

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Council of the Town of Blackstone, Virginia, held in the Council Chambers located at 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, Virginia, on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

There Were Present:

Mayor: L. Benjamin Green

Council Members: Wesley Gormus, Lloyette Wynn, Christopher Page, Carolyn Williams, Nathaniel Miller, Eric Nash, Jake Allman

Town Staff: Philip Vannoorbeeck, Town Manager; Jennifer Daniel, Town Clerk; Brittany Harris, Treasurer; Jackie Brown, Bookkeeper; Chastiddy Bryant, Community Development Specialist; Shay Farley, Police Corporal

Town Attorney:

Those Absent:

Mayor Green called the November Council Meeting to order.

Dr. Allen delivered the Invocation.

Mayor Green led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Green wished Councilman Gormus a Happy Birthday.

Mayor Green said he would be adding a letter from Mrs. Delphine Fowlkes during the Visitors section. He said we advertised a Closed Session for the Town Manager, and that is being dropped, there will be no Closed Session. He said he would be adding New Business #10, which would address a motion made by the Nottoway Board of Supervisors to extend Manager Vannoorbeeck's employment agreement with the County.

MINUTES:

Councilman Nash made a motion to dispense with reading and approve as presented minutes from the Regular Council Meetings on September 18, 2023 and October 16, 2023, and a Continued Meeting on October 4, 2023. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

VISITORS:

1. Mr. Aaron McDonald – Utility Bill

Mr. McDonald was not in attendance.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this was a delinquent bill and we told this customer to just pay the electric portion, and it would be resolved tonight.

Mayor Green said Mr. McDonald was seeking relief on his water/sewer bill. He said in the packet was his bill from August and September.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he received a call from Mr. McDonald last week saying he had a significant water bill. He said included in the packet is a statement from J&J Mechanical, which indicated there was no water on the ground. He said according to Mr. Andre Hicks, the meter was not running when he was there.

Manager Vannoorbeeck read the statement from J&J, which said Mr. McDonald had shut off the toilet in the back bathroom months ago, due to the first high water bill. He said J&J checked the crawl space and did not see any water standing or running, and the meter was not running. He said Mr. Andre Hicks wrote; the plumber did tell him about the back bathroom toilet valve was leaking where the water goes to the sewer so was not noticeable by the homeowner. Manager Vannoorbeeck said according to Mr. Hicks it is a leaking toilet.

Councilman Page said the customer got a \$1,700.00 water bill, they had a plumber check things, who didn't do any work at all, and talked about a previous water leak, but how does the bill level out if no work was done. Manager Vannoorbeeck believed there was a toilet leaking, and they cut the toilet off.

Councilman Gormus asked what had been past practice with personal situations like this. Manager Vannoorbeeck said previously a customer paid a high bill through a payment plan. Treasurer Morgan said a payment plan can be done for anyone.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said at a minimum you can remove the sewer portion.

Councilman Nash made a motion to lower the sewer portion of Mr. McDonald's bill to normal usage from the past six months. The motion was seconded by Councilman Page.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the current policy is if it goes down the toilet, you are charged for it.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Manager Vannoorbeeck said it is still a significant amount owed for the water portion, so he suggested a payment plan for three months, plus paying the regular bill each month.

Councilman Nash made a motion to allow a three month payment plan for Mr. McDonald on the outstanding water bill. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Councilman Gormus asked if this was common practice, or can anyone get on a payment plan. Treasurer Morgan said everyone is offered three payment agreements. Councilman Gormus said that is not typically a Council decision. Treasurer Morgan replied not typically. She added with a typical utility bill on a payment plan, they are usually just given two extra weeks.

Councilman Nash withdrew his motion, and said to leave it as an administration decision. Councilman Miller withdrew his second.

Mayor Green asked Manager Vannoorbeeck to come to Council for any payment agreements over three months.

2. Blackstone Baptist Church – Utility Bill

Mayor Green said Mr. Jim McDaniel was here tonight seeking relief for the Blackstone Baptist Church with their water/sewer bill. He said in the packet was bills from April 2023 through September 2023.

Mr. McDaniel said the Town had great employees, and in this instance, Mr. Charlie Atkinson checked the meter and advised there was a leak. He said they found it was a toilet leaking, and the leak was fixed that day. He said their church is across from the Post Office and their parking lot adjoins the Library.

Councilman Miller said Mr. McDaniel came to Town Hall and he happened to be there. He said the Church was working on the parking lot, power washing and painting parking lines. He said Mr. McDaniel asked that what they have done in the parking lot, that amount be taken off their utility bill. He said the Town does use that parking lot. Mr. McDaniel said the parking lot renovations were planned before they had the leak.

Mayor Green said he would like Council to provide some relief, but stay within what was done for Mr. McDonald. Councilman Gormus said with this being a church and a 501c3, wouldn't this be in alignment with what the Town did for Pastor Hogg. Mayor Green said what we did for Pastor Hogg was cash money from two members of Council and himself. Councilman Allman said we waived the first bill.

Mayor Green said the Church has been very kind letting the Town use their parking lot without any restrictions for the Library. Councilman Miller said they did not deny there was a problem, and they corrected it.

Councilman Allman made a motion to reduce the utility bill that was due October 31, 2023 for the month of August, for water and sewer to their average usage. The motion was seconded by Councilman Gormus.

Councilman Page made a secondary motion to reduce the utility bill by \$366.65.

Mayor Green said there was no second, so that motion died. He asked to leave the math to the Treasurer.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Councilman Allman made a motion to waive the sewer back to the normal usage on the utility bill due November 30, 2023. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

- Councilman Page - Aye
- Councilwoman Williams - Aye
- Councilman Miller - Aye
- Councilman Nash - Aye
- Councilman Allman - Aye
- Councilman Gormus - Aye
- Councilwoman Wynn - Aye

Letter from Ms. Delphine Fowlkes

Mayor Green read the following from Ms. Delphine Simmons Fowlkes, and said this was provided to Council earlier today.

Dearest Mayor Green,

I am writing to you as Delphine Simmons-Fowlkes, and not to get it mistaken as anything to do with Nottoway County Public Schools. On November 6, 2023, I received a telephone message from my secretary informing me one of my parents wanted to speak with me. Once I returned to my office, I called the parent, and he asked if he could come speak with me. I asked the parent when he would like to come, he stated he could be to my office in less than 10 minutes. I said, I will see you then. Mr. Page came to my office, sat down, and began talking with me. He met with my Assistant Principal, Dr. LaCara Hawkes, and I. We were informed of what he needed for his child, and was glad to help him. Before he went to speak with the teacher, he stated he had another matter to discuss. Dr. Hawkes and I said okay. As Mr. Page sat across from my desk to my left, and Dr. Hawkes to my right, he took out his telephone and began to play music. He said he was sent a clip of a particular song from someone who was at our Harvest Festival the Saturday before. He stated he was not at the Harvest Festival. Mr. Page went on to say how he was a DJ, which he stated several times, and he would have played this song verses that song, etc. He shared his concern about how he felt that particular song or songs of the same nature shouldn't be played at a school event for 4-year olds. He stated once again, he was a DJ. We talked about how unfortunately, the radio version for songs these days don't seem to be suitable. I did say to him that some of the songs the students sing would shock us. I told him there was a variety of music played at the festival, and I know the DJ cut some songs at a certain point, as well as, beeped them out. He went on to inform me he was a town official and that he DJ's for a lot of town events. Being that I never met Mr. Page before, I asked where? He replied, "the Town of Blackstone." I still don't know what relevance that had unless at this point he was representing the town in his remarks. I said to him, "Oh, okay, there actually was an official there and a couple of Pastors."

Mr. Page went on to pretty much reiterate the same thing he had said previously. I did tell Mr. Page that most of the music played that day was for the cake and pumpkin walk. I told him there were so many activities going on that day that we were attending to, and that unfortunately, I didn't get to catch every word of every song. As we ended the conversation, I thanked him for coming by with his concern, and moving forward, we would be aware of the music. Mr. Page stood up, reached his hand out to shake my hand, and I extended mine as well. I think he then extended his hand to Dr. Hawkes. He thanked us for talking with him because he wanted to make us aware and not take it any further. I looked at this like in the western days, a handshake was your bond and meant a lot. I must say I wasn't shocked; however, not surprised when Mr. Page came to speak at the board meeting because when Mr. Page left my office, he said thank you, and he didn't want to have to take it any further. He also wrote on his Facebook page, "I did speak to the principal about this yesterday because my daughter attended this event and her mom and I were not happy. She at least seemed receptive of the feedback." If I was receptive, and I had what I thought was an administrator to parent conversation how did we end up with my name continuously being posted by an official as I was told during the meeting. On Thursday, November 16, two people were in the parking lot of the school with intentions of meeting with administration. It was reported one of the people had gotten sick and was throwing up and that the other person was Mr. Page. This has now been over ten days since the festival. We have listened, communicated, came up with steps moving forward, and it still does not seem to be enough. I am smart enough to know that a person can't help what people comment on their social media page; however, when they initiate the comments they are just as much involved as the person making the comment. As stated, in my earlier comment, this is not a school issue, this is a citizen concern. I am not one that plays tit for tat; therefore, you will not see me going back and forth with anyone. My personal name has been tagged in posts, people have screenshot me comments, etc. Unfortunately, the school's page has had to play privy to undesirable comments. I hate the fact that a school page where we try to highlight the great accomplishments of our students and teachers has been overshadowed with darkness. Mayor Green, I sent you the pictures of the Fall Harvest Festival. I hope you share the pictures along with this letter to your council. They can see what a wonderful event was held, and the children and adults so enjoyed themselves. The DJs for the event have played for the schools of NCPS for years, and sometimes render their services for free. We are thankful this was one of those times. The DJ was asked to play songs he refused. As a school and division moving forward, prior to an event we will request a playlist and sensor what is requested. Parents will be provided with the list.

Mayor Green told Councilman Page he would give him the opportunity to speak first, and asked him not to get into a personal nature with Ms. Fowlkes, but felt he was entitled to speak.

Councilman Page asked for more time than the normal three minutes. He asked Mayor Green if he was asked to read the letter. Mayor Green replied yes, in an email. Councilman Page asked if it was solicited. Mayor Green replied no, but he did visit with her. He said he and Councilman Miller have conversations from time to time, and he told him about an incident and then read the paper. Mayor Green believed Councilman Miller suggested he contact Ms. Fowlkes.

Every parent in Virginia, Elected or not, has a fundamental right to be involved in their child's education. This right does not cease to exist when one becomes an elected official. These rights include monitoring what your child is exposed to at school, the right to address issues with school administration and even the right to speak at school board meetings when concerns are not addressed in a satisfactory manor by school administration. While Ms. Fowlkes insists that she is writing this letter to Mayor Green as a citizen and not a representative of Nottoway County Public Schools, it is painfully obvious that she is releasing, possibly, and most likely confidential information that only a representative of the school would be pery to. Parents depend on confidentiality when discussing their child's information with school administration and while a parent is allowed to disclose information about their child's education and conversations with school officials...administration is not. While I do not have time here today to discuss all the defamatory, slanderous, and inaccurate statements mentioned in Ms. Fowlkes letter, I will discuss the three issues brought forth that insinuate some type of wrongdoing on my part as an elected official. Ms. Fowlkes states that I informed her that I was a member of the town council and that she had no idea what that had to do with the conversation. This statement is purposely constructed to insinuate that I tried to use my position to get some type of result or to at minimum give that perception. What actually happened, was I expressed to Ms. Fowlkes that I was not the only parent raising concerns and many parents reached out to me after the event. Mrs. Fowlkes replied, "why would they reach out to you and not us directly"? to which I responded "Many parents are afraid to speak out about what is happening in our schools in fear of retaliation so they reach out to their local leaders and elected officials" Ms. Fowlkes replied " Oh, are you an elected official" and I said I am...with the town of Blackstone." Ms. Fowlkes stated that I was at the school during school hours with a person throwing up in the parking lot. Anyone who knows me knows I left for a very long road trip to San Antonio Texas Monday afternoon and did not return until 9:40 pm Thursday evening. How could I be in Atlanta posting about the traffic at 1pm and be at the school during school hours wanting to speak to the school administration. I even had a phone conversation with Manager Vannoorbeeck at 3:24 and 3:41 pm while traveling through South Carolina on I-85. I can do a lot of things, but I cannot be at two places at once. Hopefully Ms. Fowlkes called BVFD and requested medical attention for the person who was sick in the parking lot. As for Facebook posts, as any other citizen it is my right to post videos of school board meetings and to inform the public about what has happened to me since that meeting. I have no control over what someone else comments nor am I allowed to delete them. If parents want to post on BPS Facebook that is their prerogative if the page allows for public comment. While most of this letter was constructed in an attempt for council to take some sort of action against me, I am putting council on notice that this letter is filled with inaccurate depictions of a confidential conversation about my Childs education that I did not release. If Ms. Fowlkes wants to make our schools a town issue lets discuss how NCPS has the 11th worst schools in the state out of 194 districts. Let's discuss how our failing schools impact our economic growth in town, lets discuss how FASTC employees moved out of county and commute to work instead of living in Blackstone and their number one reason for it is the poor quality of education.

Tonight, right here, lets discuss how the children of our constituents are subjected to bullying and harassment with minimal intervention or consequences by administration. Let's discuss how parents like me are retaliated against for speaking out at a government meeting and bringing forth their grievances with their child's school administrators. Since this incident, Ms. Fowlkes has reached out to the media about my business and why or why not it doesn't play at certain locations anymore, she has communicated to the press false and misleading information regarding my conversation about my child's education and even made-up stories about me being in the parking lot on certain dates and times when I was clearly out of state. If anyone has shown unacceptable and inappropriate professional behavior, it is clearly Ms. Fowlkes.

Councilman Miller asked how the Town got involved in this, when it is a county thing. He said if one of Council did something inappropriately, then he would understand. He said we are not responsible for our Council's actions. He said if you went to Ms. Fowlkes as Council, he would have been infuriated, and would sound like a threat. Councilman Page said that is not what happened.

Councilman Page said Ms. Fowlkes asked him why people reach out to him, and he replied because people are afraid to talk, so they reach out to him. He said she asked if he was elected, and he told her yes.

Councilman Nash asked why people reach out to him for school issues. Councilman Page said people have been reaching out to him for years on school stuff. He said he talked to Ms. Fowlkes about the music and she seemed receptive to the feedback, but then someone sent him a Facebook message of her dismissing his complaints. He said he then went to the School Board.

Councilman Allman said he has received messages about businesses in the County doing illicit things, yet we are not at a County meeting. Councilman Page said you have the right to go to a County meeting, especially when his child is involved. He said he has the right to go to the School Board and talk, and he never once mentioned the Town of Blackstone.

Councilman Allman believed there needed to be clear guidelines for everyone as Council, so when conversations are being held, it needs to be prefaced that someone is not here on behalf of the Town of Blackstone, but instead as a parent. He said those lines are being blurred in issues coming up lately, and causing problems for Council. Councilman Page said he never once mentioned the Town of Blackstone, he mentioned his child.

Councilman Miller said we should not be involved with the school system. He said Councilman Page's issue should have been taken up with Ms. Fowlkes, the Town should not have been involved. Councilman Page said to Councilman Miller, who was he to tell him how to handle his child's issues at their school. He said he took the issue to Ms. Fowlkes, and wasn't satisfied, so then went to the School Board.

Councilman Allman believed the problem was Councilman Page didn't clarify whether he was there on Town business or not. Councilman Page said he was there meeting with the Principal talking about issues with his child, it was a parent/teacher conference, and she shouldn't have released the information, then we wouldn't be here discussing it.

Councilman Allman said there have been numerous accusations of Council throwing weight around when going into a situation, using their title, and other accusations for Councilman Page throwing his weight around to get things done. Councilman Page said he could not help it if people use our title against us when they don't like our message.

Councilman Allman asked Councilman Page if he told Ms. Fowlkes he was there as Council. Councilman Page said he did not, and at the end of the conversation he said he was not the only parent complaining, and that lots of people reached out to him with videos, and she asked why they were reaching out to him and not the School. He said he told Ms. Fowlkes because people are afraid of retaliation, so they reach out to their local officials and leaders. He said Ms. Fowlkes then asked if he was elected, and he replied yes with the Town of Blackstone, and that was the end.

Councilman Allman believed the issue was because Councilman Page did not clarify he was not there on behalf of the Town, it comes across as bullying as a Council member.

Mayor Green said the reason he visited Ms. Fowlkes is because she felt bullied and pressured. He said Councilman Page said the conversations with Ms. Fowlkes were confidential, so what gave Councilman Page the right to hear from other people, and engage on their behalf. He said anytime he hears a citizen is bullied or feels bullied, then that is a problem to him. He said we need to take steps from people feeling that way. He did not believe anybody should be speaking on behalf of the Council, but him as the Mayor of Blackstone, and he only speaks when he has sought and received Council's blessing.

Councilman Gormus asked how does a conversation like this come to an end. Mayor Green suggested Council authorize him to write a letter to all governing boards and administration that receive public comment, that Mr. Page does not speak for this Council in any shape, form or fashion, he does so as a citizen or another group.

Councilman Gormus made a motion authorizing Mayor Green to write a letter to all governing boards and administration that receive public comment, that Mr. Page does not speak for this Council in any shape, form or fashion, he does so as a citizen or another group. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Councilman Allman made a secondary motion that no member speaks for the entire Council, unless voted on or appointed. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:

No officers were in attendance.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Mayor Green stated the bills that have already been paid are in the amount of \$457,653.46.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the bills that have already been paid in the amount of \$457,653.46. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Williams.

Councilman Gormus asked about Harman, Claytor, Corrigan. Manager Vannoorbeeck said Harman, Claytor, Corrigan and Wellman is an attorney that the Town has hired in response to Councilman Page's intent to file a lawsuit. It was advised that is on the next batch of bills.

Councilman Page asked about a check in the amount of \$938.91 to the Best Western. Bookkeeper Brown said that is the hotel for Lineman School.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Mayor Green stated the bills not yet approved, and to be paid, are in the amount of \$205,809.72.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve as presented, the bills not yet paid in the amount of \$205,809.72. The motion was seconded by Councilman Page.

Councilman Page withdrew his second, and asked to separate the bill for Missy York.

The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Councilman Page made a secondary motion to approve this batch of bills, minus Missy York and have a separate vote.

Mayor Green said there was no second, so the motion failed.

Councilman Nash asked about the Rugby Environmental invoice in the amount of \$5,800.00. Manager Vannoorbeeck said that was for 107 Taylor Street, and a lien had been recorded. He said the property owner would be making payments of \$100.00 a month.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

APPROPRIATIONS:

There were no appropriations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Employment & Police – met 10/25/23, minutes included in November’s Council Packet

Closed Session – Police Chief Applications

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Committee met in Closed Session and reviewed Police Chief applications, with three being selected for interview.

Insurance – met 11/15/23, minutes included in November’s Council Packet

Fire Department Insurance Renewal

Chairman Gormus said the Committee recommended renewing the Fire Department insurance, and include PTSD Counseling, but exclude cyber liability.

Councilman Gormus made a motion to renew the Fire Department insurance with McNeil & Company in the amount of \$11,621.00 and with Hartford Insurance in the amount of \$9,206.00, and include PTSD Counseling. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.

Councilman Page asked when the last time this was issued an RFP. Manager Vannoorbeeck did not think it had been done since he had been here. Councilman Nash said nobody else can offer the same insurance.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Airport Insurance Renewal

Councilman Gormus made a motion to renew the Airport Insurance with AIG-Lockton Companies, LLC in the amount of \$5,300.00. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the correct amount is \$5,300.00 because we chose not to take the terrorist coverage.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Councilman Nash said the Committee discussed, and would be getting an RFP together to advertise on eVA for health insurance.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. RFP – Legal Services

Manager Vannoorbeeck said included in the packet is an RFP to be used in the search for a new town attorney. He said in the RFP it includes a due date of January 15, 2024. He asked to forward this RFP to Ms. Missy York for approval.

Councilman Nash said under anticipated timeline, it said November 29, 2024 as the release date, it should be 2023. He asked in the meantime, who is our legal counsel. Manager Vannoorbeeck said Attorney Bacon was still handling Courtland Coffey, Jan’s Residential and a few other items she had been working on with Clerk Daniel. He said matters beyond that, Ms. Missy York, and Hawthorne & Hawthorne would be joining us tonight for a particular matter.

Councilman Allman made a motion to approve the RFP for legal services as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

2. Award Bid - Paving

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is for paving to be done in the spring or early summer. He said we try to bid before VDOT so the Town does not get shut out. He said there would not be tar and gravel this year.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the bids were publicly opened on November 16, 2023, with two being received. He said the apparent low bid is from Southern Paving, in the amount of \$345,500.00. He said this project would include N. West Avenue from the Barco Road intersection to the 460 right of way. He added this would be 1.5” milling and overlay. He said this company would have to put up a Performance Bond in the amount of \$345,500.00.

Councilman Nash made a motion to award the paving to the low bid from Southern Paving in the amount of \$345,500.00. The motion was seconded by Councilman Gormus.

Councilman Nash asked what the Town's reimbursement per lane was from VDOT. Manager Vannoorbeeck said it is a dollar figure per lane mile.

Councilman Nash asked what the life expectancy would be. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied about seven years.

Councilman Nash asked to get figures on what the Town receives, as opposed to the life expectancy.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

3. Skill Games

Manager Vannoorbeeck said we received an email from Mr. Drew Shepherd inquiring about skill games in Blackstone. He said this month the State Supreme Court determined these games were not legal.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said included in the packet is a confirmation from Commonwealth Attorney Watrous on the skill games no longer being legal. He said Mr. Shepherd provided a Powhatan County action that gave an extension until April 1st.

Councilman Nash asked if this was under the Council's purview to decide. Manager Vannoorbeeck said if Powhatan has given an extension, there may be some wiggle room for localities. Mayor Green said we need to be well versed, by either the Commonwealth's Attorney or a competent attorney in the matter.

Mayor Green believed what he was hearing from Council is it is over our pay grade, and they would refer it to the Nottoway County Commonwealth's Attorney. He did not think Council was in a position to circumvent law.

Councilman Nash said because it is a Town business, he would like us to be proactive in getting an answer from the Commonwealth's Attorney.

Mayor Green asked for authorization to write a letter to the Commonwealth's Attorney. Councilman Gormus suggested calling, to be quicker.

Councilman Page asked if Council had a position creating an extension. Councilman Miller believed all other games were already gone from the convenience stores.

Mr. Drew Shepherd said he wants to be compliant. He said he was here to communicate and looking for guidance.

Councilman Gormus said are we agreeing that November 13th was the day they should have stopped, or agreeing Mayor Green will talk to the Commonwealth's Attorney.

Mayor Green asked who would be enforcing this. Manager Vannoorbeeck believed a felony would be enforced by the Commonwealth's Attorney, but did not know if she would enforce misdemeanors.

Mayor Green said by Common Consent, he and Manager Vannoorbeeck would work with the Commonwealth's Attorney and communicate with Mr. Shepherd. Mr. Shepherd said as of Thursday last week, they closed the business down. He added there is a Zoning Variance in the shopping centers just for skill games.

ON-GOING PROJECTS:

1. Dilapidated Buildings

Manager Vannoorbeeck said included in the packet is a recent filing in regards to the Dillard Crawley Building, owned by Courtland Coffey. He said the filing is to enforce the Town's eminent domain, as no work has been done to satisfy the blighted designation of the property.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the demolition of 902 Second Street started today, and is not being done by the Town.

2. Meals Tax / Lodging Tax

Treasurer Morgan said there was only one meals tax outstanding as of today, and there is still one on a payment agreement.

3. Street Improvement Projects

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town's pre-application for Revenue Sharing for the S. Main Street widening and sidewalks has received tentative approval. He said if the project is approved it would make \$1.8 Million in grant funds available. He said this would be a 2027 construction date.

4. Wigglesworth Sports Complex

There was nothing to report.

Manager Vannoorbeeck mentioned a burn ban in effect for Nottoway County.

5. Taylor Bottom Block Grant

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Planning Grant would be submitted by mid-December. He said Community Development Specialist Bryant had been getting income statements and surveys done for the project area.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this would be the second time submitting this grant, the first time they ran out of funds.

6. Armory

Manager Vannoorbeeck said all documents related to this project are executed, with the Notice to Proceed being dated November 6, 2023. He said Town forces were 95% complete with demolition. Councilman Gormus said the 300 days to be completed started on November 6, 2023.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said at Council's desk there was a Resolution authorizing the Town to proceed with application to the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission for \$247,217.00 to complete the commercial kitchen.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town applied for this amount previously through USDA, but they wanted the Town to follow the historic resource guidelines. He said the project had already been designed not to follow historic guidelines.

Councilman Page made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented by the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission in the amount of \$247,217.00. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

7. Weatherization

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town had received some calls from people expecting weatherization to be done because they may be first in line. He said the contribution for this fiscal year has not yet been set aside.

8. Workforce Housing

Manager Vannoorbeeck said 409 E. Broad Street was completed and a Deed from the Town of Blackstone to Ms. Lauren Fitzgerald has been recorded. He said the Deed was in the amount of \$100,500.00, with the appraisal being double that amount. He said that is affordable housing, with the owner having over \$100,000.00 in equity in their home.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said they were working on additional properties to build more homes. He said Town crews cleared off the property across from the old Levi Strauss building.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Virginia Housing was a good partner, they are providing the financing long term. He said he was working with a property owner now for three additional lots.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Committee Assignments

Councilman Gormus asked to go to the podium to speak.

Councilman Gormus said the Charter for Blackstone and the Blackstone Code of Ordinances states the following in Section 3.2, Powers of Council, Section B, with regards to committees, *The council may appoint such committees of council and create such boards and departments, consistent with the terms of this Charter and the laws of Virginia.*

Councilman Gormus said it is the belief of a majority of this Council that we can better represent the needs of Blackstone and move forward with the progressive momentum we are experiencing as a Town, if the committee assignments are revised per his handout. He said we must work together if we want what is best for all, whether we agree with each other or not, we need to maturely and professionally accept that we are part of a governing body together, in which majority rules. He believed trust was a critical ingredient to the success of any team, and most especially a team such as this Council. He said we were elected to do our best to represent the greater good of this Town, the people of this Town deserve our best efforts.

Councilman Gormus said this proposal is the result of other members of Council sharing their concerns and feelings with him, and him following up individually with each, no more than two, one on one with each to determine if a majority felt this would be worthy of pursuing, and we did.

Councilman Gormus said Edward Everett Hail, an American Author and historian once said, “coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success”.

Councilman Gormus made a motion that this Council and Town strive to be successful, and the committee assignments be changed per the proposed document he provided effective immediately.

The committee assignments were passed out to Council.

The motion was seconded by Councilman Page.

Councilman Page asked if the committees were advisory. Mayor Green said he did not know how to answer that, these are the committees of Council. Councilman Nash said they all come back to the full Council.

Mayor Green said the committees do not have the power to encumber the Town or to make or change policy, they are just advisory to the full Council.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

2. Resolution – Barbara Rothgeb

Mayor Green said Mrs. Rothgeb retired on October 31, 2023, and was presented the attached Resolution.

Councilman Nash made a motion to ratify the Resolution as presented for Mrs. Barbara Rothgeb’s retirement. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn.

Councilman Nash gave thanks to Mrs. Rothgeb for her 36 years of service. Mayor Green said he presented Mrs. Rothgeb with a key to the Town and this Resolution.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

3. Resolution – Medical Coverage

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Chief Kuzmiak is a retiree, not eligible for Medicare, and has requested to participate in the Town’s insurance at his cost, there is no percentage paid for by the Town. He said our health insurance carrier has requested the Resolution.

Councilman Nash asked how long this would be. Manager Vannoorbeeck did not know but said he would check into it.

Councilman Nash asked if this was available to everybody that retires from the Town of Blackstone. Manager Vannoorbeeck said Mr. Jackson was still on the Town’s insurance when he passed.

Councilman Page made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented for Chief Kuzmiak’s retirement health insurance until he is eligible for Medicare. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Councilman Nash asked if this was billed monthly. Bookkeeper Brown said yes.

Councilman Gormus asked if this would be made available to all employees that retire from the Town. Manager Vannoorbeeck said it has been.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

4. Filter Control Panel Replacement – Water Treatment Plant

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this repair is at the Water Treatment Plant at \$95,445.00. He said this is just a repair, nothing new. He added this is an emergency, and repairs can be done quicker than installing new. He said the operators are now having to climb in the pipe chase to manually open and close valves.

Manager Vannoorbeeck recommended proceeding with this repair using Inframark Automation & Intelligence. He said this would be advertised on eVA as per procurement emergencies.

Councilman Nash made a motion to declare the filter control panel replacement at the Water Treatment Plant an emergency, and award the repair to Inframark Automation & Intelligence in the amount of \$95,445.00. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Williams.

Mayor Green said he was worried about human error, doing this manually makes him nervous. Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is a 20 year old piece of equipment.

Mayor Green suggested checking with our insurance carrier on this repair.

Councilman Gormus said when the budget is laid out for that department, is preventative and corrective measures included. Councilman Nash said it would come from the Water/Sewer Fund. He added Councilman Moncure was always adamant about having depreciation costs in the budget.

Councilman Gormus suggested working towards a new control panel.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

5. Tourism Zone Request

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Tourism Zone is Town wide to allow real estate tax abatement with the Town. He said he received a request from Waukeshaw Development, but he was not prepared to make a recommendation tonight. He said some of their buildings may not be eligible because they were built prior to 2021, when this was adopted.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he would report at the December Council Meeting.

6. 2024 Council Meeting Schedule

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the 2024 Council Meeting Schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Gormus.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

7. 2024 Holiday Schedule

Mayor Green said the 2024 State Holiday schedule was included in the packet.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the 2024 Holiday Schedule with the exception of removing Election Day, November 5, 2024 and adding Thursday, December 26, 2024. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.

Councilman Page did not mind adding December 26th, but why remove Election Day. Mayor Green said he was at the limit of days the Town is not here for the citizens. Councilman Page said it is a statewide holiday, and meant for employees to go vote.

Councilman Page made a substitute motion to add December 26, 2024 to the holiday schedule as observed, and leave the remaining schedule as is.

Mayor Green said there was no second, so that motion failed.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

8. Ordinance – Christmas Bonuses

Councilman Miller made a motion to adopt the Christmas Bonus Ordinance as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Williams.

Councilman Page asked when the last time was the Senior and Junior Firefighters and employee bonuses were raised. Manager Vannoorbeeck did not know. Councilman Gormus said the firefighters also get paid per call.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said if Council wanted, he would do a study for next year.

Councilman Page made a secondary motion to approve the Christmas bonuses, but increase the Fire Department for Seniors to \$75.00 and Juniors to \$50.00.

Councilman Nash said he admired the Volunteer Fire Department, and he was one of them, but asked to include in the upcoming budget. Councilman Page said the employees got a raise not too long ago, but the Fire Department has been getting \$25.00 and \$50.00.

Mayor Green said there was no second, and the motion died.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Abstain
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Fire Department Allowance

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is for the payment to the Fire Department for the volunteers' running calls. He said this was budgeted for.

Councilman Page made a motion to approve the Fire Department Allowance as presented in the amount of \$28,247.00. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Williams.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

- Councilman Page - Aye
- Councilwoman Williams - Aye
- Councilman Miller - Aye
- Councilman Nash - Abstain
- Councilman Allman - Aye
- Councilman Gormus - Aye
- Councilwoman Wynn - Aye

9. Utility Write Offs

Manager Vannoorbeeck said these are accounts from people deceased or under \$5.00.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the Utility Write Off List as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Gormus.

Councilman Nash said there were some businesses on the list under \$5.00. Treasurer Harris said they would still try to collect. Councilman Nash said you shouldn't have to try, this is the citizens money. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he could stop by those businesses and get a check tomorrow.

Councilman Page asked that the list be purged for anything from \$.1-\$10.

Mayor Green said the total amount is \$247.16.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

- Councilman Page - Nay
- Councilwoman Williams - Aye
- Councilman Miller - Aye
- Councilman Nash - Aye
- Councilman Allman - Aye
- Councilman Gormus - Aye
- Councilwoman Wynn - Aye

10. Town Manager Employment Agreement with the Town & County

Mayor Green said he attended the Board of Supervisors Meeting last Thursday and asked them to make a motion. He said the Agreement with Manager Vannoorbeeck working with County is due to expire tomorrow. He asked the Agreement be continued to January 1, 2024. He said the County made the motion, and he was asking Council to extend the verbal Agreement.

Councilman Nash asked if there was a total for the usage of Manager Vannoorbeeck. Manager Vannoorbeeck said two invoices had been submitted to the County on behalf of the Town.

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked Council to let him finish through January 1st. He said he was doing interviews tomorrow for the County Administrator position.

Councilman Nash asked if there was an active search on finding somebody. Manager Vannoorbeeck said there would be interviews tomorrow. He said he would not ask to extend past January 1st.

Councilman Allman asked what we were charging the County. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied, the Town was being reimbursed for his full salary and mileage.

Councilman Allman made a motion to extend the Agreement with Manager Vannoorbeeck and the County until January 1, 2024 at a consultant rate to the Town of \$200.00 an hour, plus mileage and expenses, with this being the last extension. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Councilman Nash believed there may have been a more favorable response to extend, had there been more courtesy given to the Town from the County. He said he wants to help the County, because they are our citizens as well, but there were no favors done on our behalf.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Nay
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he would stay with \$100.00 an hour for his afterhours work.

COMMITTEE REFERRALS:

There were no referrals.

MAYORS MINUTE:

Mayor Green said he was in favor to do anything for our firemen. He said he liked the idea of looking into increasing bonuses for the firemen and Town associates during the budget.

Desserts & Discussion

Mayor Green said on November 9, 2023, he conducted a Desserts & Discussions Event with the Mayor at the Inn at Blackstone. He said there was roughly 45-50 people, including four members of Council. He said people that were there asked to see this on a regular basis.

Mayor Green said Mr. Watkins of Watkins Jewelers suggested the Town take action. He asked that he and Councilman Allman be able to work with the Crewe officials on the water issue.

Mayor Green advised Mayor Phil Miskovic will now be taking the position of Town Manager in Crewe.

Councilman Nash said by Common Consent to allow Councilman Allman and Mayor Green to work with Crewe officials on the water issue, and report back to Council.

Mayor Green said he received a letter from Mr. James Watkins, a resident on Seventh Street. He said the letter was in reference to the noise at the Inn at Blackstone. Manager Vannoorbeeck said Council did vote on the Noise Ordinance waiver for this wedding. He said he didn't think anybody thought it was going to be from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. He said it was loud and noxious, and we are happy for the business, and want to support them, but at the same time 12 hours of music outside is probably not what this Council was expecting.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said each request is taken on a case by case basis, and Council votes on each one.

Councilman Nash said he heard the music at his house, and believed more questions would be asked next time. He said he did not like the fact that the police visited and asked them to turn it down, and then it went right back up. He said to him that is not a good neighbor, and in his opinion will make repercussions on the next request. Manager Vannoorbeeck said something to consider may be amplified music only be on the inside.

Councilman Gormus asked if it was the owner's daughter's wedding. Manager Vannoorbeeck believed it was a family member of the hotel owner.

Mayor Green asked Council to allow him to write a formal letter to Mr. Watkins letting him know we care, and write a letter to the Inn to express our concerns.

Council agreed by Common Consent.

Mayor Green said Manager Vannoorbeeck and some members of Council visited the ditch on the Bunnell property. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he visited the site once with Councilman Page and another time with Councilman Miller and Gormus. He believed the Street and Light Committee might still need to discuss. He believed a response was needed from the letter received from the Bunnell's attorney.

Mayor Green said he would be delighted to respond with Council's blessing.

Councilman Gormus said before we move forward on anything, Mr. Sommerville on N. West Avenue and Mr. Divers on Forest Drive are still in need of their work being done. Councilman Miller added Mr. Phillip Armes also.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the drawings for Forest Drive would be here before December 1st. He said he met with Mr. Jason Walker for Mr. Sommerville's property. He asked on the Sommerville property, how far back will this ditch closure go. Councilman Gormus replied as far back as Manager Vannoorbeeck said it would go. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he told him the railroad.

Councilman Gormus said the Sommerville and Divers' property should have been on the Unfinished Business list for the past year. He said these should stay on the Unfinished Business list until they are finished. Mayor Green agreed, and would like a list of ongoing projects.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said we have not done those projects for one reason; we don't have the cash. He said he was trying to use the money from the checking account and the funds of the Town. He said he could do the ditches tomorrow, but that is irresponsible, he wants to put the cash together.

Councilman Gormus said we need a plan across the whole Town to assess the situations. Manager Vannoorbeeck said a word of advice, don't do private ditches. He said people talk about the Town's water, he said it is everybody's water, God's water, it falls and we channel it to certain locations.

Councilman Nash said for the Sommerville property it would be another 58'. He said the ditch is not even on Mr. Sommerville's property.

Mayor Green said Mr. Koptchak had concerns about noise. He said he has seen that tickets are being written.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said according to the Procurement Policy, we need to wait 30 days to pay bills. He said he violates that sometimes because of contractors, but he asked Council to promote net 30, and to pay by invoices.

Councilman Allman asked about a two day request. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he had some Council members question him about a check he authorized be cut, and it was not 30 days. He said an invoice was changed and we had to cancel a check.

Councilman Allman asked Councilman Page if he had any comments. Councilman Page asked if they were talking about his invoice. He said he sent a quote over and it was approved by Council. He added the quote said payment due upon services rendered. Manager Vannoorbeeck said from now on, there needs to be an expectation of 30 days.

Councilman Miller gave an example, if DBi was having an event and he wanted to play for it, how does that work, is it bid out. Manager Vannoorbeeck said Council has adopted a Procurement Policy where anything under \$5,000.00, you do not have to seek bids. He said the quote from Councilman Page was \$200.00, and he had done it in the past so Community Development Specialist Bryant called him. He said if this is not pleasing, we can change the Procurement Policy.

Councilman Miller believed the Policy needed to be changed because people are saying they are not getting a fair shot. Councilman Page said Community Development Specialist Bryant messaged him, so he put a bid in for the services.

Mayor Green said his indigestion was because the check was changed from the company invoiced to someone personal. Manager Vannoorbeeck believed it was changed to Chris Page DBA. Mayor Green said the optics looked like taxation or something was being circumvented.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said we have explained the matter and for \$200.00, you have paid these attorneys to sit here for that long to listen to this. He said in the future he would do it correctly, more pleasing to the Council.

Councilman Allman said the exception Council had with this was an employer going to an employee asking for an exception of policy, then asking for another exception to policy within a short amount of time. He said he was uncomfortable because that put staff in a bad position, as Councilman Page is a person in a position of power over them.

Councilman Page said the quote was sent in as Christopher Page DBA Bright Lights Entertainment. He said because they wrote the check wrong and had to change it, was not his fault. Bookkeeper Brown said they wrote the check out to what the invoice said which was Bright Lights Entertainment, we do not pay from quotes.

Councilman Page said in the future he would change the invoice to Christopher Page DBA Bright Lights Entertainment. He said Council did approve the bid, and that was the quote.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said to Councilman Page, the ladies cut the check correctly, as you invoiced, and then you asked them to change it. Councilman Page said that is correct the invoice was from Bright Lights Entertainment. Manager Vannoorbeeck said don't throw the girls under the bus in the future.

POLICE REPORT:

Councilman Miller asked about the shooting. Mayor Green believed there was not enough information to comment right now.

Councilman Nash asked about the DEQ Litter Grant return. Manager Vannoorbeeck said Ms. Jennifer Hardy wrote a Household Hazardous Waste Day Grant, and we received it, but he did not ever get to it. He said we sent the money back.

CITIZEN COMMENTS:

There were no additional comments.

Mayor Green asked for a three minute recess, and when we return there would be a motion to go into Closed Session.

CLOSED SESSION:

Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711

5/ Prospective Industry
7/ Legal Matters

Councilwoman Wynn made a motion to go into Closed Session for Discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community and Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Mayor Green asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Councilman Nash made a motion to certify that to the best of each member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened, were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn.

Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Certify
Councilwoman Williams	-	Certify
Councilman Miller	-	Certify
Councilman Nash	-	Certify
Councilman Allman	-	Certify
Councilman Gormus	-	Certify
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Certify

Councilman Gormus made a motion to employ the law firm of Hawthorne & Hawthorne, PC to represent the Town Treasurer in the institution of misdemeanor criminal charges against Candyce J. Early for the failure to properly collect and pay the delinquent Meals Tax amounts required under Section 54-52 of the Town of Blackstone's Ordinance, and the Town Manager is directed to enter into a representation agreement with Hawthorne & Hawthorne, PC for the services required by this resolution. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn.

Councilman Page said the motion only included Meals Tax, does that include anything else. Mayor Green said no that is Civil.

Councilman Gormus said we are in Open Session, on camera discussing something that was already settled on.

Councilman Page said the motion was lighter than he thought it was going to be. Mayor Green asked him if he wanted to make a substitute motion. Councilman Page replied no.


Mayor Green asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Aye
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye

Mayor Green continued this meeting to Tuesday, November 21, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Green adjourned this meeting.
10:22 p.m.


MAYOR
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

December 18, 2023 APPROVED AND ADOPTED


TOWN CLERK
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA