

**Narrows Town Council Meeting
May 13, 2024**

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

Staff members present were John Davis, Cindy Laws, Jimmy Joe McCroskey, Terry Nicholson (participated through Zoom), Debbie Thomas, and Lindsey Thompson.

Attorney Mike Bedsaul was present.

Councilman John Mills gave the invocation.

Council and audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of April 8th and April 29th Meeting Minutes

Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the April 8th meeting minutes. Councilman Conley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bowles, Conley, and Mills

Nays: None

Motion Carried 3-0

Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the April 29th meeting minutes. Councilman Conley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Conley and Mills

Nays: None

Abstain: Bowles

Motion Carried 2-0

Consent Agenda

Library Report

Councilman Conley congratulated Cindy Laws on the increase in state aid and is excited about the grant.

Parks & Recreation Report

No comments.

Farmer's Market Report

Councilman Mills said it looked like there will be a variety of vendors at the Narrows Farmers Market this year.

Lindsey Thompson said they had two more vendors in addition to the vendors listed on her report.

Councilman Conley thanked Lindsey Thompson for the job she has done.

Mayor Spangler said Kids' Fishing Day was a big event and was well attended.

Police Report

Councilman Mills said the police officers are doing a fantastic job.

Financial Report/Treasurer's Report

Councilman Conley thanked Debbie Thomas for her reports and for the job she does.

Town Manager's Report

Councilman Conley asked Terry Nicholson about the issue concerning the automatic transfer switch pertaining to the electrical improvement project at the sewer plant.

Terry Nicholson said the breakers are kicking when the generator kicks on. The engineer now has to figure out how to resolve the problem. A change order was approved by council last month to try and correct the issue. Parts were replaced but the issue is still ongoing.

John Davis said the plant has to be started in phases but so far they cannot do it in phases. The engineers are going to have to figure out what steps to take.

Councilman Conley asked that the town stay on top of everything dealing with this issue.

Terry Nicholson said the town did convey to the contractor and the engineer that they were unhappy and that the issue needs to be resolved.

Councilmember Bowles said she was at the meeting with Kathleen Armstrong when she presented to the parks and recreation commission. She is excited concerning some of the initiatives that will hopefully happen with parks and recreation.

Public Works Director's Report

Councilman Mills said he was very excited when he saw that water loss for the month of April was down to 11%.

John Davis said it will not be that low every month.

Councilman Mills said he gets excited explaining to the Giles County PSA what Narrows is doing to curtail water loss.

Councilman Conley said they discussed replacing the water lines in town at the budget meeting. This is something that has to be done and council is willing to put the money and manpower toward this venture. The asset management plan will help and guide them in replacing water lines.

Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilmember Bowles seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bowles, Conley, and Mills

Nays: None

Motion Carried 3-0

Councilman Mills made a motion to amend the agenda to include the scheduled public hearing to discuss the issuance of a general obligation and water and sewer revenue bond. Councilman Conley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bowles, Conley, and Mills

Nays: None

Motion Carried 3-0

Mike Bedsaul said council has a copy of a resolution to approve the approved general obligation bond for water and sewer improvements. The town had already advertised for a public hearing tonight but was inadvertently left off of the agenda and that is why he asked the mayor to hold a vote to amend the agenda to add that. He asked a public hearing to be opened to see if there are any public comments on the proposed bond issuance and then close the public hearing. He believes Terry Nicholson has actual consideration of the resolution under 'Matters for Consideration by Council' for later in the meeting. The bond financing agreement has been listed as a separate matter for consideration by Council, however, the only thing council needs to consider is approval of the resolution because the resolution approves the agreement.

Mayor Spangler opened the public hearing concerning the general obligation bond for water and sewer improvements. He asked if there were any comments from the public. Hearing no comments he declared the public hearing closed.

Communications, Concerns and Requests from the Public

Mayor Spangler said two letters were received from separate individuals concerning the matter to be discussed now.

Judy Trivette said the first day they met Joe Johnson he invited himself into their home and talked for three hours. The next day, which was a Sunday, he called her daughter and asked if he could use their shower because his water service was not to be turned on until Monday. Her daughter texted and asked her if he could take a shower and she told her daughter no because they did not know him. Her daughter told her they needed to be neighborly. Judy's grandson was staying with them, he is 23, so her daughter told Joe Johnson he could use their shower. Her daughter was lying on her bed and after Joe Johnson took a shower he opened her bedroom door and sat down on the side of her bed. This was very inappropriate. Her daughter stood up and went to the other side of the bed into the living room. The whole neighborhood is scared and it is a good neighborhood. Joe Johnson has a motion light at his front door and when it is activated it shines in the neighbor's picture window. She wants to know why he is doing this because no one is harming him. They will not even sit on their carport alone because they are afraid to. Cats are disappearing and Joe Johnson does not want anyone to walk a dog in the road in front of his house. He has chased people and has recorded them with a camera. They need some help with this issue.

Holly Ferrell Gray said she nor any of her neighbors desire to be here tonight to speak against a neighbor that does not understand what it means to be neighborly. She hates that matters such as these must be presented before council when they have more important things to do with their time. She is mother to three teenagers, two dogs, and five cats. She has lived in Narrows her whole life, which is 39 years. Most of that time has been spent at her residence on Blankenship Street on high school hill. She has always loved where she lived and enjoyed the neighbors that reside around her, until this last year. During this time, the neighbor moved away and sold her house to Joe Johnson. She nor her neighbors had any issues with Joe Johnson in the beginning and he was talkative and very friendly. Then one day something seemed to change. She has two basset hounds and one day they were tied up outside and they both slipped out of their leash. They then ran into Joe Johnson's yard. One of their neighbors grabbed the leash of one of the dogs and brought them back home. Her dogs are not aggressive and are loved by all of her neighbors except for Joe Johnson. After this occurrence she was visited by a Town of Narrows police officer and was asked about her dog being in Joe Johnson's yard and rolling around. She told the officer she was not aware of her dog being loose and apologized for the inconvenience and thanked the officer for stopping by. The officer then stated he had been to visit several of her neighbors for the same reason at the behest of Joe Johnson. Instead of Joe Johnson speaking to her or her husband about this issue he called dispatch two times concerning her animals. Joe Johnson complains and has made threats against her and other neighbors' cats because they play outside a lot and come in his yard. He has asked the police if he can 'take care of the problem himself' to which he was told no. She had a cat that has gone missing. Joe Johnson will hiss and run at her cats if they are lying on her side of the street. She believes if she looks at her ring camera she could see a lot more. She respects that Joe Johnson has his boundaries and does not seem to like or want animals in or near his yard so she does not understand why he moved into a residential neighborhood. She is not going to accept his constant threats and harassment concerning her family, her neighbors, and all of their animals. Joe Johnson has gotten into multiple verbal confrontations with several of her neighbors who were walking their animals down Elsworth and/or Blankenship Street and policing the streets as his own. He has followed people home to see where they live and has taken pictures of them and their location/homes. His behavior is erratic, hostile, and unstable. She and many of her neighbors feel unsafe inside and outside of their homes. They feel they cannot speak to him to rectify this situation that has been blown out of proportion by his antics these past several months. Something needs to be done and done quickly before something serious happens that cannot be undone. She thanked council for letting her speak.

Joe Johnson thanked council for letting him speak. He would like to speak about animal control and also about property rights and the responsibilities of others concerning property. He thanked the Narrows Police Department for responding to calls and would like to recognize Chris Reynolds, Bobby Gautier, and Chad Stilley in doing so. He had some pictures of the basset hound that has been on his property several times. Chris Reynolds did go and speak to the owners of the dog and told them about the town ordinance dealing with dogs, which states it is

prohibited for any animal to defecate on any property in the Town of Narrows. He is just asking people to respect his property. Chad Stilley responded when Joe Johnson called about a mower coming on his property and making a 54"x 3' place in his yard. Someone told him the only person mowing that day was Mr. Gray. He stays off of other people's property and he expects the same respect in return.

Mayor Spangler thanked everyone for their comments. This will be looked into but if it is a matter for the police then call the police and let them deal with it, whatever the matter may be.

Councilman Mills said he is a firm believer in an individuals rights until they infringe on someone else's rights. It is sad when people cannot communicate across the street but instead all parties feel compelled to come and address council about these issues. No sides are being taken and no line is being drawn. He would ask that the people in attendance tonight try to talk amongst themselves concerning these issues instead of calling the police.

Communications from Mayor, Council, and Staff

Councilman Mills said he and Terry Nicholson attended the PSA meeting. There will be an increase in solid waste rates of about 10%. There was a presentation by Eric Rorrer concerning trying to get a water source on the eastern end of the county. They encountered difficulties punching a hole in the ground so they have a dilemma: do they pay someone \$20,000 for a dry hole or do they roll the dice and move a few feet. Eric Rorrer has done a lot of drilling and he said he felt strongly that he could hit water. Councilman Mills voted to continue drilling.

Terry Nicholson said reports were received from the lead and asbestos testing that was done on all of the properties around the Gallimore property and properties in the downtown area. Most properties contain some asbestos but not a terrible amount so that should be easy to deal with. He gave the reports to each of the property owners and the town-owned buildings were also tested. The town will work with DEQ toward performing abatement of the asbestos. They will need a plan for redevelopment of the property and they will split the cost of the abatement for the renovation or demolition of the building.

Terry Nicholson said Dr. Noelle Bissell from the Virginia Department of Health called and wanted to know if they could have their mobile unit go to Camp Success and try to address the homeless population that are in and out of Camp Success. They will set up every Tuesday for two hours at Camp Success and offer services from VDH for anyone that wants them. This has been popular at the farmers market so it should be good for Camp Success.

Mayor Spangler said the Farmers Market was voted 2nd in Virginia Living Magazine's Best of 2024. He thanked Lindsey Thompson and others for making this happen. Also, Narrows High School came in the top 100 in the state for finance education.

New Business

None.

Unfinished Business

Councilman Conley made a motion to approve the resolution authorizing issuance of the general obligation bond. Councilman Mills seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bowles, Conley, and Mills

Nays: None

Motion Carried 3-0

Matters for Consideration by Council

Councilman Mills made a motion to schedule a public hearing for the FY25 budget at the June 10th, 2024, council meeting. Councilman Conley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bowles, Conley, and Mills

Nays: None

Motion Carried 3-0

Councilman Mills made a motion to approve the purchase order agreement with Main Street Builders, LLC and authorize Town Manager Terry Nicholson to sign the agreement on the town’s behalf. Councilman Conley seconded the motion.
Ayes: Bowles, Conley, and Mills
Nays: None
Motion Carried 3-0

Councilman Mills Made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Bowles seconded the motion.
Ayes: Bowles, Conley, and Mills
Nays: None
Motion Carried 3-0

Clerk, Debbie Thomas

Mayor, Tom Spangler