

**FLOYD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
W. SKIP BISHOP JR., TOWN HALL
January 7, 2021
6:30 P.M.
MINUTES**

MEETING CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Griffin called the January 7, 2020 meeting of the Floyd Town Council to order.

ROLL CALL –Vice Mayor Patton, Councilman Turner, Councilman Whitaker, Councilman Bond, Town Manager Cox and Town Clerk Holfield were present. Mayor Griffin and Town Attorney Shortt attended remotely.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE-

Councilman Whitaker led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS COMMENTS-

None

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION-

A. 2021 Reorganization

a. Appointment of Vice Mayor-

Councilman Whitaker makes a motion, seconded by Councilman Turner, to reappoint Councilman Patton as the 2021 Vice Mayor for the Floyd Town Council.

Councilman Turner-aye
Councilman Whitaker-aye
Councilman Bond-aye
Vice Mayor Patton-abstain
Mayor Griffin-aye

b. Setting of Meeting Date & Time-

Councilman Bond makes a motion, seconded by Councilman Whitaker to hold the Floyd Town Council meetings at 5:30pm.

Vice Mayor Patton-aye
Councilman Turner-aye
Councilman Whitaker-aye
Councilman Bond-aye
Mayor Griffin-aye

Vice Mayor Patton makes a motion, seconded by Councilman Whitaker to hold the Floyd Town Council meetings on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of every month in the W. Skip Bishop Town Hall.

Vice Mayor Patton-aye
Councilman Turner-aye
Councilman Whitaker-aye
Councilman Bond-aye
Mayor Griffin-aye

- c. **2021 Holiday Schedule-** The Council reviewed the holiday schedule provided. Councilman Turner makes a motion, seconded by Councilman Bond to adopt the 2021 State of Virginia holiday schedule as presented and honor any additional days given by the Governor.

Vice Mayor Patton-aye
Councilman Turner-aye
Councilman Whitaker-aye
Councilman Bond-aye
Mayor Griffin-aye

Mayor Griffin asked that Vice Mayor chair the remainder of the meeting for ease of communication since he is attending remotely.

CONSENT CALENDAR-

- A. **December 3rd minutes-** Council reviewed the minutes provided. Vice Mayor Patton asked to two typos within the minutes. On page 6 within the first paragraph, third sentence change “be” to “been” and on page 7 within the first paragraph, second sentence change “we” to “he”.

Councilman Whitaker makes a motion, seconded by Councilman Turner, to approve the December 3, 2020 minutes as amended.

Vice Mayor Patton-aye
Councilman Turner-aye
Councilman Whitaker-aye
Councilman Bond-aye
Mayor Griffin-aye

PRESENTATION-

A. Ms. Amy Ingram Recognition

Town Manager Cox read the proclamation honoring Ms. Amy Ingram. Council members thanked Ms. Ingram for the service she provides to the community, stating that she conducts herself in a very professional manner while managing the elections. There is no doubt that the work is completed with true accuracy. Ms. Ingram is a huge asset to the community and goes above and beyond her work duty.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT-

Town Manager Cox stated that she and Vice Mayor Patton met with the two firms that submitted a request for proposal for the architectural and engineering work needed in Town Hall. (Mayor Griffin was unable to attend) Town Manager Cox and Vice Mayor Patton recommend that council accept the proposal from Thompson and Lytton at a cost not to exceed \$30,000. This cost will include a feasibility study that would include a building concept and the work would be completed in six weeks.

Vice Mayor Patton added that he had spoken with a close friend who was an architect in Kentucky about the proposal. He stated that just because the project is small doesn't mean that the project doesn't carry the same importance of a large project. He told Vice Mayor Patton that he should look for a genuine commitment to the project from the project manager. Vice Mayor Patton stated that both firms seemed to be qualified to handle the project however Thompson and Lytton has all the department specifications on staff to handle the project, Hill Studios would have to hire out a large portion of the work that should end up costing the Town more money at the end of the day.

Councilman Bond makes a motion, seconded by Councilman Turner, to accept the request for proposal from Thompson and Lytton at an amount not to exceed \$30,000.

- Vice Mayor Patton-aye
- Councilman Turner-aye
- Councilman Whitaker-aye
- Councilman Bond-aye
- Mayor Griffin-aye

Town Manager Cox reported that the public restrooms had been closed for several day. A pipe at the back flow preventer in the basement busted. The repairs have been made and the restrooms are back open.

Town Manager Cox reminded council members of the upcoming zoning timeline. The Planning Commission will complete their final review of the document in January and Town Council will hold a public hearing on the final changes in March.

Town Manager Cox reported that the public works crew emptied business dumpsters today incase they are unable to get them tomorrow due the weather.

OTHER BUSINESS-

Councilman Whitaker stated that the Town of Floyd is the only board in the County that does not begin its meeting with an invocation. Councilman Whitaker moved that beginning January 21, 2021, each Town Council meeting be opened with an invocation. Councilman Turner seconded the motion. The following discussion was held on the motion.

Councilman Whitaker stated that he is proposing the change because it would be a good addition to the meeting. He stated that as members of council we took the oath of office that includes "So help me God" and we are all to uphold the constitution that includes "In God we Trust."

Mayor Griffin stated that he is a person of faith, but he chooses to do so in private. However, he is willing to discuss the matter if council so wishes. Vice Mayor Patton stated that he knows we live in a secular world and not everyone is a Christian, and some people worship a different God. This is a tough one, it would be best to hear Town Attorney Shortt's option before we make a decision. Roll call was taken on the motion that was on the table.

Councilman Whitaker makes a motion, seconded by Councilman Turner, being January 21, 2021, each Town Council meeting be opened with an invocation.

Vice Mayor Patton-nay

Councilman Turner-nay

Councilman Whitaker-aye

Councilman Bond-abstain, he would like to hear a recommendation from legal counsel before making a decision.

Mayor Griffin-nay

Council members agreed to seek legal advisement on the matter before making a decision. Town Attorney Shortt will share his recommendation at an upcoming Town Council meeting.

Councilman Whitaker stated that he has been looking for ways that council might be able to help our local businesses. He stated that he had spoken with Town Manager Cox and one of the only things that may be within council's power would be to wave the \$30 license fee for 2021 for our existing businesses. The business would still be responsible for paying the additional business taxes based on their gross sales.

Town Manager Cox stated that some of the businesses only pay the \$30 license fee based on their gross sales. In 2020 the Town issued about 240 business licenses, if Town Council were to remove the license fee for those businesses in 2021 it would amount to about \$7500. She continued by stating that some businesses, such as those that grow and sell their own produce and non-profits, are already exempt from the business license fee. Town Manager Cox stated it would be possible to offer an amnesty program similar to the meals and lodging. In accordance with state code council could consider extending the deadline for the business license through May 1st with no penalties.

It was noted that council members may have two options, one would be to wave the \$30 license fee for businesses with a current 2020 license and the second would be to offer an amnesty program through May 1st for business license without penalty. Town Attorney Shortt will review the options and report back to council at the next Town Council meeting.

Mayor Griffin reminded council members that he will be meeting with Town Manager Cox and Councilman Bond (the finance committee) before the next Town Council meeting to review the standings of the current budget. It would be good to fully understand the impact COVID has had on the budget before making a decision to cut additional revenues. He also noted that if council chooses to wave the business license fee it should be to businesses that are in good standings on all other taxes owed to the Town.

CLOSED SESSION-

None

ADJOURNMENT-

Councilman Whitaker makes a motion, seconded by Councilman Bond, and unanimously carried, to adjourn until January 21, 2021 at 5:30 pm at the Floyd Town Hall.

William R. Griffin, Mayor

Katie Holfield, Town Clerk