

Minutes of a Continued Meeting of the Council of the Town of Blackstone, Virginia, held in the Council Chambers, located at 100 W. Elm Street, Blackstone, Virginia on Wednesday, October 29, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

There Were Present:

Mayor: Lafayette Dickens

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

Town Staff: Philip Vannoorbeeck, Town Manager; Jennifer Daniel, Town Clerk; Jackie Mitchell, Bookkeeper; Alex Wilkinson, Transit Director; Madison Williams, Utility Billing Clerk; Karen Morris, Treasurer; Sam Murphy, Police Chief

Town Attorney:

Those Absent: Carolyn Williams

Mayor Dickens called this Continued Meeting from October 20, 2025, to order.

Utility Bill Adjustments – 3 Requests

Ms. Bessie Gregory – 407 E. Broad Street

Ms. Gregory said she received a letter on her front door stating she had a water/sewer leak from August 1st through September. She said there was no leak found, and this is the second time it has happened. She said she lives on a fixed income and does not include much for extras, and asked this be taken into consideration.

Councilman Gormus asked about the toilet flapper. Ms. Gregory said that was checked, the last time this happened everything was replaced. She said she has checked everything, and there were no leaks anywhere. She said nobody can prove to her anything that was done wrong.

Councilman Page asked if staff had rechecked the meter to see if it was back to normal. Utility Billing Clerk Williams said the reading was now back to normal.

Councilman Miller said typically Council will waive the sewer fees. Councilman Nash added, if it was an outside leak.

Councilman Page said he did not have a problem waiving the sewer.

Councilman Miller made a motion to waive the sewer portion of the utility bill to the minimum consumption. The motion was seconded by Councilman Page.

Councilman Allman said this will set a precedent doing this. He said we have denied others on the same basis. Councilman Gormus added, if we approve this, there will be more.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

Mayor Dickens broke the tie and voted Aye.

Utility Billing Clerk Williams said she would adjust the bill and resend to Ms. Gregory.

RDA – Computer Software Demonstration – Mr. Riley Davis

The following were presenters with RDA for payroll, bank reconciliations, and revenue.

Ms. Donnica Carter presented payroll.

Mr. Kyle Sansing presented on reports, accounts payable and bank reconciliations.

Mr. Sean Moroz presented on revenues, utilities and work orders.

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked what RDA needed from Bright to keep them running during interim. Councilman Allman clarified the servers.

Councilman Page said Mr. Davis suggested running through the County servers or a ghost system with a charge per quarter. He said all information would be extracted from Bright and put in a web based system.

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked how much longer does the Town need to pay for the maintenance on the Bright System. Mr. Davis said they would work with the Town to decide what information they want to pull from Bright, then convert and import into RDA.

Manager Vannoorbeeck asked why wouldn't all the data be imported. Mr. Davis said they had never been asked to import all data. He said usually they take 6 years of personal property, 20 years of transactional data for real estate. He said they usually don't convert business licenses, etc., but they can. He said for utilities they usually just pull the outstanding balances.

Councilman Allman said we can back up the entire Bright server onto a hard drive so it is retained, without having it imported into RDA.

Mr. Davis said they have a consultant who has helped pull Bright data for many years. He believed their consultant's recommendation was the quarterly service and roughly \$3,200.00 per quarter. He said they planned to have the Town up by mid-March 2026. He said revenue would be up by mid-September 2026.

Councilman Page said RDA has a third party that would extract the data from Bright onto a web based system, so the Town will operate as normal. Manager Vannoorbeeck asked if this would be done by January 31, 2026. Councilman Page replied yes, and there will be a quarterly fee.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said he did not believe this was considered emergency procurement. He asked if RDA was already a state procured product that the Town could attach to. Mr. Davis replied absolutely, others have used what was in place with Amherst County.

Treasurer Morris said she spoke with other municipalities and got good reviews.

Councilman Page said he would set up a time for Manager Vannoorbeeck to talk with the consultant about backing up the Bright data.

Councilman Miller asked about the cost. Councilman Page said it would be \$20,000.00 annually, setup is \$73,000.00, for customization is \$15,000.00 if needed. Manager Vannoorbeeck said last fiscal year we set aside \$60,000.00 and this fiscal year we budgeted \$60,000.00.

Councilman Allman said with the new system, we will hopefully reduce the Town's consultant fees.

Boundary Adjustments

Manager Vannoorbeeck said we have two written requests, and the third is with the Nottoway Commons property.

Council agreed to move this to the November Agenda.

Councilman Miller asked about Cox Road for a boundary adjustment. Manager Vannoorbeeck said there is not a water or sewer line on Cox Road, and if they are taken into Town, it would have to be built. He said on the current requests, there is water and sewer already.

Councilman Miller asked what the Town gains with boundary adjusting. Manager Vannoorbeeck said on West Entrance Road, the Town would gain twice as many houses. He said the Town would gain taxes, but would lose the 50% surcharge on out of Town water/sewer.

Councilman Gormus believed the requests should be individual, and not rolled into several requests. Manager Vannoorbeeck believed there was talk about savings in legal fees if requests were done together.

Tourism Committee – Mrs. Lisa Johnson & Mrs. Jenny Davis Bunn

Mrs. Johnson asked for permission to hang two banners, one across Main Street with no sponsorship, and the other with sponsorship to be hung at the Armory. She said they would be doing a holiday event with a train exhibit.

Councilman Page said the Chamber was just approved for the Christmas Parade Banner for that week. He suggested the Tourism banner be hung at Tenth and Main.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the banner for Tenth and Main, and waive the banner fee. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Mayor Dickens asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

Councilman Page said the Town does have a prohibition on advertising on Town property. He said it is not for the Town itself, and this is the Blackstone Tourism Committee created by this Council. He said if the Town wants to allow this for themselves there is no prohibition. Councilman Allman agreed.

Councilman Gormus said in his opinion, we are better served if we don't make the exception, even though we can.

Councilman Page said the advertising on the banner does help pay for the trains.

Councilman Allman said the Town does sponsorships on the planters.

Mrs. Johson said their committee has a small budget, so the sponsors will help with the cost.

Councilman Allman made a motion to approve the banner to be hung at the Armory and include sponsors. The motion was seconded by Councilman Page.

Councilman Miller said this being approved, he can see where it could lead to problems. Councilman Allman said the precedent was set with the planters. Councilman Gormus said last time the planters were discussed, it was voted to remove the plaques for that reason.

Manager Vannoorbeeck believed he was supposed to get new sponsors. Clerk Daniel added or remove them. Councilman Allman believed they were being removed because the sponsorship had not happened. Councilman Gormus believed the sponsors paid enough to cover the costs of the plantings. Councilman Nash said sponsors paid for one year, and had not paid since.

Mrs. Bunn said they put together different levels of sponsorships, and the top tier allows sponsorship on the banner.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

Councilman Gormus asked that sponsorship on banners be referred to the Health & Ordinance Committee to be revised. Mayor Dickens agreed to refer it.

Utility Bill Adjustments – 3 Requests

Mr. Blake Tomazo – 617 S. Main Street

Clerk Daniel said this gentleman recently purchased this property, and just made his first utility payment. She said the upstairs attic space to this property has an extra meter, so Mr. Tomazo is requesting to remove the second trash collection fee from his utility bill. She said Mr. Tomazo asked if the trash fee is removed, could he be reimbursed from the first payment.

Councilman Nash suggested he disconnect the second meter; it is not being used. Manager Vannoorbeeck did not know what the second meter served. He asked that the \$3.00 County charge not be removed.

Councilman Allman made a motion to remove the second trash charge monthly as long as the attic space is not being rented, but not remove the back charge or the \$3.00 County Fee. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Mayor Dickens asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

Dr. Carolyn Tucker – 819 N. Main Street & 847 N. Main Street

Clerk Daniel said she and Utility Billing Clerk Williams had been communicating with Dr. Tucker through email. Dr. Tucker does not live here, and had inherited two homes in Blackstone, and because nobody lives in the homes, she is requesting to remove the trash fees.

Clerk Daniel said Utility Billing Clerk Williams had changed the account name as Dr. Tucker requested.

Manager Vannoorbeeck said these are occupiable spaces, and asked Council to be cautious. He said this would set a precedent. He said the utilities can be cut off and there would be no charges at the properties.

Councilman Gormus made a motion to deny the requests to remove the trash collection fees at 819 and 847 N. Main Street. The motion was seconded by Councilman Nash.

Mayor Dickens asked for a Roll Call Vote:

VOTE:

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

Bobby Daniels Memorial Tree

Manager Vannoorbeeck said Mr. Danny Sheffield has requested to plant a tree at Schwartz Tavern for Mr. Bobby Daniels. He recommended it be on the side closest to Ace Hardware. He said Mr. Sheffield would purchase the tree and plaque, with the Town planting it.

Councilman Nash made a motion to approve the memorial tree request for Mr. Bobby Daniels at Schwartz Tavern. The motion was seconded by Councilman Allman.

Councilman Page asked how evasive the tree would be. Manager Vannoortbeeck said the tree would be planted in grass, but may have exposed roots at some point in time.

Mayor Dickens asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

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

Street Closure – Veterans Day – S. Main Street (from Church to Irvin Street)

Councilman Page made a motion to approve the street closure for the Veterans Day Ceremony for one hour. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Mayor Dickens asked all in favor or opposed:

VOTE:

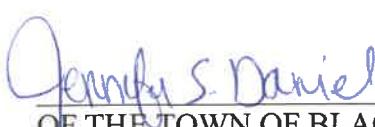
Councilman Miller	-	Aye
Councilman Nash	-	Aye
Councilman Allman	-	Aye
Councilman Gormus	-	Aye
Councilwoman Wynn	-	Aye
Councilman Page	-	Aye
Councilwoman Williams	-	Absent

There being no further business to bring before Council, Mayor Dickens declared this Continued Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.



MAYOR OF THE
TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA

November 17, 2025 APPROVED AND ADOPTED



TOWN CLERK
OF THE TOWN OF BLACKSTONE, VIRGINIA