

**MINUTES OF THE STRASBURG TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2023 AT 7:00 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE STRASBURG TOWN HALL.**

**Call to Order:** Mayor Boies called the meeting to order.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Council Member Hooser led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Invocation:** Council Member Lowder offered the invocation.

**Roll Call:**

**ROLL Called with the following members present: Mayor Boies, Vice Mayor Reynolds, and Council Members Carter, Hooser, Kimmons, Lowder, Monahan, Ricard, and Stover. Absent: Council Members**

**Public Hearings:** None

**Introduction and Recognition of Visitors and Guests:**

- GFOA Award

**Town Manager Coggsdale** said this is for the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. In the past we received the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and the Popular Annual Financial Report, so this award has given the town the “triple crown” in finance reporting. **Town Manager Coggsdale** said **Director of Finance Fletcher** and her staff do a great job in getting the budget out.

- Monthly Employee Update

<u>New Employees</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Eunice Terndrup	Strategic Initiatives	03/29/2023
Michael Holman	Public Safety	4/17/2023
Brent Hankins	Water Treatment	4/10/2023
Matthew Seal	Public Works	4/24/2023
<u>Milestones</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Years/Date</u>
Delaina Stroop	Finance	5 years (4/2/18)
Olivia Hilton	Strategic Initiatives	5 years (4/16/23)

**Teresa Shillingburg**, Sr. Administrative Assistant for the Police Department, and **Lt. Jay Magdinec** were in attendance as a requirement for the Shenandoah County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Academy of which they are both participating in.

It was announced that **Mayor Boies** was presented with her 200% Award from the Strasburg Rotary Club for all the work she does in the community.

**Mayor’s Comments:**

**Mayor Boies** said Mayfest Weekend is coming. She thanked all for the hard work that goes into this. It appears it will be a historic festival.

The ribbon cutting for the new historic walking trail took place on Sunday, May 7. There are 10 historic markers that also have QR codes for a more in-depth description. There was also a great Mother’s Day event at the Visitor’s Center. Front Porch Fridays will be starting soon. All of these events bring more stress to the staff but bring a lot to the town.

**Citizen Comments:**

**Consent Agenda:**

- 1) Minutes of the April 3, 2023 Work Session and Minutes of the April 11, 2023 Regular Council meeting.
- 2) Approval of Resolution 23-0401 declaring certain property as surplus and authorizing the Town Manager to execute the sale, trade, donation, or disposal as waste of said property.

**Council Member Lowder moved to approve the consent agenda; second by Council Member Hooser. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Old Business (Discussion and/or Action Items):**

**1.) Proposed FY2024 Budget Discussion**

**Mayor Boies** said this was placed on the agenda to give Council the opportunity to discuss anything they feel has not been completed. There were no comments, and it was noted that this will be placed on the next agenda for final comments before adoption on June 13.

**2.) Water/Sewer Extension Policy Discussion**

**Town Manager Coggsdale** said this was presented to Council at the last Work Session. We are not ready to adopt it as staff are still working with Shenandoah County. This policy will help guide Council in decisions they will need to make as far as development. He was asking for feedback on this draft policy.

**Vice Mayor Reynolds** said when they had questions about the capacity, former **Director of Public Works McKinley** knew the numbers out of his head. Would the data received from the plants be able to answer this or would the town need to do something else?

**Town Manager Coggsdale** said the plant is rated as to capacity. The numbers must be kept and sent to the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), so we know how much is available. But, we would also have to look and see what is on the books or is being proposed. This will help us see if we can meet the need of those interested in using our utilities. We recently had a request made, but the amount needed was not known. We cannot just give a "blank check". We will also need to know what is in the waste as there might be additional treatment that has to be done.

**Council Member Monahan** asked for an example of an administrative decision outside of the town. **Town Manager Coggsdale** said if the property is already served, we really should not be saying no.

**Council Member Hooser** read the section about the annexation in the proposed policy. He asked if it would be more cost effective to not annex them due to the rate charged for water/sewer outside town.

**Town Manager Coggsdale** said this is one of the discussions with Shenandoah County. He said it would have to be decided what would be the best route to take. You sometimes have to weigh an increased utility rate versus taxes. It might depend on who is requesting the extension.

**Council Member Hooser** said when they submit their annexation to the town, is that when the town would weigh this? **Town Manager Coggsdale** said this is one of the sections of the document that needs to be "fleshed out" more. It might be that we create an area that the town might consider; it doesn't mean the town will approve it as it will still need to be a "win" for the town.

**Mayor Boies** said with a policy, when we get a request and an annexation request, then Council would make the decision if it were feasible or not.

**Council Member Monahan** asked how many lots there are that have utilities running in front of them that are not developed. **Town Manager Coggsdale** will look into this. He said Shenandoah County has done a great job of keeping the development in and very close to the towns.

**Council Member Monahan** said if we do not annex property, we are still responsible for the upkeep of any lines that are put in and that is correct. **Town Manager Coggsdale** said a subdivision could master meter and take care of the lines themselves, but he is not a fan of that.

**Town Attorney Helm** said usually the town runs the lines to the property line and then it is the property owner's responsibility.

**Mayor Boies** encouraged all to review this and to email questions to **Town Manager Coggsdale**.

**New Business:**

**1.) Tax Deadline Extension Request**

**Director of Finance Fletcher** said staff received our county tax files on Friday, May 5. It takes the staff 20 days to get the bills ready for printing, etc. State Code requires that bills be mailed out 14 days before the due date. Due to these factors, staff is requesting an extension on tax due dates to June 26.

**Council Member Hooser** moved to extend the June 5<sup>th</sup> tax due date to June 26, 2023 as requested by staff; second by **Council Member Kimmons**. With no additional discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

**Reports:**

**Departmental Reports:**

\*\*\*Complete reports are provided in the Council packet which is available on the town's website at [www.strasburgva.com](http://www.strasburgva.com). Reports are also found on the "Meetings" page of the website (<https://www.strasburgva.com/meetings>).\*\*\*

**Town Manager Coggsdale** said all the reports were included in the packet provided to Council.

**Chief Sager** asked if the additional information provided in this month's report was sufficient for the question asked last month by **Council Member Monahan**; **Council Member Monahan** said it was. She said when she was reading the reports, she was getting worried that the same people were doing the same thing over and over.

**Planning and Zoning Administrator Otis** said he sent an email to all of Council that included the survey from the Berkley Group. It will be busy for the next couple of months for the Planning Commission and Town Council and staff with the work on the UDO. He would like to have comments on the survey back by Friday.

**Chief Sager** wished all the mothers a Happy Mother's Day.

**Special Committee Reports:**

**NSVRC: Council Member Kimmons** said the group did not meet. They will be having a short meeting this coming month at the Regional Airport in Winchester.

**Council Member Items:**

**Council Member Monahan** asked where we are with the Stakeholder's Meeting. **Town Manager Coggsdale** said it will be June 10 at the First Bank Operations Center on Borden-Mowery Drive. He will be sending out a notice tomorrow which will be asking for an RSVP so we will have more of an idea of the interest. The social time will be from 8:30 a.m. – 9 a.m. and then the meeting from 9:00 a.m. – noon. Updates will be given from Shenandoah County and on the rewrite of the UDO.

**Town Manager Coggsdale** asked that Council get ideas to him.

**Mayor Boies** said this is a great networking opportunity for the interested parties.

**Council Member Hooser** said he talked to a couple from out of town who had stayed at Hotel Strasburg when it was in business. They said they would never stay in Strasburg again because of the fire siren going off. His dad lives above his restaurant and the noise is terrible. He feels this is holding back development.

**Council Member Ricard** said Berryville had the same problem and they settled it by allowing it to be sounded at noon every day. She said you feel like a missile is coming whenever it goes off.

**Council Member Stover** said he has a strong opinion on this. Most of the people who were born here do not have a problem with it. There were times that if you were going to be in town, you didn't wear your pager if you were in the fire department because you had the siren to alert you. When he was younger, you knew the trucks were going to be coming out. The department has already cut it down and all the firefighters were upset when they did this. He doesn't want to see it go away. The fire alarm was there when people moved to the houses they are living in. Most of those he has talked with say the "transplants" have a problem with it. He will never vote to get rid of it.

**Vice Mayor Reynolds** said she has gotten a lot of complaints about it recently. She asked if there was a radio upgrade which bolstered the communications for the first responders. **Chief Sager** said **Mellanie Shipe**, Director of Emergency Communications for Shenandoah County, could come and give a detailed report on this. There are things that need to be tweaked. He thinks an in person report would be good.

**Mayor Boies** asked about the complaints **Vice Mayor Reynolds** has heard. **Vice Mayor Reynolds** said a complaint is getting awakened in the middle of the night. Another person said they might get a group together that would like to get rid of the siren. She got the feeling it was concentrated more in the downtown area.

**Council Member Carter** explained that having the audible alarm is vital to our community as it is the background of our emergency people.

**Council Member Lowder** asked if the complaints are for the middle of the night or is it during the day. **Council Member Ricard** said when it rings, they know they will not get any sleep that night. She suggested not using it from 9 p.m. – 6 a.m.

**Council Member Carter** said he would support not using it during the night.

**Vice Mayor Reynolds** said she works in the back of the McCarthy and Akers building and it is disruptive.

**Council Member Hooser** said it is very disruptive to those who live in town.

**Council Member Monahan** asked if it would be possible for **Vice Mayor Reynolds** to have someone from the Strasburg Fire Department come and discuss this.

**Mayor Boies** said it sounds like there is enough interest to continue this discussion. She said she wants all to remember that the first responders are saving lives, so we want to keep this in mind. People are getting out of bed to go and save lives, which is incredible.

**Vice Mayor Reynolds** said she has heard from enough citizens and with the upgrades to the radios, she thinks it is time to have the conversation again.

It was thought a presentation might be good.

**Town Manager Coggsdale** said this has been a good conversation but there are some gaps to fill in.

**Chief Sager** said some data might be beneficial to the decision as this would help them make the right decision. He knows they could get a breakdown of the calls.

**Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.**