

MINUTES

The Board of Councilmen of the Town of Rural Hall held their regular meeting on November 12, 2019 at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Council Chambers. The following members were present: Mayor Larry T. Williams - presiding; Mayor Pro Tem John N. McDermon; Councilman Timothy M. Flinchum; Councilman C. Thomas Griggs; Councilman Ricky S. Plunkett; Town Manager Megan M. Garner; and Town Clerk Dora K. Moore. Town Attorney D. Barrett Burge was not in attendance.

Pledge of allegiance to the flag was led by Clerk Moore.

Public Comment Period:

No one spoke.

Approval of Minutes: Councilman C. Thomas Griggs made a motion to approve the October 14, 2019 regular meeting minutes and November 4, 2019 agenda briefing minutes. Councilman Timothy M. Flinchum seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & MEETING UPDATES:

Municipal Election Update: Mayor Williams congratulated the following on their recent elections to the Town Council – Tim Flinchum, Mayor; Susan Hawks, Council; and John McDermon, Council. He extended condolences to Councilman Griggs on not winning reelection. Mayor Williams noted voter turnout was good.

Rural Hall Fire Department Banquet: Rural Hall Fire Department's annual banquet is Saturday, November 16 at 6:30 PM.

Holiday Concert: The Triad Community Band will have a holiday concert at Rural Hall Moravian Church on Thursday, November 21 at 7:00 PM.

Retirement Reception – Mayor Williams: A retirement reception for Mayor Williams, who has served the Town as an elected official for 40 years, will be Sunday, November 24 at Town Hall from 2:00 PM until 4:00 PM.

Christmas Tree Lighting: The annual Christmas Tree Lighting will be Thursday, December 5 at 6:00 PM at Town Hall.

Christmas Parade: The annual Christmas Parade will be Sunday, December 8 at 2:30 PM. A rain date of Sunday, December 15 is scheduled. In the event of inclement weather, a decision is typically made by 10 AM the day of the parade. Manager Garner shared the Town's Public Works fleet will be used for the Council. Council can ride in the cab of the truck or a haybale and blanket will be placed in the bed of the truck.

Public Hearing – Tobaccoville Annexation Agreement: The Town's 20-year annexation agreement with the Village of Tobaccoville expires January 2020. The Town will have a public hearing on Monday, December 9 at 7:00 PM. The Village of Tobaccoville will hold their public hearing in January. The agreement is nearly verbatim with no changes in boundaries.

NEW BUSINESS:

Personnel Policy Revision – Probationary Period: Manager Garner reported that when the Town joined the State Health Plan (SHP), the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should have been compared with the Personnel Policy. The SHP requires new hires to be enrolled within 30 days of employment while the Personnel Policy has a 90-day probationary period for benefits. Staff followed the Personnel Policy of 90 days and this recently caused issues with the SHP. Fortunately, the SHP allowed an exception this time. Manager Garner presented proposed changes to the Personnel Policy related to the probationary period:

- New hires will receive benefits including insurance, holiday pay, vacation/sick leave accrual when hired.
- The existing 90-day probationary period changes to 6 months and can be extended an additional 90 days by the Town Manager.
- Two performance evaluations will be conducted by the Department Head. The first at 3 months and the other at the end of the probationary period when a recommendation will be made to retain or terminate the employee.
- Vacation leave during the first six months of the probationary period is not permitted unless an exception is approved in writing by the Department Head.
- Leave without pay is permitted but extends the probationary period.

The proposed changes will bring the Town in line with the SHP. It will also eliminate the manual process in payroll of removing holidays during the probationary period and compensating the employee after the probationary period. Councilman Ricky S. Plunkett made a motion approving proposed probationary period changes to the Personnel Policy. Mayor Pro Tem John N. McDermon seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. *(The proposed wording is included with the minutes and incorporated in the Personnel Policy.)*

2020-2021 Budget Calendar: The 2020-2021 Budget Calendar is nearly identical to the current fiscal year calendar. A budget work session for the Council will be held after the budget presentation. Manager Garner also noted a planning session will be held sometime after the first of the year once the new Council is seated. Mayor Pro Tem John N. McDermon made a motion to approve the 2020-2021 Budget Calendar. Councilman Timothy M. Flinchum seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. *(2020-2021 Budget Calendar has been placed in the Minute Book.)*

2019-2020 Budget Amendment: Manager Garner presented a budget amendment to the Council reflecting additional revenues in sale of fixed assets in general government. This additional revenue will be used to purchase a special events trailer. Revenue in the Fire Department's sale of fixed assets is greater than anticipated as well. This additional revenue will be used to replace fire hose that failed hose testing. A fund balance appropriation will be used to replace a heating/AC unit at the fire station that has recently gone out. Councilman Ricky S. Plunkett made a motion to approve the 2019-2020 Budget Amendment has presented. Mayor Pro Tem John N. McDermon seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. *(Ordinance #803 has been placed in the Ordinance Book.)*

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilman Ricky S. Plunkett to adjourn at 7:18 PM.



Dora K. Moore
Town Clerk