you get it in March will you be OK timewise.

Rick – I will like to get started ASAP, the June 30 deadline is hitting us hard. I don't have a problem with you taking time to look at it.

Rod - I would like to call a point of order regarding a motion that Doug made and Logan seconded to make sure we are clear on this, I will ask for the attorney to explain.

Wayne - I didn't have information on hand, I am not a parliamentary expert, reading directly from Roberts Rule of Order section 59c regarding a motion to lay a motion on the table if there is no possibility to obtain a majority of vote for the move that questions that is on the table which allows no debate which enables them to instantly lay the question on the table from which it cannot be taken in their consent. I think the appropriate thing to do, can't come from chairperson but when a question is presented like that it there is a subsidiary motion to lay that question on the table if that is seconded that motion cannot be debated that question put immediately to Council and if the majority votes to lay that on the table it cannot be taken off the table until the majority consents. I think procedurally we either have to consider Council Ratliff's motion or if there is such a subsidiary motion to lay that question on the table and it is seconded and in a majority three (3) people of the currently assembled Council members to lay on the table there is no discussion for debate.

Mayor Crawford - I believe there is more to it than that when it is being voted on already so it becomes a nuisance type thing, but I am fine if you want to consider the motion tonight.

Doug - What was the motion?

Rod - Regarding the 911, I just called point of order so I would understand it not to doubt the Mayor or anyone it was clarification for me. As I understand it that motion can go forward for Council vote or there can be a subsidiary motion to lay it on the table, is that correct?

Wayne - That is my understanding.

Rod - I will make a motion to lay it on the table.

Doug - That is when you are have vote to lay it on the table,

Rod - I am asking Doug, is that correct?

Wayne - That is my understanding when a subsidiary secondary motion made to lay that question on the table if that motion is seconded there is no debate on subsidiary motion.

Mayor Crawford - No further debate, period.

Doug - I can explain why it should not be.

Wayne - Given the time fame, I don't have complete understanding.

Mayor Crawford - I think it would have been better to leave it like I had it and give you some time.

Doug - If someone makes a motion to lay my motion on the table, I want to say why we shouldn't.

Wayne - Roberts Rule of Order says no discussion allowed regarding the motion to lay on table.

Mike - Does it say how long it will lay it upon the table?

Wayne - Until the majority of Council lay on the table decide to pick it back up.

Doug - So if anyone makes a motion and seconded it someone can come in and make a motion, I didn't think you could make a motion on a motion until it was decided.

Wayne - It is a subsidiary motion, there are handful of them that Council can make. Mayor, I understand considering that motion for a second time.

Mayor Crawford - The tenth time, tells us what we need to do.

Wayne - I would recommend that you consider Council Ratliff's motion and second or I believe Councilmember Cury was making the motion.

Rod - I made the motion, may not be seconded. I know I don't need to say anything, but I feel obligated and Doug does too I just let his motion stand.

Mary Ann - I would like clarification of your motion.

Doug - My motion was within three (3) months we go to 911 to save the citizens.....

Mike - That was not the motion.

Doug - I make the motion the Police Chief, we gave word as a Council that he would meet with Sheriff to discuss going to 911 and that he attends a meeting within 30 days.

Mayor Crawford - Already been seconded correct,

Council - Yes, Logan seconded

Logan - It was a meeting that was already discussed, should have already happened.

Doug - It has been three (3) months and he has not gone to meet with the Sheriff, just require him to have a meeting with the Sheriff.

Tim - No sure who called the meeting, but someone called a meeting, sheriff was in attendance as well as Jerry Gilbert and myself may have been Travis Hackworth to discuss the 911 issues, staff trying to figure out a solution, everyone had an opinion to express their concerns it was agreed upon they would try to meet in the future to collect what they were talking about and meet again ultimately that is what that was about.

Doug - Mr. Gilbert agreed to meet with them.

Tim - I don't remember dates we but we agreed to meet they were going try to meet together to discuss. It was a staff type meeting

Mary Ann - I don't think there has been a second meeting scheduled that Chief Gilbert failed to attend.

Doug - It was supposed to be scheduled and the Sheriff has tried several times to meet with him and Mr. Gilbert will not meet.

Mayor Crawford - The Sheriff told me he would not come down here for a meeting he told me that personally.

Mary Ann - I just don't like Jerry been chastised.

Mike - I think this is a touchy subject for everyone I do think there should be another meeting, I do think there should be some things added to Mr. Ratliff's motion, I think there should be council representation at this meeting and the meeting should happen but not to say we move to 911 but discussion of what it would look at on the logistics side of it. I feel like there should be Council representation and no actual civilians, county or town or anything but consist of specific number of people and that should be in the motion as well. These guys can sit down and do this I don't know if it is legal for me to say that I would do that or how does that work?

Wayne - I would suggest having a special called meeting, we can lawfully go into executive closed session and discuss that and Council can agree to invite whomever that want to invite in closed session to discuss those things, that might be potential option.

Doug - Would that be proper for the whole Council to meet as they talk over the issues in closed session.

Wayne - That would be required if it is a special called meeting.

Logan - I think that would be the best thing we all have to vote on it we all need to be informed on it.

Rod - I think you are right sometimes we have Council representation. My experience has been two (2) members would come back telling everybody. I think on these issues needs to whole Council. Ms. Mollo I know you are invested in this so don't feel excluded.

Mayor Crawford - You can't discuss with the audience.

Rod - I'm sorry.

Mary Ann - We are holding up Mr. Chitwood as well.

Mayor Crawford - Would you modify the motion?

Doug - I make motion we call a special meeting on 911 to go into closed session and discuss the issues with Mr. Gilbert and Sheriff Hieatt, Logan seconded the motion.

Rod - Can you read the motion?

Doug - Sorry Rod we need a date too.

Doug - Within two (2) weeks.

Mary Ann - Find a date and nail down on that date

Rod - Find a date and have flex time.

Doug - Arrange a meeting with Council within two (2) weeks; suggest we invite Travis Hackworth and the Board of Supervisors in closed session.

Mike - I would invite Tom as well. Just say Board of Supervisors.

Mayor Crawford - Motion is to have a meeting with Council, Chief Gilbert and Sheriff Hieatt within the next two weeks at a date they can be there. Logan seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call - Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries - 5/0.

Rod - Can you read the motion so I will know what I am voting on.

Connie - Special meeting will be called concerning 911 with Chief Gilbert and Sheriff Hieatt in closed session and invite Board of Supervisors in closed session within a two-week time period.

Mayor Crawford - "Downtown Events" Community Development Director

Connie - Fireworks - July 3, \$5000 for 2021, Do you want to approve to have the fireworks this year?

Mayor Crawford - Do you have the money for it?

Connie - I do not have the money for it. It will go into next year's budget.

Rod - Is it July 3?

Connie – Yes

Doug - I would think we would.

Connie - The price will be going up next year due to shipping cost, if we sign a contract for additional years, they will hold the contract firm for \$5000 each year. It is totally up to Council.

Mayor Crawford - Do we need to look at putting in the budget?

Connie - We will have to put in the budget.

Mayor Crawford - We don't need to do that tonight just put in the budget.

Connie – Correct, I just need to let them know we want the fireworks for July 3, that date would get booked before we can vote on during the budget.

Mayor Crawford - Does Council have a problem with that, without taking a vote?

Connie - Is that OK with everybody?

Council - Yes

Logan - We can raise money.

Mary Ann - Do you have to pay in advance?

Connie - Last year they billed us in July after the fireworks.

Connie - The IDA did award the contract for the Greenway to John Rife from Rife Remodeling, he will start first part of March and he has until the end of May to complete. Wayne is in the process of reviewing the contract.

Doug - Who got the contract?

Connie - John Rife from Rife Remodeling, he was the lowest bidder. Wayne is in the process of reviewing the contract.

Tim - Once the contract is executed with legal, IDA will meet next week to take the matter up, the notice to proceed should be March 1.

Mayor Crawford - Are you still holding to a completion date of April 1.

Tim - No, we give him an extra thirty (30) days.

Connie - Until the end of May.

Tim - If weather permits, he can get it built before then.

Connie - I talked to him the other day and he didn't think it would take that long.

Connie - April 3- 1pm to 3pm the Easter Bunny will be giving out candy to the kids, it will be drive thru event unless COVID guidelines change. Town of Cedar Bluff and the Clinch Valley Medical are partnering

with us for this event. Town of Cedar Bluff is not doing anything so they will automatically come to Richlands, I talked to John Absher and he is going to give us some money to buy candy, etc.

Logan - What day was that?

Connie - April 3

Connie - Restaurant Week March 1-7 - We are partnering with the County on this event. We are trying to get all our local restaurants to run specials or discounts during this week. The Community Development Leaders from each Town are trying to get together each month. We will try to partner with the county on different events, we want to work together on different things, hopefully in the future we will have some type of event together. I think it is a positive thing.

Mike - What week was that?

Connie - March 1-7, we will be putting flyers up at the participating restaurants. Everyone I have talked to has been very positive about it.

Connie - Update on the Revitalization – Still working on contacting the stakeholders (business owners), the ones that I have contacted have been very positive about it. I have taken most of the pictures and am working on the documentation. We should be able to have the second meeting in a couple of weeks. I am waiting on the business owners to fill out the participation form for the amount they would like to commit to. I don't see any reason why the Revitalization won't happen next year.

Doug - Are you talking about the Revitalization?

Connie – Yes

Doug - To help you on that note, next month if it is OK with Council there will be several business leaders to come, Ervin Davis would like to take this group into closed session and they have several suggestions to revitalize the Town and they want to help you with that project.

Connie - That is awesome.

Doug - We need to put on the agenda for "Closed Session" next month. They are enthusiastic about the project.

Connie - I am too, I was a little surprised due to COVID. I think we will have a few issues, if a business doesn't want to participate and they have very blighted property we may have to put an ordinance in place to clean up or do something. We don't want part of the Town revitalization and the other half look bad and be right in the middle of the property. Hopefully in couple weeks we can have the second meeting, it has taken a little longer than I thought it would plus the weather.

Connie – Website- We have a professional that will be helping us do the upgrades on the website. It is at no charge to the Town; the service has already been paid for. We are very blessed to have received this opportunity.

Mary Ann - I am happy the Greenway is going get started.

Connie - I am too.

Mayor Crawford - "Council Member Reports" – Rod Cury

Rod – We were scheduled to have our regular Planning Commission meeting on the 1st Tuesday of the month, we cancelled due to weather. Our next scheduled meeting will be March 2 at 7:30pm at the

Town Hall. Rick Chitwood is still on the agenda to come to talk to us about the trail and also as it stood and I hope it does, Ricky Barton will be there. I have had two (2) concerns, Beth and Richard Smith

I will read the letter from Beth and Richard Smith, "I have concerns for the amount of trash that has migrated to the property that I own on Farmer Street adjacent to Elkins Mobile Home Park (1620 Farmer Street). The residents of the mobile home park are leaving trash at the road on days other than trash day, which is causing trash to migrate to the yard/ditch of the property that I own. It is an eyesore. This has been an issue for many years, and I am not sure what the solution is, but I do believe that it needs to be addressed again with the residents of the mobile home residents." Tim, could you look into this.

Tim - I got the same message we have a solution, but it takes reminding the folks on what to do.

Rod - Was there talk about putting a dumpster at the corner, she said that would not be satisfactory, but I would ask.

Tim - They need to put out the night before the pick-up or they are going have to do a better job of containing it that is the problem. In the Summertime it is a stench there. The solution is they cannot put it there. We have code enforcements for that, Jerry will check on it.

Jerry - Officer Dupree has been working on that, I know she has been to the trailer park two (2) or three (3) times and Rock Hill Road. She is currently trying to address that issue.

Rod - I will relay to Beth Smith. I know the trash problem is a growing problem unfortunately. The second concern I have was sent from Virginia Hart. I think she has also been talking to Mary Ann; she is also concerned with the amount of litter on the side of the road on business 460 in Town and how it looks in the Town. She was really nice, she has an understanding of issues and knows we have a number of people to handle the issues but she did ask if we would address it and have some type of effort of keeping the Town clean. I was in agreement with her and I know that Mary Ann is to. It is not a chastisement in any way it is just trying to keep the Town attractive, we live here, we have visitors here and people who want to potentially move here. Any thought?

Tim – We have tried numerous ways, we spend more money to get it picked up, we got the street sweeper repaired and we are using it when we can, it does help with the curb and actually the street but the trash thrown out of the cars over the banks, we don't have the labor type of people to pick up anymore. We usually contract and the mowing and the cleanup crew. We pulled back a little this winter on that because of the money in the budget for that. We have not been as aggressive that is probably why you see it as bad as it is. It looks worse in the wintertime too. We will try to pick it up a notch.

Rod - Virginia might be tuned in I am not sure, but I will relay to her, Mary Ann can too. Mary Ann, do you have anything to add since she talked to you too?

Mary Ann – I know it is difficult to get help from Tazewell County with the inmates, Jerry is that every a possibility anymore?

Jerry - Currently with the COVID they don't want them out right now, they might later on. They have not worked a road crew in quite a while.

Mary Ann - That makes since, the only other option would be American Carpet Care if there is something not as pressing as all the trash. We all agree it is such a bad reflection on our community. Virginia is talking about on 460 going to the hospital and at the red light going toward ... I know Rusty's guys do a great job maybe it could be bumped up as a priority to pick up the trash.

Tim - He has some directive to cut some right-a-ways which he has been trying to get to, I will try to get him to pick it up a notch.

Mayor Crawford – "Council Member Reports" – Doug Ratliff

Doug - Can I ask Mr. Gilbert a question? You sent out a letter to the schools and talking about Resource Officers and we may have to raise taxes if we didn't get the Resource Officers grant. Are we having a problem a problem applying for Resource Officers?

Chief Gilbert – No, Sir, that was a survey monkey it was part of our grant that we do twice a year. What that says is if a SRO is not available would you support having to pay for out of taxes. It is not suggesting that we raise taxes or put anything out there. It was just questionnaire asking if you would support that. It is part of a survey, survey monkey that was designed for SRO Program. We are not having any trouble currently; they just opened up for SRO filings for the new grant period, so we have been working on that. It was just a survey does not mean we are going to raise taxes; it was just part of the questionnaire as general question they put on the questionnaire.

Tim - Is that part of the program that they require you to do that.

Chief Gilbert - Yes, Sir, we put in the grant that we would survey twice a year, just trying to get a little feedback. In Eastern Virginia the SRO program gets a lot more scrutiny than it does here. If you want to call it a feel type good questionnaire it is just to get feedback from the public. One of the questions are you aware there is an SRO in your school, has your child every had an interaction with the SRO, there was about 5/6 questions.

Doug - Why was it only sent to one (1) school?

Chief Gilbert – It was sent to Richlands High and Richlands Elementary. How the schools chose to distribute out I don't know; I know Richard distributed at the High School I got some of those back and the elementary school they sent out to everyone. I don't know how the school's choice to survey once they were given the survey. I have the survey if anyone wants to go thru and look at them.

Doug - The reason I am going to ask the next question. I know everyone is applying for SRO, if some reason I don't want to come back in the budget. If we are denied officers in the school because we have got to have them. I don't want taxpayers to pick up another \$100,000 for two (2) SRO workers if you are having a problem. I would suggest if you are having a problem and maybe you won't get an SRO you go to the Sheriff and ask him to fill those positions so the taxpayer don't have to pick up the \$100,000, \$50,000 per school and we let the Sheriff fill those for nothing. Did you get audited?

Chief Gilbert - Yes, Sir, we come out very well thank you.

Doug - I have here that they found out some deficiencies, #1 – I am not picking on anybody, but one was over paid \$6000 which the Town had to get in their pocket and pay back to the State.

Chief Gilbert – That was a clerical glitch between the grant itself.

Doug - We were not following the grant, you had to make up 300 hrs. which was \$6000, I have it right here, the hours did not match what the grant said, so we had to pay back \$6000 out of the Town budget. #2 - The hours did not match what the grant said and the people were not working the hours that you had put on the schedule, you had a lot of deficiencies, come straight from Virginia. My only concern if you don't follow those grants and you have these deficiencies and you see we are not going to get an SRO officer instead of waiting for the last minute and expecting the tax payer to pick up the \$100,000 and raise taxes I would ask you to think of the citizens and go the Sheriff and say hey I need help can you fill those positions because I can't. Don't wait until the last minute that is all I am asking.

Chief Gilbert - I see no reason that we should not get the grant we have done rather well, any hours that was not worked was because of COVID last year.

Adrienne - I would clear up if you want me to.

Mary Ann/Mayor/Tim – Please

Adrienne – When the audit was done with Department of Criminal Justice Services, Lettie has to file a financial report requesting funds on the grant, it was a clerical error. She requested the wrong reimbursement amount, she is very thorough, that was something that was tagged and basically, we did not overpay any employee. She requested an incorrect amount and Department of Criminal Justices paid it and they didn't even check. They overpaid the Town on the grant, so we had to write a check back to Department of Criminal Justice Services for that overpayment. It was requested too much by mistake, but they didn't catch it either. Once we all met, I was part of the audit, Lettie Stiltner, Jerry Gilbert, Robert Morgan and couple people from Department of Criminal Justice Services. Together when it was found and discovered we wrote a check back for overpayment.

Mayor Crawford - Thank you Adrienne, we need to be careful about getting into personnel issues in open session.

Doug - I am just saying they got several violations like actual salary, actual hours do not match the grant application, the other one was that we did overpay an employee because they worked 1300 some hours where the grant called for 1600 hours, that was not a clerical error that was within the grant. If any Council members wants a copy of this, I will be glad to give it to them. All I am worried about and I am not picking on anyone I just don't want us not to get an SRO for both schools because we have to have them, when we could ask the sheriff to fill the position for free.

Mayor Crawford - Doug let's move on, will talk personnel issues in closed session.

Doug - That is not personnel.

Mayor Crawford – Yes, it is, you are talking about performance of people.

Doug - I am talking about Commonwealth Public, and I stand by everything I said.

Mayor Crawford - If anyone is wondering I know it is probably against health rules, but Richard is sick again he still has COVID pneumonia and he has a stomach virus, he is pretty sick.

Mayor Crawford – “Council Member Reports” – Mary Ann Strong

Mary Ann - Thank you for mentioning Richard and we all need to keep him in our prayers and I also want to mention positive reports about Gordon Russ and his rehabilitation once again. Rec Commission did meet this past Monday and we will meet again on March 15 at 6:00pm upstairs at the Rec Park. We do have vacancies we have had two (2) members resign, Joel Horn and Joe McCall. Joe moved out of the area. I am making a motion based on recommendation of the Rec Commission that we appoint Cynthia Smith; she works with Appalachian Agency. Regina Sayers very much recommends her because of the playground project. Regina would have representative on the Rec. Commission.

Mary Ann - My motion is to appoint Cynthia Smith to replace as an out of Town member to replace Michael Webb to the Rec Commission, Rod seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mary Ann - I know we are going talk about blight when we go into closed session but several people on Lynwood Drive which is close to you Doug has concerns about the former Dr. Gomez home and close to Ms. Mollo as well, I told citizens that I would mention it.

Mary Ann - Some of you know him as Mr. Richlands and some of you are aware that Bob Nassif did pass away on January 27. Richlands meant everything to Bob and he talked to us many times, I ask that you

remember his family in your prayers and I going to be coming up with some way to honor him and hope to have the Town Council's support in the near future.

Mayor Crawford – "Council Member Reports" – Mike Street

Mike – I just have a couple of quick things, I have told a few citizens about some potential with Point Broadband and we are still talking to those folks and still waiting on some different ideas that they have and things we can do for the Town. I have been in some conversations with Tim as well as Point Broadband. We are going to be digging into that a little further once we have some more information from them and it is still an exciting thing. I hope to share more details when we have those. I just wanted to bring that up and it will be really good for our community and for Richlands. I also want to thank Ramp Up Richlands which is a new community group; Connie has mentioned a few times. They started digging into different events and things they can do as far as COVID goes, Amanda Elswick and Andrea Perkins have headed up a Tea Party up for little princesses that is going to be held at Coal Town Taps at the end of February. They announce they were going to do this, and they are limited because of COVID but sold out of tickets in three (3) minutes. People are very eager about getting out and doing things, as long as COVID will allow I just wanted to give them a shout out and Thank You. As with me having a little daughter it is touching to see them do such a thing and get the little princesses involved. Will have a few big princesses involved; just want to let them know we appreciate that. Tim, have we been able to look at anything as far as the pitch package goes for potential business? I had a business to reach out.

Tim - That is in Connie's department.

Connie – I am working on it.

Mike - I keep getting the questions so I told them I would follow up.

Mayor Crawford – "Council Member Reports" – Logan Plaster

Logan – This is not something I had planned to talk about, but Connie mentioned it, I want to thank whoever made the donation to the Town of Richlands for the website I am eternally grateful for that. We are in desperate need of a new website. Thank you to whoever that was. On February 6, one (1) year ago we had catastrophic flood in Town, I feel like we have done very little to move forward with helping the citizens to move forward in these flood plains I have spoken to several this week they are worried that the spring rain is coming up and we are going to face flooding and we all know it. I wanted to bring that up as always I think we could do more I think we have been a little too lax in our aggression to tackle the flood I think it is a huge issue that we must take on. I think that is very important. I have had a few complaints about potholes I know this time of the year it is expected and not much we can do. Tim update?

Tim - Right now we are just filling up with gravel.

Logan – Thank you for speaking on that, we have had a few people complain and said they could bury their vehicle in some of them downtown. I want to thank Chief Gilbert and Officer Dupree for helping me out on some of the ordinance violations. I had spoken to Jerry and he had said that some of our codes/ordinances are not strong enough for the police to enforce properly, I don't know exactly what that means but I did ask if he could get something together to bring to Council and we could at least consider what else we need to do to bring the code violates to be more aggressive and the police can do things to offenders in Town. Hopefully by March, Jerry could we have that. I have received complaints again on the electric rates; they said their power bill was astronomical. I had a single widow that lives on North Street who contacted me, and her bill was \$498, she said she turned her heat down where it was actually a little uncomfortable for her to stay in. We have to do something on the electric I am going to continue to harp on that until we can come to some conclusion. I was going to ask for an update on the study we referred to last meeting.

Tim - We contacted and had a meeting with the representatives by telecom, they are collecting data now. It will make more sense to go thru the budgetary process and the fact we have a learning curve we have included in the program. They will come and present themselves to Council, they are the experts. The engineers are in the same firm and ask they come also and present to Council in a full budget work session and have General Manager from Blue Ridge Power. That will be incorporate in your very first budget work sessions. You will get a much thorough education on that.

Logan – I would like to have something when someone asks, I want to show that we are working on it.

Tim - They plan to have that done by mid-March. Adrienne is that correct?

Tim - Sorry it will be late-March.

Logan – That's good. I do thank you Tim and the public works crew for going over to Joe and Sandy McCracken's and fixing that. They are very grateful. Tim, I thank you for taking my call and getting that done.

Tim - You are very welcome.

Mayor Crawford – “Mayor's Comments”

Mayor Crawford – I happened to get my electric rate which is APCO in Hidden Valley and the electric rate that I have in Town which was about the same time a good comparison with everything that normally affects electric rates. I asked to have this put in the packet. APCO is .018 cents per kWh or less than the Town.

Logan - I don't think it is the rate, I don't think that is what they necessary dispute it is the taxes we have on it.

Mayor Crawford - This includes taxes, transmission rates and the whole nine yards.

Logan - I also notice you are on a budget, correct?

Mayor Crawford – Yes, but I used the amount that was due. I am not trying to fool anybody with it I am just give information, look how many times we have ask what the difference is.

Tim - I think APCO is up for another increase too.

Doug – Right now it is .9 and Richlands 11 per kWh. There are so many other things added to it beside the cost.

Tim - The electrical cost, hopefully the beauty of the cost study will zero out the PCA and adjust in the base rate. All the taxes you see on the bill do not come to the Town, we collect for the State, County and certain areas to, and some has to go to Richmond. We bundle that, it could be confusion on the electrical piece.

Mayor Crawford - I just did for information just to prove a point. I took the number that I paid at one house for kWh and what I paid at the other house and divided out and .018 was the difference.

Doug - If you take out all the taxes AEP is much cheaper than Richlands and I can prove that.

Tim - What you have to do is take the cost of service for Richlands regardless what APCO does.

Mayor Crawford - I just gave for information I don't want to debate.

Mayor Crawford - Do we have fluoride in the water yet?

Tim – No, Health Department has to give us approval for that, I think they just have to hook the electronics upon it. They will have to get an inspection. They said to expect to be in the water by the end of March.

Mayor Crawford - We are going to notify everybody, correct?

Tim – Yes

Mayor Crawford – Adrienne may I ask you a question on county disbursements? For EMS our agreement if I remember correctly was they pay us \$50,000 a quarter and at the end of the year and we true up. I understand they have paid us three (3) \$50,000 checks and the county is saying \$100,000 Cares money they passed on to us was toward our EMS. Is that correct?

Adrienne – Yes

Mayor Crawford – “Attorney’s Comments” – Wayne

Wayne - I don’t have anything at this time.

Mayor Crawford – “Manager’s Report” – Tim Taylor

Tim – Authorization to Pay Bills - We have already paid the bills but need an official vote would be in order.

Doug – I have one thing, I am not picking on anybody but what is the \$300 Petty Cash?

Tim - I don’t know, Jerry is that yours.

Chief Gilbert –TDO mental health, happens all hours of the night we can’t come up here and get a check. There is no money available, so we keep \$300 petty cash. When we have to send an officer out to Petersburg or somewhere out East that is where we have to take them a lot of times. We have to have money available in order to buy gas and buy officer food and the TDO individual, get them out there and back, usually a 12 to 15-hour trip. I have to have money for those folks, once they get back the receipts go into the box. We bring to Town Hall true up and we get \$300 to replace it so we have that money on hand. We could go two (2) days and have three (3) or four (4) trips and we may go week. We have to have cash to take care of our folks so they can make those trips.

Doug – I understand but would it be a better idea if you went ahead and did it and come back turn the receipts in and the Town writes you a check, how most Towns did it.

Tim - They have to have the money upfront and a lot of them don’t have it.

Jerry - Let me give you an example we had a TDO that went to Marion about week ago and the police officer got over there and thought he was going to get to drop them off in Marion but they had a two stop TDO once he got there Marion refused them and he had to go to Petersburg. My officer didn’t have any money on him for gas or food. We had to make arrangements to put money in his account but once he got back, he reimbursed what extra we gave him plus the receipts. We have to have that money on hand to be able to conduct business and take care of our people. A lot of them don’t have the money.

Tim - That is the safest way to do it, we could let them use credit card, we only have two (2) credit cards for the Town, I have one and Adrienne has one of them. There have been so many horror stories of credit card abuse with employees. This way has been proven for many years.

Chief Jerry - It works out well, we have a receipt for everything that is spent.

Mary Ann - With COVID mental health is huge problem.

Chief Jerry - They have mental health facilities on this side of the state, but it seems like every time mental health gets a bed it is at Petersburg, Williamsburg some where out that way.

Mayor Crawford - I entertain a motion to authorize the Town Manager to pay the bills.

Rod - I make a motion to pay the bills, Mary Ann seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Tim - Non-Revolving Line of Credit RFP – Interim Financing (WTP Rehabilitation Project) We did ask National Bank to consider giving us an increase to cover the WTP Rehabilitation Project, we got a \$200,000 extension on our \$1,000,000 making a total of \$1,200,000, the million has already been committed to in early transaction. I do need Council to vote for me to sign the contract for the \$200,000 additional with the bank. That will help us get the bills paid for the WTP.

Rod - I make the motion to authorize Town Manager to sign contract for the \$200,000 additional with National Bank, Mary Ann seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Tim – Update on Allegheny Bridge Rehabilitation Project – They are actually getting ready to start the project, the weather may delay a little bit, and their plans are to start on the bridge late February early March. The bridge will be shut down the entire duration of the construction. There will be a detour with the crossing on 4th street and that will be detour thru in case there is train on the tracks. We will always keep the lot open to the Street Department in emergency response in for Fire & Rescue. They said it would be approximately five (5) months. We will send flyers out again so the citizens will know the bridge is closed, trying to get it down as quick as possible.

Rod - I appreciate the careful planning for emergency response.

Tim – Item No. 4 - Confirm date for Work Session to discuss Electrical Department Power Supply Plan - I will defer to the experts. If Mr. Plaster or Mr. Street wants to schedule time with me to discuss during the day, me and Adrienne can go over with you.

Mike - Yes, I would.

Tim – The mowing contract, the contract we have with American Carpet Care is exhausted you can only do up to three (3) years. We need to get that out as soon as possible because the mowing starts pretty soon, and we need to get some of the trash picked up. Does Council want to go ahead with a RFP for that?

Rod - I think it is appropriate.

Tim - The direction is to go ahead and do RFP for one (1) year contact with two (2) year extension. Is that OK with everyone, we don't need to vote.

Tim - I do need authorization to pay drawdown #7 for WWTP expenses, the final design was not finished until now, this is for final design, survey expenses and Geotech work at the Raven/Doran station, looks like we are going to have to buy a little property down there, covers prequalification of contractors

which was given as well as permitting starting. The entire amount \$84,099.49. I need authorization to do the drawdown and pay Litton and Thompson.

Rod – Is it a drawdown?

Tim - It is a drawdown online of credit to pay for the services.

Rod - I make the motion to allow Town Manager Tim Taylor to get drawdown #7 for \$84,099.49 for WWTP expenses, Mike seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Doug - Can I have a copy of the electric bill?

Mayor Crawford - You didn't get it? You can have my copy.

Mayor Crawford - At this time we will entertain a motion that the Mayor and Members of Council convene in executive closed session. Just wanted to let everyone know we have already made all the actions we will have tonight if you don't want to stay but you are more than welcome to stay.

Wayne – Mr. Mayor we need to vote on executing the contract for legal services

Mayor Crawford – I will entertain a motion to appoint Wayne McClanahan as Town Attorney.

Rod - I make the motion to appoint Wayne McClanahan as Town Attorney, Doug seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Wayne - We need to entertain one more motion to authorize to executive the contract that I provided to Town Council on behalf of the Town.

Mary Ann - I make the motion, Rod seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Wayne - Entertain a motion to enter into executive closed session as pursuant to 2.2-3711 (A)(7) potential litigation business, and when I spoke earlier it should have been (A)(8) for these two issues , 2.2-3711 (A)(8) conversation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matter that requires legal counsel regarding the Fairfax Avenue property and regarding nuisance abatement and I have a grievance issue as well 2.2-3711 (A)(1) personnel and legal compliance officer.

Mary Ann - I make the motion to go into executive closed session, Rod seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Wayne - Motion to certify that the topics and subject discussed while in executive session were those both lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements.

Doug - I make the motion, Logan seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

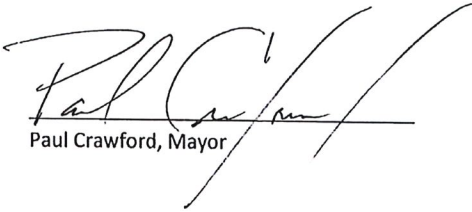
Rod - I make the motion to adjourn, Mike seconded the motion.

Mayor Crawford- We have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion say yes. All those that oppose say no. Roll Call – Logan- Yes, Mike, Yes, Doug-Yes, Mary Ann-Yes, Rod-Yes - Motion carries – 5/0.

Mayor Crawford - Adjourned



Connie Allen, Town Clerk



Paul Crawford, Mayor