

Special Called Council Meeting Minutes

June 3, 2025

Present:

Mayor Michael Hoops
Vice Mayor Joe Beasley
Councilmember Danny Willis
Councilmember Jonathan Hankins
Councilmember Zach Cline
Councilmember Emily Davis

Absent:

Councilmember David Fox

Staff members present were Town Manager, LeeAnne Regon; Executive Assistant, Susan Reeves; Clerk-Treasurer, Jessica Hayes.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hoops called work session meeting to order at 6:00pm

The Tazewell Town Council met in a work session at 6:00pm in the Town Hall Council Chambers.

WORK SESSION (6:00 p.m.)

Completed, Active, and Upcoming Projects

Manager Regon presented an overview of completed, ongoing, and upcoming projects, including expense breakdowns, projected costs, and revenue forecasts.

Mountain Biking Initiative

- Councilmember Cline emphasized the importance of having the same company design and construct the trails to ensure consistency and quality.
- Maintenance and marketing will be key aspects of the project's success.
- Delegate Morefield and Senator Hackworth have expressed interest in assisting with maintenance costs.
- **Access Considerations:**
 - Councilmember Cline highlighted the need for easements to allow multiple entry and exit points for improved accessibility.
 - Proposed multiple parking sites to facilitate access to steeper areas.

- Insurance Implications: Manager Regon has not yet inquired whether the project would impact the town's insurance policy.
- **Community Engagement:**
 - Councilmember Willis questioned whether this project aligns with citizen interests and warrants investment.
 - Councilmember Cline proposed issuing an RFP and hosting a public meeting to present plans and gather community feedback.

Gratton Property Alternative

- Councilmember Cline suggested evaluating the second Gratton property as an alternative site for the mountain biking trails, noting the need for easement acquisition.

Boundary Adjustment Considerations

- Councilmember Cline advocated for expanding town boundaries and ensuring services are provided to new areas before incorporating them.
- Manager Regon inquired whether the council should initiate discussions with the county's new representative regarding expansion opportunities.

Land Use Tax Alignment

- Councilmember Willis proposed adjusting town tax rates to match county policies to maintain consistency regarding land use tax.

Outdoor Recreation & Property Utilization

- **Primitive Camping Facilities:**
 - Councilmember Willis recommended exploring contract adjustments for toilet rentals at Lincolnshire Park and keeping existing restrooms unlocked for accessibility.
- **Barnes Property:**
 - Recently sold to Cody Burnette.
 - Councilmember Cline suggested cabin rentals at the park as a way to utilize open space and boost local tourism.
- **Tiny House Development:**
 - Councilmember Willis proposed allowing tiny homes within town limits as an alternative housing solution.
 - Manager Regon stated that setback amendments may be required to accommodate this adjustment.

Lincolnshire Park Expansion & Field Development

- Councilmember Cline discussed Jay Shott's continued interest in purchasing the Little League fields, with options to raise funds or facilitate a property swap to relocate the league to new fields in Lincolnshire Park.

- Vice Mayor Beasley emphasized that if baseball and softball fields are expanded in Lincolnshire Park, multi-use soccer fields should be prioritized elsewhere, such as at Ramey Lot.
 - He suggested leaving space for a track surrounding the soccer fields at Ramey Lot.
- Councilmember Cline proposed utilizing the fairgrounds for practice fields, suggesting cooperation with the county to improve the land and offer multi-use space.
- Councilmember Davis noted that selling the Little League fields to fund Lincolnshire Park upgrades would still result in a net loss of one field.

Additional Infrastructure Considerations

- **Playground Safety:** Councilmember Cline requested installation of a crosswalk at the playground on Tazewell Ave to improve safety.
- **Commemorative Project:** Vice Mayor Beasley suggested securing funding from Billy Wagner's network, sports professionals, and facility sponsors to install a commemorative monument at Lincolnshire Park's and afford to upgrade the ball fields. He also proposed renaming the fields in honor of Billy Wagner.
- **Flood Mitigation:** Councilmember Cline recommended including Blacksburg St. flood mitigation efforts in the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Amphitheater & Music Venue:** Councilmember Cline suggested developing an amphitheater at the end of Main St. to create a music venue and tourist attraction. This could also be a design suggestion for enhancing the green space development on Main St.

Recreational Development

- Councilmember Cline raised the idea of Dunford Park becoming a special inclusion park.
- He also suggested adding a skate park at Dunford Park or Tazewell Ave Park to expand youth recreation options.

Housing & Property Maintenance

- Councilmember Willis highlighted the need for stricter enforcement of property maintenance, focusing on dilapidated structures that require upkeep or demolition.

Traffic & Green Space Access

- Councilmember Davis proposed improving parking and road access to the green space on Main Street.
- She noted that since the Town owns the land where the Traveler is located, it could be utilized to enhance access.
- Suggested widening the road for improved entry.

Wildlife Management in Town Limits

- Councilmembers expressed concerns over the increasing presence of wildlife within town limits, posing potential safety risks.
- Discussion included whether a management or relocation program would be a viable solution.

Adjournment

Vice Mayor Beasley made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Hankins seconded the motion, On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Davis, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

Meeting adjourned 8:27pm