Virginia: **At the regular meeting of the Council of the Town of Chilhowie held at the Municipal Building, December 9, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.**

Present: **Honorable Gary L. Heninger, Mayor presiding; Councilors Donna Blevins, Billy L. Clear, Brent Foster, Lewis W. Shortt, Jr., Julie Shortt 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; Andrew Moss, Police Chief; David Haynes, Fire/EMS Chief; Randy Sturgill, Building Official and Jeff Smarr, Recreation/Special Events Coordinator.**

The meeting was held in the Council Chambers. Social Distancing due to the COVID-19 pandemic was observed.

Mayor Heninger called the meeting to order. Mr. Justin May, Chilhowie Christian Church, gave the Invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Donna Blevins Council adopts the regular November 11, 2021, meeting minutes. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Donna Blevins	Aye	Bill Clear	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Lewis Shortt	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

Citizen Time:

Ms. Heather Carter, Chilhowie Public Library, appeared before Council to report all Smyth County Public Libraries have been selected for a pilot program through the Virginia Department of Health to handout free COVID-19 testing kits. A blood drive has been scheduled for January 14, 2022, from 11:00 a.m. until 4 p.m. Participants of the Blood Drive will receive free shirts. Several participants attended a cooking class held in conjunction with the Virginia Corporative Extension Office on Tuesday, December 7, 2021. Ms. Carter reported that she has been working with the Virginia Department of Transportation for the Library to have roadside signage on Highway 11. The Library's signage is located at the crosswalk on Highway 11 in front of the Lucas Dowell Memorial Park. With the Library now fully open the circulation of Library materials is approaching pre-COVID numbers.

Public Hearing:

- Proposed Issuance of Bond up to $2,200,000 for Fire Trucks – Mrs. Marlene Henderson presented the following:

Notice of Public Hearing
Of Proposed Bond Issue
By the Town of Chilhowie, Virginia

The Council of the Town of Chilhowie, Virginia (the "Council") will hold a public hearing on the proposed issuance of a bond by the Town of Chilhowie. The estimated maximum amount of the bond is $2,200,000. The general purposes for which the bond is to be issued, and the proposed uses of the proceeds of such bond, are (a) to provide funds to pay the costs of purchasing two new fire trucks for the use by the Town's Fire Department, for which use and purpose more than 10 percent of the total bond proceeds is expected to be used, and (b) to pay the costs of issuing the bond. The public hearing which may be continued or adjourned, and at which persons may appear and present their views on the proposed bond issue will be held at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on December 9, 2021, before the Council in the Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 325 East Lee Highway, Chilhowie, Virginia.

Mayor Heninger opened the Public Hearing at 7:08 p.m.
No one wished to speak.
Mayor Heninger closed the Public Hearing at 7:09 p.m.

- Presentation to Sergeant Ben Perry for Obtaining General Instruction Certification – Chief Moss reported Sergeant Ben Perry has recently earned a Certification of General Instructor and Firearms Instructor. With this certification Sergeant Perry can oversee the Chilhowie Police Department firearms qualifications and Use of Force training.

Old Business:

- Council/Staff Comments on Bond Issuance and Council Action on Same – The Bond issuance is for $2,200,000 for the purchase of two fire trucks.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by P.J. Wolfe Council accepts and authorizes issuance of Bond in the amount of $2,200,000 for the purchase of two fire trucks. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Donna Blevins	Aye	Bill Clear	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Lewis Shortt	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Presentation of Bids/Proposals on Refinancing up to $4,000,000 on Existing/New Debt – Mr. David Rose, Davenport and Davenport, appeared before Council and reported 103 Requests for Proposals were sent out and five responses were received. The Bank of Marion, First Community Bank, First Bank and Trust, Powell Valley Bank and Truist submitted proposals. There are three parts to the refinancing: purchase of two fire trucks, a fixed interest rate for the life of the loan and cash flows working for future budgets. For the loan, the First Community Bank proposes an interest rate of 1.99% and the life of the loan is shortened by seven years. The refunding bonds will be handled through the First Community Bank and the Bank of Marion for a total of savings of $832,883. The current proposed rates will be held until the middle of January 2022. Mr. Rose recommended to accept the Request for Proposals in order to receive the savings result and take formal action during the regular scheduled January 13, 2022, Council meeting.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Lewis Shortt Council accepts the refunding and bank approach. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Donna Blevins	Aye	Bill Clear	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Lewis Shortt	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Update on Streetscape Tree Planting Project on East Lee Highway – The total contract price for the Streetscaping is $33,023.25. Deduct $1,207.50 for the planting of the Shenandoah Switch Grasses that is to be planted in May 2022 and deduct $1,000 for the labor for the planting leaves a balance of $30,815.75 for the winter phase planting and materials. At the beginning of the winter phase the Town will pay for the cost of plants and materials in the amount of $21,815.75. The Town will pay the cost of labor in the amount of $9,000 at the end of the winter planting phase. At the end of the project, it is expected to have a total of 121 trees planted along Highway 11.

- Update on Transition of Solid Waste Carriers – The Town sent letters to all garbage customers concerning the transition from Republic Services to GFL. GFL will begin to distribute their cans to addresses beginning December 15, 2021. GFL will begin providing service on January 5, 2022. All garbage will be removed on Wednesdays of each week. Republic Services will begin removing their cans the week of January 3, 2022. The letter also urged customers to sign up for Nixle for schedule changes and various emergency alerts. GFL is also working with staff to create a data base of phone numbers. Once complied a phone blast will be made to those on the list for garbage schedule changes.

- Update on Police Vacancy Applications – Chief Moss reported the Police Department is currently accepting applications. At this time four applications have been submitted. Deadline for applications is Friday, December 10, 2021, at 4:00 p.m.

- Report on Celebrity Bagging at Food City – Councilmembers and Town Staff participated in the Celebrity Bagging at Food City on Tuesday, November 23, 2021, from 11:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. The Town raised $940 for the event.

- Report on Chamber and Localities Reception at Bonham House – The Chamber of Commerce of Smyth County hosted a reception for Smyth County and all Localities as well as the Chamber of Commerce of Smyth County Board. The H.L. Bonham Tourism Association and Chamber of Commerce of Smyth County building was very impressive. Ms. Sara Gillespie, Executive Director of Chamber of Commerce of Smyth County, has had the ceilings repaired in the upstairs of the building from water damage and painted. The reception was very impressive.

- Update on Chlorine Contact Tank Bids – The bid opening was held Thursday, December 2, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. at the Washington County Service Authority. The lowest bid was submitted by Mid Atlantic Storage in the amount of $1,282,580. The bid was $346,280 over the estimated cost of $936,300. Washington County Service Authority has been awarded $90,000 in grant funds from Mount Rogers Planning District Commission. A representative of Mid Atlantic Storage cited some changes in the scope of the work that would result in cost savings. The American Rescue Plan Act monies can be utilized for this project.

New Business:

- Report on Christmas Parade – The Christmas Parade was successful with forty-four units participating. The Christmas Bazaar was also very successful with twenty-five vendors. Thirty-four gift baskets were raffled, thirteen cakewalks were held with the winner receiving a cake. The Town provided light refreshments that included cookies, hot apple cider and hot cocoa. Mr. Smarr expressed his appreciation to all of those who participated.

- Reminder of Christmas Dinner – The Town's Annual Christmas Dinner is scheduled for Sunday, December 12, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. at the Old High School. Papa's Café is catering the event.

- The Town received notification from the Chamber of Commerce of Smyth County stating the Chilhowie representative's term is expiring. The Chamber of Commerce of Smyth County meets the third Tuesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. Board members can meet via telephone, Zoom or in person. Mrs. Julie Sturgill volunteered to fill the vacancy.

Motion by Lewis Shortt, second by Brent Foster Council appoints Julie Sturgill to serve on the Chamber of Commerce of Smyth County Board. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Donna Blevins	Aye	Bill Clear	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Lewis Shortt	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

Department Reports:

Mr. Clark wished everyone a Merry Christmas and is looking forward to the new year.

Mrs. Henderson reported the annual letter and donation of $1,000 was sent to Chilhowie Elementary School, Chilhowie Middle School and Chilhowie High School. An additional $500 is allocated for Project Graduation who will request the donation in the spring 2022.

Chief Haynes reported the Fire Department experienced a loss of life of a Smyth County citizen in a structure fire. The Department has not had a fire fatality in thirty-five years. Chief Haynes requested to order four sets of turn out gear. This is a budgeted item, the lead time is expected to be several months.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Donna Blevins Council approves the budgeted purchase of four sets of turn out gear. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Donna Blevins	Aye	Bill Clear	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Lewis Shortt	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

Chief Haynes reported the Fire Department has received a FEMA grant in the amount of $47,790. Chief Haynes requested to utilize the FEMA funds to replace fire hose. Currently there is an eight month lead time from when the order is placed. The current hoses are seventeen years old.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by P.J. Wolfe Council approves the use of the FEMA funds to replace the fire hose. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Donna Blevins	Aye	Bill Clear	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Lewis Shortt	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

Mr. Sturgill reported 1305 East Lee Highway is a possible turn over in the future. Mr. Sturgill has also mailed two certified letters concerning the Weed, Trash and Clutter Ordinance. Both property owners have responded and are currently cleaning up the property.

Chief Moss reported the Police Department has raised $275 during No Shave November that is to be donated to the Santa's Elves. The Town will match the funds raised and donate to the Santa's Elves.

Mr. Smarr reported there are 154 Basketball participants, seven girls' teams and six boys teams for a total of thirteen teams. The Recreation Basketball program is currently practicing in the Chilhowie Elementary School gym, Chilhowie Middle School gym, Chilhowie Christian Church gym and first and second grade teams are utilizing the Old High School gym. Mr. Smarr is currently working with Emory and Henry College to obtain volunteers to serves as referees, keeping the time clock and scoreboard. Donation jars will be placed outside of the gym during games for spectators to donate to the Emory and Henry College volunteers. The 2021 Football and Cheerleading report was included in Council's packet.

Any Other Council Business:

Mrs. Sturgill recommended to create a Community Christmas Tree Lighting Committee to serve for 2022 Christmas season. Mrs. Sturgill stated she has a lot of ideas for a Christmas Tree Lighting event such as families purchasing decorations such as the lights that are hung throughout Town.

Motion by Julie Sturgill, second by P.J. Wolfe Council approves the development of a Community Christmas Tree Lighting Committee and take action. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Donna Blevins	Aye	Bill Clear	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Lewis Shortt	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

Motion by Lewis Shortt, second by Brent Foster Council adjourns this meeting at 8:31 p.m. The motion was approved with following recorded vote:

Donna Blevins	Aye	Bill Clear	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Lewis Shortt	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

_____Mayor
Gary L. Heninger

_____Clerk
Marlene L. Henderson, MMC