

Minutes
Branchville Town Council
Work Session
Monday, February 2, 2015

The Branchville Town Council held a work session on Monday, February 2, 2015, at the Town Hall. A notice with the time, date and place of the meeting was placed on the door of the Town Hall and emailed to The Times and Democrat newspaper at least 24 hours in advance.

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m. by Mayor Pro Tem Tom Jennings, the presiding officer. Council, along with all those present, stood for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by prayer.

Roll call indicated that Mayor Glenn Miller, Mayor Pro Tem Tom Jennings, Councilwoman Amy Bryant, Councilman Michael Blankenship, Councilman Gregory Oliver and Councilman Sam Whisenhunt were present.

Mayor Pro Tem Jennings welcomed the guests and informed them that there will be no time for public comments because it was a work session.

Garbage contract: Councilman Oliver said the town's contract for garbage collection will expire on March 1, 2015. He said the current vendor and three other vendors who are seeking the contract are interested in extending the service to people who live outside the town.

Councilman Oliver said Branchville residents pay less for garbage collection than residents of other towns in the area. He said the Town is paying the vendor more than it collects. He suggested raising rates by 31 cents a week or \$1.25 a month.

Mayor Pro Tem Jennings said the Town pays \$252 a month for yard waste removal but few people are using the service. He said it should be removed from the new contract. He said the Town should continue to identify and pick up carts that the customers are not paying to use. He said those measures might save enough money to avoid a rate increase.

Councilman Whisenhunt proposed getting formal proposals from each company as to what they would be willing to provide and at what cost and terms. He said each company should be invited to submit one price for serving town customers only, and another price to serve anyone within the area served by town water system, including Cattle Creek Road, Hunting Road and Calhoun Street, and the proposals should be received at Town Hall by Feb. 16.

Councilman Oliver said he would put that in the form of a motion. Councilman Blankenship seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Police Department: Police Chief Randy Clark said he mailed a radar unit to Kustom Signals for evaluation. They will repair it for \$148 or return it to us unrepaired for \$85.

Councilman Whisenhunt made a motion to pay for the repair so the police would have a spare and we will never be without a working radar unit. Councilman Oliver seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Chief Clark presented an estimate of \$1,409 to repair the Dodge Charger police car that collided with a deer. Insurance will pay \$915. He said the car also needs about \$700 in repairs

unrelated to the collision. He asked for \$1,694 for body work, mechanicals and 4 new tires. The work will take approximately two days and the Chief will drive one of the other cars if he works a shift on either of those days.

Councilman Blankenship made a motion to go ahead and fix it. Councilman Whisenhunt seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Chief Clark said he learned that Tasers cost \$1,029.95 each. The price for one is higher than the price he gave for three Tasers at a previous Council meeting. He suggested buying one Taser that could be shared by all three officers, along with three holsters (one for each officer), three backup battery packs (one for each officer) and six cartridges (two for each officer).

Councilman Whisenhunt made a motion not to purchase any Tasers or accessories at this time. The motion died for lack of a second.

Councilman Blankenship made a motion to buy one Taser, three holsters, one battery pack and three cartridges, at a price of approximately \$1,385. Councilman Oliver seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Chief Clark said the "slick top" Crown Victoria being used by Capt. Bonnett has liability issues because its lighting that is inadequate for police work. Some of the lights are too dim, some do not work, while others work sometimes but not every time.

Councilman Oliver made a motion to spend \$700 to get proper and adequate lights for the vehicle. Councilwoman Amy Bryant seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Chief Clark asked for approval to attend a 2-1/2 day Criminal Investigation interrogation class in Greenville. He said it's the first class he has ever asked to attend in his nearly six years with the Town of Branchville and he's been on a long waiting list for an opportunity to take it.

Councilman Whisenhunt made a motion to send Chief Clark to the class and provide the class fee of \$295 and the motel bill of \$69 per night, plus taxes, for two nights. Councilman Oliver seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Meeting with Stephanie Grant: Mayor Pro Tem Jennings said Stephanie Grant, who works with the penny tax program for Orangeburg County, wants to meet with two people from the Town of Branchville on Friday, Feb. 20, to discuss disbursements and other penny tax matters. He said Town Clerk Jenny Elliott needs to attend. Councilman Blankenship volunteered to be the other representative from the Town.

Mayor Pro Tem Tom Jennings made a motion to designate Councilman Blankenship and Town Clerk Jenny Elliott to attend the meeting. Councilman Oliver seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Personnel policy changes: Councilman Whisenhunt distributed copies of the personnel policy and the changes he is suggesting. He asked his colleagues to read the document and bring any thoughts or concerns to the regular monthly council meeting on Feb. 9.

Mayor Pro Tem Jennings pointed out that the personnel policy is an ordinance so it takes three readings to change it. He made a motion to give first reading to the changes by title only. Councilman Oliver seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Spending authority: Councilman Whisenhunt proposed allowing the Town Clerk to spend up to \$200 a week without getting Council's approval in advance to purchase items that are already budgeted and support the day-to-day activities of the Town. Examples given were office supplies, paper, postage stamps and essential minor repairs such as fixing a flat tire. The Town Clerk will provide receipts or an expense report to account for the spending.

Councilman Whisenhunt said he would offer such a motion. Councilman Oliver seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Division of labor for Council members: Mayor Pro Tem Jennings said that, years ago, each of the Council members was assigned to a different phase of Town operations and "I think it's something that we should get back to doing. I think it will allow the Council members to be more involved and have more hands-on with what's going as far as running of the town."

Councilman Blankenship said he was willing to be over the police department.

Mayor Pro Tem Jennings said he was willing to be over the administrative office, and Councilman Whisenhunt already has the water department. He said Councilman Oliver has shown interest in maintenance and in finding ways to improve the Town and its operations. He said Councilwoman Bryant, who initiated last year's Movie Night, would be a good candidate to be over town entertainment and community events. He said Councilman Ott would be a good person to have over parks and recreation.

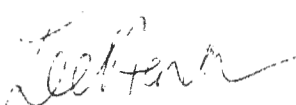
Discussion focused on areas where departmental oversight is likely to overlap. Councilman Blankenship said he is also interested in parks and recreation, while Councilman Ott has an interest in the police department. Councilman Oliver's oversight will at times involve employees of other departments.

Mayor Pro Tem Jennings made a motion to divide the duties among the Council members as described above. Councilman Oliver seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent.

Mayor Pro Tem Jennings encouraged the Council members to work closely with each other for the common good. He said, "We're not limited to just one thing. We are intelligent enough people to know it takes everybody's help."

Adjournment: Councilman Whisenhunt made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Miller seconded the motion. The motion carried without dissent at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by



Lee Hendren, in the absence of Town Clerk Jenny Elliott

APPROVED by Council on 2-9-2015 with one correction: Mayor Pro Tem Jennings said the Town pays \$252 a month (not week) for yard waste removal. Correction has been made in the text.