

**Narrows Town Council Meeting**  
**August 10, 2020**

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

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

Councilman Creger gave the invocation.

Council and audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of July 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes**

Councilman Garrett said on the 4<sup>th</sup> page in the first paragraph the word “message” needed to be changed to “factor”.

**Councilmember Thwaites made a motion to approve the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes with one correction. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

**Consent Agenda**

Cindy Laws said the library report was not available on Friday but each council member should have a report in front of them.

Councilman Creger asked how many books are left to be cataloged?

Cindy Laws said about 500.

Dakota Shrader said he would like to go over where they stand with sports going forward for this year. He met with Adam and Danielle and they decided with the regulations in place for the safety of the kids to cancel the season in the fall. They will come back and meet November 1<sup>st</sup> to see where they are at and if everything is back to normal they will start with boys’ basketball in December. They do not want to be sitting around all day so they are looking at opening up opportunities for kids because this is going to be hard on parents. They would like to open a tutoring facility for the kids. They would also like to open up something like an e-league where they hook up an X-Box or PlayStation and sign up kids to come to the rec department at certain times to play in a tournament. They could set up a barrier between the chairs so 2 kids could play at a time and they would wipe off the chairs when they are done. This would give kids something to participate in.

Councilman Creger asked if the guidelines are hard and fast? If they decided to do sports would someone come and arrest Dakota Shrader?

Dakota Shrader said they are not worried about being arrested but professional players are being tested twice a day with the best trainers on hand and are disinfecting on top of that. The rec department cannot afford to test people on that scale. This is a deadly virus so if a child comes to the rec and acquires the virus they could pass it on to someone else. That would be on their conscience.

Councilman Goorskey asked if the high school is still having sports and if they just shifted the time of the year they are having them?

Dakota Shrader said that is correct.

Councilman Goorskey asked if the rec department could not do the same thing?

Dakota Shrader said the rec department has more sports than the high school with less facilities. They do not even know if they can use the elementary school like they did in the past.

Mayor Davis said he likes the fact they work with Pearisburg and Pembroke but Narrows has their own identity. Can we not have a mini version of a volleyball league?

Dakota Shrader said you cannot touch the same ball. Once the ball touches 2 people the ball is dead.

Mayor Davis asked if those restrictions come from the governor or VHSL?

Dakota Shrader said the VHSL restrictions come from the governor.

Councilman Creger said he would think if the town was willing to do it and parents would sign a waiver they could do some kind of sports. He believes this has gone too far.

Mayor Davis said he knows we have to be diligent in what we do but we have to carry on with life.

Dakota Shrader said the rec department could follow the high school's schedule.

Councilmember Thwaites said she does like the other programs Dakota Shrader was talking about. She has seen the statistics on children committing suicide and others have probably seen them too. There is also more drug and alcohol abuse. They have to think outside the box and have something to engage them.

Dakota Shrader said if they can open the facility to tutoring, which they will, they can reach more kids than with sports.

Councilmember Thwaites asked if there would be a cost for tutoring?

Dakota Shrader said he would leave that up to council.

Councilman Creger said it was not about revenue it was about establishing themselves after this whole ordeal. He personally thinks it is time to stand up and carry on as normal. He does not want to be cavalier or risk anyone's health but some people can make their own decisions because they have all of the information. He thinks the programs Dakota Shrader has spoken about are a good idea but he also believes there are other programs in smaller versions like the mayor spoke about. He is tired of everyone caving into this.

Dakota Shrader said he has his own opinion on this.

Councilman Creger said there is plenty of data on this and he is not arguing about that. He believes we can carry on with life.

Mayor Davis said he likes the idea of the tutoring program.

Councilmember Thwaites said the e-league idea is great as long as the maturity level is set appropriately.

Mike Bedsaul asked Dakota Shrader if he had spoken with sister jurisdictions to see what they are doing in terms of sports?

Dakota Shrader said they have a meeting at the first of the month and they were talking about starting sports as they always did but when the VHSL came down with their rules they changed.

Mike Bedsaul said Dakota Shrader is saying VHSL does not have jurisdiction over their rec leagues but they are using that as a benchmark for local programs.

Dakota Shrader said yes.

Councilmember Thwaites said kids are getting together at the park and interacting in various ways. There has to be some good they can make out of this terrible time.

Councilman Creger said if the kids can get together at the park then they should be able to have a tournament.

Dakoda Shrader said they are looking at other options for the kids.

Councilman Creger said his frustration is not directed at the rec department.

Councilmember Thwaites said she thinks Dakoda Shrader and Lindsey Caudill are doing a great job helping with the feeding program and thinking outside the box. There does have to be an expiration date on this. They need to try other ways to engage the kids.

Councilman Goorskey asked Dakoda Shrader if he could have the stipulation that the kids run laps before they play another game? His kids are already in an e-league, or they think they are. He appreciates all the rec department is doing.

Dakoda Shrader said they need to put a post on Facebook telling people about this.

Councilmember Thwaites said communicating with people is extremely important even if, as a parent, she does not agree with what they say.

Councilman Creger believes e-leagues are good but there needs to be some physical fitness and they could have a physical-fitness-type camp where kids can do calisthenics.

Dakoda Shrader said they can offer to let the kids use the facilities they have.

Dakoda Shrader said they are at the park as much as they can be and they are picking up trash every morning Sunday – Saturday. He can pull up pictures on his phone where they picked up trash on Saturday and the park was spotless then when they come back on Sunday there is trash again. He has talked to the individuals who are doing this until he is blue in the face and they want nothing to do with him.

Councilmember Thwaites asked if it was primarily the same people?

Dakoda Shrader said yes. What he and Lindsey Caudill have said to the people that are doing this is not working so now they are working with law enforcement.

Mayor Davis said he believes the idea Dakoda Shrader has given to them is great and they should move forward with that. He can see both sides of it at the basketball court because there are a lot of kids that are not causing problems that are being penalized because of a few bad apples. He has spoken to Police Chief Ratcliffe about it and the police officers are patrolling that area and are also recording their patrols. They cannot be there all the time and the kids know when they can get by with doing certain things. He believes they need to put the goals back up.

Dakoda Shrader said there are still basketball goals at the middle court but parents see those goals more than they see the goals below the lower shelter. The kids causing problems will not be at the goals at the middle shelter because they know parents are near there.

Lindsey Caudill told council she has given them a quote for cameras from U.S. Cellular. She was told by U.S. Cellular the best way for this to happen would be to purchase a hotspot for the cameras. They will also need these for the splash pad.

Councilman Goorskey asked if they would be able to clearly see an image?

Lindsey Caudill said yes. They can place an app on their cell phones to see what is going on at the park through the cameras and they will also be able to talk through the cameras. They will probably have to purchase a plan through Arlo to be able to keep a year's worth of recording. They can also put it on a flash drive.

Councilman Goorskey said the more of a presence they can have at the park the better.

Councilman Turner said he was at the park last night and there were 14- to 15-year-old kids smoking cigarettes and there was trash all over the concession stand. He told all of

the kids at the concession stand to pick up the trash and if he came back and it was not cleaned up they would be banned from the park. They immediately started picking up trash. When he came back later the concession stand was spotless. The parents were sitting in the concession stand smoking around 8:30 p.m. and he told them to leave because the park was closed.

Lindsey Caudill said she thinks they need to change the park hours because there is no reason it should be open until 10:00 p.m. She can understand when it is summer and it gets dark at 9:00 p.m. but now it is getting dark at 8:30 p.m.

Councilman Garrett said he would prefer they get a sign placed on the gate stating the times they are open.

Dakota Shrader asked if council had a preference on the time the park will be closed?

Mayor Davis said right now he would say 8:30 p.m.

Mayor Davis said ReNew the New is taking place on August 29<sup>th</sup> and Camp Success will be one of the main focuses. They will welcome all volunteers that want to help with this.

Councilman Garrett said there was around \$16,000 in miscellaneous revenue.

Debbie Thomas said that around \$15,000 of that was from our insurance company (VRSA) for the damage done to Chris Reynolds' police car when the wreck happened at Marathon.

Councilman Garrett said he saw where the meters have started going out again and he assumes it is because of the warmer weather. Could this attribute to the higher water loss?

Buddy Kast said yes. We received an invoice from Mueller and they still owe us 141 meters. We just returned 80 meters and by looking at the invoice they have subtracted that from the 141 they still owe us. He does not know where that is going to go but maybe Mike Bedsaul could send them an email concerning this.

Councilmember Thwaites asked Buddy Kast if they have started work on the splash pad?

Buddy Kast said they will be ready to go when the installation company arrives. They have marked where the water line will run under Route 61. Once the town completes their portion of the project they will let the splash pad company know.

Councilman Creger asked Susan Kidd when they could expect to see work on the ARC Grant?

Susan Kidd said she hopes to get bids out very soon. She met with people from Anna's Restaurant last week and now she just has to run down Mr. Tickle to get some things from him.

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

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

### **Communications, Concerns and Requests from the Public**

Emily Clem said on June 17<sup>th</sup> she called the town office about renting a shelter. They told her one shelter was gone but the middle and upper shelter were available so she rented the upper shelter. She had to come to the office that day to pay for it so she could be sure they could have the shelter on July 25<sup>th</sup>. She travels a lot and goes on cruises so she knows when you reserve something like that you do not have to pay right that minute but they told her she had to pay if she wanted to book it. She thinks the town could give people until 1:00 p.m. the next day to pay it. She does not think that is asking too much. Someone told her they do not open the gate to the upper shelter, which is the one she rented. She called to find out if they could have the gate open and Lindsey Caudill said

she would have it open. In about 20 minutes Dakota Shrader called her and told her they had overbooked the upper shelter. This was on the 24<sup>th</sup> and her reunion was on the 25<sup>th</sup>. She had to try to get in contact with everyone that was coming to rearrange things. Dakota Shrader told her she could get her money back and also offered the middle shelter but they had 30-40 people coming so that would not have been feasible. He also told her she could have the shelter from 9-2 but a lot of the people were not coming until 1:00. She was upset but she did apologize to Dakota Shrader and Lindsey Caudill for being rude. They decided to have the reunion at her house. You need communication because if Dakota Shrader is the one that is going to be in charge of it then he should be the one that books them, in her opinion. If the town office is going to book the rentals the information should be sent straight to Dakota Shrader so they do not overbook again.

Dakota Shrader said they always check the shelter rentals and they did not notice until Friday the shelter had been overbooked. The reason the bookings are done at the town is so the money can be collected because some people pay with a credit card.

Emily Clem said the more people that are involved the more this is going to happen. It could have been worse.

Councilman Garrett asked if they were both full-day events that had been overbooked?

Lindsey Caudill said no. The shelter rental needs to be paid for when it is reserved because some people will not pay at all and that causes a headache when they show up at the park.

Mayor Davis said when you book it that is when you need to pay for it. If you want to wait until tomorrow at 1:00 to book it then do so and pay for it then.

Emily Clem said she knows mistakes happen but there has to be a better way to do it. She has worked in things like this and she knows what she is talking about.

Councilman Garrett said it sounds like someone could book the shelter and if it is not paid within 48 or 72 hours then that is void.

Emily Clem said she booked this rental June 17<sup>th</sup> and after she called on July 24<sup>th</sup> is when it was caught. Why did they not catch this before?

Dakota Shrader said they check shelter rentals the week of the rentals.

Councilman Goorskey said he believes she is asking what have we done to stop an error like that from happening again.

Lindsey Caudill said they will probably make a new shelter log that is a little less confusing. They will probably do that next year because shelter-rental season is almost over.

Mayor Davis told Emily Clem he is sorry this happened and there is no one here that will not admit to her they made a mistake. Unfortunately, it happened to her and he is truly sorry it happened. We can go on and on all night about why it happened and they are trying their best to fix what happened. Please accept their apology when they say they are truly sorry.

Emily Clem said she does accept their apology. She was told the town only writes checks twice a month and she told them she was not going to accept that because it was not her fault because if she had to pay up front she should get her money back, which she did. She came down and talked to Buddy Kast and got her money back.

Emily Clem said she had an idea last year and they did not do it but would like to do it this year. They would like to have a nativity pageant at the town and would like to use the Farmer's Market. They would like to do it the first Sunday in December. They would need the help from town council, Lindsey Caudill, and the police. They are going to ask different churches if they would like to participate. They would like to do different scenes of the nativity and also have songs and different things. Would it cost anything? It would be free for the community.

Mayor Davis asked Emily Clem to get with Lindsey Caudill and discuss this because she regulates the Farmer's Market.

Lindsey Caudill said she is ok with it as long as it does not coincide with the Christmas event they have.

Councilmember Thwaites said this is really a nice idea.

Emily Clem said she would like to thank the town for working on her wall so a lot of water will not go in her garage.

Mayor Davis said he received a call last night from Benny Johnson who lives on Cumberland Street. He had some trouble with his heating/air unit and had to leave his house for a couple of weeks to stay with his son. His outdoor spigot was running when he got home and had been running for a long time and had used a lot of water.

Tasha Riddle said she pulled up his information and the amount of water that was used was 14,500 for that month. He has not had an adjustment this year so he is eligible for one. She did a data log and it looks like everything was fixed. She will do an adjustment on a six-month average.

Councilman Garrett said this is our standard policy.

### **Communication from Mayor and Council**

Councilman Garrett said there has been no PSA meeting since the last council meeting but there will be one this Thursday.

Councilman Garrett said he has listened to a lot of conversation today and the date he sees, and the facts that he thinks are facts, says that kids should be going to school 5 days a week with no restrictions. He knows they have no control over it but they could at least voice their opinion if that is what they think this county should be doing because he is hearing there could possibly be no days in school. He believes they are doing their kids a disservice by not sending them back to school. If that is council's opinion, as well as his own, he would like to make that a matter of public record.

Mayor Davis said he agrees 100% because he would like for his child to go to school 5 days a week. They have a school board that has worked diligently but he does not agree with all of their decisions. They have the facts in front of them from the Virginia Department of Education and council does not. It is hard for them to sit here as a council, he is only speaking as the mayor, and express their concerns when they have not looked at the facts.

Councilmember Thwaites said she has looked at as much information she can find online from the Virginia Department of Education. She has voiced her concerns as a parent about wanting children to be back in school in an environment where they can learn the best and develop. There are a lot of children that are depressed and she is depressed for them. She talked to a social worker and not everything is reported to them. Statistics show that kids are safer in school.

Councilman Creger said he believes as a council they should voice their opinion. Kids should be in school and they should say something.

Councilmember Thwaites said there is a lot of data where kids have gone back to school safely with 4-5 days of in-school instruction. She looked at positive cases in surrounding counties and Giles County is very low. She knows the school board is under a tremendous amount of pressure but she does not agree with all of their decisions. She does not accept this hybrid plan of going back to school but that is what they have.

Councilman Goorskey said his opinion greatly mirrors the opinion of Councilmember Thwaites. If the department of education has data contrary to what he has seen he wishes they would present it or the school board would present it, anything other than the idea that they are going to be sued if someone gets Covid. Many localities are offering an

optional virtual or in-person schedule so if you have that option he does not see where they have a liability anymore. He does not know what hidden data the department of education may have but he knows they have available to them the data that he has, including the suggestions from the CDC that kids are ok to go back to school and it is far more beneficial for their mental health if they do. It far outweighs the risk to them and you can compile that with the growing list of inaccurate data they are presented as far as cases, transmissions, and deaths. No one can say for certain what those numbers truly are. He is in favor of taking a position that kids should be in school.

**Councilman Garrett made a motion for the Mayor to write a letter to the school board on behalf of council requesting that they go back to a full time five-day-per-week schedule for their children in school and no special circumstances.**

**Councilman Creger seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

### **New Business**

Susan Kidd said the Department of Labor and Virginia OSHA issued the Emergency Temporary Standard for all employees in all places of employment. This was a document drafted by our risk management people and sent to us. It went into effect the week of July 27<sup>th</sup> so the town went ahead and put it into effect. The town is doing temperature checks and symptom checks every morning and documenting those. She is asking council to adopt this as a temporary six-month policy.

Councilman Goorskey asked if they are required to adopt it?

Susan Kidd said she has to put it into effect whether they do or not but she is asking them to adopt it.

Councilman Goorskey asked what it does for the town's ability to perform?

Buddy Kast said they are already following the guidelines. The biggest change for the town is when the guys are in a truck together they have to wear a mask.

Mike Bedsaul said he thinks it is also important from a legal standpoint that it almost creates another personnel policy to follow and there are pretty hefty penalties from DOLI if the guidelines are not adhered to.

Susan Kidd said the penalty is \$13,000 per occurrence.

Councilman Garrett said a temperature does not indicate that you do or do not have COVID. Doing a temperature check and documenting it is a complete waste of time.

Susan Kidd said they agree but they are doing it because there is a fine of \$13,000 per occurrence and none of us want to give up our salaries for that.

Mike Bedsaul said there are 13,000 reasons they want to go by the guidelines.

Councilman Goorskey asked if a vote was necessary on this?

Susan Kidd said no.

Mike Bedsaul said if council would approve this temporary standard it would show employees that council would expect everyone to follow the rules from top to bottom.

Councilman Goorskey asked if the temporary standard specifies what type of mask?

Councilman Garrett said no. In fact, it is very clear that anything will work.

Councilman Goorskey asked what other OSHA requirement specifying a mask does not specify what type of mask? So now they are saying they are being asked to adopt a policy to where any type of mask can give you the illusion that this will now protect you.

Susan Kidd said it also lists that employees must be categorized as low, medium, or high risk. Our risk-management people helped with that because no one at the town is a doctor.

Councilman Goorskey asked if before you could do risk analysis you had to have a minimum knowledge of their medical history they may not be required to give you?

Susan Kidd said they are not asking any medical questions they are asking if they did a temperature check and a symptom check.

Mike Bedsaul said if this is a policy of the town it also gives them better authority to enforce it with employees that are not observing these regulations.

Susan Kidd said there are some places the public is required to wear a mask for the safety of the town employees and if they cannot wear one we can provide curbside service.

Mike Bedsaul asked if the insurance carrier said they would refuse to provide insurance for the town if they did not follow these requirements?

Susan Kidd said she has not asked. Since the risk-management advisor was a former OSHA inspector she kind of listened to him.

Mayor Davis asked if they adopt this and something changes over the next 2 months can the policy be done away with?

Susan Kidd said she thought so. It is a temporary standard.

Mike Bedsaul said council could adopt it and then direct the Director of Strategic Development to terminate the policy in accordance with the Department of Labor's recommendations.

Councilman Creger asked what happens if they do not adopt the policy and do not pay their fine?

Susan Kidd said she did not want to find out.

Councilman Creger said this has been mishandled by the Governor of Virginia and he does not support any of it.

Mike Bedsaul said he does not know all of the enforcement options they would have but he would suspect they could probably withhold state funding, as an example. The fines, which could be up to \$13,000, would probably depend on if something was deliberate and willful versus something that was done due to oversight.

Councilman Goorskey said most OSHA violations are backed up with years and years of research. They are going to fine us if we do not do what they say but when will this stop and who stops it? He is not going to vote to have someone do something he does not believe in.

Councilman Creger said it stops when you stand up for your rights.

Mayor Davis asked if council wanted to take action on the Emergency Temporary Standard?

(No action was taken)

Susan Kidd said she did a revenue-comparison report for FY18 through FY20 and only picked line items that are big revenue sources. At the bottom are water revenue items. The deficit for FY20 is \$104,889 for Fund 10 and \$19,101 for Fund 20. Then they did a report for just the month of July. In comparison to last July, revenues are down \$15,667 for Fund 10 and \$730 for Fund 20. In all revenues we are down \$16,512 for July. Our bank balance dropped significantly from last month.



Debbie Thomas said she did a batch of checks today for around \$45,000.

Susan Kidd said the treasurer's report council has was for the end of July and shows a bank balance of \$506,167.45 and now it stands at \$373,793.96. She would like to suggest they place a spending freeze and no purchases are made over \$1,000 unless it is approved by her or Buddy Kast first.

Councilman Creger said the primary reason the funds are down is because the town has not been collecting a lot of money.

Susan Kidd said they have been collecting tax money because of DMV stops but they have not been collecting money for utilities. Sales tax is the one thing that is up. The court now has the discretion of sending someone to school rather than fining them so fines are down.

**Councilman Creger made a motion to place a spending freeze on purchases over \$1,000 unless prior approval is given. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

### **Unfinished Business**

Mike Bedsaul said they contacted the attorney for the splash pad company because the company had a few issues they wanted to iron out. He called them last week but they have not returned his call to discuss these issues.

Lindsey Caudill said she believes they think there are going to be other expenses.

Buddy Kast said the splash pad company will not be pulling the permit from Giles County. He is still the official for any town project so they will need to pull the permit from the town but we will waive the fees.

Councilman Creger said as of now Mike Bedsaul just needs to speak to their attorney and if they need to call a special meeting for council to approve the contract they can do so.

Mike Bedsaul said that is correct. He believes the splash pad company has a lot of projects going on and are not in a big hurry to start the one for the town.

Susan Kidd said council has a draft letter the town is proposing to send out to give utility customers a month notice telling them the town will begin disconnection procedures if their past-due utility bills are not paid by September 10<sup>th</sup>.

Councilmember Thwaites said she sees no issues with the letter.

Tasha Riddle said she ran a delinquent utility list this afternoon (the credit card system was down all day so people that could have paid with a credit/debit card or e-check were not able to) and there were 97 customers that would have been disconnected if the town was disconnecting water for non-payment. When she removed the people that called in to try to pay there would have been about 60 customers on the list to be disconnected.

Councilman Garrett asked if this letter was going to everyone?

Susan Kidd said yes.

Mayor Davis asked if council was ok with this?

Council members were fine with it.

Susan Kidd said Tasha Riddle contacted nearby towns and the Town of Dublin does not send out letters to notify customers of their delinquent account, the Town of Pearisburg used to but now they just print it on the bill, the City of Radford said they print it on their bill, and the Town of Pembroke prints it on their bill.

Tasha Riddle said the office staff at the Town of Pearisburg is quite a bit larger than ours.

Susan Kidd said we are down one person now and we have not had time to interview for that position but hope to soon.

Debbie Thomas said she wants to commend Tasha Riddle because not only is she doing utility billing and various other duties in the office but she is also training Jessica Dalton on payroll.

Buddy Kast said he believes she is everyone's right arm.

Debbie Thomas said she does an astronomical job.

Councilman Goorskey said he understands the amount of work that is on Tasha Riddle and he understands that localities around us are not making phone calls. Can they give Tasha Riddle the ability to give refunds and take care of utility accounts on disconnect day instead of having a customer come to a council meeting and ask for these things? There was a gentleman that had his water disconnected because he did not receive a bill and his payment was posted to the wrong account and then he had to come to a council meeting to ask for a refund of his disconnect fee.

Councilman Garrett said that is how it needs to be. Several years ago council said they want the exceptions to come to them because they do not want to put the people in the office in the position of having to explain why you did it for one customer but not for another.

Councilmember Thwaites said she remembers some instances where the customer has asked Susan Kidd to bring their issue before council because they did not want to attend a council meeting and she is fine with that.

Debbie Thomas said some people are disconnected and will not even call the town but they will call the mayor and council members. How would someone in the office be able to help them?

Councilman Creger said he does believe they are fair to people that pay their bills.

Buddy Kast said they are working on a PAR for the fire department and police department for a public safety building. They want to make council aware that they want to put an extra bay in the building for future expansion. The problem is, when they do that, it will change the turning radius for the trucks and there could possibly be 15-20 parking spaces lost in the parking lot. Susan Kidd had mentioned placing a parking lot back beside of the old Charter property. They just wanted council to be aware of this.

Councilman Creger said this is an important project for public safety and they need to make it as safe as they can.

Buddy Kast said the town would like to have the old fire hall for storage and they could tear down the old town hall.

Councilmember Thwaites asked since Mayor Davis is writing a letter to the school board, and Virginia legislators will be meeting soon, would council entertain sending a letter on behalf of the Town of Narrows supporting our law enforcement and some of the things that are on the agenda at this next session? There are some things to be discussed that are quite alarming.

Councilman Goorskey said he does not want to see law enforcement lose what ability they now have to serve safely.

Councilmember Thwaites there are some really disturbing things to be discussed concerning law enforcement and communities. This is a way to show council's support.

Council supported the letters being sent.

Councilmember Thwaites said she would like letter to be sent to the governor, Chris Hurst, and Morgan Griffith.

Councilman Creger said they needed to write the school board and tell them to put the Ten Commandments back in public schools.

Councilman Garrett said no.

Councilman Goorskey said he would like for Mayor Davis to send these letters in opposition to these activities that are detrimental to our communities and our officers and their ability to function in the community we live in.

### **Matters for Consideration by Council**

Susan Kidd said council is being asked to approve the resolution for the purchase of the property for the ARC Grant. They held a public hearing for this but they need a resolution that authorizes herself and Mayor Davis to execute the documents.

**Councilman Creger made a motion to adopt the resolution for the purchase of property authorizing the Mayor and Director of Strategic Development to execute the documents. Councilmember Thwaites seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

Lindsey Caudill said she needs council's opinion on holding the fall festival because it is scheduled for September 19<sup>th</sup>. She has been making farmer's market vendors follow the rules on social distancing (they are spread out 10 feet) and she requires them to wear a mask. Under the amusement and business entertainment guidelines that the governor released events have to have 250 people or less, the vendors have to be 10 feet apart, they have to wear a mask, temperature checks have to be done before they start, all of the guidelines that normal businesses follow. She has spoken to Police Chief Ratcliffe about this and he feels like if they do it this way it will be a mess as far as parking and traffic. If she has to spread the vendors 10 feet apart that will not leave a lot of room for vendors on Main Street and that is where most people want to be. According to the health department they cannot have any food vendors except for baked goods. The biggest issue is the 250 people because that includes vendors, staff, and customers. There would have to be one entry point and one exit point and with spacing them 10 feet apart that would be impossible in town. People will find a way to get around that and she cannot guarantee how many people will be at this event. She does not see how they could do it and not have complaints.

Councilman Goorskey asked what the guidelines were for inviting vendors to a fall protest?

Councilman Creger said he believes they should have the event like they always have and call it a peaceful protest.

Lindsey Caudill said she understands that but she is just looking for guidance because they could get shut down.

Councilman Goorskey asked who would shut it down?

Lindsey Caudill said the health department.

Mayor Davis said law enforcement would not intervene, it would be the health department.

Councilman Goorskey asked if the health department had an enforcement arm?

Mayor Davis said yes.

Lindsey Caudill said they cannot have food vendors and that is one of the big attractions for the fall festival. They probably could not have a band that night either because of people gathering to listen.

Councilman Turner said several festivals have been cancelled because of the guidelines they would have to follow.

Lindsey Caudill said the farmer's market guidelines say if vendors cannot wear a mask because of health reasons they cannot be a vendor.

Councilmember Thwaites said this is ridiculous.

Lindsey Caudill said she has been thinking about having an event on a smaller scale such as a local's night for local businesses. Any event they would have would draw a crowd.

Councilmember Thwaites said she is not trying to copy Pearisburg but she is thinking of copying Pearisburg as far as the Scarecrow Festival is concerned. Giving people the opportunity to get outside and have something to look forward to.

Lindsey Caudill said if she had that at the farmer's market she could close it off and there would be an easier way to have one entry point and one exit point. Everyone would be asked to wear a mask.

Councilman Goorskey said he volunteers to be arrested by the health department and have that on video. Could the town have a month of "fall festivals" and break it up into a smaller group of vendors?

Lindsey Caudill said that could happen.

Councilman Goorskey said they could have a different theme for each weekend.

Lindsey Caudill said she has her regular vendors that come to the farmer's market every Saturday. The Hillsville Flea Market was cancelled today because of the guidelines. She understands where council is coming from and everyone is looking for something to do but since all of these other events have been cancelled she does not see how they could have a fall festival.

Councilmember Thwaites said she likes Lindsey Caudill's ideas but she would like to incorporate the farmer's market in some way.

Lindsey Caudill said she will have to have barriers set up because people can only be in a certain area and have to be accounted for.

Mayor Davis asked who says she has to do all of this?

Lindsey Caudill said the State of Virginia.

Councilman Goorskey said they are supposed to be counting customers as they go in Walmart, Lowe's, and Home Depot but they absolutely are not.

Councilman Goorskey said he believes they are done following the stupid guidelines.

Lindsey Caudill said the fall festival page on Facebook has thousands of people interested. Someone is planning a festival on the fly-ash property on Route 460 that has nothing to do with the town.

Councilman Goorskey said you could spread vendors all over town.

Buddy Kast said if you do not have vendors on Main Street electric hookups are very limited.

Councilman Goorskey said he knows every other town is in the same boat we are but if they have a festival we should go support them.

Councilmember Thwaites said she does not want their frustration to prohibit Lindsey Caudill in doing her job. They need to do some research and see what they can do for the kids. That is where sponsors would come into play.

Mayor Davis said what he is hearing is that Lindsey Caudill has the support of council.

Councilman Goorskey said he empathizes with her position and whatever decision she makes he is 100% behind her.

Councilman Turner said the department of health is shutting down businesses in Roanoke and Blacksburg because of overcrowding. You have to keep a count of how many people are at an event. He supports Lindsey Caudill 100%.

Mike Bedsaul said the way this would likely work is this. What happened at the Hillsville Flea Market is the health department said if they did not shut it down they would take court action; he assumes for an injunction. This would be a court order under the authority of the executive orders to compel you to shut the event down. That is how he would see it being enforced.

Mayor Davis said the health department would not come and arrest someone.

Lindsey Caudill said it is just like their sports program. She does not want to put time and money into an event that may end up being cancelled.

Mayor Davis said this is not going away any time soon so they can either shut down the town or move forward with the town. He wants to move forward with the town. That is his personal opinion. They are not receiving any income so if they do not start bringing people back to town and get back to a normal life in town the town will go bust. A lot of businesses across the state are going bust because the government has stepped in and shut them down.

Debbie Thomas said last year when Corbin Stone came to the office to do the audit he said the Town of Tazewell was already in the hole: where are they at right now? Last week when the pre-auditors were here she told them the town only had around \$440,000 in the bank and they said we were better off than some towns they have seen.

Mayor Davis said he believes they have been more than fair with their citizens. We have given them second and third chances but it is time to get back to business.

Debbie Thomas said she is very empathetic but she knows that the longer we go and do not collect utility payments the more in arrears they are going to be. She believes some people think they will not have to pay what they owe.

Mayor Davis said Tasha Riddle will work with the utility customers.

Debbie Thomas said she cannot wait until September to see how many people contact Tasha Riddle about their delinquent utility bills because she believes it will be very few.

Tasha Riddle asked council when a customer comes in and requests an extension can this be done on the day before cutoff day and not on the actual cutoff day?

Mayor Davis said he believes that is in the letter that will be sent to customers.

**Councilman Garrett made a motion to go into executive session for real property (Sec. 2.2-3711.A.3) and to discuss personnel matters (Sec. 2.2-3711.A.1). Councilman Creger 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. Councilman Turner 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:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Councilman Garrett made a motion to accept the certification. Councilman Goorskey seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

**Councilman Turner made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Goorskey seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

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Clerk, Debbie Thomas

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Mayor, John G. Davis