TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP, VIRGINIA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
505 E 5TH STREET S
BIG STONE GAP, VA July 14, 2026 6:30 PM

AGENDA ITEM 1
Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice-Mayor Gilley called the meeting to order.

Council Present:	Hon. Kent Gilley, Vice-Mayor Hon. Robert Bloomer, Councilman Hon. Adam Harris, Councilman Hon. Tyler Hughes, Councilman Hon. Crystal Lyke, Councilwoman
Council Absent:	Hon. Gary Johnson, Mayor Hon. W. Turk Hollinger, Councilman
Staff Present:	Ms. Amanda L. Hawkins, Town Clerk/Treasurer Mr. Matt Russell, Chief of Police Mr. Charles Bledsoe, Town Attorney
Staff Absent:	Mr. Stephen Lawson, Town Manager

AGENDA ITEM 2 - INVOCATION by Adam Harris, Council Member.

AGENDA ITEM 3 - PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA ITEM 4 - ADOPT OR AMEND THE AGENDA
Motion by Harris, seconded by Hughes, that the agenda for the Regular Council Meeting of July 14, 2026 be amended to move Agenda Item 6 before Agenda Item 5. Motion resulted as follows:

Ayes: Bloomer, Gilley, Harris, Hughes, Lyke
Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: Hollinger, Johnson

AGENDA ITEM 5 – LOCAL BOY SCOUT TROOP
The Boy Scouts requested the Town's participation in creating a time capsule as part of an America 250 merit badge project, celebrating the 250th Birthday of America.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – LOCAL BOY SCOUT TROOP (Continued):
Discussion included:

- Identifying an appropriate location on Town property for the time capsule.
- Involving local media in the ceremony.
- Councilman Harris asked if the Scouts had a place they would prefer the capsule to be placed.
- Councilwoman Lyke suggested the area near the old Post Office.
- Tyler recommended considering any Town park or other Town-owned property.
- Council will have Mr. Lawson research potential locations.
- Councilman Harris asked for suggestions on items to include in the time capsule.
- Council discussed whether the capsule should be opened in 50 or 100 years.
- Councilman Hughes asked what size items were needed for the capsule size and burial site size.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – FY2023 AUDIT REPORT
Scott Wickham of Robinson, Farmer, Cox (RFC) presented the Town's FY2023 audit.

Key points included:

- The Town received an unmodified opinion (clean audit report).
- Beginning balance adjustments were discussed (Note 17).
- Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) is included on page 6.
- Exhibit 1 contains the Town-wide balance sheet.
- Exhibit 3 addresses Governmental Fund activities and unassigned fund balance.
- Exhibit 7 reflects Enterprise Fund balance sheets, including a negative unrestricted net position due to interfund balances. A formal repayment plan is recommended.
- Exhibit 9 summarizes cash flows.
- Compliance information begins on page 96.
- Federal program findings begin on page 98.

AGENDA ITEM 7– BILL LIVESAY–MEMORIAL BENCH FOR MICHAEL CHANDLER
Bill Livesay, a Big Stone Gap resident with deep family ties to the community, requested permission to donate a memorial bench in honor of Michael Chandler.

Discussion included:

- Councilman Harris recommended a blue metal bench with a memorial plaque, and Norris Fabrications will work on a design concept.
- Mr. Livesay shared his appreciation for the Town and his desire to give back.
- Vice-Mayor Gilley asked where the bench should be installed.
- Mr. Livesay requested placement near Bullitt Park along the river.
- Councilwoman Lyke recommended consulting Michael Chandler's family regarding the final location.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS
None

AGENDA ITEM 9 - GENERAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

a. Approval of the minutes of the Council Workshop Meeting of June 02, 2026.
   Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
b. Approval of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of June 09, 2026.
c. Recommended Action: Approve as presented.
d. Departmental Reports for the month of June 2026.
e. Recommended Action: Received and filed.

Motion by Hughes, seconded by Lyke, that the General Order of Business be approved as presented. Motion resulted as follows:

Ayes: Bloomer, Gilley, Harris, Hughes, Lyke
Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: Hollinger, Johnson

AGENDA ITEM 10 - TOWN ENGINEER'S REPORT
Matt Layne introduced Joey Mullins as the new Office Manager for Rinker Design Associates and is a former VDOT employee. He said RDA has also hired a Junior Engineer with engineering experience and is currently serving in the U.S. Army Reserve.

Project updates included:

- Hospital Sewer Shed project is substantially complete and moving into final phases.
- ESG Phase I projects final design is complete and will be submitted to the appropriate agencies.
- Proctor Street project pre-bid meeting is scheduled for Thursday, with bid opening to follow.
- Sunrise Village projects final design is complete and will be submitted for VDH review and approval.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – TOWN MANAGERS REPORT
In absence of Stephen Lawson, Town Manager, Amanda Hawkins, Town Clerk Treasurer, gave the Town Manager's Report.

AGENDA ITEM 11a – FY2023 Audit
Ms. Hawkins said this would be addressed later in Agenda Item 12 Committee Reports.

AGENDA ITEM 11b – Resolution 15-2026 – Section 125 Plan
Ms. Hawkins asked Council to approve Resolution 15-2026 being a resolution adopting the Section 125 Cafeteria Premium Only Plan for the plan year July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.

Motion by Bloomer, seconded by Harris, that Council approve Resolution 15-2026 being a resolution adopting the Section 125 Cafeteria Premium Only Plan for the plan year July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. Motion resulted as follows:

Ayes: Bloomer, Gilley, Harris, Hughes, Lyke
Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: Hollinger, Johnson

AGENDA ITEM 11c – Special Use Permit – Holding Funeral Home Crematorium
Motion by Hughes, seconded by Bloomer, that Council move to table Item 11c – Special Use Permit – Holding Funeral Home Crematorium until August meeting. Motion resulted as follows:

Ayes: Bloomer, Gilley, Harris, Hughes, Lyke
Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: Hollinger, Johnson

AGENDA ITEM 11d – Parade Permit
Ms. Hawkins asked Council to approve a parade permit for the Storm the Mountains on Friday, July 31, 2026 at 9:00 pm.

Motion by Lyke, seconded by Gilley, that Council approve a parade permit for Storm the Mountains on Friday, July 31, 2026 at 9:00 pm. Motion resulted as follows:

Ayes: Bloomer, Gilley, Harris, Hughes, Lyke
Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: Hollinger, Johnson

AGENDA ITEM 11e – Projects Update
No updates.

AGENDA ITEM 12 - COMMITTEE REPORTS
Budget/Finance/Audit Committee
Councilman Bloomer said the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee met July 09, 2026 to receive the FY2023 audit report. Councilman Bloomer said the Budget/Finance/Audit Committee unanimously recommends that Council accept the Audit Report – Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023.

The recommendation by the Committee constitutes a motion and a second. Motion resulted as follows:

Ayes: Bloomer, Gilley, Harris, Hughes, Lyke
Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: Hollinger, Johnson

AGENDA ITEM 13 - COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION
Councilman Hughes requested additional information regarding limiting the operating hours for Charles Bledsoe. He thanked the Boy Scouts, Mr. Livesay, Town guests, and employees for attending and thanked Town staff for their continued hard work.

Councilwoman Lyke thanked everyone who attended and recognized the Boy Scouts for their participation and stated the scouts hold a special place in her heart. She also thanked Mr. Livesay for his helping give back to the community and thinking of Michael.

AGENDA ITEM 13 - COUNCIL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION (Continued):
Councilman Bloomer welcomed Joey Mullins and commended the Boy Scouts for their service. He announced that the Gap Partnership received a $23,000 grant from Cumberland Forest to construct a shade structure at the Skate Park. He reported that an application has also been submitted for a larger grant to install electric vehicle charging stations. He discussed the upcoming closure of Minnick School due to funding reductions. The facility, one of three buildings, has been partially funded by the County, Lutheran Family Services, and EnCircle. Students are being transitioned back to the public school system. Councilman Bloomer noted that there are several Minnick Schools in Virginia and this is the only facility closing because of funding loss and asked Council to call any contacts they have that could help keep the location open.

Councilman Harris agreed with Councilman Bloomer's comments and welcomed Joey Mullins. He thanked the Boy Scouts, Mr. Livesay, Town employees, and Parks Department staff for their excellent work. He expressed concern regarding speeding by electric bicycles on the Greenbelt before someone is injured. Councilman Bloomer clarified that E-Bikes are pedal bikes and that E-Motorcycles travel approximately 30–40 mph and these are creating the safety concerns. He recommended installing signage that says no bikes on the pickleball and basketball courts. Councilman Harris said the Police Department issue a public service announcement reminding riders to obey speed limits and operate safely on the Greenbelt.

Council discussed how to address the issue of e-bikes and explore lawful options for prohibiting their use on the Greenbelt.

Vice-Mayor Gilley concluded by thanking everyone for attending the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 14 - ADJOURNMENT
Motion by Lyke, seconded by Hughes, that the meeting be adjourned. Motion resulted as follows:

Ayes: Bloomer, Gilley, Harris, Hughes, Lyke
Nayes: None Abstain: None Absent: Hollinger, Johnson

Meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm.

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