

The Smithfield Town Council held its regular meeting on Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022.  
The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Members present:**

T. Carter Williams – Mayor  
Michael Smith – Vice Mayor  
Valerie Butler  
Renee Rountree  
Randy Pack  
Wayne Hall  
Beth Haywood  
Jeff Brooks – Councilmember-elect  
Steve Bowman – Councilmember-elect

**Members absent:**

None

**Staff present:**

Michael Stallings - Town Manager  
William H. Riddick, III – Town Attorney  
Lesley King – Town Clerk  
Alonzo Howell – Chief of the Smithfield Police Department  
Ellen Minga – Town Treasurer  
Tammie Clary – Community Development & Planning Director  
Jack Reed – Director, Public Works and Utilities  
Amy Novak – Director of Parks and Recreation  
Judy Winslow – Director of Tourism  
Ashley Rogers – Director of Human Resources  
Noah Cecil – Officer, Smithfield Police Department  
Jacob Nixon – Officer, Smithfield Police Department  
Eric Phillips – Lieutenant, Smithfield Police Department

**Press:** Stephen Faleski – The Smithfield Times

**Citizens:** 16

Mayor Williams welcomed everyone to the meeting. All stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Introduction of Newest Police Officers**

Chief Hall reported that there were two new officers to introduce to the Town Council, starting with Officer Noah Cecil. He reported that Officer Cecil had come to the department after having previously worked at the City of Newport News and had been sworn in on December 5<sup>th</sup>. He added that the Town was looking forward to working with Officer Cecil. Chief Hall introduced the next new member of the department as Officer Jacob Nixon. He reported that Officer Nixon

would be sworn in on December 19<sup>th</sup> and that he had also previously worked with the City of Newport News. He welcomed both new officers to the Smithfield Police Department Family.

**Manager's Report:**

The Town Manager stated that included in the packet provided were activities from the previous month. He stated he would be happy to answer any questions the Council may have.

**Public Comments:**

Mayor Williams explained that the public was invited to speak to Council on any matter, except scheduled public hearings. He stated that if a response was required that they should speak with the Town Clerk. He asked that speakers state their name and address, adding that comments were limited to five (5) minutes per person.

David Hare of 92 Moonefield Drive in Smithfield reported that he had been in a meeting earlier and it had been brought to his attention that tonight's Council meeting would be Mayor William's final meeting. He stated that he felt compelled to come thank the Mayor personally for all his years of service. He added that he knew how tough it was to be in his position and that it was rare to find people of character who are willing to put up with what the Council endures. Former Mayor Hare continued that he always felt very good about Council's decisions without having to second-guess them. He continued that the Council makes the best decision that they can after reviewing all the facts given to them. He stated that though the Council makes decisions with their heart and Mayor Williams was a good example of this. He thanked Mayor Williams for everything that he had done for the Town and its citizens. He stated that the Mayor will be missed but that he would see him down the street.

Mayor Williams stated that former Mayor Hare had done a wonderful job as Mayor during his term. He added that he had followed in former Mayor Hare's footsteps and that he had been a good leader, as was former Mayor Chapman.

Martha Jackson, Smithfield Resident, stated that she would also like to thank Mayor Williams for ten years of leading the Town of Smithfield through good times and bad. She stated that Smithfield is a wonderful place that offers people opportunity to get involved in their community, and as referenced by former Mayor Hare, being Mayor was not an easy job. She added that there was more complaints and not many thanks for the job that is done not only at Council meetings, but in many other aspects of Town service. She reiterated her thanks to Mayor Williams and encouraged those present to join her in another round of applause for him.

Mayor Williams asked if there was anyone present who wanted to address the Council. Seeing and hearing none, the public comment section was closed.

**Council Comments:**

Councilwoman Haywood thanked the public for voting for her 4 years ago and giving her the opportunity to serve the community. She added that she thinks this is a wonderful Town and thanked all of the citizens who volunteer and the different entities that come together to make it that way. She continued that the experience had been a great opportunity for her and thanked the other Council members for working with her. Councilwoman Haywood thanked the employees of

the Town who did awesome with the little resources that were given to them. She gave well wishes to the future of the Town Council.

Councilwoman Butler stated she would also like echo what had been said by former Mayor. Hare and Mrs. Jackson that Mayor Williams would be missed. She stated that she had not realized that he had held that office for 10 years. She stated that she personally could attest to his being available when she called him and wanted to wish him well in his future endeavors not matter what it is. She stated that she wasn't sure that she knew anyone who loved the Town of Smithfield as Mayor Williams does. Councilwoman Butler addressed Councilwoman Haywood, reporting that she did not know her when they had originally run for office, adding that they had become very good friends. She wished her well with her new grandchildren and stated that she was sure they would be in contact.

Councilman Hall stated that Mayor Williams had been an inspiration for a lot of people. He stated that he had learned a lot from Mayor Williams, that he had been a great example to follow, and that he appreciated the guidance he had given. Councilman Hall added that Councilwoman Haywood may be leaving the Town Council but that she would still be a part of the Town and he knew she would still have a presence. He stated she had been an asset working with maintaining the Town's status as a Certified Crime Prevention Community and her work on the other Committees.

**Consent Agenda:**

Councilman Pack asked if Item C1 on the agenda could be pulled for further discussion.

**C2. Invoices Over \$20,000 Requiring Council Authorization:**

- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| a. Isle of Wight County – E911 True-Up                         | \$ 31,354.71 |
| b. Isle of Wight County – Tourism True-Up                      | \$263,023.00 |
| c. Deere & Company – Public Works Tractor and Boom Mower       | \$117,194.76 |
| d. Atlantic Machinery, Inc – Sewer Camera                      | \$ 31,091.00 |
| e. Lewis Construction of Virginia, Inc. – Pagan Point Phase II | \$ 59,356.38 |
| f. The Blair Brothers, Inc. – Ryder Court                      | \$ 34,585.00 |

Councilman Pack made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilman Hall seconded the motion.

Mayor Williams called for the vote. On call for the vote, seven members were present. Councilwoman Rountree voted aye, Councilman Hall voted aye, Councilman Pack voted aye, Councilwoman Butler voted aye, Councilwoman Haywood voted aye, Vice Mayor Smith voted aye, and Mayor Williams voted aye. The motion passed.

**C1. Meeting Schedule for 2023**

Councilman Pack reported that he had a few questions about Town Offices closures as listed for 2023. He asked the Town Manager if the Town was following the Virginia State office closure guidelines.

The Town Manager confirmed this was correct.

Councilman Pack noted that some of the dates listed were in red, and he knew that this year there had been some last minute discussions about office closures so he wanted to make sure they were in agreement. He added that he wanted to ensure that all the members were aware of the meeting moving in July to Wednesday, October to Wednesday, and November to Monday. He stated that July's reasoning was clearly due to Independence Day falling on Tuesday, but asked for clarification for October and November's dates.

Lesley King, Town Clerk, reported that Councilman Hall had requested the move in 2022 to accommodate National Night out on the first Tuesday in October.

Councilman Hall confirmed that he would be requesting the change again for the coming year.

Mrs. King reported that the November 2023 meeting had been slated for the first Monday due to Election Day being held on the first Tuesday of November.

Councilman Pack stated that he just wanted to remain consistent with the Council meetings dates and times in order to keep the public informed.

Councilwoman Rountree stated she had a comment from a citizen regarding Committee meetings being scheduled at 3:00 pm when people are at work. She stated that Committee meetings were generally a time for Council to receive information and hold discussion. She added that someone who worked until 5 pm would not be able to participate in these meetings as a result. She stated that she felt the dates were fine, but they may need to discuss the times of the meetings being changed.

Councilman Hall agreed with Councilwoman Rountree's statement that the time was inconvenient for a lot of citizens. He recalled that there had also been previous discussion about streaming the Town Council meetings live online, adding that this could possibly be done for Committee meetings as well.

Mayor Williams reported that this had been discussed many times over the years. He stated that one reason that the meetings were held at 3 pm was to be able to have the Town Staff attend without having to come back in during the evening.

Councilwoman Rountree offered that maybe the staff could flex time and come in later on those days.

Vice Mayor Smith reviewed that the schedule showed the Town Staff working half day on November 22<sup>nd</sup> and questioned about the whole day being given to staff as a holiday this year.

Councilwoman Butler and The Town Manager pointed out that the schedule that they were looking at was holidays given by the State.

Councilwoman Butler made the motion to approve the schedule provided with the changes discussed in Committees and reviewed by Councilman Pack. Councilman Hall seconded the motion.

Mayor Williams called for the vote. On call for the vote, seven members were present. Councilwoman Rountree voted aye, Councilman Hall voted aye, Councilman Pack voted aye, Councilwoman Butler voted aye, Councilwoman Haywood voted aye, Vice Mayor Smith voted aye, and Mayor Williams voted aye. The motion passed.

**\*PUBLIC HEARING: Special Use Permit – 928 South Church Street**

Tammy Clary, Director of Community Development and Planning, reported that he applicant is seeking approval for a Special Use Permit (SUP) pursuant to the Smithfield Zoning Ordinance (SZO) Article 3.I. Section C.13, in order to allow “automobile and light vehicle repair establishments (within completely enclosed structures with screened outdoor storage) as a permitted use at 928 South Church Street. The current primary use of the property is an automobile and light vehicle dealership and retail sales establishments (with service and repair facilities as an ancillary use, with completely enclosed service facilities and screened outdoor storage of repair vehicles) (SZO Article 3.I Section B.14). The applicant has stated they plan on employing approximately 15-20 people and will operate between the hours of 7:30am and 5:30pm, Monday through Friday.

She continued that at the Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting, this application was favorably recommended to Town Council, with staff recommendations. She continued that Town staff supported approval of the application provided any proposed signage/exterior changes must be properly permitted and reviewed by the Planning Commission if applicable.

Mrs. Clary reported that a positive of the application would be that the applicant is not proposing any exterior structural changes to the property and is seeking approval for the specific use of “automobile and light vehicle repair establishment.” She added that a negative of that application would be that this requested use is not a by-right use and does require a SUP.

Christina Louisa of 323 Jamica Drive in San Antonio, Texas, was present to speak on behalf of Caliber Collision. She reported that the business’s goal was to continue the legacy that the previous owners had established in the Community. She referenced the Toys for Tots drive recently held this past weekend. She stated that she hoped that the Council would allow Caliber to serve the community in a way that would benefit the public as well as the staff that is currently working there.

Tony Macioci, owner of Smithfield Auto and Truck, reported that he was selling his business to Caliber Collision and some of their workers were already residents locally. He stated that his family had enjoyed their time in Smithfield working with the Police Department, Jack Reed in Planning, and others in the community. He added that he thinks Caliber Collision will take things to the next level and it will be good for the Town.

Mayor Williams opened the Public Hearing asking if there was anyone present who wanted to speak for or against the application.

Councilman Pack reported that the Planning Commission had reviewed the application and had no concerns as the changes requested were in line with the use of the property. He made a motion to approve the application with the inclusion of Town staff’s requests.

Councilman Hall reviewed the previous owner’s community involvement and stated with their assertion of continuation of community service he was in favor as well. He seconded the motion.

Mayor Williams called for the vote. On call for the vote, seven members were present. Councilwoman Butler voted aye, Councilwoman Haywood voted aye, Vice Mayor Smith voted

aye, Councilman Hall voted aye, Councilwoman Rountree voted aye, Councilman Pack voted aye, and Mayor Williams voted aye. The motion passed.

**Motion to Declare 202 West Street as Blighted Property**

Mrs. Clary reported that the Town of Smithfield received a written complaint concerning the condition and security of the structure currently located at 202 West Street, Smithfield VA 23430 (TPIN:21A-06-E007).

Town staff sent and advisory notice on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022 requesting that the owners secure the doors and windows on the structure.

Town staff has determined the property at 202 West Street meets the Smithfield Town Code's definition of blighted. On Wednesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, a certified letter was mailed to the owners of record, informing them that their property located at 202 West Street (TPIN:21A-06-E007) was deemed a blighted property by Town staff, and ordered them to submit a Spot Blight Abatement Plan to cure the blight within thirty (30) days, in accordance with Smithfield Town Code (STC) Section 22-2.b.1. On Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022, Town Hall received a fax of a handwritten note (Enclosure 1), stating the Spot Blight Abatement Plan. In accordance with STC Section 22-2.b.2 the Plan is provided for your review and decision on the Plan's adequacy to cure the blight. If the Plan is not acceptable, Town staff request that Town Council declare the property as blighted and develop an abatement Plan, as indicated in Section 22-2.b.4.

Councilwoman Butler made the motion to declare 202 West Street a blighted property. Councilman Pack seconded the motion.

Mayor Williams called for the vote. On call for the vote, seven members were present. Vice Mayor Smith voted aye, Councilman Hall voted aye, Councilwoman Rountree voted aye, Councilman Pack voted aye, Councilwoman Butler voted aye, Councilwoman Haywood voted aye, and Mayor Williams voted aye. The motion passed.

**Motion to Accept the Property Owner's Abatement Plan**

Mrs. Clary stated that she could proceed with explaining the process as the property was declared blighted. She reported that the Council was provided with the owner's abatement plan and they had the ability to accept or reject the abatement plan.

The Town Attorney reported that the plan provided stated that the owner was going to fix the property but did not specify when it would be repaired.

Councilwoman Rountree added that the document did not say how the plan would be implemented and it was unsigned.

The Town Attorney repeated that the document provided was not signed and he would not recommend the Council's acceptance of the abatement plan.

Councilman Pack asked if the Council could accept it with the condition that the property would be repaired within a specific timeline.

The Town Attorney stated that Council could accept the plan but specify that it needed to be repaired within a reasonable deadline. He added that Mrs. Clary could contact the owner and relay that the plan was not specific enough but was accepted on the condition that the work be completed by whatever date the Council agrees upon.

Councilwoman Rountree inquired if there had been any direct communication with the owners or the representatives that sent the abatement plan.

Mrs. Clary reported that there had been no direct contact made regarding the blighted property. She stated that the abatement plan had been received late Friday afternoon via fax.

Councilwoman Rountree asked Mrs. Clary how she would hold an estate accountable without direct contact or knowing exactly who the contact person would be.

The Town Manager reported that if they put a timeline for repair on the property, if the timeline was met without repair, then Council could set their own abatement plan, and bill the property owner for the work completed. He continued that if the property owner then did not pay for the work completed, a lien would be put in place.

Councilwoman Rountree asked how the short the timeline could be made, adding that the property was not safe.

Councilman Hall agreed with Councilwoman Rountree that the property presented a safety issue and questioned who it was representing the estate. He stated that someone should come forward to take responsibility.

The Town Attorney stated that the problem with that is they only had access to what was readily available in public information. He reported that the notice was sent to the address of the owner on record. He continued that the response would be information on what had been approved and what the timeline was. He stated that it would be great if the owner fixed the blight, but if they did not, then there was record that they were given the opportunity.

Councilman Hall stated that action needed to be taken tonight.

The Town Manager made the suggestion that the Council give the date of January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, for completion as that was the date of the next Town Council meeting, at which time they would be able to take action if necessary.

Councilman Hall agreed with the recommendation.

The Town Attorney stated that this was a reasonable time period. He added that even with the time of year, they had been given plenty of notice.

Councilwoman Butler asked if the deadline of January 3<sup>rd</sup> was a repair date or the date to respond with a more exact plan.

The Town Manager stated that January 3<sup>rd</sup> would be the repair date.

Councilman Hall repeated that this would be his recommendation.

Councilwoman Rountree asked if the Council could direct Town Staff to communicate directly back to the estate with additional information.

The Town Manager stated that Mrs. Clary would contact them as part of the process of notifying the estate that Council had accepted there abatement plan with that stipulation.

Mayor Williams reported that there had been a motion and inquired if there had been a second.

Councilman Pack questioned if a motion had been made.

Councilman Hall stated that he had made the original motion.

Councilman Pack asked him to repeat the motion made.

Councilman Hall stated that his motion was for the Council to recommend that the accepted abatement plan include the completion date of January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Town Attorney recommended in order to stay in compliance with their procedure that the motion be to reject the presented abatement plan but include a statement to the estate that it would be accepted on the condition that repair work be completed by January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Councilman Pack inquired if the Council could accept the abatement plan with the condition that the repair work was completed by January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Town Attorney stated that was correct. He added that the estate representative's plan would have to be rejected as presented, but again stated that it could be added as a condition that it would be accepted if the estate confirmed that work would be completed by January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Councilwoman Butler asked if the Council was able to be more specific on what it was that they wanted to be repaired. She additionally asked if the information that was presented in the fax by the estate was enough to resolve the blight ordinance.

Mrs. Clary stated that it would as the presented abatement plan addressed the broken windows and the unsecured door which was what Town Staff had identified as qualifying the property as blighted.

Vice Mayor Smith asked if the estate owner boarded up the windows and secured the door how long the property could then remain in that state.

Councilman Pack echoed this concern.

The Town Attorney reported that as long as the property met building code requirements and was safe, nothing further could be required.

Vice Mayor Smith stated that what he was concerned about was that what they may accept in the abatement plan could remain that way for years. He reported that he has seen examples of this before and properties stay boarded up with the excuse that they are secured for extended periods. He gave the hypothetical example that if this current abatement plan is approved that the property could remain boarded up for 10 years.

Councilwoman Butler asked Vice Mayor Smith what could be done if the property met the requirements of the ordinance.

Vice Mayor Smith stated he understood, but asked what could be done after the property was secured.

The Town Attorney stated that there was not anything that could be done after the ordinance was satisfied. He explained that the building code applies to the Town of Smithfield as the town did not have its own. He continued that building code was administered by the Isle of Wight County Building official as Smithfield did not have one.

Vice Mayor Smith reported that likely the property would return to unblighted status and it would be up to the County to respond. He added that they had seen this happen before.

The Town Attorney reported a related story that about the time that Covid hit he and the Town Manager were supposed to meet with the County to inquire if the building official would have a Smithfield staff member made a Deputy building official so that the Town may take action on their own volition.

Vice Mayor Smith stated that if the same officials were in office that the Town would likely be going through the same procedure all over again.

The Town Attorney repeated that if the estate met the code that there was not much more that could be done.

Councilwoman Rountree stated that her concern was that if the windows were secured, giving the hypothetical situation that then the next week someone breaks the boards out and attempts to reinhabit. She questioned what the next steps would be in this situation.

The Town Manager stated that the process would have to be started again.

The Town Attorney reported that the owners were perpetually and legally responsible for keeping the property safe.

Councilwoman Rountree speculated that it would be added to the Staff's rounds, and added that the police have likely patrolled the property due to the complaints.

Councilman Hall asked for confirmation that the taxes were up to date on the property, and they would be due again on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

The Town Attorney reported that the owners were not 3 years delinquent on their tax payment, and until they were a suit could not be brought for tax purposes.

Councilman Pack summarized the situation by stating that the Town was trying to get the owner of a property to take care of it, the owner had provided a plan that was certainly not the best they had considered, that plan could be accepted if done correctly, and he added that there were certainly long-term issues with the issue, namely that someone could open the property back up as had happened before. Councilman Pack highlighted that there was some communication with the owner of the property. He acknowledged what the other Councilman's concerns were, but he felt that if the owner brought the property back up to code by January 3<sup>rd</sup> with their agreement to keep it in compliance, then the Town should take them up on the offer. He pointed out that the owner still had property rights and asked the other Council members to imagine that it was their property that their local government was trying to take over its use. Councilman Pack acknowledged that would need to watch the property and that this may happen again, but made the point that at least this was giving fair order to the owners of the estate or property.

Councilman Pack stated that he agreed with that statement, but added that he would like to see someone accept responsibility other than a generalized estate as there could be several people involved.

The Town Attorney reported that there was often a misconception that people had when they inherited property that it was the estate of the deceased. He added that this was not the case. He continued that if there was an active, open estate where someone has been qualified as the executor or administrator, then there is an estate or responsible party. The Town Attorney stated that often if several people together inherit property it is assumed that it is the estate of whomever they inherited the property from, when in reality it is the responsibility of the individual property owners listed. He added that title work could be completed to find out who the individual property owners were listed in this situation.

Councilwoman Butler asked how communication was being handled with the family or property owner.

The Town Attorney stated that it was via letter.

Councilwoman Butler asked who it was addressed to.

Mrs. Clary stated that it was addressed to the estate of the listed owner.

The Town Attorney pointed out that it was addressed in that manner as that is how ownership was listed on the tax records.

Councilwoman Butler stated that she was in agreement with Councilman Pack, and a letter needed to be sent back to the owner with specifics regarding a timeline in which the property needed to be repaired. She also agreed that the property would just need to be monitored to see if this occurs again. She stated that hopefully this property would not end up like previously blighted property where it sits for years.

Mayor Williams asked Councilman Hall if he wanted to amend the motion.

Councilman Hall asked the Town Attorney to repeat his recommendation.

The Town Attorney stated that the motion was to reject the proposed abatement plan, but advise the owner of the property that the proposal is accepted if they complete the work as presented in their statement by January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023.

Mrs. Clary added that the property also will need to remain in compliance.

The Town Attorney replied that would be an ongoing obligation. He expanded that the owners plan was to repair the property and they have an obligation to maintain it as well.

Mayor Williams repeated that there was a motion on the floor, and asked if there was a second. Councilwoman Rountree seconded the motion.

Councilman Pack requested that Town Staff monitor the property particularly after January 3<sup>rd</sup> to ensure that the work is completed and that it remains maintained.

Councilwoman Butler inquired about what would happen if the owner did not repair the property by January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Town Attorney stated that the owner would be in violation and it would then be upon the Council to propose what to do with the property.

The Town Manager stated that Council could then authorize Town Staff to contract with someone to then board up the windows and doors secured.

The Town Attorney added that the cost for that work would then become a lien against the property, which would then allow for legal action.

Mayor Williams called for the vote. On call for the vote, seven members were present. Councilwoman Rountree voted aye, Councilman Pack voted aye, Councilwoman Butler voted aye, Councilwoman Haywood voted aye, Vice Mayor Smith voted aye, Councilman Hall voted aye, and Mayor Williams voted aye. The motion passed.

### **Proposal – Blair Brothers, Inc. – Grace Street Sidewalk Repairs**

The Town Manager stated that the Town was asked to review the contract with Blair Brothers to see if the proposal was covered. He continued that he and Wanye Griffin, Town Engineer, had spoken with one of the partners at Blair Brothers regarding the issue. He reported that they explained that the bulk of the reason that the price of the repairs going up was due to the price of concrete going up and due to the location of the repairs. He continued that as Grace Street was a road owned by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) it would necessitate flagging operations which was estimated at \$7200.00. He continued that as the work was to be completed in the winter, the concrete required additives which increased the cost by an additional \$3000 - \$4000. He stated that after reviewing the contract and speaking with the business, though it was undoubtably high, the cost increase seemed justified. The Town Manager stated that the

Town could save money by waiting to complete the project until Spring, but he felt it was worthwhile to have it done as soon as possible.

Mayor Williams reported that he and Mr. Griffin had walked the sidewalk in question and marked where it needed to be fixed and there were many areas in need. He estimated that 60% of the sidewalk in that area needed repair.

Councilman Pack reported that he did some investigation into the issue. He stated that the lane closures and traffic control costs were the bulk of the cost. He concluded that after his own investigation and additional understanding he found the proposal to be much more reasonable.

The Town Manager pointed out that the area in which the work would be completed would be done against historic brick walls that required removal with jack hammers, versus the ability to bring in excavators.

Mayor Williams also pointed out that VDOT would be completing the repair to driveways, and they repairs discussed tonight were purely to the sidewalk.

Vice Mayor Smith made the motion to accept the proposal as presented. Councilman Hall seconded the motion.

Mayor Williams called for the vote. On call for the vote, seven members were present. Councilwoman Haywood voted aye, Councilman Hall voted aye, Councilman Pack voted aye, Councilwoman Butler voted aye, Vice Mayor Smith voted aye, Councilwoman Rountree voted aye, and Mayor Williams voted aye. The motion passed.

#### **Motion to Approve the Town Council Summary Minutes of November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022**

The Town Attorney reported that he had reviewed the minutes and recommended approval with one grammatical revision.

Vice Mayor Smith made the motion to approve the minutes with grammatical revision. Councilman Hall seconded the motion.

Mayor Williams called for the vote. On call for the vote, seven members were present. Councilwoman Butler voted aye, Councilwoman Haywood voted aye, Vice Mayor Smith voted aye, Councilman Hall voted aye, Councilwoman Rountree voted aye, Councilman Pack voted aye, and Mayor Williams voted aye. The motion passed.

#### **New Business:**

#### **Accept Deed of Easement at 655 West Main Street to be Used for Emergency Exit of Lakeside Heights**

The Town Manager reported that he had been working with Brown's AME Church to secure an easement across the property to create an emergency exit for the Lakeside Community. He added that after meeting with them several times over the last year they had arrived at an agreement. He directed the Council to their packets to see the Easement document as well as an exhibit to show where the easement is located. He reviewed that if Council is in agreement the next steps will be the Church signing documentation and then getting estimates for putting the in the access.

The Town Attorney reported that the Church had not put new Trustees in place since 1993, and some of them had since passed away. He explained that the Church would need to meet and

appoint Trustees which may take some time, especially at this time of year. He added that if the Council approves acceptance of the deed then, then once the Trustees are appointed the document can be signed and the process can proceed. He summarized that the Church would be giving perpetual easement, a right of ingress and egress, to and from Quail Street over Lot 19.

Mayor Williams stated that the easement was overdue.

The Town Manager added that there would need to be some improvements made that would allow better access by the Church to the back of their property.

Councilwoman Rountree inquired if once the deed was signed the easement could be used.

The Town Manager stated yes, however they would need to physically put the road in. He added that the Church had been very good to work with.

Vice Mayor Smith made the motion to accept the easement. Councilman Hall seconded the motion.

Mayor Williams called for the vote. On call for the vote, seven members were present. Vice Mayor Smith voted aye, Councilwoman Rountree voted aye, Councilwoman Butler voted aye, Councilman Pack voted aye, Councilman Hall voted aye, Councilwoman Haywood voted aye, and Mayor Williams voted aye. The motion passed.

### **Old Business:**

Mayor Williams stated that he would like to address the Staff of the Town of Smithfield. He reported that he had attended 18 Virginia Municipal League (VML) Conferences and 12 Mayors Conferences during which he had been able to speak with people from different areas all over Virginia. He stated that it was not to be believed the amount of respect the Town of Smithfield has from the other cities and towns all over Virginia, and also some of the horror stories he has heard about other localities. He continued that, including the Tourism Department, there were 77 people who worked for the Town. He stated that they do their jobs to provide food on their table but it is clear that they love what they do. Mayor Williams pointed out that with Mr. Reed in Public Works, there is never a worker he has seen just standing around and they are constantly working together. He continued that the Town Staff were all respectful to the public. He stated that the staff in the waterworks, Town Manager's office, and other town entities were as nice as they could be. Mayor Williams stated that it had been excellent to work with the Staff and that he would miss them all. He addressed the Council and stated that they need to know how great the Town staff were. He encourage the Council to help staff in any way they could. He reiterated to the Council members that there are more Councils across Virginia who have problems that they would not even believe. Mayor Williams stated that in the 18 years he has sat on Town Council it had been his pleasure to serve the Town. He stated that one of the things that made the Town as good as it was, were its volunteers. He commended all the people who volunteer to make the Town a better place. He encouraged the Council to keep the Town going as good as it was going. He said it had been his pleasure to serve the Town and to work with everyone. He thanked everyone in attendance.

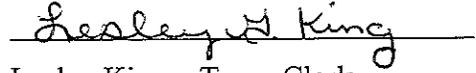
### **Closed Session:**

There was no Closed Session necessary.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 pm.



T. Carter Williams - Mayor



Lesley King - Town Clerk