

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Gate City Town Council Minutes

May 14, 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 – 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

Others present: Dale McConnell, Public Works; Sargeant Cody Johnson; Officer Erik Hinchey; Kevin Barnett, Scott County Ministerial Association; Frances Perry; Jason Snapp, Mattern & Craig; Connor Pierson; Gabe Edmunds, VA Star

III. INVOCATION – Kevin Barnett, Scott County Ministerial Association

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Sargeant Cody Johnson

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made to approve the May 14, 2024, Agenda.

Motion by: Pat Elliott 2nd 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.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of April 9, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes (Platted Road Closure/Walnut Ave)

Motion made to approve minutes as presented.

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore 2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

2. **Approval of April 9, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes (Donate Gate City Theatre to Gate City Frontier, Inc.)**

Motion made to approve minutes as presented.

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore 2nd by: Michele Rusek

VOTE: Aye: 5
 Nay:
 Absent:
 Abstain:

3. **Approval of April 9, 2024, Town Council Minutes**

Motion made to approve minutes as presented.

Motion by: Apt Elliott 2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5
 Nay:
 Absent:
 Abstain:

III. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

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

Motion by: Dexter Harmon 2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5
 Nay:
 Absent:
 Abstain:

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

Connor Pierson – 1127 W. Jackson St – Discussed how he felt about the garbage can policy and fee along with his hazardous material situation.

Mayor Jamie Lawson advised that there will be extra Police patrol in his area.

Mayor Lawson closed the public comment session at 7:00 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's 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: Project survey has been completed, preliminary design has begun, and project is currently approximately 25% complete. Pre award audit by VDOT has been completed and approved. 30% Plans were submitted to Town for review. Public Hearing to discuss the project with town residents was held 3/12/24. Several revisions have come out of that meeting that are currently being addressed. Revised plans will be discussed with the Town in the coming weeks prior to submittal to VDOT for review.

Manville Road Highway Safety Improvement Plan Funding Application: Project survey is complete, preliminary design (30% plans) are completed, and project is currently approximately 35% complete. 30% plans have been reviewed with the Town, from that review it was determined that a public hearing should be scheduled to discuss and address any questions or concerns the affected residents may have. Public Hearing was held January 9th. 30% plans have been reviewed with Town staff to determine whether or not to include retaining walls to minimize ROW takes. Next step is to discuss with residents that are affected by ROW and/or easement takes. Minor sidewalk revisions are ongoing to address vehicular access/parking for adjacent residents.

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 – No one present to give report; Report Submitted

Gate City Frontier Report April 2024



Please accept this brief report on behalf of GCF 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. As stated in our agreement with the Town of Gate City,

“GCF will provide the Town with a monthly report on monthly activities, accomplishments, and planned projects, said report being due by the first Thursday of the month, for inclusion in the Town Council package.”

The part time GCF Director will attend monthly council meetings as available to present this report. If any council member would like to gain additional information in regards to any part of this report, please email those to gcfreindirector@gmail.com. The questions will then be presented to the GCF Board and followed up with in the next monthly report.

I. Foundational Growth and Organization with GCF

- GCF completed and submitted the Community Vitality Grant. The blueprint for this grant, if funded, will encompass the high traffic area of the Historic District of Gate City which will stretch from Lavish Salon on East Jackson down to Quillin Hardware on West Jackson. We are hopeful to receive this grant in order to continue the Gate City Proud streetscape project that would provide

market umbrellas for all current concrete tables, rework and restructure all ground cover planters with perennial flora, and to bring vibrancy through public art installations. We feel that creating a more vibrant space in the downtown district will encourage stakeholders to frequent our beautiful town more often through the reaction of placemaking. Our full grant proposal includes a 2:1 match with DHCD providing \$15,000.00, GCF providing \$2,500.00, and \$5,000.00 from in-kind contributions including the GCF board of directors, Friends of Frontier, and the Town of Gate City Public Works Department.

- Contacted VDOT and received information about murals in town by Glenn Cantrell and Joseph Mullins. If our grant is fulfilled, I would like to talk with the town/planning commission about the information I received and how we may move forward.

II. Business & Community Outreach

- Our business outreach this month focused on purchasing gift cards from local restaurants and retail businesses for the upcoming Jeep Jam. We will have more to purchase next month
- Working with Gate City Little League Baseball to help them plan their Movie at the Park day and additional activities.
- The GCF monthly meetings are open to all stakeholders or anyone with an interest in improving the historic downtown district in Gate City. These meetings are currently being held at the Scott County Life Saving Building the second Monday of each month at 6:30PM.

III. Events

- GCF has continued to organize, negotiate, and book all details for the upcoming 2024 events.
- We are working to streamline the current lineup of events so that we can focus more on the community development and revitalization aspect of our organization.
- Local and corporate sponsorships are being secured for our upcoming Jeep Jamboree event on

IV. Upcoming Dates of Interest

- April 8, 6PM, Scott County Life Saving Building: Regularly called GCF meeting
- May 25, 10AM-4PM: Gate City Jeep Jamboree

C. Town Manager's 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 16th, 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.

April 2024 – LENOWISCO Planning Authority has reported that board members are not attending our meetings. **Council Action: Council discussion and direction needed.**

- **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 24th, 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
Total				\$ 151,735

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 5th, 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 7th, 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 6th and May 9th, 2024. The committee has prepared a draft FY25 budget for Council review and comment. Council Action: **Approve Public Hearing for the FY 25 Budget on June 11th, 2024.**

• **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 15th, 2024. It is with hope to complete this project prior to the Jeep Jamboree event on May 25th, 2024. The forecasted rain could cause delays.

D. Attorney's Report – No Report

E. Council Reports – Pat Elliott – No Report; did volunteer to stand in for LENOWISCO meetings
Dexter Harmon – No Report
Michele Rusek – No Report
Tyler Kilgore - No Report
Wallace W. Ross Jr. – Reported about the bad shape Cleveland Street is in; Asked about the possibility of making Walnut Street a one way; Discussed that there is no Gate City welcome sign; Mentioned the idea of putting green tourist signs at intersections; Asked about possibly raising pay for Council Members; Mentioned wanting to go to the Small-Town Conference in Abingdon on June 10th and 11th.

F. Police Department – Sargent Cody Johnson – Neighborhood watch meetings to begin in June; Introduction of Officer Erik Henley; Talked about car seat safety/installation

G. Sanitation Authority – Public Hearing for budget; Will be approved in June

H. Public Works – Dale McConnell – Spoke about purchasing new equipment; Asked to get quote on pavement spreader; Spoke about assets sold

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **Appointment: Chairperson: Sanitation Authority**
Table to June 11th, 2024

XV. CLOSED SESSION

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

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: Pat Elliott

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at 7:55 PM

Absent:
Abstain:

2. Remove decorative Streetlights on Jackson & Water Streets

Motion made to remove decorative streetlights on Jackson and Water Streets.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 4

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain: 1

3. Approve eviction notice: CrossFit

Motion made to approve eviction notice for CrossFit.

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross Jr

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

4. Approve: Public Hearing FY 25 Budget: June 11, 2024

Motion Made to approve the Public Hearing FY 25 Budget on June 11th, 2024.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

5. Approve: VDH grant application to replace raw water line

Motion Made to approve VDH grant application to replace raw water lines.

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain

6. Approve: COPS grant application for additional police officer

Motion Made to approve COPS grant application for additional police officer.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

7. Approve: Schedule follow-up workshop with Gate City Frontier, Inc.

Motion Made to approve schedule follow-up workshop with Gate City Frontier, Inc in August.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

8. Approve Purchase: Scag Tiger Cat Mower 61”

Motion Made to approve the purchase of a Scag Tiger Mower 61” from Cox Tractor using ARPA Funds.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

9. Approve Purchase: Scag Tow Behind Loader

Motion Made to approve the purchase of a Scag Tow Behind Loader from Cox Tractor using ARPA Funds.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Michele Rusek

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

10. Approve RFP: Quotes-Back Street Paving Project

Motion Made to approve RFP quotes for the back street paving project.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

11. Sealed Bids: Vacant Lot 649 Park Street: 146A6A-17: Cancel Bids

12. Sealed Bids: Vacant Lot on Chestnut Street: 146A2A-15

Motion Made to accept sealed bid for vacant lot on Chestnut Street: 146A2A-15 from Miranda Johnson, Abingdon, Va for \$515.00.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

13. Approve: Public Hearing Gate City Theatre Donation: June 11, 2024

Motion Made to approve Public Hearing for Gate City Theatre Donation on June 3, 2024.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

14. Park Street Housing Project Phase II: Management Team and Project Rehabilitation Board Member attendance issues

Take No Action

15. Approve: Chief of Police resignation

Motion Made to approve Chief of Police resignation.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

16. Approve: RFP: Quotes-Raze 110 Ronald Street

Motion made to approve RFP quote- Raze 110 Ronald Street using ARPA Funds.

Motion by: Michele Rusek

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT – NEW BUSINESS
NONE**

XVIII. ADJOURN

Motion made to adjourn.

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2nd by: Michele Rusek

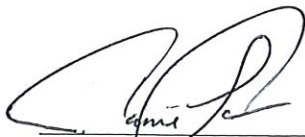
VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

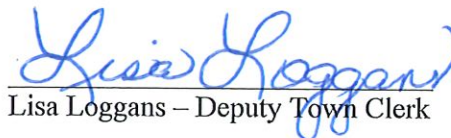
Absent:

Abstain:

*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at 9:37 PM, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on June 11, 2024, at 6:30 PM



Jamie Lawson – Mayor



Lisa Loggans – Deputy Town Clerk