

# TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

## Gate City Town Council Minutes

April 9, 2024

156 East Jackson Street, Gate City, VA

6:30 PM

**I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:46 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: Kenneth McConnell, Kevin Helms, Susan Greear, Doug Humphreys, Elizabeth Humphreys, Mark Jenkins, Vickie Roberts, Evan Crawford, Allison Winters – Kingsport Times, Leslie Crawford - GCF, Joan Cross, Alicia Alley, Samuel Gilliam, Steve Adkins, Caitlyn Cox, Samantha Culbertson, Sabrina Williams, Mark Erwin, Jason Snapp, Aaron Roberts, Sgt. Cody Johnson

**III. INVOCATION – Council Member Pat Elliott**

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

**V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion made to approve the April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, agenda.**

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

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

1. VDH 2023 Gold Standard Award
2. Dale McConnell: OSHA Training Completion

**VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. Approval of March 12, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes (Kane Street Sidewalk project)

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

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

2. **Approval of March 12, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes (Abate Waterline Easement/Moccasin Hill Subdivision)**

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

Motion by: Pat Elliott

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

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

3. **Approval of March 12, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes (Platted Road Closure/Portion of Clyde Williams Road) – TAKE NO ACTION**

4. **Approval of March 12, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes (Zoning Ordinance Changes for C-1)**

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

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

5. **Approval of March 12, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes (Zoning Ordinance Change for C-2)**

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

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

6. **Approval of March 12, 2024, Public Hearing Minutes (Zoning Ordinance Definition Addition)**

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

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

7. **Approval of March 12, 2024, Town Council Minutes**

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

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

III. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

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

Motion by: Pat Elliott

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.) – No Public Comments

Mayor Lawson closed the public comment session at 6:53 PM and opened the consent agenda session.

X. COMMUNICATIONS – No Communication

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. New pump station site has been scoped with the Town and M&C, M&C is in process of delivering supplement to Town for review. The Town, VDH and M&C conducted a site visit on 3/7/24 to reissue the CE request. Survey field work for the Williams Mill Pump Station was completed on 3/6/24. The CE request has been submitted by VDH to the Town for advertisement.

**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.

**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 9<sup>th</sup>. 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.

**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.

**B. Gate City Frontier 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 –**

**a. 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)	\$12,000
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.

**b. 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).

**c. 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.

**March 2024** – The security cameras for Grogan Park have been installed. We have received the equipment but are waiting for the in-car cameras to be installed and training for the new tasers. We are expecting to close out this grant in April 2024.

#### **d. 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.

#### **e. 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.

- f. **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.

**g. Water Leaks Repaired**

<u>Location</u>	<u>Repair Date</u>	<u>Materials used for Repair</u>
262 Campbell St	2/1/2024 (failed to report Feb)	Repaired where line enters setter; blue tip and coupling; tool truck; Ram 1500 (Lowes delivery driver ran over meter box crushing it); 2 employees; 2.5 hrs.
210 Lynn Dr	3/6/2024	2” band; 3-ton gravel; Ram 1500; little dump truck; backhoe; 4 employees; 3 hrs.
360 Woodland St	3/22/2024	Ram 1500; backhoe; 2-3/4” bands; 2-ton gravel; 3 employees; 2.5 hrs.

**D. Attorney’s Report – No Report**

**E. Council Reports – Pat Elliott: No Report**

**Tlyer Kilgore** – No Report

**Michele Rusek** – No Report

**Dexter Harmon** – No Report

**Wallace W. Ross, Jr.** – Mr. Ross asked about the bid for the grass cutting, mentioned the streetlights still are not all working, and he also brought up potentially raising the salary of the council members to benefit future members.

**F. Police Department – Attached**

**G. Sanitation Authority – Town Attorney, Michele Brooks, stated the Sanitation Department met Monday night and will be using Penn Stuart to proceed with the ongoing PSA matters.**

**H. Public Works – Attached**

**XV. CLOSED SESSION**

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

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at 7:36 PM

**XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION**

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

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

Council returned from closed session at 9:01 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: Lawson, Elliott, Kilgore, Rusek, Harmon, Ross

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

Abstain: 0



**XVII. MOTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION: No Motions Made**

**XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. **Appointment: Chairperson: Sanitation Authority**  
**TAKE NO ACTION**

**XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Platted Road Closure/Walnut Ave**

**Motion made to approve the Platted Road Closure/ Walnut Ave.**

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

2. **Donate Gate City Theatre to Gate City Frontier, Inc.**

**Motion made for a public hearing on June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Tyler Kilgore

VOTE: Aye:5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

3. **Approve Fair Housing Resolution**

**Motion made to approve Fair Housing Resolution.**

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

4. **Public Hearing: Special Exception & Use Permit: 1056 E. Jackson Steet**

**Motion made to have a public hearing for the Special Exception & Use Permit: 1056 E. Jackson St. in May.**

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried**

5. **Remove lien: 345 W. Water Street**

**Motion Made to remove lien: 345 W. Water Street.**

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 4

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain: 1 Wallac W. Ross, Jr.

**Motion Carried**

**XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT – NEW BUSINESS – No Public Comment**

**XVIII. ADJOURN**

**Motion made to adjourn.**

Motion by: Tyler Kilgore

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Michele Rusek

VOTE: Aye: 5


Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

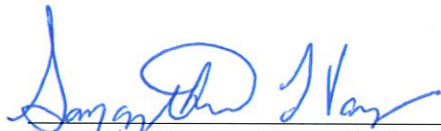
**Motion Carried**

\*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at 9:11 PM, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on May 14, 2024, at 6:30 PM



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Jamie Lawson – Mayor



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Samantha Vargas - Town Clerk