REGULAR MEETING OF THE FARMVILLE TOWN COUNCIL
HELD ON JUNE 12, 2019

At a regular meeting of the Farmville Town Council held on Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at 7:00 p.m., in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall, located at 116 North Main Street, Farmville, Virginia, there present were Mayor David E. Whitus, presiding, and Council members D.L. Hunter, B.R. Vincent, T.M. Pairet, A.D. Reid and J.J. Davis.

Staff present were Town Manager, Gerald Spates; Assistant Town Manager, Scott Davis, Town Attorney, Gary Elder; Town Treasurer, Carol Anne Seal; Assistant Chief of Police, William Hogan; Public Works Director, Robin Atkins; and Administrative Assistant, Jackie Vaughan.

Reverend Rex Williams, Pastor of the Calvary Tabernacle Church, gave the invocation, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council member A.D. Reid.

The Administrative Assistant called the roll, noting Council members G.C. Cole and D.E. Dwyer were absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mayor Whitus announced the public comment period. No guests were present.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion by Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Reid, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was granted to approve the consent agenda, as presented.

BACKGROUND: The consent agenda included the draft minutes of the regular Council work session of May 1, 2019, and the regular Council meeting of May 8, 2019.

APPROVAL OF THE TREASURER’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Pairet and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was granted to approve the Treasurer’s Report, as presented.

BACKGROUND: Mrs. Seal provided the Council with a brief update on transactions made during May. Mrs. Seal reported that the percentage collected of real estate and personal property tax through May 2019 was 98.83%, which is up .26% from April. Mayor Whitus inquired about the potential carry-over balance for the current year’s budget. Mrs. Seal answered for the Contingency and General Fund, she anticipates a carry-over of approximately $400,000.

AUTHORIZATION TO PAY THE BILLS
On a motion by Mr. Reid, seconded by Mr. Vincent, and with a recorded vote with Council members Hunter, Vincent, Pairet, Reid, and Davis voting “aye,” the motion was approved to authorize the Town Treasurer to pay the bills, as presented.

**BILLS PRINTED IN MINUTE BOOK**

**UPDATE ON BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT**

Mr. Spates stated that Mr. Wade Bartlett, County Administrator of Prince Edward County, provided two (2) potential meeting dates, July 18 or 19, 2019 for the County’s Boundary Adjustment Committee members to meet with Council’s Committee to discuss the proposed boundary adjustment. Mayor Whitus asked Council members to check their calendars and let the Administrative Assistant know if they were available either day to meet.

**BACKGROUND:** In April, Council directed the Town Manager to move forward and schedule meetings with Prince Edward and Cumberland Counties to discuss the proposed boundary adjustment and the Town’s growth. Prince Edward County advised Mr. Spates they would like to meet with the Town separate from Cumberland County.

**UPDATE ON PROBATION AND PAROLE EXPANSION**

Assistant Town Manager reported that he called the Department of General Services to inquire as to where they were in the process of deciding about the Probation and Parole Building expansion. He said the Department had more questions about the figures given previously. Mr. Davis said he gave the Department of General Services the same information again and added he has no additional information to share with them. He said the Department is still considering whether the construction cost is feasible, and they are planning to bring the Director for the Department of General Services on July 2, 2019, to show the location, condition and construction schedule.

**BACKGROUND:** In April, Mr. Davis, Assistant Town Manager reported that the engineering firm of Thompson and Litton, Inc. had provided a cost estimate of over two million dollars for the expansion and renovation of the Probation and Parole building. He stated that using a ten-year amortization schedule, the monthly rent payment would be between $20,000 to $30,000 a month.

**AUTHORIZE ADOPTION OF THE PROPOSED 2019-2020 TOWN BUDGET**

Mayor Whitus stated that a public hearing on the proposed 2019-2020 Town Budget was held tonight with no one appearing to comment. He added that Council must wait seven (7) days after the public hearing before approving the proposed budget. Council agreed to continue the
meeting until Thursday, June 27, 2019, at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall building.

**BACKGROUND:** At the May 1, 2019 meeting, Council approved the advertisement of a public hearing for the proposed 2019-2020 Town Budget. The proposed 2019-2020 Town Budget includes a real estate tax rate of .12 cents per $100.00 of assessed value, a personal property tax rate (businesses only) of $1.50 per $100.00 of assessed value and a .27 cents per pack cigarette tax rate.

**TOWN MANAGER’S ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Mr. Whitus requested that each Council member contact Mr. Cole if they had not done so already, to give input on Mr. Spates’ annual evaluation. He stated that Mr. Cole should have a draft summary of the evaluation ready to present at the continued meeting on June 27, 2019.

**BACKGROUND:** Mr. Spates’s Employee Contract, Section 7, Performance Evaluation states that “Council shall review and evaluate the performance of the Town Manager at least once a year in advance of the effective date of the annual operating budget.”

**AUTHORIZE TO REFUND PARTIAL PAYMENT ON 2019 BUSINESS LICENSE FOR MUSASHI ASIAN CUISINE**

On a motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Hunter, and with a recorded vote with Council members Vincent, Pairet, Reid, Davis, and Hunter voting “aye,” the motion was approved to authorize the Town Treasurer to refund partial payment of $97.36 on the 2019 Business License for Musashi Asian Cuisine.

**BACKGROUND:** Musashi Asian Cuisine located at 219 Sunchase Boulevard changed ownership effective May 3, 2019. The new owner has already purchased their business license.

**AUTHORIZE PAYMENT FROM THE NARCOTIC’S FUND TO WITMER PUBLIC SAFETY GROUP, INC**

On a motion by Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Vincent, and with a recorded vote with Council members Pairet, Reid, Davis, Hunter and Vincent voting “aye,” the motion was approved to authorize the Town Treasurer to issue a payment of $64.49 from the Narcotic’s Fund to Witmer Public Safety Group, Inc.

**BACKGROUND:** The payment to Witmer Public Safety Group, Inc., of $65.49 is for the sewing of a shoulder patch to a garment and the purchase two (2) sets of Damascus Nitro Kevlar Riot/Cell Extrication Gloves.
REQUEST ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION #2019-06-01 TO TRANSFER FUNDS FROM THE BUILDING & GROUNDS DEPARTMENT TO THE SPORTS ARENA DEPARTMENT

On a motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Hunter, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was granted to approve the adoption of Resolution #2019-06-01 to transfer funds from the Building and Grounds Department to the Sports Arena Department.

BACKGROUND: The Finance and Ordinance Committee recommended Council authorize the transfer of $7,370.00 from Maintenance-Building in the Building and Grounds Department to Maintenance-Sport Arena in the Sports Arena Department for the purchase and installation of the new air conditioning unit.

BACKGROUND: Mr. Spates reported that one of the four air conditioning units at the Sports Arena had to be replaced because it failed to operate properly. He stated that the unit was installed over 42 years ago and was well over the expected useful life. The air conditioning unit had to be replaced immediately to provide adequate cooling for events held by individuals and groups that rented the facility.

ADDITIONAL TIME OFF FOR THE JULY 4TH HOLIDAY

On a motion by Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Vincent, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was granted to approve additional time off for the July 4, 2019 holiday to coincide with the Commonwealth of Virginia holiday calendar.

BACKGROUND: Mayor Whitus stated that the Governor had granted state employees an additional eight (8) hours for the 4th of July holiday. Mr. Hunter stated that Council, at a past meeting, agreed to follow the State employee holiday schedule.

CANCEL THE WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 2019 WORK SESSION

On a motion by Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Davis, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was approved to cancel the Wednesday, July 3, 2019, regular work session.

BACKGROUND: Mayor Whitus stated that for the past couple of years, Council has opted to cancel the July work session, and he is recommending that this year’s July 3, 2019, work session be canceled.

AMENDED PREVIOUS APPROVAL TO HIRE A NON-CERTIFIED OFFICER

On a motion by Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Reid, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was approved to amend the previous motion and authorize the hiring of a non-certified officer at a starting salary of $38,520.00.
**BACKGROUND:** Assistant Town Manager, Scott Davis explained to Council that at work session when Council approved to establish that the current year’s budget included a 3% cost of living salary increase, not a merit raise, it increased the minimum and maximum for the pay grades. He said the previously approved motion authorized the hiring of a non-certified officer at $37,398, which is below the $38,520, the minimum pay grade 14. Mr. Davis requested the Council to amend their previous motion to authorize the hiring of the non-certified officer at a starting salary of $38,520.

**TOWN MANAGER REPORTS**

Mr. Spates reported on the following items:

Each member of Council was given a copy of the May Building Official’s Report for their review.

Mr. Spates mentioned an article in the newspaper regarding the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) plans to install rumble strips to help address roadway safety. Rumble strips create noise and vibration that alert drivers to correct their direction and can reduce head-on crossover and/or run-of crashes significantly. Mr. Spates said the strips are in the center lane of most highways, such as Route 307. He said VDOT’s plans include adding the strips to US 460 east and west in Prince Edward County.

The Town received approval to award the contract for the Milnwood Road and South Main Street project to Pearson Construction from Dillwyn. He said there should be a pre-construction meeting with the next ten (10) days to get the project started.

The bids for the Runway and Lighting project at the airport are due to be opened on June 18, 2019, at 2:00 p.m., in the Town Manager’s Conference Room. The project cost will be a little over 4 million dollars. The Town received an additional 3.5 million dollar grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Farmville was one of two localities in Virginia to receive the grant, and it is a 100% grant for the relocation of the access road, the maintenance shed and parking lot.

Work on the traffic signals under the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Revenue Sharing project will begin shortly. All the intersections with traffic signals will have battery backup, six intersections will have new cameras, and all the traffic signals will have the new have yellow backing.
The water tank on Route 15 South is scheduled to be repainted on June 24, 2019. The water tank will be repainted the same color as the tank on Andrews Drive. The writing will be removed and replaced with an image of the United States flag on two sides of the tank.

Mr. Spates stated that the installation of the new Lions Club playground at Wilck’s Lake is going very well. He said the playground equipment is up, and they are currently installing drainage and will then add the sand.

Mr. Spates informed Council that Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors would like to meet with them on July 9, 2019, at 4:00 p.m., in the Town Hall Emergency Operation Center, to discuss the Prince Edward Volunteer Rescue Squad. The Board is also inviting representatives from Hampden Sydney College and Longwood University. Mayor Whitus asked the Administrative Assistant to send a notice to the Council to get their availability for the meeting and then confirm.

**AUTHORIZATION TO WRITE OFF 2013 DELINQUENT UTILITY ACCOUNTS**

Mayor Whitus continued this matter until the scheduled reconvened meeting.

**BACKGROUND:** Mr. Davis, Chairman of the Finance and Ordinance Committee, stated at their June 5, 2019 meeting, the Committee reviewed and discussed the delinquent utility accounts. He stated the Treasurer explained to the Committee that each June Town Council is presented a list of uncollectible accounts to write-off. As per the Virginia Code, utility accounts that are not collected after five (5) years are considered delinquent and can be written off. Mr. Davis stated that the accounts have been sent to Virginia set-off debt and are uncollectible. He said the Committee did not recommend that the accounts are written off, but instead wanted Council to review the list and discuss. Mrs. Seal, Town Treasurer, addressed Council, and reiterated the same information. Council asked additional questions regarding the large amounts to be written off and if this list was only for 2013. Mrs. Seal explained that when she sends the debt to Virginia set-off debt if the individual has any money owed to them by the Commonwealth, the debt is deducted from the amount. Council questioned the current Town cut-off policy and questioned the process of writing off the delinquent utility accounts. Mrs. Seal stated that writing off the delinquent accounts takes the liability off the Town’s receivables. She said the auditors ask to see the accounts written off, and compare them to the minutes approved by Council, to make sure that she has not written anything that is not approved. Council requested that the Treasurer provide
them with a projected write-off list for 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017. Mayor Whitus requested that the Council be made aware of the lists before the request to write-off the debts.

**AUTHORIZATION TO FILL ONE VACANT FULL-TIME METER READER POSITION**

On a motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Hunter, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was approved to authorize advertisement and hiring of one full-time meter reader, to begin employment after July 1, 2019, at a starting salary of $29,501.

**BACKGROUND:** Mr. Spates explained that in the proposed 2019-2020 Budget, the responsibility of the meter reader is being transferred from the Public Works Department to the Treasurer’s Office and in addition to the transfer, he plans to hire one (1) additional meter reader. He said since the Town went to monthly billing, it is almost a constant process of reading the meters. Currently, each month, it takes two (2) people to read the meters. With two (2) meter readers, it will allow coverage for vacations, sick leave, etc. Mr. Spates stated that the meter reader position salary range is $29,501 - $42,848 and the pay grade is 8. He added the 2019-2020 budget includes the $29,501 salary for the full-time position.

**REQUEST TO PLACE A STREETLIGHT ON JAYS ROAD IN THE CRESTVIEW SUBDIVISION**

On a motion by Mr. Vincent, seconded by Mr. Davis, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was approved to accept the recommendation of the Infrastructure Committee and leave the light on Jays Road in the Crestview Subdivision as is, and if the residents want to replace the light, they may do so at their expense.

**BACKGROUND:** Mr. Spates stated he received a request to replace a streetlight on Jay Road in the Crestview Subdivision. He said somehow four of the wooden pole lights were installed instead of the decorative light fixtures. Mr. Spates said no one else has complained about the wooden poles and the only one that really stands out is the one on Jays Road.

**REQUEST ON BEHALF OF PIEDMONT AREA VETERANS COUNCIL TO IMPLEMENT A “HOMETOWN HERO” PROJECT**

On a motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Reid, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was approved to refer the request on behalf of Piedmont Area Veterans Council to implement a “Hometown Hero” project in the town, to the Infrastructure Committee.

**BACKGROUND:** Mr. Spates stated that Ms. Sarah Maddox, with the Piedmont Area Veterans Council, submitted a request to implement a project called “Hometown Hero.” He said the project
is to honor local service members and veterans. Mr. Spates stated the project is to install banners with veterans pictures throughout the town on traffic signal poles. The cost, including the banner, bracket, and hardware, is about $130 each. The person requesting the individual banner will be responsible to provide a photo and pay all cost associated with the installation of the banner. The banners will hang from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Mr. Spates asked that the request be referred to the Infrastructure Committee and for the Committee to meet with the Piedmont Area Veterans Council and the Chamber of Commerce.

**REQUEST ON BEHALF OF PIEDMONT AREA VETERANS COUNCIL TO CONSTRUCT A WATER SPRAY PARK AND A VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK**

On a motion by Mr. Reid, seconded by Mr. Pairet, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was approved to refer the request on behalf of Piedmont Area Veterans Council to construct a water spray park and veterans memorial park to the Recreation Committee.

**BACKGROUND:** Mr. Spates stated Ms. Sarah Maddox, with the Piedmont Area Veterans Council, submitted a request asking the Council to consider allowing the Veterans Council to construct two projects on Town owned property. The request stated that the Veterans Council is in the preliminary stages of developing plans for a water spray park and a veterans memorial park. The Veterans Council would like the proposed projects to be located in the same area as the new Lions Club playground at Wilck’s Lake. He explained that the water spray park would be constructed in a red, white, and blue theme to complement the memorial park. The projects will be fully funded by funds raised by the Veterans Council.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Finance and Ordinance Committee, Chairman Davis**— Mr. Davis thanked the staff and the Finance and Ordinance Committee for the time and hard work in developing the proposed budget.

**Personnel Committee, Chairman Reid**— Mr. Reid reported that the Personnel Committee has been trying to meet to discuss Mr. Spates’ annual performance evaluation, but due to the conflict in schedules, they have not been able to meet. Mayor Whitus stated that Mr. Cole is currently working on a draft of the performance evaluation. Mr. Reid stated that he is waiting on responses from Council members for the evaluation, and asked that Mr. Cole forward any responses he had received to him. Mayor Whitus instructed Council members, that had not already done so, to respond with their comments.
Infrastructure Committee, Chairman Pairet—Mr. Pairet reported that he had received a copy of an email from Mr. Rick Youngblood, VDOT Lynchburg District Planning Manager. Mr. Youngblood wrote that he had received notice to proceed with the Farmville roundabout at 30% plans project, and the surveyors should be on site in the coming weeks. Mr. Pairet stated that Council should see movement on the High, Oak, and Griffin intersection, with people laying out stakes and drawing a footprint, so Council will see what the roundabout would look like before voting on it.

Public Safety Committee, Chairman Hunter—No report

TOWN MANAGER AND STAFF REPORTS

Robin Atkins, Director of Public Works, reported that the new Lions Club playground is moving along as planned. The deck for the pedestrian bridge was poured today, and the sidewalk along Third Street and the handicap ramp in front of the hospital have been installed.

Mr. Scott Davis, Assistant Town Manager, informed Council that with the recent change from merit raise to the cost of living increase in this current’s year budget, the minimum and maximum salary ranges have been adjusted, resulting in three current employees being hired below the minimum salary for their pay grade. Employees cannot be paid below the minimum pay for that pay grade. Therefore the Town will need to increase their salary and compensate them back pay from this date to the time they were hired. Mr. Davis informed Council that the three employees’ salaries would be increased and a total of $1,237.33 will be given in back pay.

Mr. Spates informed Council that the Town will be receiving the first lease agreement payment of $24,000 from Precision Cell for the antenna located on the Andrews Drive water tank.

MAYOR WHITUS AND TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS COMMENTED ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS

Mr. Hunter thanked Mr. Spates and Mr. Atkins for the bump-outs that were installed on Andrews Drive, Vernon, and Winston Street. He said the bump-outs on the sidewalk will allow handicap residents to use the sidewalks instead of riding in the streets.

Mr. Vincent commented that the new sidewalk in front of the hospital looks great. He said that he had been contacted by several people asking about the potential naming opportunity of the bridge. He asked the Mayor if the Infrastructure Committee could discuss the idea of naming the bridge sometime in future.
Mayor Whitus mentioned that in July, the Committee assignments for Council will be done. He asked Council members to contact him if they wanted to change committees or were interested in serving on a different committee.

**CLOSED SESSION – LAND ACQUISITION**

On a motion by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Hunter, and with all Council members voting “aye,” Council went into closed session under Section 2.2-3711.A.3 of the Code of Virginia, for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose.

Council returned to the regular order of business.

**CLOSED MEETING CERTIFICATION**

WHEREAS, the Farmville Town Council has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Farmville Town Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Farmville Town Council hereby certifies that, to the best of each member’s knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Farmville Town Council.

VOTE: Five “ayes”, 0 “noes.”

MOTION: Davis SECOND: Hunter

AYES: Hunter, Vincent, Pairet, Reid, and Davis

NOES: None

ABSENT DURING VOTE: Mr. Cole and Mr. Dwyer

ABSENT DURING MEETING: Mr. Cole and Mr. Dwyer

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Clerk
AUTHORIZE THE CASH PURCHASE OF THE FORMER ED’S DRY CLEANERS PROPERTY LOCATED AT 110 NORTH SOUTH STREET

On a motion by Mr. Pairet, seconded by Mr. Hunter, and with a recorded vote with Council members Davis, Hunter, Vincent, Pairet and Reid voting “aye,” the motion was approved to authorize the purchase of the old Ed’s Dry Cleaners property located at 110 North South Street, from Mrs. Terry Atkins-Wilson for the cash price of $155,000, and for the Treasurer to issue the payment of $155,000 from the Contingency Fund.

BACKGROUND: Mr. Spates informed Council that Mrs. Atkins-Wilson contacted the Town Attorney, Gary Elder, with a cash counter offer of $155,000 for the Town to purchase the old Ed’s Dry Cleaners located at 110 North South Street. Initially, the Town submitted two (2) different purchase options for the property.

On a motion by Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Davis, and with all Council members voting “aye,” the motion was approved to continue the meeting until Thursday, June 27, 2019, at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVED: ATTEST:

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David E. Whitus, Mayor     Lisa M. Hricko, Clerk