

**Minutes
Windsor Town Council Work Session
Windsor Town Center
December 2, 2021**

The Windsor Town Council met in a work session on December 2, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. at the Windsor Town Center, Windsor, Virginia. Mayor Glyn Willis was present, and he called the meeting to order. He welcomed those who were present. Mayor Willis asked for anyone with cell phones to please turn them off. Terry Whitehead, Town Clerk, recorded the minutes. William G. Saunders, IV, Town Manager, Chief Riddle and Cheryl McClanahan, Treasurer, were present.

Council members present: Greg Willis
 Walter Bernacki
 Kelly Blankenship
 J. Randy Carr
 George Stubbs
 Jake Redd

Councilman Carr led the Pledge of Allegiance.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fund Allocation Discussion

Mr. Saunders said the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), a federal act, was passed to invest in localities dealing with the pandemic and impacts thereof. He said of the total funding, \$19.53 billion was designated to assist localities with a population under 50,000. He said the funding is similar to Cares Act funds; however, there are a broader range of uses.

Mr. Saunders reported that the Town of Windsor is due to receive a total of \$2,067,317; half of which has been received, the other half will be received in June 2022.

Mr. Saunders reviewed the following four primary categories for eligible uses:

1. Response to the Public Health Emergency (COVID-19 Mitigation and Prevention)

Response to the public health emergency with respect to COVID-19 or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel and hospitality. This also includes mitigation and prevention measures similar to those allowable under Cares Act funding.

Mr. Saunders explained that the Town of Smithfield is paving and doing other improvements at their parks because of the losses that they can show in their hospitality industry that the Town of Windsor would not qualify for.

Mr. Saunders noted the following limitation for Windsor:

- Minimal impact to tourism, travel and hospitality sector

Potential uses in this category include:

- Personal protective equipment, IT, computer and software, ventilation, etc.
- digitICKET – electronic ticketing hardware and software for WPD

2. Premium Pay for Eligible Workers

To provide premium pay for eligible workers performing essential work (as determined by each state or tribal government) during the pandemic.

Mr. Saunders noted the following limitations for Windsor:

- Wholesale reimbursement for public safety workers' salaries/benefits is not allowable
- No deposits of funds to pension/retirement funds to pension/retirement funds to reduce unfunded liabilities

Potential uses in this category include:

- Public safety employee premium pay bonuses
- Public safety employee premium pay retirement
- Other essential worker premium pay bonuses

Councilman Bernacki questioned what the difference is in "public safety employee" eligibility and "fire department and rescue squad volunteer workers" eligibility. He noted that they are eligible workers performing essential EMS work.

Mr. Saunders said this would have to be determined by Isle of Wight County.

Council continued to discuss the possibility of giving Windsor's volunteer firefighters and volunteer rescue squad workers bonuses.

3. Revenue Reduction

For the provision of government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue (i.e. meals tax, property or income tax, fees, fines, etc.) due to the public health emergency. Specific calculations are required to determine revenue loss, which involves comparing a base line revenue number from prior to the pandemic (June 30, 2019) to revenue totals for December 31st, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. Broader latitude is given for the provision of government services up to the amount of reduction in revenue.

Mr. Saunders noted that a revenue loss of \$516,643 has been identified for the Town as of December 31, 2020. He explained how this loss was calculated.

Mr. Saunders noted the following limitations for Windsor:

- Small amounts of revenue loss for 2021
- Yet to be determined for calendar years 2022 and 2023

Potential uses in this category include:

- Bank Street Park Improvements
- Demolition of dilapidated structures

4. Necessary Investments in Infrastructure

To make necessary investments in water, sewer, [storm sewer] or broadband infrastructure. Water projects must be eligible for Clean Water State Revolving Fund or Drinking Water State Revolving Fund funding to qualify; sewer and storm water projects must meet Federal Water Pollution Control Act to qualify; or be funded by the Revenue Reduction portion of funding.

Mr. Saunders noted the following limitation for Windsor:

- Water project must be eligible for Clean Water State Revolving Fund or Drinking Water State Revolving fund funding to qualify; sewer and storm water projects must meet Federal Water Pollution Control Act to qualify; or be funded by the Revenue Reduction portion of funding

Potential uses in this category include:

- Duke Street/Virginia Avenue Water System Upgrade
- Engineering work for future water projects in the Capital Improvement Plan
- Other water system upgrades, equipment, etc.
- Sewer improvements for failing septic systems in Phase 1 of Windsor Woods
- Broadband expansion in rural areas within the Town limits

Mr. Saunders reviewed the following overall limitations for Windsor:

- Operating under Interim Final Rule
- Non-Entitlement Units of government recipients cannot transfer funds to counties
- No transfers of funds into rainy day funds
- No Qualified Census tracts, which would provide broad latitude in spending
- Minimal personnel to accomplish objectives

Mr. Saunders reviewed the following Draft Distribution Plan:

- Duke Street/Virginia Avenue Water System Upgrade
 - Project underway, will ensure solicitation meets DWSRF standards
 - Action Item #1 in Strategic Plan

Mayor Willis emphasized the importance of determining who is not on Town water and County sewer, and prioritizing how to provide these services to those citizens. He said there have been discussions regarding whether the Town can team with the County to broaden sewer coverage in Town; otherwise, there are areas in Town that will never get covered because the County may never have the money to reach them.

Council continued to discuss failing septic systems in various areas of Town.

- Engineering work for future water projects in the Capital Improvement Plan
 - Potential for designing projects to be shovel-ready for future funding
 - Action Item #1 in Strategic Plan
- Other water system upgrades, equipment, etc.
 - Backhoe
 - Action Item #1 in Strategic Plan
- Storm water projects
 - Virginia Avenue to Rt. 460 residential drainage improvements
 - Norfolk and Western Street to Dairy Queen commercial drainage improvements
 - Action Item #1 in Strategic Plan

Councilman Stubbs noted that there may be a pipe filled in that goes under the south side of the railroad track from Highway 258 towards B Avenue that may be contributing to some of the drainage issues on Bank Street.

- Sewer improvements for failing septic systems in Phase 1 of Windsor Woods
 - Potential cost share with IOW County and developer of adjacent property
 - Cost a place holder at this time, as cost estimates are being created
 - Action Item #1 in Strategic Plan
- Broadband expansion in rural areas within the Town limits
 - Cost share of local match, cost shown an estimate at this time
 - VATI Grant \$6M, Charter \$3M, IOW \$2.7M, Windsor \$75K, Smithfield?
 - Action Item #1 in Strategic Plan
- Personal protective equipment, IT, computer and software, ventilation, etc.
 - Similar to Cares Act
- digiTICKET – electronic ticketing hardware and software for WPD
 - Minimize person to person contact to prevent and mitigate spread of COVID-19

Chief Riddle said that the Windsor Police Department (WPD) is requesting consideration for funding of a digital ticketing system. He said currently WPD hand writes citations to violators, with each traffic stop lasting between eight to ten minutes on average; further, clipboards, ticket forms, and ink pens are physically transferred between officers and motorists during these events. He said there are often issues that arise with data entry at the clerk of the court because of the inability to read an officers handwriting. In addition, data related to stop numbers, violation types, vehicle data and violator is not entered into our current records management system because of the volume of data and lack of manpower.

Chief Riddle explained that data collection and management provides not only valuable information on the departments' activities, it is also a valuable piece of data that can assist officers in conducting criminal investigations. He said current data collected under the Community Policing Data Act does not capture every piece of information that a digital ticketing system would. In addition, the data to be gathered is electronic and should lead to more accurate and complete data for input to records management system. He added that in addition to more complete and accurate data being gathered, the digiTICKET solution should lead decreased time that violators are detained and reduce the overall interactions between officers and citizens. Chief Riddle said this would help to mitigate and prevent the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to officer interactions with the motoring public.

Chief Riddle said the initial cost of the hardware, software, related equipment and training, in partnership with the Isle of Wight County Sheriff's Office, would cost approximately \$31,709.41 for the first year. He said the maintenance fees in additional years would cost an estimated \$4318.00 annually. Under the Code of Virginia, the Town can move to adopt an e-citation ordinance that would add a surcharge of five dollars per citation to the cost of court. He said this fee would be collected by the clerk and paid directly to the Town. Chief Riddle said these funds would allow the town to pay the

annual maintenance fees and replace equipment with no additional funds needed from the Town or ARPA funds.

- Public safety employee premium pay bonuses
 - Phased over two fiscal years

Chief Riddle said that the WPD is asking that the Town consider funding COVID-19 bonuses for our law enforcement personnel, under the ARPA allowance for premium pay for essential public safety workers. He said while WPD recently benefitted from a pay study and decompression pay adjustments this fiscal year, the law enforcement salaries throughout the Tidewater area and the Commonwealth are continuing to increase. He said the recent pay study increased starting officer pay to around \$44,000 per year, brought our midpoint salary to around \$51,000, and pushed our top out pay to around \$62,000. At the time the pay study was conducted, and later implemented, those were extremely competitive numbers. He said recently, local municipalities have entered into almost a bidding war in order to attract experienced law enforcement officers. He added that experienced officers are able to apply to these localities that will match years of service in their own pay plans with 5-10 years officers often commanding salaries over \$62,000.00 per year and officers with 10+ years commanding salaries in excess of \$70,000.00. In addition to the intense competition for these officers' services and talents, these agencies are also offering signing bonuses in the \$3,000.00 - \$5,000.00 range. Chief Riddle added that these municipalities have increased starting police recruit pay to the range of \$50,000.00 to \$51,500.00 per year matching our officers' midpoint pay range.

Chief Riddle said in addition to the rapidly evolving salary changes, the current environment of modern policing and continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our law enforcement officers, we are asking that council consider implementing a bonus program utilizing ARPA funds to increase morale among WPD officers, create an incentive to remain with the agency, and recognize their efforts as they continue to perform within the COVID-19 pandemic environment. He said WPD is proposing a \$5,000.00 bonus to be paid out to all seven WPD sworn personnel for fiscal years 2022 and 2023. He said the bonuses would be paid out in four \$2,500.00 installments over a two fiscal year period. Chief Riddle said this money would strictly come from the ARPA funding and would require no additional funding from the Town.

- Public safety employee premium pay retirement
 - Should Council approve LEOS retirement

Chief Riddle stated that we are awaiting the results of the actuary study from the Virginia Retirement System for Council's consideration. He said while it is unknown at this time whether Town Council will choose to upgrade the retirement package for WPD officers, the related increase in premiums could be paid by ARPA funds for premium pay for essential public safety workers through December 2024 should it be approved.

- Other essential worker premium pay bonuses
 - Still under review, would be phased similarly to public safety
- Bank Street Park Improvements
 - Could be planning or planning and some construction

- Provides more outdoor spaces for public to prevent/mitigate spread of COVID-19
- Action Item #11 in Strategic Plan

Councilman Bernacki said he recalls a meeting where several citizens who live on Bank Street were not in favor of having a park located in this area.

After discussion, Mayor Willis asked Mr. Saunders to research what has been discussed in the past regarding a potential park being located at this property. He also asked Mr. Saunders to review the stipulations to see what can be done on the Bank Street property.

- Demolition of dilapidated structures
 - To increase public health, safety & welfare by decreasing blight
 - Action Item #7 in Strategic Plan

Councilwoman Blankenship commented that the Town needs a planning person on staff to work with EDA to implement some of the items in the Strategic Plan.

Councilwoman Blankenship questioned how Isle of Wight County will be utilizing their ARPA funds.

Mr. Saunders explained that the County will be using most of their ARPA funds to run water and sewer from the Town of Smithfield to Hardy Elementary and possibly two neighborhoods adjacent to Hardy Elementary.

Councilwoman Blankenship said she anticipated that the County would have activities or programs to help individuals and businesses that were impacted by COVID, such as business grants or gift card programs, as opposed to the heavy focus on infrastructure. She was hoping that the Town could partner with the County to fund these type programs.

Councilwoman Blankenship said she would like to see the Town support bonuses for the volunteer firefighters and volunteer rescue workers if the County does not compensate those workers with ARPA funds, if this is possible.

Councilman Stubbs made a motion to adjourn. He suggested that Council review the information presented tonight, and contact Mr. Saunders with any additional questions or input to be discussed at a future work session.

Mayor Willis thanked Mr. Saunders for compiling and presenting this information in a way that made it effective to understand and to see where the questions are. He said Council has more information and understanding where they can contact Mr. Saunders with questions and answers in preparation for another work session to discuss the Strategic Plan after the second half of January, 2022.

Mr. Saunders said in addition to letting him know what items to add to the list, Council may want to consider items that may need to be taken off of the list.

Vice Mayor Greg Willis seconded, and Council unanimously passed the motion as recorded on the attached chart as motion #1.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Glyn Willis, Mayor

Terry Whitehead, Town Clerk

TOWN OF WINDSOR
 RECORD OF
 COUNCIL VOTES

Council Meeting Date December 2, 2021 WS

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Jerry Whitehead, Clerk