

**Narrows Town Council Meeting
May 11, 2020**

Mayor John Davis called the meeting to order. Council members present were Clyde Turner, Jonathan Creger, Tom Garrett, Sarah Thwaites, and Joe Goorskey (arrived late).

Staff members present were Lindsey Caudill, Buddy Kast, Susan Kidd, Cindy Laws, Benji Ratcliffe, Dakota Shrader, and Debbie Thomas.

Councilman Jonathan Creger gave the invocation.

Council and audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of April 13th, April 20th, and May 4th Meeting Minutes

Councilman Garrett said on the April 13th meeting minutes Sarah Thwaites needs to be added to the first paragraph as being present.

Councilman Garrett made a motion to approve the April 13th meeting minutes as amended. Councilmember Thwaites seconded the motion.

Ayes: Thwaites, Garrett, Creger, and Turner

Nays: None

Motion Carried 4-0

(Councilman Goorskey arrived)

Councilmember Thwaites made a motion to approve the April 20th meeting minutes. Councilman Creger seconded the motion.

Ayes: Thwaites, Garrett, Creger, and Turner

Nays: None

Abstain: Goorskey

Motion Carried 4-0

Councilman Creger said on the May 4th meeting minutes the word he used in the last paragraph on the first page was “fiscally” not “physically”.

Councilman Garrett made a motion to approve the May 4th meeting minutes as amended. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Goorskey, Garrett, Creger, and Turner

Nays: None

Abstain: Thwaites

Motion Carried 4-0

Consent Agenda

Cindy Laws said the library is doing very well. As of May 11, 2020, there have been 1,454 adult fiction books cataloged into the Evergreen Online Catalog Program. There are still 800-900 more to be added. After those are added she will add the reference and children's books. Storytime has been going really well with over 400 people viewing at one time. She will begin some new programs, including leadership development classes. She would also like to start a meeting place for the NA program and will work in coordination with Charlie Mullins and the Giles County Drug Court on this. The SCSEP Program will allow the library to become a workstation for the senior population and would provide the library with people to work for her if she is out. There would be no cost to the library for this.

Councilmember Thwaites said she really likes her ideas.

Councilman Creger said the library is going in the right direction and Cindy Laws is doing a great job.

Mayor Davis said he read in the Parks and Recreation Report that Robert Rucker cleaned the park for the town.

Lindsey Caudill said he did a great job.

Mayor Davis said his only question about restrictions at the park is fishing. He did not know he could not fish until one day when he was fishing and was approached by a police officer and told he could not fish while the park was closed. If he had known that he would not have been in the park.

Councilman Garrett said he believes if DGIF has been given access to stock the creek then people have to be given access to fish.

Susan Kidd said fishing is fine but people must be told the bathrooms will not be opened until 10:00 a.m.

Councilman Goorskey said someone probably needs to talk to the town attorney before they tell people they cannot fish there.

Councilman Garrett thanked Dakota Shrader and Lindsey Caudill for helping to deliver lunches to school children in the county.

Councilman Creger asked if there could possibly be something happening on the façade improvements?

Susan Kidd said hopefully. They are waiting for approval from the owners.

Councilman Goorskey asked Dakota Shrader how his meeting went with FNBP about a loan for the Lurich ballfield?

Dakoda Shrader said he received a quote for a loan with the highest numbers and a quote with cuts that were asked to be made.

Councilmember Thwaites said the rates listed are estimates. The current loan rate is around 2.67%. She used a range from 3-5%. They anticipate the rate being under 3%. She bumped up the rate for longer-term financing. The bank tries to give the lowest rate possible.

Councilman Goorskey asked what the estimated yearly increase in revenue will be?

Dakoda Shrader said \$11,000.

Councilman Goorskey said if we are estimating an increase in revenue of \$11,000 that will help cover the loan payment.

Dakoda Shrader said the revenue received from the facility will help pay off the loan.

Councilman Creger said they could probably have the bleachers built.

Mayor Davis said we probably want to purchase the bleachers because if someone would happen to fall off that could be a liability issue.

Councilman Garrett said the difference in the two loan numbers is the bleachers.

Mayor Davis said they have been discussing this for a long time and he would hate to cut corners.

Councilmember Thwaites said her thoughts are to do it and do it right without going over the top.

Councilman Creger said they need to get it built so they can start bringing in revenue.

Councilman Garrett said he would use the cheaper mix and soccer goals can either be donated or fabricated so he would take those two expenses out and finance the rest. It needs to be financed so the payment matches the \$1,100/month savings.

Councilman Goorskey said he believes the rec dept employees will be able to come up with some ways to have fundraising events. There could be tournaments going on during the Fourth of July event and the Fall Festival.

Councilman Garrett said they need to include these figures in next year's budget, if they are not there already, and a public hearing needs to be scheduled.

Councilmember Thwaites said if they can give her the terms of the financing she can give them the exact rate.

Councilmember Thwaites said she saw Lindsey Caudill's email about the splash pad and she just wants to throw something out there. They have been working on that for a long time and the town made a commitment to it and she knows there have been other sponsors and potential commitment from the county. She talked to Dakota Shrader today and asked him what if the Splash Pad did not happen? What if they took the money they have for the Splash Pad and took another look at this and got some better figures? She would like to see some numbers if it were adequately staffed. They need to look at the upkeep and long-term expense. She would like to see those projections. What if they looked at some other things at the park such as an ADA accessible playground area, an outdoor track, upgrading the volleyball area, and some improvements to the basketball facilities? They need some more adequate figures for staffing and how much they would charge to rent the Splash Pad.

Mayor Davis asked if Councilmember Thwaites was talking about not doing the Splash Pad? One problem he has with this is that people have already donated money toward the Splash Pad. He does not believe they can use that money for something else.

Dakota Shrader said they are not saying do not build the Splash Pad but look at the numbers. He looked at the very first proposal and there was a \$4 admission charge included in the break-even analysis of the \$130,000. The \$130,000 has already been raised so it will not really cost anything else out-of-pocket. The total price did not take into consideration that there will have to be a lifeguard on duty. You do not have to legally have to but you will have to. It will cost \$100 to certify someone to be a lifeguard.

Councilman Garrett said you will have to have supervision.

Councilman Creger said he believed it had always been the idea that the Splash Pad would generate people at the park. We do not want to discard the Splash Pad now.

Councilmember Thwaites said the town made a huge commitment to the Splash Pad as well and she appreciates all of the fundraising and donations. She is just asking a projection of expenses and the upkeep.

Dakota Shrader said the town does not have to worry about breaking even because the money is there.

Mayor Davis said the town has donated over half of the money to the Splash Pad.

Councilmember Thwaites said that is her concern. Things have changed since they have started the journey with the Splash Pad and she believes they would be remiss to not take a look at this.

Councilman Garrett said he believes Councilmember Thwaites would like an updated list of attendance, entry fee, and annual operating costs in terms of labor, maintenance, water, etc. The original numbers were taking into consideration they were going to borrow a good bit of that money and they are not.

Councilman Goorskey said he thought they could not charge admission at the park.

Mayor Davis said they cannot charge admission to the park itself but they can inside of the park.

Councilman Goorskey asked how they know they cannot charge admission to the park but can charge admission to the Splash Pad?

Buddy Kast said in the old lease it stated they could not charge admission to the park. When the town took it over that was not part of it.

Mayor Davis said he thought they could charge for the Fourth of July to get into the park. They are not charging to get into the park they are just charging for the Splash Pad once someone gets in the park.

Dakota Shrader said they would get the information together for the Splash Pad.

Mayor Davis said he spoke with Lindsey Caudill about the Fourth of July fireworks. They are trying to find another place to do the fireworks. There are a few places they are looking at.

Councilman Garrett asked how they are going to pay for the fireworks?

Susan Kidd said the Park Commission funds are at \$15,600 and normally the admission on the Fourth of July builds that back up. They will probably not be receiving any admissions this year because the event will not be held at the park.

Councilman Garrett said he does not want to use money for fireworks this year and then be asking next year where the money will come from for fireworks.

Mayor Davis said he believes the Park Commission puts in \$2,000 toward the fireworks and the fireworks committee puts in another \$1,000-\$1,500. The only problem is the money the fireworks committee gives comes from selling banners to go on the fence at the park.

Councilman Garrett said he believes there is enough money to buy the fireworks for this year and be ready for next year.

Lindsey Caudill said they will be saving money by not having the festival this year.

Mayor Davis said this year will be different than any other year. They may not be able to get vendors for the event.

Councilman Goorskey said they need to reach out to vendors and tell them the event will be held if at all possible, just stay tuned.

Lindsey Caudill said she does have a few that want to come.

Councilman Garrett said letters could be sent to the park boosters and ask them if they would consider donating to the fireworks in lieu of a Fourth of July. That fundraiser is from local people that usually give \$10 and they would probably be willing to do that knowing there is something going on anyway. He is not uncomfortable paying \$2,000 for fireworks but what he is hearing is they will probably need an additional \$1,500. If 150 people donate \$10 he believes they can come up with the difference.

Mayor Davis said it is possible they may have the Fourth of July event.

Councilmember Thwaites said she believes they will receive donations if they send a letter out.

Councilmember Thwaites said she has a question about water disconnects being temporarily suspended. At some point in time council needs to reinstate the policy because people are accumulating pretty excessive bills.

Mayor Davis said they talked about this today and there is a handful of people that have not paid.

Susan Kidd said Tasha Riddle printed a delinquent report for her and 58 accounts are delinquent, some 1 month and some 2 months, but the total of those is over \$6,400. If you add the penalties and cutoff fees it would be around \$10,000.

Mayor Davis said his personal opinion is to send them letters, especially to the ones that are 3 months behind, and make them fully aware there is a point where their water will be cut off for nonpayment.

Susan Kidd said the SCC rule runs out June 15th so they could let the residents know that come June 15th the town will be doing collections.

Councilmember Thwaites said they are not necessarily saying they have to pay it in full but can set up a payment plan.

Debbie Thomas said she will need council's direction at some point as to when they can begin doing DMV stops and turn over delinquent real estate accounts to the attorney.

Councilman Garrett said he believes they turn the tax collection loose at the same time they try to collect delinquent utility bills.

Mayor Davis said he believes June 15th is a good time frame for this.

Councilmember Thwaites made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Councilman Garrett seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Creger, Garrett, Thwaites, and Goorskey
Nays: None
Motion Carried 5-0

Communications, Concerns and Requests from the Public

None.

Communication from Mayor and Council

Councilman Garrett said there has been no PSA meeting for some time but believes there is one next week. He would like to announce he will not be running for council again this time. This will be his last term on council.

Councilman Creger said he talked to Kevin Belcher today and he believes there is a PSA meeting on Thursday. Right now, the PSA is not planning a water-rate increase so that is some good news.

Mayor Davis said he will be the first to say Councilman Garrett will be sorely missed on Narrows Town Council. He will be the first one at his door to beg him to stay on council. Councilman Garrett has been on Narrows Town Council for almost 30 years.

New Business

Buddy Kast said he was speaking to a representative from DGIF and wants to know if council would consider abandoning the lower road at Camp Success. There would still be access to everything down there and it would decrease the amount of stone needed there. The town would cut some of the top stone off and take scrap material and put that down over the road to bring it up to the grade around it. They would then plant grass seed on top of that.

Council agreed to abandon the lower road at Camp Success.

Unfinished Business

None.

Matters for Consideration by Council

Susan Kidd said council is being asked to retain pre-audit services from Mary Earhart, CPA.

Councilman Creger made a motion to retain pre-audit services from Mary Earhart, CPA. Councilman Goorskey seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Creger, Garrett, Thwaites, and Goorskey
Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Susan Kidd said council is being asked to consider scheduling a public hearing for the budget, tax rate, and water fees.

Councilman Creger asked if they need to have a public hearing for Reece's sign?

Susan Kidd said she will have to get with Buddy Kast and the Planning Commission on that. It could have already been approved by non-action. If you do not act on it in a certain amount of time it could automatically be approved. They also need to add the loan for the ballfield.

Mayor Davis said the Narrows Fire Department is really taking a hit during this pandemic. They are not having their fundraising events, such as bingo.

Councilman Creger made a motion to schedule public hearing for the FY21 budget, the real estate tax rate, water fees, and the loan for the ballfield at the June 8th council meeting. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Creger, Garrett, Thwaites, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Councilman Garrett made a motion to go into executive session to discuss real property (Sec. 2.2-3711.A.3). Councilmember Thwaites seconded the motion.

Ayes: Goorskey, Thwaites, Garrett, Creger, and Turner

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Councilman Garrett made a motion to return to open session. Councilmember Thwaites seconded the motion.

Ayes: Goorskey, Thwaites, Garrett, Creger, and Turner

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Certification

WHEREAS, the Town of Narrows, has convened an executive meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative-recorded vote and in accordance with the provision of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act: and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification of the Town Council that such executive meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE Town of Narrows hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (1) only public business matters

lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia Law were discussed in the executive meeting to which this certification resolution applies: and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the executive meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Town Council.

ATTEST: _____

Councilmember Thwaites made a motion to accept the certification. Councilman Creger seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Creger, Garrett, Thwaites, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Councilmember Thwaites made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Goorksey, Thwaites, Garrett, Creger, and Turner

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Clerk, Debbie Thomas

Mayor, John G. Davis