

THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE GRETNA TOWN COUNCIL WAS HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 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 Turner, Attorney
Angie Harris, Clerk of Court	Crystal Grubbs, Clerk/Treasurer	Stacy Hedrick, Asst. Clerk/Treasurer
Chief Hewitt, GPD	Brandon Grubbs, WTP, OIC	Janice Barksdale
Marva J. Smith	Lou Harris, RGG	Gayle Deel, RGG
Clayton White	Kimila Wade	

Council Members Present:

Riverra Jackson	James Gilbert	Mike Bond
Dianne Jennings	Deborah Moran	

Council Members Absent:

Mike Burnette

Meeting called to order 7:01 PM

Swearing in newly elected officials

Angie Harris, Pittsylvania County Clerk of Court swore in Riverra Jackson, Council; Dianne Jennings, Council; James Gilbert, Council and Keith Motley, Mayor.

Vice Mayor – A motion was made by Deborah Moran seconded by Mike Bond to reappoint Dianne Jennings as Vice Mayor.

Roll Call Vote:

Riverra Jackson – yes	James Gilbert – yes	Mike Bond – yes
Deborah Moran – yes		

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

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

A motion was made by James Gilbert seconded by Deborah Moran to approve the minutes of the Regular Council meeting December 10, 2024.

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

- 4. **Invoice Review** – Council reviewed and discussed the invoice list – no longer required for approval. Invoices paid \$59,813.24.

- 5. **Council Agenda**

Informational Packet – Keith Motley informed Council that they had a packet that included the committee’s list, contact information for employees, and Council Members, a list of Regular Council Meeting dates. Mr. Motley stated that the date sheet would be subject to changes.

Police Report – Keith Motley stated that Chief Hewitt was here tonight to give the monthly police report. Chief Hewitt gave the report. There was discussion of investigator school, DUI school, police vehicles, laptops and the possibility of having a National Night Out and possibly moving the Old Timer’s Jubilee and the Strawberry & Wine Festival coming back into Town. Council expressed their appreciation for the department.

Love Sign – Keith Motley informed Council that members of RGG were here to discuss the Love Sign. Lou Harris and Gayle Deel stated that the LOVE sign was completed and ready to be installed; RGG needed the Councils permission to place the sign on the old Poky’s Lot. Mrs. Harris stated that RGG would pay for the landscaping. Pictures of the completed sign were passed around to Council for review. After some discussion, Council agreed to place the sign on what is called Poky’s lot.

A motion was made by Dianne Jennings seconded by Deborah Moran to place the Love Sign on Poky’s Lot.

Roll Call Vote:

Riverra Jackson – yes
Dianne Jennings – yes

James Gilbert – yes
Deborah Moran – yes

Mike Bond – yes

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Burning Ordinance – Bill Gillespie informed Council that a burn ordinance needs to be in place. The Town needs guidance on this. Mr. Gillespie mentioned that someone asked about burning a house in Town, but the Town does not have an ordinance for guidance. Mr. Gillespie stated that he informed the person that he would need the fire department there for safety reasons. Mr. Gillespie stated that Michael Turner was to look into this. Michael Turner stated that he has drafted an ordinance for Councils review. Mike Bond stated that someone burning house will rarely happen. Riverra Jackson asked what would the ordinance cover? Mr. Turner stated that this ordinance will cover a multitude of things. Mr. Turner stated that there is a process and in significant cases a permit is required.

Burial Vault Ordinance – Bill Gillespie stated that Council had previously discussed this, and Michael put together an ordinance on this. Michael Turner handed Council Members a draft of the burial vault ordinance for their review. Council stated that there needs to be an exclusion for Erns. After some discussion, Mr. Turner mentioned that there would have to be a public hearing on the proposed ordinance.

Street repairs – Bill Gillespie stated that the Town has had 6 water breaks, VDOT’s position has always been that they can fill in with tar and gravel, but complete repairs have to be done by whoever tore the streets up. VDOT maintains the streets but if the Town digs the street up to make repairs, the Town has to do the repairs to the street. They will allow the Town to only go a foot on each side of break in the road and not have to pave the whole thing. Mr. Gillespie stated that we have 6 of those repairs, we will have to hire a contractor to do the repairs. Repairs will have to be done in the spring because that’s when the asphalt plant reopens. Road repairs could cost anywhere from \$5,000 - \$8,000 each time.

Elba Park update – Bill Gillespie mentioned that the topography map has been done, this information has been given to the Landscape Architect, and we are hoping to have a draft at the next committee meeting which should be within the next couple of weeks. Keith Motley mentioned that Hurt & Profitt will come back with 3 plans each based on the expense of that plan.

Water Plant – Keith Motley asked Brandon Grubbs if everything was going good at the water plant. Brandon Grubbs stated that plant wise, things are good. We’ve had 6 major water leaks and 2 or 3 service line leaks. I think we are pretty lucky that it hasn’t been any more catastrophic than it has been.

Fiber Optic Company – Bill Gillespie informed Council that we are trying to get in touch with the fiber optic company that put in the line on Main Street last year for Carter Bank because they came across the sewer line at Artist Way and cut the top out of it. We’ve had someone come in to fix it and we will have to pay them.

DPOR Paperwork – Brandon Grubbs informed Council that we have all of the DPOR paperwork for Matthew to take his test in February for the waterworks license. Mike Bond asked about Fluoride percentage in the water since it’s been in the news. Mr. Grubbs stated that we do a .7 which is optimal for the State of Virginia. Mr. Bond stated that he thought it was more like 1.0. Mr. Grubbs stated that years ago it was 1.0 then it dropped to a .9 and then around 4 years ago it dropped to a .7, our plant runs around a .5 to a .7.

Water Plant Grant update – Keith Motley asked Bill Gillespie for an update on the grant. Bill Gillespie stated that he has finished the financial report for the health department. USDA has already approved a \$4 Million contribution, half grant and half loan for 40 years, but it has a really good interest rate, and the paperwork has been signed locking that rate in. We are currently waiting on the health department for the other \$4 Million. Mike Bond asked if the health department money would be grant or loan? Mr. Gillespie stated he did not know until we went through the application process. Mr. Motley asked about using the Tobacco Commission as part of the funding. Mr. Gillespie stated that he just received criteria for the Tobacco Commission, and we are looking into that now. Mr. Bond mentioned asking the Danville Regional Foundation for funding. It was mentioned at a community meeting concerning the funding for the water plant and it would be something the Foundation would be willing to discuss with the Town.

Maintenance Department – Keith Motley asked Brandon Grubbs if everything was going well with the Maintenance Department. Brandon Grubbs stated yes, as far as he knows.

6. Unfinished Business

Cemetery – Mike Bond asked about finding someone to clear off the land. Bill Gillespie stated that he hasn’t been approached about that. Keith Motley stated that he mentioned it to Brooks Excavating and Kenneth will have to come look at the lot. Mr. Motley asked if bids are needed to remove the mobile home and trees. Mr. Gillespie stated yes, we need to bid it out.

Water breaks – Mike Bond asked if we have a map of the water lines. Bill Gillespie stated that you have a pictorial of where the lines are; Dewberry got information from Gary Shields on where the lines are, but the lines were never located. Mr. Bond asked about the cut-off valves. Mr. Gillespie stated no. Brandon Grubbs stated that he found 36 valves that were not listed on the map. Mr. Bond asked about the process of mapping these. Mr. Gillespie stated now that the zoning map is done and updated in GIS format, the next step is mark everything and put it in the same format. Mr. Bond stated that we need to begin that process.

Industrial Park update – Mike Bond asked if there was an update for the Industrial Park. Bill Gillespie stated no.

Snowflake lights – Mike Bond stated that one of the snowflake decorations needed the bulbs replaced. Keith Motley stated that the snowflake decoration is located near Food Lion. Brandon Grubbs stated that he would inform Jesse.

Cigarette Tax – Mike Bond asked for an update on the proposed cigarette tax. Michael Turner stated that he did not have any updated information at this time. Hopefully I will have something for the next meeting. Bill Gillespie stated that he had a draft ordinance. Riverra Jackson expressed that Council needs to consider the impact and thinks it will cause people to shop elsewhere. Mr. Gillespie stated that you will see a drop off for a while but then it will come back.

Former Napa building – James Gilbert asked what is going into the old Napa building? Riverra Jackson stated that a hair salon was in there now.

Saponi Garden property – Dianne Jennings asked if it has been determined if the Town owns the property where the Saponi Garden is. Michael Turner stated that property does not belong to anyone. Pittsylvania County has no owner listed. More than likely it is a right-of-way for the state.

Jeremiah's Corner Park – Keith Motley stated that he's been in contact with River Street concerning the dead trees within Jeremiah's Park. Mr. Motley stated that nothing had been done since he spoke with Hart Ashworth. Mike Burnette stated that Hart retired. Need to contact Tom Pinczes. Mr. Motley expressed concern that the trees would fall. Mike Bond stated that the power company should cut them back.

Bamboo – Keith Motley asked about the bamboo in the median as you come into Town from the south. Mr. Motley stated that someone had asked him if they could have some. Mr. Motley stated that the land didn't belong to the Town. Mike Burnette stated that he could get this person some bamboo.

7. New Business

No new business

8:55 PM

Closed Session

A motion was made by Dianne Jennings seconded by Deborah Moran 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
Dianne Jennings – yes

James Gilbert – yes
Deborah Moran – yes

Mike Bond – yes

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

9:57PM

Meeting Reconvened

A motion was made by Mike Bond seconded by James Gilbert 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
Deborah Moran – yes

Mike Bond – yes

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Offer on Leftwich Street land – A motion was made by Mike Bond seconded by Deborah Moran to offer \$35,000-\$40,000 on Leftwich Street property contingent on the Public Hearing.

Roll Call Vote:

Riverra Jackson – yes
Dianne Jennings – yes

James Gilbert – yes
Deborah Moran – yes

Mike Bond – yes

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Adjournment – A motion was made by James Gilbert seconded by Dianne Jennings to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 9.59 PM.

R. Keith Motley, Mayor

Stacy Hedrick, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer