

**TOWN OF TRYON  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TRYON TOWN HALL – MCCOWN MEETING ROOM  
DECEMBER 19, 2023 7:00 PM**

Present: Mayor J. Alan Peoples

Mayor Pro Tem Chrelle Booker

Commissioners Present: Bill Crowell, Bill Ingham, Crys Armbrust

Staff Present: Jim Fatland, Town Manager      Susan Bell, Town Clerk  
Tim Daniels, Planning Director      Scott Holt, Interim Police Chief  
Josh Walton, Fire Chief      Greg McCool, Public Works Director  
William Morgan, Town Attorney

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order and asked for a moment of silence. Mayor Pro Tem Booker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA ADOPTION**

Mayor Peoples asked if there are any additions, deletions or corrections. Being none, he entertained a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Armbrust so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

Mayor Peoples asked John and Kathy Toomey to come forward and he presented the Citizen of the Year Award to them both. Mr. Toomey thanked everyone. It is an honor and they do like to give back the community. A lot of good organizations here in Tryon and they are glad to be a part them.

Mayor Peoples presented a very young lady, named Charlie Johnson with a Proclamation recognizing her as CEO of Big Guns Coffee.

**CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTION**

Mayor Peoples asked if there are any additions, deletions or corrections. Being none, he entertained a motion to adopt the consent agenda, which contains the Board minutes from September 19, 2023 and October 17, 2023, Tax Reports, Financial Statements from October and November, Grant Status Report and for information purposes only the Tourism Board and Harmon Field Board minutes. Commissioner Ingham so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

**UPDATE ON AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023**

Town Manager Fatland reported he is going to keep this on the agenda until the statements are reported to them. Only 17% of the cities in the state have completed them. The auditors are hoping to present them next month.

### **RESOLUTION APPROVING MUNICIPAL SERVICES ASSISTANCE MEMORANDUM AGREEMENT NCLM**

Town Manager Fatland reported last month he presented information from the league stating they can give us free assistance. Before the Board is a Resolution Approving Municipal Services Assistance Memorandum Agreement with NCLM. Their services go beyond what he was thinking. Grant writing up to \$10,000 and Engineering services up to \$50,000, along with Cybersecurity services. We need grant writer to help get money to do an updated master plan for Harmon Field.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adopt the Resolution approving Municipal Services Assistance Memorandum. Commissioner Armbrust so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

### **TRYON FIRE DEPARTMENT APPARATUS**

Town Manager Fatland asked Chief Walton to go over the needs of the Fire Department. Chief Walton reported they are looking to sell an engine (1,000 gallons) and a tanker (1,000 gallons). The engine is considered passed its date to be certified as an engine, but it is still one of the best running trucks. They are looking at selling the tanker to Ebbs Chapel Fire Department, which is interested in purchasing the vehicle. Mr. Fatland is looking at repurposing the 2010 Tahoe to another town department. DANA Fire Department has offered to sell us a newer model suburban for the cost of \$20,000. It comes with lights and equipment. It will be our training vehicle and personnel vehicle. Gowensville Fire Department approached them about trading a newer model Dodge 2014 four door pickup truck for our brush truck. Their Dodge is higher in value. We will make it a brush truck and it comes with a skid unit. It will be a little easier to maneuver around town.

Manager Fatland reported the trade with the water department will be a good fit, because they don't put many miles on a vehicle. It was purchased with fire tax dollars. This is the reason you see an allocation of \$4,000 to go to the Fire Department.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adopt the Resolution Approving Conveyance of property to another unit of government, sale of surplus vehicle and purchase/trade of another vehicle (fire apparatus). Commissioner Armbrust so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

### **PUBLIC WORKS GARAGE RELOCATION PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Town Manager Fatland reported as you know we retained SDG Engineering firm to help us on the relocation of the Public Works Garage from downtown to the Sewer Plant. We have the geo-technical report done now and it will work. The firm that we are using for the design portion is having some family issues and have fallen behind on getting the project done. He and SDG Engineering would like to substitute another firm to handle the design portion to be done at no additional cost. Commissioner Ingham asked if this included looking at the sidewalk on East Howard Street. Fatland responded yes. They are looking at that also and will include in the report. The Board agreed with the new firm.

### **TDDA UPDATE**

Downtown Development Director Newman reported many events had been held since the last meeting. Small Town Saturday was very successful. The Christmas Stroll was lovely in spite of the rain. We have another 4<sup>th</sup> Friday coming up this Friday, the 22<sup>nd</sup>. We have Tryon Midnight coming up on December 31<sup>st</sup>. She asked the board to close Trade Street from 4-11 pm. She is working with the TDDA Board on the transition as she moves out of this position the end of this month. TDDA will have another board

meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup>, in which she will have as much information for them as possible. She wanted thank staff for all of their support and thank the Board of Commissioners for all of their support. She especially wanted to thank the TDDA Board for their support. It's the most incredible board that she has ever worked with. They have a passion for Tryon.

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to close Trade Street for the 31<sup>st</sup> Tryon Midnight event and at the corner of Palmer Street and Trade Street (on Trade Street) about a hundred feet to set up events for the children for an event on the 23<sup>rd</sup> from 5-8 pm. Commissioner Armbrust so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **MINIMUM HOUSING/PLANNING UPDATE**

Planning Director Daniels reported on 51 Shepherd Street. It was reported the property had changed hands and he was waiting for the attorney to get him the new owner information. Now that he has the new owner he sent them a letter, via certified mail and he is waiting for the letter to be delivered to continue the process.

#### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

Town Manager Fatland thanked the board for attending the holiday luncheon that was well attended by employees. He thinks this shows appreciation of the employees. He appointed Captain Scott Holt as the Interim Police Chief due to the resignation of Police Chief Randall Hodge. He has also asked former Police Chief Arrowood to help mentor Chief Holt during the transition. He has posted the opening for TDDA Director and has already received a half dozen applications. He asked Tim Daniels to be a coordinator with him during this transition, until someone is hired. The TDDA board would like to have a joint interview panel to hire the position and he agrees.

Mayor Peoples thanked the staff for everything they do.

#### **COUNCIL/MAYOR REPORT**

Commissioner Armbrust thanked everyone for being here and wished everyone a Happy Holiday.

Commissioner Ingham was impressed with the crowd here tonight. He also wished everyone Happy Holidays. He thanked Michelle for doing a wonderful job. We are going to miss you.

Commissioner Crowell thanked the citizens for coming out. He thanked Michelle for her time and energy. We will miss you. He wished everybody a Merry Christmas and see you next year.

Mayor Pro Tem Booker thanked everybody for coming out. She thanked Charlie for what she had done. She thanked Michelle and told her she had done a wonderful job. She wished everybody a Merry Christmas and asked that everybody be safe.

Mayor Peoples reported "Best place he has ever lived, reason he is still here". He has some ideas. Some of those he has put in the newspaper. Everyone will not agree with them. He was told one time, by someone that he loves Tryon more than anybody he knows and he told the truth. He thanked the staff and the citizens for coming. If you are here, then you understand why the rest of us are.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS & RESPONSES**

Alan Casavant reported he had seen his vision for the future of some of the buildings on Trade Street. Glad it is the same as the building owners also. His question is, what about the power lines. They can't do much with the power lines there. Mayor Peoples responded they have some things in the works. The power lines in the ground are part of his vision too. Mr. Casavant asked if we had contacted Duke Energy to get a pricing. Mayor Peoples responded there are things that have to happen before we get that far. Twenty-five to thirty years ago Duke Power offered to bury the lines if we would pay for the material and we turned it down. Why? Commissioner Crowell responded it was to put in new street lights and he guesses the overall rental cost was more than the sitting board at that time wanted to stomach. He asked Wanda May how much TDDA raised. She responded TDDA received \$200,000 Federal grant. They raised a total of \$400,000. Prior to that Duke Power wanted to rent the lights to us, so TDDA decided to purchase the lights.

Mayor Peoples replied burying the cables is part of what he is thinking. Mr. Casavant replied that is what he is doing today. Talking to engineers with Duke. He and several property owners are going to do this and pay for it out of their pockets. It is imperative the Town gets involved. Mayor Peoples responded he and Crys started talking about a boardwalk about eighteen years ago and it hasn't changed yet. The slowest thing in the world is local government. People want to see things happen, but when you go to raise taxes, everything stops. The thing is we all have to work together.

### **ADJOURN**

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Booker so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

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J. Alan Peoples, Mayor

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Susan B. Bell, Town Clerk