

# TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

## Gate City Town Council Minutes

July 11, 2023

190 Beech St., Gate City, VA

6:30 PM

**I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:08 PM BY: Mayor – Jamie Lawson**

**II. ROLL CALL – Town Clerk – Lora Matthews**

	PRESENT:	ABSENT:
Mayor, Jamie Lawson	X	
Vice-Mayor, Tyler Kilgore	X	
Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts	X	
Council Member, Wallace W. Ross, Jr.	X	
Council Member, Pat Elliott	X	
Council Member, Dexter Harmon	X	
Town Manager, Greg Jones	X	
Town Attorney, Michele Brooks	X	

Others present: Chief Justin Miller, Jason Snapp (Mattern & Craig), Jeff Casteel, Brigitte Casteel, Kim Frances, Scott Cleek, John Barger, Jack Arwood, Judy Vicars, Guila Davidson, Allen Reed, Cody Ferguson, Ronnie Graham, Joyce Graham, Jim Addington, Noah Kimbler, Larry D. Sturgil

**III. INVOCATION – Pastor Jeff Casteel, Gate City Assembly of God**

**IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chief Justin Miller**

**V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion made to approve the July 11, 2023, agenda.**

Motion by: Allan Roberts 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain: Motion carried

**VI. PROCLAMATIONS, CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTIONS, AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS, RESIGNATIONS AND CONFIRMATIONS, ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS. – None**

**VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**1. Approval of June 13, 2023, Town Council Public Hearing Minutes (Zoning)**

**Motion made to approve minutes as presented.**

Motion by: Allan Roberts 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain: Motion carried

**2. Approval of June 13, 2023, Town Council Minutes**

**Motion made to approve minutes as presented.**

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore                      2<sup>nd</sup> by: Allan Roberts

VOTE:     Aye: 5

           Nay:

           Absent:

           Abstain:                      Motion carried

**VIII. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS**

- **Motion made for approval for payment of bills for June 2023 as presented.**

Motion by: Dexter Harmon                      2<sup>nd</sup> by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

VOTE:     Aye: 5

           Nay:

           Absent:

           Abstain:                      Motion carried

**IX. PUBLIC COMMENT (Will be limited to 3 minutes per speaker.) – Kim Frances/Southern Graphics**

**XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Kim Frances/Southern Graphics: Comments regarding the No Parking Zone outside her business – Southern Graphics, 153 E Jackson St** – Ms. Frances has been using the alley for 40 years, but she is now being kept from having access. The No Parking Zone is affecting her business, since it is taking up parking spaces. Council needs to do something about the lack of parking in this area of town. She feels that she is being discriminated against.

**Take no action**

Mayor Lawson closed the public comment session at 7:27 PM and opened the consent agenda session.

**X. COMMUNICATIONS – None**

**XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

2. **Larry D. Sturgill PC: FY 2021 Audit Presentation**

**Motion made to accept the FY 2021 Audit Presentation**

Motion by: Allan Roberts                      2<sup>nd</sup> by: Pat Elliott

VOTE:     Aye: Pat Elliott, Dexter Harmon, Tyler Kilgore, Allan Roberts

           Nay:

           Absent:

           Abstain: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

XI. **REPORTS** (All reports given will be included with your packet. Any questions about the reports will need to be discussed with the department head PRIOR to the meeting.)

**A. Engineer's Status Report – Jason Snapp**



Engineer Report  
Town of Gate City, VA  
Status as of 7/10/23

**VDH Backup Generator Project:** Project is considered 35% complete currently. VDH has approved the Categorical Exclusion request for public comment. The CE is currently being advertised for public comment (ran in Kingsport Times on 7/2 and 7/9). Public comment has to last 30 days.

**Kane St. Sidewalk Transportation Alternatives Funding Application:** Project survey has commenced, and project is currently approximately 10% complete.

**Manville Road Highway Safety Improvement Plan Funding Application:** Project survey is complete, preliminary design (30% plans) has begun, and project is currently approximately 25% complete. 30% plans will be submitted to the Town for review shortly.

**Daniel Boone Master Meter Replacement:** The new meter has been installed and the telemetry equipment is on backorder. As soon as it is delivered it will be installed.

**Alley Extension (behind Sam's Auto Service):** Field survey was completed on 7/10. Alley Design and VDOT coordination will commence once the survey base sheet is complete.

**Retaining Wall Construction Plans (Walgreen's Parking Lot):** Task Order (#7) has been delivered to the Town for review/consideration.

**B. Gate City Frontier Report**

**Gate City Frontier Report July 2023**



Please accept this brief report on behalf of GCF volunteer director, Leslie Crawford. This report will outline the capacity at which GCF has been actively working towards foundational growth and organization, business outreach, community outreach, events, and downtown revitalization through Virginia Main Street.

I. **Foundational Growth and Organization with GCF**

- Participated in the Exploring Main Street Community Interchange led by Louisa County Chamber of Commerce and Louisa Forward Foundation.
- Meeting with our VMS representative to discuss/plan for upcoming and potential GCF projects.

II. **Business & Community Outreach**

- Contacted as many businesses, organizations, churches, etc to participate in the Red, White, and Blue Bash parade
- Worked to obtain needed partnerships for the Red, White, and Blue Bash;
- Working on all church, organization, individual, and business contacts for the upcoming Back to School Bash
- Have obtained donations in order to help prepare 300 students for school
- Many downtown businesses will be helping with this event

III. **Events**

- **Gravel at the Gate, June 24th**
  - Rescheduled by Just Ride Bikes and Fitness (Tentative Date: Sept. 30th)
- **Red, White, and Blue Bash, July 1** (will be on next report)
  - Parade, Freedom Fun Zone, Scott County’s Got Talent, Fireworks

**Upcoming Events:** Back to School Bash Aug. 5th, Harvest Moon Celebration Sept. 23rd, Oct. 21st King Alleyween, November Veterans Day program

**June 2023 Part-Time Hours:**

- June 1-3 (10 hours)
- June 5-10 (24 hours)
- June 12-17 (30 hours)
- June 19-24 (24 hours)
- June 26-30 (38 hours)

**C. Town Manager’s Report**

**Town Manager Report – July 2023**

- **Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD): Park Street Housing Rehabilitation Project: Phase II**

Phase two of the Park Street project includes the rehabilitation of five housing units, the substantial reconstruction of one unit and the clearance and demolition of one blighted unit, serving nineteen low- to moderate-income persons.

**December 2022** – DHCD was awarded funding for the Phase II Park Street Housing Rehabilitation Project on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Funding Awarded:

DHCD: CDBG:	\$687,968
AEP	\$35,000
Town (In-Kind)	<u>\$12,000</u>
Total	\$734,968

**July 2023** – I met with DHCD for our contract negotiations on June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023. We have 120 days to get under contract. Our contract includes the passage of the following federal compliance items:

- a. Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan
- b. Town Local Business and Employment Plan
- c. Non-Discrimination Policy
- d. Resolution to Appropriate Funds
- e. Fair Housing Certification
- f. 504 Grievance Procedure

Council Action – Pass the resolution indicating adoption of the above-mentioned compliance policies.

- **Estil Cemetery Restoration Project**

**November 2022** – Work is ongoing. Highland Monument has been onsite for the past several weekends. Ninety percent of monuments have been cleaned and we still have a relative handful to re-level and reset. Highland Monument has been posting updates on the Estil Cemetery Facebook page.

- **Banner Project**

**July 2023** – The new high wind brackets have been received. The banners should be reinstalled in the next week.

- **Dog Park Project**

**January 2023** – Repairs have been made to the outer perimeter fence line. We are currently waiting for the contractor to install the interior fence line. At the January 2023 Council meeting, Council voted to name the Dog Park: “The Bark Park.”

**April 2023** – The interior fence line has been installed. The contractor ordered the wrong size gates. The correct gates are expected to be installed this week. The Planning Commission will be installing the interior amenities and signs over the next few months.

- **US Department of Transportation: Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program**

**July 2023** – We are currently in process of developing a funding proposal to address a better access to the Scott County Recreational Park, development of the Gate City to Weber City trail, and a mobility path between the recreation park and the proposed trail. Our grant deadline is July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

- **Department of Criminal Justice System (DCJS)/ARPA Funding Grant**

**April 2023** – The Town was allocated \$152,000 through DCJS/ARPA funding. The Town submitted the grant application on March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Below is our budget:

Item	QTY	Cost/Each	Vendor	Budget
Axon in Car Cameras x5	5	\$ 9,685	Axon	\$ 48,425
Axon Taser 10's x4	4	\$ 4,827	Axon	\$ 19,308
Star Chase GPS x2	2	\$ 9,983	Starchase	\$ 19,966
Less Lethal Wilson Shotguns x3	3	\$ 1,207	Wilson's Combat	\$ 3,621
Handgun's with red dot x4/holster/light	3	\$ 1,155	Craig's Firearm Supply	\$ 3,465
Grogan Park Cameras	10	\$ 3,743	SCTV	\$ 37,430
Police Department Cameras	8	\$ 2,440	SCTV	\$ 19,520
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$ 151,735</b>

**May 2023** – Award notification are expected after May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**June 2023** – The Town has been awarded \$152,000 through the DCJS ARPA grant funding. I met with SCTV and reviewed the security camera project for Grogan Park and the Town Hall. The cameras are on order and will be installed upon arrival. The remaining equipment: car camera, tasers, star chase system has been ordered.

- **Daniel Boone Master Water Meter Replacement Project**

**April 2023** – The new Daniel Boone Master Water Meter was installed on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The telemetry system will be installed once the equipment is received.

**June 2023** – We have been advised the SCADA telemetry system will be installed in July. I have ordered fiber internet service for the pump station from SCTV.

- **2023 Kenworth Trash Truck and Dump Truck**

The new Trash Truck and Dump Truck that is being purchased through our ARPA funding allocation should be delivered in two weeks. We are currently working on developing protocols to deliver the new trash cans and implement our new trash collection policy.

**March 2023** – The new Kenworth trash truck was received, but it had a wiring issue. It was sent back for repairs.

**May 2023** – The trash truck has been returned. We were informed that our issue with the truck was due to a loose wire to the computer. Now we are having issues with the throttle. The dealer is expected to investigate this issue on Monday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

**June 2023** – The new Trash Truck is now in service. We received the final Solid Waste Ordinance on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The new ordinance has been uploaded to Municode. We will be able to start trash can distribution on Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

The Mini-Trash Compactor is in. It is currently being installed on our new 2023 Kenworth Truck. We are expecting the new compactor to be placed in service in a couple of weeks.

**July 2023** - Mini-Trash Compactor has been installed and placed in service. So far, we have received about fifty applications for our new trash cans.

- **Virginia Tourism Corporation: Marketing Leverage Grant**

**March 2023** - The Town applied for the VTC's Marketing Leverage Grant. The proposed funding will be used to create a new website for our tourists: YourGateCity.com. The proposed funding will also include marketing and web page utilization funds for the new website. The total funds requested for the project are \$15,000 with a 50% match from the Town.

**May 2023** – A Request for Proposals (RFP) for website development vendors has been developed and should be advertised shortly.

- **Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD): Industrial Revitalization Fund Grant (IRF)**

**April 2023** - The Town has been awarded \$44,800 from DHCD: IRF grant fund. The funding will be used to evaluate the commercial building located on 114 W Jackson Street. The Economic Development Committee held a Kick-Off meeting on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, with Spectrum Designs attending. The project has a short turnaround and will be completed by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

**July 2023** – The Economic Development committee met with Spectrum Designs, LLC on June 19<sup>th</sup> to go over the preliminary findings of our marketing plan. A meeting has been scheduled for July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023. This project is expected to be completed by the end of July.

- **COPS Hiring Grant**

**June 2023** – The US Department of Criminal Justice COPS hiring grant which will be used to hire one full time police officer has been submitted on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The amount of the proposed grant is valued at \$125,000 over the course of the next three years.

- **Personnel Committee Meeting**

The Personnel Committee Met on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The purpose of this meeting was to review the employee annual evaluations. Greg Jones reported that the employees have requested to have two additional holidays: George Washington Day and Columbus Day. The employees have requested that the Paid Time Off Hours (PTO) be increased from 40 hours to 80 hours for new hires up to

one year's service which will be prorated over the course of the first years' service. Personnel Committee agreed to make the recommendation to Council.

**July 2023** – After receiving feedback from Council, the Personnel Committee met on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and has agreed to recommend George Washington Day, Columbus Day, and Juneteenth as paid holidays. This proposal will match the Virginia State Holidays. **Council Action: Approved George Washington Day, Columbus Day, and Juneteenth as paid holidays.**

- **Request for Proposals: Scott County Historic Society Building and Wall Repair**

**May 2023** - The deadline for the RFP has been extended to April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023. We did not receive any proposals. A local contractor is interested in the project but wants engineering plans for the drainage. Council has approved Mattern & Craig to develop a drainage plan. A new RFP will be developed once the drainage plan is complete.

- **Water Leaks Repaired**

<u>Location</u>	<u>Repair Date</u>	<u>Materials used for Repair</u>
182 Valleyview Street	5/29/2023	1" line; 2-1" band; 2 ton rock; Ram truck; backhoe; Ford 350 truck; 5 employees; 4 hours
171 Massey Drive	6/5/2023	2" line; 2-2" band; 4 ton rock; Ram truck; backhoe; Ford 350 truck; 4 employees; 5 hours
565 East Jackson Street	6/8/2023	Dug up meter box; repaired leak meter to house; placed meter box over meter; filled in hole (had to be hand dug); 4 employees; 3 hours
154 Michael Road	6/8/2023	1-1/2" band; backhoe; Ford 350 truck; 4 Employees; 2 hours
965 East Jackson Street	6/15/2023	Dug up and repaired leak; mini excavator; backhoe; dump truck; 3/4" band; 1 ton gravel; 1 ton cold patch; used flaggers; 8 employees; 4 hours
210 Oak Street	6/29/2023	2 HyMax restraint coupling 6"; 3-6" pipe; mini excavator (trailer to haul); small dump truck; Ram 1500 truck; 5 employees; 5 hours



D. Attorney's Report – None

E. Council Reports (Any new business from Committees that needs to come before the Council.)

Wallace W. Ross, Jr. – Manville Road grass has not been mowed. Decorative lights are out on the East end of town.

Allan Roberts – None

Tyler Kilgore – His comments will be part of the Personnel discussion

Dexter Harmon – None

Pat Elliott – None

Jamie Lawson – We need to trim the shrubs at the entrance to town.

F. Police Department

G. Sanitation Authority – The next meeting will be in October

## XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **TrueBlue Speed Monitoring – Take no action**

2. **Motion to approve: Holiday Policy Amendment**

**Discussion:** This amendment will add George Washington Day, Juneteenth and Columbus Day as Town of Gate City observed holidays, bringing the policy more in line with the State of Virginia's holiday policy.

**Motion made to approve the Holiday Policy Amendment as presented**

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore                      2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE:    Aye: 5

        Nay:

        Absent:

        Abstain:

        Motion carried

3. **Motion to approve: Employee PTO Hours Policy Amendment - Request for clarification**

Clarify that the new policy applies to both current and future employees who are within their first year of employment. **Discussion:** This amendment will change accrued PTO hours for Employees in their first year from 40 hours to 80 hours.

**Motion made to approve the Employee PTO Hours Policy Amendment as presented.**

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore                      2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE:    Aye: 5

        Nay:

        Absent:

        Abstain:

        Motion carried

**XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**3. Approval of Special Exception and Use Permit: 163 Eva St**

**Motion made to approve the Special Exception and Use Permit for 163 Eva St**

Motion by: Allan Roberts                      2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE:    Aye: 5  
          Nay:  
          Absent:  
          Abstain:                      Motion carried

**4. Approval of Water Rate**

**Discussion:** The Town of Gate City 2021 Audit shows a shortfall of \$107,000. The last water rate increase was in 2015. In comparison, Town of Gate City rates are less than PSA. Not proposing an increase to make a profit. The increase is just to cover cost/break even. If the water cannot pay for itself, the Town's bonds/debt can be forced to be repaid immediately and the Town would not qualify for loans to repay that debt. The new water rate would begin with usage starting approximately 9/18/23, with a meter reading on approximately 10/18/23 and a bill due on 11/20/23.

**Motion made to move forward with the water rate increase**

Motion by: Allan Roberts                      2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE:    Aye: Wallace W. Ross, Jr., Allan Roberts, Tyler Kilgore, Dexter Harmon, Pat Elliott  
          Nay:  
          Absent:  
          Abstain:                      Motion carried

**XV. CLOSED SESSION**

**Motion made for Council to enter into closed session to discuss**  
1.) Personnel  
2.) Legal  
3.)

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore                      2<sup>nd</sup> by: Allan Roberts

VOTE:    Aye: 5  
          Nay:  
          Absent:  
          Abstain:                      Motion carried

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at 9:00 PM

**XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION**

**Motion made for Council to return from closed session.**

Motion by: Allan Roberts                      2<sup>nd</sup> by: Pat Elliott

VOTE:    Aye: 5  
          Nay:  
          Absent:  
          Abstain:                      Motion carried

Council returned from closed session at 9:20 PM

**CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING – Read by: Town Attorney Michele Brooks**

**WHEREAS**, the Gate City Town Council has convened a Closed Meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 2.2-7312 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Town Council that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Gate City Town Council hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge, (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirement by Virginia law were discussed in closed meeting to which this certification applies and (2) only such business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Gate City Town Council.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Aye: Pat Elliott, Dexter Harmon, Tyler Kilgore, Allan Roberts, Wallace W. Ross, Jr.  
Nay:  
Absent:  
Abstain:

**XVII. MOTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION:**

**XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**5. DHCD Compliance Resolution: Park Street Housing Rehab Phase II Project**

- a. Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan**
- b. Town Local Business and Employment Plan**
- c. Non-Discrimination Policy**
- d. Resolution to Appropriate Funds**
- e. Fair Housing Certification**
- f. 504 Grievance Procedure**

**Motion made to move forward with the DHCD Compliance Resolution: Park Street Housing Rehab Phase II Project**

Motion by: Allan Roberts                      2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE:    Aye: 5  
          Nay:  
          Absent:  
          Abstain:                      Motion carried

**6. VRS: Hazardous Duty Benefit for Law Enforcement Officers**

**Motion made to approve the VRS Hazardous Duty Benefit for Law Enforcement Officers**

Motion by: Allan Roberts                      2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE:    Aye: 5  
          Nay:  
          Absent:  
          Abstain:                      Motion carried

**XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT – NEW BUSINESS**

**XVIII. ADJOURN**

**Motion made to adjourn.**

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Allan Roberts

VOTE: Aye: 5

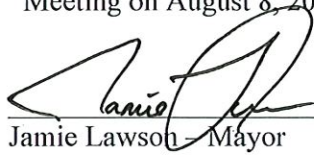
Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

Motion carried

\*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at 9:32 PM, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on August 8, 2023, at 6:30 PM

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jamie Lawson – Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lora Matthews – Town Clerk