**TOWN OF GORDONSVILLE TOWN COUNCIL**
**REGULAR MEETING**
**MINUTES**

Monday, January 26, 2026
(*Postponed to January 28, 2026*)
Wednesday, January 28, 2026
6:30 p.m.
Council Chambers

**CALL TO ORDER** - Mayor Ronald Brooks

Mayor Brooks called the meeting to order.

**INVOCATION**

Vice-Mayor gave the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Brooks led the pledge of allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**: Mayor Ronald E. Brooks III
Vice-Mayor Emily Winkey
Councilmember Cynthia Black
Councilmember Stevean Irving II
Councilmember Nicholas Paxton

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Mayor Brooks stated four additional items will need to be added to the agenda.

Mayor Brooks added under New Business the adoption of declaration of emergency, consideration of all not constructed pathways in the park for fundraising campaign, resolution of VA250 and resolution to commend all Town staff during the local emergency.

Vice-Mayor Winkey made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Paxton, to adopt the agenda as amended.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |
| | Mayor Brooks | Aye |
| | The vote was unanimous. | |

**MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC**

*Presentation by Town to Trail*

Ms. Sunni Capelle, presenting Town to Trail presented to Council a check in the amount of $19,950.00 for donations and grant from Dominion Power. Ms. Capelle stated this brings the total of donations for 2025 to $125,000.

*Andrew Evans, 307 Lucketts Alley, Gordonsville, VA*

Mr. Evans stated he had heard the TOOT bus funding was going to be cut and himself and others depend on the TOOT bus for transportation.

Mr. Schienschang, Town Manager, stated the TOOT bus funding is not being cut from the Town budget and has no plans to do so. Mr. Schienschang stated public transportation is very important.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS** – Mayor Brooks

Gordonsville Town Council will hold a work session on Monday, February 2, 2026, starting at 6:00 p.m.

Gordonsville Town Offices will be closed on Monday, February 16, 2026, in observance of President's Day.

The February Town Council meeting will be held on Monday, February 23, 2026.

**CONSENT AGENDA** – Mayor Brooks

*Consideration of minutes for December 15, 2025, regular meeting and January 5, 2026 Council work session.*
*Presentation of bills paid for the month of December 2025.*

Vice-Mayor Winkey made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Paxton, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The vote was unanimous.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Mr. Schienschang stated the Gordonsville Municipal Airport was closed till Friday, January 30th.

Mr. Schienschang stated the Gordonsville Public Works crew are working 12-hour shifts to get the streets cleared and Town back to normal.

Mr. Schienschang briefed Council on the Gordonsville Visitor Center activities.

Mr. Schienschang briefed Council on the pool ditch stating he is waiting on plans from VDOT.

Mr. Schienschang stated that Andrew Valdez will back in the office on Monday, February 2, 2026, and will be working with the Jefferson Swim League to start planning for the 2026 Gordonsville swim team.

Mr. Schienschang stated Sara Horton, Town Treasurer, is working on W-2's and will be mailing them out by the end of the week. Mr. Schienschang stated Mrs. Horton is also working on pre-audit information requested by auditors.

Chief Christopher Votaw is going into his second month, and he has hired a new public safety officer.

Chief Votaw stated officer training continues within his department with Sgt. Schienzinger and Officer Rock completing First Line Certification training.

Chief Votaw stated the police department is starting to use the fuel at the public works building.

Chief Votaw stated he has applied for a grant in the amount $7,500.00 and should know by June if the grant will be awarded.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Consideration of establishing a Department of Public Safety.*

Mayor Brooks presented it for consideration establishing a Department of Public Safety.

Mayor Brooks stated the Gordonsville Police Chief Christopher Votaw presented a proposal to the Gordonsville Town Council at their work session on Monday, January 5, 2026, recommending the Town of Gordonsville Police Department transition to a Department of Public Safety. Chief Votaw stated in his proposal the purpose of this initiative is to address a documented gap between law enforcement response and emergency medical service response, improve outcomes during the most critical minutes of medical emergencies, and strengthen coordination with regional public safety partners. Establishing a Department of Public Safety positions the Town of Gordonsville to respond more effectively to medical emergencies, improve coordination during complex incidents, and enhance overall community safety while maintaining fiscal discipline. This proposal provides a practical, life-saving enhancement to public safety services without duplicating existing systems or expanding municipal risk.

Mr. Schienschang stated this latest snow/ice event is perfect example of why these needs to be done.

Councilmember Irving made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Paxton, to authorize Town of Gordonsville Police Chief Christopher Votaw to proceed with the transition of the Gordonsville Police Department to a Department of Public Safety as the proposal submitted.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |
| | Mayor Brooks | Aye |
| | The vote was unanimous. | |

*Consideration of location for 2026 festivals.*

Mayor Brooks presented for consideration of location for 2026 festivals.

Vice-Mayor Winkey stated she would like the 2026 chicken festival be held in the Gordonsville Town Hall parking lot and apply to VDOT for a permit to close Main Street.

Councilmember Irving stated we need to do whatever is necessary to close Main Street especially for the safety of those attending the festival.

Mr. Shienschang stated staff will be submitting four (4) applications (Gordonsville in Bloom, chicken festival, veteran's parade and Memorial tree lighting) to VDOT for Main Street closures.

Councilmember Irving asked if any VDOT personnel have come to Town to look at the street.

Mr. Schienschang stated to his knowledge VDOT has not looked at the street in relation to the Town applying for street closure permits.

Vice-Mayor Winkey made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Paxton, to hold the 2026 Gordonsville Chicken Festival in the Gordonsville Town Hall parking lot and make application to the VDOT to close Main Street for the Gordonsville in Bloom event, chicken festival, veteran's parade and memorial tree lighting. The vote was unanimous.

*Declaration of a Local Emergency due to severe winter weather*.

Mayor Brooks presented for consideration declaration of a local emergency due to severe winter weather.

Mayor Brooks stated with the severe winter storm forecast with significant snow, along with sleet, ice, freezing rain, and temperatures below freezing for several days it had the potential to seriously impact the Town and its citizens and has the potential to cause damage, loss, hardship or suffering to the citizens of Gordonsville.

Mr. Schienschang stated at the February 23rd Town Council meeting Council will need to rescind the Declaration of a Local Emergency Due to Severe Winter Weather.

Councilmember Paxton made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Irving, to confirm the local emergency declaration made by Mayor Brooks on January 24, 2026, and to continue this declaration until necessary emergency actions have been taken.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |
| | Mayor Brooks | Aye |
| | The vote was unanimous. | |

*Consideration of designation of park pathways*.

Mayor Brooks presented for consideration of designation of park pathways.

Ms. Capelle, Town to Trail, stated for the 2026 campaign it would be helpful to have specific areas designated for fundraising at the park. Mrs. Capelle stated Town to Trail is asking for designation of all pathways that have not already been constructed as an area reserved for Town to Trail fund raising efforts and building a campaign around this effort.

Councilmember Black made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Irving, to designate all pathways not yet constructed in the Gordonsville Community Park as reserved for Town to Trail's "Pathways in the Park" fundraising campaign.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |
| | Mayor Brooks | Aye |
| | The vote was unanimous. | |

*Consideration of resolution in support of the Virginia America 250 Commission Recitals*.

Mayor Brooks presented for consideration of resolution in support of the Virginia American 250 Commission Recitals.

Mayor Brooks stated VA250 serves to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, the Revolutionary War, and the Independence of the United States in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Local localities have been invited to form committees to showcase their own revolutionary history and events.

Mr. Schienschang stated VA250 provides funding opportunities which would benefit the Town.

Mayor Brooks made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Irving, to adopt the resolution in support of the Virginia America 250 Commission Recitals.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |
| | Mayor Brooks | Aye |
| | The vote was unanimous. | |

*Consideration of resolution to commend Gordonsville Town Staff during the local emergency*.

Mayor Brooks presented for consideration a resolution to commend Gordonsville Town staff during the local emergency.

Mayor Brooks stated he would like a resolution to be created for Town staff who had apart in the local emergency.

Councilmember Irving stated he was proud to have the Gordonsville Police Department be a part of the community again.

Mayor Brooks made a motion, seconded by Vice-Mayor Winkey, to adopt the resolution to commend all Town of Gordonsville staff for their efforts during the local emergency.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |
| | Mayor Brooks | Aye |
| | The vote was unanimous. | |

## TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Schienschang briefed Council on the status of the pool and stated the pre-construction meeting was held and groundbreaking will be sometime in February.

Mr. Schienschang stated budget work is ongoing with capital projects due by January 31st.

Mr. Schienschang stated the Gordonsville Personnel Policy will be reviewed due to it being a new year.

Mr. Schienschang stated the employee of the month is Sgt. Steven Schirtzinger who had gone beyond to help the citizens of Gordonsville during the recent severe weather.

## NEW MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC AND COUNCIL

Councilmember Irving stated a message was sent out from the school stated curb side pickup of food will be available from 1 pm – 3 pm at Orange County High School and Locust Grove Middle School on Thursday, January 29th.

Councilmember Irving stated he would like a broadband committee be formed to discuss other options for internet service for the Town.

Mayor Brooks stated it is a great idea and have a Councilmember to lead the committee.

Councilmember Irving stated a second provider is needed for the Town and the Town needs to seek grants to help with costs.

Mayor Brooks stated the forming of the committee be posted on the website asking for members and have Council review the applicants and form the committee at the next Council meeting.

Mayor Brooks stated applications need to be sent out for Council review and make the recommendation to the Orange County Board of Supervisors for appointment to the Orange County Economic Development Authority.

Mr. Schienschang stated he strongly encourages someone who has economic knowledge be the recommendation to the Board.

Councilmember Irving stated the junior honor society would like to host a supper for Town employees who have worked so hard during severe weather. The supper would be held at the Town Hall with a date to be determined.

Vice-Mayor Winkey stated the African American Family Exhibit will be on display the month of February and the Gordonsville Lady waiters are included.

## CLOSED SESSION

*Town Council will convene in Closed Session pursuant to Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711 paragraphs (A1) – discussion, consideration of specific officers or employees of a public body and (A7) consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body.*

Councilmember Paxton made a motion, seconded by Vice-Mayor Winkey, that the Town Council convene into closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 paragraphs (A1) – discussion, consideration of specific officers or employees of a public body and (A7) consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |
| | Mayor Brooks | Aye |
| | The vote was unanimous. | |

Councilmember Paxton made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Irving, to certify that only matters lawfully exempted under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 paragraphs (A1) and (A7) as identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened, were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |
| | Mayor Brooks | Aye |
| | The vote was unanimous. | |

Councilmember Paxton made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Irving, to certify that only matters lawfully exempted under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 paragraphs (A1) and (A7) as identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened, were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |
| | Mayor Brooks | Aye |
| | The vote was unanimous. | |

**NEW MATTERS BY COUNCIL**

Councilmember Paxton made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Black, to adopt a resolution to terminate the sewer agreement between the Town of Gordonsville and Rapidan Service Authority (RSA), giving a 60-day notice, to be terminated March 30, 2026.

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| **Roll call vote**: | Councilmember Black | Aye |
| | Councilmember Irving | Aye |
| | Councilmember Paxton | Aye |
| | Vice-Mayor Winkey | Aye |

Mayor Brooks Aye
The vote was unanimous.

**ADJOURNEMENT**

There being no further business to come before Council, Vice-Mayor Winkey adjourned the meeting at 9:28 p.m.

Ronald E. Brooks III, Mayor

Janet W. Jones, Town Clerk