

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Gate City Town Council
November 18, 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, Allen Dougherty	X
Town Manager, Greg Jones	X
Town Attorney, Michele Brooks	X

Others present: Anna Barnett; Mike Still, Kingsport Times News; Gabe Edmunds, Scott Co. Virginia Star; Ellen Bailey; Jeff Owens, Scott Co. Rant & Rave

III. INVOCATION: Pat Elliott

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: GCPD Chief Sivert

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

1. Motion made to amend the November 18, 2025 agenda under "New Business" to add item # 7 (set public hearing for Solid Waste Ordinance on Dec. 9, 2025).

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried*

2. Approval of the November 18, 2025 agenda.
Motion made to approve agenda.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

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 October 21, 2025 Town Council Minutes.
Motion made to approve as presented.**

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

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

****Motion Carried***

- 2. Approval of October 21, 2025 Public Hearing Minutes: Special Exception and Use Permit for mural at Jackson & Kane Street.
Motion made to approve as presented.**

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

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

****Motion Carried***

- 3. Approval of October 21, 2025 Public Hearing Minutes: C-1 & C-2 Zoning Ordinance Amendment.
Motion made to approve as presented.**

Motion by: Kevin Barnett
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

****Motion Carried***

- 4. Approval of October 21, 2025 Public Hearing Minutes: Allow "Tiny Homes" in R-1 and R-2 districts.
Motion made to approve as presented.**

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

2nd by: Allen Dougherty

****Motion Carried***

VIII. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Motion made for approval for payment of bills for November 2025 as presented.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon
VOTE: Aye: 5

2nd by: Pat Elliott

Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

****Motion Carried***

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

1. **Ellen Bailey** – Gave an update on 242 Chestnut Street; said she has spoken with a lawyer and is waiting to find out their response. Ellen stated that even though Mr. Jones did not keep their agreement, since the meeting (June 6, 2025 Town Council Meeting) he has conducted himself professionally. Ellen thanked Greg for notifying her back in the summer about a complaint a resident had made about cut grass in the street in front of their house. Ellen said he did his job very well, for telling them about the grass and she wishes he had done that before he tore their house down – that is one of the areas he did wrong. But, he did good this time, very well. Ellen gave Greg a *Thank You* card for his professionalism and for coming and letting them know about the grass complaint. Ellen presented “Pray for Our Nation” prayer books to Mayor Lawson and Attorney Brooks. She plans to get more of the prayer books and hand out to all of the Council members.
2. **Jeff Owens**, Scott Co. Rant & Rave social media group – Talked about the economics of Gate City. He said people's voices are not being heard when folks come to Town Council – that is the consensus of the people who post on his webpage. He questioned what permits are coming in and what is not getting approved and why. He said Gate City needs a hospital, new car lots, used car lots, retail shopping, and restaurants. Why is Gate City not inviting businesses here? Stated that they understand that Council can't control that, but why aren't permits getting approved?

Mayor Lawson: asked what permits Mr. Owens is referring to. Mayor Lawson has been actively speaking with the group that owns KFC – trying to get them to come here. We're asking.

Pat Elliott: What permits have we turned down?

Greg Jones: What permits are you talking about?

Jeff Owens: What we're undertaking, us as a community is understanding is that permits don't get approved for whatever reason. We don't know. We don't see anything. What the general consensus is, is that permits don't get approved.

Town Attorney: What kind of permits?

Mayor Lawson: What kind of permits?

Jeff Owens: Everybody is at a consensus that Gate City wants to keep Gate City as a “good ‘ol boy” city. And it's like okay, what's happening is that population is declining and people are moving out.

Mayor Lawson: No, the population is actually increasing. As far as us turning down permits, we haven't turned anyone down. I don't know where you're getting your information Mr. Owens, but that is false.

Jeff Owens: Where would myself, I can do the research myself and let the 3,500 members in my group and let others know. That's the general consensus is what's getting approved to be able to come into the area? I could meet with one of you and say okay, this is what's going on and then I can let others know as well.

Mayor Lawson: Again, I am lost on the permits. I'm lost.

Greg Jones: The only time we ever turn down a permit, business wise, is if it has a conflict with zoning, but we haven't had anybody.

Jeff Owens: That's the general consensus.

Town Attorney: We haven't turned down any zoning requests, anything, any business requests that I'm aware of. I've been the Town Attorney for 15 years and I am not aware of any business that we have turned down.

Wallace W. Ross, Jr.: I been on this Council a long time and we have always advocated for progress. One of the major problems is property (not enough of it in town).

Greg Jones: I can give you my email address and you can email me with questions.

Jeff Owens: If I can meet with some of you, maybe after Thanksgiving?

Mayor Lawson: We welcome your feedback – we wouldn't know if you weren't here tonight.

*Allen Dougherty and Pat Elliott volunteered to meet with Jeff Owens.

**Mayor Lawson closed the Public Comment section at 7:03 PM.

X. COMMUNICATIONS

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 – submitted by Jason Snapp, Mattern & Craig

VDH Backup Generator Project: Awaiting to submit the pre bid package to VDH till the required utility easements are acquired. The Town is in the process of acquiring the needed easements currently. The project can go to advertisement once the easements are procured and the pre bid package is approved by VDH.

Kane St. Sidewalk: 90% construction plans have been submitted to VDOT for review.

Manville Road Sidewalk: Storm drainage design for the project is complete, and the project is currently at the 60% design stage. Required easements can now be defined for acquisition. Once required ROW and easements are established the Town can request VDOT to open the ROW phase of the project. This will allow negotiations with the affected property owners to procure the needed ROW/easements. Once ROW is procured 90% and 100% plans can be finalized.

B. Town Manager's Report – Greg Jones

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.

August 2025 – The Planning Commission is currently working on developing temporary signs for the dog park. The signs will be for the dog park itself, large and small dog areas. The signs will be used until the wayfinding sign project is complete.

October 2025 – Temporary signs for the Dog Park, large and small dog area has been ordered and received. The permanent signs will be a part of the wayfinding sign project that is being currently planned.

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.

November 2025 – Town Attorney, Michele Brooks submitted the Utility easement. We will schedule a meeting with the effected property owners shortly.

Water Street Parking Lot Development Project

September 2025 – A preconstruction meeting was held on August 25th, 2025. Quesenberry Construction has mobilized their equipment to the project site on Monday, September 1st, 2025. The construction phase is expected to start the week of September 8th, 2025, with the removal of the existing asphalt.

October 2025 – A progress meeting was held on October 16th, 2025. This drainage area behind the park has been increased by eight feet. The footprint for the Farmers Market is now 32'x100'.

November 2025 – A progress meeting was held on November 6th, 2025. The team reviewed site conditions and confirmed that the existing 4% pavement slope must be maintained, with a final grade between 4% and 4.5% to prevent drainage and elevation issues. Quesenberry Construction will provide options for fixed, non-adjustable basketball goals. While transparent backboards were mentioned for appearance, a solid backboard may be more practical for play. Food trucks will have power only, with no water connections included.

The group also discussed utility coordination. I will confirm with Cody McRoy whether a pole-mounted transformer is compatible with the planned EV chargers. Quesenberry will supply GPS coordinates for the wastewater connection and notify the Town when a Water Street closure is needed. The AEP light pole at the site has already been removed. Council has approved the 2" asphalt overlay. Currently Quesenberry Construction is installing water and wastewater connection. A portion of Park Street will be closed to make the wastewater connection.

The Farmers Market grant proposal has been submitted to USDA for funding consideration. This is a 1:1 match and we should receive notice by the end of the year. Special thanks to: Scott County Board of Supervisors, Delegate Terry Kilgore, Scott County Economic Development Authority, and Mann Farms for the letters of support for this project.

Gate City Little League: Batting Cage Roof Replacement

October 2025 – The Walmart Spark Good grant application has been completed and submitted on October 15th, 2025.

November 2025 – Walmart has declined the grant citing exhausted budget. Walmart asked that we reapply in February 2026 when their budget renews.

Hurricane Helene – September 27th, 2024

October 2025 – The RFP for the predisposition contracts for storm debris removal and landfill monitoring is currently being advertised. The deadline to respond is November 6th, 2025.

November 2025 – We have received responses from the RFP storm debris removal. The RFP's are in the review process. Recommendation will be made at the December 2025 Council meeting.

Events

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

- 10.24.25 King Alleyween: Trunk or Treat event
 - Joesph Young, MC & Magician
 - Inflatables and games
 - Face Painting
 - Dance performances by: Jenkins School of Dance and Gate City Dance Team
 - Costume Contest: Hope House of Scott County
- 11.11.25 Veterans Day Event
 - Council member Wallace W. Ross, Jr., will be the keynote speaker.
- 11.22.25 Christmas Open House
 - We currently have 20 participating businesses
 - Free Hayrides
- 11.29.25 Small Business Saturday
- 12.06.25 Christmas Parade

Engineering Procurement

September 2025- Mattern & Craig, Inc. contract has expired. Council has previously appointed Council Members Pat Elliott and Michele Rusek to the interview committee. We are expecting the final approval from VDOT for the engineering procurement RFQ soon. Council will need to replace Mrs. Michele Rusek as she has resigned from Town Council.

October 2025 - VDOT and VDH have approved the RFQ for engineering procurement. The RFQ is currently being advertised with a due date of October 31st, 2025.

November 2025 – We have received responses from three engineering firms. VDOT will need to review the RFQ submission, procurement methodology, and interview question. Once we receive feedback from VDOT we will be ready for interviews.

C. Attorney Report – No Report

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

Wallace W. Ross, Jr.: Thanked Post 265 and the town for letting him speak to the kids (Veteran's Day keynote speaker). Asked if we can put some of the blue Gate City trashcans at Gateway Park. Mr. Ross said we need to define our borders and make them public knowledge and put up signs. Asked who owns the "Home of Attorney General" sign? It needs some attention.

E. Police Department – Terry Sivert

	September	October	Year to Date
Calls for Service	199	231	2113
Arrest	4	7	51
Summons	17	15	334
Incident Reports	5	5	54
Accident Reports	3	5	38
DUI Arrests	1	1	9
Vehicle Unlock	7	5	69

Significant Activity & Reporting for October 2025:

- Our officers are continuing to work plenty of DMV selective enforcement for speed and alcohol. All grants are currently on schedule and have completed all audits.
- Vehicles (2) and equipment have been ordered.
- Officer John Coalson completed Field Training Officer School.

F. Sanitation Authority – No Report

G. Public Works – Dale McConnell: Included in packet

H. Water Plant – submitted by Steve Rutherford

Virginia Dept. of Health – Division of Drinking Water Monthly Report
Month / Year: October 2025
PWS# 1169405
Distribution System Performance

A1	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Gate City treatment Plant	8,775,000
-----------	---	------------------

A2	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Scott County PSA master meter	1,431,700
A3	Total Gallons of water placed into distribution system	10,206,700
B	Gallons of water transferred to Scott County PSA	1,496,223
C	Gallons of water placed into distribution system that are not transferred to Scott Co. PSA	8,710,477
D	Average gallons per day placed into distribution system for customers other than Scott Co. PSA	280,983
E	Gals of water metered to other customers	4,797,300
F	Total Gallons of water accounted for	6,293,523
G	Total Gallons of water unaccounted for	3,913,177
H	Apparent percent of water lost from distribution system	38.34%
I	Number of connections	1,216
J	Avg gals/day placed into distribution system per non-SCPSA	231

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Public Hearing: Zoning Ordinance C-1 & C-2 Setback Amendments**
Motion made to set a Public Hearing for Dec. 9, 2025.

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

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

****Motion Carried***

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

- Christmas Parade Grand Marshall Appointment**

Nomination: Quentin Miles
Nominated by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

Motion made to nominate Quentin Miles as the 2025 Christmas Parade Grand Marshall

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

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

****Motion Carried.***

- Planning Commission Appointments (2 vacancies)**

- Motion made to appoint Mitzi Wilson to a term that expires on Dec. 31, 2028**

Motion by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

****Motion Carried***

b) Motion made to appoint Scott Cleek to a term that expires on Dec. 31, 2027

Motion by: Allen Dougherty
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: Pat Elliott

****Motion Carried***

**3. Workshop: Information regarding PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances).
Motion made to see if we can hold a Workshop presentation, at the Scott Co. offices building or the vocational school, to be presented by Steve Ruherford, Water Plant Supervisor (date / time to be determined after meeting location is finalized).**

Motion by: Kevin Barnett
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: Pat Elliott

****Motion Carried – time/place TBD***

Gate City Water Plant Supervisor, Steve Rutherford gave a brief overview of PFAS. He told us what they are, where they can be found, how they affect living things, and some of the health issues they can cause: Thyroid disease or cancer, Increase cholesterol levels, Immune system, the way our bodies react to disease, Increased infertility in women, High blood pressure, Heart attacks, Cancer in various parts of the body, and lower infant birthweight are just some of them.

The EPA has come out with new regulations to give guidance to the Virginia Department of Health. The initial test results from Moccasin Creek, which was done by the state, the initial results were "undetectable", so that's fantastic news. We will have to go into initial testing with the EPA and Health Department, and we will have to do four consecutive quarters of testing. Based on those results, we will go to a tri-annual schedule. Initially we have to do the tests, and we'll start that in the first quarter of 2026. I want you guys and ladies to be educated on this. It is very quickly becoming mainstream. As the public becomes aware of this, I want you to be educated on what it is, what are the dangers, and how Gate City is attacking the situation and how we're monitoring the regulations and how we interact with the Commonwealth of Virginia. I don't want you guys to be in the dark on PFAS. It takes about an hour to go through the presentation from the Virginia Dept. of Health.

Kevin Barnett: Let's go ahead and establish this first: This is in no way related to child cancer incidents or any of that (Scott County cancer cluster).

Steve Rutherford: It is absolutely NOT related; it is 100% different.

Steve said PFAS are primarily used as a coating and gave a few examples of where PFAS can be used/found like the inside of popcorn bags (coating is 100% PFAS); if Styrofoam is heated too hot or reused PFAS can be ingested (coffee cups and to-go boxes).

**4. Grogan Park: Walking Trail Rehabilitation Quotes.
Motion made to accept the quotation submitted by Stone Excavating for \$11,550.00.**

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

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

****Motion Carried***

5. **Workshop – Zoning Ordinance Amendment: Change definition in R-1 and R-2 zoning districts to include ‘Tiny Homes’ (schedule date/time)**
Motion made to

Motion by: _____ 2nd by: _____
VOTE: Aye:
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain: ** No Action Taken / Move to December Agenda*

6. **Workshop – Food Trucks on Jackson St. (schedule date/time)**
Motion made to

Motion by: _____ 2nd by: _____
VOTE: Aye:
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain: ** No Action Taken / Move to December Agenda*

7. **Set Public Hearing for Solid Waste Ordinance (§18-4) on Dec. 9, 2025.**
Motion made set a Public Hearing for the Solid Waste Ordinance amendment on Dec. 9, 2025.

Motion by: Pat Elliott 2nd by: Kevin Barnett
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain: **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: _____ 2nd by: _____
VOTE: Aye:
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at ____ PM

XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Motion made for Council to return from closed session.

Motion by:

2nd by:

VOTE:

Aye:

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

Council returned from closed session at ____ 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:
Kevin Barnett:
Allen Dougherty:
Wallace W. Ross, Jr.:
Pat Elliott:
Dexter Harmon:

XVII. MOTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION

XVIII. ADJOURN

Motion made to adjourn

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE:

Aye: 5


Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

****Motion Carried***

*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at **8:26 PM**, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on December 9th, 2025 at 6:30 PM.



Mayor, Jamie Lawson



Town Clerk, Kristie Tipton