

The regular meeting of the Boydton Town Council was held on Tuesday, February 14, 2023, beginning at 7:30 P.M., in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor Christopher D. Starke presiding.

THOSE PRESENT

**Christopher D. Starke, Mayor
T. G. Gill, Vice Mayor
W. H. Coleman (Absent)
Bill Thompson
David M. Crowder
Paul “Ray” Cherry (Absent)
Mr. Ronny Worley
Chief Nathan Bowen
Rhita M. Burton, Deputy Clerk
Shirley S. Bowen, MMC, Clerk-Treasurer**

GUESTS

**R. H. Park III, WWTP Chief Operator
John M. Roberts, Maintenance Supervisor
Karen and Ron Sciamacco
J. E. Harrell
Teresa Goode**

Mayor Chris Starke, welcomed everyone for their attendance at the regular monthly meeting and called the meeting to order. The Mayor led the council, audience, and employees with the pledge of allegiance to the flag, followed by an invocation.

The Mayor requested a motion to approve the minutes of January 10, 2023. Vice Mayor T. G. Gill moved to approve the January 10, 2023, minutes as submitted, with Councilman David M. Crowder seconding the motion. All remaining members voted in favor.

Mayor Starke stated the bills to be paid were in the council packets and asked if there were any questions, and if not, he’d like a motion from the floor to approve the bills to be paid. Councilman Bill Thompson moved to approve the bills as presented. Vice Mayor T. G. Gill seconded the motion, and all members voted in favor.

The Mayor stated, before asking Chief Bowen for his monthly report, that he believed we had a presentation from Historic Boydton’s Renaissance, Inc. to be given to the Chief. Mr. Ron Sciamacco came forward with a framed certificate of appreciation from the HBR board for Chief Bowen’s help with the Christmas tour and all the things he’s done for the town as our Police Chief. Chief Bowen was extremely surprised and thanked Mr. Sciamacco and the members of HBR, Inc. for their kind gesture of appreciation. Mrs. Bowen, Clerk of Council, took a picture for our Facebook page and website for this recognition.

Chief Bowen gave his monthly, January 6, 2023, through February 9, 2023, activity report. He reported he had four (4) calls for service (two) 2 were out-of- town), and five (5) traffic stops, with one (1) of those being a citation. There were no other questions for Chief Bowen.

Mayor Starke requested Mr. R. H. Park’s public works report from the Waste Water Treatment Plant. Mr. R. H. Park III reported Boydton’s Department of Water, RRSA Meter Readings Report of water pumped for January 2023, was 884,000 gallons of water purchased from the RRSA with the DMR results returning as satisfactory.

Mr. Park III reported on the following:

Item #1: He noted he'd been having some problems with the fire alarms at two of the County buildings. He stated he'd spoken to Aubrey Russell (County Maintenance Supervisor) about this and they've scheduled some time in March to have the alarm company come visit and while here, they were going to set the alarms off, hoping they would be able to determine what's going on and why these alarms are going off when the fire department fills their trucks at the fire station. Also, he said he'd spoken to Mark Parrish and they are going to try to fill their trucks up at different locations up and down Madison Street, to possibly see whether it's setting the alarms off at different fire hydrant locations or just the one at the fire station.

Item #2. Mr. Park III also advised the council of a lower bearing unit that went out on the screw pump. He continued by saying it had been repaired and is now working. He stated they have no way of knowing when these bearings would go out and he's looking for a way to remedy the situation by placing some type of early warning system on them to detect when it may go out by welding a tab on it, so they'd know when it falls down a bit before it starts to scrape. He further stated that he was going to C & L Machine Shop in Farmville to find out if they can actually build the shaft up with some spare parts, he currently has from these two (2) bearings that have gone bad. By doing this, he would have a spare part on the shelf to replace this part, if the same thing happens again. By doing this, it would be a lot cheaper than having to purchase a new bearing. The Mayor asked, "How long do these bearings last?" Mr. Park III responded, "They are usually good for 4-5 years."

Item #3. Mr. Park III stated that the expansion work had aggressively begun down at the WWTP with a lot of activity going on. They've started working on part of the tank and the sewer line, which is being done for Microsoft.

Item #4. Mr. Park III advised the council of a progress meeting on this project that would be held on February 28, 2023, at 10:00 A.M. here at the Town Hall and invited the council to sit in on it, if they'd like to.

Item #5. He stated that work had also begun on the new "Bishop site" for another lift station. He said he had to "head them off" to not put it on property that didn't belong to the town; however, he further stated we need at least a right of way to get to it and so far, they've agreed to all our conditions. He also, stated he didn't know the size of this "build-out" as yet, but they're going to have to be told that this lift station is being totally done for them and they would have to bear the cost of maintaining it.

Item #6. Mr. Park III also updated the council on the lift station and sewer lines for the school site. He advised he met with Brian Dalton of the School Board and a representative with Cleveland Construction there today. They were told of things that had and hadn't been done at this lift station and nothing had been said about the actual force main. Mr. Park III voiced his opinion by stating he felt it was time for the town to reach out to the school board to let them know what we think about this force main and lift station, since we've got to come to some type of agreement with them, before they close out this contract, unless y'all want to take it on as is, and I don't recommend that, since it would cost the town more than what it would generate. The Mayor asked, "When are they going to close out this contract?" Mr. Park III replied, "Well, they're trying to close it out now, but haven't given me a closing date. I will also be sending the engineer a list of things that have not been done and including information on the force main."

Mr. Park III informed the council he has yet to get anyone to tell him, if others could be added to this line due to the way it was installed and this is an important part of this job or situation. Mr. Park III advised, "It has been working since the school opened with no problems, but he said he couldn't, in good conscious, tell any of you that it's going to last." He stated he would be meeting with the Mayor on Monday at the plant and invited any councilmen to meet with them, as well. Councilman Worley asked, "Where is it metered at?" Mr. Park III responded, "It's metered down at the lift station, and that's why it was done that way so we could add other people to the lift station." Councilman Worley also asked, "What is the flow rate right now?" Mr. Park III replied, with his responses being the bill amount. Mrs. Bowen, Clerk of Council, advised that Councilman Worley asked what was the flow...not the amount of the billings. Mr. Park III thanked Mrs. Bowen for the clarification and then told Councilman Worley the consumption for November was 266,270 gallons, December was 164,977 gallons, and 182,144 gallons for January. Mayor Starke added that he attended the last RRSA meeting and they've changed a lot of things, which one thing has specifically been changed and that was they're no longer asking the localities to project their usage, but are taking a 3-year average and breaking it down; therefore, he's asked Renny to attend the next RRSA meeting with him, since he understands all this, better than himself, and he wanted to make the council aware of what he's intending to do. Councilman Worley asked Mr. Park III to contact the RRSA to see what kind of water usage we've been using, so he could compare the flow to the water usage. Mr. Park III said he would do so. The Mayor and Mr. Park III agreed it was on the report in the Mayor's office for Councilman Worley to review, and if not, Mr. Paul Malone of the RRSA could be called.

The Mayor called upon Mr. Johnny Roberts, Maintenance Supervisor, for his report of January 2023.

Item #1. Mr. Roberts stated the trees on Washington Street have been removed, but the stumps have to be ground up. He advised that VDOT had been working on the culvert up on Sheriff Street and hopes they are going to come back and install a better designed one.

Item #2. Mr. Roberts also advised the council of some complaints of trees hanging over the road on Madison Street Extension (the Bumps Carter Estate) where children have their bus stop; therefore, creating danger to the children. Discussion ensued, among the councilmen and Mr. Roberts regarding VDOT or Dominion Energy taking these trees down. It was suggested that the executors of the Carter estate be contacted to see what they're willing to do about this situation and then speak to Dominion Energy, again.

Item #3. Mr. Roberts also asked the council about renting a stump grinder to get the stumps up. Vice Mayor Gill voiced his opinion, which was he thought it would be a good idea. It was the consensus of the council to allow Mr. Roberts to rent a stump grinder to do this work.

Item #4. Mr. Roberts reported that Signs and Designs had begun work on the Gateway Signs. And, Mr. Aubrey Russell had helped with the contactor in the panel box and one has been put in, which didn't cost the town anything. He stated if Mr. Russell ever needed help with anything, he'd give him it to him, as well, since he saved the town a lot of money.

Item #5. Mr. Roberts reminded the council of tearing down the old building at the back of Town Hall, that was purchased from Mrs. Owen. He stated all that had to be done was to just clean it out and he'd gotten a bid of \$6,700.00 to tear it down, haul it away, grade the area, and then cap off the old water line going to the well under the building, back to the old line. Councilman Worley stated he'd like to get more bids to do this work.

Old Business:

Mrs. Bowen, Clerk of Council, advised the council that the Mayor's office, her office, and the closet area from her office was agreed to be done, as well, and she'd contacted Mr. O'Brien who did the work to see if he would come back to do the remainder of the job. He'd been out of the country to attend his mother's funeral, but he agreed to come back. However, Mrs. Bowen, further stated that she'd heard he'd had a heart attack, since speaking to him. Councilman Crowder confirmed that Mr. O'Brien had, indeed, suffered a heart attack, but was recovering well. Mr. Roberts advised in order to resolve the water problem around the building, a "French drain" would have to be installed and it was not included in the bid he'd gotten to tear down the building. This issue was tabled for further discussion at the March meeting. Councilman Worley asked that Mr. O'Brien be contacted again to see, if he was able to come back to finish the work started on the floors.

Mayor Starke advised the council of Dominion Energy reps coming to the January meeting to discuss the MOU agreement between them and the town. The Mayor stated he'd sent this to our town attorney for her perusal. He advised of her additions/recommendations to the MOU and noted he'd sent them to each councilman, earlier. Mayor Starke said he would contact the representative at Dominion Energy and forward it back to them, if there were no objections to her additions and after everyone's approval, all parties would sign this MOU agreement with it being filed here in this office. The Mayor also advised it had been discussed previously that the town seek ways to diversify the town funds, especially with the change in interest rates. He continued by saying, Shirley has been looking into this, but right now, we aren't in a position tonight to advise you any further on this. We're looking into having local representatives to possibly come and present what they can offer or do for us.

New Business:

The Mayor advised the council that Dr. Eason, Planning Commission Chairman, had presented the town with a "draft" of the newly revised Comprehensive Plan. With that being said, he turned this subject over to Councilman Crowder, since he's the liaison from the town to the Planning Commission. Councilman Crowder stated he'd received this plan, but hadn't had the time to fully read it, thoroughly. His advice to the council was to table this until the next meeting when Dr. Eason could be here to explain and answer questions concerning the plan. Mrs. Bowen advised she'd briefly scanned it over and found several errors, along with Mayor Starke stating he'd briefly read over it, as well, but not read the entire plan, and he had questions himself to ask.

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Starke advised he'd had a complaint from a resident in the past 45 days and he'd reached out to the individual and offered a potential resolution to the person, of which they reluctantly agreed to, but within a few days came back and politely declined. The person stated appreciation for the Mayor's efforts, but wanted to entertain more avenues of resolve. Mayor Starke said, he then wrote up a letter and stated we'd done our due diligence in the matter, and the letter is on file here in the office for anyone asking to read it. He felt we've exhausted all we can do in this situation, if liability should come to the town (not that it would), but we'd at least have it on record with the letter.

Public Comments:

Mr. J. E. Harrell praised the town crew and the Police Chief for their service to the town. He also asked **Mr. Park III**, if he could speak to him tomorrow, since he had some experience in this line of work regarding the fire alarms and other issues they were having. **Mr. Park III** stated he it would be fine, but to be careful coming down to the plant with all the construction equipment moving around down there.

Ms. Teresa Goode introduced herself and advised the council that she was the young lady who started the Juneteenth Celebration last year and appreciated all the support she'd received from **Shirley**, the town, and **Chief Bowen**. She stated she was looking forward to having it again this year on Saturday, June 10th. She wanted the council to know she had a "heart" for the children and was hoping to get more support for them, the community, and the public. She also stated she'd like a building in town where they could meet, as well, and if anyone would like to donate or knew of a building, she'd appreciate being advised of one. The Mayor stated he'd like to help her in any way he could and to feel free to reach out to him anytime. **Ms. Goode** thanked Mayor **Starke** and the council for their support of her endeavors. Councilman **Bill Thompson** moved to approve the Juneteenth Celebration for **Mrs. Goode** scheduled for Saturday, June 10, 2023. Councilman **David M. Crowder** seconded the motion, and all members voted in favor.

Mrs. Karen Sciamacco reported that a lot of log trucks were coming through on **Jefferson Street** and are very large and sometimes traveling at a fast rate of speed. She asked if something could be done to re-route these trucks, due to the narrow street and other traffic coming through there. Some discussion ensued, with **Chief Bowen** stating he would contact the logging company to see, if they could take another route.

With no further comments, concerns, or discussion, Vice Mayor **T. G. Gill** moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 P.M., with Councilman **Bill Thompson** seconding the motion. All members voted in favor.

Shirley S. Bowen, MMC
Clerk of Council & Treasurer
February 14, 2023

Christopher D. Starke
Mayor