

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Gate City Town Council
January 13, 2026
156 East Jackson Street, Gate City, VA
6:30 PM

I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:37 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: John Kale; Danielle Kale; Jeff Arrington, Scott Co. VA250 Committee; Anna Barnett; Susan Elliott; Cindy Williams, Scott Co. Historical Society; Mike Still, Kingsport Times News; Gabe Edmunds, Scott Co. Virginia Star; Suzanne. Kerney-Quillen, Scott Co. VA250 Committee; Jeff Owens, Scott Co. Rant & Rave Social Media Group, Quinten Miles; Frances Perry; Steve Rutherford

III. INVOCATION: Tom Quickel, First Presbyterian Church

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: GCPD Chief Sivert

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made to approve the January 13, 2026 agenda.

Motion made to approve as presented.

Motion by: DH
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by: PE

***Motion Carried**

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

Sgt. Quillin presented GCPD Officer Corey Hammonds with an award for achieving rank of Master Officer.

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of December 02, 2025 Special Called Meeting Minutes (*Community Park Subgrade soil too soft for planned construction*).
Motion made to approve as presented.

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

2nd by: Allen Dougherty
**Motion Carried*

2. Approval of December 09, 2025 Public Hearing Minutes (*Solid Waste Ordinance §18-4 Amendment*).
Motion made to approve as presented.

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

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.
**Motion Carried*

3. Approval of December 09, 2025 Public Hearing Minutes (*C1 & C2 Setback Amendment*).
Motion made to approve as presented.

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

2nd by: Pat Elliott
**Motion Carried*

4. Approval of December 09, 2025 Town Council Meeting Minutes.
Motion made to approve as presented.

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

2nd by: Dexter Harmon
**Motion Carried*

5. Approval of January 06, 2026 Special Called Meeting Minutes.
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 January 2026 as presented.

Motion by: Kevin Barnett

2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

***Motion Carried**

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

Jeff Owens, Scott Co. Rant & Rave Social Media Group: reported that members of his social media group have asked what changed to the plans for the skate park, playground, and splash pad that was supposed to be going in at the new Community Park on water street (still under construction). It seems like a lot of things have been downgraded. Could playground equipment be added in, possibly to the green space, at a later date?

Town Manager: The skate park was switched out for a Farmer's Market (received a grant to fund that portion of the park) as there is not any grant funding available for recreational equipment. This change is made because of the engineering orders that have come up. As for the playground...there were not any plans for a playground at this park.

Mayor Lawson: If I may interject, in reference to the splash pad, that is in Phase II anyway. We're doing these in different phases and that will be incorporated in Phase II. The shade canopy and entertainment stage is also in Phase II.

Pat Elliott: One other thing you may want to let your followers know, this is the real reason, that's the last of the Covid money...no local taxes and we're not in with the county. I've noticed a lot of your followers think "why is the county wasting all this money?". Well, the county has not spent a dime on it; they have nothing invested in it. It's the last of the Covid money and we had to spend it or give it back.

Frances Perry: I would like to give great big accolades to the Public Works crew for the work they do for us down at the Community Center. We had a huge amount of trash and they picked it up, all of it – they never refuse us. They're very cooperative and we appreciate them very much.

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. Comments have been received from VDOT regarding the need for the Town to certify the Environmental document as well, M&C is currently working through the level of effort required to best address those comments within the current scope of services under contract.

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. Intent is to submit 60% plans to VDOT for review and comment by the end of the month.

B. Town Manager's Report – Greg Jones

- **Dog Park Project**

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 24 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.

January 2026 – On January 6th, 2026, Council met for a called meeting to review and discuss Change Order #3. This change order resulted from VDOT's LUP-OC standards that were required to connect the wastewater line located in the middle of Water Street to the park's underground infrastructure. VDOT required a 50' wide asphalt overlay with milled transitions. Council approved the change order. This project except for the Pickleball and Basketball Court topcoat will be completed in about 3-4 weeks. The topcoat on the courts will be completed in the spring when the temperature and weather permit.

- **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**

January 2026 – We have received four responses from our Request for Proposals (RFP) for Storm Debris Removal and Landfill Monitoring. The services will only be engaged during a state of emergency in which FEMA will fund the recovery. **Council Action: Approve one vendor for the Storm Removal and one vendor for the Landfill Monitoring services.**

- **Events**

The Events Committee met with the Scott County VA250 Committee on January 9th, 2026 to discuss this year's 4th of July event. The Scott County VA250 committee was formed to support and coordinate events, tourism initiatives, and historical programming tied to Virginia's 250th anniversary of American independence. We discussed having a two-day event with concerts, fireworks, parade, and car show.

- **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 approve our procurement and questions, we will be ready to interview the prospective engineering firms.

- **2026 Legislative Visit**

The 2026 Legislative Visit has been confirmed. We will be meeting with DHCD, VDOT, VRA, VDH, DEQ, Tourism Corporation, and Tobacco Commission. We will be attending the Southwest Legislative Reception as well. The meetings will take place between January 27th and 29th, 2026 in Richmond, VA.

- **2025 Annual Town Audit**

The FY 2025 Annual Town Audit is underway. We are expecting completion in early February 2026.

C. Attorney Report – No Report

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

Kevin Barnett: Would like to mention and thank the Scott Co. Board of Supervisors for providing funding to the Scott Co. Ministerial Association's wood project at Grogan Park.

Allen Dougherty: Where the old decorative lights were installed, those squares that are full of gravel is coming out. It's all over the sidewalks and is a safety hazard. Can we do something that is more permanent, like concrete or pavement? Some are covered by trash cans. What I'd like us to look at is the cost to start a program and to begin filling those in with permanent covering over them.

Wallace W. Ross, Jr.: On the east end of town, those American flags look awful, and they need to be replaced. They're all torn, faded, and ripped. Can we look at taking those down or replacing them? Thank you for getting Cleveland Street paved.

E. Police Department – Chief Terry Sivert

	November	December	Year to Date
Calls for Service	296	288	2697
Arrests	3	3	57
Summons	20	18	372
Incident Reports	4	5	64
Accident Reports	6	4	48
DUI Arrests	0	0	9
Vehicle Unlock	3	4	76

Significant Activity & Reporting for December 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.
- Our electronic speed is signing up now. It monitors speed in both directions. In three days, 5,000 cars passed by it on the east end of town. 23 miles per hour (mph) is the average speed. It will be moved to different locations. It gathers a lot of data that may help us acquire grant funding.
- Our rookie officer, Kevin McKinney, has finished his field training and is patrolling on his own.

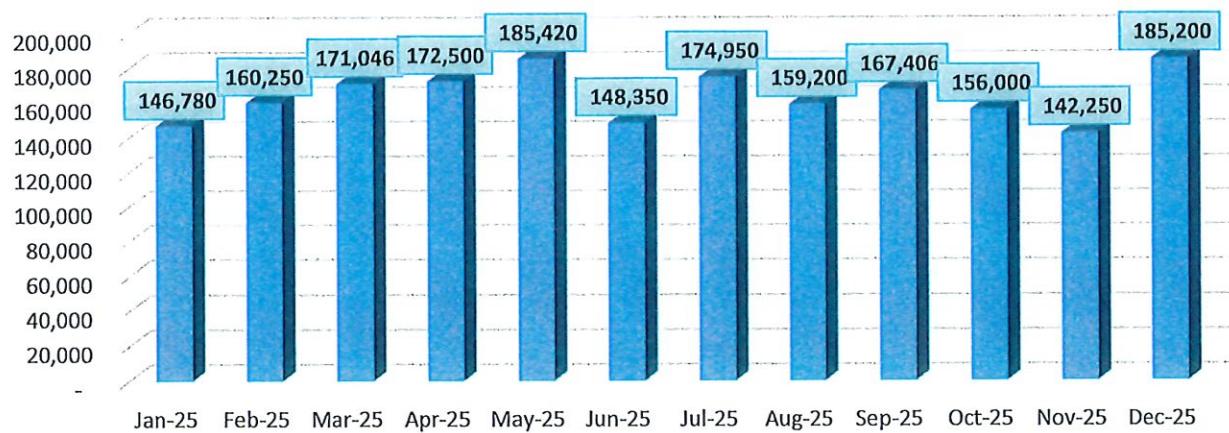
F. Sanitation Authority – No Report

G. Public Works – Dale McConnell

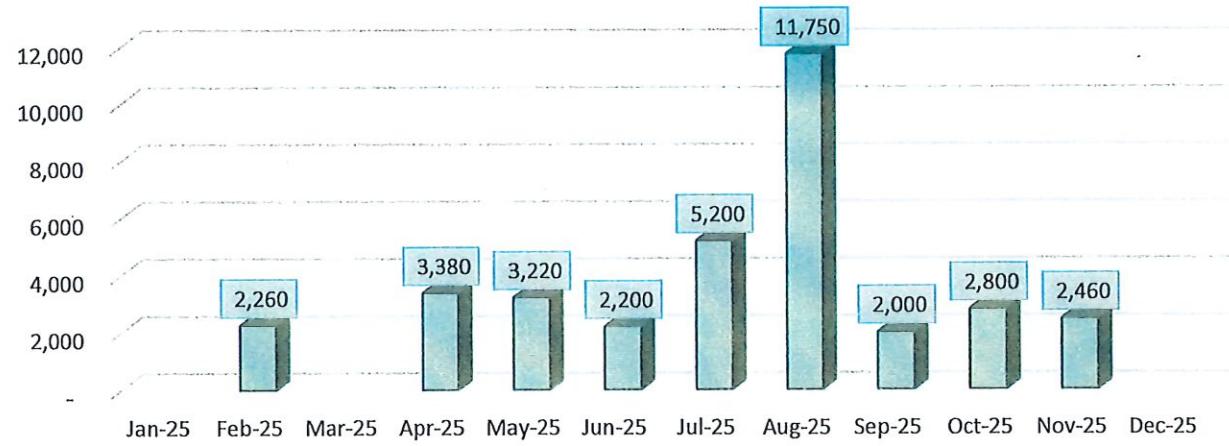
Measured in Pounds	Brush Pick-Up	Trash Pick-Up	Work Orders (# per month)
Jan-25		146,780	75
Feb-25	2,260	160,250	55
Mar-25		171,046	85
Apr-25	3,380	172,500	69
May-25	3,220	185,420	106
Jun-25	2,200	148,350	102
Jul-25	5,200	174,950	88

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		185,200	73

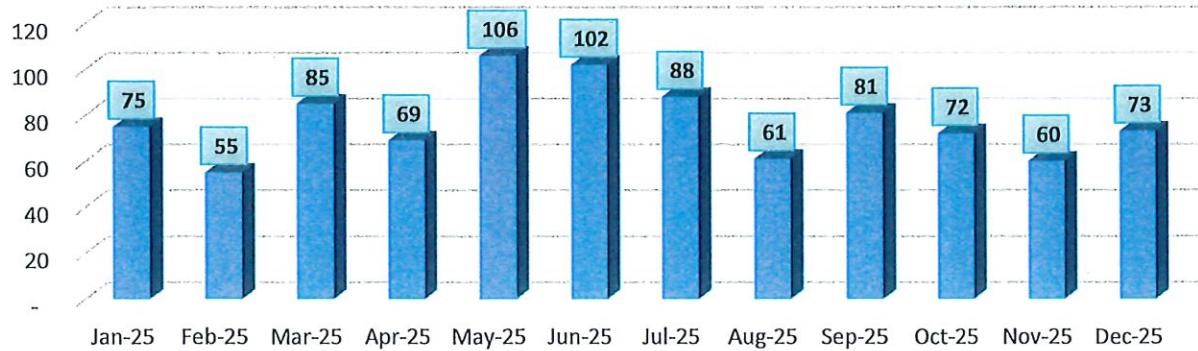
Trash Pick-Up (Pounds) 2025 Totals



Brush Pick-Up (Pounds) 2025 Totals



Work Orders 2025 Totals



H. Water Plant – submitted by Steve Rutherford

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

Month / Year: December 2025

PWS# 1169405

Distribution System Performance

A1	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Gate City treatment Plant	9,107,000
A2	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Scott County PSA master meter	1,861,300
A3	Total Gallons of water placed into distribution system	10,968,300
B	Gallons of water transferred to Scott County PSA	1,903,981
C	Gallons of water placed into distribution system that are not transferred to Scott Co. PSA	2,064,319
D	Average gallons per day placed into distribution system for customers other than Scott Co. PSA	292,397
E	Gals of water metered to other customers	4,190,500
F	Total Gallons of water accounted for	6,064,481
G	Total Gallons of water unaccounted for	4,873,819
H	Apparent percent of water lost from distribution system	44.44%
I	Number of connections	1,216
J	Avg gals/day placed into distribution system per non-SCPSA	240

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Amend the agenda to combine Unfinished Business Item # 1 and #2 and hold a Joint Workshop with the Planning Commission (on R-1 & R-2 only).

Motion made to amend the agenda to hold a Joint Workshop with Planning Commission, on R-1 & R-2 only, and Town Council to address Food Trucks on Jackson Street.

Motion by: Kevin Barnett
VOTE: Aye: 5

2nd by: Pat Elliott

Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

**Motion Carried*

2. **Zoning Ordinance Amendment: Change definition in R-1 and R-2 zoning districts to include “Tiny Homes”.**

Motion made to

Motion by:
VOTE: Aye:
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by:
**Take No Action*

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

Motion made to

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

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.
**Take No Action*

4. **Schedule a Joint Workshop with Planning Commission (R-1 & R-2 only) on 03-Feb-2026 at 6:00 PM.**

Motion made to schedule the Joint Workshop with the Planning Commission.

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

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.
**Motion Carried – schedule Joint Workshop for 03-Feb-2026 at 6:00 PM*

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Scott Co. VA250 Committee / July 4th Events (Suzanne Quillen & Jeff Arrington)**
Motion made to partner with Scott Co. VA250 Committee for July 4th, 2026 events.

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

2nd by: Pat Elliott
**Motion Carried*

2. **VML Local Government Day / Legislative Visit Update**

Motion made to

Motion by:
VOTE: Aye:
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

2nd by:
**Take No Action*

3. Community Park Name – Community to decide

Motion made to advertise to invite the community to participate in a contest, maybe give gift card or some other prize to the winner(s).

Motion by: Kevin Barnett

2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

***Motion Carried**

4. Auction Old Street Lights?

Motion made to accept sealed bids, but reserve 10 to donate to the Park Committee.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

***Motion Carried**

5. Request for Exemption – Foam Food Containers for Pal's restaurant.

Motion made to exempt Pal's restaurant from the Foam Food Containers ban that goes into effect on 01-Jul-2026 (exemption is good for one (1) year).

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

***Motion Carried**

6. Emergency Response: Landfill Monitoring (pre-dispositioned contingency).

Motion made to accept RFP from Insight Consulting Group, LLC.

Motion by: Kevin Barnett

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

***Motion Carried**

7. Emergency Response: Debris Removal (pre-dispositioned contingency).

Motion made to accept RFP from Southern Disaster Recovery, LLC

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

***Motion Carried**

8. From recommendation from Planning Commission: Set Public Hearing for C-1 (§30.194) and C-2 (§ 30-226) Setback Amendments.

Motion made to

Motion by:

2nd by:

VOTE: Aye:

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Take No Action*

9. Amend agenda to advertise Public Hearings for 1) Special Exception & Use Permit (Mac McClung sign) and 2) to vacate platted road at Sherman & Poplar Streets.

Motion made to amend agenda to advertise Public Hearings.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon

2nd by: Pat Elliott

VOTE: Aye:

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried*

10. Advertise a Public Hearing for Special Exception & Use Permit for the Mac McClung sign located below Gate City High/Middle school.

Motion made to advertise a Public Hearing to be held on 10-Feb-2026.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:

Absent:

Abstain:

**Motion Carried*

11. Advertise a Public Hearing to vacate platted road near Sherman & Poplar Streets.

Motion made to advertise a Public Hearing to be held on 10-Feb-2026.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

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: Kevin Barnett

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5

Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

***Motion Carried**

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at 7:11 PM.

XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Motion made for Council to return from closed session

Motion by:

2nd by:

VOTE: Aye:
Nay:
Absent:
Abstain:

NOTE: After listening to the audio recording and referencing my notes, I have determined that a Motion was not made for Council to return from closed session. This was the order of events:

- 1. Mayor Lawson, "I need a vote or a roll call."***
- 2. Town Attorney, "We need to do the Certification first, please (reads the Certification). And now the roll call, please."***
- 3. Town Clerk took the roll call.***
- 4. Mayor Lawson then went to New Business item # 1***

Kristie L. Tipton, Town Clerk 22-Jan-2026

Kristie L. Tipton

Council returned from closed session at 8:46 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
Allen Dougherty: Aye

Wallace W. Ross, Jr.: Aye
Pat Elliott: Aye
Dexter Harmon: Aye

XVII. MOTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION – None

XVIII. ADJOURN

Motion made to adjourn

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

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

***Motion Carried**

*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at **9:17 PM**, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on February 10, 2026 at 6:30 PM.



Mayor, Jamie Lawson

Town Clerk, Kristie L. Tipton