

**Town of Williamsport**  
**Mayor & Town Council**  
**Regular Session Meeting Minutes – April 15, 2024**



On April 15, 2024, the Mayor & Town Council for the Town of Williamsport held a Regular Session. Those members of the elected body who were present included Mayor William Green, Assistant Mayor Dennis Grove, Councilman Jim Braswell, Councilman Charles Brown, Councilman Earle Pereschuk, Councilman Ben Tinsley, and Councilperson Margaret Yaukey. Town employees in attendance were Chad Rooney, Town Manager, Ed Kuczynski, Town Attorney, and Linda Kuczynski, Town Planner.

Mayor Green called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and asked for a moment of silence and then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Green asked for a motion to approve the March 11, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes as presented. Councilman Tinsley motioned to approve the minutes; Councilman Braswell seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Green asked for a motion to approve the March 11, 2024, Work Session Minutes as presented. Councilman Tinsley motioned to approve the minutes; Councilman Pereschuk seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Green asked for a motion to approve the March 11, 2024, Regular Session Minutes as presented. Councilman Tinsley motioned to approve the minutes; Councilman Braswell seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Green introduced Chris Simms, Smart Utility Management, a contractor for the town regarding the electric rates and contracts. Mr. Simms provided a detailed overview of the current standing of electrical rates outlined in a PowerPoint presentation; each member of the Town Council was provided a copy. He explained the projected rates have not responded as intended and have leveled off. The average rates, projected rates, comparison between going to market or locking in a contract once the current one ends were all discussed. The options provided to the Mayor and Town Council are to allow the current contract to expire and utilize market rates or extend our contract and lock in a higher than market rate. Mayor Green mentioned the ability for the town to utilize the market rate for a period of six months through the end of the year and then reevaluate. This would allow for a lower rate for residents, but will ebb and flow as the rate would be based off of daily market prices. A public hearing will be scheduled for May.

Mayor Green presented a note from Mrs. Lafferty and family expressing their thanks for recognition and flowers sent following the passing of Mr. Lafferty.

Mayor Green then requested reports beginning with the Board of Election Supervisors. Linda Kuczynski identified an issue with past elections and the timing candidates must file for office and the requirement to send out absentee ballots. Candidates have up to 10 days to file their petitions, but absentee ballots must be distributed on the same day. She explained this does not allow enough time to format, print, and mail absentee ballots given the status of the United States Postal Service delays. The proposal of the Board of Election Supervisors is to have candidates file by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month prior to the election so there is ample time to complete all tasks necessary to complete and send out ballots. The Town Attorney explained the process for making such a change as

drafting the Charter change for presentation at the May Work Session and then moving for action following that meeting. Councilman Tinsley made a motion to change the 30 days prior for people to file for candidacy and also a motion to remove Section 36 of the Town Charter about conventions and primary elections; the Town Attorney explained the draft would likely be to make the change note the first Monday of February as opposed to the 30<sup>th</sup> day prior so that that day does not fall on a weekend day. Assistant Mayor Grove seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Board of Zoning Appeals – no report though she did remind those in attendance a permit is required prior to start of work starting, , Planning Commission, Land Use, Legal Counsel, Sheriff's Report 85 events, 9 traffic stops, 11 violations; MY – electric: solar panels ability to sell back power to the grid, can not sell power back to power grid; Mayor indicated our contracted Simms says its not worth it due to size of town's grid; EP – pool meeting Thursday at 6pm, CB pavilion painted, bathrooms nearly completed, Riverbottom had many folks this past weekend, DG snow boards replaced at TH, crown molding replaced at TH, weather vein back at TH, BT – no report, JB – requested a brief history of the town siren, kids sports starting be safe traveling through town, Mayor – library, lobbyist from state budget 750 k for library total 1.5 million; History & Museum Board items were dropped off by Mayor & TM

Mayor Green explained there is no Old Business and moved into New Business.

The first item on the agenda related to the Board of Election Supervisors was previously addressed. The next item is considering the Constant Yield. The Town Manager explained action is necessary to allow time should an increase be desired to schedule a public hearing, but if no change or lesser rate is decided, no public hearing would be needed. Councilman Tinsley asked if any other towns in Washington County were raising their rates; the Town Attorney noted this is not the case. Councilman Braswell mentioned a recent increase in property taxes may affect the amount paid by each property owner, the Mayor agreed. The Mayor recommended to maintain the same rate of 0.4742; Councilman Brown made the motion to maintain the current rate; Assistant Mayor Grove seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Green presented the recommended Water and Sewer Rate proposal. He noted the City of Hagerstown is likely to increase their rate 14% for each of the next three years and Washington County is likely to increase Sewer Rate 3%. Mayor Green continued to explain the town has been following a plan presented by Chris Simms to properly fund the Water/Sewer Fund and not passing on these increases would hinder the town's ability to properly fund this proprietary account. A public hearing will be scheduled for one of the meetings in May.

Mayor Green and the Town Manager presented proposed modifications to the Park, Stopping, and Standing Within the Corporate Limits of the Town of Williamsport Ordinance. The changes include Section 3: changing the day of the week to Friday, Section 4: Subsection C: change the language to include metered area of Town Center and remover the Corporate Limits of the Town, change the length of time a resident must live in the designated area from 5 years to 1 year, and remove Subsection E, and Subsection G: change date range to reflect a calendar year and not a fiscal year. The Town Manager noted the fine for violating this section of the ordinance is \$100.00. Councilman Tinsley expressed concern with not enforcing the ordinance on Saturdays and asked if there is a limit to the timeframe the individual can park in one spot. Mayor Green explained the time limit is 2 hours in a metered parking spot. A draft ordinance will be presented in the May Work Session.

Mayor Green presented the idea of continuing, by contract with the Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) for another year. This would include maintaining the Town Manager/Circuit Rider Program used currently to facilitate the submission and maintenance of many grant applications. Mayor Green noted this includes the façade grant currently being used by many properties. Councilman Brown motioned to submit to continue the façade grant application; Councilman Tinsley seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Assistant Mayor Grove motioned to continue a one-year contract with MRDC; the motion was seconded by Councilman Pereschuk.

Mayor Green presented two requests from the Washington County Sheriff's Office. The first is to allow deputies to use a space in Byron Park to hold bicycle registrations and distribute information about bicycle safety. Councilman Brown made a motion to approve the request as presented; Councilman Pereschuk seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Green then outlined both the Resident Deputy and Community Deputy programs including the history of the programs in the town. Mayor Green proposed the Town Council approve to continue the Resident Deputy Program, but not approve the continuation of the Community Deputy Program. No formal action was taken by the Town Council.

Resident Charles Stonebreaker spoke about the status of an application to allow a sober living house in the Town of Williamsport. The Town Planner explained the process for such a request and subsequent withdrawal of the application. She continued to outline the current application and status as it may progress to be heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals. A few residents in attendance expressed their desire for the Mayor and Town Council to act and keep the sober living house, in any capacity, from being approved. The Mayor, Town Attorney, and Town Planner encouraged the residents to attend the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting in May and express their dissent as this meeting is not the platform which will decide on the application.

Selena Wilkes, Port 44, expressed her thanks for the town supporting the entities projects and provided an update on the status of several buildings.

Councilman Pereschuk made a motion to adjourn the Regular Session; Councilman Tinsley seconded; the motion passed unanimously; the meeting adjourned at 8:54pm.

Respectfully Tendered,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chad P. Rooney', written in a cursive style.

Chad P. Rooney  
Town Manager