TOWN OF HEMINGWAY

MINUTES OF MEETING ON JANUARY 10, 2019

HEMINGWAY TOWN HALL AT 6:00 P.M.

**Present:**  Mayor Grady Richardson, George Sutton-Mayor Pro-Tem, Keith Baxley, Jimmy Chinnes, Doug Joy, John Coker, Charlie Carter, Joseph Lee-Town Administrator, Samantha Lewis-Town Clerk, Chief Bryan Todd, Denise Santoro, Officer Brenda Lambert, Ken Laster-Public Works Director, Jonathan Laste, Shamira McCray-Pee Dee Weekly, Dianne Owens-The News, J. P. Truesdale, Monica Richardson-Newell Richardson and Dale Johnson.

**Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.**

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of Minutes:** Mayor Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes from the January 2, 2019 meeting and it was seconded by Mr. Joy and it carried unanimously. Mayor Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2018 meeting and it was seconded by Mr. Chinnes and it carried unanimously.

**Persons Appearing Before Council: Denise Santoro:** Mrs. Santoro dropped off policies and all precincts for voting for Williamsburg County. We need to work together. She uses the terms jail, prison and hell because everyone knows them and they are common. She is running for President of the United States of America. She stated that win or lose, people deserve better. With this new program, parents must be educated and their children. That is why we are going to get rid of illiteracy. She would like to use the polling areas for them to come and get educated and also for the book mobile to be available. China is so far ahead of United States in our lifestyle and creativity. We need to do something about it. **Dale Johnson**: Mr. Johnson would like to do a fundraiser for the Hemingway Police Department. This will be funds that is only used by the Chief of Police and his department. He is looking at a date in February. Chief Todd can buy equipment for the department. A lot of departments are purchasing body cameras, etc. This money can be used for that. Mayor Richardson stated that the funds would have to be deposited in the Town’s account. Chief would have to abide by Town’s policy in purchasing equipment. This would require bids. These funds would not be used items that are not already budgeted. It is not to be used to supplant not supplement. Mayor Richardson stated that he didn’t any council member will have a problem. The plates will be chicken bog and leg quarters. Johnsonville has one every year that supports their police department. He has a business in this town and they look out for the girls in the business and he would like to do something for them. He asked council to put on the marque and would like their support. Mayor Richardson asked if the newspaper will cover this. Tickets will be available next Friday. Mr. Johnson thanked council for their time and Mr. Sutton thanked Mr. Johnson for helping him.

**2017-2018 Audit Report—Monica Richardson:** This year the Governmental fund had a loss of $71,705 and Business Type Activities had a gain of $460,676. She is not terribly concerned about the General Fund. The cost is still well below the depreciation. Our unrestricted net position is above 90 days. We need to keep an eye on this. Water department showed a decrease in net position of $11670 this excludes grants. If it didn’t exclude the grant, it would be $156,285. This is very significant loss and it well below the depreciation. There was an increase in cash and cash equivalent. This area will need to be looked but not too overly concerned due to positive cash flow. Sewer department is a different story. It has an increase in net position of $472,000. This includes grants that account for most of this. If we exclude the grants it will decrease to $24959. This doesn’t sound like a lot and falls below the depreciation but this is the second year decrease in cash and cash equivalent of $83440 negative cash balance. This is an area of concern. Sewer repairs are costly. This fund needs a lot of attention. Mayor stated that in May we raised water and sewer rates and only had three months on this audit. Next year there will be 12 months that will help with the negatively of these funds. Mayor Richardson stated that we did a significant increase in rates and may have to do it again this year. Mrs. Richardson stated that even though there was a loss of $71,000 it is still below the depreciation amount and this money was spent years ago. As long as there is positive cash flow and the loss stays below the depreciation, it doesn’t worry her too much. What worries her is a loss or a gain but the cash flow is negative. She stated that we are in pretty good shape but not as good as last year. Mr. Sutton stated that there are fixing to be a lot of expenses in water and sewer budget. Mrs. Richardson stated that is a problem and concerns her. She stated there is cash in the bank, but there is no cash for the sewer department. Each department needs to be looked at separately. Mayor Richardson made the motion to accept the audit report as presented by Mrs. Richardson and it was seconded by Mr. Baxley and it carried unanimously. Mayor Richardson thanked Mrs. Richardson for her work and she in turned thanked council for allowing them to do it. She stated that we have a great staff and they do a great job.

**Construction Update:** All the concrete has been removed. They were only going to replace the concrete that was removed earlier. They shot the level on it, it was going to be a very thin layer on top of the existing one. This requires a change order and didn’t bring it before council because it was no additional cost to remove the existing concrete and pour new one. Monday they are going to put the conduit for electrical in the floor. They have the plumbing already in the floor and then pour the concrete. It will be one big slab. We will start to see a big difference in the building in the next two to three weeks. Mayor Richardson stated that we need to make sure we have plenty of electrical outlets.

**Town Properties-Mayor Richardson:** Mayor Richardson stated that it will soon be springtime and letters will start going out to property owners concerning the upkeep. The area that the town owns beside the tennis courts needs to be cleaned up. Mr. Lee stated that he spoke with the building official on the two buildings on the corner here. She is writing up a report and is going to give it to Gregg Askins. Mr. Lee stated that we will go by the ordinance. Kyle Daniels building has a new top and new glass. Hopefully somebody will be moving into it soon.

**J. P. Truesdale:** Mr. Truesdale owns a business of emptying septic tanks for residences. He pays Johnsonville $200 to $300 in fees for use of their facility. He does not do grease or hazardous materials. He would like to have the authority to dump his waste. He keeps a log of what he dumps and it is on the honor system. No one around here has a scale to weigh the truck. Mayor Richardson asked when can this be dumped? Mr. Laster stated at the Waste Water Treatment Plant and also can be dumped in a manhole. The ordinance will have to be changed to allow this. We will have to put together policies and procedures as well as a rate schedule. Mayor Richardson asked if something can be presented at the next council meeting. Mr. Laster stated that he and Mr. Lee will get something together. Mayor Richardson told Mr. Truesdale that we will have to have two readings and also a public hearing before this is allowed.

**Administrator’s Report: 1)** Mr. Lee stated that on the same lines that Monica said, the old sewer lines are costly. These need to be repaired. Also we have the new wells. There is a lot going on. Mr. Laster stated that last year Hanna Engineering can look at the rate structure after each audit and let us know what we are looking at. This needs to be done and it won’t cost as much because he already has it set up to figure. Mr. Baxley stated that we only went up half of the suggested rate and this may need to be done soon. **2)** Mr. Lee has a change form from Mr. Joy on the old outpatient building. Mr. Joy stated that we dropped the price from $600,000 to $575,000 and it generated some interest. He is running it on websites and social media. The contract is up for renewal in three days and we are at $575,000. He suggests lowering the cost and also put it up for lease also. Council agreed to sign the contract with $25,000 lower cost and review it in a few months. Mr. Joy stated that he has reached out to MUSC twice this week. They are still buying property and is trying to get in touch with the right person. Mr. Baxley suggested that if anyone makes an offer that we get together quickly to look at it. Mr. Carter suggested we do something to get someone in there and generate revenue. Council agreed to revisiting this issue in a few months to see if they need to lower it again. **3)** Mr. Lee stated that he has Williamsburg County Council meetings twice a month at 6:00 in the evening. He will probably be appointed to a committee and these will possibly be held during the day. He is asking permission to attend these meetings as he did when he was on the school board. He may have to go for other meetings as well during the day, but if there is Town business he will put the Town business first. Mayor Richardson stated that the majority of council didn’t have a problem with him leaving for this. **4)** At two meetings ago, council voted to give employees the additional half day off. So, Town Hall will close at 12:00 on Monday and be closed Tuesday and Wednesday for the holiday. Mayor Richardson stated that the meeting had a quorum and it was voted on.

**Old Business:** No old business was discussed.

**SECTION 30-4-70 (a) (1)** DISCUSSION OF EMPLOYMENT, APPOINTMENT, COMPENSATION, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, DISCIPLINE, OR RELEASE OF AN EMPLOYEE, A STUDENT, OR A PERSON REGULATED BY A PUBLIC BODY OR THE APPOINTMENT OF A PERSON TO A PUBLIC BODY; HOWEVER, IF AN ADVERSARY HEARING INVOLVING THE EMPLOYEE OR CLIENT IS HELD, THE EMPLOYEE OR CLIENT HAS THE RIGHT TO DEMAND THAT THE HEARING BE CONDUCTED PUBLICLY. NOTHING CONTAINED IN THIS ITEM SHALL PREVENT THE PUBLIC BODY, IN ITS DISCRETION, FROM DELETING THE NAMES OF THE OTHER EMPLOYEES OR CLIENTS WHOSE RECORDS ARE SUBMITTED FOR USE AT THE HEARING. (*THE IDENTITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL OR ENTITY BEING DISCUSSED IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE DISCLOSED.)* Mayor Richardson made the motion to come out of executive session and it was seconded by Mr. Carter and it carried unanimously.

No actions or no votes were taken in executive session.

Mayor Richardson asked if there was anything else that council would like to discuss before we adjourn the meeting. No other business was brought up and meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Sincerely

Samantha Lewis

Town Clerk