

**COUNCIL MEETING
TOWN OF BOLIVAR
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

November 20, 2024 6:30pm

Bolivar Community Center

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

A special meeting of the Bolivar Town Council was called to order on Wednesday, November 20, 2024 at 6:30pm by Mayor Stephen Paradis.

The only item on the agenda was:

1. Discussion/approval request for budget request for Lantern Festival Parade

Mayor Paradis said he needed to call this Special Meeting in order to discuss and vote on the budget request. We had questions from the November 12 regular meeting that needed clarification. Mayor Paradis also said he would be out of town next week and this needed to be resolved.

Mayor Paradis asked Councilperson Sarah McMains to start with a list of questions she had:

- We were wondering about the scale of the event, why three days and possibly paring it down.
- Training of trainers, possibly localizing for next year.

Councilperson Sarah Shafer said from last year, she thought there was a day of training for adult leaders that would in turn teach others how to make and carry the lanterns. Then we would not have to budget for the artists.

- Lisa Kovach thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. She said they did not get any teachers lined up from last year. They did have people lined up to take the workshop last year. It was a three day event and the lanterns are hard to make. We had a good turn out last year, people were excited about it. We do not offer a lot here in our community. This is something new and we hope to expand and get people that will teach others. Each year we have in our Comprehensive Plan we want more programs like this but we do not get them.

Councilperson Dan Jimeno asked about the instructor fee at 10 hours at \$55 per hour.

- Ms. Kovach said yes that is right. She is also coming to facilitate on Sunday and Monday at 5 hours each day for less than her hourly rate of \$55 per hour.

Councilperson Victoria Gale asked about how many people participated last year.

- Ms. Kovach said 80 persons participated in the parade, a girl-scout troop from up on the mountain, we had kids that came to the library maybe 30 or 35. I applied for a grant from the CVB.

Councilperson Victoria Gale said the library does the children's portion. Do you also do a children's portion?

- Ms. Kovach said she had three children attend with their parents.

- Councilperson Victoria Gale said so the library does the same thing for \$100.
- Ms. Kovach said no it is not the same. These are paper sculptures.

Councilperson Sarah Shafer said she is a little concerned about a precedent and last year was not with the same council, my concern is this needs to be a little more grass roots. Just because for example there are three other parades that happen in town throughout the year and we don't receive any funding for those. It would be great if I could have a budget for both Memorial Day and Veteran's Day. I could bring in outside talent, guest speakers and I could provide them precedent. That would be fantastic. I don't ask for that, I have not asked for that because I don't feel that is appropriate.

- Ms. Kovach said but you are getting paid for your time on Council Sarah.

Councilperson Shafer said I am not getting paid for Veteran's Parades.

- Ms. Kovach said you are getting paid for a town event. Ms. Kovach asked Sarah if she was familiar with the Hotel Motel Tax.

Councilperson Shafer said the precedent is that this is not an organization that is asking for money. You are an individual asking for money.

- Ms. Kovach said I am asking on behalf of the town. And, there is a lot of work and planning that goes into this that I am not asking for compensation for.

Councilperson Sarah Shafer asked why is this not done under Parks and Rec.

- Ms. Kovach said she had no idea. I asked Eric and he was not interested.

Councilperson Victoria Gale asked why not do all this under the library basically they are doing the children's already. Councilperson Gale said she asked Lisa is instructing and is comfortable doing this.

- Ms. Kovach said the Hotel Motel Tax is supposed to be used for the Arts, Cultural and Beautification. That fund just sits there. How do you reconcile that this is not an Arts event.

Councilperson Victoria Gale said, how can we spend that much money for one event when the library does multiple events all year long for a lot less money with a lot more children?

Councilperson Sarah Shafer said she is concerned about a precedent being set.

Councilperson Sarah McMains said I do not agree this is the same as your parade. I do think you should have a budget for your parade. I don't think it is inappropriate for you to come and ask for a Cultural Arts grant that you want to put on behalf of the town. We have a budget for the library and you come and ask for up to \$3000 for you. I do see where you are trying to develop a Cultural Arts program which was received very well last year. I do think your budget is high. If everyone with a project came and asked for \$3000, we could not afford it. We are trying to be responsible.

Carolyn Bryer of Union Street said she saw a notice in the Post Office last year and went to the meeting at the library. She took the class that was very demanding. She helped get others interested. She runs an AirB and B and pays her Hotel Motel Tax. It was a big success and would like to see her tax money at work and supporting this event.

Deb Hale said her son wants to participate in this event. He participated last year, found it magical. This was a great family time event.

Discussion from several persons continued.

Ms. Kovach said she has raised \$800 so she is requesting \$2200 for this event.

Mayor Paradis asked Ms. Kovach exactly what are the \$300 Jack Grant requirements?

Ms. Kovach said this grant is to produce copies of this magazine must have their name on the magazine.

Mayor Paradis said if you don't produce that magazine, then the \$300 goes back to Jack.

Ms. Kovach, said yes.

What about the \$500 Grant from CVB.

Ms. Kovach said \$100 for my time and graphics design. \$400 for promotional (2 banners, advertising on face book and flyers. Mayor Paradis and if it is not spent in that way, it must be returned to CVB.

Mayor Paradis said the CVB approved this today. They knew we were meeting tonight and we had not approved it yet.

Councilperson Sarah Shafer asked if we approve \$1300 tonight, does this allow this project to move forward.

Ms. Kovach said if we don't have supplies, we have nothing to make lanterns. If I don't get any extra funding for supplies, I would be inclined to cancel this event because I cannot assure anybody I could raise that amount of money in such a short time.

Recorder Reed ask Ms. Kovach if all of the instructors, facilitators are being paid by the hour by X number of people. Are you asking for a check from Bolivar made out at first it was \$3000, then \$2200 and now we are down to \$1300. Are we cutting the check to you or individuals or how are we doing this, my concern as a Town violating any laws because we have not received an invoice yet. Since we are not dealing with someone in WV, do they have all the paper work including business license, tax forms etc.

Councilperson Dan Jimeno asked if they were a 501C

Councilperson Sarah McMains asked if we approve it can the Town of Bolivar order the supplies.

Laura said yes, she can order the supplies. Bolivar would be invoiced for the supplies. This way there will not be any reimbursement to any individuals

Councilperson Dan Jimeno asked if the artist would invoice the town for her services based on previous information.

Ms. Kovach said yes.

Councilperson Sarah McMains moved to appropriate \$2200 for Supplies, Artists, Facilitator and related expenses for the Lantern Festival Parade. Councilperson Victoria Gale seconded the motion.

Motion passed. 4 – 1 One person abstained from voting.

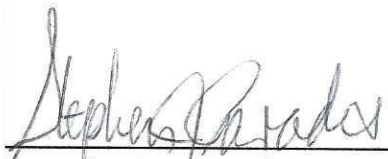
Councilperson Dan Jimeno said he would still like to see more grass roots when considering activities like this.

Adjournment

Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilperson Sarah McMains seconded the motion. Motion passed. 5 - 0 Meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,


P. Jean Reed, Recorder


Stephen Paradis, Mayor