



TOWN OF CHILHOWIE

Mayor: Gary L. Heninger
Council: Donna S. Blevins
Billy L. Clear
Alan W. Counts
Charles E. Doane
Emily B. Dungan
J. Brent Foster

P.O. BOX 5012
CHILHOWIE, VIRGINIA 24319
PHONE (276) 646-3232
FAX (276) 646-3012
www.chilhowie.org

Town Manager: John E.B. Clark, Jr.
Clerk/Treasurer: Marlene L. Henderson
Police Chief: Stephen W. Price
Director of Public Works: Jay Keen
Fire/EMS: C. David Haynes
Building Official: Randy Sturgill

Town Manager's Report to Mayor and Town Council November 8, 2018

Update on Downtown Revitalization Project

All storm drain lines have been installed in the project spanning from the river to the Main Street's intersection with Highway 107 and Walton Avenue. The drainage bore under a building on the north side of Main Street, and connected to the main line on Main Street, was also successfully completed. This project will eliminate or mitigate flooding from off Lee Highway and roof drains from three buildings that front Main and have rear facades on Lee Highway in a permanent fashion.

The Old Superior Mills Demolition is almost entirely completed. Top soil is being put on the site and grass seed will be sown on or before November 5.

One issue that has come up recently on the streetscape project is the discovery of unsuitable material under the pavement. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is slated to pave the street early next year. We had hoped that suitable material was under the surface but what was found was several layers of old pavement that was putdown over the course of many years. To remedy this situation several inches of gravel and base is slated to be added for some of the length of Main Street. There is a discrepancy between how Hurt and Proffitt (H&P) interprets the plans and how the contractor does on that responsibility. In a Progress Meeting on the project on October 30 I questioned a VDOT official on why VDOT couldn't help considering it's their street and the Town has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to improve drainage and access on Main Street.

The contractor will be getting us a cost on this fill work in the near future, perhaps by the Council meeting. This issue will have to be resolved very soon in order to prepare the street for the winter.

On a budgetary note I have a handwritten breakdown in the agenda packet that shows the approximate balance of how much money we have left for the Downtown Project through the Community Development Block Grant. Keep in mind that if we still have the overhead pole utility consolidation to do that amount will be in the \$100,000 range.

Update on East Lee Highway Sidewalk Project

All sewer lines have been moved and tied in on the project, as have been the natural gas lines. As you can see drainage pipe for the project has been stored on a lot between Akers and Virginia Avenues.

Grading on the project is slated to begin on November 5 by Boring Contractors. The west bound lane of Lee Highway will be diverted to the center lane from that date until the end of the month, or until the project is completed. We have put that notice on the Town's Facebook page and on our Nextel account in an attempt to notify the public. Additionally, it is my understanding that the two entrances on the lot between Akers and Virginia Avenues have been restored for construction.

Youth Government Day

On October 23 we again participated in the annual Youth Government Day sponsored by the Smyth County School Board and Smyth County Chamber of Commerce. The event had been held in the Spring, but in 2017 and 2018 was moved to the Fall.

The students from all over the county initially met at the Lincoln Theater in Marion that morning at 9:00 that morning. They were then bused to their individual locations. Our seven students were transported to the Town Hall and arrived at 10:00. At the Town Hall I did a brief presentation to them on the Town of Chilhowie specifically and local government generally. Mayor Heninger and staff members also gave presentations on their roles and department activities and responsibilities.

After those presentations, we took the students to the police, finance and recreation offices, then to the water treatment and storage facilities, then to the sewer treatment plant and fire department burn building, then to the Fire Department itself. Following those tours we took the students to the Riverfront for lunch and had them back at the school at 2:00

Sewer Treatment Plant Employee Achieving Class III Status

We had a sewer treatment plant employee reach an important milestone recently. Calvin Parris passed his test and became certified as a Class III Wastewater Operator. He was previously classified as a Trainee.

Obtaining this license and continued progress to higher classification is very important. Calvin took the place of a Class I Operator who left for the Town of Abingdon last year. When Calvin was hired we asked in October of 2017 he had no certification. We asked him to begin the process of getting his Class III. Class III is the first classification to be earned and certifications to Class III, II and I can be achieved with class I being the highest certification. Our sewer treatment plant is certified by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) as a Class II plant meaning we have to have at least one operator certified as Class II. Presently we have two employees certified as Class II – Chief Operator Bill Rutledge and Operator II Luke Lowe.

Our regional water treatment plant is rated a Class III but will go to a Class II when the upgrade is completed, I believe. The progression of Classifications goes much the same in water as wastewater, with one more class starting at Class IV the lowest and Class I the highest. We have no direct responsibility of operating the regional plant since the Washington County Service Authority (WCSA) performs that task. We pay for the monthly operation of the plant based on the percentage of gallons used by the Town (and WCSA). However two of our employees mentioned above also have certifications in water at a Class III level. Calvin will begin the process of getting his Class IV water license.

Obtaining either water or sewer classification progressions take six months of additional experience or present experience, study and passing the test administered by the Commonwealth's Department of Professional and Occupation Regulation. It is very important that our employees continue to move up in these classifications to the betterment of them and the Town. They are awarded with grade and step raises in the Town's classification system upon successfully passing the test.

Persons holding this classification are difficult to find. At my previous employer around 2010 we had three water treatment plant employees with Class I's leave in three months and had great difficulty finding staff, and achieving experience milestones for higher classifications. That plant was a Class II plant and with only one operator at the time having a Class I was potentially very problematic. Had a spring system gone out because of turbidity, the water treatment plant would have had to operate alone 24 hours a day, and with only one Class I, could have resulted in a boil water notice.

Renditions of Farmer's Market Building

You have in your agenda packet three conceptual renditions of the proposed farmer's market building. Also attached, and labeled as "supplemental", is seating arrangement that could be used for any of the options. Dennis Amos of H & P will present these renditions to Council at its meeting on November 8 and answer general questions. At a continued or special meeting following the November 8 meeting, if needed, Dennis will come back with an architect who will be able to answer more detailed questions.

VDOT Public Hearing on Route 107 / Lee Highway Intersection Improvements

You have in your agenda packet four pieces of information regarding the Route 11 and Route 107 intersection improvements. Those materials are the notice of the design Public hearing on December 4 from 4:00 to 6:00 at Chilhowie High School, including the project overview, the project description and map. I had previously emailed this information to the Town Council and copied the Planning Commission.

Respectfully Submitted,

John E. B. Clark, Jr.
Town Manager