

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Gate City Town Council

May 19, 2026

156 East Jackson Street, Gate City, VA

6:30 PM

I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:34 PM By: Mayor, Jamie Lawson

II. ROLL CALL: Deputy Town Clerk – Lisa Loggans

	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: Billy Skeens; JC Starnes; Autumn Clark; Cindy Williams, Scott County Historical Society; Beth Robinette; Reba Hillman, Larry Sturgill CPA Office; Thomas D. Auto; Anna Barnett; Quentin Miles; Gabe Edmunds; Dale McConnell; Brandy Dockery; Jeff Owens; Kevin Helms; Kathy Mullins; Karen Owens; Father Drake; Anthony Lambert and Michael Adams, Scott County Lifesaving Crew; Marshall Tipton; Edna Tipton; Jeremy Quiones; Ellen Bailey

III. INVOCATION: Father Drake

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

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made to approve the April 14, 2026, agenda.

Motion made to approve as presented.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay: 0
Absent: 0
Abstain: 0

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

None

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of April 14, 2026, Town Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion made to approve as presented.

Motion by: Dexter Harmon
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay: 0
Absent: 0
Abstain: 0

2nd by: Kevin Barnett

2. Approval of April 14, 2026, Public Hearing Minutes (Variance and Special Use & Exception Permits Ordinance Sec.30-365)

Motion made to approve as presented.

Motion by: Pat Elliott
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay: 0
Absent: 0
Abstain: 0

2nd by: Wallace W. Ross, Jr.

3. Approval of April 14, 2026, Public Hearing Minutes (R-1 & R-2 Zoning Ordinance)

Motion made to approve as presented.

Motion by: Kevin Barnett
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay: 0
Absent: 0
Abstain: 0

2nd by: Allen Dougherty

VIII. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

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

Motion by: Pat Elliott
VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay: 0
Absent: 0
Abstain: 0

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

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

Mr. Starnes: Stated that he is part owner of Blueline Treats Food Truck and asked for Council to reconsider the Food Truck ordinance that was recently passed. Mr. Starnes stated that he didn't think it was fair to food trucks and felt the ordinance was developed from the ordinances from Washington County and Abingdon, Virginia. The fees that are charged there may not be able to be afforded here. Recently set up at Shoemaker School and ended up paying a \$50 fee. Mr. Starnes stated that he could understand the fee for a festival that would generate a lot more money. There is a lot of overhead for food trucks just like any other restaurant and any other business. Mr. Starnes asked Council if they would reconsider that. Jonesville charges a one-time \$30 business license fee with a 5% Meals Tax; Weber City \$50 business license fee and a 4.5% meals tax; Big Stone Gap charges a \$30 business license tax plus 8% meals tax. Mr. Starnes felt that there are some misconceptions that food trucks are not paying these types of fees. We pay the same taxes as the brick-and-mortar restaurants. The food trucks are inspected by the health department, and we would like Council to go back to the drawing board and reconsider something different. Mr. Starnes stated that there have been concerns about the placement of the food trucks in front of restaurants in the past. That concern should fall back on whoever

the event organizer was. Don't punish the food trucks over that. We just want an even playing field. I still have to pay a \$50 fee regardless of where my food truck is set up at.

Ms. Dockery: Stated that she believes Council has been misinformed. Ms. Dockery just started a food truck business a month ago. Ms. Dockery said that she is not going to pay \$50 fee and she is fine where she is at. Ms. Dockery stated that she spends \$200 every time she sets up and she pays taxes. Ms. Dockery stated that the City of Kingsport is \$15 per year. Weber City is \$50 per year and we pay Weber City and county taxes. There is a lot of overhead and we are inspected by the health department just like any other kitchen. Ms. Dockery stated that she would love to sell in Gate City but the \$50 fee is just too high. Ms. Dockery informed Council that she had done quite a bit of research and has not found anyone that charges a daily fee.

Town Attorney Michele Brooks asked if they had to pay a fee to attend festivals? Ms. Dockery stated that with her T-Shirt business that she has traveled to Panama City. Ms. Dockery stated that she paid \$100 in Gate City but that was not with food. In Myrtle Beach it's a one-time tax fee of \$1,200. Mountain Empire Days was \$200. We pay county taxes; meals taxes; taxes on our equipment...really no difference other than we have wheels.

Mr. Jeff Owens: Mr. Owens stated that he does not own a food truck but has 18 years' experience in the food industry. Mr. Owens stated that what he heard from the Facebook Page, 'Scott County Rant and Rave' is why we don't want to come to Gate City and pay a daily \$50 fee. That adds up. If you charge an annual fee that will attract vendors to come to Gate City. We want to attract business to come and help our area. When you bring in one business you are bringing in thousands of tax dollars to our area. Why are you shoving these businesses away? They are looking at the bigger picture of what they are paying monthly or each week. They pay the same taxes as the brick-and-mortar stores. Why are we not having food truck rallies and charging a monthly fee? If you charged a monthly fee you would attract more businesses. They can set up at the new park. Mr. Owens stated that he is looking at it economically wise and we want to attract these businesses to our area. This will help to replace other taxes. Mr. Owens stated the county just started raising taxes again. How much more tax increase are we going to have as a community as a whole.

Mayor Lawson asked if anyone on Council has any questions for Mr. Starnes, Ms. Dockery, or Mr. Owens.

Vice-Mayor Barnett asked if you would feel more comfortable paying a food tax than a fee?

Ms. Dockery stated that she would feel more comfortable paying a yearly \$50 dollar fee and pay the little taxes that other businesses pay. If we want to build our community, then we need to set the fee at \$50 per year fee like Weber City.

Mayor Lawson asked if Ms. Dockery pays the meals tax separately. Ms. Dockery said yes. For example if the total was \$1,667 dollars then you would collect \$75 in meals tax and that is paid by the 20th just like the county does. This is your golden ticket to get this going along with a \$50 business license. Ms. Dockery stated that she did the math and New York City is \$250 for two years. I think Gate City is \$36,000.

Councilmember Elliott stated that Kingsport is \$150 per initial fire inspection and \$30 business license, \$15 for the city and \$15 for the county, sales tax on all sales and a permit of \$75 for three days.

Town Manager Jones stated that the \$15 was just for the Kingsport business license. Ms. Dockery stated that you do not need a health department permit for a one-day show in Kingsport. It's \$280 for a health department permit, but I've just been doing one day shows. You don't have to have a fire inspection if not using a generator, gas or propane.

Mayor Lawson asked if they would feel more comfortable paying a \$50 yearly fee and a meals tax? Mr. Starnes said yes, meals tax is paid the county or the city by the 20th of the month. A \$50 fee on a calendar or fiscal year and then a meals tax. Mr. Starnes said it would be cheaper than paying the \$50 per day fee. You could put a stipulation that if the vendor lost the health certificate, it would void the permit.

Town Attorney Brooks asked if you have set up at a Gate City Frontier event? Mr. Starnes said yes, I had to pay a \$50 or \$75 event fee or something like that and they told us where to set up. That may have been some of the problems to start with.

Mayor Lawson stated that was an area of concern. The food trucks were set up in front of restaurants who were selling the same thing.

Councilmember Allen Dougherty asked what the previous fee you paid? Mr. Starnes stated that was \$50 or \$75 but don't quote me on that. Vice-Mayor Barnett asked: was that for one day events? Mr. Starnes stated that it was correct. Councilmember Harmon asked if you set up four times in a year, its \$100? Plus, you pay the sale tax and meals tax? Mr. Starnes stated that town would waive the fee and meals tax because they want to bring in the business.

Town Manager Jones stated that in regards to the food truck policy that council passed, the intent was to make sure there is an even and fair playing field with everybody and to make sure that we are protecting our brick-and-mortar businesses. We have businesses who have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars just to have a food truck selling the same thing set up outside their business during an event. The purpose of the events is to bring people to our brick-and-mortar businesses. In addressing this concern, Council wanted to create a policy that would create a buffer for both brick and mortar businesses and food trucks. The town proposed a \$50 fee and that is it. You do not have to pay a meals tax our a business license tax. If you have a food truck that is making more than \$1,200 per day, you actually spend more money paying a meals and business license tax than the permit fee. Weber City does not have a food truck policy. They are charging a business license and meal tax, which is higher than Gate City, you end up paying more. Mr. Starnes stated there are misconceptions about that. If you setup at a school you will not make \$1,200. At an event, you will do really well, but setting up at a school or a parking lot somewhere, you will not make \$1,200. They may make three or four hundred dollars.

Town Manager Jones stated that a business that wishes to set up on a permanent basis, you do not have to pay a food truck fee. You become a regular business at that point. If you have a place to set up permanently, you can do what the Ice Box did and you do not have to pay a daily food truck fee.

Councilmember Allen Dougherty said the policy was written around events. That heavily influenced our policy. But what you are saying you're coming in and setting up someplace that does not involve events. We need to consider a policy for food trucks that is outside of our events. You don't have the volume on those days as opposed to events. Mr. Starnes stated that on those days outside of events we may do \$300 to \$400 per day. Mr. Kevin Helms stated that when he first setup his food truck with Gate City, he paid the annual business license and a meals tax.

Mayor Lawson asked how would the best route going forward should be? Should it just be the business license? Ms. Dockery said it should be up to the event organizers to charge the fee. She pays \$200 to set up at a school event. Attorney Michele Brooks stated that the \$200 would be the benefit for the school. Councilmember Dexter Harmon asked Mr. Starnes if he donated any monies to the school. Mr. Starnes said he did not. Ms. Dockery said if you set up at the school or a church, you do not have to pay a \$50 fee. Town Manager Greg Jones said correct but you still have to complete the application. The reason why we did set up a fee for six month or a year was due to liability. What if a dishonest food truck cancel their health department permit and they continue to operate with a valid permit from the town? Mr. Kevin Helms recommended that the Town should be added as a rider on the food truck insurance policy. Ms. Dockery said the same thing can happen with a brick and mortar business. Council Member Allen Dougherty asked how much liability insurance do you have. Mr. Helms stated he has one million.

Councilmember Pat Elliott stated that what he has picked up from this discussion that the food trucks need to be insured, licensed, make sure they are setup in the right area, make sure they have a current health department inspection.

Councilmember Wallace W. Ross, Jr. stated the town did a public hearing on this food truck policy. Did they not see it. Councilmember Dexter Harmon stated it was in the paper. Mr. Jeff Owens stated that people are not going to Town Council meetings to see what is on the agenda. How many people read the newspaper anymore? Where is the most congested area people are going to see what is on the town council agenda. Why is town council not video recording or putting on YouTube like the county council. Councilmember Wallace W. Ross, Jr. asked where did the town fail? Mayor Lawson stated that this council did not fail to inform the public of our meetings. Notices were posted in the paper and website. We did not fail to notify the public. We did what we are supposed to do by law. As far as your Facebook, that is your business and it's up to you. The Town of Gate City has a website that people can go and look at. Notices are posted on the front of the building as well. We did what we are supposed to do by law.

Mayor Lawson stated that moving forward, we are going to waive the fees for right now. We still need you to complete the applications. Please supply us with your contact information. When we go over this, we will contact you and go over it. Rumors were started that the town wanted the food trucks to go away. That is not true and we never said that. All we want is to come to some type of compromise.

Mr. Lambert, Scott County Life Saving Crew, stated that Mr. Roger Carter with the Rescue Squad Association stated he met with Council requesting help with annual payments for a new ambulance. Mr. Lambert stated that the Rescue Squad Association was over the Scott County Life Saving Crew at the time. The Scott County Life Saving Crew got back in control in January. Mayor Lawson stated what he recalls is that Mr. Carter and Mr. Burke stated that if they need any assistance they would come back to the town. Since then they have said it's all be resolved and the life saving crew will be taking their organization back over. This council did not vote to take care of yearly payments or any such measures. Councilmember Pat Elliott asked how much money are we talking about. Mr. Lambert said \$27,000 per year. We did not have an agreement with the life saving crew or the rescue squad association. Councilmember Pat Elliott asked what the \$27,000 is for. Mr. Lambert stated that in February of last year, there was an ambulance that was involved in an accident and it was totaled. We received insurance money of \$150,000. The new ambulance cost \$289,000. The \$27,000 is for the annual payments for the next five years. Mayor Lawson asked if the life saving crew is operating on its own now? Mr. Lambert said that is correct. Mr. Lambert stated the life saving crew was under the impression that a decision was already made. Vice-Mayor Barnett asked if they are still operating Bingo. Mr. Lambert said Bingo will be back up this Saturday. Mr. Lambert said our Treasurer just retired and all he left was the passwords to the accounts. The county is auditing now. Vice-Mayor Barnett asked if they had any assets they could liquidate to help. Mr. Lambert stated they have a couple of used vans they are in the process of selling. Mr. Lambert stated that they are fully staffed now. Councilmember Allen Dougherty stated it sounds like your debt is ahead of your income. Spending money on a professional accountant or business manager would be money well spent. Mayor Lawson stated once the audit is done if you want to come back and see if we can provide assistance, you are more than welcome to do so.

Ms. Ellen Bailey stated that she has a problem. She stated that she has asked Mr. Jones and others to write down agreements and they will not do so. They will not write down what they say. How do you honor what you say if you don't write it down. I come back later on, and they say they don't remember. It's a catch 22. Mr. Jones and other leaders have not honored agreements. Ms. Bailey asked what do I do to get leaders to write down agreements. Attorney Michele Brooks asked what agreements are you saying he has not written down that he has not done. Ms. Bailey said he will not write down agreements for me. Mayor Lawson asked please give us an example, so we know what you are talking about. Ms. Bailey stated that it's over the property at 242 Chestnut Street. Attorney Michele Brooks stated that she has instructed Mr. Jones not to discuss with you or meet with you over the accusations that you have made about him. The house has been torn down and there is not anything we can do about that. Ms.

Bailey asked what do I do when they refused to write down any agreements. Attorney Brooks stated he is not required to write down any discussion he has with you. Mayor Lawson stated that no one in this room is obligated to write things down for you. The property at 242 Chestnut Street has been torn down. If you want anything further, you will need to get your own attorney to represent you. Attorney Brooks stated that we went through the legal process with this property and the law was followed.

X. COMMUNICATIONS

No 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 – Jason Snapp

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 met with two of the three property owners where easements are needed on 3/4/26 and have answered various follow-up questions from the affected residents since those meetings. 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: All documentation has been submitted to VDOT for approval to advertise. Minor revision requests were received from VDOT regarding the Bid Book. These comments will be addressed, and the Bid Book resubmitted. Approval to advertise is expected any day after resubmittal.

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 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.

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 affected by this project on March 4th, 2026. We are not expecting any issues with the easements needed for this project.

April 2026 – Easement were sent back to Town Attorney, Michele Brooks on March 31st, 2026. The year 2025 referenced on the easements will need to be changed to 2026 before property owners are willing to sign. The pre bid package will be sent to VDH when all the signed easements are obtained.

May 2026 – The Easements with the corrected year have been received and sent to the effected property owners. We are expecting the sign easement to be returned shortly.

- **Water Street Parking Lot Development Project**

April 2026 – The pickleball and basketball courts coating remains to be completed. Originally Council determined the pickleball court will be green with white lines. However, having a separate color for the 'kitchen' is what pickleball prefer. Council Action: Review proposed pickleball color scheme and vote to change colors if needed.

I have applied for grant funding for the Farmers Market with the Cumberland Forest Community Fund. That application was for \$15,000 and will work with the \$44,000 already awarded through the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Development Fund. The RFP for the new Farmers Market outdoor market will be developed and advertised this week.

May 2026 – The coating for the Pickleball and Basketball courts has been completed. We are currently awaiting the inspection report for the electric vehicle charging stations to be completed.

Introduction to Pickleball classes will be held on Saturday, May 30th, 2026. This class is free but limited to 16 people.

Pickleball lessons will be held on Saturday, June 13th, 20th, and 27th. Classes will be in two groups: Kids ages 10 – 15 and Adults 16+. Classes will be limited to 8 people per class, and the charge is \$5.00 per person.

- **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.

April 2026 – Stone Excavation Company will begin on the walking trail rehabilitation at the beginning of May.

May 2026 – Stone Excavation Company has completed the walking trail rehabilitation project. The swing seats and chains have been removed from the large swing set due to wear. They will be replaced once the new seats and chains come in.

- **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 on stage and sound. We are hoping to have that contract signed soon. Additional activities being planned are a 5K race and a Pickleball Tournament.

April 2026 – The VA250 Committee held a press conference on March 23rd, 2026, and announced that Folk Soul Revival will be the headliner followed by Dave Eggar & Bristol Lightning on July 3rd, 2026, at Legion Field at Gate City High School. Leading up to the concert there will be a 5K run and a pickleball tournament. Ms. Anna Walters, US Pickleball Ambassador, and certified coach will be offering a free intro to pickleball soon followed by lessons leading up to the pickleball tournament. Details are being planned.

May 2026 – The VA250 committee met on May 8th and 15th, 2026. The current schedule of events for July 3rd, 2026, are as follows:

8:00 AM: 5k race

9:30 AM: Pickleball, 3v3 Basketball, and Cornhole tournaments.

Legion Field: Free events

11:00 AM: Veterans & First Responders Ceremony

11:45 AM: Local student's performances

12:15 PM: Band: Austin Falin & ReCover

1:00 PM: Band: Divine Glory

1:45 PM: Band: The Virginia Boys

2:30 PM: Band: Flatt Out Blue

3:00 PM: Gate Close

Legion Field: Tickets Required

4:00 PM: Gates Open

4:00 PM: Band: Brand New Box of Matches

5:00 PM: Carson Peters & Iron Mountain

6:15 PM: Dave Eggar & Bristol Lightning

8:00 PM: Folk Soul Revival

10:00 PM: Patriotic set with Fireworks

Council Action: Approve Fireworks Permit Application

- **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.

April 2026 – We received feedback from VDOT on April 7th, 2026, approving our process and recommending proceeding with the contract approval. I will be meeting with the interview team to review the contract shortly.

- **FY 2027 TOWN BUDGET**

May 2026 - The Finance Committee has completed the proposed budget for FY 2027 and has been submitted to Council for their review.

- o No new rate real estate tax or water rate increase.
- o 4% cost of living increase for the employees
- o Current version includes:

<u>Kane Street Sidewalk Project Funding Increase</u>	
Original Project Estimate (Fall 2021):	\$1,489,681
Current Project Estimate:	<u>\$1,966,361</u>
Shortfall:	\$476,680

Additional TAP Funds Requested:	\$381,344
Additional Funds Local Match	\$95,366

VDOT has approved the additional funding of \$381,344. The remaining match of \$95,366 has been approved by Council and is now included in the FY 2027 Budget

The Finance Committee is recommending a \$6,000 increase for the Gate City Fire Department. That will bring their allocation for FY 2027 to **\$42,000** per year.

Council Action: Conduct a Public Hearing on June 9th, 2026.

Note: Budget approval is anticipated in July 2026. Council will need to pass a Continuing Resolution (CR) at the June 9th, 2026, council meeting. CR is a temporary funding measure used when a government has not adopted a new budget before the current budget expires.

- **DHCD CDBG Margie Street Housing Rehabilitation Planning Grant**
Phase I and Phase II of the Park Street Housing Rehabilitation Project are now complete. Margie Street has been identified as our next priority. The Town's 2019 Housing Needs Assessment documented that 15 of the 18 homes on Margie Street need rehabilitation or substantial reconstruction, ranking it as Priority #2 for implementation directly behind Park Street. The Town is eligible to apply for a DHCD CDBG Project-Driven Planning Grant — a 100% grant up to \$75,000 — to conduct walk-through inspections, income surveys, and cost estimates needed to build a competitive application for a future CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Project Grant (up to \$1,500,000).
- **Council Action:** Approve application for the DHCD CDBG Planning Grant for Margie Street and schedule a Public Hearing for June 9, 2026, to inform citizens about the proposed project. We will need to conduct a Project Management Team prior to June 30, 2026, to complete our application.
- **2025 Annual Town Audit**

April 2026 - The FY 2025 Annual Town Audit is complete. The hardcopies have been placed in Council's mailbox. The auditors will present the audit at the May 2026 Council meeting.

B. Attorney Report – No Report

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

Councilmember Pat Elliott: Met with Town Manager Greg Jones and the Finance Committee a few times about the FY 2027 Town Budget. Also met with Scott County Building Inspector Tim

Williams and determined that installing a heat pump for the public works garage below the town hall would be cheaper than installing a mini-split.

Councilmember Dexter Harmon: No Report

Vice-Mayor Kevin Barnett: Attended the small-town conference in Chincoteague, VA. National League of City would like to meet with Gate City to make sure we are receiving all of our member benefits. Linda Goddy has grant finder licenses and wanted a good email so grant can be sent to the town. Through the firewood program the ministry helped 60 families heat their homes. Also discuss council-manager relationships and social media. Facebook right now is the number media for towns right now. If a town is receiving negative comments on social media, you can just do nothing because that is how the town will be perceived. We, as a town, need to be proactive about that. New cannabis laws are coming, and we need to be prepared for that. They have suggested to look a cannabis use should be looked at the same way was alcohol use in the workplace.

Councilmember Allen Dougherty: Attended several budget meetings in addition to several economic development meetings. Discussed cross promotions and how we can benefit by working together with Gate City Frontier, Inc and the local business community. Corporate Image also attended and shared what we can do to help with our branding ideas.

Councilmember Wallace W. Ross, Jr: The grass needs to be cut at the drop inlet on Manville Road. White parking lines on the street need to be painted. Councilmember Ross asked who owns the umbrellas on Jackson Street. Town Manager Jones stated that the umbrellas are owned by Gate City Frontier, Inc. Councilmember Ross also asked about Council raises. Attorney Brooks stated that it was her understanding that it would be discussed after the budget process is completed. There is old house on Cleveland Street that needs to be taken down.

D. Police Department – Terry Sivert

	March 2026	April 2026	Year to Date
Calls for Service	373	314	1307
Arrest	5	5	18
Summons	51	30	146
Incident Reports	6	5	24
Accident Reports	4	4	13
DUI Arrests	1	0	2
Vehicle Unlock	7	6	23

Significant Activity & Reporting for April 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.**
- **We would like to welcome Brandon Meade as our new police officer. Brandon is from Big Stone Gap and comes with 3 years' experience.**

E. Sanitation Authority – No Report

F. Public Works – Dale McConnell

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	1,400	183,306	90
Apr-26	4,000	175,200	61
May-26			
Jun-26			
Jul-26			
Aug-26			
Sep-26			
Oct-26			
Nov-26			
Dec-26			

**GATE CITY WATER LEAKS
(On Town Side)
April 2026**

Location	Repair Date	Materials used for Repair
Ruth Street	4/2/2026	Backhoe; utility truck; Chevy 2500; pipe saw; ¾" full circle band; 4 tons gravel; 4 hrs; 4 employees
167 West Jackson St	4/15/2026	Backhoe; utility truck; ½" full circle band; Chevy 2500; 4 tons gravel; 3 hrs; 3 employees

G. Water Plant – submitted by Steve Rutherford

VIRGINIA DEPT OF HEALTH
DIVISION OF DRINKING WATER MONTHLY REPORT

MONTH/YEAR: April-26

PWS#: 1169405

DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

A1	Gals of water placed into distrib system from Gate City treatment plant	9,724,000
A2	Gals of water placed into distrib system from Scott County PSA master meter	1,908,900
A3	Total Gals of water placed into distrib system (A1+A2)	11,632,900
B	Gals of water transferred to Scott County PSA	2,276,944
C	Gals of water placed into distrib system that are not transferred to Scott County (A3-B)	9,355,956
D	Average gals per day placed into distrib system for customers other than Scott County PSA (C/days in month)	311,865
E	Gals of water metered to other customers	4,735,700
F	Total gals of water accounted for (B+E)	7,012,644
G	Total gals of water unaccounted for (A3-F)	4,620,256
H	Apparent percent of water lost from distrib system (100*G/A3)	39.72%
I	Number of connections	1,216
J	Avg gals/day placed into distrib system per non-SCPSA waterworks customer (D/I)	256

Distrib. System Performance Goals:

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

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

Significant Deficiency:

*Greater than 30% leakage of water placed into distrib system

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Works Office - replace heat pump and lines

Motion made to approve Willis Home Improvement quote in the amount of \$9,550.00 to install a new heat pump with new digital thermostat, copper line inset, drain pan and switch for the public works garage below the Town Hall.

Motion by: Pat Elliott

2nd by: Dexter Harmon

VOTE: Aye: 5
Nay: 0
Absent: 0
Abstain: 0

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. RFP Approval: Accounting Software

Motion made to advertise a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new accounting software.

Motion by:	Kevin Barnett	2 nd by:	Pat Elliott
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

2. Larry Sturgill-FY25 Audit Presentation

Motion made to accept audit

Motion by:	Pat Elliott	2 nd by:	Kevin Barnett
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

3. Scott County Historical Society: Reimbursement Request

Motion made to reimburse \$7,176.28 for repairs made to the building.

Motion by:	Dexter Harmon	2 nd by:	Allen Dougherty
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

4. VA250 Fireworks Permit Request

Motion made to approve fireworks permit for July 03, 2026 VA250 Committee Event

Motion by:	Pat Elliott	2 nd by:	Dexter Harmon
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

5. Public Hearing: FY27 Town Budget

Motion to conduct a Public Hearing for the FY27 Town Budget on June 9th, 2026.

Motion by:	Pat Elliott	2 nd by:	Wallace W. Ross, Jr.
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

6. Public Hearing: Charlie Broadwater-Tow Truck Business

Motion to conduct a Public Hearing for a Special Exception and Use Permit to operate a repo/tow truck business on a lot beside 345 Water Street on June 9th, 2026.

Motion by:	Kevin Barnett	2 nd by:	Pat Elliott
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

7. Public Hearing: C1 & C2 Setbacks

Motion made to conduct a Public Hearing to amend the C1 & C2 setback zoning ordinance on June 9th, 2026.

Motion by:	Pat Elliott	2 nd by:	Kevin Barnett
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

8. Approval: Apply for a DHCD Planning Grant: Margie Street Housing Project

Motion made to apply for a Planning Grant from DHCD CDBG for the Margie Street Housing Project

Motion by:	Dexter Harmon	2 nd by:	Pat Elliott
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

9. Public Hearing: DHCD Planning Grant: Margie Street Housing Project

Motion made to to conduct a Public Hearing to apply for a DHCD CDBG Planning Grant for housing rehabilitation for Margie and Boxcar Streets on June 9th, 2026

Motion by:	Dexter Harmon	2 nd by:	Pat Elliott
VOTE:	Aye:		
	Nay:		
	Absent:		
	Abstain:		

10. Pickleball Court Fence Install

Motion made to install a 4' fence at the Pickleball Court if under \$5,000.00

Motion by:	Dexter Harmon	2 nd by:	Kevin Barnett
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT: NEW BUSINESS

No New Business Public Comments

XV. CLOSED SESSION

**Motion made for Council to enter into closed session to discuss 1.) Personnel Matters
2.) Legal Matters**

Motion by:	Pat Elliott	2 nd by:	Kevin Barnett
Aye:	5		
Nay:	0		
Absent:	0		
Abstain:	0		

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at 9:55 PM

XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Motion made for Council to return from closed session.

Motion by:	Dexter Harmon	2 nd by:	Wallace W. Ross, Jr.
VOTE:	Aye:	5	
	Nay:	0	
	Absent:	0	
	Abstain:	0	

Council returned from closed session at 11:20 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

No motions returning from Closed Session.

XVIII. ADJOURN

Motion made to adjourn

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

2nd by: Pat Elliott

*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at 11:21 PM, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on June 9, 2026 at 6:30 PM.



Mayor, Jamie Lawson



Deputy Town Clerk, Lisa Loggans