

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Gate City Town Council
March 10, 2026
156 East Jackson Street, Gate City, VA
6:30 PM

I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:41 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: Gabe Edmunds, Scott Co. Virginia Star; Mike Still, Kingsport Times News; Quentin Miles; Gordon Wood; Steve Rutherford

III. INVOCATION: Allen Dougherty

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: GCPD Chief Sivert

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made to approve the March 10, 2026 agenda.

Motion made to approve as presented.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

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 February 10, 2026 Town Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion made to approve as presented.

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

2nd by: Pat Elliott

****Motion Carried***

2. Approval of February 10, 2026 Public Hearing Minutes (*Vacate platted road at Poplar & Sherman Streets*).

Motion made to approve as presented.

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

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

****Motion Carried***

3. Approval of February 24, 2026 Special Called Meeting Minutes (*Community Park Change Order # 4*).

Motion made to approve as presented.

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

2nd by: Allen Dougherty

****Motion Carried***

VIII. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Motion made for approval for payment of bills for March 2026 as presented.

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

2nd by: Pat Elliott

****Motion Carried***

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

Gordon Wood – asked about mowing in his neighborhood (Manville Rd.), he asked for some direction as to what the town mows and what he can mow.

Town Manager, Greg Jones – asked Mr. Wood to come by Town Hall and see him.

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: Waiting to submit the pre-bid package to VDH till the required utility easements are acquired. The Town and M&C met with two of the three property owners where easements are needed on 3/4/26. Town Manager Greg Jones has spoken directly to the third property owner. All three property owners appear willing to sign the requested easements to move the project forward. 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 preparing the required EQ-121 and EQ-199 forms for submittal to VDOT as well as completing required final coordination efforts with USFWS. All comments will be addressed and the project turned into to VDOT for advertisement approval this week.

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**

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.

February 2026 – We are clear to meet with the effected property owners.

March 2026 – Jason Snapp with Mattern & Craig, Inc and I met with the three property owners who are effected by this project on March 4th, 2026. We are not expecting any issues with the easements needed for this project.

- **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 connections. 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.

February 2026 – Phase I is nearly complete. The contractors need to finish the cleanout covers. Topsoil and seedling are completed and sporting equipment has been set up. Contractors will be bringing in a sweeper to remove dirt and debris from the paving area. We are awaiting the electric inspection from the Scott County Building inspector for the EV charging stations. Installation of the acrylic coating for the pickleball and basketball courts has been delayed due to weather conditions. We will need several 50+ degree weather for the acrylic coating to properly bond with the asphalt.

The Town has been awarded \$44,000.00 in grant funding from Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund - Infrastructure Grant Program. This funding will be used for the creation of a Farmer's Market in Gate City. I would like to thank Manns Farms,

Scott County Board of Supervisors, Delegate Terry Kilgore, and Scott County EDA for their support this project. Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Test, owners of Horse-n-Bear Ranch, have expressed interest in partnering with our Farmers Market.

March 2026 – Council met and approved Change Order #4 on February 24, 2026. The change order was in the amount of \$24,889.14 to excavate rock from the water and wastewater line. The contractor informed the town this would be the last change order for phase 1. The contractor is currently creating a punch list for the final activities. The coating for the pickleball and basketball courts will need to be applied and a final inspection from Scott County Soil and Water.

We will be working with Ms. Anna Walters, USA Pickleball District Ambassador and certified pickleball coach to provide pickleball classes starting in the spring.

- **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.

February 2026 - Southern Disaster Recovery, LLC (SDR) has submitted their storm debris removal contract for Council consideration: Council **Action: Approve SDR's contract**. We are waiting for Insight, Inc to submit their contract for Landfill Monitoring.

- **Events**

March 2026 – The VA250 Committee met on Thursday, February 26, 2026 and discussed the Council event that will happen at the Gate City High School on July 3rd, 2026. The headlining band contract has been signed. We are currently working with AV Express for the stage and sound. We are hoping to have that contract signed soon. Additional activities being planned are a 5K race and a Pickleball Tournament.

- **Engineering Procurement**

February 2026 – VDOT has approved our proposed interview questions and has cleared the way to interview the prospective engineering firms. Action Item: Determine date to interview firms.

March 2026 – The interview team met with three prospective engineering firms on February 25, 2026. The interview team scored and sent their recommendations to VDOT. Once VDOT approves the process and scoring methodology, we will be ready to start the contract negotiations.

- **Congressional Community Project Funding Request**

March 2026 – The Town submitted a Community Project Funding request through the office of H. Morgan Griffith seeking federal assistance to replace the Gate City Volunteer Fire Department's aging fire engine. Congressman Griffith will review requests submitted from across the district and select up to 20 projects to forward for consideration. Those projects will then be submitted to the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations as part of the Fiscal Year 2027 federal funding process. The Town's request seeks approximately \$1.09 million and includes strong community and regional support.

Mayor Lawson – Any Council Members have any questions for Mr. Jones?

Council Member, Allen Dougherty – You mentioned that you have begun contract negotiations with Engineering firm(s), will Pat and I be able to sit in on that?

Town Manager, Greg Jones – Sure.

Allen Dougherty – As far as funding, did we get all the letters we needed from...

Greg Jones – Letters of support for the fire truck? I got all but two. I didn't get any from the [Scott County] Lifesaving Crew or the State Fire Marshall's office. I didn't receive one from either one, but everyone else was very quick to respond.

Allen Dougherty – Did that include our State [elected] people?

Greg Jones – Yes, Sir. Our State Delegates both [Todd] Pillion and [Terry] Kilgore, they signed off on that and gave us letters of support for that.

Allen Dougherty – Did we get anything from [Tim] Kane and [Mark] Warner? Were they needed or not?

Greg Jones – Nah, just on the state end. I didn't get anybody on the Federal [level]. The whole drive of these letters of support was to show that we had a need for it. It wasn't something that we just came up with a couple of days ago.

Allen Dougherty – Right, right.

Greg Jones – We've been working on this for a couple of years now. I wanted to make sure that was expressed in that.

- **2025 Annual Town Audit**

The FY 2025 Annual Town Audit is underway and nearing completion.

C. Attorney Report – No Report

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

E. Police Department – Terry Sivert

February 2026

	January 2026	February 2026	Year to Date

Calls for Service	385	235	620
Arrest	4	4	8
Summons	45	20	65
Incident Reports	8	5	13
Accident Reports	5	4	9
DUI Arrests	0	1	1
Vehicle Unlock	6	4	10

Significant Activity & Reporting for February 2026:

- Our officers are continuing to work several hours DMV selective enforcement for speed and alcohol. All grants are currently on schedule and have completed all audits.
- GCPD continues to conduct routine patrol and community policing.
- Had to order new straps for the Speed Sign; they're metal and they don't wrap around some of the light poles. The metal light poles are too big, so we had to order some extra straps.
- Speed Sign recorded 41,364 cars come into GC on Kane Street from 2/9 – 2/24. Avg. Speed 19.7 mph.
- Speed Sign recorded 9,031 cars come into GC on Manville Rd. from 2/18 – 3/1. Avg Speed 27.7
- Next firearm safety class is on 3/16/2026 at 6:00 pm.
- Our new patrol cars will be here next week. We have to go get them (camera switch out from one of our current cars to one of the new cars).
- We applied for a new grant for AED units – we have two now.

F. Sanitation Authority – No Report

G. Public Works – Dale McConnell

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Measured in Pounds	Brush Pick-Up	Trash Pick-Up	Work Orders (# per month)
Jan-26		160,400	68
Feb-26		118,300	89
Mar-26			
Apr-26			
May-26			
Jun-26			
Jul-26			

Aug-26			
Sep-26			
Oct-26			
Nov-26			
Dec-26			

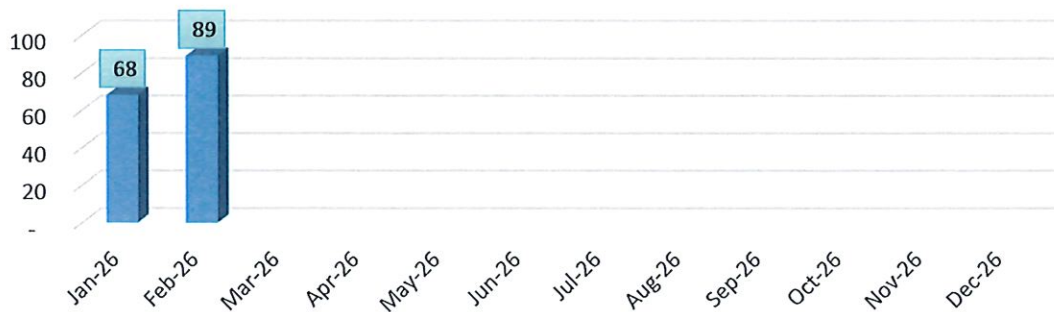
Trash Pick-Up (Pounds) 2026 Totals



Brush Pick-Up (Pounds) 2026 Totals



Work Orders 2026 Totals



H. **Water Plant** – submitted by Steve Rutherford

Virginia Dept. of Health – Division of Drinking Water Monthly Report Month / Year: February 2026 PWS# 1169405 Distribution System Performance

A1	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Gate City treatment Plant	11,087,000
A2	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Scott County PSA master meter	2,399,500
A3	Total Gallons of water placed into distribution system	13,486,500
B	Gallons of water transferred to Scott County PSA	4,312,571
C	Gallons of water placed into distribution system that are not transferred to Scott Co. PSA	9,173,929
D	Average gallons per day placed into distribution system for customers other than Scott Co. PSA	327,640
E	Gals of water metered to other customers	5,346,600
F	Total Gallons of water accounted for	9,659,171
G	Total Gallons of water unaccounted for	3,827,329
H	Apparent percent of water lost from distribution system	28.38%
I	Number of connections	1,213
J	Avg gals/day placed into distribution system per non-SCPSA	269

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

**Mayor Lawson and Council Members recognized and congratulated the Gate City Water plant for achieving the Gold Star Standard Award again.*

***Steve Rutherford, Chief Water Plant Operator** – asked if Gate City has a grant writer, Like Mattern & Craig (Engineering firm). There is a grant out there for one (1) fire hydrant every year (they cost about \$5,000.00 each).

Greg Jones – Send that to me and I'll see what it needs. I may be able to do that in-house.

Steve Rutherford – We are flushing now. We received the PFAS results came back at 0.00. We're glad our neighbors made some adjustment (pumping volume). We can now use our system to identify if there's leaks.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. R-1 and R-2 Proposed Ordinance to include Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) / Tiny Homes.

Motion made to schedule a Public Hearing for April 14, 2026 at 6:30 pm.

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

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

****Motion Carried***

2. Food Trucks Proposed Policy Motion made to

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

2nd by:

****Take No Action – add to April agenda***

3. Public Works Office, replace heat pump and lines Motion made to

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

2nd by:

****Take No Action***

****Council Member Elliot requested Scott Co. Building Inspector to inspect current unit and to determine if using a mini-split unit(s) would be feasible/practical.***

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Community Park hours proposal 6:00 am to 12:00 am

Motion made accept proposed Community Park hours of 6:00 AM to 12:00 AM.

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

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

****Motion Carried***

2. Solid Waste Ordinance Amendment

Motion made to make suggested revisions to §18-1, paragraph 2 concerning Approved Solid Waste Container, add **"or a similar rigid solid waste receptacle with a lid"**; §18-4 remove paragraph (a), (c), and (e); and remove §18-14 Penalty, paragraph (a), (b), and (c).

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

2nd by: Allen Dougherty

****Motion Carried***

3. Quentin Miles: Miles for Diabetes Walk on September 19, 2026

Motion made to grant permission to use the Community Park as the start/finish for Diabetes Walk, with the exception that he provides his own insurance coverage for the event.

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

2nd by: Allen Dougherty

****Motion Carried***

4. Proposed Rules for Bark Park Dog Park

Motion made to accept the proposed rules with the following added: 1) No dog fighting allowed, 2) Must abide with state & local ordinances, and 3) Rules are subject to enforcement.

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

2nd by: Allen Dougherty

****Motion Carried***

5. Schedule Public Hearing: Section 30-365, Variance and Special Exemption and Use Permits Amendment.

Motion made to schedule a Public Hearing for April 14, 2026 at 6:30 pm.

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

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

****Motion Carried***

6. Housing Rehabilitation Project: Margie Street

Motion made to proceed with the Housing Rehabilitation Project on Margie Street.

Motion by: Pat Elliott
VOTE: Aye: 4
Nay:

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

Absent: 1

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: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 4

Nay:

Absent: 1

Abstain:

****Motion Carried***

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at **7:19 PM**

XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Motion made for Council to return from closed session.

Motion by: Pat Elliot

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 4

Nay:

Absent: 1

Abstain:

****Motion Carried***

Council returned from closed session at **8:43 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: *Absent*
Allen Dougherty: Aye
Wallace W. Ross, Jr.: Aye
Pat Elliott: Aye
Dexter Harmon: Aye

XVII. MOTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION – None

XVIII. ADJOURN

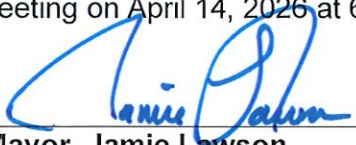
Motion made to adjourn

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

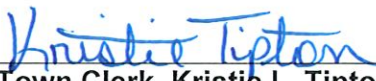
2nd by: Pat Elliott

****Motion Carried***

*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at 9:34 PM, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on April 14, 2026 at 6:30 PM.



Mayor, Jamie Lawson



Town Clerk, Kristie L. Tipton