Virginia: **At the regular meeting of the Council of the Town of Chilhowie held at the Municipal Building, January 12, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.**

Present: **Honorable Gary L. Heninger, Mayor presiding; Councilors Bill Clear, Shannon Donnelly, Brent Foster, Bob Jeter, Julie Sturgill and P.J. Wolfe.**

Absent: **None.**

Also Present: **Mr. John E.B. Clark, Jr., Town Manager; Mrs. Marlene Henderson, MMC, Clerk-Treasurer; Messrs. Paul Cassell, Town Attorney; Jay Keen, Director of Public Works; Jeff Smarr, Recreation/Special Events Coordinator; Andrew Moss, Police Chief; and David Haynes, Fire/EMS Chief.**

Mayor Heninger called the meeting to order. Mr. John E.B. Clark, Jr. gave the Invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Bill Clear, second by Brent Foster Council adopts the regular December 8, 2022, meeting minutes. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

Citizen Time:

Ms. Rose Likins, Smyth County Library, appeared before Council to report the Library Board of Trustees will be meeting Thursday, January 19, 2023 at the Old High School at 5:30 p.m. Recently the Smyth County Libraries were able to launch their community Wi-Fi in the areas of Atkins and Rich Valley with the assistance from two Churches within the areas. Citizens can park on the Church's parking lots and access the free Wi-Fi.

Ms. Likins also reported the Smyth County Libraries will be joining the Holston Associated Library effective July 1, 2023. This will allow access to the collection of Washington County Public Library, Tazewell County Public Library, Emory and Henry Library and King University Library using their Smyth County Library card.

The Smyth County Library is also participating in the Smyth County Virginia 250 Committee, which is to mark Virginia's 250th anniversary of the Revolution. Ms. Amanda Livingston is Chairman of that Committee and they are beginning to discuss event plans for the summer of 2024.

Ms. Likins reported currently the Friends of the Library has twenty members and are always active in any programs sponsored by the library. Currently the Chilhowie Library branch serves roughly 500 people per week. The Smyth County Libraries circulate around 1,000 items per week.

Reorganization of Town Officials:

- Election of Vice Mayor –

Motion by P.J. Wolfe, second by Bill Clear Council elects Brent Foster to serve as Vice Mayor. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Appointment of Town Manager –

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Bill Clear Council reappoints Mr. John E.B. Clark, Jr. to serve as Town Manager. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Appointment of Town Attorney –

Motion by Julie Sturgill, second by Bob Jeter Council reappoints Mr. Paul Cassell, Cassell & Crewe, P.C., to serve as the Town Attorney. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Appointment of Clerk-Treasurer –

Motion by Brent Foster, second by P.J. Wolfe Council reappoints Mrs. Marlene Henderson to serve as Clerk-Treasurer. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Appointment of Chief of Police –

Motion by P.J. Wolfe, second by Julie Sturgill Council reappoints Mr. Andrew Moss to serve as Chief of Police. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Any Officer Deemed Appropriate – No other Officers were deemed appropriate.

- Town Committee Appointments – The Town Committee Appointments are as follows:

Finance and Personnel Committee	Public Works Committee
P.J. Wolfe, Chairman	Julie Sturgill, Chairwoman
Brent Foster	Bob Jeter
Julie Sturgill	P.J. Wolfe

Fire and Police Committee	Wellness and Parks Committee
Brent Foster, Chairman	Bill Clear, Chairman
Shannon Donnelly	Shannon Donnelly
Bill Clear	Bob Jeter

Motion by Bill Clear, second by Brent Foster Council accepts the Town Committee Appointments as presented. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

Old Business:

- Presentation of First Funding Package of $2,069,974 for Sewer Infiltration and Inflow Project – Treatment of Infiltration and Inflow of storm water at the Wastewater Treatment Plant is a serious issue that increases the costs of electricity, ages equipment and leads to the plant being bypassed during high flow times. Of the $2,069,974 in funding, $1,552,481 is grant funds, leaving a balance of $517,493 as a loan at 0% over a thirty year period.

  The Virginia Resource Authority has stated the loan can only be closed following the 2022 audit completion (which the auditor is currently addressing) and a Qualified Independent Consultants Report be completed for the sewer expense and revenue to ensure viability. More information will be presented in the near future concerning these requirements.

Hurt and Proffitt is almost complete with the project design. At this time the Town has paid $116,544 toward the design and Hurt and Proffitt has agreed to hold that cost to a maximum of $150,000 up front and await closing of the project for the balance.

A second funding package of $1,238,541 is slated for the area east of Chilhowie and into Seven Mile Ford. At this time this funding package is a thirty-year loan at 0%. A separate closing will have to be completed for this portion of the program. Hurt and Proffitt is presenting plans to the Department of Environmental Quality to review for this project which involves 15,000 feet of repairs to various size lines of six, eight, twelve, fifteen and eighteen inches, plus forty-six manhole repairs. The review process may take up to ninety days to review.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Bill Clear Council authorizes the Mayor and Town Manager to execute any documents and approve conditions. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Review of Specification of Splash Pad and Permission to Bid – A meeting was held Tuesday, January 24, 2023 with Mr. Nathan Brown, Barrington Landscape Architecture, Ms. Lynda Helton, Executive Director of the Smyth County Foundation and Town staff. During the meeting elements of the pad were discussed such as water and sewer connections, sites, rain garden overflows and electrical additions. It was also decided the best course for bidding the project would be in two separate bids. One bid for the Splash Pad itself and a second bid for bathrooms, shelters, playground equipment and fencing. The bid schedule was also discussed with advertisements in late January or early February with a construction timeline set for April 2023.

  Ms. Likens, Smyth County Library, expressed concerns for the book lockers at the back of the Old High School Building and the possibility of noise issues from the playground being located under the library's windows.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Bill Clear Council authorizes advertisement for bids based on the bid schedule. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Submission to Senator Tim Kaine's Office on Delinquent Delivery of December Utility Billing – During the regular scheduled December 2022 Council meeting, Mrs. Henderson

reported an issue with the mailing of the utility bills. The utility bills were lost in the mail for two weeks prior to customers receiving them beginning December 12, 2022. Mr. Clark submitted a narrative concerning the situation on December 16, 2022 to Senator Tim Kaine's office. By sending the complaint Mr. Clark was not pointing fingers at a particular individual or individuals, he was trying to find a path where this delay does not happen again.

- Report on Cold Weather Situation Over Holiday and Department Reactions – Mr. Keen reported the Department of Public Works worked sixteen hours of overtime over the Holidays when temperatures dropped and remained below freezing for several days. The Department of Public works thawed over thirty frozen meters and assisted those with major leaks such as the Schools, Family Dollar and Southview Apartments.

  Chief Haynes reported the Fire and EMS Department also assisted with the schools, wrecks and three structure fires in other districts.

- Report on Snow Schedule – The Virginia Department of Transportation is currently involved in a snow removal contract with the Town. The Virginia Department of Transportation contacts the Town with snow removal times and the Town has a list of employees that rotate through. The Virginia Department of Transportation pays the Town $150 per hour for snow removal. The Town has recently removed snow for a total of sixteen hours for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

New Business:

- Report on Tourism Association Recent Activities – Appointee to the Smyth County Tourism Association, Mrs. Donna Blevins, reported Smyth County has increased the tax revenues and the lodging tax rates have doubled in the Town of Marion. Mrs. Blevins reported Ms. Livingston, Executive Director of Smyth County Tourism, is exploring several grant applications for Fish Blue Ridge Initiative for new fishing brochures and grant funds to assists with festivals such as Rich Valley Fair, Labor Day in Saltville, and Apple Festival in Chilhowie. Hungry Mother Festival received the grant funds in 2022 and is ineligible to receive the funds during 2023.

  The Smyth County Tourism Association is also involved with the Virginia 250 Committee to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America. Also, the Smyth County Tourism website is frequently visited with a count of 6.4 million contacts. The Smyth County Tourism Parade Float has been removed from service. A motorcycle was also found in storage from the previous Executive Director of Smyth County Tourism. Ms.

Livingston would like to sell the motorcycle and earmark the revenue toward a new LOVE sign. The location of the possible new LOVE sign has not been decided.

Mrs. Blevins reported the Smyth County Tourism Association is planning to conduct a performance review for Ms. Livingston. Ms. Livingston's office is currently housed in the Smyth County office building.

- Appointment of Elected Official to Represent Town at Monthly Smyth 12 Meeting – Smyth 12 meets the third Tuesday of each month at 4:00 p.m. Each Locality is to elect two elected officials to represent their Locality during these meetings.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Julie Sturgill Council appoints P.J. Wolfe and Bill Clear to represent the Town of Chilhowie at the monthly Smyth 12 meetings. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Report on First Quarter Meeting of Planning Commission – The first quarterly meeting of the Planning Commission was held Tuesday, January 10, 2023. The Planning Commission elected Mr. Jim Bonham to serve as Chairman and Mr. Jim Paine to serve as Vice Chairman. The Planning Commission reviewed two permits and no issues were found.

- Report on Local Elected Officials Conference and Newly Elected Officials Orientation – Mr. Clark, Mrs. Henderson and Mr. Donnelly virtually attended the Virginia Local Elected Officials Conference. Mr. Jeter attended the Virginia Local Elected Officials Conference in person. Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Jeter briefly reviewed items they learned during the Conference. Mrs. Henderson provided information to all of the elected officials concerning a mandatory training after every election. The Local Officials Training Webinar is available through the Freedom of Information Act Council and is required and available free online on January 18, 2023. There is also another training presented by Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethnics Advisory Council available online. The additional training must be completed within two months from taking office on January 1, 2023.

  Mr. Clark also held an orientation with Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Jeter where they reviewed and visited all departments and rode throughout the water system on December 12, 2022.

- Update on Security System at Old High School – Over the last several months Town staff have been receiving calls within all hours of the night concerning security issues at the

Old High School, mostly due to phone line issues. When Town staff would call Fleenor Security they would request a password that was unbeknownst by Town staff and therefore no progress was being made. A meeting was held December 20, 2022 with Town staff, Ms. Heather Carter, Chilhowie Library and two representatives of Fleenor Security. During the meeting several issues were addressed and a universal password was established.

- H.S. Williams – H.S. Williams Company is celebrating their 60th Anniversary. The event is scheduled for Thursday, January 19, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. at the General Francis Marion Hotel. H.S. Williams Company extended an invitation to Council members and staff.

Department Reports:

Mrs. Henderson reported the tax collection revenue rate is currently 83%. The Cigarette Tax is doing well, the current revenue collection is 86% of what was budgeted in the 2022-2023 Budget. Water revenue is currently at 48% and sewer revenue is currently at 47% of what was budgeted.

Chief Haynes reported equipment is being moved into the Training Center with minor work still ongoing. An official ribbon cutting or ceremony will be held when the weather improves. Chief Haynes invited everyone to come tour the Training Center.

Chief Haynes reported the Smyth County Board of Supervisors has an Emergency Services Committee that meets monthly to discuss public safety issues. The Town of Marion plans to send a representative from Council to these meetings and the Town of Chilhowie will be invited to do the same. Chief Haynes is to present meeting information to Council during the regular scheduled February Council meeting.

Chief Moss expressed his gratitude toward the Fire and EMS Department with assistance with a family they served during the Holidays. The Chilhowie Police Department also assisted with ringing of the bell for the Salvation Army during the Holidays. Chief Moss reported the Department is still working the Goodman Jewelry robbery by reaching out to additional resources.

Mr. Keen reported Mr. Tristian Preece and Mr. Caleb Womack have recently obtained their Class 5 Water License. The next step is obtaining a License in the Waste Water area, but they need more hands on experience prior to testing.

Mr. Smarr gave an update for the Recreation Basketball season and discussed planning of the Music in the Park.

Motion by Bill Clear, second by Brent Foster Council adjourns this meeting at 8:07 p.m. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

_____Mayor
Gary L. Heninger

_____Clerk
Marlene Henderson, MMC