

**TOWN OF WACHAPREAGUE
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
December 14th, 2023**

COUNCIL PRESENT:

Charles Elliott, Mayor
Sandie Puchalski, Vice Mayor
Robert Williams
Glenn Schagelin
Stephen Joseph
Aileen Joeckel
Robert Bilicki

Charlie Gible-Town Clerk

Town Council Meeting

7:00 PM Meeting began.

Councilman Glen Schagelin said a prayer.
The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

TOWN OF WACHAPREAGUE COUNCIL MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Charles Elliot.

I. Public comments

There were no public comments.

II. Town Council Meeting

November 9, 2023, minutes were reviewed.
Councilman Bob Bilicki asked to have an address for the green building in section E of the minutes.
The Town Clerk said she would look it up on Accomaps and add the address to the minutes.
Councilman Glenn Schagelin motioned to approve the minutes from November 9th, 2023 with the changes.
Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski 2nd the motion.
All agreed.

III. Review of Financial Report

Mayor Charles Elliot asked the council to review the town's financials for November 2023.
Town Clerk Charlie Gible said a lot of the names on the list that show they owe money have been paid.
They were taxes and the town has received a stack of payments since the financials had been printed.
Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski motioned to approve the town financials for November 2023.
Councilman Bob Williams 2nd the motion.
All agreed.

Marina's financials for November 2023 were reviewed.

Councilman Bob Williams motioned to approve the town marinas budget for November 2023

Councilman Aillen Joeckel 2nd the motion.

All agreed.

IV. Unfinished Business

A. Maintenance

Councilman Glenn Schagelin stated everything is going well in the maintenance department. No complaints from the guys.

Councilman Bob Williams stated the maintenance crew cleaned the ditch at the Thibodeaux property.

He stated that the guys should sweep all the ditches in town while they do not have lawns to mow.

Councilman Bob Williams reported this would be something that could be reported to the CRS program which would help the town's insurance rates.

Councilman Bob Bilicki said he noticed the marina parking lot is having trees removed.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski Stated Gene Gibson asked Richie to remove the trees.

JD and Robert will take the brush to the dump.

B. Powell Park

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski said the bathrooms at Powell Park have been winterized.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski spoke about the rule signs to be installed at the dog park.

She stated one sign says if you have an aggressive dog, it must remain leashed while in the park.

She has another sign she is waiting to be delivered. This one will state you must clean up after your dog.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski spoke about a repair that was made on the tarp that is on the fence at Powell Park.

She stated Richie Puchalski and herself worked on fixing it.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski spoke about the need for a stump grinder.

She said Gene Gibson will need the use of one and one is needed at Powell Park for several trees that were taken down.

Council man Steve Joseph said that Brian Kopp has a stump grinder.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski thought the town could split the cost of a stump grinder with Gene Gibson.

She stated she hasn't asked him yet. She wanted to run the idea by council first.

Councilman Bob Williams said we have \$3000.00 in the budget and only \$525.00 had been spent.

Council man Steve Joseph made a motion to spend \$800.00 on a stump project for Powell Park.

Councilman Bob Bilicki 2nd the motion

Everyone agreed.

C. Seaside Park

Councilman Stephen Joseph stated the brackets had arrived for the gazebo repairs.

Councilman Steve Joseph inquired as to whether Rory had been paid already to install the brackets.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski said she would get in touch with Rory.

D. HRSD

Councilman Steve Joseph said the kickoff for the Sewer project went well. He stated it gave him a chance to speak with many people involved in the project and pick their brains.

Councilman Steve Joseph said he spoke to delegate Rob Bloxom regarding our cell phone service problem.

He asked him to please bring this up whenever he can at their meetings.

Councilman Bob Bilicki said they are planning to have sewer completed by April 2024.

Councilman Stephen Joseph said they are interested in any survey we may have they show interest in expansion of sewer in town.

Councilman Steve Joseph said the entire town has been physically surveyed. That portion of the work will be completed if the town decides to expand the sewer.

Councilman Stephen Joseph asked Aileen Joeckel if the planning commission would do a survey.

Councilman Aileen Joeckel inquired as to when they would like to have that done.

Councilman Stephen Joseph asked if they would when they can do a survey.

He stated he realized the commission has a lot on their plate right now.

E. Derelict Properties

Councilman Stephen Joseph said he texted Patrica Bragg about purchasing her property on 48 Main St. He will be meeting with her.

Mayor Charles Elliott said several letters were sent to Irene Carr about her two properties on 7 and 15 Main St., Wachapreague.

Mayor Charles Elliot stated that Allen Stephens who owns the property, 11 Main St, next door to, 15 Main St. had a tree limb fall on his fence twice. The tree was from the property on 15 Main.

Councilman Bob Bilicki spoke about the lot the Trout's used to own. He stated this has been going on since 2017. He said he believed the property had been transferred to the granddaughter. Councilman Bob Bilicki said we sent a letter and about three to 4 months later they do something regarding the lawn.

Mayor Charles Elliott said he will get together with Town Clerk Charlie to figure out how to use the DMV to enforce late and overdue payments.

F. Marina

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski said the marina has been winterized. Work will start on the bathrooms after the new year. The VPA project is planned to start in January. She will ask for a carryover in the event they do not start in time so the money for the project is not lost.

Vice Mayor Sandi Puchalski said she completed and submitted the renewal for the dredge permit.

Vice Mayor Sandi Puchalski said that she was contacted by a contractor regarding needing access and use the marina property for storage. She said she will get in touch with Paul regarding using his marina if they are not finished by April.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski said maybe some of the containers could be stored there.

G. Tourism

Councilman Aileen Joeckel spoke about the advertorial. She handed out a display of it and explained where the ads would go. Councilman Aileen Jockel said once they receive the proof the check has cleared, they will send it in to get a refund from the ARPA Grant.

Councilman Aileen Joeckel stated that the Tourism Commission is going to be using Zink Media which is an immersion documentary series. They are known internationally. Originally the tourism commission was going to pay for our advertorial. (That was the extra \$5000.00 they were going to give to us.) They said they will pay \$6000 to Zink Media and the town will pay \$4000.00 for the advertorial. She said Zink Media charges \$6000.00 a day.

Councilman Aileen Joeckel stated Eric Fisher is a wildlife photographer. He will be taking photographs at the Barrier Island and Zink Media will be filming.

Councilman Ailene said it will cost \$3000.00 to use Eric Fisher. Councilman Aileen Joeckel said she will need approval to spend \$3000.00 for Eric Fisher and \$8000.00 for a Stellar Influencer. They will find the influencer best suited for the area. She said to get the grant money there needs to be a contract and the work needs to be completed by June.

She said all together there is an expense of \$4000.00 for the advertorial, \$6000.00 for Zink media, (the tourism committee is covering that full price), Eric Fisher is \$3000.00 and Steller influencer is \$8000.00 That's a total of \$21,000.00. The town needs to kick in the \$3000.00 and the \$8000.00. Wachapreague pays for it and then we get reimbursed by the grant.

Councilman Aileen Joeckel stated we need to make a motion to spend \$3000.00 for Eric Fisher and \$8000.00 for Steller Influencer.

Vice Mayo Sandie Puchalski made a motion that we approve the \$11,000 from the tourism budget that will be reimbursed.

Councilman Glenn Schagelin 2nd the motion.

All Agreed.

Councilman Glenn Schagelin said that the light on the Wachapreague sign that we rent from Chris Wardius has not been fixed. He stated it would be fixed at the last meeting.

Councilman Stephen Joseph texted Chris Wardius at the meeting. Chris responded with he will fix the light.

H. Floodplain Adm/CRS

Councilman Bob Bilicki said we got the acknowledgement that we have been recertified by CRS.

Councilman Bob Willams told Councilman Bob Bilicki that he has class coming up.

I. Town Beautification

Councilman Bob Williams said that we need to investigate buying new garland. He said we need to look at a plan and purchase something that will last. He also spoke about the small wreath and possibly changing that.

J. Safety and Security

Councilman Bob Williams said after the holidays he will have the computer up and running for the speed sign.

He said it will check the speed every half hour and be able to download the information.

K. Historic District

Mayor Charles Elliott stated that Lucky Levins will not continue the Hometown Heros Banners.

Councilman Bob Williams stated that Lucky and Ro did an excellent job.

Councilman Bob Bilicki stated the manufacturer requires the information showing the person that served had been honorably discharged. They do not want to be responsible for hanging a banner of someone that was discharged dishonorably.

Councilman Glenn Schagelin asked how many banners were put up.

Councilman Bob Bilicki thought it was approximately 16 once and 18 the second time, give or take.

Vice Mayor Charles Elliott asked what we do when they wear out.

Councilman Steve Joseph stated we should talk to the people that donated them and see if they want to order another one when needed.

Jim Bell said we will need some skin in the game for the next grant needed for the Historic District.

L. Streets and Drainage

Councilman Bob Williams said he is working on VDOT to make repairs.

He said the guys need to work on the drains while they do not have lawns to mow.

Councilman Glenn Schagelin asked if you can use the leaf vacuum on wet leaves. Councilman Bob Willams said yes. He stated the machine will mulch also.

M. Planning Commission

Councilman Aileen Jockel said they are getting ready to send the business letters. She wanted a letter approved that will go out with the business licenses applications. She had a cover letter that will be sent to the businesses that pay a transient tax.

Councilman Aileen Jockel question the house on Center St. (tax map #113A-A-121) that was operating as an Air BnB. Vice Mayor Sandi Puchalski said she spoke with the owner, and he said his deed stated it was zoned neighborhood commercial so he assumed it would be ok. Jim Bell said he will check into it.

Councilman Aileen Joeckel asked the council too approve Jim Bell access to the town's subscription to Accomap. The council approved Jim Bells access to use the towns subscription to Accomap.

Councilman Aileen Joeckel said they are looking for people to serve on the planning commission. They are looking into making changes that will allow people on the planning commission to focus on certain areas instead of working on the entire town project.

There was discussion regarding bed and breakfast rentals. It was stated the owner must live full-time in their home and provide breakfast.

Short-term rentals are only allowed in the business district.

Jim Bell asked what the town attorney thoughts were on the town's ordinances regarding Air B & B and short-term rentals.

Mayor Charles Elliott said he will investigate.

N. Dog Park

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski said the rules for the dog park sign are:

Owners or caretakers must be in the dog park with their dog.

A leash must be on the dog if they are aggressive.

The owner or caretaker must clean up after their dog.

She stated one sign is up, and we are waiting on the other one.

N. Community News

Nothing to report.

O. Adjournment

Councilman Glenn Schagelin Motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski 2nd the motion.

All Agreed