

Council Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2026

Present:

Mayor Joe Beasley

Councilmember Danny Willis

Vice Mayor Jonathan Hankins

Councilmember Zach Cline

Councilmember David Fox

Councilmember Glen Keen, Jr.

Councilmember Elisabeth Takach

Absent:

Staff members present were Town Manager, Leeanne Regon; Executive Assistant, Susan Reeves; Attorney, Brad Pyott; Clerk-Treasurer, Jessica Hayes; Police Chief Stanley Lampert, Fire Chief John Thomas; Recreation Director Kenneth Hicks.

BUDGET WORK SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Beasley called the work session to order at 6:00pm in the Town Hall Council Chambers

Manager Regon informed the council that there are several public works vehicles requiring consideration. She requested approval to utilize either the LGIP General Fund Reserve or LGIP Sports Complex Revenue Recovery funds for the proposed purchase. Councilmember Willis noted that if this approach is taken, the acquisition should involve purchasing new vehicles. Manager Regon contacted Enterprise to inquire about their public works fleet management offerings and confirmed that such services are available, though implementation may not be timely enough to address current needs. The council expressed support for purchasing new vehicles with warranties. Councilmember Cline recommended using the Revenue Recovery Funds and increasing the allocation to \$300,000. Mayor Beasley inquired about the possibility of acquiring four new vehicles and repairing the bucket truck and requested preparation to apply for the Fleet program next year.

Councilmember Cline proposed utilizing the water reserve fund for vehicle procurement, suggesting this approach could reduce withdrawals from accounts with higher interest rates. Vice Mayor Hankins inquired about potential purchasing power within the current budget, recommending a mix of funds: one from interest, one from the water reserve, and the remainder from revenue recovery.

Councilmember Cline requested an update on the Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade project. Manager Regon confirmed positive progress, highlighting the construction of a navy bridge to facilitate material shipments. Councilmember Willis emphasized the importance of extending sewer services to all town customers, specifically referencing Linda Lane, Hurst St, and Steeles Lane, which are currently not connected to the existing infrastructure.

Additional discussion addressed compensation for IEDA members, with Mayor Beasley questioning whether payment should occur per meeting or monthly. The charter allows for compensation up to \$50 per meeting. Councilmembers agreed that including this provision in the I/EDA budget would be beneficial, and matching Planning Commission rates was considered.

Manager Regon also presented the proposed FY 26 Budget, focusing on the Water and Sewer Fund. Councilmembers discussed the need for lead and copper replacement planning, potential agreement requirements for Town rentals with the I/EDA, and options for future project funding phases. The council collectively agreed to review estimated costs at the next budget work session and to identify the number of homes not currently connected to sewer service. Councilmember Cline suggested introducing an IRF fee to help cover future infrastructure repairs and replacements. Manager Regon agreed to gather estimated project costs with extending our sewer services to those areas and present them at the next budget work session, which the council found helpful.

REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Beasley called the regular meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Pastor Nate Thomas led the meeting in the invocation prayer.

Special Presentations

A. 4-H Camp Support Request

Tammy Bishop is seeking sponsorship support for children attending Summer Camp. The goal is to include as many participants as possible, but financial difficulties prevent some families in the area from joining. Last year, 45 children benefited from the sponsorship program, and any contribution is appreciated. Councilmember Fox inquired about the number of kids involved in Tazewell County 4H; last year, there were 190 campers, including around 40 to 50 from Town. Councilmember Fox made a motion to donate \$500. Councilmember Takach seconded the motion. Councilmember Cline pointed out that a budget amendment would be needed to afford to do this. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, nay; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

B. 2026 THS Project Graduation Support Request

Manager Regon explained that last year, instead of making a donation, Lincolnshire Park and the pool were used for Project Graduation. She read aloud the letter submitted for this year's request but mentioned she has not yet heard whether the class is interested in using the park again. Councilmember Keen suggested it would be preferable for the class to attend and present their request in person. The matter will be postponed until next month.

C. Brain Injury Solutions Support Request

Alexander Barge – Director of Development at Brain Injury Solutions. This nonprofit organization offers complimentary services to individuals affected by brain injury. In Virginia, approximately one in thirty people have a disability resulting from brain injury. Founded by a mother whose child experienced a brain injury, the organization provides essential support and resources including case management, a buddy program, an online support group, community living arrangements, and consumer support specialists who assist with task re-learning. They serve both children and adults, meeting clients in their homes and tailoring services to each unique case according to individual goals and needs. Last year, they assisted over 600 individuals. Councilmember Keen moved to allocate \$300, which Councilmember Fox seconded. Councilmember Cline highlighted that the organization is currently overextended and will require a budget amendment to facilitate additional funds for donation requests. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, nay; Councilmember Cline, nay; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

D. Friends of Southwest Virginia Partnership Support Request

Manager Regon noted that support requests are received annually, with a current request for \$1,500 included in the FY 26-27 budget proposal. Manager Regon highlighted their support of several ongoing projects. Councilmember Cline inquired about the nearest festival, which is located in Abingdon. Councilmember Cline recommended tabling the discussion and adding it to the upcoming budget work session.

E. Old Town Revival (OTR) Event Request and Support Request

Manager Regon reported that there are both an event request and a support request pending. Historically, council has approved a \$10,000 donation. She recommended addressing the event request first, scheduled for June 5, 6, and 7. Councilmember Cline moved to approve the event, and Councilmember Keen seconded. Councilmember Cline noted previous challenges with communication among local business owners regarding street closures. Manager Regon stated that a newsletter is distributed, and a phone alert system called NIXLE is utilized; notifications are sent twice during the week to provide ample advance notice. Councilmember Keen requested an amendment to the motion regarding street closures: Friday on Jeffersonville Street access, Saturday and Sunday on West Ave, with ease of access for the Wayfarer. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye.

The previous support request for this event was \$10,000. Councilmember Willis expressed concerns about ongoing sponsorship, noting that as the event becomes profitable, responsibility should shift away from external support. Councilmember Cline

indicated that last year he viewed this initiative as a five-year experiment to evaluate its impact on local meals and hotel tax revenue generated by increased tourism. Recent data shows that 1,500 visits to the area were attributable to this event. Councilmember Cline believes continued support is worth considering due to its positive effect on tourism. Councilmember Keen acknowledged both the event's value and its contribution to tourism. Despite its success, Councilmember Keen is dissatisfied with current budget constraints and reluctantly considered withdrawal of support. He moved to waive the sponsorship for this year, seconded by Councilmember Willis. Councilmember Cline made the point that sponsoring the event also serves as marketing for the town, generating peak revenue during the weekend and encouraging repeat visits. He suggested that if sponsorship ends, funds should be allocated instead to a marketing campaign. Councilmember Takach recused herself from discussion and vote due to conflict of interest on this matter. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, nay; Councilmember Cline, nay; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye. The motion carried.

F. Trees at Lincolnshire Park- Jess Beavers

Jess Beavers stated that he initiated a tree identification project several years ago and intends to complete it. The initial four images pertain to trees selected for identification, with the project originally commencing in 2018. Mr. Beavers regularly walks in our park and noted that, when walking from the dam to the lake, there is a need for shade trees on this side of the park. He suggested funding the project through donations made in memory of loved ones, enabling trees to be planted in the park as memorials, which would also support the development of an informational and educational resource. The Forest Service advised planting larger, more mature trees. Mr. Beavers collaborates with a nursery in Bristol, whose staff are highly knowledgeable, and together they have planned the types of trees to be planted, including a Red Oak and a Red Maple, in 2023. He wishes to resume the project by initially planting two trees in the spring. Additionally, he recommends using granite markers, which are highly durable, as identification markers. There is an aspiration to continue this initiative biennially, or annually if additional support is acquired, and to align future plantings with Arbor Day. He also envisions expanding the program to other areas of town, such as the Dog Park, and proposes planting Cherry Trees along the bank.

A motion was made by Councilmember Fox to approve Mr. Beavers' project and planning, which was seconded by Vice Mayor Hankins. Councilmember Cline highlighted certain restrictions regarding planting near the dam, to which Mr. Beavers affirmed his understanding of the relevant guidelines, including proximity regulations to both the dam and the lake. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

G. Jefferson Street Sewer Line Issues- Time and Jennifer Lowe

There have been multiple sewage problems on the property since Summer 2023, continuing into Saturday. Manager Regon explained three possible solutions; the

preferred option is installing a larger pipe and a grinder pump, running from the road to the cleanout. There's also consideration of connecting other houses with their own lines. Manager Regon believes there are harness agreements in place with neighboring properties. If the line moves off their property, neighbors would need to re-plumb. The council has authorized the Manager to resolve this within budget, involving a pump and an eight-inch pipe. A meeting should be scheduled to address further questions and review the plan.

Local Business Recognition

- A. J&R Gold - Joseph Calo is the current owner of the business, which has operated since 1984, originally opened by his father. Mike Abel, a lifelong friend and business partner, works alongside him. Mayor Beasley thanked them for their community involvement and presented gifts in appreciation.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Mayor Hankins made a motion to approve minutes from the February 10th Council Meeting and the February 23rd Special Called Council Meeting. Councilmember Cline seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

Approval of Financial Statements & Financial Report

Councilmember Keen made a motion to approve financial statements and financial reports for February 2026. Vice Mayor Hankins seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

Committee/Conference Updates

A. Planning Commission Committee

Building and Zoning Official Hurley reported that at the previous meeting, a developer presented a proposal for a climate-controlled building, but the motion did not receive enough votes to advance.

B. Tazewell Today

Director Emily Davis reported that the Polar Plunge was held on February 8th and raised over \$3,000, with \$1,572 contributed jointly by Tazewell Today and the Wagner Project. Twenty-six participants took the plunge, and the event was considered a success.

She noted that this past Sunday they partnered with THS to host a bingo event. The next major event is the Easter celebration on March 28th at 10:00 a.m. Addair Behavioral Services will offer a sensory-friendly portion on the tennis courts.

Over the past month, they also hosted a presentation with Joe Borgonsen regarding redevelopment strategy for Tazewell. They are currently transitioning to a new website,

expected to go live next month, which will include a calendar integration to serve as a community calendar.

Upcoming items include the SMART Grant presentation, the Design Committee meeting on Monday the 16th, and the Economic Vitality Committee and Board of Directors annual meeting on the 19th at 6:00 p.m., followed by the regular meeting. The Promotion Committee will meet on the 24th at 6:30 p.m., and volunteers are encouraged to participate.

The financial report will be available in April. An accreditation meeting is also scheduled for the 19th. Additionally, the Place and Main presentation is being implemented through Friends of Southwest Virginia.

C. Industrial/Development Economic Development Authority

I/EDA Chairperson Cara Spivey reported that they met on March 2nd. The EBAG and BAZ applications were updated, as they frequently receive incomplete submissions that delay processing. The revisions clarify required information both on the website and within the applications to help prevent these issues.

They discussed ongoing projects and expressed satisfaction with the progress at the Pavilion. They also discussed collaboration opportunities with Jordan Dillon and reviewed plans moving forward for the Ramey Lot. Chairperson Spivey noted she has a meeting scheduled with an architecture professor who may assist with project drawings.

Manager Regon has also reached out to Upper Tennessee regarding river clean-out efforts

D. Comprehensive Plan Review Sub-Committee

Councilmember Cline reported that they are working through the goals and objectives within the Comprehensive Plan. VDOT has advised that the Town must review the State's Six-Year Plan to ensure alignment and must also submit the Town's plan for their review. He noted that the scope of work will need to be contracted out. While Council wants to remain influential in the process, the design work itself will require professional services.

He recommended that Council allocate funding to support this effort. He added that the Town previously worked with Hill Studio and emphasized that this work needs to begin soon to ensure the plan is completed on time.

Unfinished Business

A. Appointment Councilmember to Town of Tazewell's Recreation Committee.

Mayor Beasley stated that the remaining seat on the Recreation Committee to be filled will be the councilmember. Vice Mayor Hankins made a motion to have Councilmember Willis serve on the committee. Councilmember Keen seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

New Business

A. Mowing Bids Update

Bid 1: Riverside Dr (Whites Muffler to Corner of Professional Drive)

Bid 2: Fairground Rd

Bid 3: Hardees to 460 Off Ramp

Bid 4: Lake at Lincolnshire Park. Pre bid meeting for this will be held at the park. The mowing contract will be mowing every two weeks.

B. May Clean-Up Month

In the past the council voted to designate May as Clean up month. Councilmember Keen made a motion to designate May as Clean-up Month. Councilmember Takach seconded the motion. Councilmember Cline asked if we were planning to rent the street sweeper. Manager Regon answered that it has already been scheduled and will be here March 30th for 2 weeks. Councilmember Takach inquired if there is a plan to address trash in town. She noted that there are many areas in our town with loose trash and debris and this reflects badly on our community. There was a discussion with the members and Manager Regon on ways we could encourage our citizens to clean up their properties. Many of these areas are private property and it is up to the owner to maintain it. Manager Regon stated that a copy of the applicable ordinance could be included to support Code Enforcement efforts. She recommended adding clarifying language regarding citations and associated penalties. She also suggested preparing informational posts for May Clean-Up Month.

It was discussed that Main Street currently receives trash collection three times per week and expressed that pickups should occur earlier, ideally by 9:00 a.m. This could address concerns of visible trash on Main Street throughout the day.

On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

C. Town Manager Project Updates

- Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade Project — This project is showing significant progress. A Navy Bridge is being installed to allow equipment access to the site.
- Clinch River Pavilion & Farmers Market — There will now be a Riverwalk mural, which is an exciting addition. The structure itself looks impressive, with water and sewer connections in place. Bathrooms and the kitchen are being installed, and tables and furniture have been ordered. A question was raised about whether a hotspot could be installed. The Riverwalk area will be ADA-compliant and will include benches and a swing.
- Mountain Biking Project — The Virginia Outdoor Trust has a grant opportunity available to assist localities seeking an easement.
- EMS Renovations / Congressionally Directed Spending — Councilmember Willis is concerned about upgrading the current facility. The are is residential and not ideal for an EMS Facility. He believes for that amount of money they could find a better property for the EMS Facility. Councilmembers Fox and Takach agree that where it is currently at isn't ideal. EMS Director Saleem stated that with the current facility that they have they know what the problems are and the cost and work scope to upgrade it to meet their

needs but is concerned that if they find another location it could open up a whole set of problems. She is open to suggestions but is concerned there isn't another ideal location for them.

D. Items for Auction

Several items were presented for surplus auction, including a 2016 Massey Ferguson tractor, a 2007 John Deere backhoe, and a 2006 International dump truck. It was noted that the cost to replace the tractor exceeds its current value. Councilmember Cline asked whether the Town could utilize the dump truck's bed or other parts before sending it to auction.

Councilmember Cline made a motion to proceed and send these items to auction. Vice Mayor Hankins seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

E. Miscellaneous

Councilmember Cline made a motion to allow an allocation of up to \$300,000 to purchase the 4 replacement trucks and repair or replace the bucket truck. It was noted that Manager Regon would provide quotes to council and they would do an email vote and ratify at the next meeting.

Council also considered compensation for IEDA members. Councilmember Cline made a motion to pay \$50 per serving member each month a meeting is held; as allowable by the Town Code. Councilmember Willis seconded the motion. Councilmembers Keen and Takach recused themselves from the vote due to a conflict of interest. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye.

Miscellaneous Public Comment

Council asked whether there is an ordinance requiring business dumpsters to have lids, noting the amount of trash accumulating along the Clinch and surrounding areas. Staff clarified that the ordinance requires garbage to be placed in a container, but it does not specifically mandate the use of a lid. The ordinance also includes requirements for when garbage may be placed out for pickup. It was discussed that those areas need to be cleaned up but it falls on private property. Manager Regon did mention that one area discussed is going to be apart of the future river clean-up project.

Council Comments- None

Adjournment

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:49pm