

TO: Mayor Webb and Town Council  
FROM: James Morani, Town Manager  
RE: Town Manager Report for April 2021

- **FY 2021-2022 Budget** – The proposed FY 2021-2022 budget was presented at the April 22 meeting and is scheduled for a public hearing and first reading at the May 3 meeting.
- **FY 2020-2021 Budget Amendment** – The proposed FY 2020-2021 budget amendment will be discussed at the May 3 meeting. A public hearing and formal consideration is scheduled for the May 20 meeting.
- **Economically Sensitive Revenues** – Through April, meals tax revenues are down only 2.9% from the previous fiscal year while lodging taxes are down 34.7%. Meals tax revenues have already exceeded current fiscal year projections and lodging tax revenues are making a strong rebound. This bodes well for the Town's reserves as we approach the end of the fiscal year.
- **Sports Complex** – Ballfield fine grading and underdrain installation continue. Footers have been constructed for the concession stand and plumbing is being installed within the foundation area. Construction of the infield mix has started on ballfields. Town staff has directed the contractor on disposal of excess soil in berms on the north side of the property and in filling a low ditch on the east side of the property for improving the proposed landscape area. Electric service has been extended to The Meadows House. Town staff will install climate control within the house.
- **Park Street Improvements** – Negotiations will start once the Town receives authorization from VDOT. Town staff is coordinating with Dave Dalton and utility companies to move the Hiram Dooley House to a lot on Park Street to ensure there are no conflicts with project plans.
- **Hassinger House** – Boundary adjustment and right-of-way acceptance plats were recorded at the Washington County Courthouse.
- **Fields-Penn House** – Facilities Maintenance staff continues interior renovation. Town Engineering staff has developed plans for new brick walkway from Main Street to the front porch, and from handicap parking spots to Main Street to complete ADA Accessible Route.
- **Sanitary Sewer System Inflow and Infiltration** – Final bid documents have been assembled and staff is working to establish an advertisement date.
- **Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Study** – Town staff continues work with consultant CHA on data collection for the study.
- **VDOT Smart Scale Projects** – The Town continues to participate in Exit 17 progress meetings and is coordinating with VDOT staff and the contractor on relocation and tie-ins on the 24" East Interceptor sanitary sewer in the project limits. Town staff is also coordinating with VDOT design staff on other Town Smart Scale projects.
- **Remsburg Drive Pedestrian Bridge** – Draft completed by T-L. Staff has drafted bid documents for the project.
- **East Main Street Sidewalk Connection** – Town staff is coordinating with Century Link to move a utility pole at intersection to widen turning radius. Bid documents are being developed.
- **East Main Street Town Creek Crossing** – Awaiting notification of grant awards.
- **Virginia Creeper Trail (VCT)** – Meade Meadows crossing to STOP control for trail users will be presented to Town Council at May 3 meeting. Town staff is working with VDOT, Washington County, and private developer on access road at Watauga Road. Town staff is reviewing a proposal for repairs to Trestle #4 at Watauga Road.
- **Tree/Arborist Work** – Town staff continues removing stumps and reconstructing sidewalk, curb and gutter, and pavement damaged by roots on Court Street while minimizing impact on local business.

- **Marcus Alert** – Chief Holbrook continues to participate on the state panel to help lay out the response of law enforcement to those in a mental health crisis. Highlands Community Services is currently organizing a local stakeholder group.
- **Police Department Training** – All officers received CPR training through the American Red Cross. Three officers received specialized training. Two officers conducted training at the academy and one at the Tazewell County Sheriff's Office.
- **Traffic Monitoring** – The deployed radar/counter device on Valley Street counted 64,000 vehicles during a 10-day period. Officers have been assigned patrol duty on Valley Street during the times of the highest percentage of enforceable speed.
- **Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Update** – Stakeholder meetings and the public input workshop was held on April 1. The Berkley Group had the first work session with the Planning Commission at its April 26 meeting. Topics covered were the project schedule, public survey results, stakeholder feedback, proposed ordinance structure, and zoning districts (including Old & Historic Subdistrict consolidation).
- **CRC Walking Trail** – Jack Bundy completed an Eagle Scout Project by adding a split railing on the perimeter trail on the steps behind the multi-purpose courts. The project has been well-received.
- **CRC Outdoor Pool** – The outdoor pool is scheduled to open June 2. Current staffing levels will allow the facility to open Wednesday through Sunday, with Sunday being members only swim.
- **Franchise Agreements** – A final draft of the Atmos Energy franchise agreement has been finalized and will be presented to council for review at the May 20 meeting.
- **Employee Benefits** – The Town held its annual health insurance open enrollment for employees. Benefits counselors from Pierce Group Benefits met individually with all employees to help educate them on the Town's new and existing plans. Over 40 employees enrolled in the new Flexible Spending Account (FSA) program.
- **Town Code** – The Town's municipal code is now hosted by General Code. The external link is accessible from the Town's website. General Code's platform will provide more versatility as we transition into a more complex Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.
- **Special Events** – In March, the Town established a new process for special events. Applications will be submitted to the Town Clerk, who will distribute information to relevant personnel based on the nature of the request. As in the past, staff meetings involving several departments may be required for new or larger events to facilitate coordination.
- **Outdoor Refreshment Area** – Staff conducted several planning meetings on new legislation that permits localities to establish an Outdoor Refreshment Area. The new law, which is effective July 1, will allow customers who purchase alcohol beverages to leave the premises and travel outdoors within the designated area. The purpose of the legislation is to promote economic activity in downtown business districts.
- **VCT Welcome Center** – The welcome center opened on April 23. Current hours of operation are Friday and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Monday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. These hours will be expanded in the summer with additional staff and volunteers. During the first week of operation, the welcome center had 115 visitors and staff mailed over 100 visitor guides.