

**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL CHERAW TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**JUNE 23, 2020**  
**5:30P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Andy Ingram, Councilmembers: Robby Bennett, Jim Crawford, Cherryl Melton and Billy Wallace, Jr.

**WebEX:** Jacqueline Ellerbe-Shannon and Richard White.

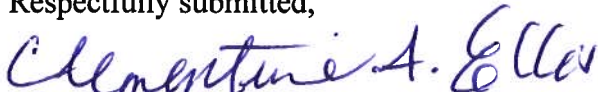
**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Smith, Town Administrator, Clementine A. Ellis, Clerk-Treasurer, Rob Wolfe and Brian Rogers.

1. The invocation was offered by **Mike Smith** and the pledge was made to the American flag.
  
2. **For Council Action**
  - a. Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration second and final reading of **Ordinance 2020-33: An Ordinance to Raise Revenue and Adopt a General Operating Budget for the Town of Cheraw for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021**. A motion was made by **Councilman Crawford** to approve **Ordinance 2020-33**. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.
  
  - b. Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration second and final reading of **Ordinance 2020-34: An Ordinance Amending Section 19-7 (1) and 19-51(a) and (b) of the Cheraw Town Code Increasing Certain Water and Sewer Charges**. A motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to approve **Ordinance 2020-34: An Ordinance Amending Section 19-7 (1) and 19-51(a) and (b) of the Cheraw Town Code Increasing Certain Water and Sewer Charges**. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.
  
  - c. Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration first reading of **Ordinance 2021-02: An Ordinance to accepting Property Formerly Known as the Kimbrell's Furniture Store**. **Rob Wolfe** stated **Kimbrells' approached the Town last year and offered to donate both buildings on the Kimbrell's property**. **Wolfe** also stated this offers an opportunity for redevelopment. The buildings are mostly in good shape and are basically blank slates for a variety of development types. A motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to approve second and final reading of **Ordinance 2021-02**. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace**. **Councilman Bennett** asked was any improvements necessary. **Rob Wolfe** stated the building on Second Street is water tight. Market Street has one small leak on the roof.

Wolfe also noted an option for subdividing the building for multiple uses. Crawford stated that it can be expensive. Mayor Ingram stated there has been some local interest for properties. The assessed value is **\$181,000** but appraisal came back **\$195,000**. **Councilman Crawford** asked did we have plans to repair leak and Wolfe said not right now. Councilman Crawford stated if the leaks are minor get estimates instead of letting the leak continue. Mayor Ingram stated once the Town has ownership he wants council to look at what direction they would like to go. The motion was passed by unanimous vote.

4. Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration **Resolution 06-2020. A Resolution Authorizing Submission of an Application by the town of Cheraw to the Division of Community Grant Programs of the South Carolina Department of Commerce.** The match for the Town will be 10%. **Councilman Crawford** made a motion to pass Resolution 06-2020. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote. Smith stated that total project is estimated to be **\$1,223,743**. The motion was passed by unanimous vote.
5. Mayor Ingram called Council's attention to a discussion on a re-opening of Town Facilities. **Town Administrator Mike Smith** stated Recreation Director Brian Rogers has been working on teleconferences with SC Recreation Departments. Smith stated after looking at the increase in positive testing in Chesterfield County and the numbers are not going down and as a result they want to back away and hold off another 30 days before considering re-opening. Smith stated if you want to rent the Community Center you could only have **37** people, gymnastics could do **45** and Dance **30** people. Each week the Town would have to sanitize and this adds up in cost. Therefore, the recommendation would be held off and revisit at the end of July. Recreation Director Brian Rogers agrees. The cost would be **\$2,100** per week to clean for gymnastics. Smith stated he is trying to get grant funds to help. **Councilwoman Melton** made a motion to not take any action and take a review at the end of July. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.
6. There being no further business a motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to adjourn. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at **5:50 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Clementine A. Ellis  
Clerk-Treasurer

**MINUTES**  
**CHERAW TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**  
**JUNE 9, 2020**  
**5:30 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Andy Ingram, Councilmembers: Robby Bennett, Jim Crawford, Cherryl Melton, Billy Wallace and Richard White.

**TELECONFERENCE:** Councilwoman Jacqueline Ellerbe-Shannon.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mike Smith, Town Administrator; Clementine Ellis, Clerk-Treasurer, Rob Wolfe, Police Chief Keith Thomas, J T Flemming, Margret Thomas, Jimmy Thompson, Patricia David, Johnathan Robinson, Martell Harrington, Candace Ellerbe, Christian Brown, Frederick Brown, Nishika Allsbrook, Ashley Davis and Delphenia Rollins.

1. The invocation was offered by **Mike Smith** and the pledge was made to the American Flag.
2. Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration the minutes of the **May 12<sup>th</sup>** Council Meeting. A motion was made by **Councilman Crawford** to approve the May 12<sup>th</sup> minutes. The motion was seconded by **Councilwoman Melton** and passed by unanimous vote.
3. The **May 2020 Financial Report** was submitted for council's consideration. A motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to approve the **May Financial Report**. Crawford wanted update on revenues. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Crawford** and passed by unanimous vote.
4. Public Hearing on proposed increases for water and sewer rates. Mayor Ingram gave rules for sending in emails or call in for questions for budget. Mayor Ingram gave information on water and sewer rates as well as key summary information.

Mayor Ingram announced the floor was open for a Public Hearing for water and sewer rate increases. No comments or questions were made. **Councilwoman Melton** made a motion to close the public hearing for Water and Sewer Rate Increase. The motion was seconded by **Councilman White** and passed by unanimous vote.

5. Mayor Ingram announced the floor was open for a Public Hearing on the 2020- 2021 Proposed Budget for the Town of Cheraw fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. Mayor Ingram stated the Town Council is proposing a General Fund Budget of **\$7,468,757**, a Water/Sewer budget of **\$3,191,532** and a budget of **\$254,786** for Hospitality Funds making a total budget of **\$10,915,075**. He also stated due to COVID-19 the Town is uncertain about revenue shortfalls and has approved some major equipment purchases. These purchases will be put on hold for 90 days to allow the Town Council to monitor the effect of COVID-19 and after the 90 days will determine if the Town can afford to move forward with the major equipment purchases. Mayor Ingram also stated that this budget does call for a tax increase. After a reassessment State Law requires the Town to "roll back" taxes based upon a formula and then the Town is allowed to increase taxes based upon that figure. The previous millage was **138.16**. The roll back after the County assessment lowered the millage to **138.00**. The millage for 2020 -2021 budget year will

be **140.49**. The budget also includes water and sewer rate increases. The 2020-21 budget is approximately **\$2 million dollars** less than last year.

**J.T. Flemming** - Mr. Flemming asked what the \$7 million dollars stated earlier in the Mayor's summary. Mayor Ingram stated this was the General Fund Budget.

### **Citizen's comments**

**Johnathan Robinson** – Mr. Robinson stated Caston Park and Arrowhead Park are not the only parks that need help. He thinks Brown Park can use some improvements. He also stated bringing back the Boys and Girls Club would be great. He also stated many people will help to be mentors. Mayor Ingram stated the Town wants to improve all parks. Mr. Robinson stated he feels minority neighborhoods are slighted and conditions are getting worse. He noted a petition was signed and it is a start, but more is needed.

**Patricia David** – Mrs. David stated The Boys and Girls Club was funded by Florence Housing Authority and it worked quite well. She suggested to try for a grant for the Housing Authority again. Town Administrator Smith thinks the new administration is at the Cheraw Housing Authority.

**Councilwoman Melton** stated they (The Pathfinders) would welcome anybody that comes to Robert Smalls to talk to children. Pathfinders had been established for 13 years.

**Town Administrator Mike Smith** stated he had two written comments for Budget Hearings.

**Mary Anderson** – Mrs. Anderson wrote regarding the tennis courts. Mrs. Anderson indicated the tennis courts are used more and would like to see them resurfaced.

**Mark Ingram** – Mr. Ingram wrote the tennis courts were being used all before COVID-19 and they have formed some teams that have gone off to play and had some teams come here to play. He noted the tennis courts are deteriorating and he would like to see them resurfaced as well.

**Latoya Funderburk** – 811 S. Church Street – Ms. Funderburk wanted to know what type programs the Town is offering for young proper and if there are any educational things being offered.

**Town Administrator Smith** stated during this period the Recreation Department has been instructed to look at developing and brainstorming new programs for young adults and youth of all ages. He stated the Recreation Department is trying to find new programs.

**Councilman Crawford** asked if the funds for the tennis courts resurfacing were the funds donated by Highland Industries years ago. Town Administrator Mike Smith stated yes. Mayor Ingram stated a few years ago Highland/Takata celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and they contributed \$50,000 to the Town to be used for some type of recreational facility and these funds will be used to resurface the tennis courts. Mayor Ingram noted the tennis courts will also be used for Pickle Ball which is a new sport that is gaining popularity.

**Councilman Crawford** made a motion to close the public hearing for the 2020-21 Budget. The motion was seconded by **Councilwoman Melton** and passed by unanimous vote.

6. **For Council Action:**

A. **First Reading of Ordinance:**

**Ordinance 2020-33: An Ordinance to Raise Revenue and Adopt a General Budget for the Town of Cheraw, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021.** **Councilwoman Melton** made a motion to approve first reading of **Ordinance 2020-33**. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.

**Ordinance 2020-34: An Ordinance Amending Sections 19-7 (b) (1) and 19-51 (a) and (b) of the Cheraw Town Code Increasing Water and Sewer charges.** **Councilwoman Melton** made a motion to approve first reading of **Ordinance 2020-34**. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.

**Ordinance 2021-01: An Ordinance to Repeal and Replace Chapter 21, Zoning Regulations (The Cheraw Zoning Ordinance) of the Town of Cheraw.** **Rob Wolfe** stated this does not change any regulations within the zoning ordinance. This simply is a repeal and replace to be reformatted to adjust for all the changes made over the last few months. A motion was made by **Councilman White** to approve **Ordinance 2021-01**. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.

B. **Resolution:**

Mayor Ingram introduced for council's consideration of **Resolution 05-2020. A Resolution Authorizing the Submission of a Grant Application to the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Arrowhead Park** is over **26 years old**. The lights have become obsolete and need to be repaired. Smith noted the Town can apply for **\$300,000** and match money will come from Hospitality. **Councilman Crawford** made a motion to adopt **Resolution 05-2020**. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.

7. Mayor Ingram called council's attention to a recommendation from the Finance Committee. **Councilman Crawford** stated the Finance Committee has met twice in the past month concerning a request from Police Chief Keith Thomas about the possibility of enacting a hiring bonus policy for certified police offers. Over the past few months several vacancies have occurred within the Police Department and it is becoming harder to find certified Police Officers. The Police Department has had to fill positions with applicants who have to undergo and pass a 12-week training process that requires attending the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy. Getting into the Academy can take anywhere from 6-12 months and the Town is having to pay these new hires their salaries that could cost the Town from **\$15,000 - \$20,000** while waiting to attend the Academy.

As a result of having a number of inexperienced police officers Chief Keith Thomas is requesting Town Council consider implementing a hiring bonus for certified officers. By adopting a hiring bonus policy the Town would get a certified Police Officer who could be put into service immediately and not have to pay thousands of dollars waiting

for an opening at the SC Criminal Justice Academy. Until a Police Officer is certified they ride with a supervisor and can only provide backup assistance. They cannot issue tickets or enforce the laws.

**Councilman Crawford** stated the Finance Committee has met twice on this subject and had asked the Police Chiefs in other municipalities what they offer in regard to hiring bonuses. The Police Chief did provide that information and the Finance Committee met with the Town Administrator and recommend the Town Council adopt a hiring bonus policy for certified Police Officer. The bonus would total **\$3,500** and be paid out as follows:

**\$1500 at the end of the first pay period**  
**\$1000 at the end of the six month anniversary**  
**\$1000 at the end of twelve-month anniversary**

Should a Police Officer be paid the bonus money and leave before two years of employment the Town could legally recover all or a portion of the bonus pay. **Councilman Crawford** submitted this recommendation in the form of a motion. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote.

8. **For Council Information:**

**Citizen Comments:**

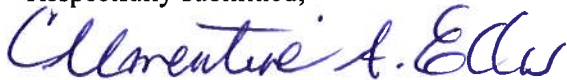
**J.T. Flemming** - Mr. Flemming stated he realizes this is the part where council does not have to respond to comments, but he does not need a response. Mr. Flemming stated council are the elected leaders for the Town of Cheraw and he has been sitting back watching during COVID-19 and everything going on in the country and has not heard from council. He stated he knows the Mayor released a statement at the beginning of the social distancing phase of SC and implemented a curfew in the Town of Cheraw. Mr. Flemming noted as we continue to go through the COVID-19 situations and the numbers continue rising we have not heard anything from you guys. People elected council to lead them and be there for them. Mr. Flemming stated he feels as elected officials council should do a better job in communicating to the public. He also stated with the stuff going on now with protesting concerning Black Lives Matter and all that is going on around the world yet again the people did not hear anything from the Mayor or Town Council. The citizens of Cheraw are getting frustrated and Cheraw is close to exploding. Mr. Flemming noted council are elected leaders and people need them to step up because Cheraw is a predominately African American Town and the issues going on right now concerns the African American Community and yet we did not hear from any of our leaders stating they don't support stuff like that or we are here to make sure everyone lives like an equal citizen in the Town of Cheraw. Luckily there has not been any situations with police and he is thankful for the leadership of the police force. The citizens need to be reassured by the people who elected them to lead the Town and that they are concerned about the well being and interest. Mr. Flemming stated there is a disconnect between council, mayor and the citizens. There is a lack of communication. He also stated it goes both ways. The citizens don't come to council meetings to ask questions or see what is going on and outside the citizens do not hear from council. Mr. Flemming feels when this is all over a forum needs to be held to interact with people. He stated we are getting close to having a problem within the Town of Cheraw.

**Jonathan Robinson** – Mr. Robinson stated there are some confederate statues still on the street and feel they need to go immediately. He feels the statues are saying he wrong thing and is offensive to his people to come to Town Hall and the statue is next to Town Hall. Something council may agree but it is not alright. Mr. Robinson stated he sees the Mayor walking his dog and nothing is done, no questions are answered. Mr. Robinson stated the Confederate Statue preach division and racism. Mr. Robinson commended Chief Thomas on the protest rally. He stated “Chief Thomas did his thing”. He again stated the statue needs to go immediately. Council should take the statue down to show a united community.

**Nischkca Allbrooks** – Ms. Allbrooks stated she was born and raised in Cheraw and no longer lives here but is in the process of wanting to bring back a business to Cheraw. She came to get some insight and to see the people who pay taxes here. She stated she sat back and watch to see how it looked before she jumped in. She noted this is home and she could take her ideas anywhere. She wanted council to know that she is coming in offering unity. She questioned whether she would be given a fair opportunity. She wanted to leave this thought with council. She stated she will do it the right way. Business is business. She stated she is going to bring an awesome opportunity to the Town.

9. There being no further business a motion was made by **Councilwoman Melton** to adjourn. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Wallace** and passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at **6:15 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Clementine A. Ellis  
Clerk-Treasurer