Mayor: Gary L. Heninger
Council: Billy L. Clear
Shannon Donnelly
J. Brent Foster
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Clerk/Treasurer: Marlene L. Henderson
Police Chief: Andrew K. Moss
Director-Public Works: Jay Keen
Fire Chief: C. David Haynes
Building Official: C. David Haynes
Director-Recreation/Special Events: Jeff Smarr
Legal: Cassell & Crewe. P.C.

Town Manager's Report to Mayor and Town Council

September 14, 2023

Submission of Final Pay Request for East Lee Highway II Pedestrian Project

You have in your agenda packet Reimbursement Request Number 11 for the Project. It is in the amount of $40,822.50 and is for final payment to Thompson and Litton, or consulting engineer.

This payment completes the project. As I had reported earlier our reimbursed on the previous two or three pay requests had been delayed. The delay was caused by a payroll problem of very small significance, but it was still flagged by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and lead to the delay. In mid to late July the problem was solved and we were reimbursed approximately $347,000.

As you can see by the August 14 letter the Town's 80% reimbursement will be $32,658. But with all previous request we have to pay the full amount and then be reimbursed.

By my estimated figures the project totaled $714,061. That included $568,211.75 for Construction through Jones Road and Bridge of Abingdon, $135,850 for Thompson and Litton our consulting engineer, and $10,000 for Mt. Rogers Planning District Commission for administration. The normal reimbursement for these projects in 80% from VDOT; however, the Town's on this project will be less. That is because one of the two change orders were all the Town's responsibilities, and, at the start of the project the Town agreed to pickup part of the construction cost overage above what VDOT had allocated.

Presentation of Proposal of Mt. Rogers Planning District Commission (PDC) Proposal to rewrite the Comprehensive Plan

You have in your agenda packet a Memorandum of understanding from the PDC. You also have included a short resume of the individuals that will be involved with the project. The last Comprehensive Plan was recommended by the Planning Commission and adopted by the Town Council on September 13, 2018

following a joint Public Hearing. The Code of Virginia requires the Plan to be rewritten, or updated every five years. This proposal will be for a full rewrite.

Planning Commission Chair Jim Bonham, Clerk Felicia Eller, PDC Executive Director Aaron Sisemore and I met on August 17 to scope the project out. The resulting memorandum and resume resulted from that meeting. Comprehensive plans are designed to strategically guide the local government towards decisions on a variety of policies and projects that will better create a better economic, physical and social environment for our citizens. The Plan will examine and use the most recent data in formulating recommendations over a variety of topics including land use, community facilities, economic development, housing, transportation, environmental, recreational, public safety, utilities, etc., etc. The PDC will be working with the Planning Commission on this project and will begin meeting monthly on it as opposed to quarterly. As you can see by the memorandum they propose to begin work in January of 2024.

In the 2023-24 budget Council allocated $17,500 for this effort. The PDC price is $15,000. So, we are within budget. We don't have to go through a professional procurement process since the PDC is an arm of local government.

I am going to recommend Council approve this memorandum based on the Planning Commission's acquiescence at its quarterly meeting in October. I think this will be a formality since we discussed the process of beginning rewriting the new Plan with Mt Rogers PDC at the Planning Commission's July Quarterly meeting.

Applicants for Accounting Position in Finance Department

As you know Senior Finance Clerk Kerri McClure is retiring on November 1, 2023. We appreciate her many years of service starting in 1997. She has been an asset to the Town and will be missed.

We advertised the position in the Smyth County News and Saltville Progress on August 16 and August 19, and August 24 respectively. We also posted the opening with the Virginia Employment Commission and on the Town website and Facebook page. We had twelve (12) applicants and we were impressed with the quality of those applicants. In the Town's pay and classification system, the position will be either an Accounting Clerk starting around $17.32, or a Finance Clerk at around $18.32, depending on qualifications.

We hope to begin interviews the week of September 18 and make an offer about ten days after that. We hope we can have someone on board by mid-November.

Pre-Construction Conference on Splash Pad Project

On September 7 my staff and I and met with personnel from National Pools of Roanoke, Contractor Kim Davidson and Architect Nathan Brown on the Splash Pad Project. Several coordination issues were discussed which I thought was especially important since we have two contractors on the job.

Construction is slated to begin on September 25 immediately following the conclusion of the Apple Festival. A beginning bench mark locations was discussed and a drop inlet in the back parking lot will be used and a mark on the Old High School made from it. Some changes were made in the bathroom part of the contract and the architect will make those changes. Public Works will be tasked with digging several utility ditches and preparing water and sewer connections that will have to done early in the construction. A final construction set of plans will be completed in about ten days and distributed to the contractors and staff.

Regarding the timeline National Pools has 180 days from September 25 to complete the project. They feel they will be substantially done their part by the end of the calendar year. Kim Davidson does not have any set time period for completion in his contract. He did indicate that his work would not be completed until late winter/ early Spring 2024.

The contractors agreed that their work would be done in time to open the facility in the Spring of 2024. A tentative date for start up and training was discussed and the first week of May seemed to be the best date. The facility opening on Memorial Day Weekend, 2024 is planned.

Respectfully Submitted,

John E. B. Clark, Jr.

Town Manager