

**TOWN COUNCIL**  
**Second Subcommittee Meeting**  
**May 18th, 2023**  
**4:00 P.M.**

The Honorable Joshua T. Lawson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. at 802 Main Street, West Point, Virginia 23181.

Members Present: Jack Lawson, Mayor; Deborah Ball, Vice Mayor; Jim Hudson, John James Pruett, John Ragsdale and Chris Vincent.

Also Present: John Edwards, Town Manager; Karen Barrow, Town Clerk; Walt Feurer, Director of Public Works; Susan Lathan, Town Treasurer; Holly McGowan, Director of Community Development; Spencer Cheatham, Fire Chief; Donna Pauley, Human Resource Officer; Melissa Anderson, Communications Manager; Officer Lisa Danuser, West Point Police Department.

Members present from West Point Schools: Dr. Larry Frazier, School Superintendent; Nathan Leach, Assistant School Superintendent and Chris Walker, Safety & Transportation.

**I. Agenda Changes**

No changes were made to the agenda.

**II. Adoption of Minutes**

A. March 16<sup>th</sup> 2023

Mr. Vincent made a motion to adopt the minutes as presented, seconded by Mrs. Ball. Upon a unanimous vote, the motion was approved.

**III. Education Committee**

A. School Safety Updates

Dr. Frazier introduced Chris Walker as the new Safety and Transportation Director that started working for the School System in April.

Chris Walker advised that the school system will be implementing the following safety programs next fiscal year: 1) Catapult EMS, an emergency notification program for schools. This program will allow the schools to have an anonymous notification, emergency alerts and it allows a two-way communication with teachers and staff. 2) Narcan will be available in the school clinics. We will provide training to certain staff members and each school will received 2 units each. 3) Next year we will also be working on increasing K9 searches for both drugs and weapons. We will be partnering with K9 Interdiction to provide searches through the schools. 4) We are doing some research on weapons detectors to see what would benefit the schools, a weapon detector verses a metal detector.

Mr. Pruett asked what the difference is.

Mr. Walker advised that a metal detector identifies what's in your pocket. A weapon detector separates the difference between what's in your pocket and a weapon.

## B. Library Facelift

Nate Leach reviewed renderings of the High school and Middle school for renovations scheduled to take place this summer. Both projects will be funded through ARPA funds. The renovations are for more modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning environment with open seating, a lot of the furniture will be on wheels so they can be moved around.

Mr. Edwards asked if there will be any egress changes or electrical changes.

Mr. Lynch stated that the lighting will be LED lights, for the most part it will be a facelift of what's already there. The project will be complete in July.

## C. Summer Academy and Preschool

Dr. Frazier advised that the Summer Academy will be on June 5<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> and June 12<sup>th</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup> for Preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The preschool graduation was on April 26<sup>th</sup> and the preschool information night was on April 19<sup>th</sup>. There are 16 slots for the preschool program and all slots are filled for next year.

## D. General Updates

Dr. Frazier advised that the FY 2022-23 budget is based on an ADM of 782, it came in at 784, 2 students over, with the preschool students the enrollment was over 800. The end of the year budget is looking good. The last day of school is May 19<sup>th</sup> for seniors and May 26<sup>th</sup> for the rest of the students. Materials for the elementary school roof will arrive next week and we thank the town for the ARPA funds to replace the roof. Dr. Frazier also stated that Dr. Daniels has been appointed as the new Superintendent for the Mathews County school system. We are in the middle of the hiring process so we will be filling that position this summer. Dr. Frazier asked if Town Council would like to go on a tour of the school facilities.

Mr. Edwards stated that the next second Committee meeting will be June 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 4:00 pm.

Dr. Frazier advised that he would verify the date.

## IV. Public Safety

### A. Police Officer Hiring Process

Chief Sawyer advised that the hiring process has become more difficult. Once we receive an application, the applicant takes another job before we can get to interview the applicant. We need to move a little faster when we receive an application. As soon as we receive an application we are going to move straight to interviews and through the hiring process so we don't lose the opportunity to hire a good officer.

### B. Digital Speed Signs for 14<sup>th</sup> Street

Chief Sawyer advised that the Mayor asked the police department to look into a digital speed sign for 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

Officer Lisa Dansuer reviewed the Shield 12B module with a pole mounted display by All Traffic Solutions. VDOT has some requirements for approval, a speed study will need to be done for VDOT in order to obtain a permit. The cost for the speed sign is \$3,956.90 and it does collect valuable data.

Mr. Ragsdale asked if this is a one-time fee or are there any other charges.

Chief Sawyer advised this is a one-time purchase fee. It is very similar to the unit as you drive into King and Queen.

Officer Dansuer advised that with the collection of the data, it will show there is a reason to have officers on 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

#### C. Police Department Move Update

Chief Sawyer advised that renovations, painting and electrical work is currently underway and will be completed soon.

#### D. Police Department General Updates

Chief Sawyer gave an update on the following events: 1) In June the Police Department has identified some children in the community that are in need of mentoring. Andy Kurfees will be hosting the Cops and Bobbers event at his river front location on 7<sup>th</sup> Street to do some fishing. 2) The PD will Host a National Night Out this year on August 1<sup>st</sup> at the Town Park. 3) We joined King William Sheriff's office to do an active shooter training at King William High School. 4) We conducted a K9 search at the schools with the State Police. Chief Sawyer also stated that he will have to discuss the K9I contractor the schools are working with. Their dogs are certified as K9 search dogs, but the handlers are not sworn officers and if they do a search in the schools, there could be some legal issues if the dogs have a hit. 5) The PD did receive \$93,000 ARPA funds for security and safety at the schools.

#### E. EOC Operation Exercise Event

Chief Cheatham advised that the Virginia Department Emergency Management put together a tabletop EOC Operation Exercise event yesterday with state evaluators overseeing the exercise. The event was successful, a full report will be available next week from VDEM.

#### F. Closed Session – Fire Chief's Performance Review and for Compensation to the Interim Building Official.

Mr. Ragsdale made a motion to enter into closed meeting pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(1), a matter involving the discussion of the performance evaluation of the Fire Chief and compensation for the Interim Building Official, seconded by Mrs. Ball. Upon roll call, Mrs. Ball, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Pruett, Mr. Ragsdale and Mr. Vincent all voted "Aye". The motion was approved.

#### Reconvene

Mr. Pruett made a motion to reconvene in open meeting, seconded by Mrs. Ball. Upon roll call, Mrs. Ball, upon a unanimous vote, the motion was approved.

#### Certification

Mrs. Ball made a motion to certify that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the Council. Seconded by Mr. Hudson, upon roll call, Mrs. Ball, Mr. Hudson, John Nein, Mr. Pruett, Mr. Ragsdale and Mr. Vincent all voted "Aye". The motion was approved.

#### Action

Fire Chief, Spencer Cheatham

Mr. Vincent made a motion to approve a 5% Merit increase for the Fire Chief effective May 1, 2023 and a 3.85% Cost of Living increase effective July 1<sup>st</sup> 2023, seconded by Mrs. Ball. Upon roll call, Mrs. Ball, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Pruett, Mr. Ragsdale and Mr. Vincent all voted "Aye". The motion was approved.

Interim Building Official – Tim Sawyer

Mrs. Ball Made a motion to give a onetime payment of \$7,650.00 stipend to the Interim Building Official, seconded by Mr. Ragsdale. Upon roll call, Mrs. Ball, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Pruett, Mr. Ragsdale and Mr. Vincent all voted "Aye". The motion was approved

**V. General Information**

There was nothing for discussion under General Information


**VI. Town Council Agenda**

There was nothing for the Town Council Agenda.

**VII. Next 2<sup>nd</sup> Subcommittee Meeting: June 15th, 2023**

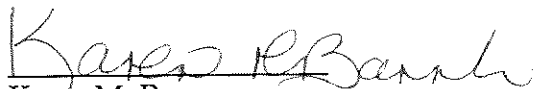
**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.



Joshua T. Lawson  
Mayor, Town of West Point

ATTEST:



Karen M. Barrow  
Town Clerk