BOLIVAR TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 7, 2026 at 6:30pm

CHRIS HIGDON, MAYOR

P. JEAN REED, RECORDER
CAROLYN BEYER
VICTORIA GALE
DAN JIMENO
SARAH SHAFER
CHARLMA SPENCE
LAURA WHITTINGTON, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Pledge of Allegiance
Mayor Higdon asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Call to Order
Mayor Higdon called the April 7, 2026 regular meeting of the Bolivar Town Council to order at 6:30pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Treasurers Report
Mayor Higdon asked Laura to give the Treasurers report.
Laura gave this report for the month of March, 2026. The total income was $518,185 and total expenses are $492,176, leaving a net income of $26,010. Laura explained the remaining pages of the financial report which is an individual breakdown of each transaction completed for this month. Mayor Higdon asked Laura about Line item 345 (Rents and Concessions and he asked if it was booked for the year. Laura replied yes almost booked for the whole year.
Councilperson Victoria Gale moved to approve the Treasurers report as presented by Laura. Councilperson Sarah Shafer seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Budget Resolution
Laura said we have a Budget Revision for tonight because line item 751 Street Lights and line item 440 City Hall were running pretty close. And we had Street Sweeping activities take place and we had a $22,060 invoice come in for that as well. We had to increase our revenues by $12,900.

We increased line item 345	Rents/Royalities and Concessions by	$1,700
We increased line item 380	Interest earned on Investments by	$ 500
We increased line item 397	Video Lottery by	$10,700
		$12,900 Total

We increased line item 440	City Hall by	$14,905
We decreased line item 750	Streets and Highways by $660	

We increased line item 751	Street Lights by		$ 1,900
We increased by line item 752	Signs and Signals	$540	
We increased line item 753	Snow Removal by		$3,295
We decreased line item 903	Fair Associations/Festivals by	$5,000p	
We decreased line item 953	Social Services by	$1,000	

Mayor Higdon read the Resolution
At a regular session of the Municipal cancel, held (Month, day and year) April 7, 2026 the following order was made and entered: SUBJECT: The revision of the Levy Estimate (Budget) of the (town or city of) Bolivar . The following resolution was offered:

Mayor Higdon explained the process for the budget revision. We need to approve money from one account to another before we pay invoices. Most of the time this occurs because we did not budget enough money or the invoice went over the amount we budgeted. We must complete the budget revision before expenditures are made.

RESOLVED: That subject to approval of the State Auditor as ex officio chief inspector of public offices the municipal council does hereby direct the budget be revised PRIOR TO THE EXPENDITURE OR OBLIGATION PF FIMDS FPR WHICH NO APPROPRIATION OR INSUFFICIENT APPROPRIATION CURRENTLY EXISTS, as shown on budget revision number 5-General Fund (2025-2026) , a copy of which is entered as part of this record.

The adoption of the forgoing resolution having been moved by Councilperson Sarah Shafer and duly seconded by Councilperson Carolyn Beyer the vote thereon was as follows:

Carolyn Beyer	**Yes**	
Dan Jimeno	**Yes**	
Sarah Shafer	**Yes**	
Charlma Quarles	**Yes**	
Victoria Gale	**Yes**	
P. Jean Reed	**Yes**	**Motion Passed 6 – 0.**

WHEREFORE, Christopher Higdon, declared said resolution duly adopted, and it is therefore ADJUDGED and ORDERED that said resolution be, and the same is, therefore adopted as so stated above, and the Mayor, Chris Higdon is authorized to fix his signature on the attached "Request for revision to Approved Budget" to be sent to the State Auditor for approval.
Mayor Higdon thanked Laura for all her hard work especially during the winter challenges. Laura also reported the 2026-2027 budget was sent to the State and was approved. Mayor Higdon thanked Laura and everyone for attending the budget meeting and helping with the new budget. Laura sent it into the State and it was approved.

Town Attorney, Effie Kallas

- Ethics Training will take place April 30 from noon until 1:00pm. Please Email kimberly.b.weber@wv.gov for an invite.

- Your WV news letter is in your packet.
- Attorney Kallas will go over some of the new laws and rulings that was recently passed by the legislature one of which will be our elections
- Attorney Kallas said one bill that did pass is # H4418 Tax Efficiency Act of 2026.
- Another bill is S659 Accessory Dwelling Act
- 4801 A different way to spend Hotel Motel Tax
- 5437 Vape and smoke regulations
- 5622 Our Municipal Elections, ordinance change

Sheriff's Department Report and Public Comment

Corp. Hockman was absent from this meeting. We had a total of 117 incidents for March. The following is the breakdown of incidents: 51 Road Patrols, 35 Directed Patrols, 4 Building checks, 3 Foot Patrols, 2 911 Hang Up, 2 Alarm ATM, 2 Fraud, 2 MVA No Injury, 2 Public Service, 2 Welfare Check, 1 Alarm, 1 Animal Complaint, 1 Civil Matter, 1 Disturbance, 1 Domestic Phys Ip.

Mayor Higdon said most of you know we had a significant fire here in Bolivar last week. Corp. Hockman was first class. He was my right and left foot and my right and left hand that day. He did a lot of things that day that would have gotten missed otherwise. I commend him for his service. He was absolutely fantastic.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Report-Superintendent Gossett

We are on hold for the demolition of the gas station and another property due to funding not available at this time. Superintendent Gossett thanked Mayor Higdon and Councilperson Sarah Shafer for attending and participating in the parking summit. We are looking forward to working with you again. Superintendent Gossett also thanked everyone that helped and worked together with the fire. The NPS is also a mutual aide partner.
Councilperson Victoria Gale asked Superintendent Gossett why the local fire company was not using the old gas station as a practice fire demolition project. Superintendent Gossett said it is not a federal requirement.
Mayor Higdon thanked Superintendent Gossett for her report.

Minutes:

Approve Meeting Minutes-March 3, 2026

Councilperson Victoria Gale moved to approve the Regular Meeting minutes for March 3, 2026 as corrected with corrections noted. Councilperson Sarah Shafer seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Approve Special Meeting Minutes for March 18, 2026.

Councilperson Victoria Gale moved to approve the Special Meeting Minutes for March 18, 2026 as presented. Councilperson Sarah Shafer seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Attendee Concerns

Mayor's Report

Mayor Higdon thanked Charlma Spence for serving on our Bolivar Town Council and what she bought to this Council. You will be missed.
Mayor Higdon said we purchased four pet receptacles and placed them around town at four different locations.

The Bolivar –Harpers Ferry Library has some cool events coming up. Please check them out. Thanks for the fire personnel and contributions. I saw and witnessed mutual aide working for the good of our neighbors and community. Our community center was turned into a shelter as there were several families displaced during this time. Others helped with transportation. Mayor Higdon said our Fire Company, Police and staff wore many hats on this day. The entire staff responded as needed. Our Community came together and I am proud of the care and love from everyone.

Committee Reports

Street Committee
Nothing to report for tonight

Bolivar Planning Commission
The next meeting will be 4/27/26 at 7:00pm

Park and Recreation Committee
Later on the agenda

Canal Town Partnership
Councilperson Charlma Spence said at one time the representative for Bolivar, but was a resident of Harpers Ferry. I would be willing to continue on the Council.
Councilperson Charlma Spence said they discussed a draft letter to CSX concerning the lack of response to their issues. We are not able to access Federal Funds for many projects for pending for the Canal Town Partnership.
Mayor Higdon thanked Councilperson Spence for her service and her report. He also offered the services of the Council, if needed.

History Committee
Jeffry Staats reported they had a very productive meeting. We are still working on our Bolivar Brochures. The next meeting is scheduled for April 28, 2026 at 7:00p.m.

Water Commission Report
Mayor Higdon congratulated Steve Paradis and said he saw his pictures all over social media today. Mr Paradis said Senator Capito was in Harpers Ferry to go over the water projects. Senator Capito has been instrumental in securing financial assistance for most of these projects. Mr. Paradis reported the new meters arrived and they are working on a schedule to start the installation. In dealing with the fire, we could only shut off individual's water we could not turn off the whole complex. Mr. Paradis thanked Jacob Lambert for the great job he did for the water company. Mayor Higdon also had high praises for him.

Board of Zoning Appeals
No Report

Special Events Committee
No Report

Building Inspector Report
No Report

Old Business

1. Discuss/Approve opioid settlement funds and reporting status

Councilperson Carolyn Beyer reported they will be meeting with the person from United Way to discuss our wants and needs for usage of the Opioid money. I will keep you updated. I will have a final report in May.

2. Discuss/Approve proposal for Bolivar Children's Park-items from inspection report

Councilperson Victoria Gale thanked Councilperson Dan Jimeno for his help in solving this problem.Councilperson Dan Jimeno thanked Vickie and Eric Eastman for all their hard work. He said they did all the paper work, contacts, phone calls, emails, meetings and everything leading up to tonight. They did all the hard work and we thank you. Dan said the meeting with Younker fell through, but was rescheduled for that evening. Dan said the safety report checks all the boxes (nothing more nothing less).

Vickie said she was is so thankful for Dan and are so grateful for his knowledge.

Councilperson Sarah Shafer said we will be in compliance.

Councilperson Dan said priority one and two will be fixed. The swings are discounted and will not be charged freight. The swings are on sale. Dan also said the Rock Wall was excluded from the quote. Councilperson Sarah Shafer asked Dan to give an explanation about the borders. Dan explained the following: We need the 12 inch border to hold the mulch around the swing area to be in compliance.

Mayor Higdon said we need this proposal in a format that we can understand and be in financial compliance as well as safety measures.

Mayor suggested we table this decision until the Special Meeting to be held on Tuesday, April 21, 2026 at 6:30.

Mayor Higdon thanked everyone again for their help.

3. Discuss/Approve funding for Flip-Flop Festival

Councilperson Charlma Spence said she has more information as to who the check would be made out to for the Flip Flop Festival. Charlma said it would be made out to Chris Craig. He is planning to come before the Council and request up to $600 for this community event. No money will be needed until after the event (April 24 & 25) and we have receipts to provide to you at that time.

Councilperson Charlma Spence moved to approve up to $600 toward the Flip Flop Festival if the organization can conform to our guidelines listed on our web site. Councilperson Victoria Gale seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 – 0. Mayor Higdon thanked Councilperson Charlma Spence for her report.

New Business

1. Presentation from Adam Lowe regarding HF Marathon event

Mr. Adam Lowe was introduced by Mayor Higdon. Mr. Lowe said he was taking over this position from Dr. Cucuzzella. The Half Marathon race will be the same as the last 15 years. As of today we have 218 registered. This event will be held on May 16, 2026 starting at 8:00am. We will have signs indicating an event is ahead. A Porta Pot will be located at the corner of Polk and Washington Street near Harpers Ferry Middle. Laura will contact Bolivar Police. Mayor Higdon will contact EMS.

Mayor Higdon thanked Mr. Lowe for his presentation and wished him good luck.

2. Presentation from Ryan Nehar regarding Lantern Festival Event for 2026

Mr. Ryan Nehar gave an update on the upcoming Lantern Festival events. Mr. Nehar said he is expecting maybe 120 people participating in the festival this year. This event means a lot to him and the community. He said he has also asked Harpers Ferry about participating with this event. Mr. Hehar said he is still looking for participating sponsors.

Councilperson Victoria Gale asked why we don't ask or bring in local artists to help with this event. We were told two years ago we would train people how to make the lanterns and then the next year we would not have to pay people from Baltimore, MD to teach the class again.

Councilperson Charlma Spence said not everyone can do this art program.

Councilperson Gale said you should go talk to the Library Board. For two years we have paid a lot of money for this class to be taught. This will be the third year.

Mayor Higdon suggested Mr. Nehar work on joint funding with Mayor Higdon's approval and with Annette Gavin's help as well as others. Councilperson Dan Jimeno could help with shared responsibilities and advice on group expenses.

Councilperson Sarah Shafer suggested that Mr. Nehar be placed on the May agenda for discussion and approval. Ryan stated that he contacted Laura and he will be on the May agenda. Mayor Higdon thanked Mr. Nehar for his report.

4. Discuss/Approve Dark Sky Proclamation to Declare International Dark Sky for week of April 13-20th.

Roberta N. Meade-Curry, Dark Sky Advocate s
poke about the Dark Sky Proclamation and asked for our support in protecting dark skies by declaring "Bolivar, West Virginia's International Dark Sky Week 2026," to be April 13-20, 2026. They are asking for our help and support to make aware and educate Bolivar Residents about Dark Sky.

After a few questions, Mayor Higdon asked for a motion to approve.

Councilperson Carolyn Beyer moved we adopt the Proclamation for International Dark Sky Week of April 13-20, 2026 with the understanding this is for educational purposes only. Councilperson Victoria Gale seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 – 0.

Mayor Higdon asked Roberta for continued help getting educational information sent to us.
Mayor Higdon thanked Roberta for waiting so long to present this Proclamation.

3. Update/Approve recent increase for Bolivar website

Mayor Higdon asked Laura to explain this agenda item.
Laura said this will be an increase from the original invoice. As you know we have to pay a maintenance fee for our web-site every year. The additional increase is for the cost of the emails we recently added. The original invoice was $1820. The added amoun t for emails is $1386 for a total of $3206. This is just so you will know when the invoice comes through.

Charlma Spence said she did not want to leave without saying how great it has been to be a part of such a collaborative and community focused and forward thinking organization. I am so proud of this town. Bolivar will always be in my heart. This Council is top notch!
Mayor Higdon thanked Charlma for her service to Bolivar.

NOTE:

Mayor Higdon said he needed three more minutes of our time.
He said during the fire everybody was reaching out and wanting to do something, like wanting to donate and help in some way. Community outpouring was great as we collected gift cards, furniture, clothes and other items. Laura said it was an honor to witness this community coming together. The furniture items will be distributed when these folks return to their homes. Thanks to Laura for all the help and organization here at Town Hall. The gift cards were evenly distributed to five families.

Adjournment

Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilperson Victoria Gale seconded the motion. Motion passed 6 - 0. Meeting adjourned at 9:40pm

P. Jean Reed
P. Jean Reed, Recorder

Chris Higdon, Mayor

Next Meeting will be Tuesday, May 5, 2026