



Mayor: Gary L. Heninger
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TOWN OF CHILHOWIE

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Town Manager: John E. B. Clark, Jr.
Clerk/Treasurer: Marlene L. Henderson
Police Chief: Andrew K. Moss
Director-Public Works: Jay Keen
Fire Chief: C. David Haynes
Building Official: Randy Sturgill
Director-Recreation/Special Events: Ron Cahill
Legal: Cassel & Crewe. P.C.

Town Manager's Report to Mayor and Town Council

May 13, 2021

Report of Phase Façade II of Downtown Revitalization Project

Work is progressing well on the Phase II facades project. The Berry's Building is currently being painted and it's my understanding three sides of the building will be done. Extensive brick pointing is being done on the old Curves building on the south side. On the north side painting is being done on all window seals including the old Town House Restaurant. The three windows at the Lowe's Building are being restored. Raised lettering saying "Antiques" has been received and will be put over the door front soon. All the above activities are being paid for by the grant and the owners matching funds.

It is my understanding, even though not part of the project, the owner/ renter of the Riverfront Restaurant is planning to restore and repaint the old "Vance Hardware Company" sign.

Regarding the Lowe Building an issue came up regarding the arch at the top of the building. You have in your agenda packet pictures of the arch, and of it being removed. The contractor was tasked to repoint the bricks in the original plans and replace the concrete padding over it. Upon going up on the lift and inspecting the arch it was found too deteriorated to repoint and was a danger to fall off and onto the sidewalk and street. The contractor then gave two prices of \$7,000 and \$11,000 to replace the brick. This would have been a change order and there is no money in the grant for contingency, it having all been obligated. Building Official Randy Sturgill, Project Engineer Dennis Amos and I thought that price was not practical considering the brick was to be repointed anyway and the arch pad replaced. We called representatives of Walberg Construction about this on April 29 and were able to convince them of our point. After the Lowes agreed they took about eight courses of brick off making up the arch and removed the pad at no extra cost.

Walberg Construction did not submit their first pay request to be processed by the engineer and Mt. Rogers PDC in time for the April Council meeting. Walberg will either combine two pay requests into one or submit pay requests 1 and 2 to the May 13 Council meeting.

Notice of Retirement of from Mr. Ron Cahill Recreation / Special Events Coordinator June 30

You have in your agenda packet a notice of retirement from Ron Cahill effective the end of next month in June. Ron has been with us since August 27, 2018. I appreciate his service during this time and he will be missed.

I am advertising for a person to fill this position. You have that advertisement and job description in your packet. Application are due 4:00 on June 1. The position is for a maximum of 32 hour per week and involves being market manager of the farmers market, coordinating football, girls basketball, boys basketball and cheerleading. There are four paid directors in each of these sports that answer and coordinate with this position. Additionally, I have asked for this position to be more active in social media and public relations on behalf of the Town.

My goal is to get someone on board by the middle / end of June so they can train and be oriented with Ron on his duties. With the COVID situation mitigating now activities will be increasing substantially for this position. I will ask members of the Wellness and Park Committee to assist in the selection.

Notice of Exorbitant Increase of Republic Services for Solid Waste Pickup

I had scanned you information regarding Republic's massive stated increase on garbage rates. As I stated the increase is from \$11.76 to \$17.64, or a difference of \$5.88 per can or a 50% increase. Two cans went from \$15.93 to \$7.52, or a difference of \$7.52 per month or 47.2%. We have budgeted \$146,268, anticipating a two (2%) increase based on the contract's Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) Increase. This increase has been in the three (3%) percent range the last couple of years. This stated increase will raise our expenses around \$71,000 if implemented.

We are attempting to set up a meeting with Republic as soon as possible. We never could find a copy of the current contract, although we know we sent it to a lady with the company who retired several years ago. We had copies of the 2015 contract which had an allowance of a COLA based on a federal index.

As our meeting with Republic and conversation ensue, we will have more information. There seems to be some flexibility on the beginning of this increase. At the regular May meeting on May 13, I may ask for a Continue Meeting with the full Council to deal with this issue.

Public Hearing on Proposed 2021-22 Budget

You have in your agenda packet an advertisement on the 2021-22 proposed budget in the amount of \$5,161,841. As you know Council reviewed the budget for over two hours on April 22 and authorized the budget to be sent to public hearing. Without going into too much detail the budget has a 5.0% increase in inside corporate limits water and sewer, no increase on outside corporate limits sewer and a 2.5% increase in outside corporate limits water. These increases are slated to be effective October 1, 2021.

The only additional documentation in your packet, other than the newspaper advertisement, is a sheet showing the minor changes from the April 22 Continued meeting. If you would like to bring your budget presented at that meeting please do so.

Following the public hearing Council has to wait at least seven days until the budget is adopted. That would allow the budget to be adopted at the June 10 regular Council meeting.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Street Sweeping

As you may recall we had a meeting earlier this year with VDOT personnel, comprising the District Engineer and Assistant District Engineer, and we went over several issues with them on street maintenance. These issues included street paving, pothole repairs and street sweeping. When we had our meeting we pointed out that the last time the streets were swept was in September of 2019, when we called the Town of Marion in to do it before the Apple Festival. They said they would be in contact with us after April 15.

As they indicated they got in touch with us the middle of April. On April 28 and April 29 a contracted street sweeper, along with a following caution vehicle, did street sweeping on the main arteries in Town. These included East and West Main Streets, East and West Lee highway, Old Stage Road and Chilhowie Street. We think they did a very good job. Afterwards I contacted the VDOT folks, including District Administrator Donnie necessary, and thanked them.

Fire Hydrant Project Fund and Implementation Schedule

At the budget workshop held at a Continued Meeting of Council on April 22, a question came up on the using that money to fund the Lyons Gap Fire Protection / Water Project. Bids on that project are due on May 12. At that meeting I asked Fire / EMS Chief David Haynes to prepare a report for Council giving an update on the program.

The program was instituted in fiscal year 2019-20 and involves each connection paying \$1 per month to cover this service. We estimate that funding generates about \$26,520 per year from 2,210 connections. This fiscal year we are using that money (plus Mt. Rogers PDC money) on about 1100 feet of water line and two hydrants on the Lyons Gap Project.

In the packet Chief Haynes provided he has a "Frequently Asked Questions" section and a 20 year plan on expending those funds. For 2021-22 the plan proposes using that money for eleven hydrants on the system, of which seven are inside the corporate limits and four outside. Four are projected to be replacement hydrants and seven new hydrants. Chief Haynes will brief you on the entire report.

Respectfully Submitted,

John E. B. Clark, Jr.
Town Manager