

BOLIVAR TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, December 3, 2024

Stephen Paradis, Mayor
Victoria Gale
Chris Higdon
Sarah McMains
Dan Jimeno
Sarah Shafer
P. Jean Reed, Recorder, Mayor Pro Tem
Laura Whittington, Town Administrator

Moment of Silence
Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Paradis asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence and for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Call to Order

The December 3, 2024 regular meeting of the Bolivar Town Council was called to order by Mayor Stephen Paradis at 6:30pm.

Treasurers Report

Treasurer Eric Lewis was not in attendance for this meeting. Mayor Paradis said we are at 42% of our budget. Anything above 42% is in our favor and anything running above 42% for expenses is against us. Video Lottery is at 46%, Gaming Income is at 38%. Wine and Liquor Tax is running at 52%, Sales Tax is running at 57%, Hotel Occupancy Tax is at 61% and Property Tax is running at 64%. On the expense side nothing is running more than 42%. Our expenses seems to be lagging a little bit. Mayor Paradis asked for a motion to approve the Treasurers Report.

Councilperson Victoria Gale moved to approve the November Treasurers Report as presented. Councilperson Chris Higdon seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0.

Town Attorney, Effie Kallas

Attorney Kallas said since her last meeting with us, she spoke with County Commission Attorney concerning our Intergovernmental agreements with Jefferson County Commission and Jefferson County Sheriff's Department and the collection of Hotel Motel Tax. Attorney Kallas said we had some significant changes that had been made last year but had not been implemented. I suggested we have clarification and put into action items already in the contract. To clarify, the tax money collected from Hotel Occupancy Tax is collected by the Sheriff. The 50% for CVB is taken care of by the Sheriff. This has always been the case. We just clarified this.

The three things that need to be put in action from last year's contract are:

- we are supposed to receive quarterly consultations by the Tax Office (does not have to be the Sheriff) on any updates on new or existing hotel operations, delinquents and removals from the tax records that the Sheriff is aware of.
- monthly report to Town Council monthly meeting

- An in person meeting with Sheriff or his designee, in March and September. This has not been happening. Attorney Kallas said she did not get any push back and feels this will all be taken care of.

The next quarterly ethics training will take place on January 30, 2025 starting at 12 noon. Please email kimberly.b.weber@wv.gov for an invite.

Mayor Paradis thanked Attorney Kallas for her report.

Committee Reports

Street Committee

Nothing to report

Bolivar Planning Commission

Nothing to report

Park and Recreation Committee

Councilperson Victoria Gale said they have a sign available at the park for free after speaking to Ed Wheelless. We need a couple of strong men or women to volunteer to dig post holes to install the sign. Mayor Paradis said you can put this on the agenda item just to be on the safe side that this was discussed and agreed to at your park committee meeting

Sheriff's Department Report and Public Comment

Corp Hockman was attending a training in Herndon, VA and was not present for this meeting.

Mayor Paradis read the report. Total incidents for November was 108 with 57 Road Patrols, 20 Directed Patrols, 4 Building Checks, 3 Illegal Burn, 2 Alarm, 2 Foot Patrol, 2 Public Service, 2 Suspicious Act, 2 Traffic Stop, 2 Welfare Check, 1 Alarm Panic Hold Up, 1 Break Enter Nip, 1 Civil Matter, 1 Fraud. Please see attached report for complete details.

Laura reported the the alarm panic hold up was a fraud.

Harpers Ferry National Park Report

- Superintendent Gossett said the permit for the Trolley has been approved. This permit is for December 14 for the Trolley to travel from Bolivar to Old Town Harpers Ferry and back to Bolivar during the celebration of Old Tyme Christmas.
- January 1, 2025 is the start of deer management. Sometime between January 1 and April, we will be collecting deer management. We will make sure the public is made aware of our plans.
- On Friday, December 6 at 600pm The National Park Service will kick off with their opening ceremony for Old Tyme Christmas.

On December 7 and 8 from 11:00am until 4:00pm the National Park Service and Harpers Ferry National Park Association will again present this year family friendly activities.

Please check NPS web page calendar for times and schedule of events.

Also December 7, illumination of lights will take place in Sharpsburg, MD.

Mayor Paradis thanked Ms. Gossett for her report.

Minutes:

Approve Meeting Minutes November 12, 2024

Mayor Paradis asked for a clarification to the snow plowing contract be made in the minutes.

Recorder Reed will make the correction as noted.

Councilperson Chris Higdon moved to approve the Minutes as modified for the November 12, 2024 regular meeting. Councilperson Sarah McMains seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0

Attendee Concerns:

- Joe Howsere asked about mailbox problems and solutions. Mr. Howsere said his mailbox has already been wiped out.
- Marissa Morris said one of her patrons actually took out 4 mailboxes. She does not want this to happen again. The mailboxes are so close to the road. We are very concerned about the safety concerns of getting mail for the community.

Mayor's Report

- Opening ceremony for Old Tyme Christmas celebration starting at 6:30pm on December 6 for both Harpers Ferry and Bolivar. Great time to go down and visit the park.
- Major events the following Saturday, December 14, will be Friendship Fire Company annual Community Christmas Parade with line up at 3:00pm and the parade starting at 4:00pm.
- Mayor Paradis said he spoke to Sheriff Tom about clarification concerning the police contract. We will get together this week to discuss.
- I have not heard from Dept. of Highways concerning mailboxes and safety issues.

Committee Reports cont.

Canal Town Partnership

No report

Water Commission Report

Joe Howsere said at their last meeting they discussed the water rates. The Water Commission is trying to lower the minimum rate.

Councilperson Victoria Gale said if you lower the minimum rate the people will conserve more. Joe said we are ready to start construction. My concern is the pipes we put in the ground is safe.

Streetscape Committee

Nothing to report

Jefferson County Development Authority

No report.

Old Business

1. Sidewalk project status update

Our concerns about the mailboxes will be discussed by the State and they will get back to us with some answers.

2. Discuss/Approve funding for mailbox upgrades on W. Washington Street

Mayor Paradis said we will hold over for later.

New Business

1. Discuss/Approve funding opportunity for Bolivar/Harpers Ferry Green Infrastructure Grant

Mayor Paradis said the deadline for this Grant has come and gone. This would have included a rain- garden in the park. We were not ready for this at the time. Mayor Paradis asked if we had seen the Thrasher report. Mayor asked Laura to give everyone a copy of this report. We are continuing to check on different kinds of surfaces for the basketball court.

2. Discuss implementing an office policy for upcoming town events, business licenses

Councilperson Sarah Shafer brought this to our attention. Councilperson Shafer said from time to time we do not appear to be transparent. We do not have a guiding document that does not fall

under ordinances. We have no guidelines in writing, just pretty much in Laura's head. She is a great resource but if something were to happen to her we do not have anyone to pick up the baton. We should have some type of policies and procedures in place as a guiding document and then from that we can transparently have it on our website and then extract the information from there. If you have a question about starting a business in town, you could go to the website for information and the documents needed to start this process. Right now you just need to make a phone call to Laura for this information. Councilperson Shafer said sometimes we as a Council are faced with voting on things in a very short turn around so we need a working document that tells us information, documents needed and time lines that are presented to everyone at the same time by reading these documents on the web.

Mayor Paradis said we could form a small committee including Laura and bring suggestions. This group will consist of Laura, Councilperson Sara Shafer and Councilperson Sarah McMains.

3. Discussion of Comprehensive Plan draft

Mayor Paradis said we would like to bring to the January meeting for a vote.

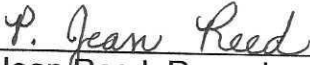
Councilperson Dan Jimeno had a question about keeping Bolivar small.

- Barb Staats said in the survey that went out, this was in the comments that came back. Keep the small town feel. Bolivar technically cannot grow (boundary). Change is very hard for some folks. We all understand change will happen. When the Hilltop is finished, some change will come such as more traffic and parking.
- Jeff Staats said there is a section in the comprehensive plan for short term and long term change.

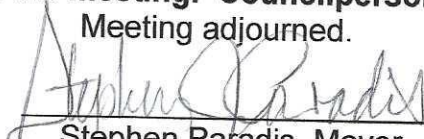
Adjournment

Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilperson Dan Jimeno seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0.

Meeting adjourned.



P. Jean Reed, Recorder



Stephen Paradis, Mayor

Next Regular Meeting Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at 6:30pm