

MINUTE BOOK XXXIII PAGES 30-48
PLANNING RETREAT MINUTES
February 26, 2024

The Planning Retreat of the Town of Troutman Town Council was held on Tuesday, February 26, 2024, at 8:00 am at the Troutman Town Hall, 400 North Eastway Drive, North Carolina with Mayor Teross W. Young, Jr. presiding.

Council Members Present: W. Paul Henkel, Edward R. Nau, Felina L. Harris, Jerry R. Oxsher; Nicholas D. Jaroszynski

Council Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Ronald Wyatt, Town Manager; Kimberly Davis, Town Clerk; Justin Mundy, Finance Director; Josh Watson, Police Chief; Austin Waugh, Public Works Manager; Emily Watson, Parks and Recreation Director; Lynne Hair, Planning Director; Lou Borek, Human Resources Director; Jessica Davidson

Press Present: Debbie Page, Iredell Free News

MAYOR YOUNG CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Young shared a brief welcome stating that he is looking forward to hearing from the department directors and any feedback that the Council may provide.

Town Manager Ronald Wyatt stated that each department director's goal is to provide the Council with an update on expectations set or agreed upon last year; how far they have come in meeting those goals and/or having to alter them for immediate needs, or long term goals. He commented that he is truly blessed to work with a great staff that takes ownership of their departments. Manager Wyatt stated that it is nice to say we want certain things, but if there is no clear path to achieving those goals, it is a waste of time for the Council and gives the citizens false hope and inaccurate information.

Manager Wyatt stated that he would provide a wrap-up discussion at the end of the meeting.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT, (Lou Borek, Human Resources Director)

Lou Borek, HR Director presented the following:

Position Lifecycle:

- **Manpower Analysis** – There is a constant re-evaluation of Need Analysis, which is data-driven. Job Task Analysis, Job Descriptions and Classification (building career path and potential opportunity for growth), and Compensation (he performed a full comprehensive evaluation review for all town employees was performed over the last year and a half). Mr. Borek explained that the pay scale provides hiring rates and the minimum and maximum rates for each position and that the hiring rate versus a pay scale are listed in the posting jobs. The scale will adjust with increases; it will help keep the scale within inflation increases.
- **Recruiting** – Although applications are down, the Town has been very lucky to fill positions as needed. For future recruiting, Mr. Borek stated that he would like to establish a process/timeline from identifying that a position is needed, to the actual hiring, on-boarding, and on through their probation period. He stated that the Town mainly posts job announcements on the Town website.

Although other recruitment channels may be needed in the future as the Town grows, he does not feel they are needed at this time.

- **Onboarding** – Onboarding is important in ensuring every new hire goes through the same process; employee benefits, completing the necessary paperwork, etc. Mr. Borek stated that the Town’s payroll system provides an opportunity to digitalize most of the onboarding process and is working with Payroll Pro’s to bring that to fruition. It will also allow pre-onboarding of a new hire, where forms would be filled out online ahead of coming into the office. If there is more than one new hire, he groups them to go through onboarding where their performance expectations will be discussed as well. The onboarding process in meeting with the new hire is a 1-3 hour process.
- **Performance Management** - Includes the following: Probation, Annual Review, Salary Adjustment, Promotion, Retention, Bonuses, Recognition, and Performance Improvement. Mr. Borek informed the Council that self-evaluations went out to all employees this year asking what the employee likes about their job, their goals, and what management can do for them. He stated that employee evaluations in November and possible merit increases in January. Longevity bonuses’ have been well received. All are good tools for employee motivation and retention, as well as the “Employee of the Month” program and the monthly employee luncheon.
- **Training** – Each year all employees have to maintain compliance training which is available online through the NC League of Municipalities Neo-Gov program and the cyber training that is provided through CORVID. The Town will also provide annual CPR and basic 1st Aid training. Any leadership training available will be forwarded to Directors for themselves or any subordinate leaders within their departments (scholarships may be available).
- **Separation** – The Town lost 16 employees over the last year. Nine (9) were full-time, 1 of which was a retiree, a couple were academy failures, and others were part-time who were not performing their duties or were no longer needed. An off-boarding program has been established that includes an exit interview or survey to identify challenges and ensure a smooth transition.

Councilmember Henkel expressed concern about experienced people possibly being overlooked due to posting only the hiring rate in the job advertisement. Town Manager Wyatt stated that Councilmember Henkel’s point is very valid, but there is no way to know. The hiring rate is reflective of someone doing that job with minimal training to get them beyond the probation period.

Councilmember Jaroszynski stated that Mr. Borek mentioned that the hiring rates were updated with inflation asking the last time they were updated. Mr. Borek stated that he did a whole comprehensive review over this last year and a half with some positions being updated throughout that timeframe. There is an annual study for every position done through the NC League of Municipalities. He also stated that in considering benefits, Troutman has better benefits than most surrounding towns and counties, and the civilian sector. Benefits are a very cost-effective way of providing an incentive or retention pull. In answering a question by Councilmember Jaroszynski regarding pay for certifications. Manager Wyatt explained if it is related to their job or a certification to better themselves and is supervisor-approved, then the Town will pay for it.

(Copied in full, PowerPoint presentation is filed on CD titled: “Town Council Supporting Documents” dated February 26, 2024 in CD Book #1 titled: “Town Council Supporting Documents”)

Break

PLANNING DEPARTMENT, (Lynne Hair, Planning Director)

Planning Director Lynne Hair presented the following:

The Numbers:

- Single Family Lots Approved – 6,480 (some developments are in different stages of construction, some have not broken ground, and some are in the process of infrastructure development, etc.)
- The 2023 Published Population Estimate was 4,020 but she believes the number is slightly higher.
- The number of Permits issued in 2023 was 981 with the majority being new single-family residential.
- The number of Plans Reviewed in 2023 (commercial and multi-family) was 17. There were no new plans submitted for single-family residential.

Ms. Hair stated that there was a market analysis done in 2018 and a statement was included from that analysis in the 2018 Strategic Plan. The analysis was done in comparison to towns south of Troutman specifically Mooresville and Mount Pleasant, and within that analysis, there is a statement that says that the rate of population growth in Troutman has been much slower than that of its southern neighbors of Mooresville and Mount Pleasant only growing 56% from 2000 to 2016, while Mooresville and Mount Pleasant grew at 70% to 90% in the same time period. Ms. Hair highlighted that in 2018 it was projected based on data and growth trends that Troutman's population would be at 3,500 by 2040, but the Town surpassed that total in 2020 at 3,738. She commented that it was interesting to see how much the Town grew in just that length of time. Based on the 6,480 approved housing units and using the calculation of 2.6% persons per household, she anticipates that Troutman will have a population of approximately 17,000 within a 10-year buildout depending on the housing market.

Growth Challenges:

Ms. Hair stated that one of the Town's challenges is infrastructure, specifically roadways and traffic congestion. She stated that the Town is in Division 12 of NCDOT; the Town and Division 12 are in CRTPO (Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization) which is where the town's transportation funds come from and historically have been on the TIP (Transportation Improvement Project) list for funding. A brief history of the following 4 projects was presented:

- 1) **R-2522 - NC 21 (Main Street)** – Widen to 4 lane divided from Cedar Lane to Barium Lane.
- 2) **R-5711 – Intersection of NC 21 (Main Street) and Flower House Loop**– Realign Flower House Loop at Houston Road and Intersection Improvements – Funded Construction to begin late 2024/early 2025.
- 3) **U-6175- Old Mountain Rd** – Widen to 4-lane divided from NC 21 (Main Street) to Buffalo Shoals Road - being reconsidered for STIP in P7.0 (Phase 7)
- 4) **H090112-A – NC 21 (Main Street)** – Widen to 4 lane divided from North of Julian Place to Cedar Lane – being considered for STIP in P7.0

Also on the NCDOT P7.0 project list is Lake Norman Multi-use trail from Old Mountain Rd. to St. John Rd., the Carolina Thread Trail from Autumn Leaf Rd. to Barkdale Rd., and the new location of the Southwest Bypass providing a brief history and status update. Ms. Hair explained the difficulty in getting projects approved and funded through the state stating that Troutman is competing with every Town throughout the region which includes Iredell, Mecklenburg, and Union counties therefore, there is limited funding. With the growth that is coming, she presented proactive solutions/options that the Town could consider doing.

- 1) Conditional Zoning with the TIA Identified improvement tied to approved developments.
- 2) Continue to use the Mobility Plan as a tool to apply for available grant funding. Could get NCDOT Traffic Counts which are free and have shovel-ready projects.
- 3) Work with CRTPO to ensure Town projects are added to the STIP.
- 4) Utilize the expertise of Kimley Horn to assist with applying for larger grants, identifying improvements that the Town can initiate, and creating engineered documents for road improvements.
- 5) Apply for matching grants for funding of projects.

Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan, drafted in 2018 was created with the help of the people in the community, and adopted by the Town Council. Ms. Hair stated that one of the things that has impressed her about the plan is that it is a small plan but it is very action-oriented with guiding principles. She stated that typically towns update their plans every 5 to 10 years so Council may want to think about updating the plan in a couple of years to see if the plan is still relevant. Ms. Hair reviewed the transportation section of the plan stating that she is focusing on transportation, commenting that some of the projects are still very doable. She stated that the downtown streetscape was talked a lot about and feels that if the Town would have a Streetscape Plan in place when Hwy 21 is widened, NCDOT will consider them. She spoke about the Access Management Policy, the design of Main Street, the creation of a US 21 Corridor Overlay District, and the building of local street connections for local traffic, thanking Council for their support concerning connectivity because it is something that staff always receives pushback about.

Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Update

Ms. Hair stated that Staff is working on an overall re-write of UDO and has brought small pieces to Council for approval stating that she felt those items needed approval sooner rather than later. In regards to the rewrite, Ms. Hair stated that she has 3 Chapters completed. She will examine increasing the use of the Conditional Use Process commenting that the Town Manager feels strongly about tree removal and asked to add Tree Removal/Protection Measures. Ms. Hair suggested that one thing the Town could do is look at increasing the civil penalties.

Future Department Space Needs

Ms. Hair commented that with a new Town Hall project being discussed, the Town Manager asked that staff share with the Council future space needs. She stated that the department currently has 3 employees, therefore it would be nice to have 4 offices for future growth; they would like to have a Permit Counter staffed by a Permit Technician; a Meeting Space, a place to house Plans; and a Storage Room to house a copier and plotter.

Councilmember Jerry Oxsher asked if there are any traffic counts scheduled. Ms. Hair responded that there were not. He asked if there is a certain area the Town should target (Hwy 21). Ms. Hair replied certainly Hwy 21 stating that things like traffic counts can help especially when going to CRTPO. Councilmember Nicholas Jaroszynski asked when the last time a traffic count was done. Ms. Hair replied that she is not sure, there has not been one done as a Town since she has been here. Typically, they are done when there is a specific reason such as an NCDOT project, and usually developers will do them as part of their Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA). Manager Wyatt stated that there is no reason to have an overall traffic count unless Council approved Kimley Horn to do studies to help the Town's overall traffic plan. It would help Kimley Horn with engineering and planning and to be proactive in getting grants for the Town. They would be the best resource to say the type of studies needed, and where.

Mayor Young questioned how the Town would combine street improvements with conditional zonings. Ms. Hair explained that it is not out of the scope to ask for road improvements in the area of a conditional use project, but the developer has to agree to it in writing. The Town cannot require off-site improvements. She advised Council that if a TIA calls for a signal light, a Signal Warrant Study has to be done in addition to the TIA, but the Conditional Zoning process, development agreements, etc. will help streamline the process with NCDOT. Mayor Young asked, about conditional zoning, if there are areas in the UDO that need to be streamlined or discussed to ensure the Town has the right quality product. Ms. Hair responded that from a planning standpoint, one of the main things that the Town can do is focus on density in the downtown. If you want to create a walkable downtown, then that is where the high-density housing should be. It is where Council would want apartments, buildings brought to the street, and sidewalks. It is where the Town will have a higher tax base as well. She stated Staff needs to go back and review the UDO, and possibly create an overlay that promotes that type of development. Ms. Hair stated that the Town could go back to the Lytton Street Plan that was drafted commenting that it is a really good plan and that once Hwy 21 is

widened, the downtown could be shifted to Lytton Street. She concluded by stating that many things need to be tweaked in the UDO.

(Copied in full, PowerPoint presentation is filed on CD titled: "Town Council Supporting Documents" dated February 26, 2024 in CD Book #1 titled: "Town Council Supporting Documents")

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, (Austin Waugh, Public Works Director)

Austin Waugh, Public Works Director presented the following:

Introduction of New Team Members (2023)

Jonathan Cruz, Master Mechanic was hired in April 2023; Mack Sutton, Public Works Technician, was hired in September 2023.

Wastewater

- Continues to operate within wastewater compliance as the Town has received a great wastewater inspection report from the state.
- Made the necessary updates to the Wastewater Collections System Annual Report for 2023.
- Completed station efficiency testing per monthly inspections.
- Completed entire wastewater system inspection including all ROW manholes and records including 10% jetting of the system (over 5 miles).
- During the ROW inspections off Westmoreland Rd. a 16" gravity sewer line was found exposed where the creek has washed the bank away (Country Boy to repair).
- Performed smoke testing for I & I (Inflow & Infiltration) identification.
- Completed annual flow meter calibration.
- Used Vac/Jetter combo truck to clean debris in wet wells and manholes.
- Installed new submersible pumps or rebuilt pumps at Streamwood, Barium Seasons, Goodman Road, South Main Street, Technology Drive
- Rebuilt Gorman Rupp centrifugal pumps at IL Creek, Westmoreland Road, Streamwood, and Massey St.

Water

- Completed annual LWSP (Local Water Supply Plan) for 2023
- Have started a new process recording water loss (leaks, hydrant flows, etc.).
- Achieved a 17% water loss rating which is better than average for water systems (the Town had 4 major leaks in 2023, which accounts for some of the Town's water loss).
- Continue to operate within a system-compliant status.
- Performed all required systems maintenance and compliance monitoring tasks.
- Disinfection Byproducts monitoring Bac-T, TTHM (total trihalomethanes), CL2 (Chlorine) testing, water tank inspections, and all other associated systems records maintained.
- Began Neptune 360 which is the new meter reading program that provides the ability to log meter data as well as other features.
- Installed a lot of new customer meters which increased the entire system by almost 20% in 2 years.
- Began the state-mandated (LSLI) Lead Service Line Inventory, which is to be complete by October 2024. The process involves hand digging on each side of the meter (the system side and customer side) to verify what pipe material is used. This will take place at homes built in 1987 and before.

With an employee leaving for retirement in July, it provided an opportunity for an existing employee to fill the position as a full-time meter reader, installer, new home utilities inspector, and locator. Since then, another technician has been hired as the Town's second full-time meter tech.

Road Maintenance

- Increased emergency sign and pole inventory to keep up with the growth of town streets.
- Continue to patch potholes as reported as well as trying to be proactive in preventing potholes from getting worse, cutting out areas around the section that looks to be a problem and patching that area.
- Began using the striping machine on crosswalks.
- Implemented a new street sign plan documenting installation dates as well as the standard 8' height.
- Installed 16 flashing beacon crosswalk signs.
- Used the vac truck to clean out clogged storm drains found while inspecting.

Facilities and Grounds

- Continue to help maintain many town buildings and grounds.
- Town Manager Ron Wyatt was able to make a plan to get the majority of all facilities off of public works with a new hire, he was also able to facilitate the hiring of additional Parks and Rec employees who will take over maintenance of the greenway and other town-owned grounds.

Fleet and Equipment Maintenance

- The Public Works Department oversees and performs maintenance and repairs to over 50 pieces of equipment from excavators to chainsaws.
- Complete monthly inspections, annual maintenance, and repairs on all 17 generators, either onsite as a stationary pump station generator or towable generator
- Maintain almost 50 town vehicles including the Public Works, Police, Parks and Rec, Administration, and Planning and Zoning. This includes normal servicing to major repairs.

Employee Training & Achievements

- Completed OSHA-regulated Confined Space Supervisor Course
- Completed centrifugal pump hydraulics, application, and troubleshooting training through Gorman Rupp Company
- Completed C-Distribution and achieved certification.
- Completed Trenching and Shoring class.
- Completed and achieved Collections 1 and Collections 2 Certifications
- Took the B Distribution class and am currently preparing to take the exam.
- All team members took and achieved the OSHA-regulated Confined Space Course
- All team members completed weekly safety courses on different industry topics.
- Half of the team has taken the C Distribution course and is waiting to take the exam; the other half are enrolled in an upcoming Collections 1 and 2 course.

Critical Needs Equipment (CNE) Replacement Plan

In the Public Works Department, the pumps and equipment used are some of the most important parts of the water and sewer system as well as keeping all the equipment and vehicles running the best they can. This report outlines the importance of the equipment, and the plan update, implemented in 2023 shows how far we have come in building critical need inventory. This past year has included:

- **Upgraded SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) for the water and wastewater systems.**

The SCADA system is vital to public works as it's the main line of communication with the sewer pump stations as well as the water tanks. This system is the Town's overall alarm system letting us know through email and text message when there is an issue with wastewater pump stations and water tanks. As the town grows and the water demand continues to increase, the Town will need to subsidize water from the City of Statesville and upgrade our system. This process would be set up by

our SCADA contractor (Treyus, LLC), switching to who the Town will purchase from and who will be filling the water tanks, making sure water pressure is maintained.

- **Kubota Skid Steer with Forestry Mulcher**
The department purchased a 2023 Kubota SVL97-2 with a Reel Brush Mulcher. Having a skid steer is a valuable piece of equipment and having 2 is even better. These machines have multiple uses, such as loading, grading, cleanup, and ROW maintenance. The new one does not just cut the brush but mulches it also, helping to keep the ROWs easily accessible. Having the two increases our Critical Needs Equipment category's capabilities, reliability, and safety.
- **Sewer pumps (both submersible and centrifugal)**
Over the past 2 years, we have taken the sewer pump stations from being a stressor to running at their full potential. These stations are the heart of the modern wastewater systems designed for areas where gravity cannot be used to transport wastewater. Proper inspection, maintenance, rebuilding, and replacement of these pumps are crucial for Troutman to continue receiving good state inspections. In the past couple of years, the Town had hired some new employees who had very little experience with sewer pumps but learned quickly and now have them in better shape than ever.
- **Water Tank Upgrades**
The Town currently has 2 water tanks in our system. One is a 300,000-gallon tank located on Old Murdock Rd., and the other is a 1,000,000-gallon tank located on Houston Rd. In the filling of water tanks, the cost is an average of \$12 a gallon above ground, meaning a 100,000,000-gallon tank would cost nearly 12 million dollars. The Town is growing at such a rate that we will soon need another water tank to keep up with the demand. Staff has talked with Town Engineer Benjie Thomas (West Consultants) to help come up with the best location so that Troutman can begin the process of acquiring the land for a new tank.
- **Alldata Software**
The purchase of this software enables the Public Works mechanic the ability to see the specs for each part of each vehicle the Town owns or will own. The software will run the VIN, making him able to find the exact parts, price, and specifications of each vehicle. This helps get vehicles in and out of service quicker.
- **Autel Upgrade**
The Autel Scan Tool helps the department's mechanic scan even the newest vehicles the Town owns helping to solve the issues faster. Our scan tool is going on 5 years old and needs an upgrade.
- **On-car brake lathe**
The department purchased the On-car brake lathe to save time and money since there are almost 50 vehicles town-wide, and the number of rotors that were having to be replaced was costing between (\$800-\$1000) per vehicle. Now rotators can be turned while on the vehicle.
- **Bay 8 upgrades**
Storage of the Vac Truck has been in the largest bay at the Public Works facility because it was the only one it would fit in. The bay never had a door or heat and with winter coming, heat had to be run to this bay as well as getting a bay door.

Effective Plan Management

The Public Works Department has been very fortunate to have the support from the Town Manager as well as the Council for the past few years. With that support, the department has grown in the number of employees and has caught up with the times with equipment to get the job completed faster, safer, and overall better. We also have an excellent team that works for one common goal, to do the best for the Town of Troutman and its citizens.

Challenges

With the many goals the department has achieved in 2023/2024, we are still facing current challenges as well as preparing for future challenges. Proper planning and execution of plans will go a long way toward mitigating the difficulties the department and Town may face if ignored.

Compliance: Current and Future Regulations

Compliance regulations in the water and wastewater industries are constantly changing and increasing. Modifications to the current safety, water, and wastewater procedures must continually be modified and inspected to adapt to future practices. One state-mandated regulation is the (LSLI) Lead Service Line Inventory, which is presently underway and has to be completed by October 2024. This process involves hand digging on both the system side and the customer side of the meter to verify what pipe material was used. This involves all houses built in 1987 and before. Currently, there are 988 of those customers in the system. Once the material used is identified, it will then be entered into the state database along with all the other customers. Then all the lead lines have to be removed and replaced. Director Waugh stated that the department as a whole does not have much experience and few have certifications. He explained that with each water and wastewater system, there has to be an Operator Responsible Charge (ORC) who has to have the certifications high enough to be over the system as well as a Backup Operator Responsible Charge (BORC) who needs to have equal or one level less of certification. Troutman is currently a B distribution system (1,000 service connections but not exceeding 3,300). The Town has a permit through this year but will become an A distribution system next year with over 3,300 service connections. Also, on the wastewater side, the Town is a Collections 2 system based on population (1,501-15,000); with a population of 7,223. Director Waugh stated that the guys are digging at the locations with every free moment they have, and with the help of the ladies in billing and Finance Director Mundy, they were able to get the locations needed and they provided a spreadsheet and a form for documentation making it easier to add the data to the database. In regards to current certifications and training, he currently has each Public Works employee going to training and certifications hoping to have raining and BORC certifications completed in 12-18 months. He stated that the incentive program that has been implemented makes it easier to get everyone interested in the certifications.

Mayor Young asked about the difference in service connections and customers. Director Waugh stated that on the wastewater side, goes off the population (Census), and on the water side goes off service connections. Councilmember Jaroszynski asked why the population number given by Planning Director Hair differed by approximately 3,300 people from what he just presented. Manager Wyatt responded that the Census was done in 2020 and the number Ms. Hair had given was based on the Town's water connections. Ms. Hair explained that the numbers she gave were a published population estimate and that she did mention that the number was probably higher.

Staffing

The Public Works Department for the Town of Troutman lost one individual to retirement and another who relocated to another job. We were able to hire another technician as well as a full-time mechanic. Public Works consists of 9 employees including the Public Works Director Austin Waugh, Crew Leaders Jason Edwards, Larry Waddell, and Mark Jewett, and Public Works Technicians: Todd Hardy, Cameron Morris, David Kenworthy, Mack Sutton, as well as Master Mechanic Jonathan Cruz. With the amount of growth the

Town is experiencing, the department will need more employees to stay afloat. Director Waugh provided the Council with a description of each member's responsibilities and the increase in the number of customers and meters installed or replaced from 2021 to the present. He stated that to perform the tasks they currently have to perform and what will soon be on their plate, he will need 7 more employees in Public Works in the near future. Director Waugh presented the Council with a description of the department personnel's current and future job duties.

Room for Equipment

Director Waugh stated that Public Works has a lot of equipment and will continue to grow its inventory as needed, but they are currently out of space to store equipment. Some of the equipment is stored in the shop to keep it out of the elements. Although the fenced-in area of the Public Works facility is large, much of it is on hills. He stated that fortunately, the property extends outside of the fence line where they have dumped spoiled dirt as well as being an area where they keep a surplus of materials that are needed on the job. They recently had the lot cleared and added slots for the surplus material to add metal storage carports and additional fencing. This way we could get all our heavy equipment, and dump trucks under shelter prolonging the life of each piece of equipment. Also, it would be a great place to store trailers as opposed to storing them at the bottom of the shop. Director Waugh stated that he would like to also add a water tap there so equipment can be washed off before unloading it.

Old Meters

Currently, the Town has in the ground close to 1000, ¾” meters which has been there for approximately 9 years. Most of these meters will slowly stop reading, as statistics have shown. The cost for a new meter is \$276. There are also anywhere from 600 to 700 setters that do not have double-check valves, which means water could siphon back into the Town’s system from the customer’s side. Those setters need to be taken out and replaced with new setters that have double-check valves. The cost per setter is roughly \$300.00 each. In 2022, this was part of our Capital Improvements Funding Assistance Request, but unfortunately, until recently, we have had a hard time getting meters and setters. Like many other things, there was a shortage but now we have been fortunate to see a turnaround and are getting more of what is needed from the supplier.

Director Waugh along with Manager Wyatt confirmed that once Engineer Thomas identifies possible funding and all meters to be replaced are identified, meter replacement will begin and will be put on a replacement schedule.

Westmoreland Pump Station Upgrades

Public Works has set up 2 Ultra V Gorman Rupp pumps with both sets consisting of twin pumps. This station was installed in 2007 and is our last station that pumps to Mooresville. It gets all the flow from Streamwood and Houston Rd south. With the current growth, the flow and run time has increased from an average of 43 hours a month in 2020 to now 150 hours a month. He stated that they are replacing the current setup with a new station that would consist of 3 Ultra V Gorman Rupp pumps with twin pumps on each set. This project is currently out for bids per Town Engineer Benjie Thomas (West Consultants). This project is taking precedence over the Streamwood Pump station upgrades that were in the 2022 Sewer System Capital Improvements Funding Assistance Requests. Manager Wyatt informed the Council that this upgrade would come from State Grant money.

We are Moving in the Right Direction (What’s the goal? Maintaining a thriving and sustainable community)

Maintaining a sustainable community becomes difficult as we grow without advances in departmental capabilities and processes. Infrastructure systems will need to continue advancing along with the department, changing in size and function to achieve the necessary efficiency to provide Troutman residents with high-level services. Achieving success in these areas will ensure that the Town of Troutman will be a long-term sustainable community far into the future.

Discussions were held regarding water testing, staffing needs, and training.

(Copied in full, PowerPoint presentation, Compliance Evaluation Inspection Letter, and the 2024 Street condition Study is filed on CD titled: “Town Council Supporting Documents” dated February 26, 2024 in CD Book #1 titled: “Town Council Supporting Documents”)

(Lunch)

TROUTMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT, (Josh Watson, Police Chief)

Josh Watson, Police Chief presented the following:

2023 Review

Calls for Service

Increased 37% from 3,797 calls in 2022 to 5,196 calls in 2023.

Reportable Offenses

Chief Watson stated that the Federal Government breaks up the way offenses are reported. He explained that there are Part I Offenses which are the serious crimes and Part II Offenses, which are the less serious crimes. He stated that in 2023 there were 623 incident reports taken and 542 were reportable offenses. In 2022 there were 559 incident reports taken with 423 being reportable crimes.

Crime Rate

A comparison of the crime rate between the municipal departments of Statesville, Mooresville, and Troutman per 1,000 residents with Statesville having the highest. Mooresville and Troutman compare the same having a 1.8% per 1000 in violent crimes. Troutman is at 21% per 1000 in property crime and 2.7 total crime per 1000.

Arrest

In 2023 the department made 328 total arrests: 80 residents; and 248 non-residents. He stated that everyone says that the increase in crime is the growth/residents moving in, but it is not; it is the people passing through. Most of Troutman's crime problems come from 10 exits south on I-77 (Mecklenburg County).

Motor Vehicle Collisions

Totals increase of 41% from 2022 to 2023. The largest indicators of crashes on reports are people following to close, failure to yield, and distracted driving. The majority of crashes occur on Highway 21 as people are cutting to Troutman to get somewhere else. Chief Watson commented accidents will continue to increase with population growth. Councilmember Oxsher asked if crash data is applicable for improvements on Hwy. 21. Chief Watson stated that when NCDOT does engineering for road improvements, they have a site called a crash web where all police data is submitted to the state and input into a crash web for decisions/design of roadways.

Patrol Division

Chief Watson stated that the Patrol Division is the unit that is most impacted by calls and wrecks. They also conduct the majority of the department's daily community engagement. He stated upon completion of current field training, all squads will have 3 officers on duty.

School Resource Officer (SRO)

In 2023, SROs saw a 21% increase in incident reports and a decrease in threats of mass violence at Troutman schools from 2022. An SRO was added to the Iredell Charter Academy of Arts and Science in August; and Sergeant Baker, who was the SRO at CATS has been pulled out for supervisory duties of the SRO Unit (6 SROs total) and to provide additional coverage. The SRO Unit has undergone training for a new curriculum for violence prevention that they will begin teaching to 7th graders and then to the 9th graders. This program addresses bullies, threats, fighting, etc., and will probably take the place of the DARE program. Mayor Young asked if the SROs are seeing bullying, threats, or violence from the aspect of Social Media. Chief

Watson responded that they are seeing some stating that most of the fights are the result of sites such as “SnapChat”.

Criminal Investigations Unit

Consists of 1 Sergeant (Sgt. Cameron Jones) who conducts follow-up investigations of felony incidents, manages the department’s body-worn and in-car camera systems, Report Management System, and numerous administrative tasks. During 2023 the load and the seriousness of the offenses increased resulting in some cases being assigned to Officer Morales as a 2nd investigator as needed. There was a 91% increase in cases assigned.

Support Services Unit

Expanded the department’s evidence vault due to lack of space. Chief Watson provided an update regarding the joint use of an incinerator with the Statesville Police Department and Mooresville Police Department for evidence destruction stating that the incinerator has been ordered. He stated that the department is now meeting the North Carolina Law Enforcement Association (NCLEA) requirements for records storage along with the North Carolina League of Municipalities (NCLM) Risk Management requirements for which they are receiving accreditations. The department is using new technology to help with evidence management and processing. Chief Watson reported that support services are experiencing an increase in service from the public such as police assistance, fingerprinting, etc.

Departmental Training

The department has 4 General Instructors and from those 4, there is 1 Specialized Instructor for Taser, 1 specialized in OC (Pepper Spray), 1 in Less Lethal Munitions, and 1 in Firearms. Therefore, now most training can be done within the department aside from specific specialized or advanced training courses. The department has purchased simulation weapons to be used in training courses, allowing for force-on-force scenarios, in the case of an active shooter, and has started quarterly firearms training to improve officer's proficiency and abilities.

Expanded Capabilities

The department has deployed a 40mm grenade launcher with the supervisors. It allows officers to use impact rounds that resemble a Nerf bullet or similar type of admonition at close range (5’), other than the use of a bean bag shotgun at a standoff distance of 20’. Chief Watson stated that last week the department received a matching grant that allows the department to purchase a field device and program software to be able to extract information/data from cellphones, iPads, tablets; computers, apple watches, etc. This program should be up and running by next week. This program also has the capability for facial recognition and data analysis they will start looking at how it is used and the privacy laws as well. Officers are beginning training on artificial intelligence in regards to AI use in criminal incidents as well as law enforcement applications such as facial recognition and data analysis. The officers have also received training to immediately engage and resolve situations when there is no time to wait on mutual aid from a swat team. Councilmember Oxsher asked for clarity stating that there is a certain set of circumstances when the device can be used. Chief Watson stated that the only way the device can be used is by consent or by a search warrant.

Culture Development

The department has begun to work on remodeling culture through small actions and changes over time by developing core values of Professionalism, Integrity, and Service to provide a guide for all actions along with the establishment of standards and expectations for all members of the department. Chief Watson stated that the overall goal is to create a positive place for officers to work that will increase their job satisfaction, pride in the department, professionalism, and improve the service provided to the public. Mayor Young expressed kudos to Chief Watson commenting that this is a conversation that all leaders should be having with their team.

Department Plans for 2024-2025 Budget Year

- Radio Upgrades

- Upgrade radios purchased before 2022 with TDMA programming to ensure continuing connectivity to the NC VIPER radio network.
- Reprogramming of all departmental radios for NC VIPER Simulcast system allowing all departments including fire departments to be on the same network.
- Purchase of 4 Motorola APX6000 radios to replace older units and provide the department with spares.
- Body Armor Upgrade
 - Current armor does not protect against rifle caliber threats. Safariland Hardwire system provides a plate that is lightweight and works in conjunction with the soft armor panel to protect against rifle threats. The combined plate and panel weigh less than current-issued armor.
 - This vest will be worn daily to provide constant protection and eliminate the need to switch to bulkier plate carriers that are not suitable for all-day duty wear.
 - The goal is to purchase 4 per year in addition to the regular 5-year replacement schedule until all officers are equipped. All newly hired officers are being provided with this vest system as well.
- Sidearm Upgrade
 - Upgrade from currently issued Glock 17 pistol to Glock 47 pistol with red dot sight (RDS). This upgrade will:
 1. Allow the officer to focus on the threat and will no longer have to focus on the front sight.
 2. Improve accuracy by having a 20% hit rate to a 69% hit rate in deadly force encounters.
 3. Provide a greater field of view by having both eyes open when engaging a target.
 4. Increase officer confidence in their skills due to the advantages offered by the RDS system.
 - The neighboring agencies currently using or adding RDS include Statesville Police, Mooresville Police, and the North Carolina Stated Highway Patrol (NCSHP).
 - The department will trade in current weapons and receive credit toward the cost of a sidearm upgrade.
- Unmanned Aerial System
 - Chief Watson stated that drones are becoming an increasingly valuable and common tool for first responders. During 2023 Troutman Police responded to 20 incidents in which a drone would have been a valuable asset. In only one of those incidents was the department able to obtain a drone asset through mutual aid. Drones provide a force multiplier for a department, acting as an additional officer to observe from other angles and areas, freeing up personnel for other tasks, and also filling some of the roles of a law enforcement or rescue helicopter.
 - The department is seeking to begin Patrol-Led Drone Operations with 2 drones. Each drone would be assigned to squads that do not have a K9 assigned to them and would be in an on-call status as well. This places the drone in a patrol vehicle which allows for immediate deployment in 40 seconds when needed.
 - The department has reviewed several vendors and are desiring to proceed with Skydio. This vendor is pioneering Patrol-led drone operations, and First Responder operations as well as being manufactured and based in the United States.
 - A patrol officer can deploy the drone, which acts in a semi-autonomous manner, and then as other personnel arrive transfer pilot operations to someone else seamlessly. The drone will have traditional video and Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) camera packages. The department will ensure all operations comply with citizens' Constitutional rights against unreasonable search and seizure as well as privacy protection.

Personnel

- Patrol Division:
 - Chief Watson stated that the current allocation of manpower to Patrol is adequate for the anticipated volume of calls and review of time committed by each officer during their 12-hour shifts. Future requests for staffing for the Patrol Division will be based on the metrics of calls for service, population increase, and committed time per officer.
- Support Services:

Chief Watson commented that he plans to add 1 civilian position to Support Services to assist with records and evidence management. This additional position will prevent billing staff from having to assist the public, and seeking Police services when staff is not present. It will ensure coverage to allow for breaks, training, and vacations without the duties of this unit stopping.

- **New Position and Promotion:**

The department is creating an additional Lieutenant position. Chief Watson explained the selection process to include an outside interview panel, written testing, and a scenario-based command exercise. One Lieutenant will oversee the Patrol Division and the other will oversee Support Services and handle administrative duties. This will remove the administrative responsibilities from the investigations unit.

- **Recruiting:**

The department is making changes in the hiring and recruiting process in 2024 by changing the interview process by looking at character and resilience to ensure that the department has the best recruits to train and to meet high expectations and performance. The department will need to continue recruiting efforts or over-hire even when fully staffed due to the nature of the profession and workforce trends. Mayor Young stated that although the Town is not there yet, he thinks at some point the Town should do an employee survey each year that provides data on how to make the workplace better. The survey would be done by a 3rd party, not in-house.

- **Employee Retention:**

Chief Watson stated that the department will prioritize retention of officers by maintaining a healthy work/life balance; maintaining a competitive salary with surrounding agencies; and ensuring that officers are equipped with modern equipment and technology as well as providing advanced training opportunities.

Facility Needs

The Police Department currently consists of 24 employees which is 41% of the total Town staff. The 12 Patrol Division officers share a front office with Support Services. Therefore, the officers process and package evidence, including weapons and narcotics, and discuss sensitive information within the sight and hearing of the public. Chief Watson stated that this is not an ideal situation for the patrol officers. There is also a need for additional records storage and a workstation for a second employee in Support Services. Chief Watson stated that officers have had to relinquish their lockers to allow them to be used as temporary evidence lockers or storage for law enforcement equipment. The department does not have an interview room or the proper audio and visual monitoring for interviews and interrogations which is a critical need. Additional office space for the second Lieutenant is needed and there is a lack of space where the officers can eat out of public view and on tables that are also used for evidence packaging. The lack of space affects morale and creates security issues with equipment being stored in offices, nor does it present a professional image.

Community Engagement

Chief Watson announced that the department will continue community engagement this year by holding the annual National Night Out, the sandlot baseball game, and will partner with the Special Olympics this year in fundraising, but the biggest thing is to talk with people in their neighborhoods and get to know them.

Mayor Young asked if a temporary modular-type building had been looked at. Manager Wyatt commented that the Town has not, but can certainly explore options. Parks and Rec. Director Emily Watson stated that years back Public Works Director Adam Lippard did some research on a pre-plumbed/pre-wired facility with HVAC included; Austin Waugh to look for the paperwork/quote. Councilmember Henkel asked about a location for such a unit. Manager Wyatt commented that he assumes the grassy area next to Town Hall, but ADA compliance may need to be explored. In regards to who would move into such a facility, it will require a lot of discussion and planning. Mayor Young commented that it could take 5 years to get things up and going with the new Town Hall; the Town could get a temporary facility on-site for the police.

A brief discussion was held regarding vehicle purchases and vehicle rotation schedule. Manager Wyatt explained that depending on the age of the fleet and if the Town can get the vehicles earlier at a cheaper

price, they may go ahead and purchase early because of the backlog last year when the Town could not get the vehicles.

(Copied in full, PowerPoint presentation is filed on CD titled: "Town Council Supporting Documents" dated February 26, 2024 in CD Book #1 titled: "Town Council Supporting Documents")

(Break)

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT, (Emily Watson, Parks & Rec. Director)

Emily Watson, Parks and Recreation Director presented the following:

A Zoom presentation was held with Nicole Edwards, of Placer AI who presented some demographics and foot traffic data that the company has been gathering for two properties specific to the Parks and Rec. Department. Ms. Watson stated that when the information was gathered and shared with her, she asked Ms. Edwards to share it during the retreat with Council. Ms. Edwards began her presentation by stating that Pacer AI is a location analytic company that collects mobile location data to provide intelligence on any physical place in the United States. Data is captured through mobile devices to learn about any place such as retailers in Town, shopping centers, neighborhoods, parks, hotels, roads, and streets, neighboring towns, etc. along with data on how many people visited those places, where they live, where they work, where else they like to go, etc. She explained the process by which the data is collected stating that they observe approximately 25 million mobile devices (24/7) which represent 8% of the mobile devices across the US through partnerships with mobile applications such as a safe driving app that require mobile locations to be turned on. They then can provide an overlay through those partnerships for additional information. Placer is only concerned with where the phone is moving assuring that they do not collect any personal or identifiable information from the phone. Ms. Edwards shared ways other organizations are using data like this for economics and growth, analyzing events, tourism, workforce analysis, etc. In sharing the data collected on the Troutman ESC Park for the presentation, she stated that Stumpy Creek Park was put in for comparison purposes advising that up to 8 locations can be inputted at a time for comparison. The data from the park was collected over the last 12 months with the park having 95,300 visits from 33,200 different individuals who came to the park 2-3 times within the 12-month timeframe and staying over 7 minutes. Parks and Rec. Director Watson commented that over the past 3 years, there has been a 220% increase in people coming to the park which shows the Council's investment in the walking tracts, ballfields, and splash pad were investments that were well received by the community. She pointed out that the number of visits to the park shows how busy staff has been and verifies the need for staff. It also shows that Troutman ESC Park is busier than Stumpy Creek Park which has a footprint 4 times the size of our park. The program provides a heat map of anyone who visited Troutman's Park and where they come from. Ms. Edwards provided other sources and various types of demographics, how they can be collected, and how they could be a resource in submitting for grants and investments. She spoke about the economic impact of someone visiting the park by commenting on the top places people go when they leave the park and the top places they come from when they go to the park, for example, in the last 12 months 1.1% of people left Food Lion and went to the park, and 4.8% left the park and went to Food Lion. This is a great source for getting sponsorships. Ms. Watson stated that it is neat to see how trends are affected by the decisions made by the Town. She stated that the impact of the number of people who visited the park in the last year is significant compared to the number of town residents per the census. This program is a comprehensive look at the many things that can affect the Town on so many levels and can drive staffing, budgetary, and retail discussions. Councilmember Oxsher how the Town would get access. Ms. Edwards replied that the program is an annual subscription service based on the population size. They will then put together a package for the Town. Each employee with allowed access will be given a login and the ability to access data and/or answer any question within a few clicks. The employees would have access to the Placer extra catalog which are reports not yet automated in their file. There will also be access to a customer service manager. She explained that the

Town is assigned credits which are based on use. Ms. Watson expressed how beneficial the program would be, especially with grant writing.

Planning Director Watson began her presentation by stating that 2023 was the power year for the Parks and Rec. Department in receiving new staff, acquiring new software, and acquiring and establishing a new facility. They are excited to be able to focus on their department.

Staffing Update

Ms. Watson shared that in 2023 they were able to hire 3 full-time Grounds and Maintenance employees; and 4 part-time Grounds and Maintenance employees who also help support the Special Events team. The department has acquired some additional responsibilities this year, but at the same time have been able to get some things off their plate. They acquired maintenance responsibilities for the Parks & Rec. Facility, Troutman ESC Park, Richardson Greenway, South Iredell Greenway, Fitness and Nature Trails, Planning Department property, Town Hall, and 2 other Town properties. She stated that there is only 1 full-time Special Events Coordinator, but in time the Town may be able to hire some part-time in that area. They host 17 annual Town events in addition to a variety of monthly programs. This division is also responsible for overseeing and organizing third-party community events hosted at Town facilities. This division is supported by volunteers and the Grounds and Maintenance team. In the next year or 2, Ms. Watson stated that she would like to hire someone to focus only on Sports & Programming.

2023/2024 Update

- Acquired & Established Parks & Recreation Facility (offices, storage & programming).
- Transitioned to an online reservation and registration software called CivicRec.
- Filled full-time Special Events Coordinator position- starting our Special Events Division.
- Acquired Richardson & South Iredell Greenway maintenance responsibilities from the Public Works Department.
- Georgie St. Park- forward movement with the project, working with residents & playground distributor.
- ESC Park Updates: Dugouts, playground updates, replaced soccer goals, volleyball court up-fit, Bermuda on soccer and baseball fields, added additional shade/seating area, purchased stage for events that is compliant with the Fire Marshall office, painted and stained restrooms, installed dumpster, re-mulched playground, purchased a camera system for the park due to vandalism.
- Richardson Greenway Updates: Parks & Rec. worked with Public Works for flashing lights at Greenway Crosswalks (received positive feedback from the public), added Spring seasonal banners that will go up March 1st, replaced digital marquee, replaced Rail Trail signage, repaired ceiling fans in the Depot, pressure washed at the Depot.

2024 Direction (Forward Movement)

- Concession Stand & Restroom at ESC Park - Met and reviewed plans with the architect. Asked that the plans be scaled back to match the footprint and colors that currently exist in the park.
- Pickleball Courts at ESC Park - Working with several companies that came highly recommended out of the Mooresville and Lake Norman areas for bids. Ms. Watson has received 1 bid. Several site visits have been made. Ms. Watson explained the reorientation of the 4 Pickleball courts and seating areas which also meet ADA compliance.
- Basketball Court at ESC Park - Working with several companies that came highly recommended out of the Mooresville and Lake Norman areas for bids. Several site visits have been made. The size of the court will be standard high school size.
- Restripe Parking Lines at ESC Park for safety issues and visibility.
- Parking lot - Paving will begin across from the Parks and Rec. facility tomorrow. Town Manager Wyatt explained that this will be a temporary parking lot.
- Staff Training & Certifications – as new staff comes on it is a priority that they are certified and trained. There is going to be pesticide certification in March; continuing education in turf management and

pesticides in April; Social Media for Social Good in May; and everyone has been through Crowd Control Certification with the Fire Marshall's Office.

- Georgie Street Park - In the Spring of 2023 a Community Input Meeting was held: in the Summer of 2023 a letter was sent to all property owners; in the Fall of 2023, a 2nd letter was sent to all property owners. Winter of 2024, feedback was sought from the community regarding amenities for the park. Ms. Watson did receive feedback on what amenities the neighbors would like to see in the park and is now working with a playground distributor to draft some renderings. Once all signatures for the deeds are acquired, staff can move forward with the project. She stated that money was put aside for the project as well as in the line item of park upgrades for funding.

Mayor Young questioned sidewalks and walkability to the park. Manager Wyatt replied that there is not a sidewalk in the neighborhood at all. Lynne Hair, Planning Director reminded the Council about the Town having a fee-in-lieu-of request from the developer of Brookside stating that the developer is now proposing to finish the sidewalk from Brookside to Wagner Street along Georgie Street stating that she hopes there will be a future sidewalk along Wagner to connect.

Ms. Watson concluded by stating that she is excited about what this year will bring. The Parks and Rec. team are all strong in their responsibilities and do a great job.

(Copied in full, PowerPoint presentation, is filed on CD titled: "Town Council Supporting Documents" dated February 26, 2024 in CD Book #1 titled: "Town Council Supporting Documents")

FINANCE DEPARTMENT, (Justin Mundy, Finance Director)

Justin Mundy, Finance Director presented the following:

Financial Review Highlights

- General Fund (GF)
 - GF Revenue is up \$2.86M over the prior year through 8 months mostly due to taxes. The remaining property tax to be collected is around \$175K.
 - GF Expenditures are up a little over \$3M mostly due to the purchase of the Dollar General building, Town building renovations, and additional personnel.
 - Sanitation is up mostly due to the sale of Benfield Sanitation and the increase in charges from the current trash and recycling business. Manager Wyatt stated that RFPs (Request for Proposals) have been sent out to lower the current cost. Four or five companies requested packets; we are still waiting on the bid process. He stated that it is not just a price that we are looking for, it is also customer service that is fair and consistent as when Jeff Benfield owned the company. Manager Wyatt stated that he feels that the cost of service will go up significantly. The contract will be for 5 years with a 2-year option following the term of the initial contract. Companies have the option of leasing or selling the Town trash and recycle bins. A brief discussion was held regarding trash cans and additional fees for extra cans.
 - Insurance is up due to the purchase of additional Town properties and Town vehicles.
- Utility Fund (UF)
 - Revenue is up 1.4M over the prior year due to new developments resulting in the following:
 - Water & Sewer sales up \$280K
 - Water & Sewer availability fees up \$1.1M
 - Expenditures are up \$800K due to the purchase of more water meter supplies, additional water & sewer purchased due to an increase in water & sewer sales, and the purchase of new vehicles.

Staffing

- Five employees in the finance department
 - Admin Supervisor (Susan), replaced Tania when she resigned
 - Senior Utility Billing Specialist (Kimberly)
 - Customer Service/Backup Town Clerk (Jessica)
 - Finance Director (Justin)
- Everyone is split 50/50 GF & UF except Kimberly.
 - Recommends to move all of Susan's salary and customer service representative 100% into UF since most of their job is dealing with water/sewer services
 - They perform a wide variety of tasks
 - Act as receptionist
 - Make daily bank deposits
 - Pick up mail & forward to appropriate party
 - Move people in and out of utility accounts
 - Record all misc. revenue such as police department revenue such as accident reports/fingerprints, ABC quarterly revenue, notaries
 - Entering in invoices for check writing once coded
 - Assorting checks with vouchers to be mailed
 - Scanning all invoices onto the server
 - Complete locating invoices/paperwork for the annual audit
 - Other daily tasks as assigned by other department heads

Items of Interest from the February 2023 Strategic Planning Workshop

1. Upgrading current software with ICS to SmartFusion
2. Upgrading meter reading software to Neptune 360
3. Updating Town policies
4. Long Term Planning

Actions taken on those items:

1. Neptune 360 was installed which is improving the time it takes to perform monthly meter readings as well as additional features that were not available with the old software.
2. Town policies were updated regarding startup/stop service, requests for payment extensions, etc. Policies are being enforced that were not always enforced in the past.
3. We are in the process of converting to SmartFusion. This will allow employees to be more efficient in the front office. It will also allow department heads to have a "live" look at their budget. Conversion should begin in the next month and should be completed before the end of this fiscal year.
4. Two employees were added to keep up with the demand from the growth of the Town. The Town has grown 53% in utility customers since June 2021, with 17% growth in the last 6 months alone which is a lot of increase. We expect the growth to continue for several more years.

Items of interest moving forward

- Complete software conversion of ICS to SmartFusion in the coming months.
- Automating processes
 - Currently, applications are mostly emailed to info@troutmannnc.gov. More times than not, the customer must be tracked down for additional information like a copy of their ID, and maybe a copy of their lease agreement if renting. With several employees having access to the info email, sometimes an application can be missed which causes frustration for the customer. Mr. Mundy suggested looking into adding an online tool to the website to allow customers to fill out applications online and upload the needed documents before an application can be submitted to the front office.

- Call volume – The front office is receiving over 3000 phone calls a month. For the first 2 weeks of February, 71 phone calls were received just to be transferred to the payment center. Mr. Mundy suggested changing some options on our phone system. For example, press 0 to speak to someone, and press 1 to make a utility payment through our automated phone system.
- Increase online/draft payments – Currently almost 50% (approximately 1700) of the utility payments are received in-house (mail, drive-through, walk-ins). It would help employee workflow and productivity for other tasks if we could increase our online or draft payments. Mr. Mundy suggested reducing or eliminating the \$3 fee to pay by phone or online to reduce the number of in-house payments.
- Long-term planning
 - The need for a new Town Hall
 - More employees are needed but there is a lack of space. Kimberly needs an assistant to help with billing. She is overwhelmed with all the move-ins/move-outs, short billing runs, setting up the new housing developments, etc. All Town employees are good employees and must be retained. We don't want to lose someone because they are stressed. Turnover is very costly and slows down productivity for all employees. A brief discussion was held regarding where new employees would be housed when there is currently no available space. Mr. Mundy stated that the assistance for Kimberly would have to share an office with her. Councilmember Nau asked if they could work from home. Mr. Mundy stated that would be up to the Town Manager. Manager Wyatt stated that he is not saying no, but sharing an office is not the end of the world. It mainly becomes an issue when both are on the phone. They also considered moving one to the Public Works office. Manager Wyatt also informed Council that there will so be additional office space at the Passport office.

Passport office

The passport office has profited almost \$36K since July. That includes half of Susan and Jessica's salaries/benefits for the first 3 months (July-September). Since September, the office has been staffed by a part-time employee only and is running around 75-80% return on investment. Manager Wyatt stated that if needed, there is room for a 2nd part-time person. Councilmember Jaroszynski questioned if the part-time Passport person was being compensated accordingly. Manager Wyatt stated that in his opinion, no. A discussion was held regarding part-time compensation. Ms. Watson interjected stating that at the time part-time was hired, the rate the Town paid was a good bit higher than neighboring communities. The Town has been able to compensate employees through the review process and re-evaluation. Councilmember Jaroszynski stated that what he was addressing was not coming from any concerns of anyone, he was just his understanding of growth and making sure the Town stays with it.

Councilmember Henkel asked to re-address the \$3 for online and by phone fee asking whether the Town is going to waive it, leave it where it is, or investigate it further, Mr. Mundy stated that he would investigate it further and look into other alternatives. Councilmember Jaroszynski asked for the fee amount when a credit card is swiped. Mr. Mundy stated that there is no set fee, it is a percentage. Councilmember Jaroszynski presented the option of putting a computer in the lobby that accepts credit card payments. Mr. Mundy stated that whatever the Council suggests, he will look into it.

WRAP-UP / COMMENTS

Town Manager Wyatt thanked all the department directors who presented today commenting that they did a great job today. The Mayor and council members expressed and their thanks and commented on what an excellent job each director did with their presentations as well as the interaction and crossover conversation. Manager Wyatt stated that he is glad that the Council got to hear what each department does and how they are progressing. He spoke to the Zoom presentation by Nicole Edwards of Placer AI and how impressed he was with the numbers that were presented as well as the program itself. Manager Wyatt commented that in

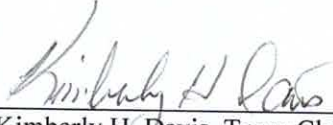
moving forward he hopes it is a benefit the Town can afford commenting that he thinks the Town, especially Parks & Rec. and the Planning Department would well benefit from the service.

The program would benefit the town in budgeting matters to know whether the people coming here are paying the freight. Councilmember Jaroszynski stated that the people who visit the Town may not be taxpayers as far as property tax, but they are doing something in the Town. It does not necessarily give them a formative voice, but the Council should hear what they have to say; they are coming here and utilizing the town. Councilmember Nau asked if it gives them the right to dictate to the Town. Councilmember Jaroszynski replied, dictate, no; but share, yes. Manager Wyatt explained that some people want to dictate, so if the county residents want to demand that the Town do something, they need to be going to the county meetings. Manager Wyatt stated that we certainly want Troutman to be a place for people to come and visit, for businesses to relocate and prosper, and for our citizens to be happy that they are safe and secure and have the amenities to enjoy, and people while they may have great ideas, present it in a nice manner. Councilmember Jaroszynski commented on the communications as a whole in society. People like to dictate to other people what to do, but also if we look at a tourist town they get ideas from the people who visit their Town and those people are not taxpayers. They come to the Town to use their amenities. Manager Wyatt stated, yes they give input, but they pay more for it.

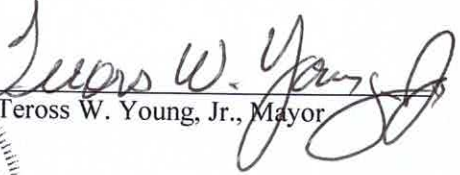
Manager Wyatt thanked the Council for their comments and for listening to the presentations.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion by Councilmember Nick Jaroszynski, seconded by Councilmember Paul Henkel, and unanimously carried, the Strategic Planning Retreat of February 26, 2024 was adjourned at 4:26 p.m.


Kimberly H. Davis, Town Clerk




Teross W. Young, Jr., Mayor