

TOWN OF NEWLAND  
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING  
MARCH 7TH, 2022



**ATTENDING:**

**Mayor: Derek Roberts**

**Alderman: Kenny Caraway, Gail Haller, Christie Hughes, James Johnson  
Lauren Turbyfill**

**Guests: Scott Bumgardner, Keith Hoilman, Mike Tolson, Alcie  
Sturgill, Teresa Foxx, Kenan Foxx, Alena Stair, Judy Hughes,  
Victoria Darlington, Republic Representative Sharon, Lily  
Kincaid, Sandy Lewis, Dane Phillips, Cobbie Palmer**

**Staff: Town Administrator Bill Bailey, Town Clerk Jennifer Beam,  
Police Chief Byron Clawson, Captain Michael Fields, Officer  
Chris Clark, Public Works Supervisor Gary Lewis, Melisa  
Borkowski**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance, and reminded everyone of ethics awareness.

Christie made a motion to approve the February minutes, Lauren seconded the motion and all agreed by show of hands and stating aye.

James made a motion to adopt the agenda Kenny seconded the motion. All agreed by show of hands and stating aye.

## **AGENDA:**

Mike Tolson with Mack Gay Associates came before the board to announce that Newland has been awarded a couple of asset inventory assessment grants through the division of water infrastructure. The grants will total \$300,000 to be used towards getting a complete inventory and condition assessment of Newland's water and sewer system.

Alcie Sturgill asked the board about the water situation on Eskona Street. Jamie said that if the town were to dig out the ditch and clean it out, it may help Alcie's situation. Alcie said that she believes that there needs to be a bigger tile for the water to go into. Gary stated that space is limited for a bigger tile because of the sewer line that runs there. Bill said that coming down the road there is an asphalt firm which channels all the water to one side of the road and then it goes on across to Alcie's property. The Mayor stated that we could remove the asphalt and maybe that would help her situation. Gary said he believed the asphalt was put there to direct the water away from the house on the other side of the street. The Mayor assured Alcie that the town is working on it.

Jessica mentioned that the town has an account with First National Bank and their branch is closing. Jessica continued that she is not an authorized signer on the account and needs to be able to move those funds before that branch closes. James made a motion to make Jessica Buchanan an authorized signer on the account, Gail seconded the motion, all agreed by show of hands and stating aye. Christie suggested Jessica look and see who has the best interest rates for the funds. Lauren made a motion for Jessica to move the funds from the closing account with First National Bank to the bank of her preference based on the highest interest rates, James seconded the motion and all agreed by show of hands and stating aye.

Bill stated the fireworks contract is with same contractor as previous years. It is for \$8,500 for a larger show and the show will be in a different location this year due to the RV park. James made a motion to accept the fireworks contract for this year, Christie seconded the motion, all agreed by show of hands and stating aye.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Victoria Darlington asked if the citizens could contact DOT about potholes within the town. The Mayor mentioned that the town will be working to fix most of them this year.

Alena Stair came to the board because the stop sign that was put up for the three ways stop on her road was taken down less than twenty-four hours after it was put up due to being put on a light pole. Alena mentioned that several other stop signs on her street were put on light poles and they were still there. The Mayor said that the sign will have to be put on a different pole. Bill said there's an issue of trying to locate a gas line before we place the pole. Kenny asked which stop sign Alena is referring too. Alena said when you come to the end of Shady Street before Wyatt Street. Alena said there were supposed to be three speed bumps. Bill stated he is working on getting quotes for the speed tables and possible raising that intersection. Alena asked if the stop sign could be put back up until the more permanent solution. Bill stated we are not going to get permission from Mountain Electric to put something on their light pole as it blocks them from trying to climb the light pole.

Bill stated there's an old right-of-way that the town has that has never been opened about one hundred feet down from where Mike's entrance was on the main highway. The property owner is willing to give the town the property if we could build a bridge which the town could do through a grant process. Kenny stated when the town was laid out there was a proposed street called

South Street. Bill stated that he can not find evidence where the town abandoned the right-of-way.

The Mayor asked when the contract is up with Republic, Bill stated June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Mayor asked Sharon, the Republic Representative about Republic being the only waste company that the citizen's of Newland can use. Sharon stated she was not apart of the original RFP, and she assumed Republic just bid on the contract and that was part of it. The Mayor stated if Republic would be bidding in June they should not include the clause that the townspeople have to use them. Bill stated normally this is a tax that comes on the citizen's tax bill, the citizen doesn't pay Republic directly it is a service through the town.

#### **REPORTS:**

Gary gave the public works report. He mentioned that 520,000 gallons of water went through the wastewater treatment plant in a three-day period. Gary continued there is a lot of infiltration which is unnecessary wear on the equipment. Christie asked about the rags found in the manhole at Appalachian Seal Coating. Gary stated that it is not just rags there is a lot of trash that gets into the system every day.

Jessica gave the finance report. She has all of the payrolls and revenue entered from 2021-2022. Southern Software sent the contract for 2023-2024. Jessica mentioned there are several items not covered but the annual support is \$5,200. Jamie stated that the town can add whatever needs to be added to the contract. Jamie asked if Jessica still needs help. Jessica stated that Bill is working on it. The Mayor stated that if she needs someone then lets get someone in here to help out. Christie said the board discussed this last month. There is money to hire someone on a part-time

basis. Jessica mentioned Paul is doing the bank reconciliations from 2021 but she would like help to catch up on 2022 reconciliation since we are in budget. Gail stated that she thought the board had already voted on Jessica getting parttime help. Kenny stated in the last month's meeting, and he made the motion to hire this person with a definite starting date an ending day with no benefits it was a part-time position and there was money already in the budget for it.

Chief Clawson gave the board the police report.

Bill mentioned that the High Country Polaris sent another offer to the board. The Mayor stated that was not what the board agreed too. Kenny said the board had agreed on one third down payment and then the other two thirds made in equal payments and here we are another month down the road. Kenny said he believes Gerald should tell him to pay in full or foreclose. Bill said he would let Gerald know.

Bill stated he emailed a list to the board to send to the grant administrators on how Newland would like to use the 3.2 Million dollar grant. He wanted to be sure those items are how the board would like to spend the funds. The board agreed.

The Mayor asked if we ever receive the eighty thousand dollars that was stolen from the United Community Bank account. Jessica answered sixty-six thousand of it has come back. Bill stated the banks position is the town is lucky that we got that much back. Bill described the situation that happened with the bank. Kenny stated he had a similar situation happen to him personally with the same bank. Kenny credited the Chief and his departments diligence as the main reason

he received his money back. The board agreed if we need to get the attorney involved with United, Bill should do so.

**Council Comments:**

Lauren asked about scheduling budget meetings. Bill stated as of right now we will continue to meet at 5 o'clock on regular meeting nights.

Jamie thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Kenny made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Gail seconded the motion. All agreed by stating aye.

**MEETING ADJOURNED.**

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MAYOR DEREK ROBERTS

TOWN CLERK, JENNIFER S. BEAM