

July 13, 2020

The regular monthly meeting was held on Monday, July 13, 2020 in the Banquet Hall at Parksley Fire House. The meeting started at 7:00 pm.

Present: Mayor Frank Russell; Council: Dan Matthews, Sam Welch, John Parks, Dana Bundick, Ricky Taylor; Public Works Director Danny Siegert; Police Chief Greer; Attorney T. Dix; and Clerk Letitia Greer.

Visitors: Julie Nash, Hazel Smack, Max Bendix, Warren Phillips, Mark Layne, Kellee Blake, James Daughton, Tom Cardaci, Lauren Lewis, Greg Duncan, Tim Valentine, Billy Graham, Allen Thornton

Mayor Russell opened the meeting at 7:10 and Councilman Welch led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Russell asked the guests to sign in and stated each person would have four minutes to speak.

Mayor Russell stated that he would like to strike the following from the June minutes - starting with "Councilman Savona made a motion" through "Councilman Russell stated that he had a plan to pay it off." Mayor Russell stated that he does not remember ever putting out someone's personal financial information in open session in his years on the council.

Councilwoman Bundick asked if meals taxes are public record. Mayor Russell stated he did not think so. Clerk Greer stated that she didn't know.

Attorney Dix stated he was not sure, but Accomack County taxes are public record.

Councilman Welch suggested tabling the change to the minutes until the town is able to confirm whether or not meals taxes are public record. Councilman Taylor agreed. Councilwoman Bundick stated that striking that from the minutes is not being transparent. Councilman Matthews asked for a timeframe for finding out if meals taxes are public record. Attorney Dix stated he should have an answer in about a week.

Councilman Matthews made the motion to approve the June minutes as follows - as written if Attorney Dix determines meals taxes are public record; if Attorney Dix determines meals taxes are not public record, paragraph five on page four will be stricken. Motion was 2nd by Councilman Parks. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Welch, Taylor. Nay - Bundick. Motion passed.

Mayor Russell asked if there were any questions on the bills. Councilwoman Bundick asked what the payment to Wells Fargo is for. Clerk Greer stated it is the printer contract.

Mayor Russell stated that he thought there should be deductions from the council and mayor pay. Clerk Greer stated that deductions had been discussed at an earlier council meeting, but there was never a vote to change the ordinance.

Mayor Russell stated there was a council member who did not come to half of the meetings and he thought the council had voted to not pay for meetings that were missed. Mayor Russell stated there were four councilmen who had missed meetings last year, which totals \$664 in deductions. Mayor Russell asked if anyone wanted to discuss deducting for missed meetings.

Councilman Welch stated he would like to leave council pay as is; the council members are elected.

Councilman Taylor suggested addressing council pay in the future.

Councilman Matthews stated that deducting for missed meetings implies that the only requirement for council pay is showing up to council meetings. Councilman Matthews stated that council members do things for the town outside of meetings, including the time former Councilwoman Nash and then-Councilman Russell invested in working on the festival.

Mayor Russell stated that, as mayor, he does not get a vote unless there is a tie; the council makes the laws.

Councilman Taylor asked what the town is paying mileage for. Clerk Greer stated that DMV contract requires a daily bank deposit.

Councilman Taylor asked why the town is paying mileage if the town owns a vehicle that can be used. Councilman Taylor asked why the white vehicle was bought. Mayor Russell stated he would look into that.

Councilman Taylor made a motion to pay the bills. Motion was 2nd by Councilman Parks. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Welch, Taylor, Bundick. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Russell asked Madam Treasurer for a treasurer's report. Clerk Greer stated she wasn't sure what his question was. Mayor Russell repeated the question. Clerk Greer stated the town had not had a treasurer's report before. Mayor Russell stated we are supposed to have one every month. Clerk Greer repeated that had never been done before and asked what information he would like included. Mayor Russell stated he would get her a list.

Mayor Russell stated that it was time to go into the public hearing session of the meeting. Mayor Russell stated that all questions should be directed to him; each speaker would have four minutes.

Mayor Russell called on Mark Layne. M Layne read a thank you letter he had written to the town on behalf of Parksley Baptist Church thanking them for their use of the town square for church services since the start of the corona virus epidemic; he has had new attendees.

M Layne stated that he had attended a council meeting a few months earlier questioning why churches are being billed for water usage; the council had not voted to charge the churches. M Layne stated that other nonprofits are not being billed so the council is showing bias. M Layne asked Attorney Dix if it was legal to bill the church without a vote. Attorney Dix stated he was not prepared to answer that.

Mayor Russell stated that he could not recall if there had been a vote.

Councilman Taylor heard that the church in the old shirt factory was being charged so the town started charging the other churches. When he heard this, Councilman Taylor asked his mother and his mother stated they had never been charged until then.

Councilman Matthews stated the council needs to research what was decided or not and then make a decision. M Layne asked if the council had voted on it; a former council member told him there was never a vote.

Councilman Taylor stated there had not been a vote.

Mayor Russell called on Tim Valentine; T Valentine stated he was at the meeting for the closed session.

Mayor Russell called on Warren Phillips. W Phillips stated he is concerned about the things he sees going on. W Phillips stated that meals taxes may be public knowledge, but it is not gossip.

W Phillips asked about the deal with social media; town employees calling people idiots, assholes; there is no place for that. *Applause.*

W Phillips stated that he had received a phone call at the store one day since the deal had been going on with being waited on outside for DMV. A grandmother had called stating her grandson was socially challenged and he was very upset about how he was handled and talked to. W Phillips stated that he suggested calling the new mayor or writing a letter to the town. W Phillips stated he was hoping the letter was at the meeting.

Clerk Greer stated that she had not seen a letter.

W Phillips stated he was not at the meeting to make friends; he is here because he is concerned about his town. *Applause.*

Councilman Matthews asked Mayor Russell to gavel the applause twice. Mayor Russell stated that he was still in charge.

W Phillips stated that he had asked about business checks at the last meeting he attended and was told they would start again, but it is not happening. W Phillips asked why not and stated he is not getting anything for his tax money.

W Phillips asked for a bank escort occasionally; they used to get it all the time. W Phillips stated the police sit outside Dollar General, wait for them to close, and take them wherever they want to; they have been robbed three times. W Phillips asked where was his escort; sometimes his sisters are there by themselves and need an escort. W Phillips stated that the Accomack County dispatcher told him he did not get an escort anymore when he called there.

W Phillips stated the his son's tags were stolen off his Jeep the Friday before Christmas; his son had called the chief of police the night before. W Phillips stated he found who had stolen the tag the Saturday before Christmas, but there was no officer working that afternoon; he was instructed to call the county. W Phillips stated that if you are on salary and on call and driving a town car, you shouldn't tell him to call the county.

W Phillips asked if the police chief made \$63,000/year. Chief Greer stated he made \$50,000; W Phillips stated that was too much. W Phillips stated that he has been told by more than one person that Chief Greer makes \$63,000/yr; the chief of Chincoteague had thirteen people working for him and only makes \$69,000/yr.

W Phillips stated the town property is poorly taken care of.

W Phillips stated the last time a town employee had purchased gas in New Church; from information he received after the last meeting he attended.

Mayor Russell stated that W Phillips' time was up and requested he finish up.

W Phillips stated the fence by the water tower is falling down; the shrubbery has grown up on it, and the poles have rotted off. W Phillips stated that needs to be taken care of.

Mayor Russell thanked Mr. Phillips.

Chief Greer stated that he had spoken to W Phillips's son when his tags were stolen and told him he would take care of it when he came in that afternoon; they chose to call the sheriff's office. Chief Greer stated that the gas in question was actually purchased in Wattsville when Officer Marks took his patrol car to Chincoteague for repairs. Chief Greer stated that there are only two people in the police department and they cannot be here 24/7; they both give the town plenty of time.

Mayor Russell called on Max Bendix.

M Bendix stated that he didn't like the idea that town employees used their personal social media accounts to down people in town; they had personally called his wife out.

M Bendix stated he didn't like the hiring process; they don't post these jobs, they just hire people.

M Bendix stated that prior to this meeting, there had been a hostile environment by the council and the employees.

Mayor Russell called on Lauren Lewis.

L Lewis stated that she had submitted a letter to the council that day regarding several complaints she has.

L Lewis stated that she finds it disgusting, sad, and disgusting for town employees advertising as such on social media to attack the taxpayers who pay their salary on social media. L Lewis stated that she had been called an asshole and was accused of being on drugs after putting limbs in an alleyway; it should not be allowed and the reprimand should include termination. *Applause.* L Lewis stated that she had seen Facebook posts not directed at her that had been made by council members, employees, and staff that included things like death threats to other employees and council members; that should include termination and legal action. L Lewis stated that her family does not live in town and cannot vote; they have done a lot for the town.

L Lewis stated that she looks forward to changes she knows will happen and the progress that she knows will be made.

Mayor Russell called on Julie Nash.

J Nash thanked everyone who had voted for her. J Nash stated that she had been offered a promotion at work and would not have time to commit to the council; she will continue to volunteer for the town, but does not have time to be on council so she would like to be removed from the list of those wanting to fill the vacant council seat.

Mayor Marshall called on Hazel Smack.

H Smack stated that the town employees had taken her trash can lids the previous Tuesday; historically, they had been putting them in the cans.

Mayor Marshall called on Greg Duncan.

G Duncan stated he had heard rumblings regarding the Confederate monument; he does not need to be given anything or recognized for anything from history. G Duncan stated he would like for people to open up their hearts and start showing appreciation. G Duncan stated we cannot change history. G Duncan stated he would do whatever he could for Parksley if asked.

Mayor Russell called on James Daughton.

J Daughton stated that he thought increasing trash pickup fees by \$10/month, it would cover an outside contractor and allow the town to save money; he is concerned the trash truck will die in the near future creating a large bill. J Daughton stated he is aware the water tower needs work.

J Daughton stated that one of his neighbors is building without a permit; the county must give a permit before the town can issue a permit and the neighbor did not have one from the county. J Daughton said his concern is because they are building another room to house people.

J Daughton stated there are several houses in town that are being used as multi-family residences; the town should include a note in water bills stating that is illegal.

Public Works Director Siegert stated that the permit was for an outside eating area; he had the owner sign a document acknowledging that the building was not for a residence and that there is a \$250/day fine.

J Daughton stated he had called the county and they had issued a cease and desist order for the property; and the owner had begun work again because the town had issued a permit.

Public Works Director Siegert explained that the town has to issue a zoning permit before a property owner can obtain a building permit from the county.

J Daughton stated he spoke to the resident who stated the town's permit allowed him to build; the building will not pass inspection. J Daughton said he is disappointed with the town for giving him permission.

Public Works Director Siegert stated that the application was for a legal structure, but he will continue monitoring.

J Daughton stated the town should not have issued the permit without the county permit.

Public Works Director Siegert explained that property owner's must get a zoning permit from the town before they can apply for a building permit from the county.

J Daughton stated he thought Public Works Director Siegert was wrong about the town permit being needed first. J Daughton stated he knew what the building was going to be used for, regardless of what he tells Public Works Director Siegert; there are already six adults living there. J Daughton stated the people of town should start stepping down or stepping up to get this sort of thing under control, including derelict houses.

Mayor Russell stated that is on his list of things to do; the town has many things to do. The town has legislation on the books defining what a living room is and is not. Mayor Russell stated these things are hard to manage since it's constantly changing. Mayor Russell stated the town can't do anything about it if the residents are family.

J Daughton stated some people may just not be aware of the rules.

Mayor Russell acknowledged Billy Graham.

B Graham stated he was there to listen and only has one concern. B Graham stated he has paid taxes for several years in Parksley and he does not get representation; he doesn't hear the businesses being discussed. B Graham asked what the town would do if the businesses left. *Applause.*

Mayor Russell called on Allen Thornton to speak.

A Thornton asked how the vacant council seat would be filled - by the council or election?

Mayor Russell stated that ordinarily, the council would vote to fill the vacant seat. Mayor Russell stated there was a law passed in 2016 and deferred to Attorney Dix.

Attorney Dix summarized that the council may appoint a resident of town to fill the vacancy, but the town must hold a special election (probably in November) to verify the appointment.

Mayor Russell stated that in the past, if there were more council candidates than open seats, the candidate with the next highest vote would fill the seat. Mayor Russell stated the council would pick someone only if there were not enough candidates.

A Thornton stated that he heard the morning after the election, that there was manipulation on who would be filling the vacant seat and he doesn't believe that is fair to anyone. A Thornton believes that are a lot of qualified people in town to fill the vacancy and asked the council to leave the seat vacant until the election since it is only four months until the election. A Thornton stated there is a lot of hatred and bitterness in town. *Applause.*

Councilman Matthews clarified that, as far back as 2007, vacant council seats had not been filled by someone who had lost an election; that has never happened. D Matthews stated that, factually, the town has never given a vacant council seat to someone who has lost an election.

Councilman Matthews asked Mayor Russell to gavel H Nicholson for cross talking. Mayor Russell asked H Nicholson to wait for Councilman Matthews to finish speaking.

Councilman Matthews stated that Mayor Russell's claim at this and the last council meeting that vacant council seats were given to the person with the next highest votes is factually incorrect. Councilman Matthews stated that the way the seat would be filled is a separate conversation. Councilman Matthews stated that several attendees were unhappy about rumors regarding how the council would fill the vacant seat; to complain about people acting on rumor and gossip and then spread rumor and gossip from the floor is counterproductive.

Mayor Russell called on H Nicholson.

H Nicholson stated that Councilman Matthews had been disrespectful by his actions. H Nicholson stated that about 208 people had voted in the election when there are typically only 30 votes. H Nicholson stated that to appoint someone else who had not received the most votes is wrong.

Councilman Matthews stated that his opinions are not the action of council. Councilman Matthews stated that it is inaccurate to say that the actions of the council are determined before the meeting because nobody knows what will happen when they get to the meeting. Councilman Matthews stated that people can have discussions

wherever, but they can't complain about rumor and innuendo and then act on rumor and innuendo. Mayor Russell gaveled Councilman Matthews.

H Nicholson stated that Councilman Matthews was referring to him since he and Councilman Matthews are having the discussion; H Nicholson stated the residents of town come to his place to talk.

Mayor Russell called on Mark Layne.

M Layne stated that he gave facts, not rumors. M Layne asked to be shown where the town voted on charging his church for water. M Layne stated the council is not acting without bias and asked how many council members were on the fire department; the council stated four, including the previous council. Mayor Russell gaveled twice.

Mayor Russell recognized former Mayor W Marshall.

W Marshall asked if anyone else was interested in the vacant council seat.

Mayor Russell stated that Mr. Layne and someone who didn't want their name put forward yet were also interested in the vacant seat.

W Marshall stated that he would like the seat, but the town is in an uproar and people wouldn't be happy regardless of who is appointed; he thinks it's best if the council left the seat vacant until the election. W Marshall stated that he would withdraw his interest in the appointment if the other interested parties also withdrew, and run for election in November.

A Gray stated that it is not a popularity contest, it is about who the town wants in the seat; the residents want what's best for the town. A Gray stated that citizens came out in droves and put the mayor and council in their seats for a reason.

Mayor Russell stated his friend, who is a politician, called him the night of the election and stated that a 2% win is a landslide, you won by 20%. His friend told him not to think that everybody loves Frank Russell because he won, they are tired of the way things are being done and they want different people in there to make changes. Mayor Russell stated that would be his mandate - to make changes and do what is best for the citizens. Mayor Russell stated he doesn't care who likes who; if they work for the town of Parksley, he is going to work with them. Mayor Russell stated that if you work for the town of Parksley, you are his person, you are on his team; if you are not, you are just dead weight to the town.

Mayor Russell called on Henry Nicholson.

H Nicholson stated he doesn't dislike anybody, he likes everybody. H Nicholson stated he may dislike how someone acts or the things they say. H Nicholson said he will listen.

Mayor Russell stated that he has told the new council that they may not always agree on things and they may argue at the meetings, but he leaves it at the door. Mayor Russell stated that had been a problem on the council for some time now. Mayor Russell stated it needs to be over with; you can't plot and plan and work under the table or shadowbox, you shouldn't be on the council. Mayor Russell stated everyone has to work together.

Mayor Russell recognized John Bowden.

J Bowden asked if the vacant council seat had been or would be advertised.

Mayor Russell said he plans to advertise for the open council seat to let everyone know.

Councilman Taylor stated that would be addressed when the council gets to new business.

Mayor Russell stated there are cookies and doughnuts in the back.

Mayor Russell recognized Betty Farley.

B Farley stated that her home is surrounded by homes that serve as second homes to their owners; she asked if the town could send the homeowners a list of things they can and cannot do, garbage policies, fire pits, Air BNB, etc. B Farley stated that the homeowners may not be aware of some of the ordinances; she thinks it is ridiculous that people are allowed to get away with some things.

Mayor Russell stated that he had asked Attorney T Dix to look at the charter and Virginia state law and determine for him who oversees the town employees, their daily assignments, and their daily work schedules.

Attorney Dix read from Section 3 of the charter and summarized that the mayor shall be the chief executive and administrative officer; preside over town meetings; he shall be the head of the town government for ceremonial things; he shall see that the duties of officers are faithfully performed. Attorney Dix stated the mayor is in charge to get the business of the town done. Attorney Dix stated that the office of Chief of Police shall be appointed by the council.

Mayor Russell stated that the council members had thirty days after the first meeting to be sworn in.

Mayor Russell asked Mr. Greer for a report. Police Chief Greer stated that the courts had finally started opening back up. Chief Greer stated that the suspects in the Dollar General robberies are awaiting trial.

Mayor Russell asked Mr. Greer to do him a favor before the next meeting - he would like a comprehensive written plan on how the police department handles, transports, and stores stolen money or property that has been recovered. Chief Greer stated he would have that done.

Mayor Russell excused Mr. Greer three times. Chief Greer asked if he could stay. Mayor Russell stated that he preferred him to leave and asked if he was being paid. Chief Greer replied that he was not.

Mayor Russell asked Mr. Siegert for a report on the sewage. Public Works Director Siegert stated that the engineers had come for a site visit and planned to rewrite the owner's manual. Public Works Director Siegert said the sewage numbers were evening out, but were still a little high. Public Works Director Siegert stated that the seven engineers were pretty positive about being able to get the system operational. Mayor Russell asked Public Works Director Siegert to get him a written report on the sewage numbers for the last six months and a letter from the health department stating what the target numbers should be and how long before a new business could hook up.

Councilman Taylor asked what the sewage numbers mean. Mayor Russell stated that he doesn't know what the numbers are or what they mean and that's why he is requesting a report.

Mayor Russell excused Mr. Siegert.

Mayor Russell stated the council needs to appoint a Vice Mayor, Councilman Parks had timed out on it since he held the office for two years. Mayor Russell asked if any of the council was interested. Mayor Russell explained that the Vice Mayor would fill the role of mayor if the mayor was absent.

Mayor Russell asked Councilman Welch if he had thought about the position of Vice Mayor. Councilman Welch replied that he is not in town enough currently because of his business. Councilman Welch respectfully declined due to not having the time if something were to happen.

Councilman Parks suggested Councilman Matthews because of his tenure.

Councilman Taylor stated that both he and Councilwoman Bundick were not familiar enough yet to consider being Vice Mayor.

Councilman Taylor made the motion to appoint Councilman Matthews to Vice Mayor. Motion was 2nd by Councilman Parks. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick, Welch. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Russell stated that he would like new guttering installed on the Farmer's Market. Councilman Taylor asked for the price. Mayor Russell stated that he did not have one, but he would get one.

Mayor Russell would like John Bowden to look over the town's finances and see if we can make them better and more efficient and our procedures for our town office. Councilman Taylor asked if Mr. Bowden can do the town's audit.

Mayor Russell stated that the town has to be audited by someone holding certain qualifications until the grant money is dispersed. Mayor Russell stated that the auditor is very expensive. Councilman Taylor stated that the fire company pays the same amount for their annual audit.

Mayor Russell stated he would like Mr. Bowden to go through our town information, find out how much money we have, how much money we don't have, what it costs to do various things, and how we can improve on our efficiency.

Councilman Taylor asked Mr. Bowden how much that would cost. Mr. Bowden stated he did not do because he isn't sure what exactly the town wants him to do. Councilman Taylor stated that he would give his \$2,000 council pay to give up; he did not join the council for money.

Mayor Russell stated that a review of this nature had never been done. Mayor Russell stated that John had come up with good ideas from casually reviewing the numbers.

Councilman Welch stated he is not against hiring him; he had some good ideas and had helped other towns.

Councilman Taylor made the motion to employ Mr. Bowden to go over the procedures and process, books, and see if we could do things more efficiently than what is being done now.

Councilman Matthews stated the motion needed to be made in new business.

Mayor Russell stated he did not have an agenda so he was winging it; we didn't have an official agenda. Mayor Russell asked Councilman Taylor to make his motion again.

Councilman Taylor made the motion to employ Mr. Bowden to and have him review our process and see if we could do something more efficient. Councilman Matthews asked if the council could get more clarification before hiring Mr. Bowden. Mayor Russell stated \$2,000 and he would like it added to the budget. Councilman Matthews stated that he thought it would be helpful to give him some direction. Motion was 2nd by Councilman Parks. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick, Welch. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Russell asked how the council felt about opening the public restrooms and fixing the door and keeping them open from 8 am until 7 pm.

H Nicholson asked hadn't the council voted on this earlier.

Councilman Matthews stated that it had been opened and J Stauffer had the key; he believed it was closed again due to vandalism.

M Layne stated that sewage was leaking out at the festival. Mayor Russell stated that was a fluke.

H Nicholson stated the council voted to open the bathrooms daily. H Nicholson stated he watched the door swing open and close for a month because it needed a spring; he had called several council members and addressed it with them. H Nicholson stated it was never taken care of.

Mayor Russell called on Cara Burton.

C Burton asked if the town would be following CDC guidelines regarding cleaning the bathrooms during the coronavirus pandemic. C Burton asked if the town had the staffing to keep it clean.

Mayor Russell stated the town would have to find the staffing to clean the restroom.

Mayor Russell stated the council should wait until the pandemic ends and address the public restrooms then.

Mayor Russell called on Mark Layne.

M Layne offered to set up his church's spare sound system for the next meeting.

Mayor Russell stated that Mark Layne had offered to broadcast the town's meetings locally on FM radio if the council thinks it would be good.

Mayor Russell stated that the town needs to figure out how to make more money; he has a few ideas and has some things cooking that will revolutionize Parksley if he can get them to work, he doesn't know what's going to happen.

Mayor Russell stated last year sometime, there was a misunderstanding about Violet's dumpster down the street. Mayor Russell stated that is a revenue generating source and he wonders how the council feels about putting that dumpster back and getting some money out of it. Mayor Russell stated he had spoken to Marilyn and she would be more than willing to have it back if the town is willing to put it back.

Councilman Matthews asked if the dumpster was something that needed to be addressed in executive session. Mayor Russell said it is not.

Mayor Russell stated the town charges businesses monthly for commercial trash; they have dumpsters. Public Works Director Siegert stated the town bills it as a service, not to make money.

Councilman Parks asked why the town removed the dumpster. Mayor Russell stated it was a misunderstanding he thought. Public Works Director Siegert suggested discussing it in executive session before making a decision. Mayor Russell asked why the council would need to go into executive session to discuss a dumpster, the council has enough to discuss in executive session.

The council members agreed to have public works put the dumpster back at Violet's.

Mayor Russell stated that Councilman Matthews wanted to talk about Facebook stuff.

Councilman Matthews asked Clerk Greer who currently had access to the town's Facebook page. Clerk Greer stated the town's email address is currently linked; and Brittany Russell-Taylor and Councilman Matthews had access. Councilman Taylor asked who's administrators and who isn't. Councilman Matthews stated he was administrator for a few hours, just long enough to update the page with the new logos. Clerk Greer stated she wasn't sure. Councilman Taylor stated he knew Brittany was not an administrator anymore.

Councilman Matthews stated he believes the town needs to decide who does and does not have access to the town's Facebook page; in his opinion, only employees and council members should have access.

Mayor Russell stated that the only reason Brittany was on it was because she was asked to be on it because it wasn't getting enough people posting things about the festivals and things of that nature; she doesn't care whether she is on it or not, she's willing to do anything to help the town as she always has been. Mayor Russell stated that if the council or citizens do not want Brittany on there, it makes no difference to them, never did.

Councilman Matthews explained that the town's Facebook is primarily to make announcements about meetings or events; they have also posted reminders about ordinances, trash day, elections, to promote the festival.

Mayor Russell stated that it is handy for some things, it gets abused a lot, but it is handy for some things. Mayor Russell stated it gets abused a lot.

Mayor Russell asked Councilman Matthews if he would like to get together and have a work session on that. Councilman Matthews stated that the council needs rules and procedures for this, that would eliminate most of the problems. Mayor Russell requested they table it; he asked for ideas and stated he would ask around and get ideas from other people.

Mayor Russell asked Councilman Taylor if he would like to leave it the way it was before or leave it the way it is now. Councilman Taylor stated his point was that the only way things should be changed in this town is by rule of the council and on July 1, it was completely changed and he made the request to have it all put back the way that it was until this council made a decision on what they would do with it; nothing should've changed on July 1 because there was an election and new council members and the charter says things stay the same, it doesn't all change because you got a new council.

Mayor Russell stated that ordinarily the council would be reappointing officers of the town at the July meeting, but because of the charter change, the council has until January to reappoint the clerk and maintenance supervisor and so on and so forth; he asked if the council was okay with that. The council agreed.

Councilman Matthews stated that the oaths of office administered to the new mayor and new council members listed June 30 as their last day, but it should actually read December 31 since the town's charter had been changed. Mayor Russell stated that he would call him tomorrow.

Mayor Russell stated that he had not been to Taylor Bank to sign the signature cards for the bank accounts since it wasn't appropriate to do it before, but he would go that week.

Mayor Russell stated he would like to get a preliminary group, a small group, together on some ideas to update the charter; he asked if anyone was interested. Mayor Russell also volunteered to put some things together. Councilwoman Bundick, Councilman Taylor, and Councilman Matthews volunteered. Councilman Matthews explained that three council members meeting constitutes a public meeting so they should only have two. Councilwoman Bundick withdrew. Mayor Russell stated he would set up a meeting with Councilman Taylor and Councilman Matthews. Councilman Taylor stated he would like Attorney Dix present as well.

Mayor Russell distributed a canons of conduct to the council for review as a social media policy. Clerk Greer asked for a copy for the minutes. Mayor Russell stated that it was initially crafted by the Supreme Court of Virginia and the Attorney Dix modified it for Parksley. Mayor Russell stated he thought the citizens were not happy with the town's social media presence and he is not either.

Mayor Russell stated he is not a social media darling, but there needs to be some constraints; apparently, good taste and kindness and love thy neighbor is out the window on social media now.

Mayor Russell recited the proposed canons of conduct. Applause.

Clerk Greer stated she had questions.

Mayor Russell recognized Donna Phillips.

D Phillips stated that nobody gets along; she stated the town needs a council that is going to be concerned about its citizens and its businesses. She stated that they need to stop going public places and bad-mouthing each other. D Phillips asked who was going to hold the council accountable. Applause. D Phillips stated that a council member had gone into a business and told the owner to keep her mouth shut in a public forum. D Phillips asked who was going to hold the council to policies and procedures like they hold the public to.

Councilman Taylor stated that he felt the council members are town employees since they receive town funds to do the job. Mayor Russell agreed. Councilman Matthews stated that the council are not legally employees, they cannot be suspended without pay.

D Phillips stated the bashing needs to stop; the town used to have pride and dignity and no longer does because of their actions. D Phillips asked what was going to happen to council members who were rude and disrespectful. Councilman Taylor stated that it would have to be brought before the council.

D Phillips stated that she is not going to allow a council member to come to her store and tell her that she cannot ask a question at a public meeting; it is disrespectful. D Phillips stated Parksley would end up worse than Onley because they have employees that may sue; everyone needs to do what's right and act like adults. Applause.

Mayor Russell called on Madam Clerk.

Clerk Greer stated the canons appear to be something that should be part of a personnel policy that the town does not have. Clerk Greer stated that the part of the canons forbidding employees from speaking about town business goes against her job duties as clerk and FOIA officer.

Mayor Russell asked Attorney Dix to respond.

Attorney Dix stated that the clerk has an obligation as part of her job so it would not be covered by the canons.

Clerk Greer asked if there was a personnel committee. Mayor Russell stated there is not one and the charter does not require one. Clerk Greer stated there had historically been a personnel committee and expressed her concern with the sanctions listed in the canons - would they be determined by the proposed canons or by the personnel committee?

Councilman Matthews asked who would define noncompliance. Councilman Matthews stated that the council could not be punished the same as employees. Councilman Matthews stated the canons should state that supervisors should treat their employees with respect, it already states employees should treat their supervisors with respect.

Councilman Matthews stated that the policy should apply to behavior outside of social media as well; there has been conduct unbecoming in meetings and outside of meetings. Councilman Matthews stated that anything expected of employees should be expected of elected officials as well; everyone needs to be held accountable.

Mayor Russell stated the proposed canons were a first step and asked if those in attendance agreed that the town needs a social media policy.

Councilman Matthews stated the town needs a code of conduct; it had been rejected months ago.

Mayor Russell stated that everyone could agree that some things posted on Facebook were inappropriate. Councilman Matthews stated that everyone could also agree that things said in people's businesses were inappropriate. Mayor Russell stated that one on one conversations don't go all over the world. Councilman Matthews stated that the only difference is the mode, the behavior is the same. Councilman Matthews asked why the behavior leading to the post or conversation is inappropriate, but the only thing being addressed is the social media post, not the behavior leading to it. Mayor Russell stated there is no way to sanction a conversation.

Mayor Russell recognized April Gray.

A Gray stated the social media policy is a first step, not a personnel handbook or a code of conduct; she stated that the social media policy is needed.

Councilman Matthews stated the first step cannot be only social media, it needs to include how people act because the things that people have done are inappropriate.

A Gray stated that the social media policy is a first step, a personnel policy can be developed at the next meeting.

Councilman Matthews stated there are other behaviors happening that not everyone is aware of. Mayor Russell gaveled.

Mayor Russell stated he is dropping the social media policy for the time being and will form a committee to work it out.

Councilman Matthews stated that someone could make a motion if they wanted to adopt the canons of conduct or form a personnel committee.

Councilman Parks made the motion to form a social media/personnel committee. Councilman Taylor asked that Councilman Parks amend the motion to state that the first job of the personnel committee is to create an employee handbook. Councilman Parks amended the motion as requested. Motion was 2nd by Councilman Taylor. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick, Welch. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Russell stated that, at the last meeting, the council voted unanimously to sell the confederate statue for \$1 to Sons of the Confederacy. Councilman Matthews asked if it was to be sold to the Sons of the Confederacy or the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Attorney Dix stated it was Sons of the Confederate Veterans. Mayor Russell stated that it was already sold to Harmonson-West Camp on February 2, 1903 so the town does not likely own it.

Councilman Matthews asked if the sale would include the land as well as the monument. Mayor Russell stated it was the land as well.

Attorney Dix stated that Accomack County records show the land is owned by the town of Parksley, but he is still researching. A representative of the Sons of the Confederate Veterans had reached out to him and their attorney will draft a contract for the town to convey the property to that organization with the understanding that the property would remain as is; the property may be returned to the town. Attorney Dix stated that if the town does own the property, the town can still convey its interest in the property to the Sons of the Confederate Veterans. Mayor Russell stated he needs the council to approve Mr. Dix drawing up the legal paperwork and moving forward with it.

Councilman Matthews asked if the council could discuss whether or not to sell the land the monument sits on. Mayor Russell stated the council had already voted to sell it, including the land.

Clerk Greer stated that the council had voted to sell the land and monument to the Sons of the Confederacy, not the Sons of the Confederate Veterans so they need a new motion anyway.

Councilman Welch left at 9:25.

Councilman Taylor asked Mr. Dix if the council is set to proceed with the sale without another vote. Attorney Dix stated that Clerk Greer shared that the motion the council had passed was to sell the land and monument to a different organization than the Sons of the Confederate Veterans. A representative (Gary) of the Sons of the Confederate Veterans explained that the Virginia division would take possession of the monument and land; if that division fails, it would revert to the national organization.

Councilman Taylor made the motion to sell it to the Sons of the Confederate Veterans. Motion was 2nd by Councilwoman Bundick. Attorney Dix stated that the town must hold a public hearing before disposing of public land. Councilman Taylor withdrew his motion.

Councilman Taylor made the motion to hold a public hearing to receive comments on the sale of the confederate monument and related land at 6:30 pm before the next council meeting. Motion was 2nd by Councilwoman Bundick. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick, Welch. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Matthews stated that he posted the new logos on the town's Facebook page; the town businesses are free to use, he has developed a Parksley Branding Agreement that must be signed before using the logos. The agreement basically states the logos cannot be changed.

Councilman Matthews stated that he had reviewed two proposed ordinances regarding removal of blight (and recovery of cost) at the last council meeting; the town needs to adopt the ordinances as required by the grant.

B Graham accused Councilman Matthews of wanting to get in other people's lives. Councilman Matthews explained that the ordinances were required for the grant. Councilman Matthews stated that B Graham is receiving grant funds. Councilman Matthews stated that B Graham was out of order; B Graham stated that Councilman Matthews was out of order.

Councilman Taylor stated Councilman Matthews reaction to B Graham was unprofessional; Councilman Matthews agreed. Councilman Taylor stated B Graham was unprofessional.

Councilman Matthews stated the ordinances must be passed.

Councilman Matthews stated that town business owners participating in the grant must submit their commitments by Friday July 17 or they are responsible for fixing their own buildings without matching funds; the funds reserved for those businesses who don't complete their paperwork by the deadline will be redistributed by the facade improvement committee.

Councilman Matthews made the motion to approve the use of the Town of Parksley Branding Agreement. Motion was 2nd by Councilwoman Bundick. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Taylor made the motion to go into Executive Session for financial matters.

An anonymous guest asked to speak; she stated there is a lot of unhappiness. She stated she had lived on the shore her whole life and Parksley is a part of her life; it is important to act as town and there is a lot of positive coming with the grant and the library. She stated that there is much fighting and bickering and we need to figure out a way to work together; there may be council members who are power hungry and town employees working hard and not being treated well by council members. She is concerned the town may lose its whole town office. She stated that everyone needs to work together.

Councilman Matthews apologized to H Nicholson and A Gray and stated that he would apologize to B Graham when he sees him.

Motion was 2nd by Councilman Parks. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

WHEREAS, the Parksley Town Council has convened an Executive Session 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 2.2-3711(A) of the code of Virginia requires a certification by this Town Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Parksley 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 Executive Session to which this certification resolution applies, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the Executive Session were heard, discussed or considered by the Town Council.

Councilman Parks made the motion to go back into regular session. Motion was 2nd by Councilman Matthews. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Parks made the motion to go into Executive Session for personnel matters. Motion was 2nd by Councilman Matthews. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

WHEREAS, the Parksley Town Council has convened an Executive Session 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 2.2-3711(A) of the code of Virginia requires a certification by this Town Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Parksley 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 Executive Session to which this certification resolution applies, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the Executive Session were heard, discussed or considered by the Town Council.

Councilman Parks made the motion to go back into regular session. Motion was 2nd by Councilman Matthews. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Matthews made the motion to adjourn. Motion was 2nd by Councilman Parks. Ayes - Matthews, Parks, Taylor, Bundick. No - none. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10 pm.

July 13, 2020

Clerk

Mayor