

**Narrows Town Council Meeting
August 8, 2022**

Mayor Tom Spangler called the meeting to order. Council Members present were Clyde Turner, Sara Bowles, George Conley, John Mills, and Joe Goorskey.

Staff members present were Lindsey Caudill, John Davis, Susan Kidd, Terry Nicholson, Landon Patteson, Benji Ratcliffe, and Debbie Thomas.

Attorney present was Reid Broughton.

Jerry Hagerman with the Wayside Baptist Mission gave the invocation.

Council and audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of July 11th Meeting Minutes

Mayor Spangler said council is being asked to approve the July 11th meeting minutes.

**Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the July 11th meeting minutes.
Councilman Turner seconded the motion.**

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Consent Agenda

Library Report

Councilman Mills said there seems to be more action at the library and everything is being nicely done.

Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the library report. Councilmember Bowles seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Parks & Recreation Report

Councilman Goorskey asked what fun stuff came out at the most recent parks and rec meeting?

Landon Patteson said they discussed some ideas for fundraising at the fall festival.

Councilman Goorskey said he saw where Mr. Bowles had been contacted about the swing. Has there been an update on that?

Landon Patteson said not that he was aware of.

Councilman Goorskey said it would be nice to get the swing up before summer is over.

Landon Patteson (inaudible)

Lindsey Caudill said part of the swing arrived around the first part of June but the adaptive part of the swing was backordered and arrived around August 1st.

Mayor Spangler said he enjoyed the farmers market Saturday night.

Lindsey Caudill thanked Mayor Spangler for coming.

Councilman Mills said it looked like they were doing pretty decent with their sale of concessions.

Councilman Goorskey asked if the concession revenue listed was for t-ball or just for a certain time period?

Lindsey Caudill said it is for the entire season. Expenses are for the entire season also.

Councilman Turner said they had one of the most successful t-ball seasons they have had in a long time.

Councilman Goorskey made a motion to approve the parks and rec report.

Councilmember Bowles seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Police Report

Councilman Conley said he would like to commend Police Chief Ratcliffe on the arrest concerning the possession of schedule II drugs.

Councilman Mills said it seems like there is quite a difference between arrests and other things between police officers.

Police Chief Ratcliffe said Jimmy Joe McCroskey took quite a bit of vacation. Bryan Hughes' mileage is lower because he works night shift and lives in town. Chad Stilley is on short-term disability so his numbers are low.

Councilman Turner said he's concerned about people driving really fast near his house.

Police Chief Ratcliffe said he will install the speed sign in that area and alert his officers to do some extra patrolling in that area.

Councilman Conley made a motion to approve the police report. Councilman Mills seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Financial Report/Treasurer's Report

Councilman Goorskey asked where they were at concerning HVAC at the community center?

Landon Patteson said they have a quote but they have to have a structural engineer look at the building. They have only received one quote on HVAC installation.

Councilman Mills said it would probably be a good idea to get more than one quote.

Councilman Turner made a motion to approve the financial report/treasurer's report. Councilman Mills seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Town Manager's Report

Councilman Mills asked Terry Nicholson if they had talked to the people concerning the outfitter building?

Terry Nicholson said yes. There is a structural analysis that Thompson and Litton will have to do that will take 30-45 days. In the meantime, they will try to get the contractor to give the town a revised bid based on the wet floodproofing. If the increase is greater than 20% of the original contract they will have to put it back out to bid. Cornerstone would still be able to bid on it.

Mayor Spangler asked how long the extension was on the grant?

Terry Nicholson said it is extended to May 2023.

Councilman Mills said he had a request to put before council and it concerns the lead pipe rules he has been talking about. There will be a seminar August 15th at Snowshoe, West Virginia. It costs \$200/person. He would like to go but would suggest that Terry Nicholson and John Davis go.

Terry Nicholson said the purpose of this meeting is to talk about the new requirements for lead and copper in water systems. There will be testing at some outlets, including residences, so the town needs to know what will be required of them and when. One of the engineering firms presenting at the meeting will be talking about it and has agreed with the PSA to involve Giles County in talking about how they will proceed locally. Virginia is not giving much guidance on this at all. West Virginia is a little ahead of the curve.

Councilman Conley said they need a motion to approve the town manager and public works director attending this meeting and the town incurring the expenses.

Councilman Conley made a motion to approve Terry Nicholson (Town Manager), John Davis (Public Works Director), and John Mills (Council Member) attending the meeting in Snowshoe, WV concerning lead and copper in water systems and the town incurring the fees. Councilman Goorskey seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, and Goorskey

Abstain: Mills

Nays: None

Motion Carried 4-0

Councilmember Bowles told Councilman Mills she appreciated the forethought on this.

Councilman Mills said this can be devastating so they need to be informed.

Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the town manager's report.

Councilmember Bowles seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Public Works Director's Report

Councilman Goorskey said he appreciates the checking of the 10% of water meters. They're not encouraged to check a lot more so now they are looking at other avenues for leak detection and the PSA will help with that without additional costs.

John Davis said the PSA is going to help and they are going to try to find leaks in a timelier manner. They have to put a valve at the north tank but will start on leak detection as soon as they can.

Councilman Conley asked if there was an update on the water meters?

John Davis said no. Mike Bedsaul and Steve Durbin are looking over the contract.

Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the public works director's report.

Councilmember Bowles seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Presentation

Mayor Spangler said next is a presentation from Chad Fox (USDA Wildlife Services) and Andy Rutledge (Virginia DGIF)

Chad Fox said he is a biologist with USDA.

Andy Rutledge said he is a conservation officer with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Councilman Goorskey said he has been on council 4 years and there has been a lot of discussion about ducks. The local Girl Scout's troop had raised some money to purchase a duck feeder to place at the park. The town advertised and promoted it but were told they would be fined if it was installed.

Chad Fox said there is a state law that prohibits the installation of duck feeders.

Councilman Goorskey said he has read it but it's hard to get all of that into a newspaper article. The rebuttal to that, which is quick and immediate, is that he can Google 20 places in Virginia that advertise online to come and feed ducks. What is the difference?

Chad Fox said council can decide to have a duck pond and let people feed them but the moment it becomes an issue to someone or some entity, such as a disease outbreak, then it is against state law. An example would be if there was a business across the street and the ducks were leaving large amounts of their excrement behind. One goose leaves one pound of excrement behind each day so if that's impacting someone's business in the general vicinity then that's a problem and they can have a say about that. It boils down to what council wants. Do they want a duck pond where people can feed ducks or do they want a situation that spreads damage. They are not just talking about businesses that can be impacted by fecal matter but also about diseases. Places like the duck pond are where diseases such as the avian flu start at. Do they want to be known as this area that started the avian flu in southwest Virginia? He believes the answer is no. The state law was enacted in 2011. He also has an article that is on the VDGIF website concerning why people need to think about feeding wildlife. They may think about calling the duck pond something else. The domestic waterfowl issue needs to be addressed before the issue with the wild waterfowl can be addressed.

Councilman Mills asked if there was any way they could work together on this to relocate some of the waterfowl?

Chad Fox said yes and no. They can help capture some of the domestic birds so they would not have to be euthanized or the town can help find a home for them. Some of them could be taken to a farm. He would have to charge a fee for this but the town can do it on their own because they are nonprotected birds. The gray legged geese that are here are farm geese. The same goes for the white ducks and the Muscovy ducks except they would have to be put in a pen.

Mayor Spangler said as far as relocating to a different pond or wherever it might be good to know if there an estimate on how far away they should be taken to keep from coming back.

Chad Fox said he doesn't believe the gray legged geese can fly but the Muscovy's can fly so they would have to be put in a pen. Most of the white Peking ducks can fly so their wings can be clipped so they can't fly. The mallards are protected.

Councilman Goorskey said the mallards hang out on the pond and mind their own business.

Chad Fox said if the town has 20-30 mallard ducks that isn't a problem but when people are allowed to feed them more ducks will show up. Those ducks don't have to be fed: it's just human nature for people to want to feed them.

Councilman Goorskey said he's read the literature they were given and he wishes everyone would read it. He believes everyone wants to preserve the duck pond and have ducks in it because it has always been there. He doesn't believe everyone understands the health and dynamics of what's happening when the ducks are fed boxes of loaves of bread. Council doesn't have a way of letting people know they are not out to get the ducks or get rid of the duck pond. They want to preserve the ducks that are there and the nature of the town. They want to balance the desire to have a duck pond with the parents

whose kids are playing in the excrement on the other side of the street because that is where they have ball practice. It's hard to say it's ok to feed them on one side of the street but not on the other side of the street.

Chad Fox said to present to the public that it's all right to look at them but don't feed them.

Andy Rutledge said the more often you feed something the more they will hang around and there will be more to come, just like bears. When bears come to your house and are able to get in the trash they will come to that same area every year to get in the trash.

Councilman Mills asked Chad Fox and Andy Rutledge if they are responsible for interpreting the code section?

Chad Fox said that would be his agency.

Terry Nicholson asked Councilman Mills to read that section of the code so it's in the minutes so they can refer to it, as well as the name of the article.

Councilman Mills read the following:

4VAC15-40-286. Unauthorized feeding of wildlife.

It shall be unlawful for any person as defined in § 1-230 of the Code of Virginia to place, distribute, or allow the placement of food, minerals, carrion, trash, or similar substances when it attracts any species of wildlife in such numbers or circumstances to cause property damage, endanger any person or wildlife, or create a public health concern. Upon notification by department personnel, any such person shall be in violation of this section if the placing, distribution, or presence of such food, minerals, carrion, trash, or similar substances continues. This section shall not be construed to restrict bona fide agronomic plantings (including wildlife food plots), bona fide distribution of food to livestock, or wildlife management activities conducted or authorized by the department or U.S. government agencies with wildlife management responsibilities.

Councilman Goorskey said what he heard was that it states 'in such numbers to cause damage' so they would be taking their chances in a court of law as to whether or not, by allowing feeders to be put up, they had enabled enough fowl to cause damage.

Chad Fox said he would give an example. In certain areas there are people that will feed feral cats but when that becomes 50 cats people are putting out around 100 lbs. of cat food per day. Then there are around 20 black vultures that come to eat the cat food then it becomes 50 black vultures on the roof of the school pecking at the building and pulling up the rubber rooftop. Then the black vultures are on peoples cars and on their homes. That is when the preceding law kicks in and the town can use it to their advantage.

Councilman Goorskey said his mind is thinking of the kids that use the field across the street that all the geese go to that leave pounds of excrement out there every day. He does not know what types of sickness and illness a child can get from there but that is a public health issue. It relates back to the geese being there and if they are there because the town is allowing them to be there by putting up a feeder then it comes back on the town as being liable. If they simply do nothing the liability is not as much but if they are asking for help they can't really ask for help if they don't help themselves by saying please stop feeding the animals. If they have seen this successful anywhere else he would like to know and the presentation of this to the town where they live is to say they are not telling people to stop enjoying the ducks. He's afraid if they put signs up telling people to not feed the ducks that is very negative and authoritative and may give a signal to people that the town hates them for coming to see the ducks.

Chad Fox said the town could put up a kiosk and follow some other examples that are out there.

Andy Rutledge said an ordinance could be approved by the town to let people know to not feed the ducks. There are several municipalities that have done this. A kiosk can also be installed so people can be informed.

Chad Fox said the town could have a public relations person that informs the public why it isn't a good idea to feed the ducks.

Councilman Conley said he believed Mike Bedsaul had already begun working on an ordinance and was ahead of the game on that. He also believes Councilman Mills is right and they should stop sticking their heads in the sand. Something needs to be done and they also need to dispel the myths about it. It's going to be bad if a kid gets an illness from the ducks. There is no food that will stop this. They can kill the ducks by feeding them bread.

Councilman Mills said they can say that bread is not good for the ducks.

Chad Fox said they don't know what else people are feeding them.

Mayor Spangler said people enjoy observing the ducks and there is a small percentage of people that want to make sure the ducks don't go hungry, in their defense. He has seen people pull their cars up to the duck pond and open the trunk and it's full of loaves of bread. He doesn't know if they leave all of the bread. The idea of a kiosk is a good idea and maybe the boy scouts can do something like that. They could do a mailing to town residents.

Councilmember Bowles said she likes the idea of a kiosk and they can put a QR code on it with links to the website. It could be updated from time to time and they would be putting literature out there that can't be thrown away.

Councilman Mills said they need to do something. It is a hot topic from where he is sitting because he has had several people disagree with the town doing anything.

Councilman Goorskey said he doesn't know if there has ever been a prom picture made without a duck in the background. That is part of the history of the town. Is there a population number with the waterfowl where they would start seeing a die-off? He knows they could count how many there are for that area. There has to be some point in time where it is more likely to have negative impact.

Chad Fox said the more numbers there are the more likely there is to have negative impact.

Councilman Goorskey said he doesn't know if they have kept up with the population but he believes it is growing.

Councilmember Bowles said she counted 54 that were together the other day.

Councilman Goorskey said the mallard's should be there.

Chad Fox said when he pulled up to the duck pond today the wild mallards were separate but the geese and Muscovy's were all together.

Councilman Goorskey said as the populations increase in the number of geese, white ducks, and Muscovy's what happens to the native species over a period of time.

Chad Fox said the less they are fed the less of them there will be.

Mayor Spangler said the problem didn't happen overnight and will not be fixed overnight. If they can do it in a way of not offending any more people than necessary and put a kiosk in place people can be informed. If it takes signs being installed then so be it.

Councilman Conley said they needed to go ahead and install a kiosk. They need to educate first and then enforce.

Councilman Goorskey said the first he heard of this was when he was told if he fed the ducks he would be fined. When he has the plastic rings from a six-pack of soda pop he cuts them in half because when he was in elementary school he saw a picture of one around a bird's neck. There is a way to present to the public that the town does not hate

ducks, does not want to get rid of the duck pond, but they do not want to have an unhealthy population and do not want to have an unhealthy surrounding for their town. There has to be balance and that begins with clear communication and clearly articulating this is why the ducks shouldn't be fed.

Councilman Mills told Chad Fox and Andy Rutledge their knowledge has been invaluable from where he is sitting. They are basically saying that they will help the town but the town has to help themselves also.

Chad Fox said there are 24-30 big geese at the duck pond now and they will not be going anywhere.

Councilman Goorskey said he heard if they stop feeding the ducks they may lose the mallards because they can fly and find another food source. He believes some of the non-protected non-native birds may need to be moved to greener pastures in other areas where they can live so they don't lose the ones that should be at the duck pond.

Mayor Spangler and council thanked Chad Fox and Andy Rutledge for presenting at tonight's council meeting.

Councilman Mills said another pamphlet council was given was titled 'Feeding Wildlife: Food for Thought'.

Councilman Goorskey said he believed that was on the DWR website.

Communications, Concerns and Requests from the Public

Audrey Roberts said most people know she owns the business next door to the town office and they just wrapped up a four-day big deal with quilting and sewing. They did about six weeks of business in four days which brings more taxes to the town and more publicity. One of the problems is that some people were in town for the first time and thought Narrows was only on Route 460. People need to know that Narrows is more than Burger King and Marathon and just what is on the road. She has gone to the Giles County Chamber of Commerce on different days at different times of the day to pick up tourist information. There are six quilt shops from Stuart to Smith Mountain Lake and Wytheville, including her shop. People that came to her shop for the first time wanted to see more of the town. She keeps Giles County tourist books in her shop that she obtained at the town office. There needs to be more information in the town office concerning Mill Creek, the driving tour of Giles County, and she is sure there are others. She has several customers that are from Pennsylvania and Ohio that think Narrows is a neat little place and want to know what is going on. She can tell them about what is going on but being a transplant herself she doesn't know everything that is going on in town.

Mayor Spangler said he is sure that he speaks for council in saying that they agree 100% and what she has said has not fallen on deaf ears. They have talked about this quite a bit and are working toward solutions for a lot of that. Unfortunately, that takes time but her ideas are great.

Councilman Goorskey said he greatly appreciates her passion and her attention to that. He believes they all feel the same way. He doesn't own a business in town and doesn't see the people she talked about and to take this on her own is wonderful information for council.

Audrey Roberts said Narrows is a neat place and people need to know about it. She also wanted to report a streetlight being out at 902 Wolf Street and since she sometimes comes home late at night she would appreciate if the light could be fixed.

Police Chief Ratcliffe said he spoke to the Town Manager about the streetlights and this has been an ongoing issue for years. They are turning in the streetlights that are out and are receiving a work order but no one is coming to fix the lights. They did not get hers on the last list but hers will be turned in.

Audrey Roberts would like to request a water adjustment at her house on Wolf Street. She has been working on getting her house fixed up and has had 3 different contractors

there to just look at the bathroom. The first contractor installed the vanity but it wasn't connected to the pipes so the water was going into the house. The second contractor was hired to fix what the first one didn't do. The third contractor was working in the toilet area and left the water running so it went from a \$46 water bill to a \$134 water bill. There has only been one time in the 5+ years she has lived in Narrows that her water bill has gone over the base amount.

Susan Kidd said she didn't see a problem in giving Audrey Roberts an adjustment. They will let Tasha Riddle know.

Councilman Goorskey said he doesn't recall her receiving an adjustment so they will have this taken care of.

Communications from Mayor and Council

Councilman Mills said at the PSA meeting they discussed the rates for solid waste and they discussed the Town of Narrows receiving help with leak detection. The other thing is that they have had a hard time collecting trash bills. They had previously worked with the treasurer's office and he inquired as to how much they were paying the treasurer's office and how much they were collecting and they gave some figures. They are going with a different agency out of the area to try to collect these fees. Some people have an \$8,000 trash bill. It isn't fair to the people that pay their bills to let these people go uncontested. A huge portion of these bills is rental property and the way it was set up previously is that they went after the tenant. People that have rental property will curse him to high heaven and that is their right but he says get it off of the owner and they can get it off of the tenant. They finally agreed to work that in place. They are moving forward with a different plan and a better plan.

New Business

Mayor Spangler said the first item is the personnel policy update concerning the recruitment and selection of department heads.

Councilman Conley said council has discussed a policy on the selection of department heads and he has spoken with Mike Bedsaul concerning this. The article will amend Article II, Section P-8 in the Town of Narrows Personnel Policy Handbook. He believes it is more in alignment with what council would like to see happen as far as the hiring of department heads.

Reid Broughton said he read the resolution and it looked good to him.

Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the resolution that will amend Article II, Section P-8 of the Town of Narrows Personnel Policy Handbook concerning the Recruitment and Selection of Department Heads. Councilman Conley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Mayor Spangler said the next item is AirMedCare Network coverage for town employees.

Scott Whyte said he is the local sales manager for AirMedcare Network and he can answer any questions council may have concerning the proposal. They discovered there is an issue in rural communities in SWVA that the cost to be flown by air ambulance is a significant expense for individuals so they created a membership program in order to give people financial peace of mind and they can offer it as an employee benefit. If someone is flown by helicopter (bases for Carilion are in Lexington, Roanoke, Christiansburg, and Marion) they can guarantee zero out-of-pocket expense for that medical transportation.

Mayor Spangler asked if that included Carilion?

Scott Whyte said yes.

Mayor Spangler asked if there were med flight services in the area that are not included?

Scott Whyte said the closest one is in Martinsville, Virginia, but it's very rare they would come to this area.

Councilman Goorskey asked if this covers the person being only picked up in this area or wherever the person may be?

Scott Whyte said as long as it is with one of their aircrafts it doesn't matter where they are picked up at. On the map on their flyer, it shows a map with dark blue dots and that is where their aircrafts are located.

Councilman Conley said the group rates show 3-149 employees at \$185 for three years for all employees. Is that correct?

Scott Whyte said that is per employee. Their most popular plan for towns is a census plan where the town would purchase a number of slots for the employees they have. Narrows would be purchasing 30 slots at \$65/slot so the total cost would be \$1,950/year. If the employee leaves, the slot would stay open and the person that was hired to replace them could obtain that slot.

Councilman Conley asked if this covers on or off the job anywhere in the United States?

Scott Whyte said yes as long as their aircraft picks them up. It also covers their entire household.

Councilman Mills asked if the town can only be offered the one-year deal?

Scott Whyte said they have different options. They have 'group full' where the town would pay for the membership whether it be for one year, three years, five years, or ten years. The downside to that plan is if the employee leaves the town the membership stays with them. They have 'census' which is where the town buys membership slots and if the employee leaves it is not portable and the town keeps the membership. Then there is the 'payroll deduct' option where the employee elects if they want it or not, determines the length of time, and it is deducted from their paycheck.

Mayor Spangler said one thing that concerns him a little bit is that if he is on vacation in Florida and needs to be transported by a helicopter he will not be able to select who picks him up. There is probably a 50/50 chance there is someone that will transport him that is not covered.

Scott Whyte said that is correct. They can never guarantee that it will be them that does the transporting but if it is them the person will be covered. What they do to combat that problem is when a member is enrolled they will receive a welcome packet with a membership card to put in their wallet as well as a sticker to put on their vehicle so they can see that AirMedCare is their preferred method of transportation.

Councilman Conley said he believes it is a great plan but believes they also need to ask the town employees if they would like the coverage and see if they would be willing to pay half. He would like to know if any town employee or a member of their household has needed air transport.

Terry Nicholson said someone has recently needed air transport.

Councilman Conley said he doesn't know if it is covered by their current insurance or not.

Susan Kidd said very little.

Lindsey Caudill said she knows a ride from Radford to Roanoke was \$40,000 and nothing was covered.

Mayor Spangler said the cost was probably closer to \$60,000-\$70,000 now. What about the air transport they see coming out of West Virginia.

Scott Whyte said the helicopters in southern West Virginia are covered in their area as well.

Mayor Spangler asked if there are any that fly in this area that would be out-of-network?

Scott Whyte said not that he is aware of but he is not 100% sure on that. There may be a base near Bristol, Tennessee, that is not covered by their network. That one and the one in Martinsville are not covered but he can't see them coming to this area because there are networks that are closer.

Mayor Spangler asked if a patient leaves a Carilion facility are they to be taken to a facility that will accommodate their needs or if Carilion Giles says take them to Carilion Roanoke and they fly over the Montgomery Lewis Gale hospital plus Salem Lewis Gale can they do that or can they leave them wherever they can provide service?

Scott Whyte said their providers always take the patient to the hospital that is the most medically necessary.

Mayor Spangler said the reason he asked that question is that he had a friend that had a heart attack and they brought a helicopter from West Virginia because Carilion didn't have one available. They left Carilion Giles and flew over Montgomery Lewis Gale and Salem Lewis Gale going to Carilion Roanoke and her insurance refused to pay because they said either one of those hospitals could have provided her with care. She ended up with a \$69,000 helicopter ride that she had to pay.

Scott Whyte said in that circumstance if she had been a member she wouldn't have had to pay the out-of-pocket expense. There is no chance that someone could be denied coverage if they are a member and it is their helicopter. There is protocol as to where the person is flown based on the facility and their needs.

Mayor Spangler said he understood Scott Whyte to say if they left Carilion Giles and Montgomery Lewis Gale could meet their needs that is where they would be taken.

Scott Whyte said that is up to the flight crew and the flight controllers. From his understanding they would be taken to the nearest facility that would meet their needs. Whether the person's insurance coverage would cover that scenario is up to them.

Mayor Spangler said he can see it being an issue if Carilion Giles wants the person taken to Carilion Roanoke for whatever reason but the flight crew decides that Montgomery Lewis Gale is a good place so they will be taken there. He can see that being a considerable concern to the patient.

Scott Whyte said if the employee or a member of their household is in their helicopter the coverage covers the flight.

Mayor Spangler said he is saying the patient may not end up at the hospital the doctor intended them to go to.

Scott Whyte said in his experience insurance companies don't like to pay and will find a reason not to.

Councilman Mills said the numbers Scott Whyte is throwing out there is showing that one flight for someone has paid for them forever. He agrees with Councilman Conley as to having staff check with employees to see how much interest there would be with this coverage. He agrees that this is worth looking into.

Councilman Conley said it was a great idea.

Councilman Mills said he would like for the town to pay 50% and the employee pay 50%.

Councilman Goorskey asked if this would be pre-tax or after-tax?

Scott Whyte said that would be up to the employer.

Councilman Conley said he believes it would be a substantial benefit to their staff.

Councilman Mills said they will check with employees to see the interest they have. He thanked Scott Whyte for his time and attention.

Mayor Spangler asked Scott Whyte if an employee leaves employment and has the coverage does the employee replacing them pick up the coverage for the remainder of their employment with the town?

Scott Whyte said yes. As soon as the elections are made the town will receive an invoice that will need to be settled within 3 months. Most towns will do 1 or 2 deductions within a month so the invoice can be paid within 3 months.

Councilman Goorskey said his choice would be the 'consensus' plan where they purchase slots for employees. They should only go into it for one year at a time because they are using taxpayer dollars to pay the other half of that. If they pay for 10 years at a time and an employee leaves employment tomorrow then taxpayers end up paying half of a benefit the employee gets to take with them.

Mayor Spangler said next is a review of delinquent business licenses. He believes they need to do whatever is necessary to collect the fees.

Terry Nicholson said council is being asked for direction on how to proceed with the collection of the delinquent business license fees. Staff has already made courtesy phone calls to them to let them know they were delinquent. The next step would be to send them a registered letter saying their license would basically be revoked if they don't pay by a certain date.

Councilman Mills asked what the next step would be after sending registered letters.

Terry Nicholson said closing the business.

Councilman Mills said that's a pretty serious message. They made a good faith effort. He has been in enforcement his whole career and it was never pleasant when he had to ramp up the law but it isn't fair to everyone around them.

Councilman Mills made a motion for staff to follow the proper procedures to collect business license fees. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Unfinished Business

Mayor Spangler said council is being asked to discuss the stop signs on Wolf Street and Williams Street.

Councilman Conley said he hasn't heard any comments, good or bad, concerning the stop signs. It is a safety concern.

Councilman Conley made a motion to install stop signs on Wolf Street and Williams Street and make that a 4-way stop. Councilmember Bowles seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, and Goorskey

Abstain: Mills

Nays: None

Motion Carried 4-0

Matters for Consideration by Council

Mayor Spangler said council is being asked to consider the Planning Commission recommendation and approval of the special exception for Leea Smith concerning her Air BnB.

Councilman Mills said there were concerns about noise, parking, and year-round rentals. Based on discussions with the applicant, the planning commission has made a motion to recommend to Narrows Town Council that the special exception is approved. The stipulation is there will be a one-year probationary period where if town officials receive complaints or have problems that are not adequately addressed by the applicant the special exception may be revoked. The motion was approved unanimously by the planning commission.

Councilman Conley made a motion to approve the special exception for Leea Smith with the stipulation of a one-year probationary period. If town officials receive complaints or have problems that are not adequately addressed by the applicant the special exception may be revoked. Councilmember Bowles seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Mayor Spangler said council is being asked to schedule a public hearing for the weed/trash/clutter ordinance.

Councilman Conley said he has worked with Mike Bedsaul as council asked to work on the ordinance to repeal and replace Chapter 10, Article III of the town code. They have added the definition of the word 'clutter'. He hopes that council has taken the time to read it and realize that this ordinance has teeth in it and it makes it easier on their officials to go ahead and notify the property owners or occupants.

Councilman Mills asked if they would be going after the owner and the occupant?

Councilman Conley said they could go after the owner or the occupant. Mike Bedsaul thought it would be prudent to have a public hearing concerning this. He likes it as it is written and it has everything they need.

Terry Nicholson said it is taking language directly from the state ordinance so it's consistent.

Councilman Conley made a motion to hold a public hearing to repeal and replace Chapter 10, Article III of the town code to regulate trash, clutter, and weeds that constitute a nuisance in the Town of Narrows. Councilman Mills seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Terry Nicholson said the public hearing will be held at the September 12, 2022, council meeting.

Mayor Spangler said the next item is to consider the lease of the BB&T building.

Terry Nicholson said there is a letter in council's packet requesting to rent the BB&T building for storage.

Councilman Mills asked how much of the building did they want to rent?

Terry Nicholson said she wants the whole building.

Mayor Spangler said he has concerns. Do they have a business plan and if they're going to run a thrift store he would assume they would solicit people to bring in goods for them to sell. Will that merchandise pile up out back when it can't be adequately attended to. Will the trash that arises from what they can't sell pile up out back.

Terry Nicholson said council has all of the information the town has.

Councilman Mills said they need more information than this to make an educated decision. Where does that put them with the county concerning issues they have had with other projects dealing with the floodplain?

Terry Nicholson said they would have to speak with the county about it being a change of use of that building. He doubts she is willing to spend much money fixing the building so that may not be an issue. He can go back to her and tell her they would need a business plan presented to council showing what she wants to do.

Councilman Mills said with the right information and the right assurances it could happen. They want the building to be used.

Councilman Goorskey asked what the change of use was?

Councilman Mills said they need more information because what they've been presented is pretty open ended.

Mayor Spangler said if she plans on running the thrift store 12 months out of the year is she prepared to pay the heating bill it will cost to heat that building. If she just wants to heat the downstairs with kerosene heaters he doubts our insurance will allow that.

Terry Nicholson said he will draft a letter that will ask her for a business plan.

Mayor Spangler said council is being asked to consider the addendum to the Thompson and Litton PAR agreement.

Terry Nicholson said council has information in their packets that was previously given to them concerning the study on the bank building to use it for a fire department. This wasn't completed because they found out the bank building would not work. There is \$16,850 left in the budget and the fire department is planning on paying some of that with \$11,415 left in their budget. The total would be \$28,490 budgeted toward the \$48,000 cost. The fire department has stated they were committed on seeing this through and seeing a plan created to see this through on some future property. That would leave \$19,730 so the town is recommending splitting that amount with the fire department so the town's portion would be \$9,865. The money would be spent to pay for this study to be able to come up with a conceptual plan on what they want to build for the fire department to make sure the site is appropriate.

Councilman Conley said on page 3 concerning the kick-off meeting and tours it states T&L will meet with a reasonable sized group of 4-8 individuals selected by the town, fire department, and police department. He would like to be part of that group.

Councilman Mills said he would also like to be part of that group.

Terry Nicholson thanked Councilman Conley and Councilman Mills for volunteering and they will make sure the meeting happens.

Councilman Mills said this has to be done by someone regardless of who it is.

Susan Kidd said T&L has been patient when working on this project in waiting for a decision to be made.

Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the addendum to the Thompson and Litton PAR agreement. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Councilman Goorskey made a motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters concerning creating a new position (Sec. 2.2-3711.A.1) and to discuss real property concerning the acquisition of real property (Sec. 2.2-3711.A.3). Councilman Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Councilman Conley made a motion to return to open session. Councilmember Bowles seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

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 Goorskey made a motion to accept the certification. Councilman Mills seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Councilman Conley made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Turner seconded the motion.

Ayes: Turner, Bowles, Conley, Mills, and Goorskey

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Clerk, Debbie Thomas

Mayor, Tom Spangler