

Gatlinburg City Commission
July 22, 2025
Meeting Minutes

The Gatlinburg Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at 5:00 P.M. in the City Council Room. All the 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 June 17, 2025. Vice Mayor Kirby Smith made a motion to approve the Minutes which was seconded by Commissioner Jay Horner and then unanimously adopted.

Regarding Petitions and Communications from the Public and Items from the Audience, Mr. Jerry McCarter spoke on several topics including the growth of kudzu in the City since the 2016 Wildfires, the need for uniform architectural aesthetics, and enforcement of storefront and window display regulations and noise ordinances.

The City Manager reported and/or requested:

- (1) That he wanted to thank the City staff who were instrumental in making the City's Independence Day celebrations possible, as well as the Gatlinburg Convention and Visitors Bureau Staff for hosting these events. The City Manager also pointed out that the City Council Room was used as the Emergency Operations Center during the Parade and that the screens around the room were able to show cameras from around the City and information pertinent to the operations of the Police and Fire Departments and that the room will serve as the EOC throughout the construction of the Public Safety Building Addition and then become a backup EPC if needed; and,
- (2) That he wanted to announce that Safe Harbor Child Advocacy Center will host its annual Fun and Safety Back to School Bash at Rocky Top Sports world on Thursday, July 24 and that the Police and Fire Departments would be among the agencies in attendance; and,
- (3) That he wanted to announce that the Gatlinburg Community Center would be closed from July 28 through August 3 for its annual maintenance week at the facility; and,
- (4) That he wanted to announce that the Mountain Hope Good Shepherd Clinic will be holding a Health Fair on August 7 and 8 at its Sevierville Prince Street location; and,
- (5) That he wanted to ask everyone to remember Mayor Werner in their prayers as he prepares to travel to Africa for a Mission Trip later this month and that he hoped that this trip will allow Mayor Werner and the others traveling from First Baptist

Church to reach and touch many lives.

Old Business:

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2639, AN ORDINANCE CLOSING A PORTION OF A PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS AND BEING AN UNUSED PORTION OF TANK HILL ROAD IN THE OWNBY HILLS SUBDIVISION, FIRST READING (PASSED FIRST READING 6/17/2025 AND PLANNING COMMISSION 5/22/2025).

Item A under Old Business was Ordinance Number 2639, an Ordinance closing a portion of a public-of-way located within the City limits and being an unused portion of Tank Hill Road in the Ownby Hills subdivision, First Reading (Passed First Reading 6/17/2025 and Planning Commission 5/22/2025). Commissioner Chad Reagan made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The Planning Director stated that this was 250 square feet of right-of-way to be granted to the estate of the owner of 640 Tank Hill Road, which has a dwelling constructed in the 1980s on the property, which was built partially on the right-of-way. The Planning Director further explained that the right-of-way is fully unused, and this request has been reviewed by the Public Works and Utilities Directors and deemed acceptable. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading was unanimously approved.

New Business:

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION APPROVING THE USAGE OF THE AQUARIUM PARKING GARAGE BY THE FRIENDS OF TENNESSEE'S BABIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS ON AUGUST 27, 2025.

Item A 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 27, 2025. Commissioner Horner made a motion to approve the usage of the Aquarium Parking Garage which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. Mayor Werner commented that this has been an annual request and is a good event. Following these comments, the motion to approve the usage of the Aquarium Parking Garage was unanimously adopted.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 1028, A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GATLINBURG AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PUBLIC ENTITY PARTNERS MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM FOR THE FOLLOWING GRANTS: JUDY HOUSLEY SAFETY PARTNERS GRANT, JAMES L. RICHARDSON DRIVER GRANT, PROPERTY CONSERVATION GRANT AND THE CYBER SECURITY GRANT.

Item B under Resolution Number 1028, a Resolution of the Board of Commission of the City of Gatlinburg authorizing the City to participate in the Public Entity Partners Match Grant Program for the following grants: Judy Housley Safety Partners Grant, James L. Richardson Driver Grant, Property Conservation Grant and the Cyber Security Grant. Commissioner Randy Brackins made a motion to adopt the Resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The City Manager explained that these are 50-50 matching grants and that the City will be submitting for the Judy Hously Safety Partners Grant, which is anticipated that the City will receive \$3,000, the James L. Richardson Driver Grant, which is anticipated that the City will receive \$5,000, the Property Conservation Grant, which is anticipated that the City will receive \$5,000, and the Cyber Security Grant, which is anticipated that the City will receive \$2,00 and in order to participate in the program, this Resolution authorizing the City's involvement will need approval. The Human Resources Director explained that the City has participated in this program for many years. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Resolution was unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING THE MASS TRANSIT TITLE VI PROGRAM AND THE MASS TRANSIT ADA PARATRANSIT PROGRAM.

Item C under New Business was discussion and consideration of approving the Mass Transit Title VI Program and the Mass Transit ADA Paratransit Program. Commissioner Horner made a motion to approve the programs which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The City Manager explained that these programs were updated as part of a recent Tennessee Department of Transportation/Federal Transit Administration compliance review and that both programs have been updated and will need approval by the City Commission. Following these comments, the motion to approve the programs was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE APPROVAL OF FUNDING RELATED TO PROJECTS THAT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ACTION SUCH AS SLOPE FAILURES AND DRAINAGE REPAIRS TO DEAL WITH FLOODING PROBLEMS AND ALLOWING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPROVE THE NECESSARY CONTRACTS OR DOCUMENTS.

Item D under New Business was discussion and consideration of the approval of funding related to Projects that require immediate actions such as slope failures and drainage repairs to deal with flooding problems and allowing the City Manager to approve the necessary contracts and documents. Commissioner Horner made a motion to approve the funding for the slope failures and drainage repairs and allowing the City Manager to approve the contracts or documents which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The City Manager explained that there are several areas needing repairs, including a slope failure on Cherokee Orchard Road that has continued to worsen, along with some drainage issues in the vicinity of Bruce and Walnut Street and that to expedite these

repairs, it is requested that approval be given by City Commission to the City Manager to approve any documentation and contracts that are necessary to handle these issues. Following these comments, the motion to approve the funding for the slope failures and drainage repairs and allowing the City Manager to approve the contracts or documents was unanimously adopted.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2640, AN ORDINANCE MAKING AND FIXING THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION FOR THE SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS OF THE CITY OF GATLINBURG FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2025, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2026, AND CARRY FORWARD APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE PRIOR YEAR ENCUMBRANCES, FIRST READING.

Item E under New Business was Ordinance Number 2640, an Ordinance making and fixing the annual appropriation for the several departments of the City of Gatlinburg for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026, and carry forward appropriations for the prior year encumbrances, First Reading. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. Mayor Werner stated that the Commissioners and Staff had a great workshop on July 17. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

UNSCHEDULED ITEMS:

Commissioner Jay Horner

- (1) Stated that wanted to thank the City's Police Department employees for all they do to keep Gatlinburg's citizens and visitors safe; and,
- (2) Stated that the Gatlinburg Entrance sign on US Highway 321 needed to be cleaned and that everyone needed to work together to keep town clean. The City Manager explained that there are Street Department crews working to pressure wash sidewalks downtown, Sanitation Department crews clean the Big Belly Garbage Receptacles each week, and that crews also patch and grind sidewalks where there are trip hazards.

Commissioner Randy Brackins

- (1) Stated that he wanted to thank all the City Departments for their work to make the Independence Day Celebrations possible and for all the work to handle the recent downtown incidents.

Commissioner Chad Reagan

- (1) Stated that he wanted to wish Mayor Werner safe travels and prayers for his mission trip next week; and,

(2) Stated that he wanted to thank Department Heads, the City Manager, and the Finance Director for their work on the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget.

Vice Mayor Kirby Smith

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

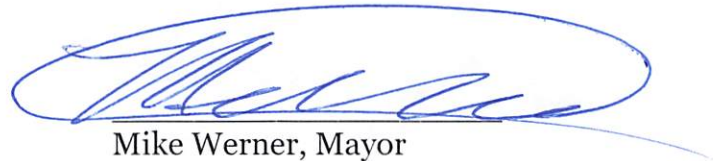
Mayor Mike Werner

(1) Stated that he wanted to thank Mr. Jerry McCarter for his comments earlier in the meeting; and,

(2) Stated that he wanted to thank the City staff for their work on the Budget and that he enjoyed the training exercise that occurred before the Budget presentation; and,

(6) Stated that he appreciated everyone's prayers for the upcoming mission trip.

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



Mike Werner, Mayor



Greg Patterson, City Recorder
/sb