

## TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

August 22, 2023

The regular meeting of the Montross Town Council was held August 22, 2023, and was called to order at 7:30 p.m., at Town Hall, 15869 Kings Highway, Montross, VA.

Council Members Present: Terry Cosgrove, Carolyn Carlson, Bobby D. Greene, Aaron Hooks, Joseph P. King, Clinton A. Watson, Jr.

Council Members Absent: Kathryn S. Wittman

Town Manager: Francine G. Taylor

### REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Cosgrove called the Council meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

### MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was observed.

### APPROVAL PRIOR MINUTES

Mayor Cosgrove asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes from the July 25, 2023 meeting. The only correction needed was the distributed financial report says June rather than July at the top of the report. Mr. King, seconded by Mrs. Carlson, made a motion to approve the revised minutes of the July 25, 2023 meeting. The motion unanimously carried.

### APPROVAL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mayor Cosgrove asked if there were any additions or corrections to the financial reports for July 2023. Mr. King, seconded by Mr. Hooks made a motion to approve the July 2023 financial reports as presented. The motion was unanimously carried.

## **REPORTS**

### TOWN MANAGER

Mrs. Taylor introduced Matthew Tanner, owner of Timely Tech, who proposed a new phone system and data back up system. The Town would purchase two phones with enhanced service rather than a lease program from Breezeline, and backup system hardware would be installed to eliminate a monthly service charge to Code Blue (one time cost of \$500 vs \$107.08 monthly). The cost to purchase telephones and equipment, including labor and installation will be \$2200. There is no ongoing contract for the phone service. There is an option to purchase IT services any time in the future for help with IT issues, as well as phone system support. After a few questions from Council

members, there was a motion from Mr. King, seconded by Mr. Watson, to approve \$2200 for the purchase of this new equipment and service. Roll call vote: Mr. King – aye; Mrs. Carlson – aye; Mr. Watson – aye; Mr. Hooks – aye; Mr. Cosgrove – aye. Motion unanimously carried.

Mr. Tanner also shared of the possibility of an alternative internet service being offered in the near future, and could be made available to both Town Hall as well as to the Montross community, with enough interest. Mr. King suggested we perhaps survey the Montross residents for interest in this internet option. Mr. Tanner offered to provide potential survey questions for such a survey. More information will be gathered at a future date.

Mrs. Taylor shared that she is researching available mass notification systems for notifying residents of emergency information – such as water breaks, weather alerts, road closures, etc. Mr. Tanner also offered to look into possible solutions to this need.

## OLD BUSINESS

### WATERLINE:

- Mrs. Taylor reported that Montross suffered yet another water break- this one near the intersection of Rectory & Glenn Streets. That makes three over a three-week period.
- Extension: We were formally asked by VDH what additional cost might be needed to extend the system beyond the current scope, and information was sent to the agency, and we continue to follow up on the process.
- The meter project continues to progress as meter company representatives visited the community over a couple days to research and investigate any challenges in advance of installation. Our current utility software company is writing a program that will interface with the anticipated new meters.
- Maintenance: Several items discussed at previous council meetings have been addressed. Bids are being solicited for new flooring and painting at Town Hall. TM Taylor would like to look at alternatives for storage in advance of the arrival of the water meters. The Christmas items that are stored there should remain within the building for climate control purposes.

### EVENTS:

- Fall Festival: Mayor Cosgrove reported that the committee continues to prepare for this festival which has gained much interest over the past month. At the July council meeting he reported in error the donations level received by the festival committee, and they continue to seek private and corporate contributions. One notable change is the change in location of the food vendors, which will be located in the green space between the Northern Neck Brewery and Miss Lora's. Vice-Mayor King suggested developing certificates of appreciation for the hard-working volunteers, and offered to help with this project. Mayor Cosgrove said that once a list of those involved is established, that would be a wonderful recognition.
- First Friday: August event is anticipated to still be at the green space location to allow more time for the park grass to become established. Those involved with this event is another group of dedicated volunteers who should be recognized

- Oktoberfest: This event is schedule 3pm on October 21<sup>st</sup> to include kids pumpkin painting contest, Trent Jones as well as Cougar Flash bands, area breweries to be invited
- Park: A ribbon cutting opening ceremony is planned prior to First Friday on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Giveaway items will be available for children in attendance. Steve Keene has offered to participate by providing hot dogs, chips and drinks at cost to help with the celebration. Most of the electrical work has been completed by Ricky Landon. He also completed the water installation in the park. Lighting options are being discussed. The mayor reported that the plan for the park grounds will be to bring in good topsoil, reseed and tend to it over the winter months in preparation for spring and future plantings. Vice-Mayor King shared news that he has secured funding in the amount of \$2000 for a new park wrapped sign, utilizing the pavilion color scheme, while using the back side of the sign for donor recognition. More information will be presented at the next council meeting. Mayor Cosgrove and Fran Taylor have each met with George Townend regarding his son who is seeking an Eagle Scout project. He is interested in helping with the garden project for the park. We will meet with him soon to discuss this project.

Codification: Mayor Cosgrove again asked for any input on codes that need to be updated or considered. Topics that the mayor has suggested are food carts, noise levels for live music, Air BNBs, zoning, blighted properties, food and lodging taxes. The mayor indicated that we should look into what State standards are for noise ordinances. Also centralizing the food cart vendors in one location might be more desirable than spread out throughout town.

Parking Lot: The mayor and Town Manager will meet with the paving company to finalize the plans for resurfacing the recently acquired lot. Lighting options will also be researched.

### NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Cosgrove wanted to acknowledge Leonard Carlson and the group of volunteers who handle the emergency phone tree system when they recently contacted all those involved during the extreme heat we experienced. It is a unique and much appreciated service offered by a wonderful group of citizens for neighbors in need.

Mr. King suggested we review the current water connection fees and mimic the County process.

### COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Hooks asked if there would be posted signage at the park with regulations/expectations, and the Mayor indicated yes and that wording is being developed.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

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Francine Taylor  
Town Manager

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Terry A. Cosgrove  
Mayor