

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Council of the Town of Blackstone, Virginia, held in the Council Chambers located at 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, Virginia, on Monday, July 21, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

There Were Present:

Mayor: Lafayette Dickens

Council Members: Wesley Gormus, Lloyette Wynn, Christopher Page, Carolyn Williams, Nathaniel Miller, Eric Nash, Jake Allman

Town Staff: Philip Vannoorbeeck, Town Manager; Jennifer Daniel, Town Clerk; Seth Myers, Police Corporal; Zac Beares, Fire Chief; Chastiddy Bryant, Community Development Specialist; Ashley Harris, Utility Billing Clerk

Town Attorney: Attorney Harf - Zoom

Those Absent:

Mayor Dickens called the July Council Meeting to order.

Dr. Allen delivered the Invocation.

Mayor Dickens led the Pledge of Allegiance.

***Councilman Page made a motion to amend the Agenda to move Unfinished Business #9, Salary Adjustments to Closed Session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Gormus***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

### **1. Proposed Financing – Raw Water Line**

#### **Town of Blackstone, Virginia Notice of Public Hearing**

*Notice is hereby given that on July 21, 2025 the Town Council of Blackstone, Virginia (the “Town”) will conduct a public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, as required under applicable law, in accordance with Section 15.2-2606 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, with respect to the adoption by the Council of a resolution or resolutions, as may be necessary or convenient, regarding the proposed financing of all or a portion of the costs of certain water supply system infrastructure improvements, including the replacement, equipping, rehabilitation and site work for installing and connecting a waterline line providing raw water from the water intake at the reservoir to the treatment works, together with related administrative, engineering and financing costs and expenses (the “Project”). The Town proposes to fund the project in part by the issuance of a bond or bonds to be issued in a principal amount not to exceed \$10,000,000, secured by revenues of the water and sewer system of the Town. The purpose of the financing is to pay for the costs of the Project described above.*

*The public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, will be conducted at 7:00PM or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, by the Town Council in Council Chambers at the Town Hall located at 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, Virginia. Interested persons may appear at such time and place and present their views whether orally or in writing or submit written comments prior to the hearing. The Town may set time limits on speakers and other rules and procedures for the conduct of this public hearing. Any persons with disabilities are urged to contact the Town Manager’s Office at (434) 292-7251 prior to the public hearing to arrange for any necessary accommodations. For additional information, please contact the Town Manager’s Office.*

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this Resolution will allow the Town to reimburse themselves through bonds and loans for the raw water line. He said the Town is currently considering replacing 3.5 miles of water line located primarily on Ft. Pickett, which runs from the Reservoir to the Water Treatment Plant. He said this project is estimated at \$10 Million, and the Town has already received \$1.5 Million in grant money for engineering.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said any work done before closing the loan, would be reimbursable. He said this information was prepared by Mr. Howard Estes, with the Estes Law Firm, who has been the Town’s bond counsel in the past.

Mayor Dickens opened the Public Hearing and asked if there was anyone here to speak for or against the proposed Resolution. There were no comments, so Mayor Dickens closed the Public Hearing.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said we actually had our first break on this water line while he was on vacation. He said this was the result of logging activity.

***Councilman Nash made a motion to adopt the Resolution as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

## 2. Zoning Ordinance & Map Update

### *Town of Blackstone Notice of Public Hearing*

*The Town of Blackstone Town Council shall hold a Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m., July 21, 2025 in the Blackstone Town Council Chambers, 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, Va. The meeting is hereby called pursuant to Virginia Code Section 15.2-2285. The Public Hearing is to consider revisions to the Town's current Zoning Ordinance. The Town Council may adopt these revisions following this Public Hearing. Any person desiring to be heard on this matter should attend the Public Hearing at the above stated date and time. A copy of the proposed zoning ordinance is available for review in the Town Manager's office, 100 W. Elm Street. Questions or comments may also be directed to the Town Manager at [philipv@townofblackstoneva.com](mailto:philipv@townofblackstoneva.com) or (434) 292-7251. It is the Town's intention to comply with the ADA. Any person requiring physical or sensory accommodation should contact the Town Manager's office no later than July 16, 2025.*

*Town of Blackstone  
Notice of Public Hearing*

*The Town of Blackstone Town Council shall hold a Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m., July 21, 2025 in the Blackstone Town Council Chambers, 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, Va. The meeting is hereby called pursuant to Virginia Code Section 15.2-2234. The Public Hearing is to consider a proposed ordinance and Official Map used for zoning purposes. The Town Council may adopt this ordinance and Official Map following this Public Hearing. Any person desiring to be heard on this matter should attend the Public Hearing at the above stated date and time. A copy of the proposed ordinance and Official Map are available for review in the Town Manager's office, 100 W. Elm Street. Questions or comments may also be directed to the Town Manager at [philipv@townofblackstoneva.com](mailto:philipv@townofblackstoneva.com) or (434) 292-7251. It is the Town's intention to comply with the ADA. Any person requiring physical or sensory accommodation should contact the Town Manager's office no later than July 16, 2025.*

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he and Clerk Daniel had been working on codifying the Town's Zoning Ordinance and Map. He said he advertised two public hearings but Attorney Harf believed one Public Hearing would cover the Ordinance and Map.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said on the Map we have only codified the changes since 2018. He said the Ordinance is not changing drastically, but it does include changes that will make it easier to build in Blackstone. He said in the R-2 and R-3 districts, the side yard setback on a corner lot was 35', but there are 70' rights of way, so the setback is now 12'. He said duplexes have been added to General Business as a conditional use.

Councilman Page asked if the new Ordinance accounted for solar, data or AI facilities. Manager Vannoorbeeck said it did not.

Mayor Dickens opened the Public Hearing and asked if there was anyone here to speak for or against the proposed zoning changes. There were no comments, so Mayor Dickens closed the Public Hearing.

***Councilman Page made a motion to repeal the current Zoning Ordinance and Map and reenact the amended Zoning Ordinance and Map as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

### **PUBLIC NOTICE:**

#### ***1. Environmental Permit – Wastewater Treatment Plant***

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is informational, and no action was needed tonight.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town has applied for a reissuance of its Permit with DEQ for the Wastewater Treatment Plant discharge. He said notice had been advertised declaring a public comment period, which began on June 26, 2025 through July 28, 2025. He said this includes 2.2 million gallons a day,

### **MINUTES:**

***Councilman Nash made a motion to dispense with reading and approve as presented minutes from the Regular Council Meeting on June 16, 2025, the Continued Meeting on June 25, 2025, and the Special Called Meeting on July 16, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

## **VISITORS:**

### **1. Ms. Marilyn Wilson – Nottoway Youth Football Association**

Ms. Wilson said she was here tonight because of an article in the Blackstone Newspaper dated June 4<sup>th</sup>. She said this did not sit well with her spirit, not their Board. She said the article said the Town spent \$300,000.00 on the Gator football field, and said that cannot be true, and is not true, and if it is, she and her Board would like to see the receipts

Ms. Wilson said also in the article it says the Gators have not played on the field, she said we cannot play on the field. She said the field was not conducive for the young people to be out there playing. She said the stadium was not ready, and the concession stand was not ready. She said the proximity of the concession stand was too close to the field. She discussed the lighting and the field had not been crowned to facilitate proper drainage. She said the article said goalposts had been sitting in storage for almost two years.

Ms. Wilson said they want to play there, but if the field is not ready, they were not going to put anybody on the field. She said if anyone gets hurt on the field, the Gator's insurance would have to absorb the cost through their insurance. She said we are not ungrateful; we are grateful the Town wants to build the field, but we want it done right. She invited anyone to walk the field with her to see what needs to be done to make the field playable.

Councilman Miller said he talked with Mr. Coleman yesterday, and they walked the field and there were four issues the Gators were worried about. He said the first was the water, he said that was already piped in, but had not been hooked up yet. He said the second item was needing 225' in width. Manager Vannoorbeeck asked if that included the coach boxes. Councilman Miller replied that includes everything.

Councilman Miller said he and Mr. Coleman would go to the school and pick up a machine, then go to the field to see what else needs to be done, and report back to Council.

Councilman Miller asked about the bleachers. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he was holding off on moving the bleachers until after July 4<sup>th</sup>.

Councilman Miller asked Ms. Wilson if the Gators had made arrangements to play at Nottoway this year. Ms. Wilson replied yes.

Ms. Wilson said there is not an amp in the concession stand to hook up a stove.

## **FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT:**

Chief Beares said the radio project was continuing, and there would be a meeting tomorrow night to discuss the equipment being purchased. He said there was no update on the Fire Code.

Chief Beares asked about the hydrant that was hit in front of Grace Church. Clerk Daniel said Mr. Andre Hicks repaired it today.

Chief Beares said the Diesel Exhaust System was going well. He said the Forestry Grant for hoses was submitted on July 1<sup>st</sup>. He said during the recent blood drive they collected 17 units of blood, which helps 51 lives.

Chief Beares said this month they voted in 2 new members, with 2 going through the six month probation. He said the Food Truck Rodeo would be July 23<sup>rd</sup>, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Chief Beares said the Knox Box Program that was started in 2017, is now being reenacted. He said Tower 6 was in the shop getting serviced, and the County provides \$5,000.00 annually for maintenance. He said the EVOC Class started tonight in Burkeville.

Councilman Nash said he heard with the new radio system, they are now not doing the \$150,000.00 tower, but instead use a pole that only costs \$1,100.00. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he heard from Utility Services, and they have some issues with the antennas being proposed on the FASTC property.

Councilman Nash said if there is going to be something different, then it needs to be brought to Council for approval.

### **PAYMENT OF BILLS:**

#### **ALREADY PAID:**

***Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the bills that have already been paid in the amount of \$552,122.32. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Williams.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

#### **VOTE:**

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

#### **TO BE PAID:**

***Councilman Nash made a motion to approve as presented; the bills not yet paid in the amount of \$403,927.91. The motion was seconded by Councilman Page.***

Councilman Nash asked if the Town was paying for two fuel trucks. Manager Vannoorbeeck said we are just paying for one at \$1,800.00 a month.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

### **APPROPRIATIONS:**

There were no appropriations.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

*Employment & Police – 6-23-25 and 6-26-25 – minutes included in July’s Council Packet*

*Closed Session – Personnel – Treasurer Interviews*

Councilman Miller said the Committee interviewed for the Treasurer position on both nights, and have narrowed it down to three, with these being presented to Council tonight.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

#### *1. Award Bid – S. Main Street Repaving*

Manager Vannoorbeeck said sealed bids were opened on June 20, 2025 for pavement restoration on S. Main Street. He said one bid was received from Colony Construction in the amount of \$339,777.00. He said the total budget for the project is \$599,000.00. He said this is 100% funded through grant with the State of Good Repair.

Councilman Nash asked if the remaining money could be used for sidewalk. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he would ask, but he did not think so.

***Councilman Page made a motion to award the S. Main Street Pavement Restoration Project to Colony Construction in the amount of \$339,777.00 funded through VDOT with the State of Good Repair, contingent on VDOT approval. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.***



Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is replacing asphalt, and putting it back, to include relining. He said this project did not include any curb and gutter.

Councilman Nash asked when the parking lot at the Armory would begin. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

## 2. Industrial Development Authority - Nomination

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked if Council had any nominations to let Clerk Daniel know.

Councilman Miller nominated Ms. Verna Rhoades.

Councilman Nash asked if Ms. Rhoades had been contacted. Councilman Miller replied no, he was just trying to provide a name.

Councilman Nash asked to contact Ms. Rhoades, because it does require a Statement of Economic Interest be filled out.

## 3. Award Aluminum Sulfate Rebid – Water Treatment Plant

Manager Vannoorbeeck said bids were opened originally on June 24, 2025, and then shared with the contractors. He said one contractor then said he bid in dry pounds instead of wet pounds. Mr. Edward Harris admittedly said he told the contractor dry pounds, and asked how to proceed. Manager Vannoorbeeck told Mr. Harris he had to rebid it.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the aluminum sulfate was rebid, and the contractor that bid in dry pounds provided a lower price this time, after seeing the original bids.

Councilman Nash said the previous low contractor did not provide a price for the rebid.

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked Attorney Harf if the previous bid award needed to be rescinded, and then award the new low bid. Attorney Harf said this could have been handled differently, but he suggested to rescind the previous bid, then award the new bid.

Councilman Page asked how do we rescind a bid that had been voted on and appropriated, because someone bid it wrong.

Councilman Nash said it was the Town's fault; Mr. Harris told the bidder the wrong information. Attorney Harf said that should have been figured out before accepting the bid. Manager Vannoorbeeck said we did not know it was an issue until Council awarded the bid, then we provided the bid tab to the other contractors.

Councilman Gormus pointed out the other contractors that rebid, their prices stayed the same.

Councilman Page believed this was unethical.

Attorney Harf questioned why the original company did not submit a rebid. Clerk Daniel said Mr. Harris told her, that after the back and forth, they were not going to bid again because they figured Chemtrade would under bid them.

Attorney Harf said the bid documents provided the information, and even though wrong information was provided to Chemtrade, everyone was relying on the bid documents. He said the bid was awarded to lowest responsive and responsible bidder. He did not think the Town should go back and redo the process.

Attorney Harf said we need to engage the original low bidder, Superb Solutions.

Councilman Nash asked if bids were verbal. Clerk Daniel replied, they were sealed bids.

Councilman Page said in the bid documents it specifies wet pounds. Clerk Daniel said that was added in the second round of bidding. She asked Mr. Harris if liquid meant wet pounds, which was included in the first bid documents.

Attorney Harf did not believe the Town should move forward with the rebid process. Councilman Allman said if Superb Solutions did not want the award, then we will award it to the rebid from Chemtrade.

Attorney Harf said to proceed with the original bid from Superb Solutions, and if something changes, we will revisit at the next Council Meeting.

#### 4. School Buildings

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he was not asking for any action, but we still have an outstanding proposal. He asked for guidance on how to proceed.

Mayor Dickens asked what the options were. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Buildings, Property & Cemetery Committee interviewed those that submitted proposals through an RFP, and decided on one. He said the developer was looking for assistance with sidewalks and street lights.

Councilman Nash said we received a cash price from one developer, and the second developer wanted to negotiate. Councilman Page said Manager Vannoorbeeck had not provided the negotiations from the developer.

Councilman Page believed Council voted to move forward with the developer, but no negotiations have been provided to Council.

Councilman Miller believed the citizens should have some input. Councilman Gormus said this was done during the Public Hearing.

Councilman Nash suggested Manager Vannoorbeeck present the negotiations at next month's Council Meeting in Closed Session.

##### 5. TAP 21 – College Avenue

Manager Vannoorbeeck said at the last meeting we discussed sidewalk and curb and gutter on the west side of College Avenue, between Sixth and Eighth Street. He said we discussed this project starting at Fourth Street and he would work with the Inn on a cost share.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said after talking with VDOT, they suggested going to Eighth Street then to Brunswick Avenue, to make it an eligible application. He said this would have to include an agreement with the Inn paying 50% of the curb and gutter.

Councilman Miller asked what the cost would be. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied, \$650,000.00. Councilman Nash said for five blocks that is absurd.

Councilman Nash asked what S. Walker's price was. Manager Vannoorbeeck said \$192,000.00 for two blocks. Councilman Allman said with the grant the Town only pays \$162,500.00. Councilman Page asked if the Inn would pay half of that.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this would not take place until FY27, if successful. He believed the Inn's cost would be \$100,000.00 if done by S. Walker.

Councilman Nash said we could accomplish more at far less, by just widening the shoulder and installing a lane.

Councilman Gormus asked if the 25% could be paid for with VDOT funds. Manager Vannoorbeeck said we would use the General Fund for funds available to us.

Clerk Daniel asked for clarification, the Town's portion would be \$162,500.00, and that excludes the Inn. Manager Vannoorbeeck said VDOT would not allow this project to start at Sixth Street, it has to start at Fourth Street. He said if the Inn did not participate, then this project is dead.

Council asked Manager Vannoorbeeck to talk to the Inn and report back.

6. Training – Mr. John Montoro

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked to allow assistance for the ladies, and let Mr. Montoro train. Councilman Nash asked about a time frame. Manager Vannoorbeeck did not know.

Councilman Page said he did not want Mr. Montoro to come do the work, he preferred he train the ladies.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town was reconciled through June 2024.

***Councilman Page made a motion to hire Mr. John Montoro to train Town staff on how to reconcile the books, with a cap of \$20,000.00.***

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked the cap to be \$20,000.00, and if it goes over, he would bring back to Council.

Councilman Miller said the training should apply particularly to the Treasurer and Bookkeeper.

Councilman Gormus said the motion includes 167 hours at \$120.00 an hour.

***The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.***

Councilman Gormus believed a window of time should be included.

Councilman Page amended his motion to include a November 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Councilman Nash agreed.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

7. Forest Drive Force Main

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town is working on two sewer improvement projects. He said the first is the Fort Avenue sewer line that goes under the railroad and comes out behind Shiloh Baptist Church. He said the manhole is brick and falling into the line, which is blocking the sewage flow.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the second project is the Forest Drive Force Main. He said both projects total \$4,750,577.00. He said included in the Budget is \$135,000.00, but the estimate is \$582,000.00, which is from manhole to manhole.

*(Manager Vannoorbeeck corrected this amount later in the meeting, the correct amount is \$300,000.00)*

Manager Vannoorbeeck suggested the Town apply for a loan through the Clean Water Revolving Fund for both projects. He said a Resolution was adopted that will allow the Town to reimburse ourselves for any money spent. He said this might not be all loan, he hoped for Principal Forgiveness.

Councilman Nash asked what the rate would be. Manager Vannoorbeeck said this would be through DEQ, and did not know.

***Councilman Nash made a motion to submit an application through DEQ for the Clean Water Revolving Fund in the amount of \$4,750,577.00. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

#### **8. Electric Reconductoring Financing**

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is for an electric improvement project, and estimated to be \$1 Million. He said this would include replacing wiring, poles and crossarms in Eppington Forest, S. Main Street, and Taylor Bottom. He said this would also include replacing the SCADA System.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he sought funding from the Virginia Resources Authority and they gave an estimate of 5%, but were not crazy about doing a ten year amortization.

Manager Vannoorbeeck reminded Council about the BESS System, which is supposed to save \$135,000.00 a year. He said we want to apply the savings to paying the note off. He said the VRA could not provide final rates until the fall.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he also solicited pricing from Citizens Bank at 4.5%, or 1% above the yield on the existing \$1 Million CD. He said Benchmark Bank was at 6.25%, and would balloon in five years and be repriced.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he spoke with Mr. Roland Kootch with Davenport & Company, and asked his thoughts. He said Mr. Kootch recommended the 1% above the yield on the \$1 Million CD.

Councilman Page asked how many years the VRA wanted to do. Manager Vannoorbeeck replied 20 years.

Councilman Nash suggested the Town pay for this, and pay ourselves back. Councilman Page said we would lose the interest. Manager Vannoorbeeck said we have been talking about purchasing some property, and that would make a dent in the cash reserves.

Councilman Gormus asked if this was included in the Budget. Councilman Nash said the financing of the project is in the Budget.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said \$400,000.00 of this project will be used as leverage for the Taylor Bottom project.

Councilman Nash asked to present what the Town's monthly payment would be if we borrow the money from ourselves and pay it back at 4.5% interest.

Councilman Gormus asked when the work would start, and who would do it. He asked about the \$650,000.00 in labor. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the work would have to be bid out. He said the Town's engineer provided the figures.

Councilwoman Williams asked if the Town had ever borrowed from themselves before. Manager Vannoorbeeck did not think so. She suggested asking the Town's advisor how to proceed.

Mayor Dickens asked if this would be a good opportunity to put the lines underground. Manager Vannoorbeeck said making repairs is more difficult. He added Dominion Power doesn't even put all lines underground. He said it is less expensive hanging lines on a pole.

By Common Consent, Council asked Manager Vannoorbeeck to discuss financing further with Mr. Kootch.

## 9. Salary Adjustments

This was moved to Closed Session for tonight's meeting.

#### 10. Budget Procedures

Councilman Gormus said we may be better served if we back the schedule up by one month. Manager Vannoorbeeck said we have to wait until June to adopt a budget because Dominion Power does not provide their rates until then. Councilman Gormus said there are other items we can have ready by June.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said we provide the Capital Improvement Plan in December, and can start then. Councilman Gormus suggested starting in January.

Councilman Nash said the Budget is intended to be worked on throughout the entire year. Councilman Gormus suggested having a committee meeting monthly to see where we stand. He suggested having the Mayor task each member with a project to keep track of it.

Councilman Page said he did not see the budget until June 7<sup>th</sup>, and by then raises were already being proposed. He said he would like to see it earlier next year.

#### **ON-GOING PROJECTS:**

##### 1. Dilapidated Buildings

Manager Vannoorbeeck said there will be two public hearings at the August Council Meeting for blighted properties at 819 and 915 Falls Street.

##### 2. Meals Tax / Lodging Tax

Councilman Nash asked about the business that was on the list last month. Manager Vannoorbeeck said it had been sent to TACS.

Councilman Page said there was no balance included for the two new business. Utility Billing Clerk Harris said she forgot to include the amounts on the list.

Councilman Allman suggested contacting the franchise owner of the delinquent restaurant.

Councilman Miller asked how long can this restaurant keep operating now that TACS is involved. Manager Vannoorbeeck said he didn't even know who to take a summons out on.

Councilman Nash said just follow procedure, and let TACS handle this.

### 3. Street Improvement Projects

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he received notice from Whitehurst Paving, they should be starting surface treatment (tar & gravel) around August 18, 2025. He said this would be primarily in Wards D & E.

### 4. Wrigglesworth Sports Complex

Councilman Miller said once we get the machine on the football field, then he could report to Council.

Councilman Allman asked about the 225'. Mr. Coleman said we need to start with clearance from the concession stand. He said it would need to be roughly 20' from the sidewalk, then do the coaches boxes, then the playing field.

Councilman Nash said Nottoway's field is 197'. Mr. Coleman said the field itself is 160', then adding 40' for both sides that give clearance as a safe zone for the kids.

### 5. Taylor Bottom Block Grant

Manager Vannoorbeeck said resolutions and other documents would be presented next month for Council approval.

### 6. Armory

Manager Vannoorbeeck believed this project was about 95% complete. He said there were some workmanship issues and things being requested that were not included in the scope of work. He said the building would be ready for Arts and Crafts.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said a contract had been signed for the internet. He said the parking lot would start on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Councilman Page said the job fair was changed.

### Weatherization

There was nothing reported.



## 7. Workforce Housing

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the three houses being built on Tavern Street were about 75% complete. He said we are running underground service to the houses.

Councilman Miller asked if we were still two short for qualifying. Community Development Specialist Bryant said there is only one person qualified, and working with another.

Mayor Dickens asked to start including photos for the Dilapidated Buildings and Workforce Housing sections.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### 1. Purchase Order Request – New Cherry Picker

Manager Vannoorbeeck said included in the Budget is \$248,000.00 to purchase a new Cherry Picker Truck. He said we received the price from Sourcewell through State Procurement in the amount of \$242,635.94.

Manager Vannoorbeeck requested authorization to purchase the Cherry Picker, and may take 18 months to get here.

***Councilman Nash made a motion authorizing the purchase of a new Cherry Picker Truck in the amount of \$242,635.94. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.***

Councilman Gormus asked how we can keep the new truck from getting in bad shape as the current truck. Manager Vannoorbeeck said replace it before 24 years.

Councilman Page asked if there was an option to purchase a used Cherry Picker. Manager Vannoorbeeck said it has been a goal to get rid of the old junk in Town.

Councilman Gormus suggested a solid maintenance plan to maintain equipment.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Nay |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

## 2. Joint Use Agreement – Army, National Guard, Blackstone

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the biggest changes were grammatical, such as spelling Allan C. Perkinson correctly. He said Col. Preston Scott wrote this a few years ago. He said this does require a five year review. He said Col. Cree has already signed, the Town will sign, then the Adjutant General.

***Councilman Allman made a motion authorizing Manager Vannoorbeeck to sign the Joint Use Agreement as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Page.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

## 3. Town Square Event – 10-25-25

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is an expansive street closure. He said the request was from New Life Church, but he was concerned about closing four streets for three hours, including Main Street.

Manager Vannoorbeeck suggested not closing Main Street, and use the route from last year.

***Councilman Allman made a motion to approve the event, excluding the street closure for Main Street, and to use the route from last year. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.***

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked if there was a Noise Ordinance waiver. DBi Director Glenn replied they are not having music.

Councilman Page said they are requesting to close Broad, High and Elm Streets, how will residents get to their homes. DBi Director Glenn said she could not answer that.

Clerk Daniel said they are requesting vendors in the Town Square, so once that is confirmed, it will be brought back to Council.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

**4. B&B Consultants – Task Order #1 – Raw Water Line**

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is a Task Order from B&B Consultants for the Raw Water Line for the PER and Environmental Review for \$30,000.00. He said this would be reimbursable from the Department of Health.

***Councilman Page made a motion to authorize Manager Vannoorbeeck to execute Task Order #1 with B&B Consultants in the amount of \$30,000.00 for the Raw Water Line. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Williams.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

**5. B&B Consultants – Task Order #2 – Hodges & Pickett Streets**

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this Task Order is for the design of the water line for Hodges Street. He said he did not require the inspection portion of the Task Order so \$22,800.00 can be removed.

***Councilman Allman made a motion to authorize execution of Task Order #2 in the amount of \$34,000.00, per Manager Vannoorbeeck's amendments. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

Manager Vannoorbeeck made a correction, he said earlier he had \$135,000.00 in the budget for Fort Avenue, but it really is for Hodges Street. He said he has \$300,000.00 in the budget for Fort Avenue.

#### 6. Meals Tax Waiver

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he spoke with a restaurant owner about waiving penalty and interest for being 5 days late paying meals tax. He said the penalty and interest was assessed at \$481.66. He said he told the business owner he could not waive the fees, but would not add anymore until Council met to make their decision.

Mayor Dickens asked if this business owner had been late in the past. Utility Billing Clerk Harris replied no.

Attorney Harf cautioned Council about waiving the late fees. He said according to the statute, this cannot be waived unless the taxpayer can prove it was not his fault for paying late.

Utility Billing Clerk Harris said the business owner said the line was too long, he did not want to wait.

Council agreed there would be no action.

Mayor Dickens asked that the business owner be informed of what was presented from Attorney Harf.

Councilman Gormus questioned how long these restaurants would stay on the Meals Tax list in the packet every month. Councilman Nash believed they needed to stay until paid.

Councilman Page believed stopping the penalty and interest may be in violation to what Attorney Harf presented. Utility Billing Clerk Harris said penalty and interest accrue monthly, and we are still in the same month.

7. Robinson, Farmer, Cox – Engagement Letter

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is the Engagement Letter for the FY25 audit in the amount of \$34,500.00. He believed there was \$28,000.00 in the budget.

Councilman Page believed we were going to bid this out this year. Manager Vannoorbeeck said it was too late this year.

***Councilman Allman made a motion to approve the Engagement Letter with Robinson, Farmer, Cox in the amount of \$34,500.00 for the FY25 audit, and issue an RFP for the next fiscal year in September. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.***

Councilman Nash said a few years ago we were paying \$20,000.00, this is a salary increase amount now. He believed the audit had been difficult because of missing items.

Clerk Daniel said last year it was \$27,100.00.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the RFP needs to be issued in September.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Nay |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

8. Fire Training Grounds – Concrete Work

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the Town received \$148,000.00 in grant funds for the Fire Training Grounds, with \$10,000.00 being the match, and was received from Nottoway County.

Manager Vannoorbeeck expressed his appreciation for Mr. Lee Williams with the Fire Department.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the first part of this grant would be to pour a concrete apron around the building.

***Councilman Page made a motion to solicit bids for the concrete apron at the Fire Training Grounds. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.***

Mayor Dickens asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

#### 9. Airport Property

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the presentation on the Airport property did not go well with the Board of Supervisors. He said since then he met with John Roark and Bo Toth, along with Jake Allman. He now had a better understanding of what they were looking for, and are now moving forward as they are more receptive to the proposal, and are asking for it in writing.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the County is requesting a right of first refusal. He said the Town's important parts are contingent on zoning, FAA approval, use of the site, and an extended study period. He said Nottoway County did not want another Nottoway Commons.

Attorney Harf said if the Town decides to sell property that has not been developed for the intended use, that's when the first right of refusal would be made at a fair market value.

Councilman Page said if the County does not pass the zoning, or if the FAA does not approve, the County should have to buy it back. Attorney Harf said there would be contingencies in the due diligence period.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the offering price is \$651,000.00.

Mayor Dickens asked if this project was speculative, or was there confidence it would pay off for the Town. Manager Vannoorbeeck said as near and dear as the Reserve Fund is to him, he would not recommend taking \$651,000.00 if he was not confident this was important to the Town.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he would like to present to Talbert & Bright the airport overlay district to be sure 10 acres of the property isn't prohibited from being built on. Councilman Allman said we are trying to protect air space.

Councilman Nash said this may be increased traffic to Town, and asked if we will repay ourselves as property is sold. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the purchase price would be based on the development. He said the Department of Aviation has said the Town is eligible for grant money for the purchase of the property, and would be reimbursed if awarded.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said we will move forward with a rough document to present to the County. He said a survey would be prepared as well. He said we will purchase this property by the acre, not a lump sum, at \$9,000.00 an acre for 72 acres. He said a survey will let us know the exact acreage.

10. Headstone Request – Mr. Milton Smith

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this family wants to install a second headstone. He said these requests have been approved previously, as long as the headstone stays in line with other headstones.

***Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the second headstone request as presented for the Smith family. The motion was seconded by Councilman Gormus.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

11. DEQ – Litter Prevention & Recycling Grant

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Community Development Specialist Bryant had already submitted for this grant in the amount \$9,641.00. He said this would be dumpsters in different locations for holiday clean-up.

Community Development Specialist Bryant said there is no match, and needs the submittal ratified.

***Councilman Allman made a motion to ratify the submission of the DEQ Litter Prevention & Recycling Grant in the amount of \$9,641.00. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.***

Councilwoman Williams suggested letting the citizens know, with an ad in the paper. She said add it with the utility bill.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

12. 1014 S. Main Street – Replace Water Line

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he met with the owner of 1014 S. Main Street. He said previously the trash truck backed into the property, and subsequently there was a leak in the water line. He said the Town has repaired this line three times.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said this is on private property, but the Town does have culpability, not only for driving on it, but Mr. Andre Hicks has also hit it with a probe rod helping them find a sewer line.

Manager Vannoorbeeck requested the Town replace the water line at the Town's cost and have the property owner sign a waiver to complete the project. He said this would include Town staff doing the work. He asked to enter the property to replace the water line 5' from the foundation of the house back to the meter, and have the property owner sign an indemnity agreement letting the property owner know that the Town's responsibilities are done.

***Councilman Nash made a motion to enter the property at 1014 S. Main Street, to replace the water line 5' from the foundation of the house back to the meter, and have the property owner sign an indemnity agreement letting the property owner know that the Town's responsibilities are done. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.***

Councilman Page asked about the cost. Manager Vannoorbeeck said the material cost would be roughly \$250.00. He said the labor will be more expensive.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Nay |



13. Nottoway County Economic Development Committee

***Councilman Page made a motion to remove the previous mayor, Mr. Ben Green from the Nottoway County Economic Development Committee, and appoint Mayor Dickens. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.***

Mayor Dickens asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

14. Renew DMV Contractual Agreement

Clerk Daniel said this was received today, and was sent to Council earlier. She said a different agreement was approved recently.

***Councilman Allman made a motion to approve the DMV Contractual Agreement as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.***

Councilman Page said this agreement lists who actually uses DMV.

Clerk Daniel said she emailed today about the treasurer signature, since the Town does not have one at this time, and was told nothing needed to change, Manager Vannoorbeeck could sign.

Mayor Dickens asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Nay |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

## **COMMITTEE REFERRALS:**

### **1. College Avenue – Private Property Ditch**

Councilman Nash said when a citizen comes to him with a request, he does not have the authority to say yay or nay. He said it is a grate that the Town put over a culvert pipe to keep debris from going through the pipe. He said this was installed years ago.

Councilman Miller said this Council has said we would not go on private property until the Armes ditch is repaired.

Clerk Daniel said she communicated with the property owner today, and she did not want to be on the Agenda for tonight. She has asked Manager Vannoorbeeck to provide all private property work done since Council has said they would not do work on private property.

This Committee Referral was postponed until next month.

## **CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

### **Ms. Cynthia Patterson**

Ms. Patterson said her mom's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday was coming up and asked to waive the Noise Ordinance on August 2, 2025 from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. She said this would be on Patterson Street. She said it would be family members, and less than 100 in attendance.

Councilman Miller asked if alcohol would be served. Ms. Patterson said she contacted the ABC Board, and it is a private event, so nothing was needed.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said the field Ms. Patterson was referring to is Town property. He said to have alcohol on Town property a TULIP Policy would be needed. Ms. Patterson said her mother's house is across the street, and no alcohol would be served on Town property.

***Councilman Page made a motion to waive the Noise Ordinance on August 2, 2025 from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Patterson Street, and use of the Town property, with no alcohol on Town property. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn.***

Mayor Dickens asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

### **MAYORS MINUTE:**

Mayor Dickens said he remained impressed with the concern and dedication of this Council, and how serious Council takes their responsibilities. He said let's continue to move forward and forge a brighter future for Blackstone and its citizens.

Mayor Dickens said the Tourism Committee had met, and he was excited about the group and looked forward to new creative ideas to help market Blackstone.

Mayor Dickens said the Armory group is working on the guidelines. He said they are discussing naming various rooms after echelon ranks of the National Guard. He said the Committee asked that Council decide which room would be named the Blackstone Conference Room.

Councilman Page believed the rooms should be numerical, especially for the students.

Councilman Miller asked if the committee wanted control and name what they want. Mayor Dickens said no, they are asking for Council's input.

Mayor Dickens said the committee asked about priority for usage. He said for instance the colleges, the community, for profits, non-profits, in and out of Town requests. Councilman Nash believed a lot of this was unknown because we don't know what the colleges want.

Councilman Page believed the colleges would be first, the community second and private and non-profits are treated the same.

Mayor Dickens said he was still meeting with town employees and department heads, and had been well received.

### **POLICE REPORT:**

There was nothing reported.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711-A

- 1/ Personnel - Treasurer Position, Admin. & Specific Salaries for Multiple Departments
- 5/ Prospective Business or Industry

***Councilman Page made a motion to go into Closed Session for (1) Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body and (5) 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 business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Williams.***

Mayor Dickens asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

***Councilwoman Wynn made a motion to certify 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. The motion was seconded by Councilman Page.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |         |
|-----------------------|---|---------|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Certify |
| Councilman Page       | - | Certify |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Certify |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Certify |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Certify |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Certify |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Certify |

Councilman Miller asked if the new treasurer would be paid between \$60-\$65 Thousand. Manager Vannoorbeeck believed there was \$54,000.00 in the budget, but whatever is decided is fine, we can do an appropriation.

***Councilman Page made a motion authorizing Manager Vannoorbeeck to contact the candidate of choice with an employment offer for up to \$65,000.00. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Wynn.***

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

|                       |   |     |
|-----------------------|---|-----|
| Councilwoman Wynn     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Page       | - | Aye |
| Councilwoman Williams | - | Aye |
| Councilman Miller     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Nash       | - | Aye |
| Councilman Allman     | - | Aye |
| Councilman Gormus     | - | Aye |

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Dickens adjourned this meeting at 10:37 p.m.

 MAYOR  
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

August 18, 2025 APPROVED AND ADOPTED

 TOWN CLERK  
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA