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TOWN OF CHILHOWIE

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Police Chief: Andrew K. Moss
Director-Public Works: Jay Keen
Fire Chief: C. David Haynes
Building Official: Randy Sturgill
Director-Recreation/Special Events: Jeff Smarr
Legal: Cassell & Crewe, P.C.

Town Manager's Report to Mayor and Town Council August 12, 2021

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Solid Waste Contract

You have in your agenda packet an RFP for the Town's Solid Waste Pickup beginning on January 1, 2022. As you can see it was advertised on July 24 in both the Smyth County News and Bristol Herald Courier. It has also been posted on the Town's website. I also mailed the RFP, and the supporting Statement of Qualification (SOQ) the contractor has to submit for consideration, to eleven companies / individuals. We got those company names on-line or through word-of-mouth.

As you recall Republic, our present carrier, put in a substantial increase in the price in mid-June about the time the budget was formulated and about to be adopted. The increase would have gone into effect on July 1 after the old three year contract ended June 30. The increase was in the tens of thousands of dollars. Previous increases were in the five percent (5%) range based in a transportation cost of living index. We met with Republic on May 14 to discuss the situation. To Republic's credit they extended the current contract to December 31, 2021, which gave us time to get other proposals. Republic may also submit a proposal and were emailed the RFP.

We asked for ten copies of the SOQs that Council and Staff will use to evaluate the company. There are eleven criteria that I asked to be submitted, as you can see by the attached SOQ. The deadline for submission is August 19 at 4:00.

I have had a good bit of feedback from several companies on submitting a proposal and feel like there will be legitimate interest from solid qualified companies. My goal is to submit all the RFPs to the Public Works Committee in late August or early September and pick selected companies, or all, for interviews. Following the interviews with the committee and staff. I want to have a recommendation to Council by no later than the October 14 meeting on the recommended company and see Council approval. This

should give us plenty of time to execute a contract and do the necessary logistics before January 1, 2022.

Bids on Old High School (OHS) Roof

As we reported at the July meeting, we bid out the OHS roof in July and specked another flat membrane roof. We advertised in the Smyth County News on July 10 and July 17. The bids were due July 29, 2021. I had several calls on the project from Plan Rooms, and from several contractors as Building Official Randy Sturgill did. We received only one bid on the project from R.L. Williams. The bid was more than we anticipated and had budgeted in the 2021-2022 budget. We had budgeted the project this fiscal year and for 2022-2023.

R.L. Williams has been doing patching work on the old roof for some time. They advise that although material prices are very high they can reduce the quote several thousands of dollars by some modification of the specifications. He has also indicated that the materials for the project would probably not be available until this Fall and that also may allow prices to set out.

The Public Works Committee will be meeting on this issue on August 5 and will be making a report to the Town Council on August 12.

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Funding on Sewer Project

You have in your agenda packet a July 26 letter, and July 27 email, from Ms. Karen Doran that we have been tentatively approved for funding for the \$2,069,000 sewer project. As I understand the email and letter, a public comment period will be held by the State Water Control Board on August 20 and then the Board will meet at its September meeting to authorize funding for the project.

As you know we received a \$90,000 grant from DEQ and Mt. Rogers PDC to do a Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSES) that identifies area of infiltration and inflow (I&I) into the sewer system. The SSES only did part of the system in and around the Corporate Limits and not the section of sewer east and into Seven Mile Ford. We think we have significant problem in the Seven Mile Ford area but there was not enough money allocated to complete that portion.

There are still a lot of unknowns on this project, especially financial. Although DEQ program will provide 50% grant, I don't know what that ceiling is. If the total project is \$2,000,000, then even if the grant provides \$1,000,000, that still leaves \$1,000,000 to borrow, which is not an insignificant amount, of course. We also have the ability to scale the project back to a lesser amount, which would then allow for a reduction in the loan amount.

With all that said, on the other end of the equation, the more the scope of the project is reduced the less impact on I&I reduction into the system. And, I&I drives up our Operation and Maintenance (O&M) costs through treating ground water and surface water, as opposed to raw sewage. As an example

when rainfall was high the first of this year, our monthly electric bill at the plant was around \$4,700. Compare that to the last two or three months when it has been dry our bill is around \$3,700 a month. I&I affects many other workings of the plant also and prematurely ages the equipment.

As soon as I hear more details on the project, I will of course keep you informed. Council can then decide on what path they want the Town to follow.

American Rescue Plan Act Funding to Staff For Recommendations to Council

As you can see in your agenda package I presented a package to the Department Heads and asked them to make recommendations in Town development / public service areas, as a first step in making a recommendation to Town Council on how the ARPA money is to be spent. The sections are building and grounds, esthetics/ beautification, business development, Fire/EMS, personnel / essential workers, streets, recreation, sewer, water and other. Also included in the packet is an article in the June, 2021 Virginia Municipal League Magazine that gives a good overview of the ARPA and some timelines and deadlines. The Town will get \$1,765,854, half this year and the other half in 2022. As I understand it the money has to be spent by December 31, 2024.

My plan is to get input from the department heads in these categories, do some type of average or median spending amount, and then present it to Council at a Special meeting, most likely early Fall. Then after Council reviews the recommendation and gives their input and changes, we put the numbers in one document and hold a Public Hearing to receive public input. That being done the document will be finalized, subject to revisions in the future.

Concerts at the Town Park

Jeff Smarr, our new Recreation / Special Event Coordinator, has hit the ground running, since his hire on June 14. He has become familiar with the football, basketball and cheer leading programs, been oriented on Facebook and social media aspects responsibilities of the job, worked and became familiar with running the Farmer's Market, became familiar with the Recreation Park and his offerings, completed the move into his office and all those logistics, etc., and many other things in short order. I am very impressed with Jeff's drive and enthusiasm to say the least.

Something else Jeff has been working on is a schedule of activities, including music related, at the Town Park. Park and Recreation Committee members and I have talked about this with Jeff and he agrees with the great opportunity the Town has to put things like this on, considering its venues including the Will Walker Farmer's Market and Park Stage. To that end Jeff has booked the band Phantom to go to the Park on August 21. You have a brochure of this event in your agenda packet. He has named Chilhowie's beginning music venue "On Stage". We are advertising the event with the Chamber of Commerce and on social media.

Jeff is also looking to book a band on Apple Festival weekend, on September 25, at the Town Stage. We are looking to do an event at least once a month at the park, during warm weather, and perhaps more once Jeff gets more settled in. This type of events the Town needed to do, and perhaps solicit sponsors.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day(s)

You have in your agenda packet a flyer outlining household hazardous waste collection. As you recall Council approved its allotment of \$3,000, with Saltville putting up \$3,000, Marion \$6,500 and Smyth County \$20,000. There will be two collections. One will be at the Landfill on August 14 and 9:00 to 2:00. The second will be in Marion sometime in September at a location said to be Marion Intermediate School. The date for that pickup has not been set, but I understand the location is pretty solid.

The money the four entities have allocated will go towards both pickups. That money will go to a certified environmental solid waste carrier who be at the two sites. That carrier will collect and deliver the waste to another landfill. You can see what items are accepted in the flyer under “ Acceptable Items” and what are not under “Items that will not be accepted”.

We will put this information on our social media sites and on Nixle in the coming days to attempt to let people know about the event.

Respectfully Submitted,

John E.B. Clark, Jr.
Town Manager