

Town Council Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2023
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The Orange Town Council held a regular meeting at 7 p.m. in the Town's Community Meeting Room. Town Council Members present were: Mayor Martha B. Roby, Vice-Mayor Frederick W. Sherman, Jr. and Councilmembers Jason R. Cashell, Jeremiah V. Pent, and Donna Waugh-Robinson. Staff members present were: Town Manager Gregory S. Woods, Town Clerk Wendy J. Chewning, MMC, Town Attorney Catherine Lea, Director of Finance Dianna Gomez, Director of Community Development John Cooley, AICP, Police Chief Kiline Madison, and Lieutenant Rebecca Tidwell.

CALL TO ORDER

The Town Manager called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m. The Town Clerk called roll and noted that there was a quorum present.

CONSIDERATION OF PROCLAMATIONS HONORING FORMER COUNCIL MEMBERS BOSFORD AND FOX

Motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Councilmember Sherman to adopt the Proclamations honoring former Council Members Bosford and Fox, as presented. On vote, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, Councilmember Roby – aye, Councilmember Sherman – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye.

RECESS

Motion was made by Councilmember Roby, seconded by Councilmember Sherman to recess the meeting until regular business would take place at 7 p.m. On vote, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, Councilmember Roby – aye, Councilmember Sherman – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye.

RECEPTION

A reception was held honoring former Council Members Bosford and Fox. At 6:40 p.m. Mayor Roby read the Proclamations honoring them.

At 7:00 p.m. the regular business meeting reconvened of the Orange Town Council.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Town Manager led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Town Manager recommended adding a continued discussion on the Town's Music in the Park to the end of Unfinished Business and the consideration to move the Monday, February 20th, Town Council Meeting to Tuesday, February 21st because it falls on a Town Holiday, President's Day to the end of New Business. The Town Attorney stated that she needed to report on what she had heard from the State Attorney General's Office today and could do this after the Public Hearings. Council Member Roby recommended doing this right after the adoption of the agenda.

Motion was made by Councilmember Roby, seconded by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, to adopt the agenda, as amended. On vote, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, Councilmember Roby – aye, Councilmember Sherman – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye.

The Town Attorney reported that she had received a call today from the Attorney General's Office in response to a question that she had asked on behalf of Council Members regarding an update on the Town Council election. The Town Attorney reported further that the Attorney General's Office stated that the voter registrations came from the local level and should be regulated at the local level. Therefore, the Attorney General's Office would defer to the local voter registrar and Commonwealth's Attorney and take no further action. The Town Attorney stated further that the Attorney General's office stated that the Attorney General's position is that the election process has spoken, and the civil process is available if further action is needed.

ELECTION OF MAYOR

The Town Manager called for nominations for Mayor. Motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Councilmember Pent, to nominate Martha Roby to serve as Mayor for a term of one year (January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023). There being no more nominations, motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Councilmember Sherman, to close the nominations. On vote: Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, Councilmember Roby – aye, Councilmember Sherman – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

On roll call vote to appoint Martha B. Roby, Mayor for a term to expire December 31, 2023: Councilmember Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Roby – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

The Mayor for FY2023 was Martha Roby. The Town Manager handed the gavel over to Mayor Roby and congratulated her. Mayor Roby thanked Town Council for their vote of confidence. Mayor Roby stated that working together is key.

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ELECTION OF VICE-MAYOR

Mayor Roby called for nominations for Vice-Mayor. Motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Councilmember Pent, to nominate Frederick W. Sherman, Jr., as Vice-Mayor for a term of one year (January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023). There being no more nominations, motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Councilmember Pent to close the nominations. On vote, On vote: Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, Mayor Roby – aye, Councilmember Sherman – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

On roll call vote to appoint Frederick W. Sherman, Jr. as Vice-Mayor for a term to expire December 31, 2023: On roll call vote, Councilmember Pent – aye, Councilmember Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Waugh-Robinson aye, and Mayor Roby – aye.

PUBLIC HEARINGS – TOWN COUNCIL WILL HOLD TWO PUBLIC HEARINGS ON DECLARING TOWN OWNED LAND ON ROBINSON STREET AS SURPLUS

The Town Manager reported that there will be two separate Public Hearings for two separate Town lots on Robinson Street to consider declaring as surplus:

- A. Parcel 044A4002300070 – 0 Robinson Street (see attached map)
- B. Parcel 044A4002300080 – 0 Robinson Street (see attached map)

The Town Manager stated that a business was interested in the property for a place to store more equipment. The Town Manager stated the first step was to declare the property surplus and then negotiate with the buyer.

Mayor Roby opened the Public Hearing on Parcel 0044A4002300070 – 0 Robinson Street and called for Public Comment.

After discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Vice-Mayor Sherman, to declare Parcel 044A4002300070 on Robinson Street as surplus. On vote: Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Roby opened the Public Hearing on Parcel 044A4002300080 -0 Robinson Street and called for Public Comment. The Town Manager stated that there was no interest in this property at this time.

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Mr. Hamilton who resides on Monrovia Road inquired about the zoning of the property. The Town Manager reported that the property was Industrial Railroad property. Councilmember Cashell inquired about the acreage. The Town Manager stated that he was not sure of the exact acreage and would have to provide to Council at a later date.

After discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Councilmember Pent, to declare Parcel 044A4002300080 on Robinson Street as surplus. On vote: Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. G. W. Anthony Smith-Cavodish of 212 Byrd Street appeared before Council regarding his concern of the speed limit on Byrd Street and the number of speeders.

Ms. Grayson Butterfield of 11499 Rapidan Road appeared before Council regarding her concern over the recent Council election.

Ms. Dani Rivera appeared with Just Orange members Naomi Griffin and Michael Cobb outlining their plans for the new year.

TOWN COUNCIL CONSIDERED TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 5, 2022

Motion was made by Vice-Mayor Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, to adopt the minutes of December 5, 2022, as presented. On vote: Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT

The Director of Finance reported that General Fund Tax revenues included the following significant YTD favorable variances to budget: \$67K for Meals Tax, \$31K for Personal Property tax, and \$79K for Local Sales tax. The Director of Finance reported further that we had added the second half of 2022 to our delinquent Real Estate tax collection efforts; we had collected \$51K (82%) in delinquent Real Estate taxes and there was \$12K remaining which included an account in bankruptcy of \$2K and two accounts scheduled for public auction of \$1K. The Director of Finance stated that we had collected \$97K in Personal Property tax delinquencies.

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The Director of Finance stated that we had received a \$250K lump sum payment for the TowerCom lease that could fund needed equipment.

The Director of Finance reported that Water Sales Revenue through December was \$760,103. The Director of Finance reported further that revenue was projected to be \$22K below budget for the year due to lower water availability fees than projected.

The Director of Finance reported that Sewer Sales Revenue through December was \$985,165. The Director of Finance reported further that Sewer Revenue was projected to be \$158K unfavorable for the year due to the reduction of sewer availability fees in the forecast.

The Director of Finance reported that payments for December were \$434,229. The Director of Finance reported further that the payments included \$77K to Williamson for paving, and the remaining payments were normal course of business expenses.

The Director of Finance reported that expenditures from the \$2,643,592 ARPA 1st funding amounted to \$634,898 ITD, of which \$86,750 went toward engineering services for the Liquid Feed project at the Water Plant, \$231,132 went toward the new SCADA system for the Sewer Plant, and \$317,016 went to Standpipe Engineering services. The Director of Finance stated that we had received the 2nd funding of \$2,643,592 but there had been no disbursements yet.

The Director of Finance stated that we had not received an update for the Safe Streets for All grant. The Director of Finance stated further that she and Aaron Hines were working on a Cyber Security grant application. The Director of Finance stated that she was currently completing the application for the T-Mobile Hometown grant that was recommended by John Cooley and we could receive up to \$50K for community projects from this grant if received.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

TOWN COUNCIL CONTINUED A DISCUSSION ON THE TOWN'S MUSIC IN THE PARK

The Town Manager reported that while planning the upcoming Town's Music in the Park OEI Events had encountered businesses who were upset that the Town was holding the music event on a Friday because they too had music on Fridays, and they would be in competition with one another. After discussion, motion was made by Councilmember Pent, seconded by Councilmember Cashell to move the upcoming Town's Music in the Park series from the fourth Friday of the month to the fourth Thursday of the month. On vote: Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

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NEW BUSINESS

TOWN COUNCIL CONSIDERED APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The Town Manager stated that new appointments to Boards and Commissions normally took place at the time of the election of Mayor and Vice-Mayor annually. Mayor Roby stated that she no longer wished to serve on the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission Board. After discussion, it was the consensus of Council to table this discussion until the February 6th Town Council work session meeting to give Council Members more time to think about where they wished to serve.

TOWN COUNCIL CONSIDERED MOVING THE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20th TOWN COUNCIL MEETING TO TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21st BECAUSE THE MONDAY DATE FALLS ON A TOWN HOLIDAY, PRESIDENT'S DAY

Motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Councilmember Pent, to move the Monday, February 20th Town Council meeting to Tuesday, February 21st because the Monday date falls on a Town holiday, President's Day. On vote: Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

FY-2024 DRAFT BUDGET INFORMATION

The Town Manager reported that the information that had been presented to Council for the DRAFT FY24 Budget was for information only. The Town Manager stated that there were no tax or rate increases in the FY24 proposed draft budget; there was a 5.0% COLA increase for employees (effective July 1, 2023) with additional 0.5% for under \$20/hour; and a 5% health insurance increase. The Town Manager further stated that the exact amount for the health insurance was also not known as of this time. The Town Manager stated further that LODA costs increased from \$632 to \$830 per certified police officer per VRS mandate, and donations were the same as last year. The Town Manager stated further that other considerations were significant increases to water and sewer chemicals, and an increase in vehicle fuel across the board. The Town Manager stated that also in the budget was payment of 100% of the utility costs for the Depot (This is proposed with the understanding that the County would hire a person to staff the Visitor Center).

The Town Manager reported that Capital expenditures included work to be done at the shooting range, purchasing a rear loading trash truck and trash cans for town residents and businesses, Madison/Main Traffic Light, Public Works and Police vehicles, sidewalks, paving Old Town lot, Town car, Connector of Boxley/Maddox, and a sound system for the Community Meeting Room.

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The Town Manager reported that a FY24 Draft Budget Work Session would be held on Monday, February 6th at 6 p.m. in the Town's Community Meeting Room.

Mayor Roby requested an update on Fiber at the February 21st regular Town Council meeting.

FOIA/COIA UPDATE

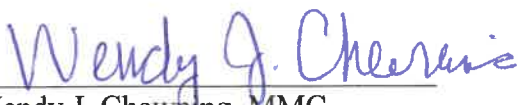
The Town Attorney stated that Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) review was to be done every two years. The Town Attorney reviewed FOIA with the Council. The Town Attorney reviewed violations under FOIA and what was considered a meeting. The Town Attorney expressed the importance of Council using their town issued email addresses.

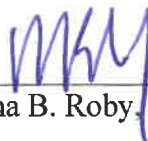
The Town Attorney reviewed COIA with Town Council. The Town Attorney stated that COIA training was to be done every year.

ORANGE COUNTY REVIEW

Mayor Roby stated that she had received many complaints from citizens regarding the content in the Orange County Review with not a lot of local news and no editorial news. Mayor Roby stated that now the cost of the paper had gone up 200 percent from \$1.00 to \$3.00. After discussion, it was consensus of Council to have the mayor write a letter to A Lee Enterprises outlining the Town's concerns. Ms. Andri Landi stated that she was currently writing for the OC Bulletin which was a volunteer collaborative right now and currently only available online. Ms. Landi stated that the Town could send news or information to the OC Bulletin at info@theocbulletin.com.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.


Wendy J. Cheering, MMC
Town Clerk


Martha B. Roby, Mayor

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The Orange Town Council held a work session meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Town of Orange Community Center Meeting Room. Town Councilmembers present were: Mayor Martha B. Roby, Vice-Mayor Frederick W. “Rick” Sherman, Jr., and Councilmembers Jason Cashell, Jeremiah Pent, and Donna Waugh-Robinson. Staff members present were: Town Manager Gregory S. Woods, Town Clerk Wendy J. Chewning, MMC, Town Attorney Catherine Lea, Director of Community Development John Cooley, AICP, CZA, and Director of Finance Dianna Gomez.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Roby opened the meeting. The Town Clerk called roll and noted that there was a quorum present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Vice-Mayor Sherman, to adopt the agenda, as presented. On vote, Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Mayor Roby stated that this was a continued discussion from the regular January Town Council meeting. Mayor Roby gave an overview of various duties on different Board and Committees, and reminded Council that their duties at these meetings was to only sit and listen and report information back to Council.

Mayor Roby stated that she had some suggestions for Board/Committee appointments to include:

Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission- Councilmember Pent

Planning Commission (ex-officio) – Mayor Roby

Orange Downtown Alliance – Councilmember Waugh-Robinson would remain the representative.

Orange County Board of Supervisors – Vice-Mayor Sherman

Youth Ambassador to Just Orange – Councilmember Cashell

Orange County Economic Development Authority – Arthur Bryant

Mayor Roby stated that she had served on the PD-9 for the last 10 years and wished to do something new. The Town Manager stated that he also served as a representative on the PD-9 Board, and PD-9 members had voting rights.

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Councilmember Pent stated that he had put a lot of time into the Orange Downtown Alliance with the negotiation team and getting a new contract signed with the Town. Councilmember Pent stated further that he had an emotional investment in ODA and would like to be involved with ODA either as the Town's representative, and if that was a conflict, perhaps serve on the ODA Design Committee. The Town Attorney stated that she didn't know if it would be a conflict with him serving as the Town's representative, but there was a concern with the appearance because he had negotiated the current contract with the Town on the behalf of the ODA. The Town Attorney stated further that it was also not a conflict for him to serve on the ODA's Design Committee, but that would have to be up to the ODA.

Councilmember Cashell stated that he would like to serve as the Town's representative to the Orange County Board of Supervisors. Vice-Mayor Sherman stated that he wanted to keep his position as the County's representative to the Board but would be willing to share the County Board of Supervisor Representative and Youth Ambassador position with Councilmember Cashell. Vice-Mayor Sherman stated that was what he and former Councilmember Fox did. After discussion, it was decided that Vice-Mayor Sherman and Councilmember Cashell would share the two positions.

FY-2024 BUDGET WORK SESSION

The Town Manager gave an overview of the DRAFT FY24 Budget to date:

The Town Manager stated that there were no tax or rate increases in the FY24 proposed draft budget; there was a 5.0% COLA increase for employees (effective July 1, 2023) with additional 0.5% for under \$20/hour; and a 5% health insurance increase. The Town Manager stated that the health insurance increase amount was also not known as of this time. The Town Manager stated further that LODA costs increased from \$632 to \$830 per certified police officer per VRS mandate, and donations were the same as last year. The Town Manager stated that other considerations were significant increases to water and sewer chemicals, and an increase in vehicle fuel across the board. The Town Manager stated further that also in the budget was payment of 100% of the utility costs for the Depot (This is proposed with the understanding that the County would hire a person to staff the Visitor Center).

The Town Manager reported that Capital expenditures included work to be done at the shooting range, purchasing a rear loading trash truck and trash cans for town residents and businesses, Madison/Main Traffic Light, Public Works and Police vehicles, sidewalks, paving Old Town lot, Town car, Connector of Boxley/Maddox, and a sound system for the Community Meeting Room.

The Town Manager stated that revenues for the DRAFT FY24 Budget included Water and Sewer availability fees for 30 homes in the Round Hill Meadows buildout with an additional 5 throughout Town, increased tax revenue by revenue increases already experiencing, and increased interest income to reflect Town funds (excluding ARPA) at today's rates. A lengthy discussion was held on revenues and taxes.

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The Town Manager presented a Debt Service Schedule pointing out that in FY25 \$330,000 in debt goes away which would then leave room to get other things done that are needed.

The Town Manager stated that the Revenue Sharing that was postponed from 2022 and 2023 were included in the budget for FY24 which would amount to \$339,000 for the Town, which was more than double the regular cost of \$150,000 annually.

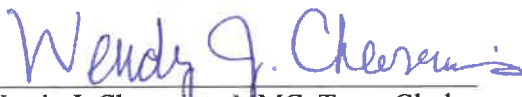
Mayor Roby stated that she would like to see the Town hire their own full-time Economic Development position. The Town Manager stated that this would cost the Town approximately \$50,000 salary annually and with benefits this would come to approximately \$80,000/\$90,000 annually. Councilmember Pent stated that ODA, the Town's IDA, and the County EDA were also focused on Economic Development for the Town. A lengthy discussion was held regarding the purposes of each of these groups. After discussion, it was the consensus of Council to have the Town Manager look more into the costs of an in-house full-time Economic Development position.

Vice-Mayor Sherman stated that he thought former Councilmember Bosford was on the right track regarding sidewalks when he was on Council, and he wanted to see the sidewalk replacement plan continue. Vice-Mayor Sherman requested that the Belleview Sidewalk Project continue onto Peliso Avenue and into the new Town parking lot. Vice-Mayor Sherman also requested that the sidewalk projects be added to the Town's Capital Improvement Plan.

REGULAR FEBRUARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

The Town Manager reported that the regular February Council meeting would be Tuesday, February 21st at 7 p.m. due to the Monday holiday. The Town Manager stated that we would discuss Fiber and have a Closed Session at this meeting. It was a consensus of Council to hold another Budget work session meeting on Monday, March 6th at 6 p.m. in the Town's Community Meeting Room.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.


Wendy J. Chewning, MMC, Town Clerk


Martha B. Roby, Mayor

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The Orange Town Council held a regular meeting at 7 p.m. in the Town's Community Meeting Room. Town Council Members present were: Mayor Martha B. Roby, Vice-Mayor Frederick W. Sherman, Jr. and Councilmembers Jason R. Cashell, Jeremiah V. Pent, and Donna Waugh-Robinson. Staff members present were: Town Manager Gregory S. Woods, Town Clerk Wendy J. Chewning, MMC, Town Attorney Catherine Lea, Director of Finance Dianna Gomez, Director of Community Development John Cooley, AICP, Police Chief Kiline Madison, and Lieutenant Rebecca Tidwell.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Pent led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. The Town Clerk called roll and noted that there was a quorum present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Vice-Mayor Sherman requested adding the discussion of open carry in town public places as New Business item 10C.

Motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Vice-Mayor Sherman, to adopt the agenda, as amended. On vote, Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Roby, Chief Kiline Madison, Lieutenant Rebecca Tidwell, and First Sergeant Michael Utz made a special presentation to Chase Marshall for his quick response, and for exhibiting exceptional bravery during a life-or death crisis in our Town. Chief Madison also acknowledged William Ayers and Tyrik Williams for their bravery, but they were not present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Cameron Hamilton, the new ODA Board President, introduced himself to Town Council. Mr. Hamilton stated that he knew that ODA had a MOU with the Town, and that their primary effort was Main Street Accreditation. Mr. Hamilton stated further that he would like to see more youth programs in Town.

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TOWN COUNCIL CONSIDERED TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 17th AND FEBRUARY 6th, 2023

Motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Vice-Mayor Sherman, to adopt the minutes of January 17th and February 6th, 2023, as presented. On vote: Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

FINANCE REPORT

The Director of Finance reported that the General Fund Tax revenues included the following significant YTD favorable variances to budget: \$97K for Meals Tax, \$31K for Personal Property tax, and \$85K for Local Sales tax. The Director of Finance reported further that we had collected \$53K (85%) in delinquent Real Estate taxes; there was \$9K remaining which included an account in bankruptcy of \$2K and two accounts scheduled for public auction of \$1K. The Director of Finance stated that we had collected \$116K in Personal Property tax delinquencies.

The Director of Finance reported that in addition to the favorable tax revenue variances, interest income is \$46K favorable to budget due to rate increases, and we received the TowerCom lump sum payment last month of \$250K.

The Director of Finance reported that Water Sales Revenue through January was \$887K, and revenue was projected to be \$20K below budget for the year due to lower water availability fees than projected.

The Director of Finance reported that Sewer Sales Revenue through January was \$1.1M and revenue was projected to be \$211K unfavorable for the year due to the reduction of sewer availability fees in the forecast.

The Director of Finance reported that payments for January were \$412K and the payments included \$69K to US Bank for a debt payment and \$20K to RFC Associates for the annual audit. The Director of Finance stated the remaining payments were normal course of business expenses.

The Director of Finance reported that expenditures from the \$2.6M ARPA first funding amount to \$637K YTD, of which \$87K went toward engineering services for the Liquid Feed project at the Water Plant, \$231K went toward the new SCADA system for the Sewer Plant, and \$319K had gone to Standpipe Engineering services. The Director of Finance stated that we had received the 2nd funding of \$2.6M but there had been no disbursements yet.

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The Director of Finance stated that we had received an update for the Safe Streets for All grant, and we were not awarded the funding. The Director of Finance stated further that she and John Cooley had signed up for a debrief and planned to sign up for FY23 grant.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

FIREFLY FIBER BROADBAND UPDATE

The Director of Community Development stated that we had a Fiber Broadband plan but were probably 14 to 16 months out until building starts. The Director of Community Development stated the biggest obstacle to making Firefly fiber broadband a reality was funding and this was because according to the FCC Broadband Availability maps the Town was 100% served and therefore did not qualify for the available State nor Federal funding grants. The Director of Community Development reported that there was one grant we may qualify for through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), but the application window wasn't expected to open until "Early 2023." The Director of Community Development stated that the grant funding was on Firefly's back, but the Town was willing to give assistance.

The Director of Community Development stated that Fiberlync could install infrastructure within the Town's right of way and serve residents and businesses within the Town once they have entered into a franchise agreement with the Town. The Director of Community Development stated that the Town would be able to support/recommend approval of any proposed franchise agreement containing terms comparable to those held by other town franchises.

The Director of Community stated that the Town's franchising authority comes from the Virginia Code 15.2, Chapters 20 and 21, the Virginia Constitution Article VII, and Title 47 of the US Code, as well as other case law and judicial opinions and was tied to the sovereignty and police power afforded a municipality, along with that government's responsibility to its citizens.

NEW BUSINESS

TOWN COUNCIL DISCUSSED TOWN OWNED LOTS ON GRAHAM CEMETERY

The Director of Community Development reported that staff had been made aware of several gravesites located in Graham Cemetery which were owned by the Town of Orange. The Director of Community Development reported further that the Town purchased 13 gravesites, 11 of which currently housed the remains of people who had been buried in a family graveyard which was located behind the former Leggett's Department Store.

The Director of Community Development stated that according to Graham Cemetery personnel, Town Council had three options regarding the two remaining empty graves to include: keep them, sell them, or donate them to Graham Cemetery for use in indigent burials.

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After discussion, it was the consensus of Council to have staff contact Graham Cemetery and use the two remaining empty graves for indigent burials or for multiple cremations of Town citizens.

TOWN COUNCIL DISCUSSED A BURNED-OUT HOUSE AT 129 MAY-FRAY AVENUE

The Director of Community Development stated that 129 May-Fray Avenue caught fire and burned in December 2021 and nothing had been done to repair the house since. The Director of Community Development stated further that the owner, Chris Martyn, was contacted in January in order to determine what actions were being taken to bring the house into compliance with Town code and the building ordinance. The Director of Community Development reported that the owner stated that he had finalized a settlement with the insurance company and was looking into his options. The Director of Community of Development reported further that in mid-February Mr. Martyn was contacted again about the property, and he disclosed that he had a contract with an investor and the sale would close on March 10th.

After discussion, it was consensus of Council to wait until after March 10th to see what happens.

TOWN COUNCIL DISCUSSED OPEN CARRY IN TOWN PUBLIC PLACES

Vice-Mayor Sherman stated that he was concerned about open carry in Town public meetings and at Town Hall. The Town Attorney stated that open carry could be prohibited at these places and outlined what some other localities were doing. After a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of Council to have the Town Attorney research this further and continue the discussion at the regular March 20th Town Council meeting.

TOWN COUNCIL WILL HOLD A CLOSED SESSION UNDER 2.2-3711, SUBSECTION 8 FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL REGARDING SPECIFIC LEGAL MATTERS REQUIRING THE PROVISION OF LEGAL ADVICE BY SUCH COUNSEL INVOLVING THE RENEWAL OF A CONTRACT WITH RAPIDAN SERVICE AUTHORITY

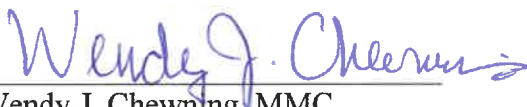
Motion was made by Mayor Roby, seconded by Councilmember Pent, to move into closed session under the provisions of State Code Section 2.2-3711, subsection 8 for the purpose of consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel involving the renewal of a contract with Rapidan Service Authority. On vote, Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

A five-minute recess was held before going into closed session.

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Motion was made by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, seconded by Vice-Mayor Sherman, to leave closed session and reconvene in regular session. On roll call vote, Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, and Mayor Roby -aye. All members swore that they only discussed matters lawfully permitted under the State Code and so noted in the motion convening the Closed Session.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.


Wendy J. Chewning, MMC
Town Clerk


Martha B. Roby, Mayor

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The Orange Town Council held a work session meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Town of Orange Community Center Meeting Room. Town Councilmembers present were: Mayor Martha B. Roby, Vice-Mayor Frederick W. “Rick” Sherman, Jr., and Councilmembers Jason Cashell, Jeremiah Pent, and Donna Waugh-Robinson. Staff members present were: Town Manager Gregory S. Woods, Town Clerk Wendy J. Chewning, MMC, Town Attorney Catherine Lea, and Director of Finance Dianna Gomez.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Roby opened the meeting. The Town Clerk called roll and noted that there was a quorum present.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Town Manager inquired whether Town Council wanted to add a discussion tonight to the agenda on whether to have the discussion on gun restrictions in Town buildings on the March 20th Town Council agenda.

Motion was made by Vice-Mayor Sherman, seconded by Councilmember Waugh-Robinson, to adopt the agenda, as amended, adding the discussion on whether to have the discussion on gun restrictions in Town buildings at the March 20th Town Council agenda. On vote, Mayor Roby – aye, Vice-Mayor Sherman – aye, Councilmember Cashell – aye, Councilmember Pent – aye, and Councilmember Waugh-Robinson – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Roby requested that the gun restrictions agenda item take place before the budget work session.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF TOWN GUN RESTRICTIONS IN TOWN PUBLIC BUILDINGS AT THE MARCH 20th TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

A discussion was held by Town Council on whether to have a continued discussion on Town gun restrictions in Town buildings at the regular March 20th Town Council meeting. After discussion, it was the consensus of Town Council to not have the discussion of gun restrictions in Town public buildings at the March 20th Town Council meeting.

FY-2024 DRAFT BUDGET WORK SESSION

The Town Manager gave an overview of the DRAFT FY24 Budget to date:

The Town Manager stated that there were a few changes to the draft budget since the last budget work session to include a 7.01% health increase and funding for an Economic Development person with a salary of \$50,000 but with benefits costs totaling \$84,582. The Town Manager restated that there were no tax or rate increases in the FY24 proposed draft budget and there was

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a 5.0% COLA increase for employees (effective July 1, 2023) with additional 0.5% for under \$20/hour.

The Town Manager stated further that LODA costs increased from \$632 to \$830 per certified police officer per VRS mandate, and donations were the same as last year. The Town Manager stated that other considerations were significant increases to water and sewer chemicals, and an increase in vehicle fuel across the board. The Town Manager stated further that also in the budget was payment of 100% of the utility costs for the Depot (This is proposed with the understanding that the County would hire a person to staff the Visitor Center).

The Town Manager reported that Capital expenditures included work to be done at the shooting range, purchasing a rear loading trash truck and trash cans for town residents and businesses, Madison/Main Traffic Light, Public Works and Police vehicles, sidewalks, paving Old Town lot, Town car, Connector of Boxley/Maddox, and a sound system for the Community Meeting Room.

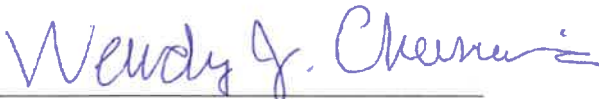
Mayor Roby stated that she would like to see the extension of a sidewalk from Round Hill Road to North Madison Road to the South and from there to Spicer's Mill Road.

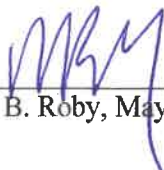
A lengthy discussion was held on Economic Development and Marketing in the Town. After discussion, it was decided that Mayor Roby and the Town Manager would discuss Economic Development and bring back ideas for discussion to Town Council.

A lengthy discussion was also held on business licenses and how the Town can track what businesses are in Town.

It was the consensus of Town Council to advertise the FY24 DRAFT Budget and Appropriation public hearing for the regular Monday, April 17th Town Council meeting.

With no further business the meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.


Wendy J. Chewning, MMC, Town Clerk


Martha B. Roby, Mayor