

TOWN OF WACHAPREAGUE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

August 12, 2021

COUNCIL PRESENT:

*Fred Janci, Mayor
Sandie Puchalski, Vice Mayor; Robert Williams;
Robert Bilicki; Glenn Schagelin; Margo Digan*

COUNCIL ABSENT: Stephen Joseph

TOWN CLERK: Charlie Gibble

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

I. Call to Order – *Fred Janci, Mayor called to order the Town Council Meeting at 7:00. PM, Thursday, August 12, 2021 in the Wachapreague Vol. Fire House in Wachapreague, VA.*

II. Opening Prayer- *Councilman Glen Schagelin led the meeting in prayer.*

III. Pledge of Allegiance – *Mayor Fred Janci led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.*

IV Public Comments –

Sewer:

Bonnie Munn questioned the survey. She wanted to know why it said commercial properties and not residential.

Councilman Glenn Schagelin stated that you could cross off commercial and write in resident.

Councilman Bob Williams stated that the sewer line coming in is concentrating on the commercial business.

Resident are not require to hook up.

Mayor Fred Janci said maybe five years from now the town residence will hook into the sewer line.

No one can tie into the main line because it is pressurized. Mayor Janci said the town will have the opportunity to vote on the sewer.

Bonnie Munn wanted to know who was going to maintain the system once it is in.

Mayor Janci responded that HRSD will maintain the system.

Jack Sherman was concern if the system would go down what would happen?

Councilman Bob Williams said he was sure that HRSD would be set up to respond in a timely manner if something like that were to happen.

Mayor Fred Janci reported that HRSD will maintain full responsibility of maintenance once the sewer line is completed.

Grove Jones asked about the cost of HRSD.

Major Fred Janci said Jimmy Bundick estimated the cost to hook up to be around \$10,000. He stated that HRSD is estimating the monthly figure to be around \$60.00 a month.

Fireworks:

Jack Sherman spoke about a letter written by Councilman Margo Digan regarding the fireworks in town. He told Margo Digan he didn't feel she had the town's best interest in mind because she was not supporting the fireworks.

John and Joanne Eshleman also stated their support of the town's fireworks. They said we need to support functions that the kids and young adults enjoy. They said the town should get to decide if the fireworks continue. They didn't think it was right that one person should have the right to take the firework display from the town.

Mayor Fred Janci stated that we need to look at the legal aspects of the fireworks. He stated they are illegal. They need to be set off by a licensed technician.

Vice Mayor Sandie stated we have looked into what is involved to make the firework show legal. She stated there is no courses within reach of them and the state no longer offers courses due to Covid, and lack of interest.

We did the fireworks the last 10 years to celebrate the 4th of July and our freedom. We brought people into the town, which helped the carnival, and the Island House with business.99% of the town loved the fireworks."

Council Margo Digan stated she wasn't against fireworks, it was how they were done, without the proper permits etc. She said her common concern was" how do we get people to follow the town ordinances if we aren't doing what is right?"

Vice Mayor Sandie stated that there are 1 or 2 people that want to stop them. Sandie stated we always kept Town Council out of the firework production.

Vice Mayor Puchalski stated that She and Richie were told by a higher up it is better to ask for forgiveness than to ask for permission.

Vice Mayor Sandie said once you are a licensed technician you must do 4 shows a year. She stated" the fireworks are pretty much out"

Councilman Margo stated that next year the town needs to get together and say we want the fireworks

She said that we need to start planning for next year. " We need to go on record that this is how we are doing the fireworks." She wants the fireworks done right.

Vice Mayor wanted it on record that she and Richie had no intention to involve the town.

- *Cathy Janci expressed her opinion regarding Councilman Bob Bilicki's role on town council. She stated he should be removed from council.
She reported as long as he works for VIMS there is a conflict of interest.*
- *Jim Bell spoke about the historic district. He said he surveyed about 40 properties and is working on designating a Historic District Area in Wachapreague.
He stated that there will be strangers in town September, October, and November looking at the history of homes. He also reported that he and his wife are starting a nonprofit for this project and they are looking for volunteers.*
- *Mayor Fred asked if the minutes for July 8, 2021 were reviewed.
A motion to accept minutes by Councilman Bob Williams.
Motion to 2nd by Councilman Margo Digan.
A vote was taken and all agreed.*

V. Review of Financial Report

- *Mayor Fred Janci asked to review the Town financials for July 2021.
Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski motioned to approve, Councilman Bob Bilicki 2nd the motion. All agreed.*
- *Mayor Fred Janci asked if everyone had a chance to review the Port Financials for July 2021.
A motion was made to approve by Councilman Bob Bilicki.*

Councilman Bob Williams seconded the motion. All agreed.

VI. Unfinished Business

A. Fred Responded to Bob Bilicki's letter to him

Copies of letter are available at Town Hall.

B. Grants

- *Mayor Fred Janci asked about the CARES Grant.*

Town Clerk Charlie Gible reported that we had \$3778.00 left and it needs to be used by the end of the Calendar year.

Mayor Fred Janci suggested giving it to the fire company to cover meetings held there.

Vice Mayor Sandy Puchalski asked what else could it be used for.

Town Clerk Charlie Gible responded that you could divide it between your town employees. She stated in PA that the majority of companies paid their employees who worked during the Pandemic an extra \$5.00 an hour. She stated that the employees were in direct contact with other individuals and at a higher risk than the people who stayed home and collected unemployment and an extra \$300.00 a week. She also stated that everyone that owned an air B&B received an extra \$2100.00 from the CARES act. The town employees received nothing from this grant. It states in the Grant that this money can be used to pay employees.

She reported on the ARPA Grant. She stated that the town has until December 31, 2026 to use the money. It has to be expenses that incur between the period of March 3, 2021 and December 31, 2024.

Gible stated that she included paperwork in the town hall packet regarding how the money could be spent. A report needs to be submitted by October 31, 2021.

C. HRSD

Councilman Bob Bilicki addressed questions that Grover Jones had asked in a letter written to Town Council regarding HRSD. His response to Grover's question, "why wasn't VIMS sewer usage higher"? Bilicki stated they aren't adding any additional students or employees to VIMS.

"They are just replacing old buildings with new ones". He stated that the number of students and employees will remain the same.

D. Town Maintenance

- *Councilman Glen Schagelin discussed the table at town hall.*
Councilman Bob Williams said there is a product that can fix the table if the leg can be straightened out.

Williams stated that there are stumps at Powell Park that need removed.

Vice Mayor Puchalski stated it is very expensive to remove them. She stated they needed to get a price to take care of them.

E. Powell Park

- *Vice Mayor Puchalski commented on the pile of dirt at Powell Park. She stated it is used to grade the baseball field.*
Vice Mayor Sandy said there is brush that needs cleaned up at Powell Park.

F. Seaside Park

- *Nothing new at Seaside Park*

G. Town Beautification

- *Nothing new to report*

H. Derelict Properties

- *Mayor Fred Janci asked to have a letter written to the owners of 6 High St. regarding the high grass. Mayor Fred Janci said to tell the owners they have 30 days to mow. If not mowed, the town will mow the lawn at \$100.00 each time needed. The lawn will continue to be mowed by the town whenever it reaches 12 inches. The mowing charge will be added to their taxes.*
- *Buddy Barnes home was discussed by Vice Mayor Sandie. Vice Mayor Sandie stated that David Moon, purchaser of Buddy Barnes home, wasn't planning to spend any more money on the house until they settled.*

I. Safety and Security

Councilman Bob Williams stated that \$1500.00 was still needed for the solar radar sign. Councilman Bob Williams asked if we could take the money out of reserves.

A roll call vote was taken to use funds from the reserves.

Councilman Bob Bilicki	Voted yes
Councilman Bob Williams	Voted yes
Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski	Voted Yes
Councilman Glenn Schagelin	Voted Yes
Councilman Margo Digan	Voted Yes
Councilman Stephen Joseph	Absent

J. Zoning

Mayor Fred Janci spoke to Councilman Glen Schagelin regarding applying for a permit for his Air B&B.

Mayor Janci told Councilman Glen he would be turned down and would need to apply for a variance.

Mayor Fred Janci stated Aileen Joeckel needed to be reinstated to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Councilman Bob Williams stated that Tamika Watkinson needed to be reinstated to the Planning Commission.

Councilman Margo Digan made the motion to reinstate Eileen Joeckel to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Councilman Bilicki seconded the motion.

All agreed with the exception of Councilman Glen Schagelin. He stood down.

Councilman Margo Digan made the motion to reinstate Eileen Joeckel and Tamika Watkinson to the Planning Commission.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski seconded the motion. All Agreed.

K. Streets and Drainage, Floodplain Administrator/CRS Coordinator/ A-NPDC/RAFT

Councilman Bob Williams reported that after speaking with Rob Duma regarding the town's main sewer line that the town should wait. There would not be enough time to pull everything together in order to use the VA preparedness grant.

Councilman Bob Williams stated we are receiving brochures about flood prevention and hurricanes. This will help with the CRS program. They want to know that the town takes an initiative to educate the people.

L. Planning Commission

Councilman Bob Bilicki stated that VDOT rejected the sign variance on the South East Corner of 180 and 13 because it is located on the scenic route.

He reported that the railway and Randy Lewis gave approval for the north east corner. Bilicki submitted that area for placement of the sign.

M. Tourism/Events

Councilman Bob Bilicki reported that He and Brian Collins spoke with the fire company to bring music to the carnival grounds. They are planning on food and music as a joint venture to raise money for the town and the fire company. This event will probably take place mid to late October.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski stated that they were asked to wait and not do anything regarding the bird platform until the Nature Conservatory decides what they want to do.

Councilman Margo Digan discussed the boat ride to see the “oyster castles” and the work that the Conservatory had in progress. The date is September 8th at 4:30.

P. Planning Commission

Councilman Margo Digan stated that they are working hard on goals. She reported that Jim Bell was a big help in guiding the committee to focus on smaller projects and to stay actively involved. Digan stated there was a problem with absenteeism. There are a few of the committee members who consistently do not show up for meetings.

Councilman Bob Williams asked, “How are we going to do it is the biggest obstacle for the planning commission?”.

O. July 2021 Meeting

Mayor Fred Janci inquired about 13 High St.

Town Clerk Charlie Gible stated letters were written to the Honeycutt’s and Eileen Joeckel.

Mayor Fred Janci reported that Joe Vodvarka knows that the trailers need to be moved every 180 days. He believes that FEMA will have to be notified regarding this.

Councilman Bob Bilicki stated that FEMA says it is the town’s responsibility to take care of the problem.

VIII. Q. New Business

- Elections

Councilman Bob Williams read the new ordinance regarding changing the elections for town council and mayor from May to the even years in November.

This will correspond with VA government elections and save the town money.

Vice Mayor Sandie Puchalski made a motion to adopt the ordinance. Councilman Glenn Schagelin seconded the motion.

The vote was polled.

Councilman Bob Bilicki	Voted	Yes
Councilman Margo Digan	Voted	Yes
Vice Mayor Sandi Puchalski	Voted	Yes
Councilman Glenn Schagelin	Voted	Yes
Councilman Bob Williams	Voted	Yes
Councilman Stephen Joseph	absent	

All Agreed.

Town Council went into a closed session

IX. Adjournment

Councilman Glenn Schagelin motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Bob Williams 2nd the motion. All Agreed.

MAYOR

TOWN CLERK

5/13/2021