

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES



Gate City Town Council Minutes
January 9, 2018
156 E Jackson St
Follows 6:30 PM Public Hearing

I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:45 P.M. BY: Mayor - Frances Perry

II. ROLL CALL – Town Clerk – Wayne Bledsoe

	PRESENT:	ABSENT:
Mayor, Frances Perry	X	
Vice Mayor, Roger Cassell	X	
Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts	X	
Council Member, Robin Richards	X	
Council Member, Wallace W. Ross, Jr.	X	
Council Member, Ron Kindle	X	
Town Manager, Greg Jones	X	
Town Attorney, Michele Brooks	X	

Others present: Debbie Kindle, James Addington, Jason Snapp, Officer Matt Stewart

III. INVOCATION – Robin Richards

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Jim Addington

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made to approve the agenda.

Motion by: Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts 2nd by: Council Member, Ron Kindle

VOTE: Aye, 5
Nay,
Absent,
Abstain

Motion carries.

VI. PROCLAMATIONS, CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTIONS, AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS, RESIGNATIONS AND CONFIRMATIONS, ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS.

None

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Approval of December 12, 2017 Town Council Minutes**

Council Members Wallace W. Ross and Council Member Robin W. Richards said previous minutes were not included in the Council Packet. The minutes had been sent by electronic mail earlier in December and were provided to each Council Member.

Motion made to approve minutes as presented.

Motion by: Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts

2nd by: Council Member, Robin Richards

VOTE: Aye: 4

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain: 1 – Council Member Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

Motion carries.

VIII. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Motion made for approval for payment of bills for December 2017.

Motion by: Council Member, Robin Richards

2nd by: Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

Motion carries.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT (Will be limited to 3 minutes per speaker.)

None.

Mayor Perry closed the public comment session at 6:53 P.M. and opened the consent agenda session.

X. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

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

Jackson Street Sidewalk: Contractor is currently awaiting fabrication of the handrails for installation. Project should be substantially completed early February and completion should occur early March.

Sanitation Authority: No update, awaiting next meeting.

DEO Sewer I&I Rehab Job: Awaiting DEQ and VDOT plan review comments. Virginia Water Protection Permit to be finalized with Town signatures and submitted, permit approval usually takes 45 to 60 days. Permanent and temporary easements paperwork will be delivered to the Town for acquisition shortly. The Town will need to acquire all easements before the project can be advertised.

Water Treatment Plant Upgrades: Bids were accepted Tuesday, October 17th at 3:00 at Town Hall. The apparent low bidder was T&B Contractors of Bristol at \$387,000.

The bid package has been sent to VDH for approval as well as a request for additional funds in the amount of \$34,460 at the same terms of the original funding package. These additional funds will allow the Town to install the additive bid item (Baffle Curtains) and provide a contingency amount of 5% for the project. We can award the project once Gate City obtains the needed letter of credit to satisfy VDH requirements. T&B has extended their bid till January 15th.

Asset Management Plan: Mattern & Craig to submit a preventative maintenance and operational plan for the Town to extend the life and performance on their assets to VDH. The plan will also include an inventory of all the Town's assets associated with its waterworks system. Mattern & Craig and Town are in discussions to finalize plan with equipment life expectancies, data gathering/entry is ongoing.

VDOT HSIP Funding: VDOT has awarded the Town funding from the HSIP program to construct handicap ramps and access improvements at several locations along Jackson St. HSIP funds would not be in place until 2020, but VDOT has moved money available from another project to allow this project to get underway. MATTERN & CRAIG to provide scope and fee to the Town for approval to start design shortly.

The HSIP Grant for Manville Road was turned in on November 1st and consisted of approximately \$250,000 of sidewalk upgrades and improvements to bring the sidewalks up to ADA standards. We will continue to watch for award status on this project.

B. Manager's Report

Water Treatment Plant Upgrade Project

- Roof Replacement project, steel doors replacement, backwash control system, chlorine room scales, generator, telemetry system and Clearwell baffling system will be developed into one project. The Town has received a funding offer from the Virginia Department (VDH) of Health. The project cost is anticipated to be \$498,000. VDH will provide \$137,000 in principal forgiveness.
- Virginia Resource Authority (VRA) has approved funding for both the Water Treatment Plant Upgrade Project and the Sanitation Authority Waste Water Collection Line Replacement Project (DEQ).

VRA bond covenants include hiring a CPA firm to provide monthly accounting services.

- Hicok, Fern, and Company has begun the monthly accounting services. (Finance Reports are now delayed one month to allow CPA review)
- Five-year profit/loss report is being reviewed by Larry Sturgill, CPA.
- Cost Savings Estimate Report is being prepared by Mattern & Craig, Inc.
 - Once these reports are complete, they will be submitted to VRA so they can complete their credit evaluation.

East Jackson Street Sidewalk Project

- Construction began on October 23, 2017.
- To prevent damage to the new sidewalk, the old sidewalk will be removed prior to construction. This will create an inconvenience for local pedestrians during this process. We will do everything we can to accommodate residents.

Street Committee

- The Street Committee met on Monday, December 4th, 2017 and identified the decorative streetlights that will be moved to the new sidewalks on East Jackson Street. The Town Crew has moved nine (9) street lights to their new location so far.

Highway Safety Improvement Project (HSIP)

- The Town has been awarded an HSIP grant from the Virginia Department of Health. This project will provide for handrails, handicap ramps, and safety improvements along Jackson Street. A “Request to Administer” project application was submitted to VDOT on November 30th, 2017. A kick-off meeting was completed on December 6th, 2017. Mattern & Craig will develop a scope of the project. VDOT will be submitting an award letter. The value of this project is \$87,000 and will be 100% funded by the VDOT HSIP project.
- VDOT has required that Town Council provide approval to authorize Town Manager to execute documents for VDOT projects.
- HSIP grant application for the sidewalk replacement project on Manville Road was submitted on November 1st, 2017. (VDOT recommended approving a blanket approval for all VDOT projects). **Council Action: Approve Town Manager Signature Authority to execute agreements and/or addendums for VDOT grant related projects.**

Gate City Theater & Public Facilities

- Planning Grant for the Gate City Theater, Town Hall, and proposed Community Center, have been submitted to Rural Development (USDA) - (Community Facilities Technical Assistance and Training/TAT Grant). The TAT Grant is a planning grant that will focus on engineering and environment plans to make the best use of our public facilities. The total funding request is \$50,500 from Rural Development. Our proposed budget will include:

\$20,000 Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR)
\$5,500 Site assessment and environmental review \$25,000 Marketing
Analysis - Gate City Theatre (match)
\$50,500 Total

- The TAT grant has tentatively been approved. Council has approved that the TAT Planning Grant will be executed within the next three years. This will give the Town and Gate City Frontier, Inc. time to raise the remaining \$25,000 for the Marketing Study. Upon further discussion with Lenowisco Planning Authority and Rural Development, the TAT Grant is on hold until the remaining funds for the Marketing Study can be raised.

Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD): Planning Grant - Park Street

- A planning grant has been submitted to DHCD to address the housing rehabilitation needs on Park Street. Currently Park Street consists of homes that are dilapidated and substandard that do not meet the Virginia Uniform Building Code. This planning project will help identify, analyze and prioritize the means to enable homeowners to reach DHCD Housing Quality Standards.
- Mr. Frank Kibler, Senior Planner with Lenowisco Planning Authority, and Town Manager Greg Jones conducted a telephone conference with Ms. Tamarah Holmes, Associate Director of Community Development Policy with DHCD, on December 1st, 2017. Ms. Holmes stated that DHCD would be willing to fund a planning grant for the Town to complete a Housing Rehabilitation Master Plan. The Master Plan will help identify housing needs on a Town-wide basis. This will help the Town prioritize future housing projects.
- Mr. Kibler indicated that Lenowisco has available resources to complete the planning for the housing project on Park Street. Mr. Kibler feels that we can meet the construction grant deadline in the spring of 2018.

Dog Park & Gateway Park

- Trees have been removed from the project area. Town Crew will work to improve the drainage. Planning Commission will research and design a fence for the dog park soon.
- The new floodlights for the Love Sign and light for the Gazebo have been installed. Planning Commission will be planning to develop a split rail fence for the Gateway Park in the next few months.

Events

- Planning has begun for the 2018 Events. The Event Committee and Gate City Frontier, Inc. will be meeting on Saturday, January 20th, 2018 for a planning workshop.

Other Items

FY 2017 Town Audit

- Larry Sturgill, CPA is currently conducting the FY 2017 Pre-Audit. Mr. Sturgill will follow with the FY 2017 Town Audit once the pre-audit is complete.

Police Vehicles

- The two 2017 Ford Explorer Police Vehicles and 2018 Ford Explorer Police Vehicle have been received by the Town. The two 2017 Ford Explorers have been equipped and decals will be applied in the next couple of days. They will be in service shortly thereafter. The 2018 Ford Explorer will be equipped, decaled, and placed in service in the next few weeks.

Town Trucks

- The Town's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that was passed by Town Council has identified a utility truck and a Ford F-250 truck to be procured in FY 2018. \$75,000 has been allocated with 50% liability to the water fund and 50% liability to the Sanitation Authority. I am recommending that the Town purchase one 2018 Ford F-250 Crew Cab, 4x4, with a snow plow package and one 2018 Ford F-250 regular cab, 4x4, with service bed. (Cost and supporting documentation in a separate report). **Council Action: Approve vehicle purchase.**

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

Allan "Cotton" Roberts: Gate City Frontier has changed the proposed project for grant approval. The previous project was for "Wayfinder" signs to be purchased and constructed for the Town of Gate City, however, VDOT changed the regulations on these signs in August, without the knowledge of Gate City Frontier, so this project is no longer feasible. Gate City Frontier continues to receive questions as to the location of the theatre restoration project, so the project will now focus on a sign improvement to help better locate the site of the restoration project. Additionally, Gate City Frontier has set a goal to show a movie near the area of the theatre restoration. Mr. Roberts received one complaint about dogs, but found this complaint was not in violation of any town ordinance and was an issue to be resolved between residents within a subdivision. Mayor Frances Perry asked for further clarification of the potential signage at the restored theatre. Mr. Roberts indicated that the incorporation of a marquee may also be considered, and Vice-Mayor Roger Cassell indicated that a simulated marquee may also be included. Deadline for this would be June 16, in conjunction with the Mountain Music Festival.

Wallace W. Ross, Jr.: Mr. Ross indicated a lot of bugs and cobwebs remain within the streetlights. Mr. Ross also asked if the streetlight covers could be removed in favor of "regular lights" to shine brighter. Mr.

Ross also asked if volunteers could clean the poles and coverings to clear cobwebs. Mr. Ross said the poles need to be painted and refurbished. Mr. Ross indicated more activities need to take place in the Gateway Plaza area of town, possible having a day to highlight this area of town.

Ron Kindle: Asked about the streetlights, if instead of 5 bulbs, one solid globe could be placed on the lights. Town Manager Greg Jones said this is being researched, with the idea to completely replace all lights with LED bulbs. This program would go through DMME, and ultimately would replace the existing lights. Mayor Frances Perry reminded Council that the current lights were purchased by another Council, which was attempting to upgrade the Town of Gate City at the time. Mayor Perry cautioned Council to move forward with replacement, but not to be critical of past actions concerning streetlights.

Robin Richards: No report.

Roger Cassell: Asked about the burnt-out trailer behind Pal's and where the legal standing on this structure was. He said Pal's and Hardee's have both complained repeatedly about this being removed. Town Attorney Michele Brooks said attempts were being made to serve the private property owner, and efforts have been hindered due to claims of the property owner not actually owning the building sitting on the property. Robert Mullins has been contacted concerning the serving of property owners. Multiple attempts have been made to serve the property owner here. The trailer belongs to one party, while the property belongs to another. Both must be served to enforce action. Mr. Cassell also asked about the process of real estate taxes. Town Attorney Michele Brooks said these will be entertained within the next 30 days, with the oldest delinquencies being auctioned first. Mr. Cassell asked Ms. Brooks to ensure monies from the county were being received from this process.

D. Sanitation Authority

Vice-Mayor Roger Cassell said the Sanitation Authority met on January 8, 2018. Town Council was originally paying half of the cost of both proposed Sanitation Authority/Public Works vehicles. The Sanitation Authority decided since there was money in a savings account available, the Sanitation Authority voted to buy a regular bed F250 vehicle outright, rather than divide the cost between Council and Sanitation Authority. The Sanitation Authority generally splits the cost of equipment with the Council, because of the shared duties of this equipment between water, sewer, and Public Works. A proposed new PSA contract has been sent, and a potential meeting date with PSA is in discussion. \

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

- **Approval to charge customer \$2.95/year for VDH Operations Fee**

Motion: Charge annual VHD operations fee to customer upon receipt.

Motion by: Council Member, Allan "Cotton" Roberts

2nd by: Vice Mayor, Roger Cassell

Additional Discussion: Robin Richards asked to amend the motion to include "not to exceed \$2.95". Town Attorney Michele Brooks said the motion can be in any form, with an according vote. A substitute motion could then be made after discussion and vote. Allan "Cotton" Roberts said if the charge from VDH increases, then the fee would need to increase accordingly. Roger Cassell said he thought a formula was used by VDH to determine the amount that needed to be charged.

VOTE: Aye: 3
Nay: 2 – Wallace W. Ross, Jr., Ron Kindle
Absent:
Abstain:

Motion carries.

- **Approval to authorize Town Manager to execute documents for VDOT projects.**

Town Manager Greg Jones explained to Council that VDOT is requesting a blanket form to complete for approvals on projects. Before, each proposal had to come before Council and receive an individual vote and approval to sign off on each individual project. Any addendums to projects had to also follow this process. VDOT is requesting a blanket form to alleviate this process, and the approval of Council is needed to allow the Town Manager to utilize the blanket form.

Allan “Cotton” Roberts asked if the only time this would change was if the Town Manager changed. Town Manager Greg Jones said no, that this was for the Town Manager, regardless of who that person is, and was not specific toward him alone.

- **Motion: Approval to authorize Town Manager to execute documents for VDOT projects.**

Motion by: Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts
2nd by: Council Member, Ron Kindle

Additional Discussion: Robin Richards asked if this was an annual approval. Town Manager Greg Jones said no, and Town Attorney Michele Brooks said that this could be rescinded if the need arose.

VOTE: Aye: 3
Nay: 2 – Robin Richards, Wallace W. Ross, Jr.
Absent:
Abstain:

Motion carries.

- **Purchase 2018 Ford F-250 Crew Cab 4X4, with snow plow package.**

TAKE NO ACTION: Sanitation Authority has resolved in 1/8/18 meeting.

- **Purchase 2018 Ford F-250 Regular Cab, with service bed.**

Bids were presented to Council, with Freedom Ford of Wise, VA being the low bid. Comparable bids were provided by the state and two other dealerships. Town Manager Greg Jones recommends this purchase, as it meets the requirements of Procurement. Due to the heavy-duty suspension of this vehicle, it will not be equipped with a snow plow. Approximately \$23,000 was placed in a savings account in 2017 for the purchase of this vehicle. (The next agenda item will transfer the remaining amount needed to complete the purchase). Snow plow is included with the other Sanitation Authority vehicle.

Motion: Purchase 2018 Ford F-250 Regular Cab, with service bed from low bidder, Freedom Ford, \$34,830.53 with options.

Motion by: Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts
2nd by: Council Member, Robin Richards

VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

Motion carries.

- **Approve transfer: \$11,111.00 transfer from Water Fund to Capital Outlay Account: Vehicle Purchase.**

AMEND TO \$11,776 FOR COMPETITION OF PURCHASE.

Motion: Approve transfer: \$11,776.00 transfer from Water Fund to Capital Outlay Account: Vehicle Purchase.

Motion by: Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts
2nd by: Vice Mayor, Roger Cassell

Additional Discussion: Robin Richards asked why funds were being transferred from the Water Fund. Town Manager Greg Jones explained that repairs to water lines, sewer lines, and leaks throughout the Town of Gate City are mostly what the vehicle would be used for. Vice Mayor Roger Cassell also said monies usually come from water, sewer, and General funds. Because of this, the monies would come from the Water Fund.

VOTE: Aye: 4
Nay: 1 – Wallace W. Ross, Jr.
Absent:
Abstain:

Motion carries.

- **Proposed Personnel Policy addition: (submission only)**

Town Manager Greg Jones explained the 2 additions to the Personnel Policy:

- Personal Data: Employee is to submit requested information to Town and keep the information updated.
- EAP (Employee Assistance Program): If an employee needs to counsel, information is made available to the counselor.

Discussion: revision of last line – encouragement of an employee to seek these services can be provided, but not required.

TAKE NO ACTION – SUBMISSION ONLY

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT – NEW BUSINESS

None

XV. CLOSED SESSION

Motion made for Council to enter closed session to discuss 1.) Legal

Motion by: Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts
2nd by: Council Member, Ron Kindle

VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

Mayor Perry opened the closed session at 7:32 P.M.

XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Council returned from closed session at 7:52 P.M.

Motion made for Council to return from closed session.

Motion by: Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts

2nd by: Council Member, Ron Kindle

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

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: Vice Mayor, Roger Cassell	X
Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts	X
Council Member, Robin Richards	X
Council Member, Wallace W. Ross, Jr.	X
Council Member, Ron Kindle	X

XVII. MOTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION:

Council returned from closed session at 7:52 P.M.

XVIII. ADJOURN

Motion made to adjourn.

Motion by: Council Member, Allan “Cotton” Roberts

2nd by: Council Member, Robin Richards

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

*Mayor Perry adjourned the meeting at 7:55 P.M., until the next regularly scheduled Council Meeting on February 13, 2018.

Frances Perry – Mayor

Wayne Bledsoe – Town Clerk