



MIDDLEBURG TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 25, 2021



PENDING APPROVAL

PRESENT: Mayor Trowbridge M. Littleton
Vice Mayor Philip M. Miller
Councilmember Chris W. Bernard
Councilmember J. Kevin Daly
Councilmember Morris “Bud” Jacobs
Councilmember Peter Leonard-Morgan
Councilmember Cindy C. Pearson

STAFF: Danny Davis, Town Manager
Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk
William M. Moore, Deputy Town Manager
Estee LaClare, Planning & Project Associate
Julie Rivard, Finance Director/Town Treasurer
A.J. Panebianco, Chief of Police

ABSENT: Councilmember Darlene Kirk

The Town Council of the Town of Middleburg, Virginia held their regular monthly meeting, beginning at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 25, 2021. Due to Governor Northam’s executive orders requiring that people social distance, the Council meeting was held as a hybrid meeting, with some of the Council and staff participating in-person and others participating remotely.

Mayor Littleton explained for the viewing audience that it was the Council’s responsibility to conduct essential public business despite the COVID-19 pandemic; however, it recognized the need to do so safely, not only for its members but also for the Town staff and members of the public. He further explained that to that end, in accordance with the Council’s resolution declaring a local emergency and its ordinance implementing emergency procedures and effectuating temporary changes to address the continuity of governmental operations, the Council would hold its meetings via remote access until such time as the Governor rescinded his executive orders. Mr. Littleton advised the viewing audience that copies of the agendas were available on the Town’s website and that the meetings would be livestreamed and recorded for viewing on the website. He reviewed the process that would be utilized for the remote meetings.

Mayor Littleton led Council and those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The roll call was called at 6:00 p.m.

Staff Reports

Town Treasurer’s Report – February 2021

Town Treasurer Rivard noted that she had provided Council with a mid-month report. She reported that the business license revenues were up by 15%, which was larger than projected. Ms. Rivard further reported that meals tax revenues were down by 21% and advised that they were down consistently. She noted that the water and sewer bills were due on April 15th and advised that while those revenues looked like they were down, this was only because the bills were just sent. Ms. Rivard noted that overall, water/sewer revenues were down by 9%, which would result in \$100,000 in lost revenue by the end of the year. In response to an inquiry from the Council, she advised that the reason for the reduction was that consumption usage was down for a handful of the larger accounts.

Town Manager Davis opined that the reason the meals revenues were down was because traffic was down during January and February, which also tracked with water consumption. He advised that he spoke with representatives from Salamander, who were looking at their water consumption as well. Mr. Davis noted that they had taken savings measures, which would have limited their consumption.

COVID Status Report

Town Manager Davis reported that Governor Northam was continuing to loosen restrictions. He advised that effective April 1st, groups of up to fifty individuals could gather indoors for social gatherings, up to one hundred could gather outdoors for social gatherings, outdoor events could have 30% occupancy, and outdoor events with no occupancy would have no cap. Mr. Davis noted that this would help the Spring Races and Art in the Burg. He reminded individuals of the need to wear a mask, social distance and wash their hands.

Town Manager Davis encouraged people to get the vaccination as they qualified for it. He noted that he spoke with the County about reaching out to the underserved members of the community, as well as those that were hard to reach.

Mayor Littleton reported that the Coalition of Loudoun Towns (COLT) would do a vaccination event next week in Purcellville to show people that it was safe and to reinforce the need to get it. He noted that 30% of people in Western Loudoun were not or were hesitant about taking the shot, which was not good. Mr. Littleton encouraged the members of the community to get it as soon as possible so the Governor could eliminate the need for masks. He also encouraged the members of Council to help increase awareness of the need to get vaccinated.

Consent Agenda

- A. Council Approval – February 23, 2021 Special Council Meeting Minutes; March 11, 2021 Regular Council Meeting Minutes
- B. Council Approval – Blue Ridge Avenue Utility Extensions

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan moved, seconded by Councilmember Bernard, that Council accept and adopt the consent agenda as written.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Miller, Bernard, Daly, Jacobs, Leonard-Morgan and Pearson
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Councilmember Kirk
(Mayor Littleton only votes in the case of a tie.) (by roll call vote)

Action Items

Council Approval – Resolution to Apply for Grant – Feasibility Study for Sewer Main Extensions

Town Manager Davis thanked Planning & Project Associate LaClare for her work on this grant. He reported that four property owners agreed to allow the Town to apply on their behalf for a grant to do a feasibility study on extending sewer to their locations and noted that they were all on septic. Mr. Davis reported that there was no match required on the Town’s part. He reminded Council that eliminating these septic systems was a key strategy in the Source Water Protection Plan.

Vice Mayor Miller moved, seconded by Councilmember Daly, that Council adopt the Resolution Supporting the Town of Middleburg’s application for grant funding from Loudoun County for community water and/or wastewater solutions.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Miller, Bernard, Daly, Jacobs, Leonard-Morgan and Pearson
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Councilmember Kirk
(Mayor Littleton only votes in the case of a tie.) (by roll call vote)

Council Approval – Amendment to Employee Handbook – Paid Family Leave

Town Manager Davis reminded Council that when they held their discussion of paid parental leave, they directed the staff to look at paid family leave. He noted that many employers were going in that direction, including Fairfax and Loudoun Counties. Mr. Davis reported that the staff was proposing an amendment to the Employee Handbook to allow for paid family leave, with the requirements being based upon those of Loudoun County. He explained that if an employee qualified for Family and Medical Leave (FMLA), they would also qualify for up to six weeks of paid family leave in a twelve-month period. Mr. Davis reviewed the categories to qualify for FMLA. He explained that if an employee was still out after the six weeks of paid family leave, they would be required to use sick, annual, unpaid, or donated leave. Mr. Davis noted that it was difficult to identify the fiscal impact on the Town; however, he opined that it would be approximately \$3-5,000/year for overtime in the Police Department, as the other departments generally handled absences with in-house forces. He advised that there could also be a cost for the payout of leave when an employee left.

Mayor Littleton thanked the staff and Council for addressing this in a forward way. He opined that it sent a great message.

Councilmember Pearson moved, seconded by Councilmember Daly, that Council adopt the attached (to agenda) amendments to the Employee Handbook regarding the Family and Medical Leave Act and Paid Family Leave, effective April 1, 2021, to include any employee on FMLA as of this date.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Miller, Bernard, Daly, Jacobs, Leonard-Morgan and Pearson
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: Councilmember Kirk
(Mayor Littleton only votes in the case of a tie.) (by roll call vote)

Town Manager Davis thanked the Council for their concern for the team’s well-being. He noted that Loudoun County also performed a comprehensive review of their leave and benefits policies and advised that he planned to work with Vice Mayor Miller and Councilmember Kirk to make recommendations for changes to Middleburg’s policies. Mr. Davis noted that the changes would first require an actuarial review. He expressed hope to bring a recommendation to Council prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Vice Mayor Miller noted that the definition of “immediate family” had changed since the Employee Handbook was last updated.

Discussion Items

FY '22 Proposed Utility Fund Budget

Town Manager Davis reviewed the summary of the utility funds and noted that the Town would use most of the revenues for operations, with there being no buffer. He reported that consumption continued to be soft and expressed hope that this was just a seasonal occurrence. Mr. Davis reminded Council of the proposed three percent increase in water and sewer user fees; however, he advised that there would be no additional revenue. He reported that an increase was projected in revenue from the cell tower leases; although, he acknowledged that the revenues had not been updated.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis opined that Sprint would continue to lease space on the water tower as they were in a long-term lease with the Town.

Mayor Littleton noted that the Sprint network had not integrated with T-Mobile's. He asked that the staff review the lease contracts and update the revenue projections.

Town Manager Davis reminded Council of the escalator clause in IES' contract. He reported that \$100,000 was included in the engineering line item for a utility system master plan and advised that the last one was prepared eighteen years ago. Mr. Davis noted that the utility maps did not reflect the most recent utility projects. He opined that it was important for the Town to understand the future capital needs in the Utility Fund, including what portions of the systems were in the worst condition. Mr. Davis reminded Council that a portion of his, the Town Treasurer's and the Accounting Assistant's salaries were included in the Utility Fund. He advised that the debt service costs may change, depending on when the Town drew down on the letter-of-credit.

Town Manager Davis reminded Council that the operations and maintenance budgets for the water and sewer systems were separate. He reported that the cost of equipment and supplies was significantly reduced. Mr. Davis advised that a significant amount of money was also transferred to the CIP budget and noted that if it were not spent, it would be saved for a significant future capital item. He reported that IES analyzed the amount of chemicals used and were able to identify cost savings. Mr. Davis noted that the same occurred with the sludge removal costs.

Mayor Littleton noted that the Town of Round Hill had excess sludge drying capacity and suggested the staff explore contracting for it. He opined that this could help reduce the Town's sludge removal costs.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis reported that \$75,000 was budgeted for capital improvements in both the water and sewer budgets. He reiterated that any unspent monies would roll over for future projects.

In response to an inquiry from Council regarding the company that overcharged the Town for salt, Town Manager Davis reported that they took a hard line that it was the Town's fault for approving the invoices without question. He noted that they did agree to reduce the cost for the future.

Mayor Littleton asked the staff to consult with the Town Attorney regarding the overcharges and opined that this was a legal issue. He suggested that if the company stuck with their position, the Town should explore purchasing its salt elsewhere.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). He reported that the major project in the coming year or two involved the membrane replacements at the wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Davis noted that they were currently being cleaned, which may help resolve some of the recent operational challenges. He reported that a project was included in the CIP for the design and construction of sewer lines to those properties that remained on septic systems. Mr. Davis expressed hope that grant money may be available; however, he suggested the Town cover the costs if it was not. He advised that a project was included in the CIP for water tower maintenance and noted that the Marshall Street tower was scheduled for maintenance in July of 2022. Mr. Davis opined that this would allow the tower to last another forty to fifty years. He reported that a project was included in the CIP for the purchase of radio read water meters in FY '23 and FY '24, which would allow the Town to obtain hourly readings and identify possible leaks as soon as possible. Mr. Davis noted that this system would allow the Town to better serve its customers and advised that he would recommend it be done immediately if the Town had the money to do so.

Mayor Littleton asked that the staff conduct a revenue return analysis to determine the payback period for the radio read meters. Council noted the need to also consider the amount of staff time that would be saved, the data that would be available, as well as that the system would allow for better customer service. They questioned whether there was any grant money available to assist with the purchase.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis explained that the clear well project involved the construction of a 40-100,000-gallon water storage tank that would be located at Well 4. He further explained that it would hold finished water, which could be used to backwash the treatment plant, as well as feed the distribution system. Mr. Davis noted that an RFP was issued for the design work and he was ready to sign the contract. He opined that the design would take up to six months, with the construction occurring in FY '22. Mr. Davis advised that this was an important project and suggested there should have been one in the original treatment plant design.

Council asked that the staff explore whether there was any State grant money available for the design and construction of the sewer lines to eliminate the septic systems. They noted that this was a high priority for the Wellhead Protection Committee.

Town Manager Davis advised Council that the staff planned to advertise the budget and water/sewer rate increases for a public hearing on April 22nd. He reminded them that they could adopt them during their first meeting in May. Mr. Davis noted that the budget must be adopted by June 30th.

Information Items

Town Manager Davis reported that Baker Tilly (formerly Springsted) placed the Economic Development job notice online earlier in the day.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis reported that the Town received some feedback to the Public Outreach Session on the Town Hall Project, mostly related to the layout and orientation toward Marshall Street. He advised that the design team was working on how to address this. Mr. Davis noted the article on the project in the Middleburg Eccentric.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis reported that there would be discussion of the latest round of COVID stimulus money by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission later this week. He advised that nothing formal had been received.

Mayor Littleton noted the need to look at what the Town could do to help the citizenry, assuming the money would be coming soon. He further noted the need to hold a discussion soon as the Town may need to put some type of distribution system in place.

Town Manager Davis reported that this would be a topic of discussion at the next Council meeting. He suggested that if any of the members have any ideas that they let him know. Mr. Davis noted that one suggestion was another round of utility credits, which would help the residents.

Mayor Littleton noted the need to determine how to help those tenants whose landlords paid their utility bill.

Town Manager Davis advised Council that during the next meeting, he would update them on the recently adopted State legislation related to (1) the moving of town elections; and, (2) the marijuana referendum.

Mayor Littleton noted that the Town elections must move, as the Town had no choice in the matter. He suggested the citizens should make the decision as to whether they would be held in even or odd years and questioned how the Town could gauge their feelings on this matter.

Town Manager Davis noted that the Town had a limited window for selecting when the elections would be held. He advised that if they did not, they would automatically default to even years.

The Council held some discussion as to how to engage the citizenry in this discussion. They agreed the best method would be through a direct mailer. It was noted that the Council's input was also important. Council suggested their experience be shared with the residents.

There being no further business, Mayor Littleton declared the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

APPROVED:

Trowbridge M. Littleton, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk

March 25, 2021 Middleburg Town Council Meeting

(Note: This is a transcript prepared by a Town contractor based on the video of the meeting. It may not be entirely accurate. For greater accuracy, we encourage you to review the video of the meeting that is on the Town's website – www.middleburgva.gov)

Bridge Littleton: I'm going to call the meeting to order, first item is Pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone: [Pledge of Allegiance]

Bridge Littleton: Ok, we will now go to the remote meeting announcement. It is the Middleburg Town Council's responsibility to conduct essential public business despite the covid-19 pandemic. However, it recognizes the need to do so safely, not only for its membership but also for the town staff and members of the public. To that end, in accordance with the resolution confirming the declaration of a local emergency and the ordinance to implement emergency procedures and effectuate temporary changes to address continuity of government operations during covid-19, the town council will hold its meetings via remote access until such time as the governor rescinds his emergency orders prohibiting gatherings of greater than 10 individuals and mandating social distancing. Copies of the previously referenced documents are made or are available on the town's website for those who wish to view them. OK, as we have been doing, we will have a public comment session at the beginning of the meeting and at the end for anybody who is remotely called in. All right. The next item is roll call, Bud.

Bud Jacobs: Present, Bud Jacobs.

Bridge Littleton: Philip.

Philip Miller: Philip Miller.

Bridge Littleton: Hey, Bud, I don't think your mic was on when you said that.

Bud Jacobs: But Jacobs, present. [laughter]

Bridge Littleton: Bridge Littleton.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Peter Leonard-Morgan.

Chris Bernard: Chris Bernard.

Kevin Daly: Kevin Daly.

Cindy Pearson: Cindy Pearson.

Bridge Littleton: Rhonda.

Rhonda North: Rhonda North Town Clerk.

Danny Davis: Danny Davis, Town Manager.

Bridge Littleton: Ok, and by the way, Bud's here all week, be sure to tip your server. OK, we will now open the public comment session. If any member of the public wishes to address the town council they may do so. Rhonda, do we have anybody on the line?

Rhonda North: We do not, Mr. Mayor.

Bridge Littleton: All right. We will now close the public comment session and move on to staff reports, Treasurer's report.

Julie Rivard: I just have a real quick, simple update for you as we are mid-month. We haven't reached the end of March yet. So as of the date of this memo, our business license tax revenue was 15 percent above our budgeted projections, which is higher for the month of March than we had anticipated. But it's also higher just overall annually. It's larger than the annual budget amount as well. Our meals tax continues to hover around 21 percent less than the budgeted projections so far. It's been kind of trending along the same line with little ups, little downs. But for the most part, it's right. It's been pretty consistent at that level. Our water and sewer fund revenues for we just sent out the March bill. Those bills are due April 15th. If you look at the collections, the numbers for the collections, it looks like we're down about 20 percent. But that doesn't take into account the outstanding bills that we just put through the system. Some have paid, but the bulk is still due. So taking a look at our billings overall, our billings are down by about nine percent over prior years billings. This could result in about 100,000 dollars in lost revenues by year end. If we continue to trend at that reduced billing amount, we'll keep track of it and kind of see where we go, especially over the next two billing cycles as we near the end of the year. That's pretty much it. Real quick, simple. Just to give you a quick update on where we stand for our major revenues at this point so far in the month, do you all have any questions for me?

Bridge Littleton: Anybody have any questions for Julie?

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Not really a question, but Julie is more conversation about what's the general consensus about why the billings are down so much? Is it the businesses are you know, not operating the way they were or. I know it's not probably something you should have to answer. Something to talk about.

Julie Rivard: It's more it's more of a case instead of being down overall across the board, across all of our accounts, we have a handful, a handful of accounts who are large water users and their consumption is down. And so therefore our billings are down.

Bridge Littleton: So let's look to be accurate. It's consumption, not billings. Because you could you could assume that a billing means we're not getting our bills out.

Julie Rivard: Oh, I'm sorry.

Bridge Littleton: No, I mean.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: I did interpret as consumption and I know I knew what you were saying, but thanks for clarifying that.

Danny Davis: If I can. If you recall meals tax in February receipts, which was for January sales, were actually down larger, a greater percentage than we're seeing in February or than we saw in the fall. So we do know the traffic throughout town generally in January and February was lower than what we've seen in the fall. So that kind of tracks because this bill that we just sent out was for January and February water consumption. I will also say I spoke with the resort because I was interested to see if there was any significant reason why their change. And they were actually also already looking at it themselves because it struck them as unusually low. I think they've taken some measures because of the pandemic to limit their water consumption. But again, we're looking at a variety of things.

Bridge Littleton: Any other questions for Julie. OK, Mr. Davis.

Danny Davis: Thank you, sir. Two primary updates, the first, as I'm sure you're all aware, the governor is loosening certain of the covid-19 guidelines, the restrictions as of April 1st, specifically social gatherings indoors can have up to 50 percent. That is extremely helpful for things such as weddings, private gatherings, other events that might be able to be hosted at the resort or the Red Fox Inn or other venues, including restaurants. Outdoor social gatherings can be up to one

hundred persons, which is great. Again, these are social gatherings. And then specifically as it relates to outdoor events, they can have 30 percent occupancy or if there's if it's outdoors and there's no actual occupancy, there's no cap. This helps things like the spring races, other outdoor events, Art in the Burg, things like that. So we are seeing some positive changes in those restrictions and I think that will be beneficial to the town overall. Of course, we continue to remind people to keep your distance, wear your mask, wash your hands, take all the precautions. And then that leads to the final thing, which is about vaccines continuing to stay vigilant and for the public to continue to seek out the vaccination when they qualify for it. I just briefed the mayor earlier and we're going to do what we can. I had a good conversation with the county about trying to reach underserved and hard to reach populations and those that might have a hard time accessing it. And so we're going to try to do our best to continue providing access here in our region for those who need it. So we'll continue working through that and provide more [inaudible] that can become available. With that I'm happy to answer any questions.

Bridge Littleton: Any questions for Danny? Cindy. OK, so I just want to mention one thing as it's related to covid, so I guess we're now on the 1B9, whatever it is. So COLT is going to do a I don't want to say mass, a vaccination event on Tuesday at noon in Purcellville, so we work with the county, so all seven mayors will be there to get vaccinated to show, you know, broad support and that it's safe and that everybody should take it seriously and try to get vaccinated. Now, some of the mayor's already been vaccinated because they were over 65. So, you know, but they'll be there and we'll you know, the whole idea is to try to spread as much positive reinforcement for people to actually go and get vaccinated as possible. I was speaking to the chair earlier today, and there is a significantly higher percentage of people who live in western Loudoun as opposed to eastern Loudoun who are not taking the vaccination or are concerned about it or are really resident and hesitant to do it. And that's not good. I mean, we're in Western Loudoun and all the towns are in western Loudoun. So I think anything that we can all do as public officials, you know, through your Facebook or whatever to encourage folks to get the vaccine as soon as you can. And that's the only way we're going to get to that certain point that we need to be at, that we can start taking these things off, get together in normal circumstances. The numbers I've read is something like 30 percent. There's a 30 percent reluctance rate to get vaccinated. And as I understand it, that is not enough people getting vaccinated, that masks can go away and all that kind of stuff. So if I'm going to post something on Facebook tomorrow about this thing on Tuesday, if you guys can share it around and just to, again, raise awareness and hopefully encourage people to get vaccinated, I think it'll be really, really important. So any questions on that? OK, next item. I pulled up here. Is any town committee reports, Peter.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Negative.

Bridge Littleton: OK. Does anybody have any item they wish to have removed from the consent agenda? Is Will here?

Rhonda North: He's online.

Bridge Littleton: Will, can you hear us?

Will Moore: Yes, sir.

Bridge Littleton: Ok, just I'm not nothing to be removed from the consent agenda, I was just looking at your memo. I didn't see any bullets on there. Just an FYI.

Will Moore: Understood. Thank you.

Bridge Littleton: All right, is there a motion for the consent agenda?

Peter Leonard-Morgan: I move that council, accept and adopt the consent agenda as written.

Chris Bernard: Second.

Bridge Littleton: Any discussion? All right. All those in favor, say aye. Bud.

Bud Jacobs: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Philip.

Philip Miller: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Peter.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Chris.

Chris Bernard: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: John Kevin Daly.

Kevin Daly: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Cindy.

Cindy Pearson: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: All right. Opposed. Abstentions. OK, consent agenda is approved. Next item is resolution to apply for grant feasibility study for sewer main extension.

Danny Davis: So, Mr. Mayor, I want to thank Estee for putting this together, as you will note. There are.

Bridge Littleton: A lot of bullets. I love it.

Danny Davis: A number of bullet points. And she did that very specifically.

Bridge Littleton: Estee follows direct instruction, very. And guidance very well.

Danny Davis: Yes she does.

Bud Jacobs: Yeah, Danny. [laughter].

Bridge Littleton: Despite a lack of doing so by her boss,

Danny Davis: She's she's an example for all of us. I also want to thank her for the fact that she she put all this information together. She spoke with all four of the property owners that we've referenced in here. And we've received their consent to apply on their behalf as the town as stated in the item. This is to seek County funds to go through a feasibility study to extend sewer mains to four properties that are currently on septic. Ultimately, the one on Stonewall Avenue will actually serve three additional homes that have their own private laterals. But we need to at least take this first step and we think this is important. So I'm happy to answer questions or go into more detail. But I think you have the information. It's fairly straightforward. There's no obligation or match or anything else on behalf of the town at this point. And it is a key strategy of the source water protection plan of the town.

Bridge Littleton: Any questions for Danny or? OK, Cindy any questions. OK, is there a motion?

Philip Miller: I move that the town council adopt the resolution supporting the town of Middleburg's application for grant funding from Loudoun County for community water and or wastewater solutions.

Bud Jacobs: Second.

Bridge Littleton: Any discussion. All right. All those in favor. Bud.

Bud Jacobs: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Philip.

Philip Miller: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Peter.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Chris.

Chris Bernard: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Kevin.

Kevin Daly: Yes.

Bridge Littleton: Cindy.

Cindy Pearson: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Could you not hear us with the wind blowing in the background. [inaudible]. All right. All opposed, abstentions. OK. Motion passes. Next item, paid family leave. let me pull this one up. Danny.

Danny Davis: Thank you Mr. Mayor and council. There are very important bullets. As we discussed at the February 11th meeting, the council asked us to go look at instead of doing a paid parental leave, but to look at also paid family leave, which is the direction we think a lot of employers and governments are going, as evidenced by Fairfax County adopting this in the summer of 2020 and Loudoun County just adopting a paid family leave policy on March 16. We have modeled our suggested policy amendments on the Loudoun County policy that was thoroughly vetted and reviewed. Essentially, the idea is this if an employee qualifies for the Family Medical Leave Act, then they would also qualify for up to six weeks of paid family leave in a 12 month period in a six weeks and a rolling 12 month period. They would have to again qualify for FMLA under a variety of reasons, whether it is birth or placement of a child, one's own serious medical condition, or caring for an immediate family member with a serious medical condition. And I think this addresses some of the comments made at the prior time. We discussed this about well it's not just about perhaps having a child it might also be caring for an aging parent or a spouse or a child that gets hurt or your own serious injury. After the six weeks that you're still on FMLA, FMLA runs for 12 weeks, you could use sick leave, annual leave or unpaid leave, and you could also seek donated leave from other employees if needed, so that's the short and sweet of it, I will indicate that it is difficult to truly come up with a fiscal impact because use of FMLA is very sporadic. However, I think in our general use that we've seen here at the [inaudible] as well as some general numbers I've looked at from the county, it's essentially 10 percent of the workforce might use it in a given year. And for us, that equates to between one and two persons. For general workforce staff, we typically cover workload. While someone is out on an FMLA status, we don't necessarily bring in an employee or any other costs related to that. The only real costs for those employees would be the leave that they bank and then would be paid out upon separation of the town. Again, costs that are a little bit hard to calculate but are relatively [inaudible] in the grand scheme of things. On the police side we do have to backfill with either the lieutenant or with overtime or part time officers. And again, as I indicated here, that's probably somewhere around three to five thousand a year, which is very we can absorb in our current budget. So I'm happy to answer any questions you might have. And then once we dialog on this, I would like to just give a quick heads up about some other changes. I'm going to be working with the council members on.

Bridge Littleton: Ok, any questions, comments, input, thoughts? This is an important one so let's just go around the room. Bud. Any input or questions.

Bud Jacobs: Love it.

Bridge Littleton: All right. Philip. Peter,

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Thanks for putting it together. I think it's great.

Bridge Littleton: Chris.

Chris Bernard: Yeah, same thing. Thanks for getting all organized.

Kevin Daly: It's important to take care of our own, especially the folks who so much we need to look after them

Bridge Littleton: Cindy, any input?

Cindy Pearson: No input. You want me to make a motion?

Bridge Littleton: No. I just want to quickly say thanks, Danny and the staff, for putting this together. This is hard stuff, but it directly impacts people's lives. And just thanks to the council for, you know, I think we're leaning forward in an important way, you know, and any change in environment. Right. There's those who lean forward there are those who get there. Then there's always those who lean back. And I think we're leaning forward. I think it sends a great message. So really appreciate everybody's hard work on it. Yes. And if you wanna make the motion,

Cindy Pearson: Sure I move that the town council adopt the attach amendment to the employee handbook regarding the Family and Medical Leave Act and paid family leave effective April 1st, 2021, to include any employee on FMLA as of this date.

Kevin Daly: Second.

Bridge Littleton: Any other discussion? All right. All those in favor say aye. Bud.

Bud Jacobs: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Philip.

Philip Miller: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Peter.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Chris.

Chris Bernard: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Kevin.

Kevin Daly: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Cindy.

Cindy Pearson: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Opposed, abstentions. OK, the motion carries [off mic]. Oh yeah. I'm sorry. That's right. Go ahead.

Danny Davis: And I want to echo your comments. I believe what you've just done as the council shows a lot of. It's greatly appreciated by staff [off mic]. And it shows that you're concerned about the well-being of our team and the benefits that make it a great place to work. So we really appreciate the council doing that. My other comment is that along with this amendment that Loudoun County passed, they did a comprehensive review of pretty much all of their lead policies, as well as some other benefit policies. And so I will be working with Council Member Kirk as her role in kind of personnel committee and then also the vice mayor, just because we've been working on some of these issues to review some of those changes and perhaps make recommendations or suggestions for continued review, some of those will require likely a little bit of analysis or potential actuarial review from our auditor just because it may involve leave carryover, Leave payouts and things like that. But I think it's it's worth us at least looking at trying [off mic] exactly [off mic] Again, not a huge number, but any change would have some effect on that. So we'll be working on that behind the scenes and hope to bring something back and hopefully before the beginning of the fiscal year.

Philip Miller: I mean, there's a lot even in that document that you showed me, that they cleaned up a lot of language that was, you know, just from a long time ago that didn't really make sense today. So, yeah, a lot of the definitions changed. And yeah. [off mic] Like what is extended family versus, you know, immediate family, a blended family. Like it has to include those modern definitions.

Danny Davis: And we appreciate the county doing the legwork and then we can [inaudible] that. And I mean, that's great. Thank you for that.

Bridge Littleton: But remember, you have to change at least one thing that they propose so that way it's truly ours.

Danny Davis: Oh, absolutely.

Kevin Daly: Put Middleburg. [laughter] [multiple speakers]

Bridge Littleton: Ok, was there anything else on that? Any of that? No, sir. OK, discussion items, utility fund discussion.

Danny Davis: All right, thank you, Mr. Mayor, and I am sharing my screen, this is also in your budget. I pulled out separately just the utility fund pages. So you have that in your packet. You also have it in the original budget. I will say for those using the original original budget document, as we get into the actual pages. You will note that the formulas were not transferred over. So the dollar variance between 21 and 22. I apologize for that. [off mic]. It's not the last time is that what you said?

Bridge Littleton: No. I said it happened the last time. [multiple speakers]

Danny Davis: Thank you for understanding that we are not perfect.

Bridge Littleton: We're just adding it to your score.

Danny Davis: The first page of this that you have is actually from the very beginning of the budget documents, a summary of utility funds, but thing probably of importance to see here. And my cursor is attempting to circle and not doing a good job. Is that we're at this point planning to use the majority of the revenues that we have coming in? And we'll go through that in a second so there's very little buffer if you will. But scrolling on down to the actual pages first is utility revenues. As we just talked about, we're seeing some softening in consumption. I think that is seasonal. And I'm hopeful that that is a seasonal issue. And as we see re-opening of the town in a significant way, that we will see a rebound in consumption. But because of that, we have budgeted and are preparing on a three percent increase in water and sewer, as we have in years past, just to continue on with inflation and capital needs. But we're not showing an actual dollar value

increase in user fees because we've seen, again, some softening in our consumption. So essentially thinking that we might be down consumption, three percent rates go up three percent. So it's flat year over year. [off mic] We have some slight projected increases in our lease revenues of cell towers just for regular increases that are built into the [inaudible].

Chris Bernard: Are those that actual built in [inaudible]?

Danny Davis: Those are based on the most recent payments that they've been making. I don't believe so. They pay us monthly and they get. [off mic] Yes. So we have most of those contracts. Some are [inaudible] we may not, but we had not updated these numbers to at least what they're paying today. Typically, they are somewhere between a two or four percent increase from [inaudible].

Peter Leonard-Morgan: One question, if may. So Sprint is still showing here, but they have merged with T-Mobile. Is that a contractual commitment they still have to maintain?

Danny Davis: Yes, for a period of time. And I honestly, I off the top of my head don't know the term of that. And if some of them were 15 year terms or significant long terms, I also know that the T-Mobile lease is here at Marshall Street, whereas Sprint is at the other tower so that actually benefits us. My thinking that they could keep both.

Bridge Littleton: It's not an integrated network. And I mean, T-Mobile is GSM and Sprint is TDMA and it's going to be a decade to merge those two networks.

Danny Davis: And they are doing improvements, continuing to upgrade the one here at Marshall Street. So they definitely have a vested interest in this one here. So that is revenues fairly straightforward at this time.

Bridge Littleton: So can I suggest something? We need to get we need to if you don't have those contracts, we need to get them, because what was negotiated 15 years ago very well may not be with a market rate is today. And typically the way those cell phone, I just I know this experience, those cell phone contracts go, it's like, hey, it's five years. And then after that, just month to month, whatever the last rate was. And we could be seven years in doing that. And it's actually worth twice as much

Danny Davis: Rhonda has a lot of that info, and she sent me some of that and I'll continue working with her and with Martin on reviewing those.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. And so if they're just on a month to month, it's time to go renegotiate.

Danny Davis: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Rhonda North: Yeah. I don't think they've hit a month to month yet.

Bridge Littleton: Ok, I mean they may still have time on them, but if you haven't looked at them. Let's put it this way. [off mic]. Yeah. If you don't know whether or not they are or aren't, that's the problem. [multiple speakers]

Danny Davis: OK, moving into expenditures, we have our general contract with you IES and it has a built in escalator for each year. And I'm sorry, I believe it's two percent per year, two or three percent. And I can look that up real quickly. But we also and this is an item that I called out briefly in the memo under engineering here, we have built in one hundred thousand dollars for a utility system master plan that would be a consultant based review, analysis, update, recommendations, updating our maps and also providing suggested timelines of replacement, rehabilitation and repairs for our system so that we can better plan that out. It's not been updated for 18 years now. So it is long, long overdue. And we obviously have done some piecemeal updates to information and a little bit of mapping. But even the mapping doesn't include all the latest RRidgeview water line projects or the Washington Street Project. So definitely a lot that needs to be done there. This is important from the aspect of setting the groundwork and a stage for better understanding future capital needs in the utility funds. Specifically, as we look at where the worst condition or the water mains or sewer lines might be

in the worst condition. So it's a significant project, but one that has been top of mind of the utility committee since I began. I'm happy. If you want to stop there, we can talk through this. Clearly that's a significant expense.

Bridge Littleton: Peter. any input with you or the committee on where things are?

Peter Leonard-Morgan: No, I did have a question really just to discuss on the next page, but maybe we haven't got to that yet. So if anyone else had more questions,

Bridge Littleton: Any questions so far? Ok.

Danny Davis: With that being said, the rest of the line items on this page are fairly standard and straightforward. They're formulated based on some salaries that my salary, Julie and Shannon, that are covered by the utility fund for the work that we do on support on behalf of the utility fund. And then you'll see the debt at the bottom of this page. The numbers are a little wonky just because of the refundings that we did over the past year. But in short, you'll see how much we're paying in debt service at this time. The line of credit amount may change depending on the actual amount of that we draw down on that line of credit, but that's kind of the anticipated amount at this time with that going on to the next page operations. Then we have water and sewer separated. This is the page where briefly we had talked about on under equipment, supplies and [inaudible] equipment slash supplies for both water and sewer. We've taken a significant dollar amount and moved that into what we show as a transfer to the CIP. That would be a cash transfer that goes into a capital asset replacement fund. The idea is that when we buy fifteen thousand dollar blowers or pumps or other equipment like that, it really is a capitalized purchase based both on cost and lifecycle. And when we don't use those dollars the operating fund looks like we're significantly over budget or under spending. I'd rather take those dollars and annually just move it into a capital fund that's held to manage current and future replacement of significant pieces of equipment. Again, such as, you know, 15, 20 thousand dollars for this or that and various water wastewater plants. So that is where you see those significant variances. The remaining dollars would be to go to smaller scale purchases, whether it's a meter reading type device, listening device, other things like that that become necessary just in day to day activity. Those are kind of some of the significant changes. I will say looking at chemicals, we analyze that to the pound, how much we anticipate needing for water and wastewater. You'll see we achieved a little bit of savings in each a little bit more in the wastewater side, similar with sludge removal. We reevaluated our current rates of hauling and also disposal fees and tweak that on a number based on some real estate expectations and the number of gallons of sludge that we transported over to Winchester.

Bridge Littleton: Are we OK. Real quick on the sludge, are you doing liquid or dry?

Danny Davis: It is liquid.

Bridge Littleton: Ok, so you guys should reach out and talk to Scott Ramsey.

Danny Davis: Scott Ramsey.

Bridge Littleton: At Round hill.

Danny Davis: Okay.

Bridge Littleton: So they got way more homes than we do because they're out of town people. They bought a centrifuge and they spin their sludge and then they have a hauling company can haul it to the county dump. And they're spending something like six grand a year. And they have a capacity that if you want to bring your sludge to them, they can spin it and dry it for you. So, I mean, we're plugging in 40,000 dollars to do this. They probably have more than we do or, you know, at least equal and they're doing it for less than 10. So, I mean, Scott and his team worked really hard on that to figure out a way to do it. And I think they actually bought a used centrifuge and they literally have their sort of their maintenance guy haul it over to the county dump once a week.

Danny Davis: Sure.

Bridge Littleton: Because if it's dry the county dump can take it.

Danny Davis: Yeah, great. I'll reach out. We were trying to work with Purcellville actually, because they have the same system essentially that we have and that ended up just not coming to fruition because of some other priorities. But I will reach out to Melissa over at Round Hill.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah, I mean, Scott, they worked on it for two years and they got it last time we talked about they've got it humming. [Off mic] Bud I'm sorry.

Bud Jacobs: Two quick questions on the capital asset transfer in the CIP.

Danny Davis: Yes sir.

Bud Jacobs: I assume that becomes a line item in the CIP.

Danny Davis: It does. So I'll turn it down to the next page real quick and you will see the capital asset replacement fund here on the left.

Bud Jacobs: Yes.

Danny Davis: And in 22 proposed you'll see seventy five thousand in each line item. And the funding as shown and the revenues are shown as cash funding down here at 220. That 220 line item correlates with the 220 transfer to CIP right here.

Bud Jacobs: I got it. And the unused portions from year to year roll over?

Danny Davis: They will roll over in the capital funds and they'll just remain there. So if in the future, there is a significant project, even if it's not a pumper blower it could even be a water line replacement and we have one hundred thousand dollars sitting there, we could use it towards [off mic] project.

Bud Jacobs: Thank you.

Danny Davis: Yes sir.

Bridge Littleton: Any other questions so far?

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Yeah, quick question. We haven't discussed it recently, I don't think in a utility meeting, but we have the issue of being overcharged for a while. Do you remember with the salt, I think it was?

Danny Davis: We did, yes.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: And I just wondered how that was reflected in rebudgeting, and did we get that back?

Danny Davis: So unfortunately, they took a hard line position that it was our fault. And however, they did.

Bridge Littleton: Our fault that they misbilled us?

Danny Davis: They essentially made the argument that we signed off on the invoices and did not question the charge. So it was a charge that had just been raised that we came back and said this is an exorbitant amount of money, but unfortunately it had been for a relatively significant period of time before it was caught.

Bridge Littleton: How long?

Danny Davis: 18 months maybe.

Bridge Littleton: And Martin reviewed this?

Danny Davis: I did not talk to him about it specifically. [Off mic] Now, what did occur is they did reduce some costs on future chemical prices and worked with us to help reduce that in a fairly significant amount, as well. I won't say it is one to one value but there was definitely cost savings in the price that we're currently paying on some of these things.

Bridge Littleton: Well, so real quickly, that's not cost savings, that's partial cost recoupment? Talk to Martin. You can't just contractually overbill and oh, I paid you so there go.

Danny Davis: So our contract doesn't have a built in dollar value for these because they fluctuate. Right.

Bridge Littleton: Understood.

Danny Davis: And so.

Bridge Littleton: It's a legal issue. I mean, because, you know.

Danny Davis: I'll talk to Martin.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. And I mean, you know, at the end of the day, if they want to stay in that position, guys, we can buy our chemicals somewhere else.

Danny Davis: Absolutely. And that was some of the conversation we had at the time. [Off mic] We thought about buying it from Lowe's [multiple speakers] But yes thank you.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Thanks, Danny.

Danny Davis: [multiple speakers] Reflect our current rates, which is back to at least a reasonable amount and then reduced on some of the other amounts.

Bridge Littleton: I mean, I just got to say, that's not how you keep a customer.

Philip Miller: No.

Bridge Littleton: I just, uh. All right. Any other questions for Danny?

Danny Davis: And then the CIP, very briefly, we have some major projects. Just a reminder, we're paying to replace the membranes at the wastewater plant. They will need to be replaced within the next one to three years, probably. We actually did a recovery plan on two of the membranes over the last couple of days and Stuart is doing a cleaning cycle. So we'll be interesting to see how well that has helped some of our recent operational challenges there. And then we'll take care of the other two membranes in a very short period of time. We also have, I built in based on a grant that you guys had just approved here. I built in some just estimated costs. And showed that as being covered by grant funding. Part of the reason I want to show that is because if we don't get grant funding, I think these may be projects that we need to consider doing anyway, or at least engineering to see what it would cost. Because there are some significant both impacts to the residents as well as environmental concerns. So I built that in, but I'm showing an offset in grants revenue for that project. And that's hopeful that we get grants for the construction as well, but we won't know until we design it. We do have the tank maintenance project that will be coming up in fiscal 23 it's probably actually next summer. So June to July of 22. And that is the Marshall Street Tank. And that's going to be a very significant project and a lot of money. But it's necessary and should last for 40 to 50 years once completed. The other item I'll draw your attention to in the capital program we call it Radio Read Meters when we show over the fiscal 23 and 24 a hundred and ten thousand dollars in total. That is to upgrade all of our meters to include little radios essentially on them and the system where we can gather

that information with a essentially remote antenna that can either be located at the town hall or placed in a vehicle and driven around town, that will give us daily actually hourly reads on all of our water meters. It will allow us to flag leaks as soon as they happen, instead of waiting potentially four to seven weeks to know that something's going on. And it will allow us to better serve our customers with more refined [inaudible] software that comes with that. We think that's a significant project. If I had the the dollars available today, I would recommend that as a very immediate suggested capital project. But I think it's something we need to plan out over the coming years when we have the dollars in the budget. So I wanted to point those out. And then again, the CIP in current.

Bridge Littleton: Danny, let me stop you right there real quick. If it's a project like that, that you think is going to actually have revenue return payback and you can make the economic business case that doing it now pays itself back in five years as opposed to waiting five years and then doing it. [multiple speakers] Well, then do that analysis, I mean.

Danny Davis: We can put some numbers together. I will tell you, I don't think I can argue that it would have a five year ROI, but we could do some analysis to understand some of our current policies.

Bridge Littleton: Or even if it's half of it and we all look at and go, hey, that's good enough.

Danny Davis: Sure, we'll put some thinking together.

Philip Miller: And it's not just how quickly it pays itself back. It's also staff time and the data that it gives to prevent problems, which means we're better serving our customers.

Danny Davis: So, okay, we'll do some looking. And also, again, looking at our current revenue situation and where things stand with the dollars we have both in the bank and also the dollars [off mic].

Bridge Littleton: And are there any type of specific grants for those type, you know, even some type of partial grant that help with those types of things?

Danny Davis: Sure. Rhonda's ears perking.

Rhonda North: Rhonda's been promoting this for a couple of years.

Bridge Littleton: Oh, wait, never mind. I've changed my mind. [laughter] [off mic]

Danny Davis: The initial program was actually putting the antennas up on the water towers and having that feed directly here. But then when they came on site, they said, you know, based on the size of our town, we can actually do a much cheaper solution. And if we can't capture 100 percent of our homes or our customers, again, that can be something that's in a vehicle that's just driving [multiple speakers].

Chris Bernard: I think you can fit it in a backpack and Kevin can just walk around town. [laughter]

Rhonda North: There we go. [multiple speakers]

Bridge Littleton: No, no A.J.'s backpack.

Danny Davis: See we have not talked specifically, but the officers are driving around town. [multiple speakers] You know, one way or another we can find [multiple speakers].

Bridge Littleton: A.J.'s bicycle. [off mic] I was going to say, it's got a lot dust on it, OK.

Danny Davis: And that's all I have on the utility funds. As of now, we are going to be advertising unless there's any concerns from council we'll be advertising the budget and also [inaudible].

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Sorry, the clear well. it's such a big budget item. And I just wonder, does everyone, you know, would you mind giving that the 30 second summary of what the clear well is going to do for us?

Danny Davis: Yes. And thank you. And you know, the name always confused me because it's you think of wells being underground, but it's actually a storage tank and it's somewhat going to be somewhere between probably a forty thousand and one hundred thousand gallon, probably between 40 and 60 thousand gallon storage tank and well 4 that will hold finished water and from there will then be distributed into the distribution system, however, as needed when we run our backwash cycle in well 4, it will pull from this tank. So we're not actually pulling from pipes in the system, which has been our problem with stirring up water and causing some of that. It will pull from this holding tank, which is all just clean and ready to go water, no potential sediment or any other thing. And so that process should be much more fluid and have no impacts on the actual distribution system. So we have done an RFP for the design of this. We have a proposal in hand that is ready to be signed. I'm just waiting for one final review on it to get it designed out it'll take about four to six months. And then the project itself is budgeted in fiscal 22. We think that's still probably a relatively close number for the project itself, because it's not just building a tank, but it's all the piping back and forth between the plant and the distribution system as it comes to actuators and all that stuff. So it's a very important project, one that I think most people said, you know, looking back should have been included in the original design of well 4. Unfortunately, just never was. We had the essentially clear well, a storage tank that's Stonewall, that tank is actually three hundred thousand gallons. So it's a significant storage tank, but it serves the same purpose that when we need to do back wash, it just pulls right from that same [inaudible] distribution system. [off mic]

Bridge Littleton: Any other questions for Danny? Bud.

Bud Jacobs: Not a question, a comment. I'm delighted that you guys are moving forward to hopefully get money for the feasibility study, for the septic connections to the town sewer. That's really important. And as I recall, was a top priority for the wellhead advisory committee. I guess this is more for Rhonda than for you, Danny. Is it possible that if for some reason the county cannot fund our grant request either for the feasibility study or for the work, is VDH a potential source for grant money for something like that?

Rhonda North: We can always look and see.

Danny Davis: We we have looked.

Bud Jacobs: We've gotten money from them for this sort of thing before, haven't

Danny Davis: Source water protection has? I do think that could be a potential.

Bud Jacobs: [off mic]

Danny Davis: Absolutely, yes. We've looked at CBDG which is a federal program administered by the county we actually spoke with them as well [off mic]

Bridge Littleton: All right, any other input. Cindy you're good?

Cindy Pearson: I'm good.

Bridge Littleton: All right. Yes, Danny.

Danny Davis: So it's our intention. We are planning to advertise the budget as well as the utility rates for a public hearing to be held on April 22nd. So we'll be advertising over the next couple weeks and then we'll meet here on the 22nd with potential for adoption of the budget at your first May meeting or any time thereafter until June 30th.

Bridge Littleton: Ok, any other questions? All right, any other discussion items or information items. So I just had a couple of quick questions. The job rec for economic development director. Did you guys work with Springsted on that?. [off mic] [inaudible] ok cool. [off mic] You did, ok. Just curious.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: When you click the link is sometimes a bit difficult to get through. You almost need a password. I'm not sure if I made a mistake, but might want to just look at that.

Danny Davis: Ok. Were you on our website?

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Yeah, it was on the Facebook posting.

Danny Davis: Interesting. I'll look at it again.

Bud Jacobs: It worked on mine. [multiple speakers] [off mic]

Bridge Littleton: Ok, cool. Any other non-Facebook feedback from our town hall information session.

Danny Davis: So we did get some comments during the Planning Commission meeting. Some from one of the members who spoke at the public outreach session and then some general comments from others who kind of echoed the statements. Specifically about the layout of the building orientation at Marshall. And again, that's one of the pieces that we knew that was going to be an input. And so we continued to raise that with our design team to how they intend to best direct people to entrance of the building, and they create a very visually and appropriate entrance to the Town Hall.

Bridge Littleton: OK.

Danny Davis: Other than that, Rhonda, I don't think I mean general comments from a number of folks who said, you know, we think it's very, very important that, you know, you guys are in very small building here. Someone who came in today who asked not to be named, said that they [inaudible] [laughter] And I thought that was great.

Bridge Littleton: I got you

Danny Davis: No. I will say the article was front page of The Eccentric today.

Bridge Littleton: Fake news. [laughter]

Danny Davis: [inaudible] plan, the layout. But also I appreciate they showed the slide that shows our current space and then the additional space that we're programming for serving the public. And that's a great slide demonstrating a lot of the things that we lack in our current building,

Bridge Littleton: Well, a lot of things that we are not able to provide to the community. OK, and the only last question I had was, so do we have any idea when we're going to get the covid dollars? It's half like now, half in a year?

Danny Davis: That's my understanding. Generally, we do have a discussion tomorrow with the Northern Virginia Regional Commission managers with someone from [inaudible] government about those dollars. So I may have more info tomorrow, but we haven't actually got anything formal. The question was asked to Congress [off mic] office again on Tuesday, and they said they're waiting on the statement [off mic] as soon as we have it.

Bridge Littleton: Ok, because here is the question. I remember we were talking about that last time, and this was one of our strategic initiatives. You know, there were certain things we wanted to pay back, maybe half of it or whatever, like the the health center fund all that kind of stuff. But we also wanted to look at what things we could do with those dollars to directly help citizens now today. And you guys were going to go off and take a look at different ideas of things that we could do if we had any ideas, send them to Danny. So, you know, I know we haven't I haven't seen any yet, but let's assume those dollars are coming in the next week or two or three. What are we going to do with it. Right? Because we

don't. I mean, especially if we're going to be directed towards people who are hurting. We don't want to sit on it. We want to get it to them. And if it's something we got to do, like we did with Windy Hill for the rental assistance, OK, that's a structure you got to put in a place that that can take two or three weeks. So, yeah, if you guys can focus on that.

Danny Davis: I was intending to bring an item to the next council meeting with some suggestions on that. And hopefully by that time we actually have a better understanding of ensuring the dollar amount is as expected as well as the timing of dollars. So I would say if there are any other thoughts, I do know I've heard from a number of you that, you know, looking at the utility credits would be a very direct way to benefit the residents of town, not just the property owners in town, but really the residents [inaudible] here. And so we have some ideas. I'll make some recommendations on. But if there are other ideas as well, please reach out to me.

Bridge Littleton: OK, the only thing I thought about was you might have renters who the landlord actually pays the utility bill so they can come and demonstrate that then we could do rental assistance, you know, comparable to what their utility would have been. So, I mean, you know, we did rental assistance before.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: So did we have an issue before? Do we

Bridge Littleton: No, last time we just did rental assistance.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: But we also did the utility,

Bridge Littleton: The utility thing I think we can probably do. That's just a credit. But I'm saying is I think most renters have to get their own utilities. But I know a couple of people who rent, who just pay a flat fee and the landlord pays the utility. Yeah, it varies. So, you know, if that renter you there are resident here in town. We want to you know, they wouldn't benefit from that. So they're just you know, I think utilities are a great way to do it. But there's going to be some people, probably a small amount, that fall through the crack so how do we catch them? OK. That was all I had. Anybody else? Yeah.

Danny Davis: Also at the next meeting, I intend to bring to an update on legislative items out of the most recent general assembly legislative session. And one of those is going to be related to elections. And then we will have the.

Bridge Littleton: Referendum discussion too.

Danny Davis: The marijuana referendum discussion as well. So both of those are very important conversations to have and we'll bring some points of consideration. I won't say recommendation's necessarily, but just points of consideration on both of those issues.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah, so. OK. All right, that's good. I will say one thing. Just to be thoughtful of. So one way or the other, we're going to have to move our election. We don't get a choice. And there's well, we kind of get a choice, as I understand it. But ultimately and I'm just saying this for food for thought. That's actually a citizen decision, not a council decision. It's their vote and, you know, not that we don't have a say in it and it's important to us and we have whatever and I you know, it can go one way or the other. So but. I would want to know how we get the gauge of the citizenry as to what they want for how we move the election.

Danny Davis: If I may, if I can add just a touch of clarity to what you're discussing is the conversation about we have a limited window of choosing whether the November election for town council elections would be held on odd years, which is when county and state elections happen or in even years, which is when federal elections happen. At this time if we do nothing, we would be forced to be even years, which would be during either presidential or Senate elections. We have a limited window in which to do something, to change it proactively, to have them in odd years, but there are some implications of that as well. And I think to your point, the question is for the citizenry, how do we engage them in that conversation in this very short window of time?

Bridge Littleton: Yeah, because, I mean, the thing is, is right. It's they're voting right. Not, you know, and if 80 percent of people say, I want it on odd or I want on even whether we agree with it or not, because we understand where the political, not political, the sort of ramifications of stuff you have to go through when you run in that election. [off mic]. And well, you know what? It's their choice, you know. So but I don't know how we do it because Danny's right. There's a window of like, what, a month or two?

Danny Davis: It's about three months.

Bridge Littleton: OK, so we got time. We got to figure out how we get that input. Yeah, but sorry,

Bud Jacobs: One of the things that Cindy, I believe it was put on the table at our last strategic session was enhancing communication efforts with the community. And maybe this is one element that we can use to go ahead and blast something out and get some direct feedback from our residents on where they want to go on the election.

Philip Miller: I think it should be a video address just on Facebook and on our website. And then I think we should mail something to everyone [multiple speakers].

Bridge Littleton: Or have an online poll.

Philip Miller: Yeah, well, they can they can vote right there at the video.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. And, you know, to be fair, too, there's a whole education piece about this. I mean, if you went to the average person right now and said odd or even they go I don't know.

Philip Miller: That's exactly why I think it needs to be a video. It's going to be a lengthy piece of paper somebody's going to read or, you know, a white paper, essentially. And I just don't think that that really captures the issue. [off mic]

Bud Jacobs: You're right. But does Bridge do the video?

Bridge Littleton: You do the video. [laughter] Hey, you know what, Cindy yeah go ahead.

Cindy Pearson: I like what Philip said, but the only problem is when you put things on Facebook our residents don't answer it. It's always the surrounding area that chimes in. And that's not who we need to gear too. I think it needs to be a bit more.

Bridge Littleton: Direct touch.

Cindy Pearson: I don't know what.

Bridge Littleton: I mean you know what? Maybe it's one or two info sessions like we're doing with the town hall, but also a direct mailer that's got the bullet details. And, you know, I mean, [inaudible] yeah, and here's the thing. This is forever. This whichever direction this goes on or even, you know, it'll be up to the citizens. But it's a forever decision. I mean, unless some future legislature changes it. So it's really I mean, it's really important. What's that Cindy?

Cindy Pearson: [inaudible] that we vote also. So our opinion on this is important on we think [inaudible] is together. So, you know, I think the citizens do need a chance to answer, but I think it's very important on this, too.

Bridge Littleton: So. Yes. And I think obviously we're voters, too. We know the impacts plus and minus of both, you know, being an odd year or being an even year. And I don't think there's anything wrong with us saying, you know, hey, in my experience, you know, odd is good this way and bad this way and even is good this way and bad this way. You know, I think we just need to arm them with as much detail. Cause it is. I mean, it's plus and minus on both sides. So it's a I don't know why they did that.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: I just I think it is a great opportunity as well for another one of our events that we did. It's that important.

Bridge Littleton: Well, now you can actually have more people. So no, Cindy, it's a great point. It's a great point. OK, and you see, was that Danny what was the other one?

Danny Davis: The Marijuana referendum as well, but we have a little bit of time on that one.

Bridge Littleton: The what? Oh, the marijuana referendum. Yep, that's right. OK, OK, cool. Any other inputs or comments.

Cindy Pearson: I have one.

Bridge Littleton: Yep, go ahead Cindy.

Cindy Pearson: I think I messed up with the agenda. There's no closed session on it. I don't understand [laughter] [applause]

Bridge Littleton: So Cindy, you didn't get the other memo we're having a closed session about you. That's why you're not on it. Like in Purcellville. If there's no other. Oh we will now open the second public comment session. Any member of the public wish to comment. They may do so. Rhonda, do we have anybody on the line.

Rhonda North: We do not Mr. Mayor.

Bridge Littleton: We do not. We will close the public comment session and unless there's nothing else, meeting is adjourned.