

Narrows Town Council Special Meeting

April 23, 2026

Mayor Spangler called the special meeting to order.

Council Members who were present were John Hale, Sara Bowles, Jonathan Creger, John Mills, and Alicia Lane attended via Zoom because she was in New York on business.

Town Manager Terry Nicholson was present.

Staff Members present were Lindsey Thompson and Bryan Hughes.

An invocation was offered by Mayor Tom Spangler.

Council and audience recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing – Sale of the Bank Building

Mayor Spangler opened a public hearing concerning the proposed sale of the building known as the bank building. There were no members of the public present to comment, and the public hearing was closed.

Alisa Stull subsequently approached the Council and explained that her sister, originally from the area but now residing in Texas, had submitted a business plan proposal for the bank building in January. She stated the family had not received any acknowledgment of the submission and had been informed only in March, when she contacted Town Manager Terry Nicholson, that a proposal had already been accepted.

Terry Nicholson stated he did not receive her sister's submission. He noted that when Ms. Stull contacted him, he had asked for her sister to call him so the proposal could be resubmitted, but he did not receive a follow-up call. Councilman Jonathan Creger clarified that the bidding period had opened and closed, the bids had been evaluated, a winning bid had been selected, and a contract was in place. He expressed sympathy but indicated the town was prepared to move forward.

Council members acknowledged the situation and thanked Ms. Stull for attending. Terry Nicholson offered to schedule a time to show her another available town property if her sister remained interested. The public hearing was formally closed.

Approval of the Sale of the Bank Building

Terry Nicholson stated the purchase agreement had been reviewed at a prior meeting and had been signed by the buyers. He noted the closing was scheduled for the following week and asked

Council to make a motion to approve the agreement and authorize him to execute the closing on behalf of the town.

A motion was made by councilman John Mills and Jonathan Creger seconded by councilman to approve the purchase agreement and authorize the Town Manager to execute the closing on behalf of the town.

Ayes: Hale, Bowles, Creger, Mills, and Lane

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Approval of Pre-Season Fishing Ban – Kids Fishing Day

Terry Nicholson asked Council to approve the annual ban on fishing for the night prior to Kids Fishing Day, which was scheduled for May 2, 2026. A motion was made by councilman John Mills and seconded by councilman Creger.

Ayes: Hale, Bowles, Creger, Mills, and Lane

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Communications – Budget Update

Terry Nicholson provided Council with a preliminary budget update. He stated he had met with Davenport, the town's financial consultant, who had been assisting with the budget process and the long-term capital plan. He advised Council that the draft budget would be formally presented at the May meeting and that a representative from Davenport would be in attendance to explain the reasoning behind their recommendations.

Terry Nicholson stated that Davenport was recommending the town capture most, if not all, of the real estate assessment increases, which had risen approximately 58%, and that water and sewer rates be increased by 35%. He acknowledged these were significant figures and wanted Council to be aware before the formal budget presentation so the numbers would not come as a surprise.

Council members acknowledged the information. One member noted he had previously told constituents that real estate rates would be reduced and asked for assurance that raising them was truly necessary before any action was taken. Council agreed to reserve detailed discussion for the May meeting.

Terry Nicholson outlined the budget approval timeline: the draft budget would be presented at the May 11 meeting, a public hearing would be advertised and held at the June meeting, Council would recommend approval at that meeting, and a final vote would occur at a special meeting held one week thereafter, as required.

Council member Alicia Lane noted she anticipated participating in the May meeting remotely due to a prior engagement in Wisconsin, and Council indicated that could be accommodated.

Town Manager Recruitment Process

Mayor Spangler raised the topic of the process for interviewing candidates for the Town Manager position. He stated there were 14 applicants as of the meeting, with the application deadline set for May 1. He proposed using the same process employed when Terry Nicholson was hired: each Council member would review all resumes and identify their top candidates, and the combined results would be used to select a group for interviews.

Council members expressed support for this approach and discussed additional elements. Council member Lane suggested that finalists be asked to deliver a 10-to-15-minute presentation about themselves, their career, and a relevant project prior to their formal interview. She noted this would allow Council to assess communication skills directly relevant to the role. Council members agreed this was a good idea.

Council also discussed whether to conduct two rounds of interviews rather than one, with the possibility of virtual interviews for candidates located at a distance. Members expressed a preference for in-person meetings where practicable but acknowledged that virtual interviews would be necessary in some cases.

There was discussion about developing interview questions tailored specifically to the requirements of the Town Manager position rather than relying solely on generic questions. Council member

Councilwoman Alicia Lane offered to help with designing the interview process such as drafting a presentation requirement and interview questions for the recruiting process. Council all agreed this would be helpful.

Council members noted that several applicants came from Virginia Tech's Center for Public Administration and Policy program, which was viewed as a positive outcome of outreach efforts.

Adjournment

A motion was made by John Mills and seconded by councilman Jonathan Creger to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: Hale, Bowles, Creger, Mills, and Lane

Nays: None

Motion Carried 5-0

Clerk, Debbie Thomas

Mayor, Tom Spangler