

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GRETNA TOWN COUNCIL WAS HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2025 AT 7:00 PM WITH MAYOR R. KEITH MOTLEY PRESIDING.

The following were present for the meeting:

R. Keith Motley, Mayor	Bill Gillespie, Interim Town Manager	Michael G. Turner, Attorney
Sgt. Tompkins, GPD	J.R. Dunbar, Youth Sports Booster	Crystal Grubbs, Clerk/Treasurer
Stacy Hedrick, Asst. Clerk/Treasurer		

Council Members Present:

Riverra Jackson	James Gilbert	
Dianne Jennings	Mike Burnette	Deborah Moran

Council Members Absent:

Mike Bond

Meeting called to order at 7:02 PM

1. Prayer
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Approval of Minutes:**

A motion was made by Dianne Jennings seconded by Deborah Moran to approve the minutes of the Regular Council meeting January 14, 2025 with the correction that Mike Burnette came in, in the middle of the meeting.

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

4. **Invoice Review** – Council reviewed and discussed the invoice list – no longer required for approval. Invoices paid \$48,939.89.
5. **Council Agenda**

Police Report – Keith Motley informed Council that Chief Hewitt would be out on leave for a while due to breaking his ankle. Sgt. Tompkins was here tonight in Chief's place. Sgt. Tompkins gave the police report, discussed the in-car cameras, laptops, and a DCJS grant that will be used for equipment. Sgt. Tompkins mentioned that she and Chief Hewitt received a Bravery Award from the fire department for a house fire on Leftwich Street. Sgt. Tompkins stated that she and Chief were the first on the scene and assisted with the fire department.

March meeting – Keith Motley expressed to Council that he would like to change the March meeting date from the 11th to the 18th as he would be out of town. Council agreed to the change.

TekaByte Service Upgrade – Keith Motley informed Council that Crystal Grubbs has some information on the TekaByte Services. Crystal Grubbs gave Council a handout that came from TekaByte concerning the Towns IT Managed Services. Mrs. Grubbs stated that TekaByte informed her that it was time to upgrade the Towns IT Managed Services. The last time it was updated was in 2021 and with the increase in cyber-attacks, the Town should look into upgrading our services. Services included in the upgrade: managed antivirus, managed patch, managed email security, email back-up, managed endpoint & detection, manager security operations center, managed DNS, managed Multi-factor Authentication, managed APP control, unlimited remote & in-person support, which is more than it was in previous times. If the Town should upgrade, it would be an extra \$800 per month. This will cover: Town Hall, Water Plant & Police Department. After some discussion, Council agreed to upgrade.

A motion was made Mike Burnette seconded by Deborah Moran to move forward with the TekaByte update from 2021 to 2025 version.

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Elba Park – Keith Motley mentioned that JR Dunbar would like to address Council. JR Dunbar stated that he is the Vice President of the Football Booster and would like to discuss Elba Park. Mr. Dunbar expressed concerns over the insufficient lighting at the park and expressed that Mr. Gillespie a couple of years ago was going to put out bids for lights. Bill Gillespie stated that he did put out bids for electrical work for the park. The only company to place a bid was Moore’s Electric in the amount of \$500,000 and the Town cannot afford that. So that was put to side for a while, however, the Town is applying for grants to help with the associated costs. Mr. Dunbar mentioned that any electrician could repair the lighting. Mr. Gillespie mentioned that if the Town were going to fix the park, it needed to be done right. After some discussion, Keith Motley informed Mr. Dunbar that the Town is working on a grant to upgrade the entire park at one time, but this process takes time to complete.

Road repairs – Deborah Moran asked if Council should discuss the road repairs. Bill Gillespie stated that there are 6-7 places that need repairs. The Town has met with VDOT, and the Town has to fix them because the Town busted up the asphalt. It was mentioned that the asphalt plants do not reopen until March or April. Keith Motley stated that the Town has met and received help from VDOT; the Town is doing all we can do at this point. The Town will solicit bids for the paving work.

6. Unfinished Business

Advertise for Town Manager – James Gilbert expressed that we need to advertise for a Town Manager. Keith Motley stated that we will be revisiting this in the near future.

Proposed Ordinances – Michael Turner informed Council that if the proposed ordinances are suitable, I would like to hold a public hearing on them at the March meeting. So, please read and review the ordinances.

Brush pick up – Keith Motley stated that the Maintenance Department is working on cleaning up the brush and debris that was leftover from the ice storm. We did have some trees down in the cemetery, some of them have been cut up and are ready to be hauled off and then there are some more that have to be cut up.

Love sign – Keith Motley informed Council that the Love sign is complete. They are trying to figure out a way to get the sign to and from Lynchburg to do what is called a wrap with the design on it.

Flagpole at the Saponi Garden – Keith Motley mentioned that RGG is working on get the flagpole in place at the Saponi Garden. Mecklenburg Electric and Raco are working with RGG on this project.

Caboose painting – Keith Motley stated that Brent Merchant has not been in touch about painting the Caboose.

Bids for clearing land – Keith Motley asked if any bids had been sent out for clearing land on the newly purchased property on N. Music Street. Bill Gillespie stated no because he had been sick for a couple of weeks and was unable to do it.

Park Committee – Bill Gillespie stated that the park committee needs to give me some dates that we can meet with Hurt & Profitt concerning Elba Park. Deborah Moran asked who the committee members are now. Keith Motley stated that you are still on the committee, Mike Burnette and Riverra Jackson. Mr. Gillespie stated that Hurt & Profitt have some sketches that they would like to present to the committee. We need a date to meet with them.

Water Plant update - Bill Gillespie mentioned that he met with VDH, and we have been working on coming up with a business plan for a couple of months now.

Amthor update - Bill Gillespie stated that he does not have any new updates about the Amthor plant.

7. New Business

Brush pick-up – James Gilbert mentioned the brush pick-up ordinance and that the Town can charge \$35 after 30 minutes of picking up brush; do we still have this in the ordinance? Michael Turner stated that there have not been any changes to this ordinance. There was discussion of the ordinance, Mr. Motley stated that the Maintenance Department is only getting up tree limbs from the ice storm we had, no leaves.

Warming centers – Riverra Jackson suggested having warming centers. Ms. Jackson stated that we were in a situation with this past storm where we had extensive power outages, it doesn't have to be a place where they stay all night, but a place where people can come to get warm. Keith Motley stated that something like that is usually done by the fire department or rescue squad. However, I did see where someone had called the fire department, but the fire department told them they did not have a place available. There was discussion of some of the churches opening up, using the old fire department since the office has a generator and possibly using the American Legion. Mr. Motley stated that the only issue would be having someone who would be willing to leave their homes to come out in the weather to open up these places. The fire department and rescue squad buildings are being maned, there are people there all the time.

B & B Towing – Dianne Jennings stated that the area at B & B Towing looks horrible. There was discussion of where the junk cars and parts were being placed. Bill Gillespie stated that we will take the same approach that we did with the chickens. Those around that area need to make a complaint to the police department; we need written complaints. Mr. Turner said that he has written to Mr. Boyd on several occasions concerning the issues. There are procedures that have to be followed, and he will have deadlines to take care of anything that's in violation. There was discussion about not renewing the business license for B & B. Mr. Turner stated that the procedures have to be done first, you cannot just pull their license without following the procedure first. Mr. Gillespie stated that he would put together a letter, once Michael and Keith look it over, I will send it to all Council Members.

Flower baskets – Keith Motley informed Council that RGG was going to assist the Town with the flower baskets again this year.

Strawberry & Wine festival – Keith Motley stated that he thinks the Merchants Association is going to try and bring the wine festival back into Town.

Cemetery information – Keith Motley stated that Colbert-Moran Funeral Home would like to meet with the Town concerning additional graves.

Fence at Solar area – Keith Motley stated that the fence was buckled at the solar farm at the Industrial Park. This needs attention and Mr. Motley asked Mr. Gillespie to get in touch with the solar people about repairs. Mr. Motley said that he had a couple of people come to him, stating that they were not for the solar garden but wanted to let the Town know that it was one of the most appropriate pieces because of the way it was positioned and the landscaping and that it turned out way better than they thought it would.

9:05 PM

Closed Session

A motion was made by Dianne Jennings seconded by Mike Burnette to go into closed session pursuant to **Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 A, Subsection 3** dealing with the discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. **Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 A, Subsection 8** dealing with consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel.

Roll Call Vote:

Riverra Jackson – yes

James Gilbert – yes

Dianne Jennings – yes

Mike Burnette – yes

Deborah Moran – yes

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

9:37PM

Meeting Reconvened

A motion was made by Riverra Jackson seconded by Dianne Jennings to end closed session. Under **Virginia Code Section 2.2-3712 D** a roll call vote was taken, certifying that to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the meeting by the Town Council. Any member of the Town Council who believes that there was a departure from the requirements shall so state prior to the vote, indicating the substance of the departure that, in his/her judgment, has taken place.

Roll Call Vote:

Riverra Jackson – yes
Dianne Jennings – yes

James Gilbert – yes
Mike Burnette – yes

Deborah Moran – yes

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Advertisement – Michael Turner expressed that he would like to advertise for a public hearing on the Burial Ordinance and Fire Ordinance for the next meeting.

A motion was made by Mike Burnette seconded by Deborah Moran to allow Michael Turner to advertise the Burial Ordinance and Fire Ordinance for the next Council Meeting.

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Adjournment – A motion was made Dianne Jennings seconded by Mike Burnette to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM

R. Keith Motley, Mayor

Stacy Hedrick, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer