

# **Gatlinburg City Commission**

## **May 20, 2025**

### **Meeting Minutes**

The Gatlinburg Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 5:00 P.M. in the City Council Room. All the members were present with the exception of Vice Mayor McCown. 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 April 22, 2025. Commissioner Jay Horner made a motion to approve the Minutes which was seconded by Commissioner Chad Reagan and then unanimously adopted.

Regarding Reports of Boards and Committees, Gatlinburg Convention and Visitors Bureau First Quarter Report by President/CEO Chad Netherland, Mr. Netherland reported that the first quarter was very busy for the Convention and Visitors Bureau with several key marketing meetings held, along with numerous visits to Gatlinburg.com, Visit Gatlinburg Mobile App downloads, and digital downloads of the 2025 Vacation Guide. Mr. Netherland also reported that the GCVB hosted several influencers in the first quarter and hosted over 25 events at the Convention Center. Also, during the first quarter, Mr. Netherland reported that Gatlinburg received 14 accolades, including being named the Best Small Town in Tennessee by World Atlas. Mr. Netherland reported that the City had over 30,000 visitors to its New Year's Eve celebration on December 31 according to data. During the first quarter, the GCVB also hosted several event themed weeks, including Sweet Week around Valentines Day, Pancake Week in February, and Winefest at Arrowmont in March.

#### **The City Manager reported and/or requested:**

- (1) That he wanted to recognize and thank the City's Public Works Department employees, as the City is observing National Public Works Week; and,
- (2) That he wanted to congratulate the graduating senior class from Gatlinburg-Pittman High School, which graduated last night; and,
- (3) That he wanted to wish good luck to the Gatlinburg-Pittman High School soccer team, which is playing in the TSSAA Class A State Tournament, with an opening matchup with Pigeon Forge in the State Quarterfinals; and,
- (4) That he wanted to thank Vice Mayor Mark McCown for his 16 years of service to the City as a Commissioner and that Vice Mayor McCown's leadership and vision during his 16 years of service on the City Commission have helped make Gatlinburg a better place to live, work, and visit.

#### **Old Business:**

**PUBLIC HEARING ESTABLISHED BY RESOLUTION NUMBER 1026, A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY INTO THE CITY BY OWNER CONSENT AND APPROVING A PLAN OF SERVICES, SAID PROPERTY BEING 51.87 ACRES, TAX MAP 108, PARCELS 77 AND 77.01, LOCATED AT 4412 BIRDS CREEK ROAD (Passed Planning Commission 3/20/2025, Resolution Passed by City Commission 4/22/2025).**

Item A under Old Business was Public Hearing established by Resolution Number 1026, a Resolution calling for a Public Hearing on the proposed annexation of territory into the City by owner consent and approving a Plan of Services, said property being 51.87 acres, Tax Map 108, Parcels 77 and 77.01 located at 4412 Birds Creek Road (Passed Planning Commission 3/20/2025, Resolution passed by City Commission 4/22/2025). Mayor Werner opened the Public Hearing. Mr. Woods Hippensteal addressed the commission regarding that the area has been saturated with development and that this proposed development of 50 acres and over 100 units would have a negative impact on local residents. Ms. Katie Valentine also addressed the commission regarding a possible concern with stormwater runoff from the proposed development and that she was concerned that it would cause a lasting impact. Mr. Jeff Murrell addressed the Commissioners on behalf of the developer and noted that he appreciated the concern by the citizens, which would be addressed through site plan approvals and other approvals and that what has been presented thus far was conceptual. Mr. Murrell also said that the developer would address concerns and comply with all regulations and respectfully asked that the Commission approve the annexation request when it comes to a vote.

**New Business:**

**DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF MAKING APPOINTMENTS TO THE ANNA PORTER PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD.**

Item A under New Business was discussion and consideration of making appointments to the Anna Porter Public Library Board. Commissioner Chad Reagan made a motion to reappoint Lisa Oakley and Susan Helms to the Library Board and to appoint Christine Maltese and Patricia Swenor which was seconded which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The motion to approve the reappointments and appointments was unanimously adopted.

**DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF MAKING AN APPOINTMENT TO THE GATLINBURG AIRPORT AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS.**

Item B under New Business was discussion and consideration of making an appointment to the Gatlinburg Airport Authority Board of Directors. Commissioner Reagan made a motion to reappoint Allen Newton to the Gatlinburg Airport Authority Board of Directors which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The motion to approve the reappointment was unanimously adopted.

**ORDINANCE NUMBER 2634, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE, BEING ORDINANCE NUMBER 830 AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO RECLASSIFY PARCEL 49, GROUP E, OF TAX MAP 126N LOCATED AT 145 W. HOLLY RIDGE ROAD IN THE CITY, FROM R-2 (MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) DISTRICT TO C-2 (GENERAL BUSINESS) DISTRICT, First Reading (Passed Planning Commission 4/24/2025).**

Item C under New Business was Ordinance Number 2634, an Ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance, being Ordinance Number 830 and further being an Ordinance to reclassify Parcel 49, Group E, of Tax Map 126N located at 145 W. Holly Ridge Road in the City, from R-2 (Medium Density Residential) District to C-2 (General Business) District, First Reading (Passed Planning Commission 4/24/2025). Commissioner Kirby Smith made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The Planning Director explained that this a rezoning from R-2 to C-2 at 145 West Holly Ridge road and approved by the Gatlinburg Municipal Planning Commission on April 24. Following these remarks, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

**ORDINANCE NUMBER 2635, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE, BEING ORDINANCE NUMBER 830, AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO RECLASSIFY PARCELS 16, 17, 18, 20 AND 21, GROUP D, OF TAX MAP 126M LOCATED OFF LITTLE FOX ROAD AND LOOP ROAD IN THE CITY, FROM R-1 (LOW DENSITY) DISTRICT TO C-1 (TOURIST COMMERCIAL) DISTRICT, First Reading (Passed Planning Commission 4/24/2025).**

Item D under New Business was Ordinance Number 2635, an Ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance, being Ordinance Number 830, and further being an Ordinance to reclassify parcels 16, 17, 18, 20 and 21, Group D, of Tax Map 126M located off Little Fox Road and Loop Road in the City, from R-1 (Low Density) District to C-1 (Tourist Commercial) District, First Reading (Passed Planning Commission 4/24/2025). Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Commissioner Smith. The Planning Director explained that this is a proposed rezoning for five parcels totaling 4.5 acres on Little Fox Road and the City has received no opposition. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

**Ordinance Number 2636, AN ORDINANCE CLOSING A PORTION OF A PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS AND BEING UNUSED PORTION OF LITTLE FOX ROAD IN HUCKLEBERRY HILLS SUBDIVISION, First Reading (Passed Planning 4/24/2025).**

Item E under New Business was Ordinance Number 2636, an Ordinance closing a portion of a public right-of-way located within the City Limits and being unused portion of Little Fox Road in Huckleberry Hills Subdivision, First Reading (Passed Planning Commission 4/24/2025). Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first

reading which was seconded by Commissioner Smith. The Planning Director explained that this is a request to absorb 500 feet of the current Little Fox Road right-of-way and that there will be an entry point for emergency personnel and maintenance crews and the owner has provided plans for the turnaround to be installed at the proposed end of the roadway, which has been reviewed by the Police and Fire Departments. The Planning Director also explained that the Utilities Department is working with the developer to establish an easement for a portion of a waterline located on the neighboring properties and the Utilities Manager has given approval to proceed with right-of-way abandonment. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

**Ordinance Number 2637, APPROPRIATING AN AMOUNT SUFFICIENT TO COVER THE NECESSARY EXPENSES OF THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS, OFFICES AND BOARDS OF THE CITY PENDING THE FINAL PASSAGE OF THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-26, First Reading.**

Item F under New Business was Ordinance Number 2637, appropriating an amount sufficient to cover the necessary expenses of the various departments, offices and boards of the City pending the final passage of the Annual Appropriation Ordinance for the Fiscal Year 2025-26, 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 this Ordinance, which is used to appropriate funds to pay the necessary expenses of the City during the time between the beginning of the new fiscal year on July 1 and the final passage of the FY25-26 Appropriation Ordinance. This Ordinance is commonly referred to as the Interim Budget Ordinance and is required by the City Charter. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

**ORDINANCE NUMBER 2638, AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2024, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, First Reading.**

Item G under New Business was Ordinance Number 2638, amending the appropriation Ordinance for the Fiscal Year for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, 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 this Ordinance makes additional appropriations where needed to the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget and that this is commonly referred to as the Transfer Ordinance. 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 thank City employees for the job that they do and wanted to recognize them for their hard work; and,
- (2) Stated that he wanted to wish the Gatlinburg-Pittman High School soccer team good luck in the State Tournament.

**Commissioner Kirby Smith**

- (1) Stated that he encouraged everyone to go vote in the Municipal Election if they had not done so already.

**Commissioner Chad Reagan**

- (1) Stated that he wanted to wish good luck to the Gatlinburg-Pittman High School and coach Zach Schrandt; and,
- (2) Stated that he wanted to thank Vice Mayor Mark McCown for his service.

**Mayor Mike Werner**

- (1) Stated that Vice Mayor McCown has been a great Vice Mayor and has done a great job for the City during his 16 years of service.

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



Mike Werner, Mayor



Greg Patterson, City Recorder  
/sb