

**Infrastructure Committee
Town of Independence
January 30, 2024
Minutes**

Committee Members in Attendance: Jason Cassell, Chairman, Jim Meier, Buddy Halsey, Terry Osborne

Adhoc Attendees: Ronald Sexton, Laura Ratcliffe

- 1) Welcome – Jason Cassell
- 2) Safety Update – Terry Osborne
 - a. Status of OSHA
 - i. Equipment received and installed
 - ii. Safety policy in place
 - iii. SDS at each location
 - iv. New fire extinguishers being installed next week with monthly/annual checks
 - b. Safety Inspection Process/Results
 - i. See attached for form to be used
 - ii. When implemented, Town employee at each site will be responsible for completing and return
- 3) Current status of projects in process – Terry Osborne
 - a. Penn Court – Completed; may need some additional paving – Terry to check on status. Waiting for final billing from contractor to close project out. Hurt & Profit is following up with contractor. Also need Hurt & Profit to amend their project budget as they went over on inspection costs. Rural Development is willing to pay for additional but need amendment. We need project closed out so we can be reimbursed for funds we fronted on the project.
 - b. Sewer I & I – Project financing at a standstill due to additional requests/underwriting from Rural Development. Town Council needs to approve parity between RD and VRA. Additionally, it appears DEQ might be expecting us to bid project before finalizing financing. Laura had queried Matthew Lane on this but no response. She'll follow up with Matthew Lane (Engineer) on project. Committee agreed it made sense to bid it now.
 - c. Lead Assessment – Project Manager assigned from VDH and kick off meeting held. VDH needs additional documentation before we progress. Laura in process of submitting requested paperwork. Terry will be the project manager from the Town. Project will require feedback from all water customers. Suggest a survey with a water bill discount for those who return it. Buddy suggested a \$25 for everyone who returns completed survey by deadline. Committee agreed. Laura placed this on Town Council agenda. The project must be completed with results submitted by October 16th, 2024. At this time, it is unknown the requirements for the replacement phase. Additionally, the grant we

received is a reimbursement grant so monies will be needed to front expenses and we can only submit 3 reimbursement requests for the life of the project.

- d. Town Park
 - i. Revised plan received, reviewed and minor adjustments being made. Will request proposals from local grading contractors mid February. Goal is to have site opened for the May 3rd Market Opening day.
- 4) 2025 Budget Plan
- a. Water/Sewer Rate Review – Jim and Laura will work on the analysis together and will have a proposal at the next meeting. Expecting at least a 3% increase.
 - b. Capital Requests
 - i. The group discussed potential needs for the upcoming year including;
 - 1. Replacements – Water Truck, Small Riding Mower, Roof at Police Station, Utility Trailer, Police Vehicle
 - 2. PER – Lakeview
 - 3. Repairs – Water Tanks
 - c. Responsibility
 - i. Jim & Laura – Rate Analysis
 - ii. Terry – Capital requests
 - d. Due Dates
 - i. Start Mid- March; Follow Finance Committee Due Dates
- 5) Capital Plan
- a. 2024 Focus/Community Matters Feedback Session Results
 - i. See attached summary of feedback received
 - b. Timeframe
 - i. Need to build a 5 year plan. The first step is to create a master asset listing to include current status of asset so we can understand future needs.
 - c. Projects/Equipment
 - i. The group discussed potential needs for the upcoming year including;
 - 1. Replacements – Water Truck, Small Riding Mower, Roof at Police Station, Utility Trailer
 - 2. PER – Lakeview
 - 3. Repairs – Water Tanks
 - d. Funding Sources
 - i. No discussion at this time
 - e. Prioritization
 - i. Will be completed as part of the upcoming
- 6) Code Review Plan – Jason Cassell
- a. Priority for Review
 - i. Laura suggested group focus on Water/Sewer first as this affects residents/businessowners the most. The most questioned items is the amount of the access fee. Second would be the solid waste code and the definition of commercial waste customers.
 - ii. The code has been recently changed to make all rate changes, etc. be a part of the administration cycle and not part of the code. Additionally, the reconnect

- fee/process was changed with the adoption of the new code. This is a streamlined/simplified approach.
- iii. Buddy wants to understand where there is issues maintaining/following the code.
 - b. How to review
 - i. Committee decided most effective way is to review as a group together. Group decided to meet on 2/6 at 6pm to start review.
 - c. Quarterly Public Hearings
- 7) Contracts Renewing in next 24 months
- a. Sanitation – January 1, 2025
 - i. Town Manager to speak with County regarding renewal rate. Present at March meeting.
 - b. Engineering – November 18, 2025
 - i. No Discussion
- 8) Other items
- a. Past Due/Penalties – Laura brought up the Town currently has over \$1M on the financials for uncollectible penalties and past due water/sewer bills. This does not reflect well on the financials and should be written off. Discussion ensued. Buddy wants to understand who/what is involved in those accounts more than a year old. Ronald indicated this had been discussed before and needs to be taken care of now. Laura to add to Town Council agenda for action and will provide detail reports to the committee.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45pm.

Next meeting –

February 6th – 6 pm – Code Review Work Session

March 19th – 6-7:30pm - Infrastructure Committee Meeting