**Town Manager Report – June 10th, 2025**

* **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 people.

**December 2022 –** DHCD has 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) $12,000
Total $734,968

**May 2025** -

• **326 Park St: Rehab Project:** Construction completed; HVAC has been installed. An exception to remove carpet from the bedroom has been approved.
• **347 Park St: Rehab Project:** Roof and HVAC – The initial work using CDBG funds is completed. HVAC using AEP grant funding has been completed.

• **308 Park St: Rehab Project:** Construction in progress. Hot water heater to be installed.
• **309 Park St: Demolition** – Demolition has been completed.

DHCD has completed their compliance review on June 6th, 2025.

* **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.

 **April 2025** – Easement has been signed by the property owner. The design is nearly complete.

* **Scott County Historic Society Building: Secure 2nd floor**

 **April 2025 -** The Historic Society informed me of their desires to create a museum on the second floor of the building the Town leases to them. The flooring appears to be unstable in a few areas. I have received one quote from Clinch Mountain Contractors for $9,871.98 to install additional support jacks in five different locations. I am in the process of getting additional estimates.

* **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.

**December 2024 –** All of the documents VRA requested have been submitted. We are expecting to close this project very soon.

**January 2025 –** The required easements needed for this project were turned over to Town Attorney Michele Brooks on January 14th, 2025, to prepare deeds.

**March 2025** – Project design is complete and submitted to VDH for review. This project is expected to close with the VRA soon.

**April 2025 -** Project design is complete, and plans and specs have been submitted to VDH Central Office for review. The required easements to facilitate the project have been delivered to the Town for acquisition**.**

**May 2025 –** Utility easements from the Town is needed. To date, we have not received the deeds back from Town Attorney Michele Brooks.

* **Water Street Parking Lot Development Project**

**December 2024 -** Council has approved the construction contract with Quesenberry Construction for the Phase I of the Community Park Development Project on Water Street.

I met with Quesenberry Construction and Spectrum Designs on December 4th, 2024, and discussed the following:

**Pickleball Courts**

The design team has proposed a modification that would allow us to include four pickleball courts instead of the originally planned two. The courts can be reoriented so that, if the Town decides to repurpose the area in the future, it can be converted into two tennis courts. While this redesign will slightly extend into the green space, the overall cost will remain the same.

**Basketball Court and Surface Colors**

We also discussed the basketball court and need to decide between a concrete base with a rubber coating or an asphalt base with a rubber coating. I have reached out to Leslie to see if she can contact Matt McClung for his input, but I would appreciate your feedback as well.

In addition, we have the option to choose the colors for the surfaces of the pickleball court, basketball court, and skatepark. A suggested option is to use a color resembling “Gate City Blue” to create a cohesive and branded look for the park.

**Skate Park Layout Options**

The team also presented three different layout options for the skate park, designed to align with low-, medium-, and high-range budget levels. I would recommend going with the middle-range option, as it offers a good balance between features and cost. If Council chooses, we can always add additional amenities later as funding allows.

**Fencing and Lighting**

There was discussion about adding fencing around the pickleball and basketball courts. Since fencing was not included in the Phase I budget, I have asked the contractors to draft a separate engagement for this addition.

On the topic of lighting, I will be meeting with AEP to gather their feedback on options for the park to ensure adequate and cost-effective lighting throughout.

**Cost-Saving Opportunity**

The team identified a potential cost-saving measure. The asphalt area between the parking lot and green space—currently reserved for a future stage—could be left as is for now and used as a temporary space for food trucks until we move forward with stage construction. This could be a practical, interim solution that enhances usability in the short term. Quesenberry Construction will inspect the existing asphalt to see if this can be done.

**April 2025 -**  On March 21st, 2025 Vice-Mayor Kevin Barnett and myself went on a field trip to Bristol Sportsplex and the Riverview Courts in Kingsport. We were joined by Ms. Lenore Weiss with Spectrum Designs who is working as a sub-contractor for Quesenberry’s Construction. Ms. Anna Walters, USA Pickleball District Ambassador and certified pickleball coach, served as our tour guide.

**May 2025** – The Ground Breaking Ceremony was held on April 30th, 2025. Construction is expected to start in a few weeks. Council Action: Determine colors of the Pickleball Court.

**June 2025** – Mayor Lawson, Vice-Mayor Barnett, and I met with Lenore Weiss, Spectrum Designs, Inc and Abran Quesenberry, Quesenberry Construction on May 30th, 2025. The bids for the project have come in over budget. We discussed ways to bring the cost down. **Council Action: Discuss and approve cost savings recommendations.**

* **2024 Comprehensive Plan

July 2024 –** The Comprehensive Plan for Gate City is due by December 31st, 2024. The Planning Commission will need to be adopted by December 3rd, 2024. The Town Council will need to conduct a Public Hearing and adopt on December 10th, 2024. Both 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.

* **Kane Street Mural Project**

**December 2024 –** The Planning Commission has reviewed the proposed design with one minor change. The lettering ‘Town Gate City, VA’ has been added for context**. Council Action: Approve the mural design.**

**June 2025** – This project is almost complete. The mural need to be sealed. Is there any interest in doing an unveiling within the next two weeks?

* **Gate City Little League: Batting Cage Roof Replacement**

**April 2025** - The batting cage for the Gate City Little League needs to be replaced. We anticipate the cost to be around $10,000. Mayor Jamie Lawson has identified Walmart’s Spark Good as a potential funding source to help offset the cost. Walmart funding can cover as much as $5,000 towards the project. **Council Action:** approve to apply for the Walmart Spark Good grant program.

**May 2025 –** Council has approved to apply for the grant. The grant cycle will run through July 15th, 2025. I have reached out to the Little League for additional information.

**June 2025** – I have received the requested information from the Little League and the requested information from the IRS. The grant application will be submitted shortly.

* **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 down trees destroyed eighty 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.

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

**June 2025** – Team Rubicon is scheduled to come to Gate City on June 13th, 2025 and help remove from private property and relocate the debris to a public right of way (ROW) for removal. Special thanks to Vice-Mayor Barnett and the Ministerial Association for providing the accommodation will they are in town.

The RFPs for the storm debris and landfill monitoring predisposition contract are still in draft. It is expected to get the final version of the draft RFP approved by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

The pay request for the generator, cut & toss tree vendor, and miscellaneous expenses have been submitted through FEMA’s portal.

FEMA has given Gate City an extension until October 1st, 2025 to clear the remaining land debris.

Gate City has been awarded $91,667.00 by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to remove 300’ water debris from Big Moccasin Creek on May 29th, 2025.

* **FY 26 Budget**

**June 2025** – The draft FY 2026 Town Budget has been submitted to Council. Council has conducted a public hearing on May 27th, 2025. **Council Action:** Approve FY 2026 Town Budget