

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Gate City Town Council
December 09, 2025
156 East Jackson Street, Gate City, VA
6:30 PM

I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:43 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; David Dawson, Virginia Department of Health; Gabe Edmunds, Scott Co. Virginia Star; Allison Winters, Kingsport Times News, Steve Rutherford, GC Water Plant Chief Operator/Supervisor

III. INVOCATION: Kevin Barnett

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approval of the December 09, 2025 agenda.

Motion made to approve the agenda as presented.

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.

Quentin Miles – Mayor Lawson & Town Council presented a certificate to Quention for being the 2025 Christmas Parade Grand Marshall.

Delaney Herron – Mayor Lawson & Town Council presented Mr. Herron a certificate or recognition for his years of service on the Gate City Planning Commission.

David Dawson – Deputy Director, Virginia Department of Health, Abingdon office

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of November 18, 2025 Town Council Minutes

Motion made to approve as presented.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: Pat Elliott

****Motion Carried***

2. Approval of November 13, 2025 Town Council & Planning Commission Joint Session Workshop Minutes.

Motion made to approve as presented.

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

2nd by: Pat Elliott

****Motion Carried***

VIII. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

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

Motion by: Dexter Harmon
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

****Motion Carried***

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

David Dawson - Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is currently doing a study to address this issue with an epidemiologist (social media reporting that the child cancer cluster in Scott County may be related to the drinking water) – anticipates the report will be released sometime by the end of December. There has not been any exceedance or non-compliance for any of the disinfectant by-products over the last couple of years for any of the water systems they regulate. Gate City has received 15 out of 16 years the VDH Optimization Program award.

The VDH receives daily and monthly reports from water plants. Mr. Dawson went on to describe many of the items that are tested on a daily and/or monthly basis. The VDH uses a certified laboratory for testing, and we make on-site visits/inspections of the water plants.

For individuals who are interested in testing their water, we are concerned with their collection techniques and recommend it be analyzed by a certified laboratory. They can reach out to local health departments with questions.

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 – 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 and M&C will begin the process of coordinating with each property owner in January. The project can go to advertisement once the easements are procured and the pre bid package is approved by VDH.

Kane St. Sidewalk: 90% review comments have been received from VDOT, and M&C are in the process of addressing those comments for resubmittal and approval to advertise the project.

Manville Road Sidewalk: Storm drainage design for the project is complete, and the project is currently at the 60% design stage. Required easements are being 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.

December 2025 – In November 2025, an engineering evaluation completed by FSE on November 24th identified significant subgrade deflection at the basketball courts and recommended remediation consisting of an undercut, geogrid installation, and stone. At the December 2, 2025 called Council meeting, the contractor reported that the subgrade had become compromised. Council approved a change order in the amount of \$40,752.47 to install the recommended stone and geogrid to restore soil stability to the area.

- **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.

- **Grogan Park Rehabilitation Project**

December 2025 - In November 2025, thirty-four trees were removed around the walking trail and park. The Scott County Ministerial Association is currently collecting the usable wood for its firewood program, after which the Town will clear the remaining debris. We are now awaiting Stone Excavation to mobilize and begin the trail rehabilitation work.

- **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: Jenkin 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.

December 2025 - The RFQ submission and proposed interview questions have been submitted to VDOT for their review. Once they approved our procurement and questions, we will be ready to interview the prospective engineering firms.

C. Attorney Report – No Report

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

Pat Elliott: Heard a rumor about a new coffee business coming to Gate City – it's false.

Kevin Barnett: Yes, I'd like to comment on this Virginia Town & City Magazine, the November-December issue they put out. When we went to the last conference in Roanoke, they discussed doing an article on Gate City, and the firewood program we've started. They have that on page 37, and they mention Gate City and stuff in there. I'm very pleased to have been a part of that.

Wallace: I'd like to mention that big 'ol pile of rocks that we've paid for, that thing is as tall as a building down there. Is it really going to take that much? You think they'll use all that? Another thing, I know it's the holidays and they're working down on Water Street. So uh, we have a few lights down there that are out.

Mayor Lawson: Do you have any updates on the cell phone tower or whatever it is?

Greg: Yes, they started construction. They got through all of their environmental reviews so they're starting on construction.

E. Police Department – Terry Sivert

	October	November	Year to Date
Calls for Service	231	296	2409
Arrests	7	3	54
Summons	15	20	354
Incident Reports	5	4	59
Accident Reports	5	6	44
DUI Arrests	1	0	9
Vehicle Unlock	5	3	72

Significant Activity & Reporting for November 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) are expected to be ready in approximately 4 weeks.

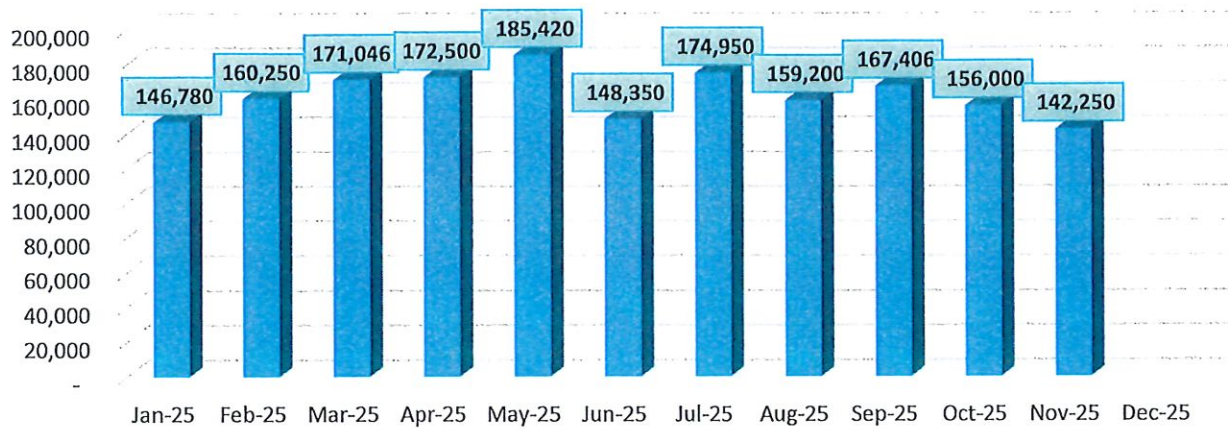
F. Sanitation Authority – No Report

G. Public Works – Dale McConnell

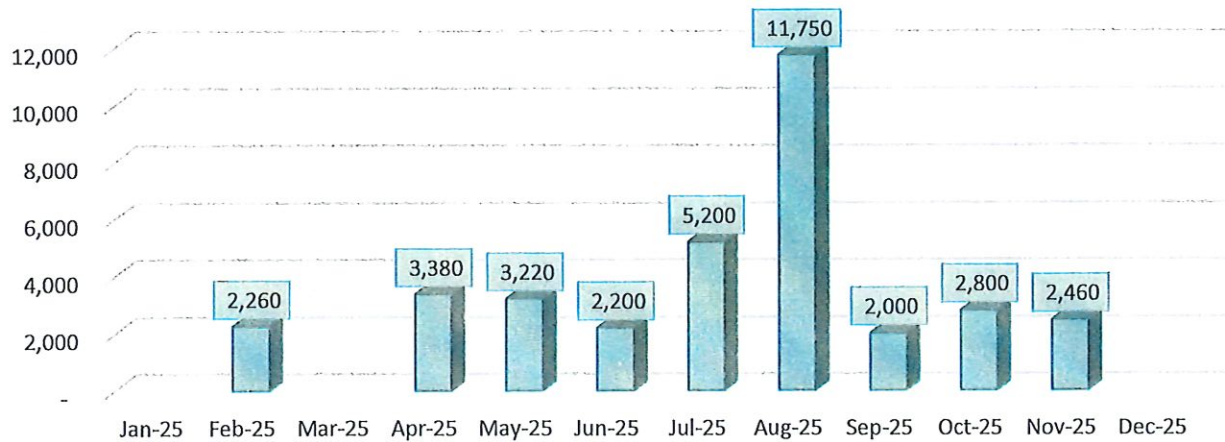
Measured in Pounds	Brush Pick-Up	Trash Pick-Up	Work Orders (# per month)
Jan-25		146,780	75
Feb-25	2,260	160,250	55
Mar-25		171,046	85
Apr-25	3,380	172,500	69

May-25	3,220	185,420	106
Jun-25	2,200	148,350	102
Jul-25	5,200	174,950	88
Aug-25	11,750	159,200	61
Sep-25	2,000	167,406	81
Oct-25	2,800	156,000	72
Nov-25	2,460	142,250	60
Dec-25			

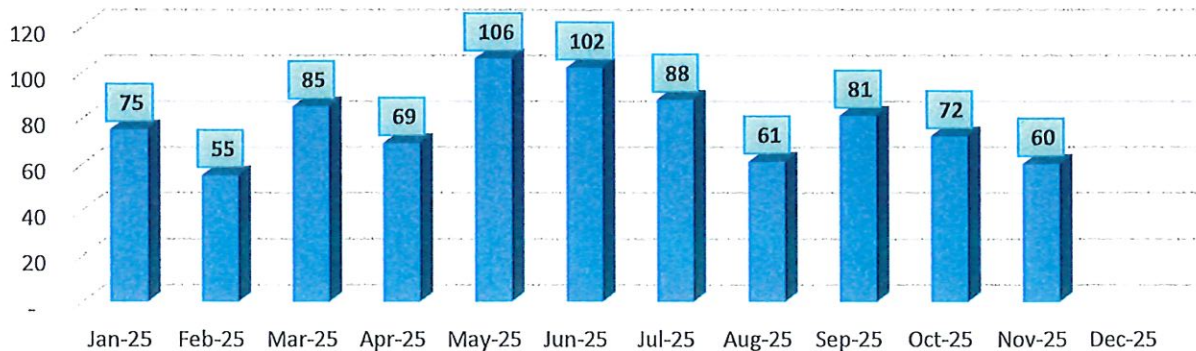
Trash Pick-Up (Pounds) 2025 Totals



Brush Pick-Up (Pounds) 2525 Totals



Work Orders 2025 Totals



H. Water Plant – submitted by Steve Rutherford

Month / Year: December 2025

PWS# 1169405

Distribution System Performance

A1	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Gate City treatment Plant	8,715,000
A2	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Scott County PSA master meter	1,293,400
A3	Total Gallons of water placed into distribution system	10,008,400
B	Gallons of water transferred to Scott County PSA	1,713,286
C	Gallons of water placed into distribution system that are not transferred to Scott Co. PSA	8,295,114
D	Average gallons per day placed into distribution system for customers other than Scott Co. PSA	276,503
E	Gals of water metered to other customers	4,669,200
F	Total Gallons of water accounted for	6,412,486
G	Total Gallons of water unaccounted for	3,595,914
H	Apparent percent of water lost from distribution system	39.93%
I	Number of connections	1,216
J	Avg gals/day placed into distribution system per non-SCPSA	227

Steve Rutherford: To answer Mr. Ross' question concerning water testing frequency we submit a monthly report to the VDH. Within that report is daily run testing that is performed every 2 hours that the plant is in operation we must collect samples and data. We also have a process control audit (*inaudible*) system that will record information to the second. That is recorded and I can't modify it or do anything with it – that has been recording since its inception back in 2016. If you want a sample data point from December 9, 2019 at 9:00 it's there. There's no skewing or modifying any of those numbers; they go straight to the office of drinking water (VDH). I am held accountable by the Federal and State for that operation (water plant). There is a mandate by the EPA and the state: I have 2 hours to report any deviation that is not in compliance or regulations. Failure to comply – I will be held accountable by a court of law.

Wallace Ross: When things like this happen, do you increase your testing?

Steve: On the disinfectant by-products, we have done additional testing on those. We go out into the system (field) and flush. I can take tests at those sites that are kind of precursors and by my experience I know typically about what those results will be. Anytime I'm out I'll send emails and pictures to Greg, Lisa and Kristie where I'm at and what I'm doing – kind of a physical record of the actual site(s).

Wallace: So, if you test and find something that's out of normal, do you immediately get in touch with Gate City to see what could be the thing, or do you go through the state?

Steve: If I find something that's out of, let's just call it "whack", it's not normal, I will immediately go back and test it to find out what's causing it. We have a troubleshooting protocol which we follow to come up with a solution. Typically, if there's something out of whack more than twice, I'm making a phone call to Mr. Dawson's office to get some recommendations on what we need to do.

Steve went on to tell Council that the "Tap Test" water test that people are talking about on social media, samples may sit in their lab up to five days, at room temperature, before being tested. Also, they may test for up to 30 different items out of one sample. The samples the Gate City water plant takes are put on ice, tested within 24 hours by a certified lab, and for each item we want to test for there must be a single sample for that specific test only.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Zoning Ordinance Amendment: Change definition in R-1 and R-2 zoning districts to include "Tiny House".

Motion made to

Motion by:

2nd by:

VOTE:

Aye:

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Take No Action – Schedule Workshop*

2. Workshop: Food Trucks on Jackson Street (schedule date and time).

Motion made to

Motion by:

2nd by:

VOTE:

Aye:

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Take No Action – add to January Agenda*

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Richmond Legislative trip – who will be attending?

Motion made to

Motion by:

2nd by:

VOTE:

Aye:

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Take No Action – add to January Agenda*

**2. Section 30-365 Variances and Special Exception & Use Permit amendment
Motion made to**

Motion by: 2nd by:
VOTE: Aye:
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain: **Take No Action*

**3. Public Hearing: Vacate platted road near Poplar Street
Motion made to advertise and hold a Public Hearing on Jan. 13, 2026**

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

**4. Planning Commission appointment: Mrs. Jo Ann Castle: Term to begin January 1, 2026
and end December 31, 2029.
Motion made to**

Motion by: Dexter Harmon 2nd by: Allen Dougherty
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain: **Motion Carried*

**5. Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) Appointment: Scott Cleek to a one-year term. Term to
begin January 1, 2026 and end December 31, 2026.
Motion made to appoint Scott Cleek to a one-year term on the BZA.**

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

**6. Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA):
Motion made to**

Motion by: 2nd by:
VOTE: Aye:
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain: **Take No Action*

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**

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at ____ PM

XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Motion made for Council to return from closed session.

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

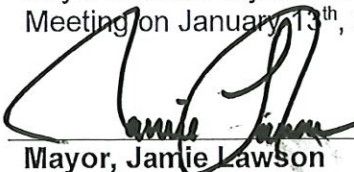
Motion made to adjourn

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

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

****Motion Carried***

*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at **8:17 PM**, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on January 13th, 2025 at 6:30 PM.



Mayor, Jamie Lawson



Town Clerk, Kristie Tipton