TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Gate City Town Council
August 11, 2026
156 East Jackson Street, Gate City, VA
6:30 PM

I. COUNCIL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 6:30 PM By: Mayor, Jamie Lawson

II. ROLL CALL: Town Clerk, Kristie Tipton

	PRESENT	ABSENT
Mayor, Jamie Lawson	X	
Vice-Mayor, Kevin Barnett	X	
Council Member, Wallace W. Ross, Jr.	X	
Council Member, Pat Elliott	X	
Council Member, Dexter Harmon	X	
Council Member, Allen Dougherty	X	
Town Manager - Vacant	N/A	N/A
Town Attorney, Michele Brooks	X	

Others present: Mike Still, Kingsport Times News; Gabe Edmunds, Scott Co. Virginia Star; Anna Barnett

III. INVOCATION: Pat Elliott

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: GCPD Chief Sivert

V. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the August 11, 2026 agenda.
Motion made to approve as presented.

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

Motion Carried

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

1. **Resolution was presented to the Hope House on 7/16/2026 commemorating the 30th Anniversary.**

2. **GCPD presented a Commendation to Officer Brandon Meade for Community Service (weed-eating a bank for an elderly resident whom he witnessed fall twice).**

3. **Vote to accept/reject Greg Jones' resignation as Town Manager (tenured on 7/17/2026 and received on 7/22/2026)**

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

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. **Approval of July 14, 2026 Town Council Meeting Minutes**
Motion made to approve as presented.

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

2. **Approval of July 06, 2026 Special Called Meeting Minutes**
Motion made to approve as presented.

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

3. **Approval of July 14, 2026 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes**
Motion made to approve as presented.

Motion by:	Pat Elliott	2nd by:	Allen Dougherty
VOTE:	Aye: 5		
	Nay:		
	Absent:		
	Abstain:		***Motion Carried**

4. **Approval of July 16, 2026 Emergency Called Meeting Minutes**
Motion made to approve as presented.

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

VIII. APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

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

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

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT (Will be limited to 3 minutes per speaker) – **None**

Unknown male (did not sign attendance sheet for public comment) – I think we should recognize Quentin (Miles) for everything he does for the town.

Dexter Harmon – We just gave him one…recognition plaque.

Mayor Lawson – We just recognized Quentin.

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

Jason introduce a new Project Manager at Mattern & Craig. His name is Octavio Reis, and he goes by "Oats". He will be assisting Jason with Gate City's projects and attending our Town Council Meetings.

VDH Backup Generator Project

Funding Agency: Virginia Department of Health
Funding Package: $1,558,760 ($1,080,632 local funds/$478,128 grant) Project Schedule:

- TBD Advertisement/Bid/Construction Pending Easement Acquisition

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 and have answered various follow-up questions from the affected residents since those meetings. Currently, two easements have been signed and there is one additional property owner that still need to sign. Calvin Clifton (M&C) is working with the Town Attorney to schedule a meeting with the remaining property owner to get the last easement signed. The project can go to advertisement once the easements are procured and the pre bid package is approved by VDH.

Kane St. Sidewalk

Funding Agency: VDOT (Transportation Alternative Funds
Funding Package: $1,968,395 ($393,679 local match/$1,574,716 grant) Project Schedule:

- Advertise Project – June 2026 **COMPLETED**
- Bid Opening – July 2026 **COMPLETED**
- Contract Award – September 2026
- Begin Construction – September 2026
- Substantial Completion – March 2027
- Final Completion – April 2027

Project bid package is currently in development to submit to VDOT.

Manville Road Sidewalk

Funding Agency: VDOT (Transportation Alternative Funds
Funding Package: $1,703,241.20 ($170,324.12 federal grant/$1,532,917.08 state grant) Project Schedule: TBD Pending Design Completion and ROW Acquisition (See potential schedule below)

- 60% Completion – July 2026 **COMPLETED**
- VDOT Review – August 2026 **COMPLETED**
- Easement/ROW Acquisition – September 2026 – September 2027
- 100% Plan Development – September 2027
- VDOT Review – October 2027
- Advertise Project – November 2027
- Bid Opening – February 2028
- Contract Award – February 2028
- Begin Construction – March 2028
- Substantial Completion – September 2028
- Final Completion – October 2028

VDOT 60% comments are being revised. Required easements have been 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. Once ROW plans are accepted and the ROW phase is opened, we expect the easement acquisition to take 12-18 months before final construction plans can be fully developed.

DEQ – Southwest Virginia Pilot Program, High School Area Collector Line Replacement Project (C-515856)

Funding Agency: Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Funding Package: $704,000 ($176,000 local funds @ 0% loan/$528,000 grant) Project Schedule:

- TBD after engineering agreement executed

DEQ – Southwest Virginia Pilot Program, Little Moccasin Interceptor – Phase 1 Project (C-515874)

Funding Agency: Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Funding Package: $720,300 ($180,075 local funds @ 0% loan/$540,225 grant) Project Schedule:

- TBD after engineering agreement executed

B. Interim Town Manager/Mayor's Report – Jamie Lawson

Please see notes and descriptions below regarding town business/activities that have occurred since the prior town manager's resignation.

7/21/26: I contacted Verizon about changing point of contact in reference to billing and being administrator for the accounts.

7/27/26: Heat Pump Bids (downstairs Public Works) - I contacted the previous companies for quotes on the heat pump downstairs for the public works department. Rick Willis Home Improvement, ATC Cooling and Heating, and Fields Right Contracting.

7/27/26: I soke with Eugene McClellan in reference about an ad for the Civitan football program. Half page is $125.00. I advised him to go ahead with it and gave Kristie the info for it. He will send an invoice for the amount.

8/3/26: EV Charging Station – I spoke with Cody McElroy he advised that the grant for the EV station is at a standstill, and the application has been filed and submitted with Virginia Clean Cities and is awaiting a response from them.

8/3/26: VDH Backup Generator Project-WSL 007-21($1,446,655) – Still awaiting easement signature from resident on Wolfe St. They asked about some kind of compensation for the use of the property. Will contact Mattern & Craig to follow-up with this matter.

**Ask Jason Snapp talk about the Little Moccasin Interceptor Phase 1; WW Project ($720,300); High School Collector Line Replacement($704,000)

Kane Street/Manville Road Sidewalk Project: September 21-23, 2026 Pat Elliott, Dale McConnell, and I will attend a training certification class in Roanoke Va for VDOT in reference to the Kane St/Manville Sidewalk Projects. This is for (Local Public Agency) Project Manager. This is requested from VDOT and is needed due to the requirements for the sidewalk Projects.

8/3/26: Events:

1) Saturday September 19, 2026 Quentin Miles Walk For Diabetes
2) Saturday October 3, 2026 will be the Harvest Moon Festival (7am-7PM). Contact for the event will be Steve Adkins with Gate City Frontier
3) King Alleyween (Trunk or Treat) on October 24, 2026 (6pm to 8pm) Contact VDOT for road closures and obtain permit.

8/4/26: Galivanting in Gate City (Council voted to advertise billboards for this and discussed putting the funds that would be used for this toward the new software update for the office at town hall).

8/4/26: Community Park Project: The Pickleball Court has been a big hit for the town and is being used daily. Pat and Allen met with Quesenberry Construction and discussed the ongoing issues. They advised they would get a GEO Tech Analysis and Grid Summary Baseline to monitor the court. They are still going to fix the swales around the basketball goals.

Grants: Cumberland Forest Community Fund: $15,000.00 (Electrical); AFID Infrastructure Grant: $44,000.00 (Structure) Local Match: $29,000.00 and Total Funding: $88,000.00

I am waiting for more information from these entities to be able to move forward and get everything started. John Kilgore is helping me with this information and once I receive it I will advise council with updates.

DCJS: The Gate City Police Department has been awarded two grants. Grant #1 is for AED's ($3,000.00), and Grant #2: Miscellaneous ($67,880.00).

C. **Attorney Report** – No Report

*****Mayor paused the meeting for a break at 8:05 pm, and the meeting resumed at 8:25 pm*****

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

Pat Elliott – I don't have a report, but I do have a couple questions. **1)** We have a town emergency alarm system; for whatever reason, the past Council said we can't use it anymore. Not everyone has a cell phone. It was an air-raid whistle used for GCFD. I recommend we use it as a warning device. **2)** Mayor, what would it take to receive a Monthly Treasurer's Report? Nothing in depth, just a simple report?

Mayor – I'm already a step ahead of you. We're already looking into that. She's (Treasurer, Kristie Mullins) is in the process of getting everything fixed so she can produce that. That way everybody on Council will be able to see what's coming in and going out.

Dexter Harmon – The pickleball courts are staying full. People who have been using the court say they wish there were lights for night play and would like to have more courts. Some folks have had to squeegee water off the courts to use them. They greatly appreciate what we're doing. I've read a Scott Co. Rant and Rave social media post that says we're padding our pockets. I want to go on record that I have not gotten a dime from Gate City Town Council for this (serving on Council), not a dime. So, when people say I'm padding my pockets, it makes me mad, but it hurts my feelings too. So, I just want that to be on record.

Kevin Barnett – Was recently at an event in Bristol and learned that some of the area schools may start a pickleball league. We may want to participate.

Allen Dougherty – I'd like to go on record too, that I don't receive any money from the Town Council, and put a lot of hours in, and the Mayor puts a lot more than I do in. Southern Solutions Software, money that was in the budget doesn't match the amount that it will cost. There are some towns in our region that uses Southern Solutions – we could call/visit them to get their opinion on it.

Wallace W. Ross, Jr. – Pickleball courts, could there be another bathroom (port-o-potty) down there? Men's and Women's? At the basketball courts? Could we move one?

Mayor – Do we have an extra Port-o-John?

Dale McConnell – We just have two (2) of our own; we don't have any way to pump them. It's cheaper to rent them than to fool with them. We may have a contract with them.

Wallace – I noticed too that some people have planted flowers in the trash cans (on the sidewalk). *Steve Rutherford said that not all of them are trash cans, some are planters, so it's okay that flowers are in them.* **Wallace** – The tables that are at the Court House and Quillens's Hardware, could we locate them somewhere else? They're needed at the pickleball courts.

Dale McConnell – Those tables are heavy and unbalanced and will turn over easily. If someone was to sit on the table top it would turn them over. *Michele Books suggested that we could get some temporary benches made by VOTEC (Scott County Vocational School).* **Dale** – There are some benches at the water plant, maybe a dozen of them. Could we use them? Maybe 1 picnic table?

Wallace – On paving, doing anymore sometime soon?

Mayor – Just to be honest, there's no budget there. It was utilized for other things. We can use cold patch to fix immediate needs. We have to look at that on an "as needed basis" right now. It's $119-120 per ton for asphalt.

E. **Police Department** – Terry Sivert

	June 2026	July 2026	Year to Date
Calls for Service	280	206	2079
Arrest	8	10	40
Summons	9	20	198
Incident Reports	4	11	47
Accident Reports	4	3	26
DUI Arrests	0	1	3
Vehicle Unlock	6	8	50

Significant Activity & Reporting for July 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 will get our speed sign up and going again, we have a new officer training on it.

Chief Sivert went on to discuss the department's needs for a new vehicle. Gave details of quotes he's received and made his recommendation on the bid that met the department's needs best (Thornhill, WV), cost, location, and timing of getting the car ready.

We have received the 2 AEDs that we got from a Grant. We don't have enough for every officer, so we'll have to rotate them out at shift start/end.

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	1,400	183,306	90
Apr-26	4,000	175,200	61
May-26	4,280	131,700	68
Jun-26	3,250	155,840	68
Jul-26	6,480	200,500	73
Aug-26			
Sep-26			
Oct-26			
Nov-26			
Dec-26			

- Dale spoke about the request for a new salt spreader. He recommended B&H Sales out of Kingsport. They're local, good to help us, but it is the 2nd highest bid. The old salt spreader is worn out.

- The little trash truck is out of commission; needs a new solenoid.

- Dale has pictures of the 2022 sewer system, Little Moccasin Phase 1, if Council would like to see them.

- Public Works/Safety is applying for a grant for a trench box and a car lift (to do small maintenance in-house).

- We are in the "good graces" of VDOT again.

Mayor Lawson – I do want to mention something in regard to the park, the pickleball courts. I got an email and also a notification from Mr. Kegley, the owner of Factory to You Fence, they will install that fence on the 29th of this month. There was a little bit of a price difference because we went from a four (4) foot fence to a six (6) foot fence. The total price was $5,000.00, and the other one was $4,500.00. Five hundred dollars isn't much difference, so we went on up to the six-foot fence.

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

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

A1	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Gate City treatment Plant	**11,178,000**
A2	Gallons of water placed into distribution system from Scott County PSA master meter	**2,420,100**
A3	Total Gallons of water placed into distribution system	**13,598,100**
B	Gallons of water transferred to Scott County PSA	**2,607,909**
C	Gallons of water placed into distribution system that are not transferred to Scott Co. PSA	**10,990,191**
D	Average gallons per day placed into distribution system for customers other than Scott Co. PSA	**354,522**
E	Gals of water metered to other customers	**4,838,600**
F	Total Gallons of water accounted for	**7,446,509**
G	Total Gallons of water unaccounted for	**6,151,591**
H	Apparent percent of water lost from distribution system	**45.24%**
I	Number of connections	**1,216**
J	Avg gals/day placed into distribution system per non-SCPSA	**292**

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

A $10,00.00 grant to improve water system has been approved. A $2,300.00 check valve will need to be replaced. Working on a $90,000 grant through Lenowisco.

We will be taking lead/copper samples soon.

We had some new changes with Ferguson (meter vendor to us) and had training on 8/10/26. Steve then spoke about Citgo Water's "Smart City System". Their meters retain 90 days' worth of data; our current ones only retain 35 days. They use Delphi meters, they're AMR Mobile system, AMI direct system. They have leak detection with reporting, meter tamper alarms, overflow alarm, and temperature alarm. This system will be compatible with our new Accounting Software. The entire system would cost $500,000.00 but would bring in $152,000.00 per year in revenue; we're currently losing with our current system.

XII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **Front Door Replacement**
   Motion made to

Motion by:		2nd by:
VOTE:	Aye:	
	Nay:	
	Absent:	
	Abstain:	***Take No Action – Remove from Agenda for September***

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. **Donate 2017 Police SUV Ford Explorer to the Scott County Sheriff's Department**
   Motion made to donate the 2017 Police SUV Ford Explorer to the Scott County Sheriff's Department. (Pursuant to Virginia Code 15.2-951 which allows donations from one municipality to another.)

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

2. **Heat Pump for Public Works Garage/Office – received 3 bids**
   Motion made to accept the bid from Willis Home Improvement for $9,850.00

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

3. **Purchase Salt Spreader for Public Works**
Motion made to accept the bid from B&H Sales for $10,850.00

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

4. **Proposal to pursue Certified Crime Prevention Community (CCPC) Designation**
Motion made to

Motion by:		2nd by:	
VOTE:	Aye:		
	Nay:		
	Absent:		
	Abstain:		***Take No Action – Remove from Agenda for September**

5. **Quotes for Accounting Software Upgrade**
Motion made to accept the bid from Southern Software for $61,350.00.

Motion by:	Kevin Barnett	2nd by:	Allen Dougherty
VOTE:	Aye: 5		
	Nay:		
	Absent:		
	Abstain:		***Motion Carried**

6. **Appoint Town Clerk Position**
Motion made to appoint Kristie Tipton

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

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENT: NEW BUSINESS – None

XV. CLOSED SESSION

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

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

Mayor Lawson opened the closed session at **8:58 PM**

XVI. RETURN FROM CLOSED SESSION

Motion made for Council to return from closed session.

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

Council returned from closed session at **11:06 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 2.2-3712 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

1) Purchase new GCPD Cruiser from Thornhill, WV for $73,163.00 (vehicle identified by Chief Sivert in his Police Department report).

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

XVIII. ADJOURN

Motion made to adjourn

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

*Mayor Lawson adjourned the meeting at **11:12 PM**, until the next scheduled Council Meeting on September 08, 2026 at 6:30 PM.

Mayor, Jamie Lawson

Town Clerk, Kristie L. Tipton