



Mayor: Gary L. Heninger
Council: Donna S. Blevins
Billy L. Clear
Alan W. Counts
Emily B. Dungan
F. Brent Foster
Lewis Shortt

TOWN OF CHILHOWIE
325 East Lee Highway
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-Public Works: Jay Keen
Fire Chief: C. David Haynes

Town Manger's Report to Mayor and Town Council
April 11, 2019

Presentation of Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) Report

You have in your agenda packet a report from the VFS on the operation of the Chilhowie Fire Department entitled "A Report of Findings and Recommendations". The study concentrated on five areas – namely organizational development, communication, training, budget and administration and delivery of Services. Policy Manager Mohamed G. Abbmain and Board members may be in attendance.

As you many remember this process began at an E-911 meeting early in 2018. Chief David Haynes brought it up proposing that it be done on a county wide basis. No other locality seemed that interested so we recommended to Council, which was approved that we have the study done on our own. This in spite of the fact that the Chilhowie Fire Department has the best Insurance Services Organization (ISO) rating of a 3 in the county, and the second best west of Salem in the Commonwealth (the Department also ranks in the top 90% in the state and 95% in the country with this ranking).

This process started on October 25 with the Staff and Board members of the VFSB conducting interviews with various fire agencies, emergency services agencies and stakeholders in Smyth County. An advertised public information meeting was then held that night to receive more information involving the Town Council

Mt. Roger Planning District Commission (PDC) Presentation of Hazardous Mitigation Plan

You have in your agenda packet the Smyth County portion of the Hazardous Mitigation Plan prepared by the PDC. There is also a resolution that the Council will asked to be adopted. Either Executive Director Aaron Smith, or primary Planner James Dillion of the PDC will be at the meeting to discuss the plan.

I had sent Council electronically the entire 135 page plan that cover five counties and two cities. I think it's very interesting reading. I have copied only the Smyth County portion for the agenda. This plan has to be updated every five years, I believe. The PDC does this plan on behalf / behest of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Virginia Department of Emergency

Management. By adopting this plan the Town and localities in the PDC would be eligible for disaster funding.

2019 – 20 Budget Preparation

Treasurer Marlene Henderson and I have been working on the 2019-20 Budget Proposal for several weeks. Department heads submitted their requests the first of March. Following our completion of the draft budget proposals we will send out the draft, with a detailed cover letter, and all supporting materials and requests. We would then like to set up a meeting with the full Council at a Continued Meeting, most likely on April 25. We will talk further on the process and the date at the April 11 meeting.

Pre – Bid on Farmer’s Market

On March 26 we had a prebid on the Farmer’s Market Project. The meeting was attended by me and several staff members, Angela Wolfe of Mt. Rogers PDC and was put on by Project Engineer Dennis Amos and consulting architect Sandra Graham. About six contractors attended the non - mandatory conference. I put in the agenda packet both the Attendee list and conference agenda.

Several items were brought up during the conference including who was responsible for what. I believe all those items were successfully addressed. A 90 day substantial completion time was addressed. One contractor expressed concern that the 90 period perhaps could not be met because of delays in receiving the needed material, especially brick. Dennis and I comments that that would be an allowable reason for a delay and would be credited.

As you know the Town is doing the grading and will leave the site ready for construction, in addition to getting the Erosion and Sedimentation Permit and doing that necessary work. That will leave about \$29,000 slated in the budget to go against the building. Other items in the construction budget, most notably bathroom fixture installation and stone will be done by the Town and that money can be used against the building. Three deducts are included for the bathroom – none, one and two.

The bids will come in on 2:00 on April 18. We will most likely having a Continued Meeting that night to discuss the Saltville area Emergency Medical Services (EMS) situation so Council could evaluate the bids that night, and not wait until the regular meeting on May 9. Another option would be to discuss the bids at the April 25 meeting, in order to give the engineer more time to run the numbers.

Pre – Bid on Downtown Revitalization Façade Bids

We had another prebid meeting on the Downtown Façade Project on March 26 after the prebid on the Farmer’s Market. The non-mandatory meeting was attended by me and building Official Randy Sturgill, Angela Wolfe, Dennis Amos and Sandra Graham. I was very pleased that we had three contractors attending. You have sign up list in your agenda.

As you recall we have bid this project out twice in early and mid-2018 and received no bids. As a result we changed the process. The new process formulated by Angela Wolfe included all buildings on the north side of Main Street as Phase 1. Advertisements for interested contractors were put in the paper and solicited for pre-qualification. The \$100,000 bonding requirement previously required was eliminated and the only requirement was to have liability insurance.

Following the prebid meeting we toured the Downtown Project area with the three contractors. Questions were asked about the scope of work which the architect Sandra Gram addressed. Other administrative requirements were discussed and addressed by Angela Wolfe. She emphasized that any problems the contractor had with wage rate requirements, etc. that she would gladly assist. Bids are due on the project at 3:00 on April 18. Hopefully we will receive bids and they will be within the project budget.

Possible Proposals on Saltville Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

You have in your agenda packet a March 22 letter from County Administrator Michael Carter requesting the Town providing primary EMS services in the Saltville area district. It is my understanding the County will be evaluating proposals from the Town (if approved by Council), proposals solicited from other providers, and the existing service provided by the Saltville squad, if they continue to be viable. I don't think that it's an understatement that the enormity of this situation and long term implications to the Town cannot be underestimated.

As you all know this is a huge issue for the Town and area and has been developing for several months. As I reported at last month's Council meeting, I attended a meeting of the Board of Supervisors on March 13, along with Town EMS staff, and was informed that the Saltville's squad closing was a matter of days. When asked if Chilhowie could take over I stated that I had no authority to make that call. On March 19 I asked for a meeting to clarify and refine the situation with EMS Chief David Haynes and staff, County Administrator Michael Carter, Emergency Services Director Charlie Harrington and Saltville Town Manager Brian Martin.

At that meeting I again stated I had no authority to commit to anything but would take a request to Council. I further stated that with all the innuendo and reports going on about the Saltville situation I needed a formal request from the County and / or Town of Saltville based on criteria provided by David Haynes – namely operating another ambulance from Chilhowie, operating an advanced life support unit from Saltville housed in the Saltville Fire Department (and then supported by an ambulance from Chilhowie) and an ambulance housed in Saltville. Michael's letter reflects and addresses those criteria. David Haynes and staff have worked up numbers for those three options and they have been reviewed by Marlene Henderson and I. These proposal will most likely not be included in the agenda packet going out Monday, but our goal will be to have them provided on to you on April 9.

I have repeatedly made it clear to the Board, county staff and our EMS staff that we cannot recommend to Council that we provide those additional services as first responder in the Saltville area unless revenues at least meet expenditures, and the Town provides these services without a loss. I believe everyone understands that.

Additionally, if the process and Town Council approval does lead to the Town taking primary coverage in the Saltville service district, Attorney Paul Cassell has advised that we enter into an intergovernmental agreement between the Town, County and perhaps Town of Saltville. I will strongly recommend to Paul that this be done on a calendar year or fiscal year basis to insure adequate support from the County and Town of Saltville. I also think that several other items need to go into the agreement, including complaint procedures.

Even though these proposals will be presented to Council on April 11, I see no way that all this information can be understood and disseminated during a regular meeting with all other

accompanying business. Therefore I will propose that Council continues its meeting to April 18 to discuss this enormously important matter. Additionally, if Council decides to move forward with proposal(s), and the County accepts the Town's proposal from the two other options, I see absolutely no way that the Town could be able to provide long term services to the Saltville area until at least July 1, 2019 due to staffing, materials and equipment needs.

Respectfully Submitted,

John E. B. Clark, Jr.

Town Manager