

AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE VINTON TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2021, AT 7:00 P.M. BY ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 15.2-1413, CODE OF VIRGINIA (1950), AS AMENDED, ORDINANCE NO. 1016 AND SECTION 4-0.01(G) OF CHAPTER 1289 OF THE 2020 ACTS OF THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bradley E. Grose, Mayor
Sabrina McCarty, Vice Mayor
Keith N. Liles
Laurie J. Mullins
Michael W. Stovall

STAFF PRESENT: Pete Peters, Town Manager
Susan N. Johnson, Executive Assistant/Town Clerk
Jeremy Carroll, Town Attorney
Anne Cantrell, Finance Director/Treasurer
Fabricio Drumond, Police Chief

The Vinton Town Council meeting was held via Zoom with livestreaming on the Town of Vinton, Virginia Government Facebook Page. The Mayor called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Town Clerk called the roll with Council Member Liles, Council Member Mullins, Council Member Stovall, Vice Mayor McCarty and Mayor Grose present and announced there was a quorum of Council. The Town Clerk next announced the names of staff and others present, confirmed that the meeting was being held in accordance with Town Ordinance No. 1016 and Section 4-0.01(g) of Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Acts of the Virginia General Assembly and that everyone present was participating by electronic means.

Roll call

After a Moment of Silence, Council Member Liles led the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

Vice Mayor McCarty made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; the motion was seconded by Council Member Stovall and carried by the following vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Liles, Mullins, Stovall, McCarty, Grose; Nays (0) – None.

Approved minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of December 1, 2020

The next item on the agenda was the public opening of franchise bids for electric power transmission and distribution throughout the Town of Vinton. The Mayor asked the Town Clerk to

open and read any bids that were received for an electric power transmission and distribution system throughout the Town of Vinton. The Town Clerk opened and commented that only one bid was received from Appalachian Power Company for the franchise as advertised and proposed to be sold and offered for such franchise the sum of \$1,000.00.

The Mayor next asked if there were any other persons desiring to submit a bid at this time. There being no further bids, the bidding was closed and we will now proceed to a Public Hearing and the proposed Ordinance proposing to sell and grant a franchise for an electric power transmission and distribution system throughout the Town of Vinton.

The next item on the agenda was the consideration of public comments concerning the concerning approving an Ordinance proposing to sell and grant a franchise for an electric power transmission and distribution system throughout the Town of Vinton. The Mayor opened the Public Hearing at 7:07 p.m.

Public Hearing Opened

The Town Attorney first commented that Council was briefed at their last meeting on the draft Ordinance, which was a part of the agenda package. The Ordinance establishes a franchise in the public streets, rights-of-ways and public land in the Town for a successful bidder to be able to use those public streets and public lands for the electric power transmission and distribution system. One bid was received from AEP and if Council deems that bid to be acceptable and votes in that manner, then the Ordinance will be modified to note that AEP is the Grantee of the franchise. The franchise would take effect today, January 5, 2021 and one caption that was mislabeled will be corrected. This is a 20 year franchise with a renewal for an additional 20 years and authorizes the successful Grantee to take such steps as necessary to maintain the electric transmission system throughout the Town. The franchise contains requirements as to insurance and bonding and contains an indemnification provision that protects the Town. There are also obligations with regard to abandoned facilities that the successful bidder would have to remove them within a certain period of time after they are abandoned.

The Town Attorney next commented he or Larry Jackson with AEP, who is in attendance, would be happy to answer any questions that Council might have.

Hearing no other comments, the Public Hearing was closed at 7:11 p.m.

Public Hearing Closed

The Town Attorney commented that under the controlling Code provision and the provision of the Virginia Constitution a franchise has to be approved by a three-fourths vote of all members of Council.

Council Member Liles made a motion to adopt the Ordinance as presented; the motion was seconded by Council Member Mullins and carried by the following roll call vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Liles, Mullins, Stovall, McCarty, Grose; Nays (0) – None.

Adopted Ordinance No. 1027 proposing to sell and grant a franchise for an electric power transmission and distribution system throughout the Town of Vinton

The next item on the agenda was to consider adoption of a Resolution approving and authorizing the Mayor and Town Clerk to execute the Employment Agreement between the Town and Town Manager, retroactive to January 1, 2021.

Vice Mayor McCarty made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented; the motion was seconded by Council Member Mullins and carried by the following roll call vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Liles, Mullins, Stovall, McCarty, Grose; Nays (0) – None.

Adopted Resolution No. 2402 approving and authorizing the Mayor and Town Clerk to execute the Employment Agreement between the Town and Town Manager, retroactive to January 1, 2021

The next item on the agenda was to consider adoption of a Resolution verifying and approving utility accounts receivable arrearages are in excess of one percent of annual operating revenues. Anne Cantrell commented that during the 2020 Special Session, the Virginia General Assembly approved specific procedures and requirements applicable to utility service providers. These provisions included the customer assistant grant, a disconnection moratorium and requirements on customer repayment plans. As part of this legislation, the State is allowing utility providers who have a receivables balance of greater than one percent of revenues to apply for exemption.

Based on the report that was prepared for the State on December 15, 2020 and an updated report that was prepared before the release of the Council packet on December 29, 2020, the Town currently has a 4.5% receivable balance in comparison with our Revenue Budget. The Resolution would support seeking exemption from the State moratorium. This would not imply that the Town would immediately resume disconnection, but it would avail the Town the option should payment arrangements become repeatedly not paid or any other action is not working.

Council Member Stovall made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented; the motion was seconded by Council Member Liles and carried by the following roll call vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Liles, Mullins, Stovall, McCarty, Grose; Nays (0) – None.

The Town Manager commented that there are three new restaurants opened or about to open in Vinton - Big Belly Pizza Subs and Burgers on Lee Avenue; Our Daily Bread scheduled to open later this month on Lee Avenue and Joe Goodpies that will be a part of the new Vinyard Station Complex. The Town Manager next expressed appreciation to the Police and Public Works employees who have been working in these tough environments.

Under appointment to boards/commissions/ committees, Council Member Stovall made a motion to re-appoint Allen Kasey to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a new five-year term on the Board of Zoning Appeals beginning January 17, 2021 and ending January 16, 2026; the motion was seconded by Council Member Liles and carried by the following vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Liles, Mullins, Stovall, McCarty, Grose; Nays (0) – None.

Vice Mayor McCarty made a motion to re-appoint Robert Benninger to the Planning Commission for a new four-year term beginning January 5, 2021 and ending January 4, 2025; the motion was seconded by Council Member Mullins and carried by the following vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Liles, Mullins, Stovall, McCarty, Grose; Nays (0) – None.

Adopted Resolution No. 2403 verifying and approving utility accounts receivable arrearages are in excess of one percent of annual operating revenues

Re-appointed Allen Kasey to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a new five-year term on the Board of Zoning Appeals beginning January 17, 2021 and ending January 16, 2026

Re-appointed Robert Benninger to the Planning Commission for a new four-year term beginning January 5, 2021 and ending January 4, 2025

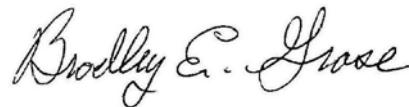
The Mayor read prepared comments expressing appreciation to Town Staff, Council, our community partners and our citizens for all of the hard work and exceptional patience that we have seen on full display in 2020 especially since March.

Comments from Council: Vice Mayor McCarty expressed appreciation to staff for taking care of the trash issue behind Bojangles, to the refuse crew for their extra work during the holidays and to staff who manage the Town's Facebook page. Council Member Liles echoed the Mayor and Vice Mayor's comments and that he is looking forward to 2021 and wishes everyone a Happy New Year. Council Member Mullins and Council Member Stovall expressed appreciation to Town staff and Council and commented that together as a team we have brought the Town through 2020 and Happy New Year.

Council Member Mullins made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Council Member Liles and carried by the following vote, with all members voting: Vote 5-0; Yeas (5) – Liles, Mullins, Stovall, McCarty, Grose; Nays (0) – None. The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

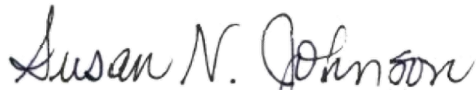
Meeting adjourned

APPROVED:



Bradley E. Grose, Mayor

ATTEST:



Susan N. Johnson, CMC, Town Clerk