

**Narrows Town Council Meeting  
December 7, 2020**

Mayor John Davis called the meeting to order. Council Members present were Clyde Turner, Sara Bowles, George Conley, Sarah Thwaites, and Joe Goorskey.

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

Attorney Mike Bedsaul was present.

Mayor Davis gave the invocation.

Council and audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Hearing**

Mayor Davis opened the public hearing for an easement at 122 MacArthur Lane for Jason Tickle.

Buddy Kast said there had been no complaints or comments concerning the easement.

Mayor Davis declared the public hearing closed.

**Approval of January 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes**

**Councilmember Thwaites made a motion to approve the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

**Ayes: Goorskey, Thwaites, Conley, Bowles and Turner**

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 5-0**

**Consent Agenda**

Mayor Davis asked how the Narcotics Anonymous meetings were going?

Cindy Laws said they were going very well. They have had as many as 14 attend and as few as 3. They contribute \$20/month for the use of the library.

Mayor Davis asked how the building is opened for this use?

Cindy Laws said either she or Stephanie Gibson stay to open the building for Jared Lawson and then he is supposed to lock up. A Narrows police office goes by the building after the meeting ends to make sure the library is locked. Would it be better if someone from the library stayed for the meetings?

Mayor Davis said no but if something happened would it be covered by our insurance?

Mike Bedsaul said they could check with VRSA but he suspects it would be covered by insurance.

Councilmember Bowles asked about the \$200 for the library grant? Could it be generated through a fundraiser?

Cindy Laws said it could. FNBP has donated to these grants in the past. She has not sent out any contribution letters in the last year because of the pandemic but she is going to very soon.

Councilman Goorskey said he would like to make sure the people that are attending the Narcotics Anonymous meetings keep their anonymity and not have their names revealed.

Mayor Davis said he would like to thank parks and rec for everything they are doing. The day after the first game was held he received several phone calls and had spoken to several people at work and they had nothing but praise and high regards on the way things were being handled. Everyone appreciates what they are doing.

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

**Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, 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 the Orchard Well is back online. Finances are in good shape. He would ask whoever takes the position on the PSA Board to keep an eye on the net-water position. At this point they are \$272,000 to the good for the water department, which is not a bad thing, but as budgeting comes around for next year that much excess means either you are charging too much or you need to look at your expenses and make sure you do not have a reason to spend it. There is another issue that will be a long-term issue that may come up. There were 2 houses in the county that were tested by the health department for lead and copper that came back with high levels of lead and copper on the original sample. You take the first draw in the morning and it is a measure of the elements that are coming from the residential plumbing, not from the PSA water system. Those 2 high samples may require the PSA to treat all of the water for all of us with a chemical agent to minimize the corrosion in those 2 houses. He does not believe it is the right way to go and he does not know what the options would be. The county received a grant to pay for outstanding water debts.

Susan Kidd said they are aware of the grant. It sounds good but there is not that much money attached to it.

Councilman Turner said at the last council meeting someone made a comment that there were a lot of smart heads sitting on council but there will be smarter ones. He took that as an insult. Council works diligently on everything they do. He said that comment did not need to be made.

George Conley said he made the comment but it was not meant to be insulting. He would like to apologize for making the comment.

Councilman Creger said the PSA sets the water rates and there is going to be a new PSA representative from the town. He would like to encourage that representative to attend the PSA meetings. They need to vote against increasing water rates as often as possible and stand up to the PSA. We need to sustain ourselves.

Councilman Creger asked what was stopping them from putting the Ten Commandments back in schools and in council chambers?

Mike Bedsaul said legally they could get into trouble. He would not recommend that but he will look into it more if they desire.

Councilman Creger said it is not a law right now. He would also like to break the contract with the PSA.

Mayor Davis said before they try to break the PSA contract they need to find out what it would cost the town to run their own water system. He believes it will cost a lot more than what they are paying now.

Councilman Garrett said the health department wanted a regional water system so they condemned the water sources in most of the entities in Giles County. He believes if Narrows tried to break away from the PSA our water sources would either be condemned or reduced in capacity so they could not supply enough water. That is not a fight he believes they should take on.

Councilman Creger said that could all be correct and it makes good sense. He believes they made the right move in voting to stream council meetings and this is the type of information people need to know. He does believe they need to look at the legal aspect of the Ten Commandments.

**Councilman Creger made a motion to pursue the posting of the Ten Commandments in Narrows Public Schools and in Narrows Council Chambers.**

Councilman Goorskey said he is not opposed to this idea but believes taxpayer dollars need to be spent another way instead of on legal fees for this.

**(Motion died for lack of a second)**

Councilman Creger said at the last council meeting the raising of minimum wage was discussed and that 50-70% of our budget is salaries. He believes the town employees do a good job and deserve pay increases but he also believes they need to be a little more frugal. He would also like to thank everyone for letting him serve on town council.

Councilman Garrett said council needs to look at placing a ban on outdoor wood stoves. If there are a lot of people on one block that put in outdoor wood stoves there could be an air quality issue. He does not know what the town can do, they can grandfather in the ones that are currently there, but something needs to be done.

### **New Business**

Mayor Davis said he would like to recommend Sarah Thwaites to serve as the town's representative on the New River Valley Regional Commission.

**Councilman Creger made a motion to appoint Sarah Thwaites to serve as the town's representative on the New River Valley Regional Commission. Councilman Garrett seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 4-0**

Mayor Davis said he would like to recommend Joe Goorskey to serve as the town's primary representative on the Giles County PSA.

**Councilman Creger made a motion to appoint Joe Goorskey to serve as the town's primary representative on the Giles County PSA. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

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

**Abstain: Goorseky**

**Motion Caried 3-0**

Buddy Kast said Jason Tickle is requesting an easement at 122 MacArthur Lane to place an HVAC unit. He looked at placing it on the roof but that would not work. He owns the footprint of this address. Jason Tickle has not had a survey done yet because he wanted to make sure he can place the unit there. This will require a public hearing.

**Councilman Garrett made a motion to hold a public hearing at the January 11<sup>th</sup> council meeting for disposition of property at 122 MacArthur Lane. Councilman Goorskey seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 4-0**

### **Unfinished Business**

Mayor Davis said council is being asked to look at the Splash Pad Operation Plan.

Councilman Creger said they just need to be flexible.

Mayor Davis said the next item on the agenda is FOIA training for mayor and council members.

Mike Bedsaul said he sent Debbie Thomas a link to the online FOIA training. Once the training is completed a certificate needs to be printed and given to Debbie Thomas. This applies to all council members. Once you have initially trained you will need to do this every 2 years.

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

Mayor Davis said council is being asked to approve an extension of the Continuity of Government Resolution that was approved 6 months ago. If they decide to meet virtually they will need to stick to things on their agenda that are essential such as operations of the government, statutory required items, and things that are necessary to the operations of the governing body.

**Councilman Creger made a motion to re-adopt and extend the Continuity of Government Resolution. Councilman Goorskey seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 4-0**

Mayor Davis said council is being asked to approve the costs associated with video streaming.

Debbie Thomas said Michelle Lucas from the Giles County Vocational School came to the town office to discuss what would be needed to stream council meetings. She set up streaming for the Giles County School Board. CARES Act money can cover this. A computer has been ordered but the Logitech camera and microphone extensions need to be ordered. They just need council's approval.

**Councilman Goorskey made a motion to approve the costs associated with video streaming council meetings. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 4-0**

Mayor Davis said council is being asked to approve budget supplements.

Susan Kidd said they talked to the town's auditor concerning line items that have over encumbered. Council is being asked to approve budget supplements to the following line items: 10-4901-0273 (\$3,500) and 10-6401-0906 (\$20,176.03).

**Councilman Garrett made a motion to approve the following budget supplements: 10-4901-0273 (\$3,500) and 10-6401-0906 (\$20,176.03). Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 4-0**

Mayor Davis said council is being asked to approve a CARES Act bonus for law enforcement officers.

Susan Kidd said the county gave all sworn law-enforcement officers a \$2,000 hazard-pay bonus that is covered under the CARES Act.

**Councilman Creger made a motion to give all Town of Narrows sworn law-enforcement officers a \$2,000 hazard-pay bonus that is covered under the CARES Act. Councilman Goorskey seconded the motion.**

**Ayes: Goorskey, Garret, Creger, and Turner**

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 4-0**

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

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

**Nays: None**

**Motion Carried 4-0**

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Clerk, Debbie Thomas

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Mayor, John G. Davis