

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Gate City Town Council Minutes

November 12, 2024

156 East Jackson Street, Gate City, VA

6:30 PM

I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:30 PM BY: Mayor Jamie Lawson

II. ROLL CALL – Deputy Town Clerk – Lisa Loggans

	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	X (Arrived @ 6:33 PM)

Others present: Frances Perry; Jason Snapp, Mattern & Craig Engineers; Dale McConnell, GC Public Works; Stoney Falin, GC Public Works; Mike Still, KPT Times News; Gabe Edmunds, VA Star; Kevin Barnett, Anna Barnett, Brad Lewis, Austen Arnold, Zeke Newton, Suzanna Moore, and Dustin Haigler.

III. INVOCATION – Council Member, Pat Elliott

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – GCPD Chief, Terry Sivert

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made to approve the November 12, 2024, agenda.

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2nd by: Michele Rusek

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried*

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

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**1. Approval of October 15, 2024, Town Council Minutes
Motion made to approve minutes as presented.**

Motion by: Dexter Harmon
VOTE: Aye: 4
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain: 1 (was not at meeting) 2nd by: Pat Elliott
*Motion Carried

III. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Motion made for approval for payment of bills for November 2024 as presented.

Motion by: Pat Elliott
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain: 2nd by: Tyler Kilgore
*Motion Carried

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT (Will be limited to 3 minutes per speaker.) – None

Mayor Lawson closed the public comment session at 6:43 PM 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 Status Report – Jason Snapp

VDH Backup Generator Project: Project design is complete, and plans and specs have been submitted to VDH for review. The required easements to facilitate the project have been delivered to the Town for acquisition. The CE approval for the final project has been granted by VDH and the project is cleared for environmental purposes. The Towns FY 23 audit has also been completed, which is a requirement of the VDH funding as well. We have received comments from VDH FCAP and VDOT, still need to submit to VDH Central office for technical review. We have a meeting onsite with VDH to review on Tuesday, November 12th. Project should go to construction in the spring pending VDH approval and easement acquisitions progressing accordingly. Kane St. Sidewalk Transportation Alternatives Funding Application: 60% plans are in progress. The Town and M&C will need to set up a utility conference with all vested parties to discuss relocations. Manville Road Highway Safety Improvement Plan Funding Application: 60% of plans are in progress. The Town and M&C will need to set up a utility/ROW conference with all vested parties to discuss relocations and acquisitions. There will be a ROW phase for this particular project to the needed Slope and Construction easements for the project. This will add approximately 12 months to the project timeline. M&C and the Town will need to reach out to each property owner to discuss options. Retaining Wall Construction Plans (Walgreen's Parking Lot): Design is nearly complete with the exception of working out drainage onto the adjacent parking lot. M&C met with Mike Carrico who will represent the owner in

discussions regarding the needed construction easement. Mike has indicated he will reach out to Town Attorney to facilitate the needed easement.

DBQ project for Sanitary Sewer System (SSES), which we applied for 3 or 4 years ago, was approved funding for another phase. We won't know what the principal forgiveness is until next year, but the project has been approved.

B. Gate City Frontier Report – Included in council packet.

C. Town Manager's Report – Greg Jones

- **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 16th, 2022.

Funding Awarded:

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

October -2024 – Interim Compliance Review has been postponed to November 6th & 7th, 2024 as a result of Hurricane Helene. Prebid conference 308 Park Street and 347 Park Street was held on October 3rd, 2024. The Housing Rehabilitation Board approved rehabilitation efforts for 308 Park Street and 347 Park Street. 309 Park Street is currently scheduled for demolition soon.

November – 2024 - The Interim Compliance Review was held on November 6th & 7th, 2024.

- **Dog Park Project**

July 2024 – Council has awarded \$5,000 in funding through the FY 2025 budget for this project. The Planning Commission will be moving forward in developing signage and amenities for the dog park in the coming months.

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

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

July 2024 – Plans are 90% complete.

August 2024 – Scott County Historic Society has informed me that until exterior work is completed, they cannot get insurance for their personal property. Action item: Approve estimate from Clinch Mountain Contractors to replace the roof for 6,773.95. I have approved the soffit trim repair work and leaking windows repair work.

October 2024 – Clinch Mountain Contractors has replaced the roof, fixed windows and broken bricks. The Town is waiting for a return call from Walgreens attorney to proceed with the drainage mitigation.

November 2024 – Mattern & Craig, Inc met with the attorney for Walgreens. Walgreen's attorney will be working with the Town Attorney in an effort to obtain a construction easement.

- **VDH Backup Generator Project – WSL 007-21**

November 2024 – I am currently working with the Virginia Resource Authority (VRA) to close on the backup generator project. VRA has requested data to assist them with their credit analysis. This will be completed in the next couple of weeks.

- **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.

August 2024 – AEP has informed that they will start installing the new LED lights in late September. They are behind on their work orders due to the recent storms.

November 2024 – AEP has informed the Town that they will start installing the new LED lights starting during the week of November 11th, 2024. They will contact us a few days prior. We will need to inform the area residents so they can be prepared to move their vehicles if needed.

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

October 2024 – The Town has been awarded \$125,000 in grant funding from the USDOJ COPS Hiring Grant. The funding will be used to hire one additional full time Police Officer over the next three years. Help wanted advertising has been posted for this position.

- **November 2024** – The Town has accepted the grant through the JustGrants portal. We have also set up the ASAP system. This system is used to receive payments for federal grants, including COPS grants.

- **Water Street Parking Lot Development Project**

July 2024 – Spectrum Designs, LLC has completed a couple of site plans. They need feedback. I am currently working on scheduling a meeting time for the Economic Development Committee to

meet with Spectrum Designs. *Note: ARPA funding must be spent or under contract by December 31st, 2024.

August 2024 – The Economic Redevelopment Committee met with Spectrum Design, Inc and Gate City Frontier, Inc on August 5th, 2024, to discuss the Parking Lot development project on Water Street.

Gate City Town Council and Gate City Frontier, Inc met on August 12th, 2024, to receive their input and ideas concerning the proposed community development project.

The Request for Proposals for a design-build contract has been advertised and solicited. The pre-bid meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 13th, 2024. The RFP bids are due by Friday, September 20th, 2024. Council Action: Reconvene Council meeting to September 24th, 2024, to review bids and award the contract.

October 2024 - Council reviewed bids on September 24, 2024, and determined that the scope of the project will be narrowed to 1x Basketball Court, 1x Skate Track, 2x Pickleball Courts, and 1x Green Space. This project has been named Phase I. A new project map showing the Phase I project area was submitted to Council. The two responding firms were given instructions to revise their bid to include just the Phase I amenities. The due date for the revised bids was set for October 10th, 2024. Council Action: Approve bid as recommended by the Economic Redevelopment Committee.

November 2024 – Council has approved the bid from Quesenberry’s Construction. **Council Action: Approve Design-Build services contract for Phase I of the Community Park Project on Water Street.**

- **2024 Comprehensive Plan**

July 2024 – The Comprehensive Plan for Gate City is due by December 31st, 2024. The Planning Commission will need to adopt by December 3rd, 2024. The Town Council will need to conduct a Public Hearing and adopt on December 10th, 2024. Both the Council and the Planning Commission will receive draft copies by the beginning of November 2024.

November 2024 – The Comprehensive Plan is expected to be complete in early January 2025.

- **Byrne/Justice Assistance Grant**

July 2024 – The Town has been awarded the DCJS Byrne/Justice Assistance Grant. The funding will be used to purchase and install mobile data terminals in five of our patrol vehicles. The total value of the grant is \$25,169.00.

August 2024 – The mobile data terminals have been installed. We are currently waiting for the anti-virus software to be installed. This project is anticipated to be completed by early October 2024.

October 2024 – This project has been completed. Grant close-out documents and reporting should be completed by the end of the month.

November 2024 – This project is complete. DCJS close-out documents and reporting have been completed.

- **Lead and Copper Compliance Program**

August 2024 – In May 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released final revisions to the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR). The rule requires all utility services to create an inventory of public and private water service lines by October 16, 2024.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has required monitoring of lead and copper content in drinking water since 1991. The town's water has been in compliance with safe standards since monitoring began.

The Town of Gate City must compile a Lead Service Line Inventory (LSL Inventory). The inventory must include the Town's portion of the water service line (before and including the water meter) and the customer's portion of the service line (after the water meter into the home or business). Lead service lines were primarily installed during the late 1800s through the 1940s with a federal lead ban effective June 19, 1986.

All municipalities in the United States are required to complete the Lead Service Line inventory. The Town of Gate City will be conducting a customer survey in order to gain information on the type of service lines going into their homes. Please watch for this survey in your next water bill. LENOWISCO has secured \$25,000 in funding for the Town of Gate City to help complete the inventory.

September 2024 – A webpage has been created: <https://mygatecity.com/water-line-survey-material-survey/#survey> This webpage provides the information about the program and online survey for the convenience of our residents. We have targeted eleven areas in Town that have galvanized water lines. Our Public Works Team will be surveying these areas for our initial submission that is due by October 15th, 2024. Letters about this project have been mailed to our residents as well.

October 2024 – The Public Works team completed surveys for Davidson Subdivision, Willow, Walnut, Lynn Drive, Ravine, Anderson, Elm, and McConnell Street areas. We received online responses from 58 residents and have received 151 responses from our direct mailing campaign. The data is currently being uploaded to the Virginia Department of Health's portal. The due date is October 16th, 2024 for the first initial reporting.

November 2024 – The initial deadline of October 16th, 2024 for the first initial reporting has been met. VDH has advised that we have until November 14th, 2024 to report the 'unknown' material. Our Town Crew is currently collecting that information.

- **Kane Street Mural Project**

September 2024 - The Planning Commission met on Tuesday, September 3rd, 2024, and reviewed the Request for Proposals submissions for the Mural project on Kane Street. The Planning Commission was unanimous in recommending MadrPaints to complete the project. Council Action: Approve MadrPaints bid of \$10,150.00.

October 2024 – Council has approved the bid from MadrPaints in the amount of \$10,150.00. The Planning Commission will review the artwork on November 5th, 2024, and make recommendations to Council. Town Council is expected to approve the artwork at the November 12th Council meeting. The approved artwork will then be sent to VDOT for their approval.

November 2024 – The Planning Commission did not meet in October due to the election day holiday. MadrPaints will be meeting with the Planning Commission on December 10th, 2024, and their recommendation to Town Council on the artwork is expected to follow. Once Council approves the artwork, we will send to VDOT for their approval and feedback.

- **Hurricane Helene – September 27th, 2024**

October 2024 – Hurricane Helene hit Gate City Friday morning, September 27th, 2024. AEP reported that 282,000 customers lost power. The hurricane caused 2,500 spans of fallen wire and damaged equipment, including 585 poles, 315 cross arms, and 150 transformers. Destructive winds and downed trees destroyed nearly 80 transmission lines across Appalachian Power's system. The power restoration began on Sunday, September 29th, 2024, with most of the residents' power restored by Thursday, October 3rd, 2024. The Water Plant regained power on Sunday, September 29th, 2024, after being offline for 2.5 days. A voluntary boil water was issued for Estil Heights subdivision and area at higher elevation. The boil water advisory was lifted on Thursday, October 3rd, 2024.

Currently work is taking place to remove fallen trees. FEMA funding for Scott County has been allocated for this storm on Thursday, October 10th, 2024. The Town is presently working to bring in Asplundh Tree Removal Service to Gate City. All downed trees and storm debris should be placed (if possible) at the edge of the road for pickup. Please contact the Town Hall to be placed on the list.

FEMA announced individual assistance funding on October 14th, 2024. Funding can help pay for essential items, temporary housing, home repairs, and other needs due to the hurricane. Residents can call FEMA at (800) 621-3362 or apply online: [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/assistance).

The Scott County Emergency Services Coordinator will be submitting funding requests to FEMA on the Town's behalf.

November 2024 - Asplundh Tree Expert, LLC and Top-Notch Tree Services have been contracted for debris removal. The debris in Big Moccasin Creek alongside Old Nickelsville Highway will be the first area of concern that will be addressed. Once the debris in Big Moccasin Creek is resolved, they will move to the Hillcrest Subdivision and Beverly Circle area. Top Notch Tree Service will also help with the remaining trees that need to be cleared. Residents are encouraged to contact the Town Hall if they have debris from the hurricane that needs to be removed. If possible, the debris should be moved to the curbing for pickup.

D. Attorney Report – No Report

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

Pat Elliott: The town Christmas tree isn't seen when it's on top of Town Hall. Does it have to be on Jackson Street? (Michele B. said as long as we have permission, we can put it anywhere). There's a nice level, raised place on Kane Street between the Kane St. Smokehouse and Williams Heating & Air Conditioning. Josh Kress (Kane St. Smokehouse) may let us put it there and borrow some electricity. Greg Jones will stop and ask Josh Kress if we can do this.

Dexter Harmon: No Report

Tyler Kilgore: No Report

Michele Rusek: No Report

Wallace W. Ross, Jr.: Gate City welcome signs/name plates would be nice to have throughout town. Gave report on the Virginia Municipal League conference he attended (Oct. 13 – 15th, 2024).

F. Police Department – Chief Terry Sivert

October - 2024

	September	October	Year to Date
Calls for Service	296	227	2143
Arrest	5	6	62
Summons	62	54	277
Incident Reports	12	8	95
Accident Reports	5	6	36
DUI Arrests	2	1	8
Vehicle Unlock	8	10	59

Significant Activity & Reporting for October 2024:

- **Successful King Alleween on Oct. 19th. Gave our lots of candy, lots of children and great costumes.**
- **GCPD Hired Josh Givens as a full time police officer.**
- **GCPD continues to work with Scott County Sheriff's Office, Weber City PD, State Police, Local EMS and Rescue, Local Fire Departments, and Other government agencies.**
- **GCPD will continue to do walk throughs at local banks and businesses and do extra patrol when needed.**

1. CLOSED SESSION

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

Motion by: Dexter Harmon
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

**Motion Carried*

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at 6:47 PM

2. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Motion made for Council to return from closed session.

Motion by: Pat Elliott
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

**Motion Carried*

Council returned from closed session at 7:50 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: Pat Elliott, Dexter Harmon, Tyler Kilgore, Michele Rusek, Wallace W. Röss, Jr.

VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried*

XIV. MOTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION:

Motion was made to: approve \$100.00 gift certificates for Town Employees in lieu of a Thanksgiving Dinner.

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2nd by: Michele Rusek

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried*

*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at **8:27 PM**, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on December 10, 2024, at 6:30 PM.



Jamie Lawson – Mayor



Lisa Loggans – Deputy Town Clerk