



Minutes of Council Meeting
Work Session
Buchanan, VA

August 5, 2021

Present: Vice-Mayor James Manspile
Councilman Chris Petty
Councilman Marlon Rickman
Councilman Chris Witt

Vice Mayor James Manspile opened the August 5, 2021 Council work session at 7:01 p.m. Vice Mayor Manspile requested Town Manager Susan McCulloch take roll call to establish a Quorum. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that Mayor Craig Bryant was absent and Vice Mayor Manspile would be running the meeting with a quorum. He stated that Council is still adhering to social distancing protocols.

First on the Agenda was the discussion of Mr. Willie Hampton and 201 Fourth Street. Town Manager Susan McCulloch stated that when Mr. Hampton came to the last Council Meeting. He requested the Town waive the water connection fee for 201 Fourth Street. There are two houses on Fourth Street that are owned by Mr. Hampton and his son Mr. Julian Hampton. There was a lien on Mr. Julian Hampton's property for unpaid water bill that has been paid off 100%. Mr. Willie Hampton's attorney wrote the Town a letter. The Town in turn sent a letter requesting proof that a water meter was on the property in the past and to show where the meter was located, and that the balance of Mr. Julian Hampton's lien be paid. The reason the Town requested the lien be paid was the option of using the existing meter to Mr. Julian Hampton's property to hook up water to Mr. Willie Hampton's property. The Town map and Google Earth both show the properties are separate entities. Mr. Hampton and his children Ms. McCadden and Mr. Julian Hampton provided documentation showing water had been previously hooked up at the house. Town Treasurer Tina Kingery made a statement that the former Mayor authorized that some meters not be replaced in order to save money to purchase a backhoe and gator. Since the house was vacant at the time the meters were being replaced, it is possible that this is one of the locations that the meter was not replaced. Mr. Hampton submitted his plat and it is a separate parcel. There is a residential lease showing that the property would not be leased without water and sewer on the property. Then there were checks showing the property had been rented in 2004, showing there was water and sewage on the property. The plat shows the properties are separate entities. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the proof Mr. Hampton shows is 8 to 10 years prior to the water system being updated. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that Mr. Julian Hampton stated that he had a

conversation with then Town Clerk Amanda Aaron that the meter was not replaced. Mr. Julian Hampton did not follow up the issue at that time. Vice Mayor Manspile also stated that until the Town requested proof that there were 2 separate properties, the Town was unaware that there are 2 separate properties until the Hampton's provided proof. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that Town Treasurer Tina Kingery was correct. There are properties in Town that have been vacant for years that do not have meter sets put in for them. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he had gone to the Town supplier, Core and Main, the updated quote for supplies is \$663.55, not including labor. That includes the band and cork stop (tap) that goes on the pipe, the roll of plastic that goes to the meter, 7- inch setter, the meter box, cover and the meter. There will have to be asphalt cut out at the end of the main pipe to attach the meter. Additional Expenses to be incurred are: a permit from VDOT to cut the road open, and asphalt replacement costs. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that Mr. Julian Hampton should have followed up with a member of Town Council instead of speaking to a Town employee when he realized the meter was not replaced. Councilmember Petty stated that with proof of the meter not being replaced, there is the possibility of a lawsuit. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the work can be done in half a day. This situation is different from a previous situation with Ms. Tucker. The situation with Ms. Tucker, the Town had nothing there from the beginning. The situation with Mr. Hampton, the Town's previous administration removed the meter without replacing it. Councilmember Rickman asked if anyone is living in Mr. Hampton's house. Vice Mayor Manspile stated the house is vacant right now. Councilmember Petty stated that is the issue. Mr. Hampton wants to rent the property, but there is no water on the property. Councilmember Witt asked if GIS recognizes 201 Fourth Street as a separate plot. Town Manager McCulloch stated the property has its own number and lot on the GIS. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he has issue with Mr. Hampton's attorney Mr. Spiegle's statement in the letter which states Mr. Hampton has paid real estate taxes on the property since his ownership, based upon these circumstances, this is a formal request to reinstall the meter base since it was removed without his knowledge or permission. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that paying real estate taxes has nothing to do with water meters. There are several properties that Vice Mayor Manspile owns that do not have water meters on them that the taxes are paid. Councilmember Witt states that the letter says the water meter was removed without Mr. Hampton's knowledge, yet he spoke to then Town Clerk Amanda Aaron. Councilmember Witt stated that even though the previous administration had decided not to put a meter at the property because it was vacant, if it were his property, he would be in the Town office every week, not just once. He would irritate the paint off the walls until the meter was put back on his property because the Town would not devalue his property. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the Town should put the water meter back in because there are going to be other backlashes like this that the Town will have to take care of from previous administrations. For example, the former administration put in a meter tap and meter in at a property that was not hooked to Town water. Vice Mayor Manspile asked Town Manager Susan McCulloch if this issue had to go back to Council or if it could be resolved in the Work Session. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Town has 30 days from the Council Meeting on July 12, 2021 to respond to the request. Councilmember Chris Witt made a motion to amend the Agenda to go into closed session to discuss legal matters. Councilmember Chris Petty seconded the motion. Vice Mayor Manspile asked for a vote. The motion carried with a vote of 4 – 0. Vice Mayor Manspile made a motion to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing matters exempt to the conditions of the Freedom of Information act under section 2.2 – 3711 pertinent to Town business that may compromise privacy of individuals and legal matters. Councilmember Witt gave a second. Vice Mayor Manspile asked for a vote. The motion carried with a vote of 4 – 0.

Work Session went into closed session at 7:26 pm.

Vice Mayor Manspile stated that only matters that are lawfully exempted from the Freedom of information act that were identified before going into closed session were discussed in the Closed Session. Vice Mayor Manspile made a motion to certify that statement is correct with a roll call vote with a second from Councilmember Chris Petty. Councilmember Rickman, Councilmember Petty, Councilmember Witt, and Vice Mayor Manspile voted yes. The motion carried 4 – 0. Councilmember Witt made a motion to go back into regular Work Session with a second from Vice Mayor Manspile. The motion was carried with a vote of 4 – 0.

Work Session went back to open session at 7: 46 pm.

Vice Mayor Manspile stated that result of the close session is that Town Manager Susan McCulloch will contact Mr. Willie Hampton to discuss terms with them in order to resolve the issue at Town Council Meeting on August 9, 2021.

Next on the Agenda was open discussion for each Councilmember. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that if any Councilmember had something they want to discuss, speak up about it in open forum. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he has gotten complaints from citizens about the way Council operates. The work session is used to work things out, but there is no public comment, the Council Meeting on Monday night has a resolution, but the citizen only sees the face of the resolution. The only way a citizen can investigate is to ask for minutes. Sometimes there is a lag in getting the minutes typed up and having them ready for the public. Citizens do not know when they should sign up to speak for matters pertaining to them. That is why we do not have an audience for Council Meetings anymore. Citizens feel that the Town is hiding something. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that all the Council members all are busy, some Councilmembers are on other committees and have several meetings per month. If there is a majority, we can discuss with Mayor Craig Bryant the possibility of taking care of most of the issues during Council Meetings instead of Work Sessions. Councilmember Witt stated that there are several work sessions a year that can be handled during Council meetings, and there are times when a work session is needed, especially at budget, Councilmember Witt stated that the only times citizens attend is when there is drama, just like in any town. Councilmember Petty stated that if any citizen is interested in what the Town is doing, they will show up regardless of what is going on, and there are people who are going to complain no matter what you do anyway. Councilmember Petty stated that there is a citizen that was complaining that when they rent a boat at Twin Rivers, they should receive trash bags to put trash in when they are floating the river because the river is full of trash. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that since Recreation has picked up on the river the trash has quadrupled. People are sinking their trash in the river. Councilmember Witt stated that Twin River gives their renters dry bags to put everything in, there is no reason to leave trash. The traffic on the river is more from personal craft users than renters from Twin River Outfitters. Councilmember Witt asked if this area was just featured in a magazine. Town Manager The area has been voted most beautiful river in Virginia with the Swinging Bridge featured in the article. Councilmember Witt stated that the business is capitalizing on the natural resources in the area. He sees the Town's economic growth shifting to capitalize on the natural resources around the Town. Whether it is the river, the Appalachian Trail, or the creeks in Arcadia, the bikers, fishermen, hikers, canoers and kayakers, that is where the Town will see the most economic growth. Councilmember Witt stated that to blame one business has caused all the trash is absurd. He stated that the business does canoe and kayak trips at the beginning and end of their season to pick up

trash and clean up. They also rent at a reduced cost to the Boy Scouts and the Boy Scouts pick up trash. Councilmember Witt stated that citizens have complained since the company came in that they cannot fish the river anymore that it is polluted, but it is great because it is bringing people into the town. The Town is benefitting from tax revenue from people being drawn to the town because of this business. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that according to figures put together a year and a half ago, the Town only receives 1% of 1 cent on the dollar. He stated that as a citizen he feels what the Town makes from their business licenses does not make the tourism business profitable for the Town. Councilmember Witt stated that his business gets minimal traffic from the river. The Fountain, James River Drip, and Stop In Deli, potentially four restaurant/deli type businesses that the Town receives business license taxes, meals taxes, or sales taxes, the Town is getting a percentage of each of those sales and it is adding up. These tourists are buying gas, looking for a place to stay, going to Family Dollar and Dollar General for supplies, if they stay in one of the Bed & Breakfasts, or an AirBNB, the Town receives occupancy taxes, if water usage goes over the minimum when tourists stay at these facilities the Town receives more money. Councilmember Witt Stated that the Town is receiving minimal moneys, but if the Town could add a thousand more minimums, that is economic growth, you will see more money. The Town needs to know what is marketable in our area, and knowing your customer base. If the Town is able to have businesses that focus on that instead of going through phases and oversaturating the market as has been going on in cycles for the last thirty years. Twin Rivers created something outside the "norm" and is cashing in on the natural resources available in Town. Now that COVID restrictions are being eased, there is a surge of people wanting to get outdoors and get a break from things. The number of cyclists that come through Town on the weekends is astonishing. We need more businesses that would entice them to stop. Seeing a resurgence of hikers, there is a bunk room at the Anchorage House that is for hikers to rent at a reduced rate. The hiker's main complaint is that the Town does not have a presence on the apps that they are using, primarily guthook. Troutville has listings for restaurants, hotels, hostels, campsites, bunk rooms. Buchanan has nothing. Anchorage House is in the process of being put on the Guthook app. Even on the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the only thing listed in the Hiker Bible near Town is Wattstull Inn, Anchorage House now, the Witt Stop, and Twin Rivers Outfitters. Councilmember Witt stated that people do not understand that the Town only receives 1 % of \$.01 per dollar, but ignorance is not omission. No one is stopping the citizens from coming to the work sessions, or Council Meetings. The citizens have twice the opportunity by having the work sessions. Councilmember Witt stated that he felt he could speak more candidly in the work sessions than in the Council Meetings. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he would like to see what the total revenue from businesses. He doesn't think the Town is receiving enough of a percentage of revenue from tourism to offset the expenses such as picking up trash, mowing the Town Park, and use and upkeep of the facilities. He stated that he may be wrong, but he doesn't think the Town is making that much money. Councilmember Rickman stated that everything that has been done this year, the Carnival, Reggae by the River, and the Botetourt County Fair have all done very well this year. He also stated that people love to come to the car shows. People love to come to those and the Town needs to start doing them again. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he has no problem with the car show, but it needs to be done on Lowe Street instead of Main Street. He stated that he thinks the event schedule needs to be looked at again. Everything was removed last year because of Covid. We have a revised schedule this year. With the safety issues with VDOT and Main Street, we need to make the Town Park our all-inclusive event area the Town would be better off. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that if there were an alternate detour route for I-81 it would be different. Next year, in 2022, there are going to be issues because of the bridge work that is going to be

done. He stated that Council talked about doing a Cruise In on Lowe Street at the end of the year to see how much interest is generated. This year is a good year to evaluate how well all the events have done because with the Covid restrictions being lifted and more people attending events, if the event did not do well, it should probably be removed from the line-up. Councilmember Witt stated that businesses have to self-report. There may be some that are not reporting correctly, some cash businesses, there are gaps in the reporting and there is no audit. Councilmember Witt stated that his businesses have to do monthly reports of food sales, alcohol sales, occupancy taxes, all businesses have to do that. If someone pays in cash, it is up to the business owner to record it correctly and report it to the Town. The revenues could be more if there were a way to audit the businesses calculating the taxes. Councilmember Witt stated that the Planning Commission did a tour of the commercial district because that is what the Planning Committee is working on now to update ordinances and zoning codes. The tour was to take into consideration what they want for the future, what is being done now, and what was done in the past. Councilmember Witt asked if anyone knew where the commercial district actually was. He stated that the commercial district starts at the Bridge and ends at the Presbyterian and Episcopal Church. For the next couple of blocks, the houses to the left and right are zoned as offices. People have been allowed to live there as residences, but it is zoned as offices. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that should have been cleared up long before he started on Council. Councilmember Witt stated that he was not saying that people couldn't live there, but if all of the buildings were offices, which is how it was 40 years ago, it would go to the Ramsey's house. Vice mayor Manspile stated that there are many home-operated businesses that have business licenses. Councilmember Witt stated that there are home-operated businesses operating in Town without business Licensed as well. The only way you can find them is to screen social media, or someone tells you about it. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that if you have a business, and file it with your taxes, the Town should get in the income tax part of it. The Town is pulling business licenses at the wrong time of year. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the business license should be collected between May 15 and June 15. It would stop it in your current budget cycle, but 90 % of the small businesses will have paid their taxes by then. Then the Town would be able to use a copy of their schedule from their business instead of the full tax forms. Vice mayor Manspile stated that some of the amounts listed on some of the business licenses that are recorded in good faith are inaccurate. If Town waited until taxes were done and required tax documentation, the business license tax would be more accurate. Councilmember Witt stated that the brick-and-mortar businesses do their business licenses at one point in the year so they stay on schedule with their accountants. Then have the home-operated businesses do their business licenses after tax season. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that businesses pay their taxes at different intervals during the year. Councilmember Witt stated that doing the business licenses at different times takes the pressure off of the Town Office as well by separating the brick-and-mortar businesses from the home-operated businesses. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that these types of issues are what Council needs to address because Town needs to update the way it deals with contractors and businesses. Town does not take into consideration the yearly cost increase to pay for services it receives from contractors. Town should consider adding a percentage increase in contracts each year in order to stay current with cost increases so that Town doesn't get hit with large increases when contracts need to renew such as the Sheriff's contract and the Waste Water contract. Councilmember Witt stated that the water/sewer bill should be increasing too, but it didn't for a long time. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that Town has been increasing the water/sewage bill for the last several years. Councilmember Petty stated that a lot of residents are older and have to decide if they can pay water/sewer because they are on a fixed income. Vice Mayor

Manspile stated that we try to do very modest increases, and most people understand that, but it is tough for some of the citizens that are on a very limited budget. Councilmember Witt stated that from a human aspect, you want to have sympathy, but this is business. The Town cannot do for one citizen and not for another. That is not a precedence the Town would want to set. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that when the citizens voted in the Council, it is tasked with managing and running the Town. Public government is not the type of entity that saves a lot of money up, but doesn't lose money either. The Town needs to do a little better than break even. Most of the citizen's understand that. The Town is a business regardless. Councilmember Witt stated that as far as the Cruise-Ins and car shows, when they were removed, the reason was they were costing the Town money. No business or anyone else could show that there was any increase in sales because of the Cruise-Ins other than the movie theater and the Fountain if they stayed open late. Another issue was the Council not receiving an event calendar 30 days prior. Councilmember Witt stated that the last time Council discussed the Cruise-Ins and Block Parties, Council wanted to shift these events to the Town Park to start implementing use of the Band Stand and Town owned property. Council discussed not doing these events during June and July because of overloading the volunteers with events. The Block Parties are to fill the void of special events. Councilmember Witt stated that he recommended having a food truck, or open the food stands for Cruise-Ins or Block Parties. He also suggested making the bandstand into an inflatable movie projector and making it a drive-in movie. Working in conjunction with the movie theater to do popcorn and concessions, do this once a month or once a quarter. Something on a regular basis. Councilmember Petty stated that this is what the guy at the Drip first talked about. Councilmember Witt stated that he has bought the projector. Citizens can put an app on your phone, and using Bluetooth, listen to the movie through your phone or vehicle speakers. Councilmember Witt stated that if it is not new, citizens tend to stop coming to events that happen more than once a year. The Carnival and County Fair are both yearly events. Every time you have a new event or something different, more people attend. Sell alcohol. Alcohol sells tickets. There are things that can be done. Listen to the citizens, come up with events, and think outside the box to change events. Council has never been opposed to events, it is just coming up with events and making them happen. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the Cruise-Ins were not making any money. He agreed that it needs to be moved to the Town Park. Something needs to change to cover the costs. Councilmember Witt stated that instead of coming to Council Meetings with the problem, come with the solution too. When the discussion was first started about removing certain events that were not creating revenue, the citizens still want to have the events. Councilmember Witt stated that not being able to have events due to COVID has allowed the Town budget to settle and get through the pandemic without going too far into the red. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that when the issue was first discussed in Council Meeting, the event schedule is supposed to be presented to Council 30 days prior, when the schedule was not given out, the meeting was so contentious, the Mayor sent an Email to Town Manager Jason Tyree expressing great displeasure at not having the event schedule available until that evening, that email is the reason then Town Manager Jason Tyree started looking for other employment. Councilmember Witt stated that the schedule was presented to the Council as information, but later was presented to the public during the Council Meeting. That was the problem. The information should not have been presented to the public. Councilmember Witt stated that he was unaware of any of the rest of Vice Mayor Manspile's comments about former Town Manager Jason Tyree's actions about the email. Vice Mayor Manspile asked if Councilmember Petty had anything he wished to discuss. Councilmember Witt stated that Work Session like this are the type of groundwork needed for Council to work on ongoing issues instead

of playing catch up on previous administrations and issues from the past. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that it would be nice to have a work session like this every quarter. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he and Town Manager Susan McCulloch are working through some issues in public works: some of the facilities and stuff there was no prior knowledge of, air leaks at the sewage treatment plant, thought there was a blower not working but the switch was not cut on, there was a power interruption this morning and the computer went down because it was not connected to the battery pack. Small glitches that are being addressed. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the only time he has had a problem was a couple weeks ago on a Saturday when there was a sewage backup around midnight. The call went to the sheriff's office. Vice mayor Manspile called maintenance supervisor Billy Eagle two or three times, and the other maintenance personnel at the number to reach him at anytime several times, none of the employees were reached. None of the public works employees answered the phone. Vice Mayor Manspile came out and took care of the sewage backup by himself. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the employees have been told they need to make an on-call schedule. The Town Manager and Vice Mayor Manspile will be working on the schedule. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that public works has a new truck, other tools and stuff are needed, but they are doing good work during the day, but we have an after-hour emergency number for a reason. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the answering service was not transferring the call to the Sheriff's Office correctly. He stated that working with the new contractor for the water and waste water, they have found a lot of things the previous contractor was not doing. The Chlorine level has been stabilized, and a truck coming Monday. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that Council will have to make an Ordinance about disposal into the Town sewer system. There is somewhere language about if Town catches you, you can be fined. There are two problems right now. First problem is a lot of rags on the North side of the river. Councilmember Witt asked if by rags Vice Mayor Manspile meant baby wipes or flushable wipes. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that it isn't baby wipes, it is sanitation wipes, or flushable wipes, and actual cloth rags. Former Town Manager Jason Tyree sent out letters when this problem was going on at Southview, and had narrowed it down to four houses. Vice Mayor Manspile will work with Town Manager McCulloch to see if there is any language there to put a stop to it if the citizens doing it can be found. Vice Mayor Manspile stated the other problem that needs to be worked through Council is to find out how Town can be legally retro-active in putting grease traps in at the businesses. Town Manager McCulloch agreed with Vice Mayor Manspile. --Vice Mayor Manspile stated that there are more grease problems on the north side of the river. There are softball size grease balls in the pump station over there. Councilmember Witt stated that his restaurant has a grease trap that is serviced regularly, but the Town does not have an Ordinance that requires restaurants to have grease traps or provide the Town with service records for grease traps if they have them. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the size of the grease trap decides how often it has to be serviced. The Ordinance would have to be inclusive that someone from Town would be allowed to go to businesses and request proof that the grease trap was being serviced. If there is no proof, the business will be fined. Councilmember Witt stated that there should be a slip like what is used for fire extinguishers or elevators showing the date the grease trap was last serviced. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the grease trap at Stop In may no longer be serviced since Burger King is no longer there. Councilmember Witt stated that the question is, since it is on the north side of the river, where is it coming from. There is only one business on that side of the river. Town Manager McCulloch stated that there was one that was a household. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that there will have to be an education campaign to stop the grease from going into the waste water system. There is a major grease problem. Monday, August 9, 2021 there is a pump truck coming to pull Water Street down and clean it,

get the grease out of it. This is routine maintenance. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the Town does not have this issue at the main lift station is because it runs a coarser bar screen and the pumps grind the grease into the sewage. The smaller pump stations do not pump all the time so the grease has time to float. The pump truck is going to clean the 2 lift stations with Town employees and 1 operator from Inboden. Saturday, there was an algae bloom that hung up at the UV lights and shut the waste water treatment plant down. Councilmember Witt asked how the brush dump was looking. Councilmember Petty and Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the brush dump is looking good, it is pretty empty. Councilmember Witt asked if implementing the camera at the dump had helped with issues of illegal dumping and gravel theft issues. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that it had helped, especially with dumping brush bigger than what is allowed. Councilmember Witt stated that the gazebo is coming up on its 10 year anniversary. He asked what has been lined up for upkeep and painting of the gazebo. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Maintenance Supervisor Billy Eagle was taking care of that. Councilmember Witt stated that another way of opening up Council to citizens and be more transparent would be to live stream Council Meetings and Work Sessions. Councilmember Witt had discussed this with former Town Manager Jason Tyree when the cameras were being put in the building. Since broadband has come into the area, it would be easier for citizens to access the meetings than in the past. Councilmember Witt stated it would also give the Town another way of recording the Council Meetings and Work Sessions. Larger municipalities have a TV channel dedicated to the local municipalities. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that before Town does this, the Town needs to establish a place to hold closed sessions. The more media there is in the room, the harder it is to have a closed session. Closed Sessions use to be held in the file room upstairs. Councilmember Witt stated that the attendance has nothing to do with Council being accessible. It has to do with a lack of drama and lack of interest. The use of livestreaming alleviates the statement or presumption that Council is not transparent. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he tells citizens that most issues are discussed three or more times before anything is done. There are plenty of opportunities to come and see it. Vice Mayor Manspile asked Councilmember Rickman if he had anything to discuss. Councilmember Rickman stated he would like to thank Councilmember Petty for all that he has done for the beautification of the Town. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he has thanked Councilmember Petty for heading up that project and taking care of the Town's equipment. Councilmember jokingly asked if Councilmember Petty had signed a waiver beforehand absolving Town of all liabilities. Councilmember Petty stated the tank needs a cut off on the front of the pump. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that no one had told him there was an issue. Town Manager Susan McCulloch stated that she had not been informed either, and she needed to be informed. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that even after he had set it up, and numerous training sessions, when the tank would get full, instead of cutting the water off at the hydrant, the person would cut the tank off and bust the hose every time. Councilmember Petty stated that they did not have that problem now, he just needed the spanner wrench and the hose it will be fixed. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the spanner wrench was on the sewer jet, that is where it is kept. He stated they need to have a hose about 25 feet long with quick couplings on it. Right now, the hydro-valve is on the meter, they need to be separated, Town needs to buy another one. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he had the hose he would donate to the Town. Town has the couplings, so he would make the hose. Councilmember Witt stated he would like to talk about rent on Town properties again. Vice Mayor Manspile stated Town should keep the Town events, the ones Town started, Carnival, Mountain Magic in the Fall, and the luminaries at Christmas. Any other events, that have been centered around one certain person, put a rate structure on renting the Town Park, set up a rental policy where the renter has to carry the

insurance, if you rent the park for the entire weekend, you get a cut rate. The Town would be just like a landlord. Town would collect the money, carry a liability policy, they rent the park with each structure carrying a fee for use, and the renter must clean up. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the Town would get out of the event business and turn it into a money maker. Councilmember Witt stated that if it would make the Town Park, if not profitable at least self-sustaining, it would be nice. Council had spoken with former Town Manager Jason Tyree about renting the Town Park, and from a business standpoint, it doesn't matter, you're renting it, you're paying for it, as long as the Town is generating income from the rental, so be it. Councilmember Witt asked Town Manager Susan McCulloch what her experience at her previous employer, what was written to alleviate what can be perceived as undesirable groups from using municipal properties. Town Manager McCulloch stated that there is a draft park policy on the computer in her office that Town Attorney Jon Puvak was helping to draft because of the Charlottesville, VA incident. That draft can be revisited, talk to Town Attorney Puvak to check wording to be careful about what could be perceived as discrimination, or violation of the First Amendment, those kinds of things. Councilmember Witt stated that he was not aware that there was something already drafted, or if Town Manager McCulloch had worked on something similar in the past. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that one of the phrases that has been widely used in policies is "family friendly", or "family oriented". Councilmember Witt stated that that terminology is open to interpretation. It could be left as "family oriented" at the discrepancy of Council upon presentation. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that there is no way you can cover everything. The policy would state at the discretion of the Town Manager, if the renter does not agree with the Town Manager's decision, take it to the Town Council, and Council will make a decision. Councilmember Witt asked if the Special Events Committee could be utilized to make a decision before it came to Council. Councilmember Petty asked if former Town Manager Tyree addressed something similar, before he left. Councilmember Witt stated that he was drafting policy before he left. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the worst thing about using the Special Events Committee, excluding Councilmember Rickman, is the Special Events Committee does not have a designated staff member on it. When decisions are being made about Town properties, it should come through the Town Manager. The renter would have a right to appeal the decision and bring it to Council. It is the Town's property, the Town is responsible for upkeep and Town is responsible for what happens on it, that is part of the law too. Councilmember Rickman stated that if someone rents it out and has a party, has a beer truck there, if someone leaves and gets hurt or causes injuries to someone, the Town can be held liable. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that is why the renter would have to have insurance. The Town would have liability insurance for the property, but the renter would have to cover everything else. Councilmember Witt stated that Council has discussed lack of volunteers in the past, lack of volunteers for committees, and councils, and everything else. Buchanan is larger than the Town limits. There have been discussions about finding a way to allow people in the greater Buchanan area to have some sort of say. Obviously, they would not have voting rights, but Buchanan area goes up to the Troutville line, out to the Parkway, up to Jennings Creek, out left and right. Buchanan is a large area, and things that Council decides directly affect people in the area as much as citizens in the Town. Councilmember Witt would like to find some way to include people in the greater Buchanan area, not just the Town, to have their voices heard in some fashion. A lot of the volunteers that the Town has are not even citizens of the Town. Councilmember Witt stated that he feels that one of the reasons there is a draw down of volunteers is that the volunteers from outside Town limits go unheard or are ignored because they do not live in Town limits. Councilmember Witt stated that he does not know what can be done about the situation. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that


the only committee that people from outside Town limits can influence is the Special Events Committee. The Planning Commission has to be Town residents. That is where a former Town Manager got in trouble, she had a Roanoke citizen on Town Planning Commission. Town Manager McCulloch stated that more people from the Buchanan area than Town citizens came to the Brownfield Community Planning Meeting, their suggestions were recorded. Councilmember Witt stated that in areas where growth, he would like to see a way to include their input. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the best you can do in his eyes is to have the events Town already has to include people from outlying areas. But if you start using the Town's tax money to entertain the County, a lot of citizens, including the Vice Mayor's father, will have serious issues. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he does not participate in the events. If what he does in Public Works and other things is not enough, find someone else for Council. Everyone has their own niche on Council. If you weren't doing things right, you wouldn't have enough votes to be put on Council. Vice mayor Manspile stated that he is old school, find a way to thank your volunteers, but don't think you can do something for everyone. Councilmember Witt stated that he doesn't expect that, there should be a middle ground. There are people who own a building, or run a business, but don't live in Town limits. They have no say in what is being done even though they own property or run a business in Town. Vice Mayor Manspile stated it is no different than someone owning a business in Roanoke City, and living in Botetourt County. That person has no say in Roanoke City. You live where you want because you choose to live there. You choose where you will locate your business. You put your business where you will make money. Councilmember Petty stated that he is mixed on that. He agrees with Councilmember Witt that they do have a business here in Town, they provide goods or services here in the Town. They may not be able to vote, but why can't they come in and share ideas or concerns. Vice Mayor Manspile stated he doesn't have an issue with that. His concern is when they want Town to do something for them personally, not for their business in Town. Councilmember Petty stated that even if that does happen, yes, we hear you, at least their opinion is heard. Councilman Witt stated that that turns into an economic development committee situation. Where there is a specific committee that people can go to when there is a business owner that is interested in the area, or I have a group of business owners with this concern or issue, the committee hones it down and filters it, then presents it to Council. That way Council does not have to deal with the minutiae of the issue. Councilmember Witt stated that Harry said the hub of the Town, what has been the focus for revitalization is Main Street, and he doesn't want other areas to be ignored, but the best way to help the outlying areas is to have a thriving Main Street. You will see that in your tax dollars. Looking toward the future and growth, sometimes you have to have those fixtures in place before you can grow and see results. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that something has to be done besides Main Street because citizens avoid the area because all they have seen is Main Street. Town Manager McCulloch stated that Lois has asked if Council can make a donation for Freedom Fest. Town Manager stated that she would like to respond that it has been Town policy not to sponsor events, or Town can give individual council members the information and they can volunteer as citizens. Town Manager McCulloch stated she would tell her that Town policy is not to sponsor events. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the only thing Town has sponsored in the past is After Prom Party and Standing Room Only. Budget talks will be starting in September. This may not be possible this year, but let's start a grant process for businesses. Put a certain amount in it, have an application process, have a cap on the amount, have the application process, present it to Council for approval, receive your grant. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the Sign Policy was changed so that no one in Town could hang banners across the street. Lois has asked to put a banner across Main Street. Town Manager McCulloch researched and there is no way to put a banner

across Main Street. Town statute states you cannot hang a banner in Town. Planning Commission will be getting a request to change the policy from Vice Mayor Manspile. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that he will use his personal hay wagon, if Lois gets the banner, to have the banner up on personal property. They are looking for a place to do the same on the south end of Town. Councilmember Witt stated that if Planning Commission is rewriting it, it will be included with all the other changes being made. Councilmember Witt asked if the poles are high enough for tractor trailers to come through if a banner is hung. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that the poles were marked for the lowest point the banner could be. Councilmember Witt asked if Town still had the vertical banners, there were photos of the banners being used at an event years ago. Vice Mayor Manspile stated that would be flag policy. He would like to see that changed to putting something up at the change of seasons. Councilmember Witt stated that as part of revitalization, he would like to see the utilities all run underground.

Last on the agenda was Adjournment. Councilmember Petty made a motion to adjourn with Councilmember Witt seconding the motion. With no further discussion, the vote was carried 4-0.

Adjournment was at 9:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Claudine Stump, Clerk



James Manspile, Vice Mayor

