

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

The following were present for the meeting:

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|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| R. Keith Motley, Mayor | Bill Gillespie, Interim Town Manager | Michael G. Turner, Attorney |
| Chief Hewitt, GPD | Crystal Grubbs, Clerk/Treasurer | Stacy Hedrick, Asst. Clerk/Treasurer |
| JD Fazio, GPD | Jesse Haley, Maint. Supervisor | Brandon Grubbs, WTP, OIC |
| Gary Shields, STP, OIC | Chris Farris, Gretna Youth Sports | Michael Davis |
| Anthony Miller | Henry Boyd | Barbara Hubbard |
| Leon Hubbard | Janice Wood | |

Council Members Present:

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|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Riverra Jackson | James Gilbert | Mike Bond |
| Dianne Jennings | Mike Burnette | Deborah Moran |

Meeting called to order at 7:03 PM

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 February 18, 2025.

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

4. **Invoice Review** – Council reviewed and discussed the invoice list – no longer required for approval. Invoices paid \$64,343.84.
5. **Council Agenda**

Police Report – Keith Motley informed Council that Chief Hewitt was here tonight to give the monthly police report. Chief Hewitt first read a letter of gratitude from a citizen concerning Officer Fazio and a County Deputy for responding to a call on Harrison Street. Chief Hewitt commended Officer Fazio and the Deputy for the great job and then Chief gave the report, discussed the community day event, the Strawberry & Wine Festival coming back into Town. Chief Hewitt told Council that the department had challenge coins made; what they are for is if a citizens goes above and beyond, we will give these out to show our appreciation. Mr. Motley asked if the equipment was okay. Chief Hewitt states yes, everything is good; Sgt. Tompkins Advance DUI classes went well, and stated that Tompkins learned a lot and is sharing that information with Dalton and Fazio as well. Chief Hewitt stated that the police department is doing a fine job of keeping the streets safe.

Gretna Youth Sports/Gretna Youth League – Keith Motley stated that a representative from Gretna Youth Sports was here to discuss the Elba Park, and we have letter from the Gretna Youth League. Mr. Motley stated that Ms. McCluster was unable to attend tonight due to the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors meeting. Chris Farris from Youth Sports stated that the letter from the Youth League could be read first. The 2 groups came to an agreement concerning the use of the park. Mr. Motley expressed that it was great that the 2 groups could come to an agreement on their own without Councils involvement. There was some discussion of the meeting with the Parks & Rec Committee and the input from the Youth Sports on the layout of the park.

Maintenance Department update – Keith Motley asked the Maintenance Supervisor, Jesse Haley for any updates from his department. Jesse Haley mentioned that he was getting some asphalt filler to temporarily repair the streets until we can get someone to do the paving. Bill Gillespie stated that the bids will be coming in on April 1, 2025. Mike Bond stated that the road in the cemetery needed some patching as well. There was discussion of why VDOT would not repair the streets where the Town had waterline breaks. Mr. Gillespie stated that he has been in discussion with a VDOT engineer, they said if someone other than VDOT tears up the streets, they are responsible for the repairs.

Trees in Jeremiah's Park – Mike Bond asked about the downed trees in Jeremiah's Park. Keith Motley stated that he's been trying to contact the new manager, but he has not returned any of my calls. Mike Burnette stated that the new manager resigned, at this point they do not know who will take over that position.

Water Department update – Keith Motley asked Brandon Grubbs to give any updates at the water plant. Brandon Grubbs stated that we lost 3 head loss meters in sequence within a week's time. I had a company from Altavista come in and we were able to get meters 1 & 3 going again but meter #2, needed parts, so we are waiting. These meters are 20 years old. Without these meters working, we are out of compliance with the health department. Riverra Jackson asked about the numbers. Mr. Grubbs stated that we also have manual gauges and have to check them every 2 hours manually. This information has to be backed up electronically. The town has 2 or 3 months to fix the issues, but we are working to get it back up and running sooner. Bill Gillespie asked Mr. Grubbs to inform Council how much the chemicals will be increasing. Mr. Grubbs stated that one of chemicals that we use will be increasing anywhere from 10%-25% due to the tariffs. Those increases will be taking effect in the next couple of months.

Wastewater Department update – Keith Motley asked Gary Shields for any updates at the sewer plant. Gary Shields mentioned the Falwell invoice. Bill Gillespie asked Mr. Shields to give just a little bit of history on the pumps. Gary Shields stated that Tommy Merricks used to do the repairs on the pumps for the Town but he's unable to do that for us now. So, we had to get Falwell to do the work. However, they send the pumps off for repairs. One of the pumps could be repaired and it took about 3 months to get it back. When Tommy did the work, we had the pumps back within 2-3 weeks. Mr. Shields stated that the other pump could not be repaired and that one came back in parts. We ordered a new pump from Wood Equipment Company. Mr. Shields stated that these are the first pumps that the sewage comes to. The new pump was \$20,000. Mr. Gillespie informed Council that he has summary sheet to pass out with all the information on it. The Town cannot afford to lose the pump station, it would be catastrophic.

Sewer Aeration System – Gary Shields mentioned that the Aeration System at the sewer plant that EDI (Environmental Dynamics International) quoted \$31,500 for diffuser maintenance to the existing FlexAir aeration system currently at the sewer plant. Mr. Shields stated that this oxidizes the sewer water to keep the smell down. This system has been in place since 2004 and within the last six months it has started to go down; some of the pipes are breaking and EDI are the ones that put the last one in. Dianne Jennings asked what is the normal lifespan? Mr. Shields stated about every five years. After five years, EDI called about repairing it and I was told that as long as it’s working, don’t do anything. Mike Bond asked about bidding this out. Mr. Gillespie stated that this system is proprietary, which means this can’t be replaced with anything else; this means you have to use the same company in order for everything to work properly. Council discussed the appropriation of funds. After some discussion of what account to use the funds to cover the expenses of \$9,900 for the WTP and \$67,876.20 for the STP making a total of \$77,776.20.

A motion was made by Mike Burnette seconded by Dianne Jennings to put \$10,000 from the General Fund into the Wastewater Contingency Fund and pay the \$9,900 from the Water Contingency Fund and \$67,876.20 from the Sewer Contingency Fund.

Roll Call Vote:

Riverra Jackson – yes
Dianne Jennings – yes

James Gilbert – yes
Mike Burnette – yes

Mike Bond – yes
Deborah Moran – yes

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Parks & Rec Committee – Keith Motley asked for a report from the Parks & Rec Committee. Riverra Jackson stated that the committee held a meeting and invited members of the Gretna Youth Sports to attend and was unaware of Gretna Youth League at the time of that meeting. Ms. Jackson mentioned that they were invited so we could get a wish list for the park and to inform them of what the Town has planned. The Youth Sports actually gave some suggestions on things that the committee had not thought about, such as safety issues and parking. There was discussion of lighting issues, and possible grants for help with temporary lighting, movable fences, and movable pegs for the bases in the ball fields. Chirs Farris from GYS, stated that they were here to help the Town in any way possible.

6. Unfinished Business

Park Grant update – Mike Bond asked about the park grant from the Danville Regional Foundation (DRF). Deborah Moran stated that the committee received 3 plans from Hurt & Profit; the committee choose plan C. Once the plan is narrowed down, Council will see the plan first, then a meeting with the public to look at it. Mr. Bond asked what about the grant part. Keith Motley stated that we had to decide on a plan first, make any changes with Hurt & Profit and then submit that plan to the DRF to see what the Town qualifies for in grant money.

Love sign – Mike Bond asked for an update on the Love sign. Keith Motley stated that it’s still a work in progress. They have to decide on decaling it or painting it, what material it is made of and if the Town was still suppling the water and electricity. There was discussion of the trees that are on the lot.

Industrial Park update – Mike Bond asked if there was any update on the Industrial Park. Bill Gillespie stated that it’s going nowhere. Mr. Bond asked about the road. Mr. Gillespie stated that he had not heard anything.

Caboose painting – Mike Burnette asked about the painting of the Caboose. Keith Motley stated that Brent Merchant was going to contact Hewey to find out exactly what paint he used several years ago but he has not gotten back with me yet. Mike Bond stated that the back side of the caboose is worse.

Leland Cyprus Tree – Mike Burnette stated that there was a Leland Cyprus at the edge of the cemetery that has fallen over next to Judy Yeatts’ house. Mr. Burnette stated that the tree could be placed at the edge of his property near the tree line for his rabbits.

B & B Towing letter – Deborah Moran asked if the letter had been sent to B & B Towing. Keith Motley stated no.

7. **New Business**

Town Manager – James Gilbert mentioned advertising for a Town Manager. Keith Motley stated thank you for the reminder.

New Water Plant Update – Mike Bond asked for an update on the new water plant. Bill Gillespie stated that things are up in the air with the USDA and VDH’s funding. With everything that is going on in Washington, we may not know anything as far as funding until summer. The application to the Virginia Health Department (VDH) is due in May. Riverra Jackson asked if the funding doesn’t come through, does the Town have a contingency plan? Mr. Gillespie stated no, they are the only two agencies with that kind of money. There was mention of the Balico project.

8:42 PM

Closed Session

A motion was made Mike Bond seconded by Mike Burnette to go into closed session pursuant to **Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 A, Subsection 5** dealing with the discussion concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the businesses or industry’s interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community. **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
Mike Burnette – yes

Mike Bond – yes
Deborah Moran – yes

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

9:43 PM

Meeting Reconvened

A motion was made by Mike Bond seconded by Mike Burnette 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

James Gilbert – yes

Mike Bond – yes

Dianne Jennings – yes

Mike Burnette – yes

Deborah Moran – yes

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Mutal Aid Agreement – A motion was made by Deborah Moran seconded by Dianne Jennings to allow Gretna Police Department to enter into a Mutual Aide Agreement.

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Adjournment – A motion was made by Deborah Moran seconded by Dianne Jennings to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried/Vote was unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 9.49 PM

R. Keith Motley, Mayor

Stacy Hedrick, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer