

TOWN OF BROOKER  
REGULAR MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING  
APRIL 13, 2021

Present: Steve Acree, Linda Bennett, Gene Melvin, Chris Caldwell, Joe Tolleson, John Maines, Suzanne McRee, Charlene Thomas, Tony Stalaker.  
Community: Terry Thomas, Diane Andrews – County Commissioner

Meeting called to order by Gene Melvin, Mayor.

Pledge of Allegiance

A motion was made by Steve Acree to approve the March 9th meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Joe Tolleson. Motion passed.

---

**Fire Department – Tony Stalaker:**

I. Volunteer Status – Brooker Fire Department

Tony Stalaker advised he had met with Alan Parrish and Ben Carter regarding the volunteer status of the Brooker Fire Department. They relayed that all of the volunteer stations within the county are closed with exception of Brooker. Brooker is currently the only volunteer department in the Bradford County and the County would no longer support the volunteer mission. Mr. Parrish is proposing to Bradford County Commissioners that the fire engine, tanker and brush truck be turned over to the Town since the Town of Brooker has its own FDI number, similar to City of Starke, except Brooker would remain volunteer with a Mutual Aid Agreement with the County. If accepted, the Town of Brooker would have to pay for insurance for the volunteer firefighters along with any replacement equipment (nozzles, hoses, etc). This proposal by Mr. Parrish to the County is contingent on the Town's desire to pursue. Gene Melvin noted this has been a discussion for a number of years and raised the concern that the budget does not provide for repair of large projects (\$20,000.00 allotted for fire station needs), i.e., tanker goes out, truck goes out, no funds to fix.

Tony Stalaker advised that he had polled the 3 volunteer staff and the overall consensus was they were not interested in continuing volunteer services under the current protocol. Diane Andrews, County Commissioner, advised this has been a concern and she will bring the volunteer status and the possibility of a permanent station up with the County Commission. Since the Town of Brooker already owns structures associated with the fire station, she felt there should be a way to provide a permanent fire station. It was decided this matter would be tabled until the next meeting, with input from Diane Andrews following the County Commissioners meeting. A Motion was made by Steve Acree to Table this discussion. Seconded by Linda Bennett. Motion passed.

### **Town Clerk – Suzanne McRee:**

1. Letter sent to B. Dukes re: removal of tree that had been cut down on his property and was in the city road (Bradford Avenue). Removal completed.
2. Swamp Cutters called to move a meter from inside a fenced yard to outside of the fenced yard (J. Addison/Shady Oaks). Completed.
3. Brooker Elementary School has discontinued WastePro service and installed a personal dumpster. There has been a question as to the location of the dumpsters, being partially on city right of way. Discussion with Council and attorney re: liability issues. It is decided that there are no issues to note and no need to ask BES to move their dumpster.
4. Town Clerk has a meeting with Doug Sanders/Andy Easton's office on Wednesday, 4/10/21 to discuss the SCOP Grant and the advertisement bid for engineering services under that grant.

### **Bookkeeper – Charlene Thomas:**

1. Went over Revenues and Expenditures for March 30, 2021.  
On the General Fund side an overage in Budget line item, Accounting and Auditing was noted. Ms. Thomas stated that she would move some money around in August to correct this overage. She also mentioned that there is an overage in Budget line item Parks & Recreation – Rec Grand expenditure. This is FRDAP expenditures. She stated that money will be moved in August to correct this overage.
2. Bookkeeper requested for the town to purchase another piece of playground equipment, a "Spring Dinosaur". Cost for this piece of equipment is approximately \$900.00. There is currently a balance of \$2105.00 in Parks and Recreation – Other Charges. Motion was made by Steve Acree and Seconded by Linda Bennett. Motion passed.
3. FRDAP close out date is April 30<sup>th</sup>. Andy Easton and Ms. Thomas as working to finish up using all funds with \$715.22 left to be spent. The water fountain at the tennis court is being replaced and possibly another picnic table purchased. The balance, as of the last meeting, was \$1680.99. Since that time a swing set, child swing and anchors were purchased bringing the balance down to \$715.22. If there is any money left, Ms. Thomas will purchase mulch to go under the new swing set.
4. Ms. Thomas met with Jacob Messa, Engineer. He looked over all of the FRDP expenditures and signed off as the Engineer. The cost for his services was \$500.00 which was a requirement of the grant agreement. (Payment for his services could not be paid out of the grant.

### **Attorney – John Maines:**

1. Gene Melvin discussed the recent meeting held by the Superintendent of Bradford County Schools with Brooker Elementary School faculty, discussing closure of Brooker Elementary School. Mayor Melvin requested direction from Attorney Maines as to what the Town can do as far as keeping the school open or what are the Town's alternatives. Attorney Maines advised the Town does not have the authority to reverse a decision that has been made. Attorney Maines advised that the Council can decide if they want to take a stance on the topic and can direct the Town Clerk to write a letter to the school board members and superintendent from Mayor Melvin on behalf of the Town Council.

Discussion regarding pros and cons on the consolidation of schools and closure of Brooker Elementary School ensued with input from various council members. The Town Council agreed for the Town Clerk to prepare a letter from Mayor Melvin on behalf of the Town Council to the BCSD Superintendent and school board members, relaying the concerns of the Town, to include the financial impact on the Town.

**Water Department – Gene Melvin:**

1. Mayor Melvin spoke with Bernard Carter about the battery going out on the emergency power with Ring Power.

**Sanitation – Chris Caldwell:**

Nothing new to report

**Road/Streets – Joe Tolleson:**

1. Potholes are issue
2. One of the barricades on Melvin Street is down. Mayor Melvin asked if Ms. Diane Andrews, County Commissioner, could assist.

**Recreation/Parks – Linda Bennett:**

Nothing new to report

**Grounds/Maintenance – Steve Acree:**

1. Noted the dates of service (3/17 and 4/8)

**Community Center – Gene Melvin**

1. Confirmed with Town Clerk that the Center is being rented out. Town Clerk advised that there were currently 4 scheduled rentals.

**Discussion from Town Council/Mayor:**

Nothing new to report

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

None

Checks approved: 7470-7498, 5605 - 5617

A motion was made by Chris Caldwell to approve the bills. Seconded by Steve Acree. Motion passed.

Gene Melvin made a motion to adjourn. Time: 8:10 p.m.

---

Cecil E. (Gene) Melvin, Mayor

---

Suzanne McRee, Town Clerk