

Gatlinburg City Commission
July 21, 2026
Meeting Minutes

The Gatlinburg City Commission met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, July 21, 2026, at 5:00 P.M. in the City Council Room. All members were present. Mayor Mike Werner called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Finance Director Robert Holt led the Invocation.

Mayor Werner then called for a motion to approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of May 19, 2026. Commissioner Randy Brackins made a motion to approve the Minutes which was seconded by Commissioner Jay Horner and then unanimously adopted.

The City Manager reported and/or requested:

- (1) that he wanted to report that the Community Center will be closed the Week of July 27 through August 2 for its annual Maintenance Week, with the Community Center scheduled to reopen on Monday, August 3 and that maintenance will include refinishing the gymnasium wood floors, painting, and other maintenance projects completed by Recreation Department staff; and,
- (2) that he wanted to invite everyone to attend a dedication ceremony at Mills Park for Mr. Pleas Proffitt.

Old Business:

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2654, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE GATLINBURG ZONING ORDINANCE, BEING ORDINANCE NO. 830, AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO RECLASSIFY PARCEL 18, TAX MAP 118, LOCATED ON GLADES ROAD IN THE CITY FROM R-1 (LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) DISTRICT TO C-5 (CRAFTS COMMERCIAL DISTRICT), Public Hearing and Second Reading.

Item A under Old Business was Ordinance Number 2654, an Ordinance to amend the Gatlinburg Zoning Ordinance, being Ordinance No. 830, and further being an Ordinance to reclassify Parcel 18, Tax Map 118, located on Glades Road in the City from R-1 (Low Density Residential) District to C-5 (Crafts Commercial District), Public Hearing and Second Reading. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading, which was seconded by Commissioner Chad Reagan. Mayor Werner opened the public hearing and after no comments were made, Mayor Werner closed the public hearing. The Planning Director explained that this proposed rezoning would rezone the parcel from R-1 (Low Density Residential) to C-5 (Crafts Commercial District) to facilitate a Planned Unit Development. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading was unanimously approved.

New Business:

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2655, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTIONS 411, 701, AND 706 OF THE GATLINBURG ZONING ORDINANCE, BEING ORDINANCE NO. 830, AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF QR CODES OR OTHER DIGITAL SCANNABLE TECHNOLOGY IN SIGNAGE, AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO MODIFY THE REGULATION OF TOURIST RESIDENCES, First Reading.

Item A under New Business was Ordinance Number 2655, an Ordinance to amend Sections 411, 701, and 706 of the Gatlinburg Zoning Ordinance, being Ordinance No. 830, and further being an Ordinance to prohibit the use of QR codes or other digital scannable technology in signage, and further being an Ordinance to modify the regulation of tourist residences, First Reading. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Vice Mayor Kirby Smith. The Planning Director explained that this Ordinance is a proposed change to the Sign Regulations of the Gatlinburg Zoning Ordinance and that the proposed amendments establish regulations governing signage for Tourist Residences, including the use of QR Codes. The Planning Director further explained that the proposed amendments were suggested by members of the Gatlinburg Municipal Planning Commission and that staff and the City Attorney worked on these amendments and that the proposed amendments were reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission at its June 18 meeting. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING THE USAGE OF THE AQUARIUM PARKING GARAGE BY THE FRIENDS OF TENNESSEE'S BABIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS ON AUGUST 26, 2026.

Item B under New Business was discussion and consideration of approving the usage of the Aquarium Parking Garage by the Friends of Tennessee's Babies with Special Needs on August 26, 2026. Commissioner Reagan made a motion to approve the request which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The motion to approve the request was unanimously approved.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2656, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTIONS 7-501(2) AND 7-502 OF THE GATLINBURG MUNICIPAL CODE, AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO INCLUDE SPARKLING DEVICES IN THE DEFINITION OF "FIREWORKS" AND TO PROHIBIT THE RETAIL SALE OF FIREWORKS IN THE CITY OF GATLINBURG, First Reading.

Item C under New Business was Ordinance Number 2656, an Ordinance to amend Sections 7-501(2) and 7-502 of the Gatlinburg Municipal Code and further being an Ordinance to include sparkling devices in the definition of "fireworks" and to prohibit the retail sale of fireworks in the City of Gatlinburg, First Reading. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The City Manager explained that currently it is prohibited to use

fireworks in the City and this would prohibit the sale of these and that these proposed amendments were reviewed by the City Attorney. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 1043, A RESOLUTION DECLARING CERTAIN CITY-OWNED RESCUE VEHICLES TO BE SURPLUS PROPERTY AND AUTHORIZING THEIR DISPOSITION BY TRADE-IN TOWARD THE PURCHASE OF A NEW RESCUE VEHICLE.

Item D under New Business was Resolution Number 1043, a Resolution declaring certain City-owned rescue vehicles to be surplus property and authorizing their disposition by trade-in toward the purchase of a new rescue vehicle. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. The Finance Director explained that, rather than selling the vehicles as surplus, staff recommended trading them toward the purchase of a new rescue vehicle because the City had secured a guaranteed trade-in value that exceeded the anticipated sale value. The Fire Chief explained the Fire Department's plan to replace multiple smaller rescue vehicles with one larger, specialized rescue vehicle capable of carrying all rescue equipment while enhancing rescue capabilities throughout the fleet. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Resolution was unanimously approved.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2657, A PROPERTY TAX LEVYING ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2026, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2027, First Reading.

Item E under New Business was Ordinance Number 2657, a Property Tax Levying Ordinance for the City for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, First Reading. Commissioner Reagan made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The Finance Director explained that due to the property reappraisals, the certified property tax rate would decrease the rate from \$0.1257 per \$100 assessed valuation to \$0.0691 per \$100 of assessed valuation, which results in the same amount of revenue. The City Manager stated that this would make Gatlinburg one of the two or three lowest tax rates in the State. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2658, AN ORDINANCE MAKING AND FIXING THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION FOR THE SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE CITY OF GATLINBURG FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2026, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2027, AND CARRYING FORWARD APPROPRIATIONS FOR PRIOR YEAR ENCUMBRANCES, First Reading.

Item F under New Business was Ordinance Number 2658, an Ordinance making and fixing the annual appropriation for the several departments of the City of Gatlinburg for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027, and carrying forward appropriations for prior year encumbrances, First Reading. Commissioner Brackins made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by

Commissioner Reagan. The Finance Director explained that this is the City's annual Budget Ordinance and this is the first of three readings. The Finance Director further stated that he was proud of this year's Budget and the impact it will have on City services. Mayor Werner stated that all of the City staff did a fabulous job with the Budget. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

UNSCHEDULED ITEMS:

Commissioner Jay Horner

- (1) Stated that he wanted to extend condolences to the family of H.L. Oakley, who recently passed away; and,
- (2) Stated that he wanted to compliment all of the City staff on their work throughout the Budget process; and,
- (3) Stated that he was excited about the honor that Mr. Pleas Proffitt was going to receive later this evening.

Commissioner Chad Reagan

- (1) Stated that he appreciated the work of City Staff during the Budget process.

Vice Mayor Kirby Smith

- (1) Stated that the Budget Presentation was a great day for the City.

Mayor Mike Werner

- (1) Stated that he wanted to thank all of the City Staff for their work on the Budget.

There being no further business to come before the City Commission, Commissioner Horner made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Brackins seconded the motion which was unanimously adopted.


Mike Werner, Mayor

Greg Patterson, City Recorder

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