

**TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP, VIRGINIA
COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
505 E 5TH STREET S
BIG STONE GAP, VA**

November 05, 2025

6:30 PM

AGENDA ITEM 1

Call to Order and Roll Call

Mayor Johnson called the November 05, 2025 meeting to order.

Council Present: Hon. Gary Johnson, Mayor
Hon. Nancy Bailey, Vice-Mayor
Hon. Robert Bloomer, Councilman
Hon. Kent Gilley, Councilman
Hon. Tyler Hughes, Councilman *
Hon. Aaron McKinney, Councilman
*arrived at 6:33 PM

Council Absent: Hon. Crystal Lyke, Councilwoman

Staff Present: Mr. Stephen Lawson, Town Manager
Ms. Amanda Hawkins, Town Clerk/Treasurer
Mr. Charles Bledsoe, Town Attorney
Mr. Matt Russell, Chief of Police

AGENDA ITEM 2 - REVIEW OF DRAFT MINUTES

Review of draft of minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of October 14, 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 3

TOWN ENGINEER’S REPORT

Mr. Broskey gave the Town Engineer’s Report as follows:

- The railroad bore was put in on Tuesday, and it has been tied in and pressure tested and that finalizes that project with Boyd’s construction.
- Phase III sent plans to VDH and they were approved. The environmental is moving forward, the easements are in the works. Will advertise for bids next winter and get started in the summer.

AGENDA ITEM 4

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT

a. Parade Permit – Christmas Parade

Asking Council to approve the parade permit for the Christmas parade scheduled for Thursday, December 04, 2025 at 6:00 pm.

b. Organizational Meeting

Looking at December 10th to December 17th dates to beat the holidays.

c. Projects Update

Mr. Lawson gave the following updates to Council:

- Congratulations to Adam Harris and Turk Hollinger. Thanks to Aaron McKinney and Nancy Bailey for their service to Council.
- With the change to the political landscape, we as leaders need to keep calm and have open communication.
- November 9th at 11AM for Veteran's Parade – still working on and with the participants. After the parade, the new owners of the Minor Building are opening the time capsule from 1908 at the Visitor Center.
- Festival of Trees – Sunday, Nov. 9 through Wednesday, Dec. 31, closed on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sunday, 1-5 p.m. Night Viewings Nov. 28 and 29, Dec. 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 26 and 27 5-8 p.m.
- Concrete Projects – Will start on the sidewalk at GoodTimes and work in sections then move on to the vacant lot on corner of 1st and Wood Avenue.
- UHS football game has been moved to Thursday night this week. All the playoff games will be played at Bullitt Park on Saturdays, gates open at 12PM with game time at 2PM.
- We are preparing bid documents for the ARC road and trail enhancements at Big Cherry – this is a state project and have received \$700,000 to be used for roads, trails ditches, overlook points and lake accessible piers. Will be doing trail and overlook work this winter and there will be no paving till spring.
- Street striping bids are in, and striping will be done on Dogwood Drive, Azelea, Morris Circle, East 19th, Armory Road, and 2nd Avenue.
- Skate Park work has begun but the construction of the Park has shifted to the west of the gravel road to allow use of that road to Bullitt Park.
- Thanksgiving employee lunch is Nov. 20 @ Noon at Carnes Gym.
- Fire Department Christmas Dinner is December 6th at 7 PM.
- MECC Gala on December 6th at 6:30 at the Goodloe Center. The town purchased 14 tickets, (two tables) and will need to know who wants to attend.
- Wise County DSS Foster Care Children's Christmas Fund \$1,050 donation is due and is already in the budget, with Council's ok we will issue the check.
- A camping ordinance from the Planning Commission was handed out to Council to review.
- The Post Office is on hold.
- Charles Bledsoe is resigning as Town attorney.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilman Gilley said the Planning Commission will vote on the Camping Ordinance at their next meeting and send it to Council for approval. The ARB Ordinance was discussed at the meeting, but no action was taken. Mr. Lawson said the Planning Commission has two spots that need to be filled, Amy Hubbard was elected at Chair, and Greg Kress as Vice-Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 6 - COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Councilman McKinney said congratulations to Adam Harris and Turk Hollinger.

Councilwoman Bailey also congratulated Adam Harris and Turk Hollinger.

Councilman Hughes congratulated Adam Harris and Turk Hollinger and thanked Aaron McKinney, Nancy Bailey, and Charles Bledsoe for their service. He thanked the Town Employees for the work they done for Halloween and also for the closure on Clinton Avenue which helped with their 1,500 trick or treaters . He said we need to support food banks and churches with the government shutdown. He said he was torn with the camping ordinance because there is an issue with the homeless in our area. He said if the Town passes the ordinance without resources for the homeless it would mean the only place they can go is to jail and that puts a burden on the jail and tax dollars. He said we need to contact state partners and let them know we need more resources for shelters or organizations to support these people.

Councilman Gilley agreed 100% with Councilman Hughes and we need to do more. He said Halloween was a great event and the whole town was covered up with Trick or Treaters.

Councilman Bloomer thanked Aaron McKinney, Nancy Bailey and Charles Bledsoe for their service and he congratulated Adam Harris and Turk Hollinger. Thanks to the Town for Halloween, it was great and appreciates everyone's hard work.

Mayor Johnson agreed with Councilman Hughes on this ordinance but that it would be an expensive thing to take on because people need to be trained to work with these people, we would need to check on funding before he would be in favor of it, not to mention more work on the police. He said it needs some thought on how to manage all aspects. He thanked Nancy Bailey and Aaron McKinney for their service, and he thanked Ked Meade for Halloween.

AGENDA ITEM 7 - ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm.

Minutes Recorded & Transcribed by
Amanda L. Hawkins – Town Clerk/Treasurer