

# TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

## Gate City Town Council Minutes

June 11, 2024

156 East Jackson Street, Gate City, VA

6:30 PM

**I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:33 PM BY: Mayor Jamie Lawson**

**II. ROLL CALL – Town Clerk – Samantha Vargas**

PRESENT: ABSENT:

Mayor, Jamie Lawson	X
Vice-Mayor, Tyler Kilgore	X
Council Member, Wallace W. Ross, Jr.	X
Council Member, Pat Elliott	X
Council Member, Dexter Harmon	X
Council Member, Michele Rusek	X
Town Manager, Greg Jones	X
Town Attorney, Michele Brooks	X

Others present: Kevin Helms, Scott County Treasurer; Reba Hillman, Larry Sturgill CPA Office; Leslie Crawford, Gate City Frontier; Dale McConnell; Frances Perry; Kevin Barnette, Scott County Ministerial Association; Gabe Edmunds, VA Stars; Mike Still, Kingsport Times News; Donnie Alley, Gate City Frontier; Sgt. Cody Johnson; Quinton Miles; Vicki Roberts, Gate City Frontier; Fritz Fralin, Jason Snapp, Mattern & Craig; Steve Adkins, Gate City Frontier; Ryan Gardner, Chief of Police candidate; Terry Sivert, Chief of Police candidate;

**III. INVOCATION – Kevin Barnette, Scott County Ministerial Association**

**IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Sgt Cody Johnson**

**V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion made to approve the June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, agenda.**

Motion by: Pat Elliott 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

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

None

**VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**1. Approval of May 14, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes (Special Exception & Use Permit: 1056 E. Jackson Street)**

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

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**2. Approval of May 14, 2024, Town Council Minutes**

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

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**III. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS**

**Motion made for approval for payment of bills for June 2024 as presented.**

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

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

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

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

Frances Perry spoke about the budget and about Greg Jone's knowledge on grants and savings.

Fritz Fralin, East Carter Valley Resident, spoke about pulling up yard signs on public roads to keep Gate City looking nice and bringing the signs to VDOT. He also spoke about some of the parking signs and road signs being faded so they are hard to see.

Donnie Alley asked if the town would consider renaming Kings Alley after Cotton Roberts and asked how to go about making this change.

Mayor Lawson closed the public comment session at 6:49 PM and opened the consent agenda session.

**X. COMMUNICATIONS**

**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 Status Report - VDH Backup Generator Project:** Project is considered 35% complete currently. VDH has approved the original Categorical Exclusion request for public comment. The CE has advertised for public comment (ran in Kingsport Times on 7/2 and 7/9). The public comment period has closed and official CE approval was received from VDH on 11/30. VDH has indicated the needed water pump station in the Williams Mill Tank area can be added to the project in place of the one we removed from the project previously. The design can be part of the VDH funding project, but the survey will be the responsibility of the Town since it was not originally included in the budget. The CE will have to be readvertised to include the new location. The survey field work for the Williams Mill Pump Station was completed on 3/6/24. The CE request has been advertised in Kingsport Times for two consecutive weeks (5/5/24 and 5/12/24) per VDH guidelines. Project design is ongoing.



**Kane St. Sidewalk Transportation Alternatives Funding Application:** The Town, VDOT, and M&C had a virtual call on Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss progress and specifics of the 30% design submittal. Plans are currently at the 30% complete stage and have been submitted to VDOT for official review. There are various ROW and Utility conflicts that will have to be resolved going forward.

**Manville Road Highway Safety Improvement Plan Funding Application:** The Town, VDOT, and M&C had a virtual call on Tuesday, June 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss progress and specifics of the 30% design submittal. Plans are currently at the 30% complete stage and have been submitted to VDOT for official review. There are various ROW and Utility conflicts that will have to be resolved going forward.

**Retaining Wall Construction Plans (Walgreen's Parking Lot):** Field survey is complete. M&C met with Mr. Brack Slate (owner of adjacent property) to determine the possibility of gaining an easement to construct the wall. Mr. Slate has indicated they are willing to entertain const. easement to actually construct the wall but not permanent easement or ROW to place the wall on. Design is in process.

## **B. Gate City Frontier Report – Foundational Growth and Organization with GCF**

- Registered for the upcoming Exploring Main Street Community Interchange

### **Business & Community Outreach**

- Planning/assisting Gate City Little League with their Challenger League Day and Movie Night at the Ballpark. The movie night is scheduled for Saturday, June 8th.
- GCF welcomed new volunteers to prepare for the jeep event.
- Working daily with other local organizations and individuals to prepare for the July and August events.

### **Events**

- **Jeep Jamboree**
  - Nineteen volunteers on the street for a total of 190 volunteer hours
  - Six food trucks and all were successful and/or sold out
  - 22 merchandise vendors
  - Additional local community organizations in attendance
  - 148 registered Jeeps on Jackson Street with additional parked in lower parking lot
  - 101 pre-registered; 47 registrations on the day of event
  - GCPD, GCFD, Scott County Life Saving Crew were all available on the street to assist if needed
  - Officer Cody Johnson did a phenomenal job in preparing for the event. His communication was key in determining the proper detour map for thru traffic. We appreciate this attention to detail as the map posted on social media made it clear to the public ahead of the event.
  - The GCPD and GCFD also did a fantastic job in helping to secure the streets and high

traffic kidzone area. This was very much appreciated for GCF and the community as well.

**Upcoming Events:** Red, White, & Blue Bash: The After Party July 6th, Back to School Bash August 3rd, Harvest Moon Celebration September 21st.

**C. Town Manager Report - 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

**March 2024** – The monthly Management Team and Rehabilitation Board meetings have been changed to the second Tuesday of each month. We did not have a quorum for February’s meeting.

**May 2024** – The Management Team and the Housing Oversight Rehab Board voted to approve the rehabilitation 326 Park Street and 308 Park Street.

- **Dog Park Project**

**August 2023** – The Planning Commission noted that the fence is damaged again due to a fallen tree. The Planning Commission also indicated that the latches on the fence were not closing properly. Factory to You Fence will be working to correct these issues. The Planning Commission is currently working on sign development and placement, placement of concrete benches, developing rules that will be posted onsite, and placing three dog waste stations.

**February 2024** – Factory to You Fence has completed the repairs to the fence. The sign project can be incorporated into a planning grant from the Tobacco Commission and Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC).

- **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>

**December 2023** – SCTV has informed the town that the equipment has been received. SCTV anticipates installation to be completed in January or February 2024.

**February 2024** – The security cameras for the Town Hall have been installed. We are expecting the security cameras for Grogan Park to be installed in a few weeks.

**May 2024** – The security cameras for Grogan Park have been installed. The in-car cameras have been installed and the new tasers have been received. The training for the new tasers will be completed shortly. This grant will be closed in in early June 2024.

- **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.

**December 2023** – VTC has awarded \$10,000.00 to the Town for this project.

**January 2024** – Our letter of engagement with Corporate Image has been signed following Council RFP approval in December. Work should begin in February 2024.

**March 2024** – The Town’s new website is nearly completion. We are expecting this project to complete in about one month.

**May 2024** – The Economic Development Committee has reviewed the webpage draft of the new webpage. We are now working on giving the new webpage content. I have reached out to Pam Cox with the Scott County Tourism Committee and Leslie Crawford with Gate City Frontier, Inc to help add the events and high resolutions pictures.

- **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.



**September 2023** – Council has accepted Mattern & Craig, Inc. proposal to manage the project under the Town’s GES contract.

**December 2023** – Mattern & Craig has completed the survey on the property and is currently working on designing the project. Currently awaiting on property owners to decide on easements issues.

**April 2024** – The property owner has approved a construction easement but not a permanent easement.

- **FY 2025 Town Budget** – The Finance Committee met on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The Committee reviewed FY 25 Health Insurance cost, department and town funding requests, ARPA balance, and the Budget Calendar.

**April 2024** – The budget calendar has been approved by Council. We are currently experiencing a minor delay in our budget schedule. We are about four weeks behind.

**May 2024** – The Finance Committee met on May 6<sup>th</sup> and May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The committee has prepared a draft FY25 budget for Council review and comment.

**June 2024** – The budget draft was given to Council on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024. There has not been any feedback since the submission. **Council Action: Conduct Public Hearing for the proposed FY 25 town budget and vote to approve.**

- **Jackson Street Parking Spaces and Gutter Repaint Project**

**May 2024** – Bracken Paving will begin repainting the parking spaces and curbing on Jackson Street on Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. It is with hope to complete this project prior to the Jeep Jamboree event on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The forecasted rain could cause delays.

**June 2024** – The parking spaces and curb repainting project along Jackson Street was completed on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024.

- **Decorative Street Light Removal**

**June 2024** – AEP will be installing the new LED lights to their poles on Jackson and Water Street starting in late July. AEP will install a few lights at a time. Our Town Crew will remove the decorative lights as AEP progresses.

- **United States Department of Justice (USDOJ) COPS Hiring Grant**

**June 2024** - The COPS grant is due on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The application has been completed and will be turned in on time.

**D. Attorney Report** - None

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

- a. Tyler Kilgore spoke about the citizens wanting a mural on the retaining wall by the medical area.







ROLL CALL VOTE:

Aye: Jamie Lawson, Tyler Kilgore, Michele Rusek, Pat Elliott, Dexter Harmon, Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

Nay:

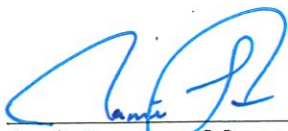
Absent:

Abstain:

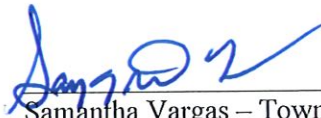
XVII. MOTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION: None

XVIII. ADJOURN

Reconvene June 25, 2024 at 6:30 PM.



Jamie Lawson – Mayor



Samantha Vargas – Town Clerk