

Gatlinburg City Commission
March 3, 2026
Meeting Minutes

The Gatlinburg Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 6:00 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 February 17, 2026. Vice Mayor Kirby Smith 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 announce that the Smokies BearWise Task Force would host an educational Open House on Wednesday, March 18 at Rocky Top Sports World; and,
- (2) that he wanted also wanted to announce that the G.C.O.P.P. Easter Egg Hunt would be held on Saturday, April 4 at Mynatt Park; and,
- (3) that he wanted to congratulate Charles Sellars who was appointed as the Superintendent of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and that the City looks forward to continuing to work with him; and,
- (4) that he wanted to ask that everyone remember the friends and family of Lester Cooter, a longtime employee of the Parking Department, as he passed away on March 1; and,
- (5) that he wanted to wish the Gatlinburg-Pittman High School girls and boys basketball teams good luck during their postseason tournaments.

Old Business:

New Business:

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING A TROLLEY SERVICE CONTRACT WITH GREENBRIER CAMPGROUND.

Item A under new business was discussion and consideration of approving a Trolley Service Agreement Contract with Greenbriar Campground. Commissioner Randy Brackins made a motion to approve the Contract which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The motion to approve the Contract was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF MAKING APPOINTMENTS TO THE RECREATION BOARD.

Item B under new business was discussion and consideration of making appointments to the Recreation Board. Commissioner Chad Reagan made a motion to reappoint Al Shirley, Lester Flynn, Allen Cox, Buster Flynn and Whit Helton which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The motion to reappoint Al Shirley, Lester Flynn, Allen Cox, Buster Flynn and Whit Helton was unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING THE USE OF THE GATLINBURG COMMUNITY CENTER FOR THE SEVIER COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM FUN AND FITNESS DAY ON MAY 14, 2026.

Item C under new business was discussion and consideration of approving the use of the Gatlinburg Community Center for the Sevier County School System Fun and Fitness Day on May 14, 2026. Commissioner Horner made a motion to approve the use of the Community Center which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. Mayor Werner stated that this program has been in place for 32 years. Following these comments, the motion to approve the use of the Community Center was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTING AN INTERNAL CONTROL POLICY.

Item D under new business was discussion and consideration of adopting an Internal Control Policy. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Internal Control Policy which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The City Manager explained the manual was originally adopted on June 30, 2016, but revisions are required pertaining to purchases that are funded through the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Internal Control Policy was unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING A GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK FOR MUTUAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE.

Item E under new business was discussion and consideration of approving a General Agreement with the Department of the Interior National Park Service, Great Smoky Mountains National Park for the Mutual Law Enforcement Assistance. Commissioner Reagan made a motion to approve the Agreement which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The City Manager explained this is an Agreement between the City and the National Park Service for mutual law enforcement assistance in and near the National Park and that the Agreement has been updated to reflect changes in leadership from both entities and the Agreement will begin on April 1, 2026, and expire on March 31, 2031. Commissioner Reagan asked if this was always a five-year term and the Police Chief said it is. Following these comments, the motion to approve the Agreement was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING A GRANT CONTRACT WITH THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) RELATED TO THE REPAIRS OF LOOP ROAD AND PERRY DRIVE.

Item F under new business was discussion and consideration of approving a Grant Contract with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) related to the repairs of Loop Road and Perry Drive. Commissioner Horner made a motion to approve the Grant Contract which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. The City Manager explained that the Contract is in the amount of \$268,029.77 for costs related to the repair of Loop Road and Perry Drive, which were damaged as part of Hurricane Helene. The City Manager further explained that the Contract requires City funding in the amount of \$14,106.83 (5 percent), State Funding in the amount of \$56,427.31, and Federal Funding in the amount of \$211,602.46 and that the City has funds available to fund the required match. Following these comments, the motion to approve the Grant Contract was unanimously adopted.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2650, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE GATLINBURG ZONING ORDINANCE, BEING ORDINANCE NO. 830, AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO RECLASSIFY PARCEL 20.01, TAX MAP 126L, GROUP B LOCATED AT 217 SYCAMORE LANE IN THE CITY, FROM R-2 (MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) DISTRICT TO C-2 (GENERAL BUSINESS) DISTRICT, First Reading (Passed Planning Commission 2/19/2026).

Item G under new business was Ordinance Number 2650, an Ordinance to amend the Gatlinburg Zoning Ordinance, being Ordinance No. 830, and further being an Ordinance to reclassify Parcel 20.01, Tax Map 126L, Group B located at 217 Sycamore Lane in the City from R-2 (Medium Density Residential) District to C-2 (General Business) District, First Reading (Passed Planning Commission 2/19/2026). Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The Planning Director explained that this was regarding the rezoning of 217 Sycamore Lane from R-2 to C-2 and that this parcel adjoins C-2 and R-2 parcels and has a single-family dwelling on it. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2651, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE GATLINBURG ZONING ORDINANCE, BEING ORDINANCE NO. 830, AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO RECLASSIFY PARCEL 31, TAX MAP 126M, GROUP A LOCATED ON BASKINS CREEK ROAD IN THE CITY, FROM R-1 (LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) DISTRICT TO C-1 (TOURIST COMMERCIAL) DISTRICT, First Reading (Passed Planning Commission 2/19/2026).

Item H under new business was Ordinance Number 2651, an Ordinance to amend the Gatlinburg Zoning Ordinance, being Ordinance No. 830, and further being an Ordinance to reclassify Parcel 31, Tax Map 126M, Group A located on Baskins Creek Road in the City, from R-1 (Low Density Residential) District to C-1 (Tourist Commercial) District, First Reading (Passed Planning Commission 2/19/2026). Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The Planning Director explained that this will rezone the subdivided parcel from R-1 to C-1 and is being rezoned to match the neighboring Anakeesta development and will be absorbed into that existing development. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE GRANT CONTRACT FOR THE FY 2025-26 WITH THE TENNESSEE HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE (THSO) FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Item I under new business was discussion and consideration of approving an amendment to the Grant Contract for the FY 2025-26 with the Tennessee Highway Safety Office (THSO) for the Police Department. Commissioner Reagan made a motion to approve the Amendment to the Grant Contract which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The City Manager explained that this grant is a 100 percent federally funded reimbursement grant paid through the State Department of Safety and Homeland Security and that the original Grant Contract, approved in September 2025, was in the amount of \$29,196.50, but due to Budget adjustments at the State level, the grant funding is being reduced by 20%. The City Manager stated that this reduction in Grant Funding is in the amount of \$5,389.30 and makes the new grant amount \$23,357.20. Following these comments, the Amendment to the Grant Contract was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ENTERING INTO A PROPERTY EXCHANGE AGREEMENT WITH GATLINBURG AIRPORT 108 LLC FOR THE PURPOSE OF SIDEWALK EXPANSION ALONG REAGAN DRIVE.

Item J under new business was discussion and consideration of entering into a Property Exchange Agreement with Gatlinburg Airport 108 LLC for the purpose of sidewalk expansion along Reagan Drive. Commissioner Horner made a motion to enter into the Agreement which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. The City Manager explained that The City has identified the need for sidewalk expansion and public right-of-way improvements to improve pedestrian safety and connectivity, while Gatlinburg Airport 108, LLC, has previously presented a site plan to the Gatlinburg Municipal Planning Commission for a proposed parking garage, which it was determined that Gatlinburg Airport 108, LLC, is in need of additional approximate 2,500 square feet. In exchange for the square footage, the City of Gatlinburg will receive approximately 2,051 square feet along the front of parcels owned by Gatlinburg Airport 108, LLC. Also, as part of the Agreement, Gatlinburg Airport 108, LLC, will be required to bear the full cost of construction for the new sidewalk on these areas, including the front of the Shilling Center, associated retaining walls, and the installation of appropriate lighting, along with the costs for the licensed survey, deed preparation, and title opinions.

UNSCHEDULED ITEMS:

Commissioner Jay Horner

- (1) Stated that he wanted to congratulate the Gatlinburg-Pittman Junior High School girls basketball team on their State Championship; and,
- (2) Stated that he wanted to thank City crews for their work in recent winter storms.

Commissioner Randy Brackins

(1) Stated that he wanted to thank the Street Department and others who had to work in the winter storms in February.

Commissioner Chad Reagan

(1) Stated that he wanted to thank the City crews for their work in winter weather; and,

(2) Stated that he wanted to thank the teachers at the local schools for their work, because the academics at Pi Beta Phi, Gatlinburg-Pittman Junior High, and Gatlinburg-Pittman High School are top notch.

Vice Mayor Kirby Smith

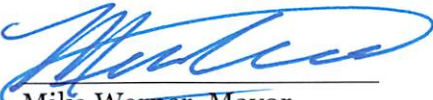
(1) Stated that the Street Department did an excellent job in the February winter storm.

Mayor Mike Werner

(1) Stated that he wanted to wish Commissioner Horner a happy birthday; and,

(2) Stated that the City recently presented a proclamation to the Gatlinburg-Pittman Junior High School girls basketball team for winning the TMSAA State Tournament.

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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