Council Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2026

Present:	Absent:
Mayor Joe Beasley	
Councilmember Danny Willis	
Vice Mayor Jonathan Hankins	
Councilmember Zach Cline	
Councilmember David Fox	
Councilmember Glen Keen, Jr.	
Councilmember Elisabeth Takach	

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; EMS Director, Syndee Saleem; Zoning and Building Official, Chris Hurley.

WORK SESSION

Mayor Beasley called the work session to order at 6:30pm

Comprehensive Plan Update

Councilmember Cline reported that Mr. Laith Wardi of Gem City presented at the Comprehensive Plan meeting yesterday evening. Mr. Wardi is here today to present to the council his proposed layout of the Comprehensive Plan, noting his long-standing familiarity with the region and the extensive time he has spent here while developing the plan. That experience, he said, gives him a strong understanding of what strategies are likely to succeed in this area.

Mr. Wardi emphasized that long-term planning is increasingly difficult in a rapidly changing world. Even major industry leaders, he said, struggle to predict their own five-year outlooks. For that reason, he encouraged the town to expect annual re-evaluation, re-work, and structural reviews to stay on track.

He highlighted that the community has far more assets today than many rural areas. When evaluating a town, he explained, Main Street serves as the community's "living room," and he described the Town's built environment as impressive. Although the county has experienced some population decline, he noted that it is nowhere near the levels seen in surrounding areas. He pointed to local amenities, such as the new medical facility; as major strengths that should be leveraged in the plan. He believes the community is positioned to move "from good to great."

The plan, he said, will focus on amplifying existing strengths to support growth. Some areas, such as housing, may need stabilization before expansion. He will provide Manager Regon and Executive Assistant Reeves with a copy of the draft document so council members can review it thoroughly and suggest changes or additions. With strategic planning, achievable goals, and consistent pursuit, he believes the town can accomplish significant progress within five years.

Mr. Wardi described the current economic environment as one in which communities must “build it and attract more to come.” Enhancing quality of life, he said, is key to drawing new residents and supporting economic growth. Manager Regon stated that the subcommittee’s feedback has already been incorporated into the plan and agreed that Mr. Wardi is moving in the right direction. Mr. Wardi reiterated that he welcomes suggestions and noted that the draft is currently about 100 pages.

He outlined the plan’s structure, beginning with Legislative Authority and noting that many statutes now exist that were not in place during the last comprehensive plan update. The plan explains its purpose, what it is and is not, and why it matters. It includes a situational analysis describing where the town stands today and where it can realistically go. He stressed that the town will ultimately be responsible for implementing and being accountable to these plans.

Unlike some consultants who rely on secondary data sources, Mr. Wardi is using current U.S. Census data. While minor deviations may appear, he said this is the most up-to-date information available. The plan includes regional and historical context under the Cumberland Plateau Planning District, updated demographic and population data, and a half-century population plateau graphic for quick reference. He noted that the aging population presents economic challenges and that the town will need strategies to attract and infuse younger residents.

He also discussed the town’s economic base, pointing out that labor force participation is low and should be examined. Median household income lags behind county and statewide levels. He highlighted the Census “On the Map” tool showing job inflow and outflow, which could help identify groups to incentivize, such as workers who might relocate if housing were more available.

Each section of the plan includes summaries. The housing section identifies the lack of new construction and outlines potential action steps to address it. Additional sections cover wastewater collection and treatment, stormwater, fire protection, law enforcement, EMS, parks and recreation, public schools, government, and broadband connectivity. He encouraged the town to lean heavily into broadband as a major advantage, noting that availability is strong even if adoption is lower.

The plan also addresses community preservation and development, including the Main Street Program, downtown revitalization strategies, and heritage tourism and recreation assets. He noted that these are significant strengths. A SWOT analysis, absent from the previous plan, has been added. The plan also includes a “report card” evaluating how well previous recommendations were implemented.

Strategic goals requested by the town are incorporated, along with priority initiatives. Mr. Wardi said the Fab Lab and mountain biking components are well developed in the draft, and additional topics will be expanded. He praised the sidewalk project and encouraged adding intentional details, such as the multi-purpose soccer fields to create positive impressions and attract interest.

The plan continues with Future Land Use, transportation elements, updated maps, and an implementation framework that ties everything together. There is a chart located at the end of the plant that outlines timelines for implementation. Mr. Wardi asked council members to review the goals closely and specify any additions they want included.

Councilmember Takach expressed support for the plan's design and layout and said she looks forward to seeing the goals clearly integrated. Mayor Beasley thanked Mr. Wardi for his presentation.

Work session adjourned at 7:17pm

REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL 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 Presentation/Request(s)

A. Recognition of Leah Keene and Walker Patterson, Winners of the Once a Bulldog, Always a Bulldog Scholarship.

Leah Keene and Walker Patterson attended the meeting to be recognized as recipients of the 2026 Once a Bulldog Scholarship. Leah Keene, a recent graduate of Tazewell High School, participated in competition cheerleading, football and basketball cheerleading, as well as indoor and outdoor track. She plans to attend Southwest Virginia Community College for one year before transferring to Virginia Tech.

Walker Patterson also graduated from Tazewell High School alongside Ms. Keene. During his time there, he played football, baseball, and indoor track. He will be attending Emory & Henry College to study Engineering Science.

The council congratulated both students on their accomplishments and extended best wishes for their future academic and professional endeavors.

B. Tazewell High School Marching Band Boosters Support Request

Heather Davis reported that band practice began this week and that the group will attend band camp at Emory & Henry next week. She explained that the band operates on a very limited budget and is in desperate need of updated equipment. To help support these upgrades, they requested $500 in funding. She also noted that the band is participating in several upcoming events. Councilmember Keen made a motion to approve the $500 request, and Councilmember Cline seconded the motion.

Councilmember Fox suggested increasing the contribution, stating that the band consistently supports the town during parades and Main Street events. He recommended raising the donation to $700.

Councilmember Willis agreed, noting that with 80 band members, the higher amount was reasonable and still within a modest range.

Councilmember Keen amended his motion from $500 to $700, and Councilmember Cline seconded the amended motion. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

C. Tazewell County Historical Society Support Increase Request

Dr. Terry Mullins thanked the council for inviting him to speak. He explained that the Historical Society is located at the end of Main Street and is the oldest remaining structure on the street, with many others having been replaced or significantly altered over time.

The building is used frequently by community groups, including the DAR, SAR, local Scout troops, and various class reunions. It has also been the site of video projects and documentaries. The town's Christmas decorations tie into the exterior of the building, and visitors come from across the country to research family and local history. Dr. Mullins emphasized that volunteers are essential to the Society's operations. He noted that the Society's activities bring people into Tazewell and help support the local economy. Members personally cover the cost of software, supplies, and other necessities. Their only income comes from publications sold at the building and from donations. The Society made significant progress when the town began providing a $5,000 annual support grant.

Dr. Mullins outlined the Society's expenses, which include water and sewer fees, festival participation costs, electricity, camera and online research services, monthly camera-system fees, and credit-card reader charges. He highlighted the mural at the train station, which the Society installed using a grant from the Ratliff Foundation.

He also reported that the building's heat pumps recently failed. Volunteers stepped in to reduce costs, bringing the repair and replacement expense down to $800, but the Society still needs funding to cover it. He stressed that the Society is a vital part of Tazewell and expressed appreciation for the town's support. He invited council members to visit the building, which is open Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

Councilmember Cline asked about the historical origins of Main Street's location. Dr, Mullins confirmed the long-told story that a fistfight between two families determined its placement; had the other family prevailed, Main Street would have been located at the four-way intersection.

Councilmember Cline also asked whether the Society receives support from other localities. Dr. Mullins said they do not currently, though they hope to receive assistance from the County in the future. He noted that the Society's camera system receives many views, and technical issues are noticeable when it goes down.

Councilmember Cline recalled that the Society had previously submitted expenses exceeding $5,000, closer to $7,000 annually for operations. Dr. Mullins responded that after reviewing all expenses, the Society's annual operating cost is now just over $9,000.

Councilmember Cline made a motion to amend the town's contribution from $2,000 to $6,000, contingent upon the Society showing that they have also reached out to Bluefield, Richlands, Cedar Bluff, and Tazewell County for support. Councilmember Keen seconded the motion.

Councilmember Fox suggested increasing the amount further, to $7,000. Councilmember Takach added that if other localities contribute, it may encourage broader participation and shared responsibility. Councilmember Willis asked whether the Society had spoken with John Rudy. Another member confirmed that a letter had been delivered to him and a response is pending.

Councilmember Cline asked whether adding a resolution of support from the town might help incentivize other localities and strengthen the Society's ability to pursue donations and grant funding. This will be voted on after the vote for a donation of $6,000 to the Historical Society, contingent upon the Society showing that they have also reached out to Bluefield, Richlands, Cedar Bluff, and Tazewell County for support. On vote, Councilmember Willis, nay; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

Vice Mayor Hankins then made a motion to issue a letter of support for the Historical Society in their pursuit for funding. Fox seconded the motion. The letter would be to show support for them to use to reach out to additional funding, grants and donations. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

D. 2027 Rt. 16 Rally & Music Festival Event and Support Requests

Donna Roberts and Chris Myers presented survey analytics to the council and expressed gratitude for the town's support of the Rt. 16 Rally and Music Festival. They explained how the donation impacted the event, what they learned, and their vision for the future. Their goal is to grow the festival into a destination weekend that drives tourism and economic growth in Tazewell.

They reported that in just seven weeks they established a nonprofit organization and successfully delivered the festival. Key outcomes included:

- 8,000 attendees, measured by traffic counters
- Creation of a brand and launch of a website
- Sponsors secured and entertainment booked
- Marketing campaign executed
- Volunteers organized and logistics managed, including road closures
- Regional television coverage
- Zero major safety incidents
- Strong community partnerships
- Multiple days of entertainment
- Billboards placed in other cities
- Increased overnight stays, restaurant traffic, retail spending, tax revenue, and community pride

Mrs. Roberts and Mr. Myers noted that the biggest challenge was wayfinding and signage, particularly connecting the full footprint of Main Street. They want to see broader Main Street involvement and plan earlier coordination for next year. They also hope to expand music experiences, strengthen regional partnerships, and enhance the visitor experience to build a sustainable long-term event.

They requested that the council consider increasing its donation from $10,000 in 2026 to $15,000 in 2027, citing higher regional marketing expenses. They also submitted a request for street closures for next year's event.

Councilmembers discussed the request at length. Councilmember Willis asked how many days of road closure were being requested, they replied Friday and Saturday, beginning at 11 a.m. Friday. Police Chief Lampert raised concerns about court proceedings during that time of Friday, but Judge Patterson, who was present, said that with advanced notice a traffic arrangement could be possible. Councilmember Willis then asked about overtime costs for the town to assist with this event, which totaled around $18,000. Mrs. Roberts asked for comparison with a similar event, and Manager Regon noted that Main Street Moments in 2025 cost about $15,000 in overtime. Mayor Beasley emphasized the importance of the 8,000 visitors who attended. Councilmember Willis expressed concern that the event is generating revenue, while Mrs. Roberts clarified that it is operated as a nonprofit. She also asked for visitor data comparison between the events, and Manager Regon reported 5,871 visitors for Main Street Moments last year. Councilmember

Cline suggested that the town analyze its contribution as a percentage of overall event costs to evaluate sustainability.
Councilmembers continued discussion on the Rt. 16 Rally and Music Festival. Councilmember Cline noted that expanding participation from more restaurants would further champion local businesses, and suggested this was a strong point in favor of supporting the event at a higher percentage.
He asked whether the festival, currently operated as a nonprofit, was considering ticketed events in the future. Mrs. Roberts and Mr. Myers responded that they had discussed possibilities such as VIP experiences and raffles, and that ticket sales remain under consideration as the festival grows. They explained that they are studying how Rhythm & Roots operates to determine the best approach for Tazewell.
Mayor Beasley then opened the floor to accept the event application. Councilmember Keen made a motion to approve the event application and Vice Mayor Hankins seconded the motion. The motion was presented to accept the application as submitted, including street closures for Friday and Saturday.
Councilmember Cline raised a question about whether volunteers could be certified to flag and direct traffic, reducing the burden on town employees. Mrs. Roberts and Mr. Myers explained that Tazewell Today had volunteers who received VDOT training, though they were not utilized during the event. They confirmed that it remains a possible option. Fire Chief Thomas reminded the council that no blocking of the Fire Station could occur during this event. Councilmember Takach clarified that because her business participates in this event she will abstain from voting but she notes that she is allowed to participate in the discussion because there are several other businesses who are a part of this non-profit. On vote, Councilmember Willis, nay; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, nay; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, abstained.
The motion did not pass due to lack of majority. Attorney Pyott clarified that according to Code due to the nature of this vote it required a majority of at least 4 votes to pass. Mrs. Roberts and Mr. Myers were advised they could resubmit with a different time frame.
Councilmember Willis proposed amending the street closure times and recommended tabling the matter to a work session at the next meeting, scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on August 11th. Mrs. Roberts expressed concern that delaying the decision would hinder planning and suggested meeting earlier. The council agreed to explore options for an earlier meeting, and the vote was tabled along with related matters.

E. Iron Thrones Industrial Revitalization Fund Grant Application Request

Iron Thrones, an already operating motorcycle repair business, is seeking to relocate into town. Their plan is to move into an existing blighted building, the former Arrow Upholstery site, which they believe would greatly improve that area and bring new vitality to Main Street.
They are not requesting direct funding from the town. Instead, they are seeking management support in the form of a resolution that would allow them to apply for Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF) grants to finance building improvements.
Currently, the business operates behind the Ramey Lot. Relocating into town would not only enhance the appearance of the area but also provide an opportunity to beautify and strengthen the community's economic base.
Their request to the council is twofold: adopt a resolution of support for their relocation project and authorize them to apply for IRF funds to assist with building improvements. If it is authorized their team will finish the application package, coordinate with the DHCD, and manage the process through award. Once awarded it would become the Town's money to distribute back to Iron Thrones. He said that it is

needed for this area. There isn't another option for motor cycle repairs in our area. Representatives from Iron Thrones emphasized their enthusiasm for working with the town on their relocation project. They noted that Tazewell is increasingly moving toward a tourism-based economy, with motorcycles and the Back of the Dragon drawing more visitors. They explained that there is limited availability for motorcycle repairs in the area, particularly for bikes over ten years old, and that their dynamic team is well positioned to succeed.

They asked the council to adopt a resolution so they can begin the process of applying for Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF) support. The application deadline is July 31st. When asked if they had a business plan to include with the feasibility study, they confirmed that they would provide one.

Councilmember Cline reminded the council that only one IRF project can be submitted per year and noted that competing projects are already under consideration. The Iron Thrones proposal would also include a retail space and potentially Airbnb units in the upper portion of the building. Zoning compliance was addressed and confirmed.

Councilmember Fox expressed support, noting that motorcycles are already a strong presence in Tazewell and praising the presentation. Councilmember Cline asked whether the applicants would be opposed to allowing the council time to review the information, with a vote ratified by email before the 31st. The applicants preferred to have the vote sooner to allow time for application. They suggested allowing 5 days for review.

Councilmember Willis made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Councilmember Fox. Councilmember Willis added that this is the same loan type previously presented to the Theatre project and emphasized that the applicants have 30 years of business experience. Councilmember Cline reiterated the need for time to review, given that the town would carry liability. Manager Regon clarified that the IRF program requires a one-to-one match: the applicants report their expenses, the town submits them to DHCD, and DHCD reimburses the town, which then distributes funds back to the applicants.

Councilmember Keen expressed reservations. Councilmember Takach asked about repercussions if the applicants fell short, and it was explained that a deed of trust would be in place. Councilmember Cline suggested amending the motion to allow two business days for review. Councilmember Willis withdrew his motion so that the matter could be tabled for further study, with ratification to occur by email.

Local Business Recognition

A. Your Grate Escape

Clint Neel shared that July 2026 marks the 25th anniversary of his business. He began as a personal chef, expanded into catering, and has since grown into a full restaurant. Mr. Neel expressed appreciation for the town's support over the years and said he looks forward to another 25 years of serving the community.

Approval of Minutes

Councilmember Willis made a motion to approve minutes from the regular Council Meeting June 9th, Special Called Meeting Council & I/EDA July 6th. Council Takach 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 Willis made a motion to approve financial statements and financial reports for June 2026. Councilmember Fox 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

Zoning, Building, & Property Maintenance Official Hurley updated that the committee did not meet in July. The Planning Commission members have been asked to review the Senate Bill 531which is regarding accessory dwelling units that will be ratified.

B. Tazewell Today

Nate Thomas, President of Tazewell Today, reported that the organization has been very busy and thriving during the summer months. He noted that Fourth Fest, held at the middle school on July 3rd, was well attended and the fireworks were a success. He highlighted that the major upcoming event is Main Street Moments, scheduled for next weekend. On Friday, July 24th, family and children's activities will take place, with street closure beginning at 5 p.m. On Saturday, July 25th, the festival will continue with over 70 vendors registered, including the farmer's market. Numerous information booths will be set up throughout the day, with performances scheduled on the stage during both daytime and evening hours. The Cruise-In is expected to arrive around 6 p.m. The overall goal is to "pack the street and pack the day." Mr. Thomas explained that Tazewell Today is currently operating without an executive director. The board anticipates restructuring after Main Street Moments, likely moving toward a part-time director role. He praised the planning committee for their exceptional work and noted that the board of directors has stepped up to ensure the organization's continued success.

C. Comprehensive Plan Review Sub-Committee

Councilmember Cline updated that they are working to build up the comprehensive plan. They had a representative from Gem City that is working to put this together for us. He presented earlier in this meeting as well. This Plan is nearing its final stages. There are still areas of the plan, such as transportation, that need to be approved by VDOT and it may cause some delay in the final draft. However, there should be a more final draft available for the council to review soon.

Unfinished Business

A. Capital Improvements Plan

Councilmember Cline noted that a number of projects are currently under consideration, some of which fall into the "want-to" category while others are essential "have-to" projects. He emphasized the importance of focusing on the capital improvements plan and referenced the Town Charter, which outlines four distinct budget funds: the General Fund, Water Fund, Sewer Fund, and Recovery Funds. He explained that his proposal is for the town to consider establishing a capital improvement fund, as identified in the charter, to focus specifically on long-term capital improvements.

Councilmember Cline described a capital budget as fundamentally different from the general fund budget. It is long-term in nature and intended for projects with a useful life of more than five years and an expenditure exceeding $50,000. He explained that the Town Charter requires the Planning Commission to recommend a five-year capital improvement plan, which is then submitted to council for approval and incorporated into the annual budget. This process would provide a long-term vision for capital improvements the town needs and wants to pursue. He cited examples such as Gateway Park, the restoration of 1616 Riverside Drive, and the ongoing waterline project as items that would fall under such a plan.

Councilmember Cline stated that while the town has historically earmarked funds for various projects, it has not had a deliberate system for prioritizing capital improvements. He believes that implementing a capital budget would add predictability to planning and reduce reliance on debt for major purchases. As an example, he noted that the town plans to purchase a fire truck in two years but has not set aside funds for it, meaning debt will likely be required. A capital improvement budget, he said, would help avoid such situations.

Councilmember Cline then made a motion directing the Planning Commission to formalize a five-year capital improvement plan pursuant to Town Charter Sections 4-12, 4-18, 4-19, and 6-135. He defined a capital improvement project as any nonrecurring expense for a tangible asset with a useful life of at least five years and a total project cost exceeding $50,000. The plan would be updated annually and presented to council alongside the budget to ensure fiscal planning remains in compliance with Virginia Code. Councilmember Willis seconded the motion.

Manager Regon asked several clarifying questions. She noted that the Water and Sewer Funds are enterprise funds, while the General Fund is tax-based. Within the General Fund, the town already has a capital expense department with designated line items for capital improvements. She asked whether Councilmember Cline was proposing the creation of a separate capital improvement fund, which would become Fund 005. She also raised concerns about how such a fund would be financed, as auditors do not allow interfund transfers.

Councilmember Cline acknowledged that his proposal was based on preliminary research and that any new system would require adjustments. He referenced an article about the City of Radford, which had reportedly been able to move funds between accounts, suggesting this might be an area to explore. Manager Regon suggested that instead of creating a new fund, the town could establish capital improvement departments within each existing fund; General, Water, Sewer, and IEDA allowing capital improvements to be budgeted within their appropriate fund categories.

Councilmember Cline responded that the charter specifically references a separate fund, though it has never been implemented. Manager Regon stated that in her 21 years with the town, there has never been a designated capital improvement fund. She reiterated that she supports creating a capital improvement plan but wants to ensure it is executed correctly within the constraints of fund accounting.

Manager Regon requested that, if the proposal is approved, she and Treasurer Hayes be allowed to consult with the auditors to ensure proper implementation.

Councilmember Cline reiterated his belief that a capital improvement plan is necessary and expressed openness to collaboration on how best to implement it. He emphasized that the Planning Commission is required under Section 6-135 to create a five-year capital improvement plan. Manager Regon again stated her support for the planning aspect but stressed the need to follow correct financial procedures.

Councilmember Cline then rescinded his motion and asked that the matter be tabled until next month, allowing time for collaboration and review. The item will be placed under unfinished business for the next regular council meeting.

B. Economic Developer Coordinator

Councilmember Cline stated that this discussion ties directly into the outlook of the Comprehensive Plan. He reminded the council that two summers ago, a position for an Economic Development Coordinator was earmarked in the budget, and he would like to revisit that idea. He noted that Manager Regon already has her hands full managing day-to-day operations, and this position would provide the tools necessary to implement the comprehensive plan effectively.

Manager Regon asked whether the council preferred hiring an employee or contracting a consultant. She explained that a consultant would work on a project-by-project basis, while an employee would be vested in the town and engaged in all projects.

Councilmember Takach said she would lean toward hiring an employee who could grow with the town. Councilmember Cline expressed concern about whether the town could recruit the necessary level of talent at the salary currently budgeted.

New Business

A. Law Changes Effective July 1st

Attorney Pyott informed them that every year we have to do this because each year the general assembly enacts changes, some subtle, some not so subtle with regard to the criminal title 18.2 of Virginia code and also the vehicle title for motor vehicles under 46.2 and therefore the council needs to allow for the adoption of those changes and that they become effective immediately as of July 1. Mayor Beasley read the ordinance.

ORDINANCE No.: 2026-07-001

Chapter 16
Motor Vehicles and Traffic
Article 1. In General
Sec. 16-2. Adoption of State Law

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council for the Town of Tazewell, Virginia, that Sec. 16-2, Adoption of State Law, of Article I of Chapter 16 of the Code of the Town of Tazewell, be, and the same hereby is, amended as follows:

Pursuant to the authority of §46.2-1313 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, all of the provisions and requirements of the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia contained in the Code of Virginia, Title 46.2 (§46.2-100, et seq.), and in the Code of Virginia, Title 18.2, Chapter 7, Article 2 (§18.2-266, et seq.), as amended, except those provisions which are contained in this chapter and except those provisions and requirements, the violations of which constitute a felony, and except those provisions and requirements which by their very nature can have no application to or within the Town, are hereby adopted and incorporated in this Chapter and made applicable within the Town of Tazewell. References to "highways of the state" contained in such provisions and requirements hereby adopted shall be deemed to refer to the streets, highways and other public ways within the Town. Such provisions and requirements are hereby adopted, mutatis mutandis, and made a part of this Chapter as fully as though set forth at length herein, and it shall be unlawful for any person, within the Town of Tazewell, to violate or fail, neglect or refuse to comply with any provision of Code of Virginia, Title 46.2 (§46.2-100, et seq.), or Code of Virginia, Title 18.2, Chapter 7, Article 2 (§18.2-266, et seq.), which are adopted by this section; and the Council of the Town of Tazewell does hereby adopt and impose the same penalties for the violation of any provision or requirement hereby adopted as imposed for a similar offense under Code of Virginia, Title 46.2 (§46.2-100, et seq.), or in Code of Virginia, Title 18.2, Chapter 7, Article 2 (§18.2-266, et seq.), as amended, subject only to any limitation of the Charter of the Town of Tazewell.
(Ord. of 07-14-26)

First Reading: July 14, 2026
Second Reading: Motion, with Second, to WAIVE Second Reading

Vote:				
	Cline	Aye	Keen	Aye
	Fox	Aye	Takach	Aye
	Hankins	Aye	Willis	Aye

Motion to ADOPT as Emergency Ordinance to take effect immediately:

Vote:				
	Cline	Aye	Keen	Aye
	Fox	Aye	Takach	Aye
	Hankins	Aye	Willis	Aye

Mayor

Jessica Hayes
Clerk

Effective DATE: 7/14/2026

Councilmember Keen made a motion to adopt the ordinance and Councilmember Fox seconded the motion. On vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

Vice Mayor Hankins made a motion to waive the second reading of the ordinance. Councilmember Fox seconded the motion. On roll call vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

Councilmember Fox made a motion to adopt as an emergency ordinance to take effect immediately. Councilmember Takach seconded the motion. On roll call vote, Councilmember Willis, aye; Vice Mayor Hankins, aye; Councilmember Cline, aye; Councilmember Fox, aye; Councilmember Keen, aye; Councilmember Takach, aye.

B. Town Manager Project Updates

- **Rt 460 Water Line Replacement Project**

Manager Regon stated that the Town is awaiting approval from the Virginia Department of Health to connect the Fincastle sections to the new water line sections. While waiting, crews moved to a small section on Market Street to avoid delays. That line was tied in at 1:30 p.m. today, with pressure testing and water sample testing scheduled for next week.

- **Paving**

Manager Regon stated that paving issues have been identified and discussed with the contracted paving company. The company has returned to re-mill the road between Fincastle Turnpike and the bridge near Nationwide Insurance and will apply a leveling agent to the section of 4-Way Hill to address the uneven surface. Repaving is scheduled for next week. She expressed appreciation for the company's efforts to correct the work and noted that they were commendable in their response and apology for the original quality.

- **Ramey Lot -Gateway Park**

Manager Regon reported that architect Kevin Jones attended last week's joint public meeting. She said the public comments were helpful in gathering early input for the project and that the overall response was very positive. She also has a meeting scheduled with DEQ next week to discuss possible assistance for the project.

- **Mountain Biking Project**

Laith Wardi, who is assisting with the Comprehensive Plan, toured the active project sites and was able to visit and fully explore this property. Manager Regon and Executive Assistant Reeves have been reviewing DCR grant opportunities to help secure a permanent right-of-way easement for the property.

- **Engineering Services**

In June, the Town received 11 proposals for engineering services and interviewed six firms. Manager Regon said the applicants were highly qualified and that she was pleased with the presentations. A four-member Town staff group interviewed and scored the firms, resulting in Thrasher being selected as the primary engineering firm and Hurt & Proffit as the secondary firm.

- **Sewer Line on Lowe Property / Water Drainage on O'Quinn Property**

A meeting is scheduled with Thrasher, the Town's new primary engineering firm, on Thursday at 1:30 p.m. to review both projects. Water issues at the O'Quinn property have been an ongoing topic of discussion. Councilmember Keen sent photos over the weekend showing drainage concerns affecting a neighboring property. The Town has been in contact with that property owner and delivered gravel last Thursday to help repair the driveway; however, recent heavy rains washed it away. A crew returned Sunday to make additional repairs. These issues will be presented to Thrasher as the Town works to reduce the problem and better control water runoff in the area.

- **Gateway Park Project**

Manager Regon added that Thrasher has extensive experience with similar projects and plans to include the firm in discussions to determine how it may assist with the Gateway Park project.

Steeles Lane Recycling Center

Council discussed ongoing issues at the recycling center. It was noted that users are abusing the facility by leaving unbagged items, overflow, and inappropriate materials, despite designated signage stating, "bagged household items only." The dumpsters are emptied four times per week, which has caused significant wear and tear on the town's dump truck.

Manager Regon suggested temporarily staffing the site to help educate residents on proper use of the facility. Councilmember Fox agreed that monitoring is necessary and added that paving the gravel area should be considered. It was noted that heavy trucks have previously damaged pavement, and concrete may be a better long-term option.

Councilmember Keen recalled that this issue has been discussed before. He suggested that if attendees resist staff direction, police could be called to provide backup. He acknowledged that there is no specific ordinance addressing this problem, calling it a "nightmare."

Justin Takach shared that in a previous locality where he lived, a similar facility was staffed and monitored, with tickets issued to allow access. He noted that the site there was open from dusk to dawn. Manager Regon cautioned that locking the gate could lead to garbage being piled outside, blocking truck access.

Additional concerns were raised about dumpster divers, despite signage prohibiting the activity. Councilmembers agreed that staffing the site is necessary. It was suggested that the facility should only be open while staffed. They discussed the possibility of part-time staffing with staggered hours, though this would require separate hiring. Consideration of operating hours will be part of the next steps.

Road Concerns

Councilmember Fox emphasized the need for roads to be paved and drainage checked to help mitigate issues around town. He also expressed interest in adding a mountain bike trail above the walking trail at the recreation park.
Councilmember Cline questioned why these concepts, (referring to the mountain bike trail) had not been addressed during the planning process in previous meetings. He voiced concern that introducing new projects could derail Manager Regon from the many other plans she is already managing. Councilmember Cline recommended tabling the matter for now.

C. Discussion of Automated License Plate Readers/Flock Cameras

Councilmember Cline raised the issue of surveillance cameras, noting that while there are benefits, such as use in Amber Alerts and emergency notifications; there are also concerns about persistent intelligence gathering and eligibility for use. He emphasized that before any such system is permitted, the council must review and approve the contract for implementation.
Police Chief Lampert explained that he has attended several meetings over the past ten months regarding this matter. He noted that public perception has been mixed and clarified that cameras would need to be

placed on private property or town property, not VDOT property. He added that a grant could potentially fund three cameras. Although the conversation has been revisited multiple times, it has not moved forward without further direction. Police Chief Lampert acknowledged that while cameras can be a valuable tool, they also present significant challenges.
Councilmember Cline stated that he wants language added to ensure that council approval is required before any contract for such services is signed. Police Chief Lampert agreed to reach out to sister agencies and review sample contracts they use. Councilmember Cline reiterated that he wants the council to have final approval if and when cameras are placed in the Town of Tazewell.

D. Blackhorse Road Garbage Pickup

Vice Mayor Hankins was approached by an individual that lives on Black Horse Road. The resident said that their garbage hasn't been picked up but twice since they have lived there. Manager Regon will verify with staff why this hasn't been happened, as this was unaware of this issue. She stated that this issue will be addressed.

Miscellaneous- None

Miscellaneous Public Comment

Amy Patterson raised concerns about the growing deer problem in town. She asked if there was anything the town could do, noting that the police department cannot take direct action. One option discussed was opening a town archery season, as code allows hunting on properties with a certain combined acreage. Mrs. Patterson mentioned hearing that the police department in Marion had been hired to cull deer. Councilmember Cline recalled that when he joined the council, the hunting distance restriction was reduced from five miles to two miles. He explained that hunters must register with the police department and suggested that restrictions could be reduced further if the council wished. Justin Takach added that if the council reduced the requirement to one acre, they could work with that.

Justin Takach and Deborah Wilson revisited an earlier discussion regarding the Rt. 16 Rally Event vote. They noted that the vote was 3 ayes, 2 nays, and 1 abstention. Attorney Pyott responded that, under the Town Code, a motion requires at least four affirmative votes to pass unless it involves a parliamentary procedure. They referred to the April 14th meeting, where a motion with 3 ayes, 1 nay, and 2 abstentions was approved. Attorney Pyott clarified that the motion should not have passed and that its approval was an error. Council members noted that Attorney Pyott was not present at that meeting and that another attorney was serving in his place. The error was not identified at the time, and in that instance, the outcome allowed the event to proceed.

Councilmember Cline asked which section of the charter applied and what would qualify as a parliamentary procedure in this context. Attorney Pyott explained that matters such as selecting a Vice Mayor or designating someone to preside over meetings could pass by a 3-2 vote as parliamentary actions. However, he clarified that event approval is more like a resolution and therefore requires at least four affirmative votes. Mrs. Wilson requested a written legal opinion on whether the vote was valid. Councilmember Cline reiterated that four affirmative votes are required for passage. Attorney Pyott added that although the previous motion passed in error, the event was held and produced a positive outcome for the event organizers and the community. He emphasized that the Town should not continue acting contrary to its code and said the matter would be addressed at a subsequent meeting, where he expected it to be resolved. He again specified that, unless the matter is parliamentary, passage requires four affirmative votes from members present.

Council Comments- None

Adjournment

Councilmember Cline motioned to adjourn. 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.

Meeting adjourned at 10:41pm.