Minutes 1202 Town of Blacksburg

Regular Town Council Meeting July 23, 2018

With Mayor David Hogue presiding, present at the meeting were Councilman Mike Patterson, Councilman Dennis Stroupe and Councilman S. L. Ford.

Scott Powell with the Gaffney Ledger represented the media.

Councilman Ford gave the invocation.

Councilman Stroupe made the motion to approve minutes 1201 as written and distributed. Councilman Patterson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Councilman Stroupe made the motion to approve paying the bills with the exception of Patterson’s Wrecker. Councilman Ford made the second and all were in favor. Councilman Stroupe made the motion to approve Patterson’s Wrecker and Councilman Ford seconded the motion. All were in favor with the recusal of Councilman Patterson.

Councilman Ford asked Ms. Shanda Davis to speak again about the program she wants to have in Blacksburg called “Crunk Cardio”. She introduced Ms. Shauna Tolliver who is with the program itself and gave more information about reaching the children and young adults with music and the gospel. They are asking to have the event August 18th from 6 pm until 9 pm. After a few questions and answers, Mayor Hogue made the motion to allow the event with Councilman Stroupe making the second. All were in favor.

Mayor Hogue asked for Item 6, Hall of Fame, to be moved to the executive session. With no opposition from the media, it was so moved.

Administrator Carter brought before Council the first reading of an ordinance for the sale of the lot on Brugg Street to Mrs. Roberta Thompson. Mrs. Thompson had the high bid of $10,000 for the purchase of the property. Councilman Patterson made the motion to adopt the first reading. Councilman Ford made the second. All were in favor.

Mayor Hogue recognized the Planning and Zoning Chairwoman Nina Cobb for the recommendation of the committee for the Parking situation from the previous Council meeting. She said the recommendation of the committee is to replace the “two hour parking” signs with “no overnight parking” signs. This will remove the concern of citizen’s enjoying the downtown area for longer than the two hour stipulation. Councilman Ford made the motion to accept the recommendation and Councilman Patterson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Administrator Carter asked Council if they would like to buy an ad in the local Veteran’s Day booklet done by the County Veteran’s Association. Last year we purchased ½ a page ad for $200.00. Councilman Stroupe made the motion for the purchase and Councilman Patterson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

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Mayor Hogue introduced Mr. Terry Fant, the town auditor, and asked him to give his report of the Town’s finances for the fiscal year 2017-2018. He began with the Water and Sewer Department. He gave an overview of the revenue and expenses. The revenue was up due in part to penalties and service fees being paid accordingly. Operating revenues were up about $45,000. Operating expenses were down due to the water purchasing being less because we didn’t have any large water loss and movement of two employees to the general fund. The overall look for the Water and Sewer Department is real good.

The General Fund isn’t doing as well. The first issue is there is a deficit of $125,000 from last year’s budget. It wasn’t balanced by department. Another problem is that the state shared revenue wasn’t as much as it has been in previous years. The C-Funds have also been removed from the town and the revenue given to the Cherokee Transportation Committee for use as they see fit. This was a state mandated change. The revenue is somewhat steady even with the aforementioned changes. The expenses, however, is where the biggest deficit lies. With the moving of two employees from the water department to the town, salaries were also moved which changes the expenses for the General Fund. Also, the expense of the comprehensive planning for the park, cutting of trees, police expenses, SCMIRF insurance allocations to all departments and downtown revitalization were included but there was no revenue to offset it. The Town revenue minus your expenses, the General Fund is at a deficit of $289,990.

The overall audit is good due to the fact that the reserve funds on hand being five to six months while the recommended amount is two and a half months for governmental entities. Councilman Stroupe made the motion to approve the audit as presented. Councilman Patterson seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Administrator Carter brought before Council the 2019 budget amendment and discussion. She mentioned that the money that was budgeted for the comprehensive plan was $70,000 but only spent only $49,000 and then bought the dealership building for $13,000 with some of the remaining money. She said she had worked with Terry, our auditor, to propose the amended budget balanced. The fines and forfeitures were lowered, after review, from $170,000 to $130,000. That is an amount closer to the prior year. We were also able to reduce the expense to the State for the fines and forfeitures. She explained the “Cost sharing”, where an employee is paid from one department but works a significant portion of time in both departments. Clerk Foster and Administrator Carter are paid out of the general fund but both do a lot of work with water and sewer, therefore, water and sewer can pay a portion of these salaries back to the general fund. It is the same with street and parks departments that work a portion of their time in different departments. A total of $134,864 can be made with quarterly payments from the water to replace those salaries. We also have the chance to reduce the SCMIRF liability insurance with a few updates to policies. They will re-evaluate us after August 24th and give us a new our new premium. Council then discussed the budget as a whole and compared it to the previous years. Mayor Hogue didn’t agree with the new budget being more than the last budget since it wasn’t met. After much discussion, Mayor Hogue asked for a motion to approve the amendment to the new 2019 budget in the amount of $3,610,786. Councilman Ford made the motion to approve the amendment. Councilman Stroupe made the second with an exception and wants to meet with Administrator Carter to further discuss the changes and have better understanding before the next reading. Mayor Hogue did not vote but the rest of Council agreed, therefore, the motion carried.

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The next item was departmental updates. Police Chief Ham updated about the need for two new officers with the resignation of Officer Tammy Levister and one officer being moved to the new SRO position. He also mentioned there would be overtime due to officer’s having personal problems with illnesses. Chief Ham then mentioned the changes with the insurance were detrimental to the moral of his department. Mayor Hogue stated that we try to have the best insurance we can for all employees. Administrator Carter then explained the changes as best she could.

Mayor Hogue then asked for a motion to go into executive session. Councilman Stroupe made the motion and Councilman Patterson seconded the motion. All were in favor. Councilman Patterson made the motion to return to regular session. Councilman Stroupe seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Upon return Mayor Hogue introduced Mr. Will Cobb, who was representing the Blacksburg Hall of Fame, which was approved at the last meeting. Mr. Cobb had a list of inductees recommended by the committee established for the Hall of Fame. The nominees most have either been born, had a business in the town or have made a contribution to the betterment of the town. No more than five members can be added a year but at least two will be added every year starting with 2019. The committee will present new nominees every April for approval by Town Council. The public and council can suggest to the committee persons for consideration, however, the final recommendation will be made from the committee. Anyone wanting to make a recommendation should do so to a committee member during the month of January. There will be a plaque made and placed in the museum. The first year there are 15 recommendations for Council to consider. The nominees are: Founders-Dr. William Anderson, Dr. John Gailiard Black, Jacob Augustus Deal, Major John Franklin Jones and Cr. David Summey Ramsuer. Departed-Gregg Winslow “Dub” Blanton, Cr. Thomas Alexander Campbell, Cr. Bobby Gilmer Moss, Heyward William Porter, Alan W. Silverman. Living-Edward Brown, Dr. Ladson L. Dubose, Orline Childers Moss, Van Stephan Moss, Harold Dean Pennington, Sr. Mayor Hogue made motion to approve the list of inductees as presented. Councilman Patterson seconded his motion and all were in favor.

For the personnel portion of the executive session, Councilman Patterson made the motion to hire Mr. James Bolton to replace the officer who resigned. Councilman Stroupe made the second. All were in favor. Mayor Hogue made the motion to hire Mr. William Boyce Peeler to replace Officer Tracy Fowler who will be moved as the new SRO to the elementary school. Councilman Stroupe made the second. All were in favor.

Clerk Foster asked Council to approve sewer adjustments in the amount of $703.31 including leaks and pools. Councilman Stroupe made the motion to approve the request with Councilman Patterson making the second. All were in favor.

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With no further business to discuss, Councilman Patterson made the motion to adjourn. Councilman Ford made the second. All were in favor. The time of adjournment was 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura B. Foster

Town Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Mayor, Town of Blacksburg, SC