

The regular meeting of the Boydton Town Council was held on Tuesday, November 15, 2022, beginning at 7:30 P.M., in the Town Hall Council Chambers with Mayor John M. Kirkland presiding.

THOSE PRESENT

**John M. Kirkland, Mayor
T. G. Gill, Vice Mayor
W. H. Coleman
Bill Thompson
David M. Crowder
Paul “Ray” Cherry
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
Karen Garnett
Ethan Garnett
Bill Persuitte
Elizabeth Neal**

Mayor John M. Kirkland welcomed everyone for their attendance at the regular meeting and called the meeting to order. Afterwards, he led the council, audience, and employees with the pledge of allegiance to the flag, followed by a moment of silence.

Mayor Kirkland stated the first speaker from Rural Water was unable to make tonight’s meeting; therefore, he would move on to the next matter of business on the agenda. He introduced Mrs. Karen Garnett to address the council regarding the old pharmacy’s exorbitant water/sewer bill account owned by her and in her name. Mrs. Garnett explained in detail that there was “no way” the usage could have been that high, since nothing was left on in the vacant building and everywhere had been checked for leaks. Questions arose regarding the time frame of this bill, which was between the period of July and August 2022, with usage of 66,510,000 total gallons during these months. She also stated there had never, in 25 years, had this much usage, even when the Fire Department used their water for the stews made for Boydton Day, and she was at a loss, to see how this much water was used. John Roberts, Maintenance Supervisor stated he had reread the meter and it was clear this much water had gone through the meter, but he had no explanation as to why, since there was no leak discovered anywhere at this location. The “only” possibility or explanation was the commode seal/valve may have not closed back down at the last flushing of their toilet and it ran for a long period of time while the building was unoccupied without anyone knowing it was running. Mrs. Garnett, along with her son, Ethan Garnett, and Mrs. Garnett’s brother, Billy Persuitte, denied that this was the case. Councilman W. H. Coleman asked if the commode had a possible leak? In response, Mr. Persuitte stated he’d replaced all the parts in the tank of the toilet in July, with receipts to prove it. More comments/questions ensued between the Mayor, the council, and Mrs. Garnett with Mayor Kirkland reading the updated ordinance from March of last year, regarding adjustments to water/sewer bills. The Deputy Clerk, Rhita Burton, was requested to provide water usage for the period in question. While she was retrieving this information, the Mayor continued on with other items on the agenda.

Mayor Kirkland asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2022, meeting as submitted. Councilman Bill Thompson moved to approve the October minutes, as presented, with Vice Mayor T. G. Gill seconding the motion. All members voted in favor.

Mayor Kirkland requested a motion to pay the bills for November 2022, as submitted. Vice Mayor T. G. Gill moved to approve the bills for the month of November, as provided. Councilman Bill Thompson seconded the motion, and all members voted unanimously.

The Vice Mayor called upon Chief Bowen for his monthly, October 5, 2022, through November 9, 2022, activity report. Chief Bowen reported he had thirteen (13) traffic stops, with six (6) of those being citations, three (3) calls for service, along with one (1) call to a traffic accident in front of the Goode Building. He also stated Boydton Day had good attendance and felt it was a success. He added that Halloween “Trick or Treating” went very well, along with having a good turnout, with no problems. He then asked if anyone had any questions or concerns for him. Mayor Kirkland complimented all the employees and the Boydton Day Committee for all their hard work for Boydton Day, especially since this was the first time in two (2) years that we’d been able to continue it. He, also, thanked Mr. Roberts and Chief Bowen for the work and assistance to the “Trick or Treaters” on the night of Halloween. He asked Mr. Roberts to pass his and the council’s sentiments on to his employees. There were no other questions or concerns from the council for Chief Bowen.

Mr. R. H. Park III reported Boydton’s Department of Water, RRSA Meter Readings Report of water pumped for October 2022, was 823,000 gallons of water purchased from the RRSA with the DMR results returning as satisfactory. Mr. Park III stated he had two (2) updates he’d provide later, since the Deputy Clerk had returned with the results of the findings on the water bill usage for Mrs. Garnett. Upon Mrs. Burton’s return with the requested information regarding Mrs. Garnett’s bills, Mayor Kirkland advised the water usage amount for this time frame was \$383.75 and the sewage usage was \$372.98, along with the penalties, making a total bill owed of \$897.59. The Mayor asked the council for a recommendation regarding her water bill. Vice Mayor Gill and Councilman Coleman felt the penalties should be waived. Councilman Coleman then stated his concerns and how he was struggling with the decision to adjust this bill when others have asked for the same thing in the past. He said in the past, if it was an outside leak, we’d take a three (3) month average and adjust the overage off the sewer portion of the bill only and the customer would then pay the water & the adjusted sewer amount. Vice Mayor Gill suggested to Mr. Roberts to turn the water on tomorrow and monitor it daily to see if the meter turns rapidly and we’ll see what happens after doing this. Mayor Kirkland advised the Garnett’s, upon this procedure being done, and after hopefully having some answers, we’d bring this back to council for a decision at our December 13th meeting. Mrs. Garnett asked for copies of the bills during the time frame questioned and thanked them for hearing her. Mayor Kirkland replied that the ladies would have this ready for her this week.

The meeting was continued with Mr. R. H. Park’s report. He advised the council of his concerns with the school lift station. He stated he’d gotten in touch with Brian Dalton at the school board office, Matt Gross (engineer), and the contractor to advise them of his concerns with all the issues he’d found at the site. After around three (3) hours spent with them, so far, nothing has come from that meeting. Mr. Park III informed the council that everything was running smoothly at the LVL North on Ridge Road, which has a permanent Lift Station there. He concluded his report by saying we would be having a progress meeting two (2) weeks from today, here at 10:00 A.M., if anyone would like to sit in. Councilman Coleman inquired of Mr. Park III as to what was the problem at the new school’s lift station.

Mr. Park III replied that it's all in the construction done by Cleveland Construction, who will have to answer to all the problems there, who in turn, will possibly put it back on Biggs Construction. Councilman Worley asked who was cleaning the lift station. Mr. Park III said he's the one going and checking the bar screen weekly and letting the automatic bar screen run, but other than me doing that, no one else is overseeing that lift station, as it should be. Councilman Coleman asked if they ever fixed the fence where the garbage truck can enter in. Mr. Park III responded, "No." Negotiations with the school itself should be done as a change order, after it's been certified. He continued by saying, before the town takes it on, I have a separate list of things that will have to be negotiated with the school, before we should take it on. Councilman Coleman remarked, "I think we should look long and hard before taking this on, regardless." Mr. Park III agreed and said we should have a contractual agreement with them and look at this really hard, before doing anything.

Mayor Kirkland asked Mr. Roberts, Maintenance Supervisor, for his report for the month. Mr. Roberts reported that VDOT had come and removed the tree on Jefferson Street across from Mr. E. E. Coleman's. They put in a new culvert on Park Street, to try and cut out some of the overflow in everyone's yard. However, we don't know how it will work until we get a good rain. Also, some new pavement was put down and within the next week or so they will be in town to stripe it. Mr. Roberts asked if the council would like for him to rent a lift for \$140 a day to take the other dead tree down and also advised that the Gateway Sign needs to be replaced up near the Microsoft site on Highway 58, since it's falling apart. Councilman Coleman stated he definitely felt this should be repaired or replaced. Mr. Roberts asked for an answer to his two (2) questions about the tree and the gateway sign. Councilman Coleman asked if he felt he could safely remove the tree. Mr. Roberts replied, "Well, it will be a while if I do it, since I'm having a surgical procedure done at the end of the month and I possibly won't be able to do it until the end of December. The Mayor advised him, "If you get up there and find out it's too much to tackle, then don't risk it. He expressed his appreciation for him asking to do it.

The Mayor asked if there were anymore comments. Mrs. Bowen, Clerk of Council, advised of the Grand Illumination on Monday, December 5th at 5:30 P.M. and asked if any of them knew of some people who could sing for this event. The Mayor and Councilman Coleman said to make sure the Clarksville Elementary School choir could come and perform, if no one else. She responded she'd already contacted them and waiting on a response, due to there being a new principle and choir director at the school. The Mayor questioned Mrs. Bowen about the employee Christmas dinner. She asked if the council would entertain the thought of having a "combined" dinner the evening of December 13th, at 5:00 P.M., prior to the council meeting, to include all of the council, Mayor Kirkland, and the employees, since this would be Mayor Kirkland's last council meeting, as our Mayor. She also asked if she could include Danny Fox, our former Chief of Police, and present him with the plaque she'd had done for him when he retired, but due to circumstances beyond her control, it was never formally presented to him. The council was very enthusiastic about this, and granted her their permission.

Mrs. Elizabeth Neal addressed the council regarding a car accident that happened to her on January 2, 2021, on Jefferson Street, which involved her phoning a town employee to come and assist her. She explained to the council all the events of that night, since she felt it was something they should know or be made aware of and it had been on her mind, since it happened.

Questions were asked and responses given between the council and Mrs. Neal regarding this incident, with no resolve to the issue, except for her “finally” getting it out in the open to the council, which she hoped would help ease her mind, after keeping it inside her all this time. (Refer to the recorded tape, if needed on this subject, due to the length of this conversation.) Upon stating her case/grievance, Mrs. Neal left.

Mayor Kirkland asked if there were any other questions or concerns. Councilman Worley stated he had a town resident ask him why the town doesn’t sell the property on Jefferson Street, where the yellow house (owned by the town) was torn down. This person told Councilman Worley, if we’d sell it, maybe a young person/couple would purchase it; thus, bringing in more young people and more tax revenue for the town, as well. There was a brief discussion regarding this with the subject left for future discussion and possibly at our next council meeting.

With no further comments, concerns, or discussion, Mayor Kirkland adjourned the meeting at 8:45 P.M.



Shirley S. Bowen, MMC
Clerk of Council & Treasurer
November 15, 2022



J. M. Kirkland
Mayor