TOWN OF CHILHOWIE, VIRGINIA

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Director Public Works: Daniel W. Combs
Fire /EMS Chief: C. David Haynes
Building Official: C. David Haynes
Wastewater Operations: Luke A. Lowe
Water Operations: Don Cole, II
Special Events/Recreation: Stephen Fields
Legal: Cassell & Crewe, P.C.

Town Manager's Report to Mayor and Town Council
November 14, 2024

Good evening, Mayor Heninger and Members of the Town Council. October was a busy month and the first part of November is shaping up to be the same way.

Hurricane Helene Recovery

The town staff continues to recover from Hurricane Helene. You're aware of the damages that our facilities and infrastructure suffered. With the help of our engineering consultants and outstanding staff, the town is back to full operations on both water and wastewater. The successful operation of the wastewater collection system was made possible by the temporary bypass system that bypasses our three broken aerial crossings.

Two weeks ago, the claims adjustor from the town's insurance company, the Virginia Risk Sharing Association, was in town to meet with me and others to inspect our damage and determine what is covered by our insurance and what will not be covered and, therefore, eligible for FEMA reimbursement. It has been determined that all damage occurred within the flood zones and will not be covered by the town's policy. The one exception to this is the damaged fencing at the Widener Spring. This was deemed to be due to wind damage, not flooding, and will be covered. Quotes for the repair of the fence and removal of downed trees have been obtained and approved by VRSA. The contractors are tentatively scheduled to start work within the next two weeks.

The town staff continues to accurately track all costs associated with the cleanup and repair work. We have met with Dennis Amos, the town's engineering consultant with Hurt & Proffitt, to begin design work on the permanent repairs to the three aerial crossings. Conversations have also taken place between the town and regulatory agencies to request that these new crossings be considered "maintenance" rather than "new construction" which will speed up the completion timeline considerably. As of now, the agencies seem amenable to our request. With luck, the town may be able to bid the project shortly after the first of the year. Once final design is completed, you will be provided details for your review.

Wellspring Grant Funding Opportunities

I have attached a copy of the grant funding announcement email I received from the Wellspring Foundation of Southwest Virginia last week. Please note that there are two rounds of funding eligibility: HOPE grants and IMPACT grants. The HOPE grant cycle opens on December 2nd and closes December

31st. If you have any ideas for projects you would like the town to pursue, please let me know so that we can discuss and have a plan to move forward. In addition to the funding announcement, I have also attached the grant guidelines for both grant pools.

Veterans Day Ceremony

The town held our annual Veterans Day Ceremony on Monday, November 11th. We have made a couple of minor changes to the program which I hope will make the ceremony better than ever. And as a veteran myself, I personally want to thank every single member of our staff and community who helped make the event possible. Thank you!

Election Results

I have attached to my report a copy of the 2024 results for our local elections. Congratulations to everyone on your re-election and I look forward to working with you as we strive to serve our town and make it better all the time.

Washington County Service Authority

I and other staff members met with the General Manager and Chief Engineer for the Washington County Service Authority on Wednesday, November 13th. This is the first meeting between the town and WCSA in at least two years. We as your staff felt that it is important to have a strong relationship between both entities considering the shared responsibility of properly maintaining our water treatment plant, not only for today, but also to effectively plan for future growth. It is my intention to get on track with having quarterly meetings with them so that we have a better understanding of day-to-day happenings and to also ensure that water allocation is always in line with the agreement signed in June 2022.

Bird Nuisance Complaints

At the request of Mayor Heninger, I contacted the USDA Wildlife Services Office in Christiansburg to inquire on possible solutions to deter the black buzzards that roost in certain areas of our town. Several residents has expressed their concerns about the birds and the damage they can do, especially to recreational areas and cemeteries. Mr. Chad Fox was extremely helpful and provided a couple of ideas to help deter the birds. So far, the birds have been able to be driven away somewhat effectively.

Questions

As always, I welcome any questions about the status of the town's busy activities.

Respectfully Submitted,

J. Brian Martin
Town Manager