

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Gate City Town Council
July 08, 2025
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: Town Clerk, Kristie Tipton

	PRESENT:	ABSENT:
Mayor, Jamie Lawson	X	
Vice-Mayor, Kevin Barnett	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: John Burke; Baron William Scott Bradley; Anna Barnett; John W. Sawyer, Jr.; John W. Sawyer, III; Father Tim Drake, St. Bernard's Catholic Church; Valerie Haynes; Jeff Owens; Dale McConnell; GCPD Chief Terry Sivert; and Rhonda Rowe, VML Chief Administration Officer

III. INVOCATION: Father Tim Drake, St. Bernard's Catholic Church

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Terry Sivert, GC Police Chief

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made to approve July 08, 2025, agenda as presented.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 4

Nay:

Absent: 1

Abstain:

**Motion Carried*

VI. PROCLAMATIONS, CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTIONS, AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS, RESIGNATIONS AND CONFIRMATIONS, ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS: None

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of June 10, 2025 Town Council Minutes
Motion made to approve minutes as presented.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 4

Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain:

****Motion Carried***

2. Approval of June 18th, 2025 Special Called Meeting - Town Council Minutes
Motion made to approve minutes as presented.

Motion by: Pat Elliott
VOTE: Aye: 3

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain: 1 (*Wallace W. Ross, Jr.*)

****Motion Carried***

3. Approval of June 30th, 2025 Special Called Meeting - Town Council Minutes
Motion made to approve minutes as presented.

Motion by: Pat Elliott
VOTE: Aye: 3

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain: 1 (*Wallace W. Ross, Jr.*)

****Motion Carried***

VIII. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Motion made to approve payment of bills for July 2025 as presented.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon
VOTE: Aye: 4

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain:

****Motion Carried***

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

Jeff Owens, Scott Co. Rant & Rave Group – here to express community concern that King Alleyween and other events will still take place even though Gate City Frontier is no longer partnered with the town. He suggested the possibility of it taking place on Water Street, citing concerns over parking and accessibility for the physically challenged. Volunteered (himself & his wife) to help with events if needed.

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, Mattern & Craig

VDH Backup Generator Project: Final Plans and Specification have received approval to advertise from VDH. The Town will still need to acquire the required Utility Easements prior to advertisement.

Kane St. Sidewalk: 60% plans are complete. VDOT is currently working on environmental coordination efforts to satisfy NEPA requirements. VDOT has provided approval to move forward with project design utilizing stairs at the intersection of Kane St. and East Jackson St. Final construction plans are in process and are expected to be finalized for submission to VDOT by the end of August.

Manville Road Sidewalk: 60% of plans are in progress. There will be a ROW phase for this particular project to address 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. VDOT is currently working on environmental coordination efforts to satisfy NEPA requirements. The Town and M&C have set up a meeting with Jeffery Lane, who is the resident of 384 Manville Road, on July 15th at 2:30 PM to discuss how parking in the area of that residence will be affected.

Retaining Wall Construction Plans (Walgreen's Parking Lot): Preliminary final bid documents are under review and will be delivered to the Town this week for review prior to advertising.

B. 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 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)	<u>\$12,000</u>
Total	\$734,968

July 2025

•**326 Park St. Rehab Project:** Construction completed; HVAC has been installed. An exception to remove carpet from the bedroom has been approved and replaced.

•**347 Park St. Rehab Project:** Roof and HVAC – The initial work using CDBG funds is completed. HVAC system and water heater were replaced using AEP grant funding.

•**308 Park St. Rehab Project:** Construction is complete.

•**309 Park St: Demolition:** Demolition has been completed.

Community Clean-Up was conducted from June 16th – June 23rd, 2025.

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

This project is now complete.

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 2025 - Preliminary final bid documents are under review and is expected to be delivered to the Town this week.

Scott County Historic Society Building: Secure 2nd floor

April 2025 - The Historic Society informed me of their desire 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 (1) 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.

July 2025 – Currently awaiting the Utility easements 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 Groundbreaking 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.

July 2025 – Quesenberry Construction informed the town that the bids came in at \$813,500 which exceeded the construction budget of \$600,000. Council met for a Called Meeting on June 30th, 2025 and voted to accept \$216,506 in value engineering credit. The project now has a new construction budget of \$596,994. The town is currently waiting on the permits from DEQ to begin construction.

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 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.

Kane Street Mural Project

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

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

July 2025 – The mural has been sealed, and this project is now complete.

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 elevations. 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.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 debris 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 accommodations while 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.

July 2025 – Team Rubicon worked June 13th through June 15th to move storm debris from private property to the public right of way for removal. The Scott County Ministerial Association provided accommodations while they were in town. We are still awaiting approval of the proposed RFP for predisposition storm debris removal and monitoring from VDEM.

Events

The following events are currently being planned for the Fall 2025.

- 08.02.25 Gate City Frontier, Inc: Back to School Bash
- 09.13.25 Kickin Back at King Alley Concert
- 09.20.25 Gate City Frontier, Inc: Harvest Moon event
- 10.24.25 King Alleyween: Trunk or Treat event
- 11.11.25 Veterans Day Event
- 11.22.25 Christmas Open House
- 11.29.25 Small Business Saturday
- 12.06.25 Christmas Parade

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) funding awards

Little Moccasin Interceptor – Phase I

- Project Amount: \$720,300
- Principal Forgiveness (grant funding): \$540,225
- Loan Amount: \$180,075
- Interest: 0%
- Terms: Up to 30-year debt retirement

High School Collector Line Replacement Project

- Project Amount: \$704,000
- Principal Forgiveness: \$528,000
- Loan Amount: \$176,000
- Interest: 0%
- Terms: Up to 30-year debt retirement

Curb Painting Project

Affordable Pavement Services (A.P.S.) completed the curb painting project on Jackson Street on June 28th, 2025.

C. Attorney Report – No Report

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

Pat Elliott – No Report

Dexter Harmon – No Report

Wallace W. Ross, Jr. – Asked Council to consider keeping some of the old decorative lights, remove the bulbs and electrical components, and use them to hang flowers on (like what some other towns have). Property Maintenance we have a lot of properties we need to look at, we as

a committee. It's so just much, cut grass, in places it's grown. We used to have a process for that. We need to look at backups for our office people (in case of sickness).

Kevin Barnett – Was contacted by Chris Maines who attended the 4th of July event that United Pentecostal Church. Questioned if the Town can take electrical connections from the streetlights and convert the power over to be used by vendors?

E. Police Department – Terry Sivert

	May	June	Year to Date
Calls for Service	295	321	1160
Arrest	5	3	25
Summons	52	48	218
Incident Reports	7	5	33
Accident Reports	5	2	23
DIU Arrests	1	0	4
Vehicle Unlock	6	4	39

Significant Activity & Reporting

GCPD held its first civilian gun safety class in June, a great turnout! Thanks to Sgt. Quillen for teaching this class. We have another scheduled for August 18, already full.

Our officers are working plenty of DMV selective enforcement for speed and alcohol. All grants are currently on schedule.

With the help of Town Manager Greg Jones, we received a grant for a portable/digital speed awareness sign; it's solar powered. The sign lets drivers know how fast they're going. We have some "hot spots" we're going to use it in. There is no camera, no enforcement – designed to have drivers self-correct their speed.

Kevin, our Rookie, is doing very well at the academy, and we're looking forward to having him back.

F. Sanitation Authority – No Report

G. Public Works – Dale McConnell

June Brush Pickup: 2,200 lbs.

Work Orders: 102

Trash: 148,350 lbs.

Water Leaks: 7

Sold walk-behind Scag mower, 2016 Dodge Ram, and 2013 F-350 Dump Truck with Meyers Snowplow all on GovDeals.com.

H. Water Plant – Submitted by Steve Rutherford

Virginia Dept. of Health – Division of Drinking Water Monthly Report

Month/Year: May 2025

PWS# 1169405

Distribution System Performance

A1	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from GC treatment plant	9,254,000
A2	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Scott Co. PSA master meter	1,642,500
A3	Total gallons of water placed into distribution system (A1+A2)	10,896,500
B	Gallons of water transferred to Scott Co. PSA	1,612,275
C	Gallons of water placed into distribution system that are not transferred to Scott Co. (A3-B)	9,284,225
D	Average gallons per day placed into distribution system for customers other than Scott Co. PSA (C/days in month)	299,491
E	Gallons of water metered to other customers	4,028,000
F	Total gallons of water accounted for (B+E)	5,640,275
G	Total gallons of water unaccounted for (A3-F)	5,256,225
H	Apparent percent of water lost from distribution system (100*G/A3)	48.24%
I	Number of connections	1,216
J	Average gallons/day placed into distribution system per non-SCPSA waterworks customer (D/I)	246

Distribution System Performance Goals

*Less than 10% loss of water placed into distribution system

* Less than 150 gpd of water placed into distribution system per non-other waterworks customer.

Significant Deficiency

*Greater than 30% leakage of water placed into distribution system.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. VML Essay Winner, John W. Sawyer, III
Motion made to

Motion by:

2nd by:

VOTE: Aye:

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

****Take No Action***

2. Mayor's VML Conference: October 11th through October 12th, 2025 in Roanoke, VA
Motion made to approve the Mayor & Vice-Mayor's attendance.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

VOTE: Aye: 4

Nay:

Absent: 1

Abstain:

****Motion Carried***

3. **VML Conference: October 12th through October 14th, 2025 in Roanoke, VA. Who will attend?**
Motion made to approve the Mayor, Vice-Mayor and Wallace W. Ross, Jr.'s attendance.

Motion by: Pat Elliott
VOTE: Aye: 4
Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain:

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

****Motion Carried***

4. **423 East Jackson Street: Raze structure approval (complaint received)**
Motion made to move forward with razing property.

Motion by: Pat Elliott
VOTE: Aye: 4
Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain:

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

****Motion Carried***

5. **Approve quote: Express AV, stage and sound for September 13th, 2025 concert event.**
Motion made to approve quote as presented.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon
VOTE: Aye: 4
Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain:

2nd by: Pat Elliott

****Motion Carried***

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT – NEW BUSINESS: None

XV. 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: 4
Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain:

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

****Motion Carried***

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at 7:29 PM

XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Motion made for Council to return from closed session.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

VOTE: Aye: 4
Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain:

****Motion Carried***

Council returned from closed session at **8:41 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: Jamie Lawson: Aye
Kevin Barnett: Aye
Wallace W. Ross, Jr.: Aye
Pat Elliott: Aye
Dexter Harmon: Aye
Michelle Rusek: *Absent*

XVII. MOTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION – No motions

XVIII. ADJOURN

Motion made to adjourn

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

VOTE: Aye: 4
Nay:
Absent: 1
Abstain:

****Motion Carried***

*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at **8:45 PM**, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on August 12th, 2025, at 6:30 PM.



Mayor, Jamie Lawson



Town Clerk, Kristie Tipton