



Mayor: Gary L. Heninger
Council: Donna S. Blevins
Billy L. Clear
Brent Foster
Lewis Shortt
Julie Sturgill
P.J. Wolfe

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: 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 December 9, 2021

East Lee Highway Streetscape Tree Planting

I had a meeting with Aaron Lundy, our contractor on the streetscape tree planting project, in the office on November 24, and a phone conversation that same day with Nathaniel Brown, our streetscape architect. As approved by Council the revised project will involve eight foot trees consisting of 10 redbuds, 28 flowering dogwoods, 54 winter king hawthorns; 29 hydrangea shrubs; and 210 Shenandoah switch grasses.

Aaron will begin the plantings the week of December 13 and has supplied his certificate of insurance. He will be done by January 13, weather permitting. As discussed in Council, members talked about any cost savings for bagged compared to bulk mulch. We presented that question to Aaron and he said it would be the same cost either way. The trees and plants will have a one year guarantee. Nathan recommended that the grasses not be planted until around May 1 in order to give them a good start after the danger of frosts has passed. We will pay for the trees and labor after they are satisfactorily completed and pay for the grasses after plantings this Spring. You have a copy of the contract in your agenda packet.

Aaron will mark off the areas where the planting will occur, and Nathan will check those locations against the plans. Aaron will work with Works Director Jay Keen in the markings and Aaron will call Miss Utility for all necessary clearances.

Solid Waste Pickup Logistics and Schedules

You have in your agenda packet a December 3, 2021 letter signed by Mayor Gary Heninger and I that was sent the week of December 6 to all Chilhowie residents and customers in the County detailing the transition from Republic Services to GFL Environmental. The letter also gave the holiday schedule that Republic will utilize in December. The staff and I have been working diligently the past several weeks on making this transition as seamless as possible and thought mailing this letter to all customers would be very helpful in this regard.

As you can see in the letter, GFL will begin to distribute their cans to addresses beginning December 15. They will pick up the entire area on one day. Their first pickup will be on January 5. Cans have to be out the Tuesday night before or by 5:00 that morning.

Republic Services will begin picking their cans up the week of January 3, 2022. Their holiday schedule for Christmas will be changed to a Monday and Tuesday pickup, from the traditional Tuesday and Wednesday pickup, as will the New Year's Week of January 27.

As you know there is always confusion when Republic changes their schedule. We make notification by Nixle and put changes on our Facebook page, but word is missed by many. In the letter we again urged citizens to sign up for Nixle for schedule changes and various emergency alerts. We also gave them instructions on how to sign up or offered for them to call the Town Hall and our staff would assist.

Additionally in the letter, we stated that GFL is working with us to create a data base of phone numbers that we will provide them if citizens call their information in to us. Once compiled a robot call will be made to those on the list for garbage schedule changes. This call will be for only garbage schedule changes and not emergency calls.

Refinancing Package through Davenport and Company and Public Hearing

You have in your agenda package several items regarding the proposed refinancing of \$4,000,000 existing and new debt. That refunding includes \$2,200,000 for two new fire trucks and approximately \$1,800,00 to refinance the 2009 United States Department of Agriculture (Rural Development Loan).

In conjunction with that refinancing, Davenport advised that we were required to do a public hearing for the new monies to be borrowed. You have in your agenda package a copy of that Public Hearing Notice. The ad was published in the Smyth County News, a paper of General Circulation, on November 24 and December 1. These dates and other requirements meet state law. Following the Public Hearing a resolution will be presented to Council to authorize both the new debt and old debt.

In your agenda is also an engagement letter with Davenport for the refinancing project. Also included in the packet is the Request for Proposal (RFP) dated November 15, 2021 that gives all necessary details of the proposal and contacts for questions. The proposals are due in Richmond on 11:00 on Thursday, December 2, 2021. Also attached in your agenda packet is a list of banks that Davenport sent the proposal to directly. The list includes 103 banks, including our three local banks. Additionally, I directly emailed our three local banks, the Bank of Marion, New Peoples and Truist (formerly BB&T) just in case the proposal got to some corporate office and was not acted upon in a timely manner.

Mr. R.T. Taylor and perhaps, Mr. David Rose, of Davenport will be at the meeting to walk Council and staff through the process. Clerk Treasure Marlene Henderson, Attorney Paul Cassell and I have been in close contact with them through this stage of the process.

Police Applications

You have in your agenda packet a copy of an advertisement developed by Chief Andrew Moss for our vacant police officer position. This is a result of Police Officer II Hunter Reedy taking a job with the Smyth County Sherriff's Department. The advertisement was run in the Smyth County News on December 1 and 8. The deadline for application is December 10.

At this writing we have four applications. Because of Council's action on the Staff Retention Plan that gave "Line" officers a 5% pay increase effective in January, 2022, we have a better chance of hiring a Certified officer, or at the least a good Uncertified candidate. This is because the existing Police Officer I and II pay was raised above the advertised \$31,845 to \$32,781 range.

Bids on Chlorine Contact Tank at the Mill Creek Regional Water Treatment Plant (WTP)

As we have discussed earlier, the bids were due at the chlorine contact tank at the WTP on December 2 at 2:00. The Town and Washington County Service Authority (WCSA) had \$653,510 left over from the grant and loan project. The cost estimate I saw for the project was \$936,300 But, we thought the bid would be higher since that estimate was over a year old, plus it was not produced in the recent supply and inflationary environment.

I attended the bid opening and recorded the results. As you can see the low bid appeared to be Mid Atlantic Storage at \$1,282,580. That is \$346,280 over the estimate, which is a significant amount, of course. The good news is the WCSA was awarded a \$90,000 grant from Mt. Rogers PDC which will cut into the overage. Also, a representative of Mid Atlantic Storage cited some changes in the scope of the work that would result in cost savings. What those cost savings could be and how much it will impact the overage is unknown at the writing. I will keep Council apprised of this situation as it develops.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!!!

Respectfully Submitted,

John E. B. Clark, Jr.
Town Manager