Gatlinburg City Commission
November 18, 2025
Meeting Minutes

The Gatlinburg Board of Commissioners met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, November 18, 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 October 21, 2025. Commissioner Kirby Smith made a motion to approve the Minutes which was seconded by Commissioner Randy Brackins and then unanimously adopted.

Regarding Petitions and Communications from the Public and Items from the Audience, Ms. Connie Miller addressed the City Commission regarding Kudzu. Ms. Miller explained that she had had recent conversations with the Building Department regarding the City's property maintenance ordinance and commended the City for having the Ordinance. Ms. Miller further stated that she wanted to reinforce her comments from addressing the Commission in August, explaining that kudzu was a major problem and that she would welcome any additional action that the City Commission can take to work with citizens to remedy Kudzu. Also, Mr. Mike Hicks addressed the City Commission regarding the Glades Road Greenway. Mr. Hicks updated commissioners on the number of individuals who use the greenway. Mr. Hicks also asked that the City purchase a piece of property to continue the Greenway.

The City Manager reported and/or requested:

(1) That he wanted to congratulate Fire Chief Charlie Cole on being named the EMS Region II Administrator of the Year. This award recognizes exceptional leadership, dedication, and contributions to the field of EMS within 16 East Tennessee counties that comprise Region II; and,

(2) That he wanted to thank the Gatlinburg Convention and Visitors Bureau Staff, City Employees, volunteers, and all the excellent vendors that came together on Thursday, November 6 to make the Gatlinburg Winter Magic Kickoff and Chili Cookoff on the Parkway a great success; and,

(3) That he wanted to announce Gatlinburg City Hall and City Offices will be closed on November 27 and November 28 in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday; and,

(4) That he wanted to announce that the 50th Gatlinburg Fantasy of Lights Christmas Parade will be held on Friday, December 5. The Parade will start at 7:30 p.m. at the Baskins Creek Bypass intersection with East Parkway and proceed through downtown Gatlinburg through Traffic Light No. 10; and,

(5) That he wanted to wish the Gatlinburg-Pittman High School football team good luck on Friday as they have advanced to the TSSAA Class AAA State Quarterfinals against Meigs County after winning their first two games of the postseason against Kingston and Forrest High School; and,

(6) That he wanted to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Old Business:

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2643, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE GATLINBURG ZONING ORDINANCE, BEING ORDINANCE NO. 830, AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO RECLASSIFY PARCEL 76.02 TAX MAP 108 LOCATED AT 795 BUCKHORN ROAD IN THE CITY, FROM R-1 (LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL) DISTRICT TO C-5 (CRAFT COMMERCIAL) DISTRICT, Second Reading and Public Hearing (Passed First Reading 10/21/2025 and Planning Commission 9/30/2025).

Item A under Old Business was Ordinance Number 2643, an Ordinance to amend the Gatlinburg Zoning Ordinance, being Ordinance No. 830, and further being an Ordinance to reclassify Parcel 76.02 Tax Map 108 located at 795 Buckhorn Road in the City, From R-1 (Low Density Residential) District to C-5 (Craft Commercial) District, Second Reading and Public Hearing (Passed First Reading 10/21/2025 and Planning Commission 9/30/2025). Commissioner Jay Horner made a motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. Mayor Werner opened the Public Hearing and after no comments were made the Public Hearing was closed. The motion to adopt the Ordinance on second reading was unanimously approved.

New Business:

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING A RIGHT-OF-WAY USE REQUEST LOCATED AT 806 BEANSTALK FOR A PROPOSED PARKING DECK. (Requested by Mr. Alejandro Sabater).

Item A under New Business was discussion and consideration of approving a Right-of-Way Use Request located at 806 Beanstalk for a proposed parking deck (Requested by Mr. Alejandro Sabater). Commissioner Horner made a motion to approve the request which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. The Planning Director explained that this request is regarding permission to permit the construction of a parking deck and that the proposed plan indicates that the parking for the dwelling will be located upon both private and public property. The Planning Director also explained that the applicant has acknowledged that the use is temporary in nature, may be revoked by the City at any time, and the agreement also serves as a hold harmless to the City. Following these comments, the motion to approve the request was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF ADDING AND INCREASING CERTAIN FEES RELATED TO THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE GATLINBURG PLANNING DEPARTMENT.

Item B under New Business was discussion and consideration of adding and increasing certain fees related to the services provided by the Gatlinburg Planning Department. Commissioner Smiht made a motion to approve the fees which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The Finance Director explained that these changes were discussed and approved by the City Commission at an October 21, 2025, Workshop Meeting and that a schedule of the updated and proposed fees is included in the agenda package. Following these comments, the motion to approve the fees was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING AN OFF-PREMISE CERTIFICATE OF GOOD MORAL CHARACTER FOR DIPEN PATEL, D/B/A SAI KARMAA, LLC located at 1670 EAST PARKWAY.

Item C under New Business was discussion and consideration of approving an Off-Premise Certificate of Good Moral Character for Dipen Patel, D/B/A Sai Karmaa, LLC located at 1670 East Parkway. Commissioner Horner made a motion to approve the Certificate of Good Moral Character which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. The City Manager explained that this application is submitted by Dipen Patel for his business located at 1670 East Parkway. Following these comments, the motion to approve the Certificate of Good Moral Character was unanimously adopted.

Discussion and Consideration of APPROVING A STATE CONTRACT WITH LADD'S FOR THE LEASE-TO-PURCHASE SEVENTY-TWO (72) CLUB CAR GOLF CARTS.

Item D under New Business was discussion and consideration of approving a State Contract with Ladd's for the lease-to-purchase seventy-two (72) Club Car golf carts. Commissioner Horner made a motion to approve the State Contract which was seconded by Commissioner Chad Reagan. The Finance Director explained that this State Contract is for the lease of 72 Club Car Golf Carts and that the term of the lease is for 48 months and the monthly payment under the agreement is $12,259 per month. The Finance Director further explained that as this is a State contract, the City is not required to put this service out for bid and that this contract will include maintenance of the carts, this will allow the City to discontinue the $1,700 per month maintenance contract with another vendor. The Director of Golf explained that the fleet of carts will continue to use the Club Car Connectivity/Visage system for messaging and marketing, which is a sole-source system because it is the only platform compatible with Club Car's proprietary system which controls geofencing, speed limits, and safety functions. Following these comments a motion to approve the State Contract was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF AWARDING A BID RELATED TO THE LOOP ROAD SLOPE REPAIR PROJECT.

Item E under New Business was discussion and consideration of awarding a bid related to the Loop Road Slope Repair Project. Commissioner Horner made a motion to award the Bid to Charles Blalock and Sons which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. The Finance Director explained that the City received four bids and based on a recommendation from Robert Campbell and Associates it is recommended that the low bid from Charles Blalock and Sons in the amount of $100,792.50 be accepted. The Finance Director further explained that this is an unbudgeted project for which the City is requesting reimbursement from FEMA and based on discussions with FEMA, the City is confident that 75 percent or more of this amount will be reimbursed since the bid amount was lower than the previous estimate given to them. Following these comments, the motion to award the Bid to Charles Blalock and Sons was unanimously adopted.

Discussion and Consideration of AWARDING A BID RELATED TO THE CULVERT REPAIRS AT WALNUT ROAD AND HOGPEN BRANCH.

Item F under New Business was discussion and consideration of awarding a bid related to the culvert repairs at Walnut Road and Hogpen Branch. Commissioner Horner made a motion to award the Bid to Charles Blalock and Sons which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. The Finance Director explained that the City received three bids and based on a recommendation from Robert Campbell and Associates it is recommended that the low bid from Charles Blalock and

Sons in the amount of $370,920 be accepted. The Finance Director further explained that there is approximately $300,000 allocated for his project in the Capital Projects Fund and the overage can be covered by available capital funds. The City Manager noted that this is located off of Glades Road behind the Three Jimmy's Restaurant and there have been a lot of issues there with the culvert and drainage of stormwater. The Public Works Director explained that this improvement will triple the amount of stormwater that is able to be drained. Following these comments, the motion to award the Bid to Charles Blalock and Sons was unanimously adopted.

DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF APPROVING THE RENEWAL OF THE LONG-TERM DISABILITY (LTD) INSURANCE PLAN WITH USAble FOR THE PERIOD OF JANUARY 1, 2026, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2026.

Item G under New Business was discussion and consideration of approving the renewal of the Long-Term Disability (LTD) Insurance Plan with USAble for the period of January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026. Commissioner Reagan made a motion to approve the renewal of the Long-Term Disability Insurance Plan which was seconded by Commissioner Horner. The Finance Director explained that this renewal is for the 2026 calendar year in the amount of $49,500, which comes at no increase. Following these comments, the motion to approve the renewal of the Long-Term Disability Insurance Plan was unanimously adopted.

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2644 , AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 15-607 (1) OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE AND FURTHER BEING AN ORDINANCE TO CHANGE THE PARKING RATES FOR USAGE AT THE AQUARIUM AND MCMAHAN/PARKWAY PARKING FACILITIES, First Reading.

Item H under New Business was Ordinance Number 2644, an Ordinance to amend section 15-607 (1) of the Municipal Code and further being an Ordinance to change the parking rates for usage at the Aquarium and McMahan/Parkway Parking Facilities, 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 is an Ordinance to change the parking rates for usage of the Aquarium Parking Garage and the McMahan/Parkway Parking Garage from $10 to $15 per visit. The Finance Director further noted that these changes were discussed by the City Commission at the October 21, 2025. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Ordinance on first reading was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 1032, A RESOLUTION SETTING THE RATES FOR VARIOUS ACTIVITIES AND USES OF THE COMMUNITY CENTER.

Item I under New Business was Resolution Number 1032, a Resolution setting the rates for the various activities and uses of the Community Center. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The Finance Director explained that this is a Resolution to update pricing for the Gatlinburg Community Center and that these changes were discussed and approved by the City Commission in an October 21, 2025, Workshop meeting. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Resolution was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 1033, AN INITIAL BOND RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF NOT TO EXCEED FIVE MILLION TWO HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND AND NO/100 DOLLARS ($5,250,000) GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE CITY RELATED TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING ADDITION PROJECT.

Item J under New Business was Resolution Number 1033, an Initial Bond Resolution authorizing the issuance of not to exceed five million two hundred fifty thousand and no/100 dollars ($5,250,000) general obligation bonds of the city related to the Public Safety Building addition Project. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Brackins. The Finance Director explained that this Resolution will authorize the City to issue up to $5.25 million in debt in the General Fund, which will be used to fund costs associated with the Public Safety Building Addition and this is associated with the final debt issuance for the Project that began construction earlier this year and is scheduled for completion in July 2026. The Finance Director further explained that the Initial Bond Resolution and the Final Bond Resolution, which is Item K on the Agenda, can be done at the same time to begin the process. Mayor Werner commented that this building project is a well-needed addition for the City's emergency services departments. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Resolution was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 1034, A FINAL BOND RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS OF THE CITY IN THE AGGREGATE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF NOT TO EXCEED $5,250,000 RELATED TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING ADDITION PROJECT.

Item K under New Business was Resolution Number 1034, a Final Bond Resolution authorizing the City issuance of general obligation bonds of the city in the aggregate principal amount of not to exceed $5,250,000 related to the Public Safety Building Addition Project. Commissioner Reagan made a motion to adopt the Resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Smith. The Finance Director explained that this Agenda item is related to the previous Agenda item and is the final resolution to allow the City to move forward. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Resolution was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NUMBER 1035, A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE CITY REQUESTING THE MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE TO CODIFY AND REVIEW THE ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GATLINBURG.

Item L under New Business was Resolution Number 1035, a Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the city requesting the Municipal Technical Advisory Service to codify and review the Ordinance of the City of Gatlinburg. Commissioner Horner made a motion to adopt the Resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Reagan. The City Attorney explained that this Resolution will authorize MTAS to begin the revision of the City's Municipal Code and that the last comprehensive code update occurred in the year 2000 and the total cost of the Code update is $4,800. The City Manager stated that each of the City's Departments will be giving input to MTAS through this process. Following these comments, the motion to adopt the Resolution was unanimously approved.

UNSCHEDULED :

Commissioner Jay Horner

(1) Stated that he wanted to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving; and,

(2) Stated that he wanted to invite everyone out to support Gatlinburg-Pittman High School in its quarterfinal round game on Friday night.

Commissioner Randy Brackins

(1) Stated that he too wanted to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and for everyone to come out and support the Highlanders.

Commissioner Chad Reagan

(1) Stated that he wanted to wish Gatlinburg-Pittman High School good luck in its quarterfinal round game; and,

(2) Stated that Police Chief Ronnie Barrett's father recently passed away and to keep his family in everyone's prayers; and,

(3) Stated that he wanted to congratulate Gatlinburg-Pittman High School athletic director Zach Schrandt on being named TSSAA Coach of the Year; and,

(4) Stated that he was glad to meet the City's new Fire Chief, David Gray.

Vice Mayor Kirby Smith

(1) Stated that he wanted to thank all of the City employees which have a hand in putting up and assembling the Winterfest light displays; and,

(2) Stated that he wanted to wish Gatlinburg-Pittman High School good luck in the playoffs.

Mayor Mike Werner

(1) Stated that he wanted to echo all of his fellow Commissioners remarks, including a Happy Thanksgiving and congratulating Mr. Schrandt on his TSSAA Award.

(2) Stated that he wanted to invite everyone to come out and watch the Highlanders on Friday night and support them in their playoff run.

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
/sb