

Town of Lovettsville

Town Council Minutes of the May 7, 2015 Special Meeting

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Robert Zoldos II called the Special Meeting of the Lovettsville Town Council to order at 7:34 p.m. on May 7, 2015 at the Lovettsville Town Hall, 6 East Pennsylvania Avenue, Lovettsville, VA.

Council Members Present

- Mayor Robert Zoldos II
- Vice Mayor Michael Senate
- Council Member Kimberly Allar
- Council Member Tiffany Carder
- Council Member Rodney Gray
- Council Member Jennifer Jones (arrived at 7:44 p.m.)
- Council Member James McIntyre

Staff Present

- Town Manager Laszlo Palko
- Project Manager Karin Fellers
- Town Clerk Harriet West

Mayor Zoldos announced that there would be no closed session. He then led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Comments from the Public

The Mayor called for comments from the public. There were none.

Additions/Deletions/Modifications to the Agenda

The following item was added to the agenda: Fire Fee Update.

Action/Discussion Items

A. Letter of Support for Wellhead Protection Grant Application

Project Manager Fellers presented this item. The Council is being asked to provide a letter of support to the Wellhead Protection Grant Application.

Motion: I move that Town Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of support on the Council's behalf and provide to the Project Manager by May 8, 2015 to include in the Wellhead Protection Implementation Grant Application Package.

By: Council Member McIntyre

Second: Council Member Carder

Aye: Council Members Allar, Carder, Gray, McIntyre, and Senate

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Council Member Jones

B. Inspections of Sprinkler Systems

Project Manager Fellers presented this item. After checking with the Loudoun County Fire Marshall's Office about sprinkler inspection services provided by the County, staff recommends that an annual inspection by Town staff is advisable to ensure the connection is appropriate and safe for the other customers on the water system. Staff further recommends that the Town charge an annual \$80 Fire Sprinkler Fee. This fee would be for each separate fire sprinkler system connected to the Town's system. The fee would be split evenly between the four quarterly water/sewer bills and would only apply to commercial and government facilities, and apartments. The amount of the fee is based on estimated staff time to conduct the inspection. The Council agreed to add the \$80 fee to the FY 2016 Rates & Fee Schedule.

C. Budget Work Session

The Town Manager and Project Manager presented recommendations for the Capital Budget including:

- Completing Phase 1 of the East Broad Way project and other future streetscape improvements (Phase 2 of East Broadway, S. Loudoun Street, S. Church Street), and downtown parking.
- Improvements to the Quarter Branch Park and Barn.
- Options for a new Town Hall and providing space for potential new, part-time employees.
- The new Welcome Sign at the Community Center and the Town Information Sign.
- Enhancements to the Town Green and Town Square.
- Conducting an economic development study, possibly in partnership with the City of Brunswick.

Staff then reviewed the Operating Budget for the Utility Fund and discussed the following with the Council:

- Using future water/sewer availability fees to pay down the debt.
- Replacing manual read meters with radio read meters.
- Setting up internal maintenance programs.
- Enhancements to the water/sewer system.
- An asset management plan.

The Council took a brief recess from 9:28 p.m. to 9:36 p.m. Manager Palko then continued reviewing and discussing the General Fund Budget with the Council, including:

- Establishing a charitable donations fund to assist Town residents with their water/sewer bills.
- Hiring a part-time Events Coordinator, Customer Service Representative, and Economic Development Coordinator.
- Using the projected \$25,000 surplus to build up reserves, hire the Events Coordinator, reduce the proposed water/sewer rate increase, or increase the compensation available for hiring the Economic Development Coordinator.
- Creating reserve funding to improve transparency.

Manager Palko discussed the two main budget options, including eliminating the trash subsidy or raising the utility rate by 30%. Mayor Zoldos stated that if the Council truly accepts that this is a transitional year during which the Town's major commercial projects come online, then they can "stair-step" to where they want to be, with utility paying for utility and general paying for general. He suggested they could go one more year without the Events Coordinator. The Council agreed that an increase in utility rates would be hard on many families. They also discussed at length the need to add additional staff capacity to maintain service levels.

Mayor Zoldos suggested that the Council Members further review the Town Manager's recommended budget options and come prepared to discuss items they would be willing to give up when the Council meets next.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Harriet West, Town Clerk

Date Approved: March 10, 2016

Attachments:
None