

WORKSHOP TOWN BOARD

August 6, 2024

Present Mayor George Holleman
Mayor Pro Tem Eric Bumgarner
Councilman Jack Simms
Councilwoman Kim Brown
Councilwoman Tamara Odom

The workshop was opened for discussion by Mayor Holleman at 2:00 p.m.

Items of Discussion:

1. Town's website:

Town Manager, Aaron Wike has met with Apptegy, Munibit, and Civic Plus about updating our website. All three base their charges off population. Munibit charges the least of the three for monthly service but has a high upfront cost. Apptegy and Munibit had a yearly cost of around \$8,000. All three require town staff to make any changes we want to make to the website. They only host the site and provide the tools to make it easier for staff to make changes. He spoke with Presentations on the Web, who currently hosts and maintains our site, and they are more than happy to update our site for us. We just need to tell them what we would like to see. Their cost would be roughly \$600 for the home page and \$185 for each additional page for the update. We would spend around \$8,000 updating each page of our current website, but there are some pages that could be combined or eliminated that aren't necessary, which would lower the price. After the updates are made, there would be no increase in our maintenance/hosting fees (\$231.60 per quarter) and they would continue to update the site as they do now. All we do is send them the information. Their monthly fee allows for up to 1 hour of updates, which we never go over. We need to know how the Town Council wants the pages to look. It was suggested that each member write down or provide snapshots of other websites to get ideas of how the new layout is envisioned to be. It has also been recommended that the meetings be recorded and live streamed with a link on the website. Several cameras were discussed and recommendations are to be obtained and reported back for future discussion/decisions on the best way to make the live stream happen.

2. Matheson Park:

Informational packets were provided of pictures of the park, mainly the shelters, bathrooms and playground equipment. Discussion was held regarding the future plans for the park in years to come and the need to get phases on a yearly rotational basis for upgrades so that we are not faced with major costly repairs/upgrades all at once but over staggered years so they can be planned and budgeted for. Various ideas were discussed regarding funding and Part F grants. Some minor construction repairs are needed at some shelters, the bathrooms need attention and is already planned. The biggest concern is some of the playground equipment which is original equipment that was purchased when the park was created back in 1998. Town staff learned during a recent insurance coverage meeting with the NCLM that all playgrounds should be inspected monthly and an inspection log kept. It was also recommended that the equipment should be inspected

annually by a certified playground inspector. The toddler play station and the 3to5 year old playground station are in serious need of replacement. It was decided to remove both pieces and place a sign with “new playground equipment coming soon” at the park. Prices will be included on the September agenda for consideration for the toddler and 3to5 year old play stations.

3. Various Projects updates:

Water AIA Grant - Scheduled for completion January/February 2025.

Water Regionalization and Merger Study Grant - Scheduled for completion January/February 2025.

Sewer AIA Grant - Scheduled for completion by March 2025.

Paul Payne Pump Station and Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades Project – Bid award for the pump station construction is on the agenda for our upcoming meeting. Bids were over by nearly \$250,000. We are prioritizing our work list for the wastewater treatment plant based on the remaining funding.

Streets and Sidewalk Project – Engineers are currently designing the sidewalk project. We made sidewalks our top priority. Paving will follow once we know what the sidewalk project is going to cost.

Main Ave. Dr. median project and solar lights are on hold until we find out if we will receive any additional state funding in the short legislative session

4. Other topics:

The old hospital was discussed. The flea market permits, the monthly lease costs vs benefits were discussed. The upcoming meeting between the owner, Alexander County and the Town regarding the building being condemned.

Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation Center is under new ownership and will have a grand re-opening on September 17, 2024 from 4:00 with a ribbon cutting.

Hometown Halloween will be Thursday October 31, 2024 from 5pm until with the town candy walk, hayrides, beverage & food vendors and other activities still in the planning stages.

Hometown Christmas will be Thursday December 5th, 12th, and 19th, 2024 with caroling and horse drawn carriage rides. There will be food & beverage vendors and other activities still in the planning stages.

Councilman Bumgarner had some preliminary information regarding a passenger rail car for downtown. More information will follow.

With no further topics, a motion was made by Councilwoman Brown and seconded by Councilwoman Odom to adjourn the workshop at 5:28 pm. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mayor

Councilman

Councilman

Councilman

Councilman

Attest: _____
Yolanda T. Prince, Town Clerk