

Council Meeting Minutes

October 14, 2025

Present:

Vice Mayor Joe Beasley

Councilmember Jonathan Hankins

Councilmember Zach Cline

Councilmember David Fox

Absent:

Councilmember Danny Willis

Staff members present were Town Manager, LeeAnne Regon; Executive Assistant, Susan Reeves; Attorney, Brad Pyott; Clerk-Treasurer, Jessica Hayes; Police Chief, Stan Lampert.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Fox made a motion to enter into the executive session. Councilmember Cline seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

The Town Council entered into Executive Session at 7:00pm

Certification of Executive Session

RESOLUTION

Motion made by: Fox

Resolution Number: ES251014

Motion Seconded by: Cline

Meeting Date: October 14, 2025

Vote: All voted Aye

Purpose: Prospective Business and
Personnel Matters

CERTIFICATION OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, the Tazewell Town Council has convened an executive session on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, 2.1-344.1 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this Council that such executive session was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Tazewell Town Council hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia Law were discussed in the executive session to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the executive session were heard, discussed or considered by the Tazewell Town Council.

VOTE

Ayes: Hankins, Cline, Fox, Beasley

Nays: none

(For each nay vote, the substance of the departure from the requirements of the Act should be described.)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Hayes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Treasurer Hayes, Clerk

Councilmember Fox a motion to leave the executive session. Councilmember Cline seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

Vice Mayor Beasley read the resolution for the Certification of Executive Session. On roll call vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Mayor Beasley called the public council meeting to order at 7:30pm in the Town Hall Council Chambers

Pledge of Allegiance.

Nate Thomas led the meeting in the invocation prayer

Special Presentation/Request(s)

A. National 4-H Week Proclamation-Tammy Bishop-Sparks, Associate 4-H Extension Agent, VCU-Tazewell County.

Tammy Bishop-Sparks and Kathy Dalton thanked the council for supporting youth programs serving over 1,000 local children and promoting leadership. Sophia Robinson spoke about how these activities help young people develop their passions. Danny Sparks, president of the 4-H Sharp Shooters, expressed appreciation for council sponsorships and highlighted the club's positive impact across all ages. Vice Mayor Beasley announced a proclamation, which Vice Mayor Beasley read, recognizing National 4-H Week. Councilmember Cline made a motion to approve the proclamation recognizing Nation 4-H week. Councilmember Fox seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

B. Southwest Virginia Community College Festival of the Arts Support request.

Susan Lowe thanked the town for its past Festival of the Arts support and requested support for the 2026 event (America's 250th anniversary, 4/10–4/19). Manager Regon noted previous \$500 donations. Councilmember Cline motioned to continue support for the Festival of the Arts; Councilmember Hankins seconded the motion. No discussion. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

Local Business Recognition-None

Approval of Minutes

Councilmember Fox made a motion to approve minutes from the September 9, 2025 meeting. Councilmember Cline seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

Approval of Financial Statements & Financial Report

Councilmember Cline made a motion to approve financial statements and financial reports for September 2025. Councilmember Hankins seconded. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

Committee/Conference Updates

A. Planning Commission Committee

On Monday, October 6th, the new Medical Facility was toured by members of the Planning Commission. Completion of the facility is planned for December. Paving is underway this week, and construction is on schedule.

B. IEDA

Last Monday, IEDA held a meeting to discuss planning a future joint session with the council. The group welcomed a special guest from the Cumberland Plateau District, which had been mentioned previously as a potential site for new technologies. The year 2026 will be essential for funding opportunities related to trades work, and they are exploring Co-op options in collaboration with Southwest Community College and other partners. Cara Spivey encouraged everyone to start networking for the project. Vice Mayor Beasley was also present and emphasized that building networks and securing co-op partnerships would be crucial to its success.

C. Tazewell Today

Several upcoming events are scheduled for the Fall season. On October 31st, Main Street will host the Trunk or Treat event. Due to high attendance in previous years, additional candy donations are anticipated, and multiple collection sites have been established. This initiative is being promoted via Facebook posts, and the Council recommended that the Town also encourage donations to support this event.

The Veteran's Parade is planned for Sunday, November 2nd, followed by Bingo on November 9th. The Turkey Trot, held on Thanksgiving morning, remains a popular event, with a portion of proceeds benefiting A Child Shall Lead Them.

On December 5th, there will be a Gingerbread House Workshop in the Board of Supervisors Chambers. The Christmas Market will take place the following morning, immediately followed by the Christmas Parade.

The first Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday the 16th. Additionally, the Promotion Committee Meeting will be held at the American Legion building on the fourth Tuesday at 6:00 p.m., and the Christmas Committee will meet on the 28th at 5:00 p.m.

Councilmember Cline inquired whether the Recreation Department will manage the Ice Rink at Lincolnshire Park this year, and Manager Regon confirmed. Councilmember Cline also raised budget considerations for the coming year and asked about continuation of the 4th Fridays program. He suggested the newly constructed Pavilion could serve as a future event venue once completed, and this was met with agreement as a possible option.

Unfinished Business

A. 2ND Reading & Approval of Land Use Assessment Ordinance Amendment.

Councilmember Hankins motioned to waive the reading second reading. Councilmember Cline seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

Councilmember Cline motioned to approve the Land Use Assessment Ordinance Amendment and for it to take effect 30 days from today. Councilmember Fox seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

ORDINANCE

Chapter 10 TAXATION

ARTICLE VIII. Special Assessment for Land Preservation

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the Town of Tazewell, Virginia, pursuant to Virginia Code §58.1-3230, et seq. (Cum. Supp. 2025), and Charter Sec. 3-8, that it hereby enacts the following Ordinance regarding the taxation of real estate devoted to agricultural, horticultural, forest and open space uses within the corporate limits of the Town:

ARTICLE VIII. Special Assessment for Land Use Preservation

Sec. 10-121. Applicability

The Town finds that the preservation of real estate devoted to agricultural, horticultural, forest and open space uses within its boundaries is in the public interest and has adopted a **land use plan**. Such real estate shall be taxed in accordance with the provisions of Code of Virginia, tit. 58.1, ch. 32, art. 4 (§ 58.1-3230 et seq.) and of this article

Sec. 10-122. Application for special assessment

- a) The owner of any real estate meeting the criteria set forth in Code of Virginia, §§58.1-3230 and 58.1-3233(2) may, within the time specified by Code of Virginia, §58.1-3234, subject to the exception set forth in part (c), apply to the commissioner of the revenue **(and the Town Clerk)** for the classification, assessment and taxation of such property for the next succeeding tax year on the basis of its use, under the procedures set forth in Code of Virginia, §58.1-3236. Such applications shall be on forms provided by the Town and shall be supplied by the commissioner of the revenue **(and the Town Clerk)** and shall include such additional schedules, photographs and drawings as may be required by the commissioner of the revenue **(and the Town Clerk)**. An individual who is the owner of an undivided interest in a parcel may apply on behalf of himself and the other owners of such parcel upon submitting an affidavit that such other owners are minors or cannot be located. An application shall be submitted whenever the use or acreage of such land previously approved changes; however, no application fee may be required when a change in acreage occurs solely as a result of a conveyance necessitated by governmental action or condemnation of a portion of any land previously approved for taxation on the basis of use assessment. Further, the commissioner of the revenue **(and the Town Clerk)** shall review all applications previously approved by him/her. **An application fee of ten dollars (\$10.00), plus fifty cents (\$0.50) per tract shown on individual lines of the tax book, shall accompany each application.**
- b) A separate application shall be filed for each parcel on the land book.
- c) An application may be filed after the specified annual filing deadline of November 1, but not later than December 5, upon payment of the application fee set forth and a late filing fee of no more than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per parcel sought to be classified, assessed and taxed under this Chapter. Said late filing fee shall be set by resolution of the Town Council.

State Law reference— Similar provisions, Code of Virginia, § 58.1-3234.

Sec. 10-123. Determination of eligibility.

- (a) Promptly upon receipt of any application under this article, the commissioner of the revenue (and the Town Clerk) shall determine whether the subject property meets the criteria for taxation under this article. If the commissioner of the revenue (and the Town Clerk) determines that the subject property does meet such criteria, he shall determine the value of such property for its qualifying use, as well as its fair market value.
- (b) In determining whether the subject property meets the criteria set forth in Code of Virginia, §58.1-3230, the commissioner of the revenue (and the Town Clerk) may request an opinion from the director of the state department of conservation and recreation, the state forester or the state commissioner of agriculture and consumer services. Upon the refusal of any of such person to issue an opinion, or in the event of an unfavorable opinion which does not comport with standards set forth by him, the party aggrieved may seek relief from any court of record wherein the real estate in question is located. If the court finds in his favor, it may issue an order which shall serve in lieu of an opinion for the purposes of this Article.

Sec. 10-124. Filing of applications and indexing of qualifying properties.

The commissioner of the revenue (and the Town Clerk) shall prepare a list of all applications filed and approved under this article and shall transmit such list and the original copy of such application to the clerk of the circuit court of the county. The clerk shall index the names in a book entitled "Land Use Tax Assessment Book" and file the application in his office. The Council shall compensate the clerk at the rate of one dollar (\$1.00) for filing and indexing each application or revalidation for which a fee is payable, notwithstanding any limitation provided in Code of Virginia, §14.1-143.2 or any other section of the Code of Virginia.

Sec. 10-125. Computation of tax.

The use value and fair market value of any qualifying property under this Article shall be placed on the land book before delivery to the Town treasurer, and the tax for the next succeeding tax year shall be extended from the use value.

Sec 10-126. Rollback tax – imposed.

There is hereby imposed a rollback tax, and interest thereon, in such amounts as may be determined under Code of Virginia, §58.1-3237, upon any property as to which the use changes to a nonqualifying use under this Article.

Sec. 10-127. - Same. – Report of change in status; payment.

The owner of any real estate rezoned as provided in Code of Virginia, §58.1-3237(D), or liable for rollback taxes under this Article, shall, within sixty (60) days following such change in use or zoning, report such change to the commissioner of the revenue or other assessing officer (and the Town Clerk) on such forms as may be prescribed. The commissioner (and the Town Clerk) shall forthwith determine and assess the rollback tax, which shall be assessed against and paid by the owner of the property at the time the

change in use which no longer qualifies occurs and shall be paid to the **Town** treasurer within thirty (30) days of the assessment. On failure to report within sixty (60) days following such change in use or failure to pay within thirty (30) days of assessment, such owner shall be liable for an additional penalty equal to ten (10) percent of the amount of the rollback tax and interest, which penalty shall be collected as a part of the tax. In addition to such penalty, there is hereby imposed interest of two-thirds percent of the amount of the rollback tax, interest and penalty, for each month or fraction thereof during which the failure continues.

Sec. 10-128. Making false application.

Any person making a material misstatement of fact in any application filed pursuant to this Article shall be liable for all taxes, in such amounts and at such times as if such property had been assessed on the basis of fair market value as applied to other real estate in the taxing jurisdiction, together with interest and penalties thereon. If such material misstatement was made with the intent to defraud the Town, he shall be further assessed with an additional penalty of one hundred (100) percent of such unpaid taxes.

Sec. 10-129. Applicability of state law.

The provisions of Code of Virginia, Title 58.1 applicable to local levies and real estate assessment and taxation, shall be applicable to assessments and taxation under this Article *mutatis mutandis*, including, without limitation, provisions relating to tax liens, boards of equalization and the correction of erroneous assessments, and for such purposes the rollback taxes shall be considered to be deferred real estate taxes.

Secs. 10-130 through 10-140. – Reserved.

(Ord. of ____ - ____-25)

First Reading:

Second Reading:

VOTE: Beasley _____
Cline _____
Fox _____
Hankins _____
Willis _____

Mayor

Clerk

This Ordinance shall be in effect from and after thirty (30) days from the date of its passage.

Effective Date: _____, 2025.

B. Ratify Resolution of Support for the Cumberland Plateau Regional Opportunity Program (CPROP) Grant Application.

Councilmember Cline motioned for the resolution of support for the Cumberland Plateau Regional Opportunity Program (CPROP) grant application. Vice Mayor Beasley seconded the motion.

On roll call vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, nay; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

New Business

A. Mayor Vacancy Discussion

Vice Mayor Beasley expressed appreciation for former Mayor Hoops' service and offered commendations. Manager Regon consulted with Legal Counsel regarding the Town Charter, which outlines two possible courses of action: one provision indicates that the Vice Mayor shall assume the office of Mayor, while another states that Council should appoint an interim Mayor. At this time, Manager Regon recommends maintaining the current Vice Mayor in position. Pyott clarified that both Charter sections use the word "shall." A public hearing will be required, and if an election is necessary, it would take place on November 2026.

B. Crosswalk Discussion

Councilmember Cline was asked about a crosswalk on Tazewell Avenue due to a busy playground area; this and other potential locations like Warhawk Park will be considered. Manager Regon confirmed VDOT's approval process and expects installation of the crosswalk by late November, though costs are not yet known. Councilmember Cline suggested adding shade trees to the dog park, and Councilmember Fox raised concerns about its usage and dogs' impact around the lake at Lincolnshire Park. Water access and necessary improvements for the park were discussed regarding the dog park; updated information will be presented at the next council meeting. Addressing leaf pick up concerns. Manager Regon stated that leaf pick up is offered once free in the fall, and sidewalk maintenance for leaves is planned.

C. Mountain Biking Project Update

Councilmember Cline stated that they have had plans and discussion to utilize the property that we already own. He asked for updates regarding easements to the property. Manager Regon stated she has a meeting scheduled tomorrow with two property owners. Attorney Pyott clarified that the other property of the east. Councilmember Cline asked would it be good to seek easements for both properties. Attorney Pyott has been trying to contact them for discussion of easement conversation. This particular parcel will not be utilized for Mountain Biking but they are actively seeking contact. Council agrees that it is unused land and that securing easement to access and then utilize that property is imperative. Councilmember Fox is against easement and public access to the parcel because there is a water source on that land. He is concerned that it can not be policed and protected. He is also concerned that it is driving assets out of town instead of having it in town. He is concerned for damage in the area. He clearly stated that he is against it. Councilmember

Cline said that if he recalled from April meeting that they discussed these exact concerns at that meeting. He said that there are firms that do this and are attentive and sensitive for plans regarding locations similar to this. Councilmember Cline also stated that our revenue has only increased in Meals Tax and Hotel Tax. He believes it is crucial to tourism in our area as a growing revenue source. Councilmember Cline agrees that it could be an option to pivot the location in town could be feasible. He doesn't foresee an environmental concern. Councilmember Fox is still adamant that it should not be installed in that location. Vice Mayor Beasley stated that the reason they considered that is because it is property that the town already owned and they would not have to spend money for the location. Councilmember Fox asked why they don't seek co op with the county and utilize their property for this project. Councilmember Cline explained that they have had multiple meetings this year for projects and tourism that can increase traffic resulting in more businesses in our town. It is imperative to bring industry, revenue increase from tourism. It is a growing revenue opportunity for our town. Vice Mayor Beasley said that if they proceed with this project they will ensure that the water reservoir is protected. Councilmember Fox is adamant that it does not be touched. He is terrified that it will damage that land and he believes it needs to be preserved. He is concerned that we need to focus us on bringing something in town. Councilmember Cline said that we are all on the same team he is asking for suggestions for alternative projects and ideas feasible from him. Please provide them with an alternative.

Councilmember Cline mentioned ongoing plans and discussions to make use of existing town-owned property located in Gratton. He requested updates about easements for the property, and Manager Regon shared she has a meeting scheduled with two property owners the next day. Attorney Pyott clarified that these discussions also involve a property to the east, and suggested pursuing easements for both parcels, noting he has been trying to reach out to them. While this specific parcel will not be used for the mountain biking, contacting the owners remains a priority. Most of the council agreed that since the land is currently unused, securing easement access is essential for future utilization.

Councilmember Fox opposes granting easements and public access because the parcel contains a water source, raising concerns about its security and potential for damage. He feels allowing access could divert assets from the town and is worried about harm to the area. Councilmember Fox reiterated his opposition clearly. Councilmember Cline recalled similar concerns discussed at the April meeting, referencing firms experienced in handling projects similar to this, involving sensitive locations and trusts that the land a water reserve will be protected. Councilmember Cline also noted increased revenue from Meals Tax and Hotel Tax, emphasizing tourism as a crucial and growing source of income for the area. He suggested shifting the location within the town might be possible and does not anticipate environmental issues. Councilmember Fox remained firmly against developing the parcel.

Vice Mayor Beasley explained the appeal of using town-owned property was avoiding the cost of purchasing new land this is why they are considering using this parcel for the project. Councilmember Fox asked why the town doesn't collaborate with the county to use county

property for the project. Councilmember Cline replied that there have been multiple meetings this year aimed at boosting tourism and business traffic, which are vital for increasing local industry and revenue. Vice Mayor Beasley assured that any project would protect the water reservoir, but Councilmember Fox insisted the land should remain untouched, citing fears of irreversible damage and a need to preserve it. Councilmember Fox argued attention should focus on attracting new opportunities within the town instead. Councilmember Cline reminded everyone they are working toward a common goal and requested suggestions for alternative projects or feasible ideas from Councilmember Fox.

D. Set Joint Work Session for Town Council, Planning Commission, and I/EDA for Monday, December 1, 2025 at 5:30pm to review the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilmember Cline motioned to set the joint work session with Council, Planning Commission and IEDA on Monday December 1st at 5:30pm. Councilmember Hankins seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

E. EMS Renovation Project Update

Manager Regon reported that a proposal has been prepared for the EMS renovation project. A mandatory pre-bid meeting is scheduled for October 29th at 10am at Town of Tazewell Emergency Medical Services. The project involves congressional directed spending, with \$354,000 provided as a grant, and the town required to supply matching funds. Thompson and Litton developed a proposal PAR, presenting two options: the first is to construct a new building, while the second suggests renovating the existing office. These upgrades are considered essential for their facility. Bids must be submitted by November 19th at 2pm. The purpose is restructuring.

Councilmember Cline inquired about the status of their vehicles. The Manager stated that two new ambulances will soon join the fleet but expressed concerns regarding the other vehicles. She will ask Syndee to attend the next meeting to provide further details and share a preview. Next month, the Fire Department is scheduled to deliver a presentation.

F. Rt. 460 Water line Replacement Project Update

Manager Regon announced that work will continue into the first week of October. Final touches on that section are set for tomorrow, and Melvins Enterprise is scheduled to begin milling and paving the lane on Monday. In the spring, both sides of the road from Perry St to the intersection at the red light will be completed. On Thursday, work will start on the four-way hill section, which will then be paved by the Town and overlaid in the spring. The asphalt plant is expected to close the week of November 10th. Councilmember Cline reported that a citizen raised concerns about vehicles still traveling through the closed area on both lanes, causing traffic to meet. Although Work Zone signs have been installed, enforcement has proven challenging, but the police department is actively addressing the issue. This project spans 18 months as outlined in the plan

and agreement. Councilmember Fox inquired if the work could be contracted out, but Manager Regon explained this is unlikely since all contracts stipulate the town must handle the project but she will look further into this. She also mentioned plans to offer incentives or relief to local businesses and residents affected by the construction.

G. Waste Water Treatment Plant Project Update

Work is expected to start in November, and the project will last 18 months. Vice Mayor Beasley asked if everything is functioning properly. Manager Regon answered that one of the belts failed on Monday and was ordered for replacement today.

H. Clinch River Pavilion Update

Three bids were submitted, and Heritage Metal was selected for the project. Completion is expected by May 2026. The initial meeting took place on October 16th, one year ago, and significant progress has been made since then. Construction will start in February, and a ribbon cutting ceremony will follow once groundbreaking takes place.

I. Miscellaneous

Manager Regon provided an update to the council about Kid's Fish Day, noting that 167 children took part. The event was led by the recreation and public works departments, who did an excellent job organizing it. Attendance was impressive. Vice Mayor Beasley shared that he joined the event with his family and appreciated its partnership with the Fire Department Parade, which they also attended. Overall, it was an enjoyable occasion for everyone involved.

Public Comments

Emily Davis- 124 Combs Court took a moment to comment on the project, involving the two Town owned parcels: one with a water source and one without. The council is considering the parcel with the water source for the Mountain Biking Project, as confirmed by Councilmember Cline. Mrs. Davis sought clarification on where the water source is located, and Councilmember Cline explained it lies on the southern side of the property, so far south that it shouldn't pose significant issues. Mrs. Davis emphasized the importance of attracting visitors by utilizing available resources. Although the region boasts beautiful mountains, access is restricted since much of the land is privately owned. She also noted that there isn't enough in-town property suitable for mountain biking.

Council Comments

Councilmember Cline said that collectively we are on the same team. They are working to grow the town, making it better for their citizens. He said the work the council is doing is not for monetary gain it is to serve the community. It is important that they have these discussions to collaborate and work together for our communities. They are at the early stages of project planning;

where they are using outside funding to study and research these projects then if it lines up for the success of our town and citizens proceed with implementing the project.

Councilmember Cline requested that all members review their emails. Maintaining timely and consistent communication is essential.

Councilmember Fox reiterated the issues he previously discussed concerning the properties in Gratton. He advocates for development projects within the town limits to benefit local residents rather than focusing outside of town.

Adjournment

Councilmember Cline motioned to adjourn, Councilmember Hankins seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Vice Mayor Beasley, aye.

Meeting adjourned at 9:21pm.