At the **January 25th work session** concerns about police presence and response times were raised by several speakers, including Jane Morse who shared her experience with a hit-and-run accident. Dennis Reynolds and Joe Smith discussed power outages and mailbox damage. Mayor Hodnett emphasized the need for fair and equal treatment, while Unknown Speaker highlighted the importance of hiring qualified police officers. Tommy Neal stressed the need for adequate police protection in a small town, and Paul Johnson mentioned the importance of a neighborhood watch program. Other speakers discussed water quality, taxes, and child protection concerns, with some expressing frustration with the lack of night coverage for police services. In addition, speakers discussed various strategies for economic development, including grant writing and creative thinking. The potential locations and designs for a new police department were also discussed, with proposals for a separate building and acquiring a separate property for library programs.

Action Items

Get quote for parking area, French drain, and ADA compliant steps for police station basement renovation

Email Sheriff Taylor the police chief's work schedule to coordinate coverage when chief is off duty

Have a town hall meeting to discuss police coverage and response time issues

Send out RFP for new trash collection service

Pay $250 to remove trees near Ella Goodman's property

Hold annual town road cleanup on March 9th with rain date of March 16th

Add action item

Outline

Agenda items and public comments at a meeting.

Invocation and pledge of allegiance followed by a meeting agenda addition and public comments.

Safety concerns and police presence in a neighborhood.

Jane Morris shares concerns about safety and security in her neighborhood.

Road accidents and response times.

Neighbor calls 911 after discovering a car crash in the road, with the county dispatch providing updates on the incident.

Neighbors find car down the street after triple hit, call for better communication.

Police response times and traffic safety.

Jane Morris describes a situation where a neighbor's house was broken into and the police were called, but it took two hours for them to arrive.

Mayor Gary Hodnett suggests moving a message board to different parts of town to warn people about getting tickets while sitting in a particular area.

Grant writing and community development.

Rachel del Campo Gatewood introduces River District Consulting Group, a local nonprofit consulting firm.

Consulting firm specializes in grant writing for nonprofits and municipalities, with a focus on local foundations and government grants.

Speakers discuss community input for shopping center redevelopment with a focus on finding what the town wants.

Funding for water infrastructure improvements.

Mayor Gary Hodnett advocates for grants to improve water infrastructure and support local businesses.

Water infrastructure and economic revitalization in a small town.

Town faces water crisis due to aging infrastructure and lack of funding, with no clear solution.

Grant writing and funding for local projects.

Chief Lovelace highlights the importance of police grants and general beautification projects for economic development.

Kathy Keesee emphasizes the connection between quality of life and economic development, citing the importance of presenting a calming and friendly environment to attract businesses and industry.

Rachael Del Campo Gatewood explains that their consulting fees are not based on a percentage of grant funds, but rather a flat rate for specific projects.

Rachael Del Campo Gatewood mentions that the largest grant they have written is in the low three hundreds, and Virginia housing grants have been in the 25-50,000 range.

Michael Blackstock asks for examples of grants written for clients, and the speaker provides examples of successful grants, including a park project in Davao and research on grant options for a client.

Rachael Del Campo Gatewood emphasizes the importance of a kickoff meeting to understand the client's needs and research potential grants, and provides an example of a USDA grant recently received by Rocky Mount.

Revitalizing the plaza with creative ideas and community input.

Mayor Gary Hodnett emphasizes the need for creative thinking and research to develop a unique and successful plaza.

Mayor Gary Hodnett proposes a business incubator in Town to attract small businesses and create jobs.

The town of Hurt is open to resident suggestions and engagement to develop a comprehensive plan for the community.

Housing stock and economic development in a small town.

Housing stock is a growing concern in the region, impacting economic development.

Housing and basement renovation in a small town.

Rachael Del Campo Gatewood highlights Virginia housing grants as a valuable resource for addressing housing needs, citing the organization's openness to conversations and willingness to help with blight grants.

Speakers across the board express concern about the lack of affordable housing options, particularly in nonprofit organizations, and the impact it has on attracting and retaining employees.

Contractors provided quotes for basement renovation, with Brumfield and Pillow attending the meeting.

Joe Smith discussed parking and accessibility, including installing a set of steps for ADA compliance.

Construction project scope and pricing.

Contractors share referrals and praise Mr. Pillai's work.

Contractors provide pricing information for various projects, including basement steps, parking lot installation, and French drain installation.

Discussion revolves around a shower at the Town of Hurt police station, with speakers debating how long they have been officers and how many times they have taken a shower there versus going home.

Tom Sawyer's incident with a defender leads to a health issue and the need for a shower.

Renovating a building for town council meetings.

Michael Blackstock impressed by building's condition despite rain.

Michael Blackstock suggests renovating the old Virginia ABC store for a police department or town council meetings.

Parking lot and tax revenue in a small town.

Council discusses potential benefits and drawbacks of relocating town hall to a different location.

Relocating police department for improved accessibility.

Steve Worley suggests moving the police department to the front of the shopping center to deter crime and make it more accessible to the community.

Mayor Gary Hodnett and Steve Worley disagree, citing concerns about the building's market rent and potential negative impact on the businesses nearby.

Potential new location for police department.

Chief Lovelace suggests advantages to PD being separate from town hall, including confidentiality and security.

Group discusses potential for a new community center, including space for close sessions and improved lighting.

Renovating a building for a new business.

Bob Majure is open to renovating the building for security reasons, but concerned about meeting areas and inclement weather.

Considerations for renovating a police station into a business include cost, lost income, and potential for growth.

Zoning and development in a small town.

The property purchase includes a half-acre discrepancy in land measurement.

Unknown Speaker: Proposes building roads to connect residential areas.

Paul Johnson Residents want zoning change to residential to avoid commercial traffic.

Mayor Gary Hodnett mentions buying property to gain an easement, saving $225,000 in financing costs.

The group discusses the potential for residential development on the property, with Paul Johnson suggesting zoning it residential to avoid industrial development.

Water infrastructure, solar leases, and police response.

Tom Fore explains the town's water system upgrade plan to address EPA compliance and potential industrial customers.

Michael Blackstock expresses frustration with slow progress on solar leases, which have been worked on for two years.

Police staffing and liability in a small town.

Chief Lovelace addresses concerns from the public and the council regarding police staffing issues.

Chief Lovelace explains that the sheriff's office doesn't have 24/7 coverage and refers some calls to the state police or county when they don't have someone available.

Chief Lovelace expresses frustration with the limited resources and lack of coverage, while also acknowledging the challenges of law enforcement and the importance of following the law.

Chief Lovelace emphasizes the importance of fairness and equal treatment for all individuals, while also acknowledging the need for stricter background checks and liability management in law enforcement.

Chief Lovelace highlights the importance of treating everyone equally, regardless of their personal choices or beliefs, while also recognizing the need to prioritize safety and liability in law enforcement.

Police response times and duties in Virginia.

Dispatch prioritizes calls and sends appropriate responders based on availability and call type.

Dispatch prioritizes calls based on severity, with higher priority given to calls involving injuries or fatalities.

Chief Lovelace explains that police officers are not always available after hours, even if they live nearby, and that they have a schedule to follow.

Steve Worley asks if the sheriff's department has a copy of the police officers' schedule, and Chief Lovelace replies that they do not.

Police protection in a small town.

Resident expresses frustration with long response time to 911 calls in their town.

Council member suggests forming a partnership with sheriff's department to help police department in need.

Resident expresses fear for safety in town due to lack of police protection.

Police coverage and jurisdiction in a small town.

State Police try to help cover Chatham and Gretna after hours, with limited resources and no simple answers.

Unknown Speaker mentions a possible hit-and-run incident on Route 40.

Neighborhood watch members discuss training and coverage with local police.

Waste management fees and services.

Resident suggests finding another part-time position to supplement the solid waste fee, which is earmarked for landfill maintenance and operation.

Mayor Gary Hodnett explains the solid waste fee as being used for other services, and wants to remove the $120 annual fee.

Police coverage and response times.

Resident reports delayed response from county sheriff's office due to lack of communication with State Police.

Police response to neighborhood concerns.

Chief Lovelace explains that local police and state police have different frequencies and dispatch systems, and they may not always respond immediately to emergencies.

Tommie Neal shares an anecdote about a time when state police arrived quickly to help with an emergency, but then bowed out once others arrived.

Resident reports being attacked, others reluctant to help.

Water and tax issues in a community meeting.

Mayor Gary Hodnett discusses the need for a work session on strictly PD and tax issues, mentioning that water conditions are dire and taxes will only get worse.

The group considers having a community town hall meeting to address these issues and potentially find relief.

Town road cleanup and property assessment.

Gary Poindexter clarifies tax assessment process with county, citing valuation data as key factor.

Joe Smith discusses tree removal on Ella Goodman's property.

Council discusses annual town road pickup, dates, and advertising.