BOLIVAR TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, October 14, 2025 at 6:30pm

CHRIS HIGDON, MAYOR

P. JEAN REED, RECORDER
CAROLYN BEYER-Absent
VICTORIA GALE
DAN JIMENO
CHARLMA QUARLES
SARAH SHAFER
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 October 14, 2025 regular meeting of the Bolivar Town Council to order at 6:30pm and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Councilperson Carolyn Beyer was not present for this meeting.

Treasurers Report
Mayor Higdon asked Laura to give the Treasurers report in place of Eric Lewis. Laura reported our total income for the month was $173,764 and the total expenses of $111,884 which makes your net income $61,879. Laura explained the remaining pages of the financial report which is an individual breakdown of each transaction completed for this month. We are pretty much on target according to the budget.
Councilperson Victoria Gale moved to approve the Treasurers Report as presented by Laura Whittington. Councilperson Sarah Shafer seconded the motion. Motion Passed 5 – 0.

Town Attorney, Effie Kallas
Attorney Kallas said she was glad to be back with everyone due to her absence. She started with the Wine and Liquor Sales Tax remittance and said we were right on target with $9,338.56 compared with other quarterly reports. Mayor Higdon asked Attorney Kallas about sales tax on commerce delivery trucks such as Amazon, UPS, Wal-Mart and others. Are we collecting sales tax on these companies? After a couple questions concerning this matter, Attorney Kallas asked for this to be placed on one of our agendas so we could talk about this in depth. Attorney Kallas will try to find some answers to our questions. Attorney Kallas said the next Ethics training will be held on Thursday, October 30 at 12:00 noon until 1:00pm. Please email kimberly.b.weber@wv.gov for an invite. Attorney Kallas would like to reschedule our Ethics training again. Mayor Higdon asked Laura to survey everyone for some dates and get back in touch with Attorney Kallas. Attorney Kallas said she spoke with Councilperson Carolyn Beyer and in doing so she learned the West Virginia First Foundation in collaboration with WV Attorney General is supposed to create and provide guidance to local Governments and Municipalities on how to responsibly and transparently use their Opioid settlement funds. As of today, the guidance information is still not available. Attorney Kallas spoke about the four bills passed in legislative Session this year.

1. Changes to the local municipal elections. This may cause the transferring of funds because we will need to pay the County Clerk. The Secretary of State is working on this information.

2. Home base business which the Legislature may change to license requirements and zoning for certain businesses.

3. Attorney Kallas said she attended the Municipal League Conference and one thing they stressed was town hall safety protocols for staff. We are blessed to have Corporal Hoffman here but, they are really stressing safety. Councilperson Victoria Gale said she would be willing to go through safety protocol trainings if available. Councilperson Dan Jimeno said he has some online training's we could also use. This is just low hanging fruit. Mayor Higdon said this is very important. Councilperson Sarah Shafer suggested we could do some walk-through drills also. Mayor Higdon said we could check into this.

Attorney Kallas said she would like to go through the Intergovernmental Agreements between The Jefferson County Commission and the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department for the Corporation of Bolivar for Tax Collection Services and also the Intergovernmental Agreement for Public Safety Services for Bolivar. (Laura will send a copy of both of these agreements for last year for us to read over and make changes for the coming year. Please bring any questions or concerns you may have to the November 4, 2025 meeting.
Mayor Higdon thanked Attorney Kallas for her report.

Sheriff's Department Report and Public Comment
Corp. Hockman was not present for this meeting. Mayor Higdon asked everyone to look over the report for any concerns. Recorder Reed expressed concern for the increased number of calls (25) for Harpers Ferry PD coming to Bolivar. Mayor Higdon also said he would talk to Corp. Hockman for clarity. Councilperson Sarah Shafer said she did not see anything out of the ordinary on this report.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Report-Superintendent Gossett
Superintendent Gossett was not present for this meeting due to the Government shut down. Mayor Higdon said the only thing he had to report was with the government shut down, the Wonderful State of West Virginia will provide Grant money to HF National Park to stay open thru October 31, 2025. That means the parking lot will be open, buses will run, bathrooms will be open, book store will be open, shops are open and there will be minimal police on the streets. The Park Superintendent Gossett told Chris that there was discussion of an executive order to remove slavery symbols from the park, but no action has been taken yet.
Councilperson Charlma Quarles asked who and what action are they waiting for.
Mayor Higdon said the White House.

Minutes:
Approve Meeting Minutes-September 2, 2025
Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to approve the minutes for September 2, 2025 with one correction. Councilperson Victoria Gale seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0.

Introduction of Raymond Goodrich-BCT & Jefferson County Development Authority Rep
Reschedule for another time
Attendee Concerns
None

Mayor's Report

- Mayor Higdon reported he and Laura had a really fun meeting at C. W. Shipley Elementary. We talked to them about our Business Partners program. It was fun to sit on those little tiny chairs. We got to meet the Student Council. It was nice to know they

have leadership roles in Elementary School. They attended the meeting and gave us a small little presentation. We committed to them that if they ever needed anything from us, we would do anything to help. It was a really great meeting. They have invited us to their Fall Festival on Friday, October 24 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.

- We had a meeting with the County regarding an MOU with the Building Inspector. The Lawyer has it under review. When complete, they will give that to us for review. I don't know what it will say except they can provide someone from the County to come in and look at different projects we choose for them to look at. I am a little disappointed it has taken so long but, I will keep you informed.
- I had a visit from Mike Lowrey, our neighbor next to the park, concerning paving a paper street. Mr. Lowrey would like to pave his parking spaces for his home, his rental and ceramics business. This is a paper Street adjoining Mr. Lowreys property and he would like to pave that. Mayor Higdon does not want a decision tonight but just wanted us to be aware of this. This is on the agenda scheduled for later this evening.
- I would still like to see us offer tables in the park for parents to set up for Trunk or Treat. This has not been advertised but I think we should offer for anyone that would like to participate.
- We talked to Region 9 and they will allow us to plant trees that are sidewalk friendly. Region 9 will take a look at this for us. Councilperson Sarah Shafer said WV Dept of Highways said we could not plant trees around the new sidewalks. Mayor Higdon said we need to talk about this with Region 9 and WV Dept. of Highways.
- Mayor Higdon said there is Grant money that will provide new playground equipment for Bolivar Children's Park. Laura has already filled out the paperwork. This is a first come first serve basis. This would be a Cunningham Recreation Grant at 100% matching funds. Laura said we have to show the funds are there and they would then reimburse.

Committee Reports

Street Committee

See later on the agenda

Bolivar Planning Commission

Barb Staats said the next meeting will be October 27, 2025 at 7:00pm

Park and Recreation Committee

Councilperson Victoria Gale said they did not have a meeting but we have items on the agenda for discussion and approval. Mayor Higdon said the Basketball Court is complete and looks great. I know you had a heavy hand trying to work this out, you needed some help to bring this home but it was a **WE** thing and they look great. Thank you for everything you put into that. Councilperson Victoria Gale said she is so happy and gratified that this was done and looks awesome.

Canal Town Partnership

Councilperson Charlma Quarles reported on the Art exhibit at Camp Hill Church. We had a total of 20 people that stopped by. We had just a few less than last year. We collected a total of $24. Councilperson Charlma Quarles said the other item you should know about is the Canal Town Partners were asked to support a request from our sister town of Paw Paw to get grant funding to approve their pedestrian bicycle access to the C & O Canal. This is part of Paw Paw's economic development program. Chris Craig and I, on behalf of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar, voted to support this and signed the letter.

Water Commission Report

Mayor Higdon said he drove around Bolivar and said the Company Harpers Ferry chose to repair the water company damage on all the streets, looks really great. That is just my vision from driving all around.

History Committee

Jeffrey Staats reported the History Committee has selected a glossy finish for their brochure. The map on the brochure was created by Andrew Lee. The committee would like to put information in the Town Newsletter. Their next meeting will be 10/28/25 at 7:00pm
Mayor Higdon said we will need a draft of your completed brochure and the number to be ordered and the cost. Councilperson Sarah Shafer asked where will these brochures be housed?
Jeffrey said Hotels, Library, JCCVB, Post Office, Businesses.
Mayor Higdon thanked Jeffrey for his report.

Board of Zoning Appeals

No Report

Special Events Committee

Mayor Higdon, Laura, Councilperson Sarah Shafer and Councilperson Victoria Gale are the members for this committee at this time. Think about options for events.

Old Business

1. Update regarding opioid settlement funds and reporting status
Mayor Higdon asked to table this until next month.

2. Discuss/Approve the hire of a certified building inspector
Mayor Higdon asked to table this until next month. We are still waiting for the MOU for us to approve.

3. Discuss/Approve zoom availability options for Bolivar Town Council Meetings
Mayor Higdon said in his opinion our number one item is to establish an individual email address for Council Members instead of using our personal email address.
Councilperson Charlma Quarles said she felt we wanted a mechanism for public to have the capability to call in. Laura said we need to upgrade what we are using now. Councilperson Dan Jimeno said start with audio only. We need the terms. Councilperson Dan Jimeno said we need to consolidate what we already have and add to it. Councilperson Sarah Shafer said whoever is managing this it is part of their job. Laura said that would be Town Web. Mayor Higdon said we need to pay someone to manage it. Attorney Kallas said are we not archiving now. Laura said this would be her biggest concern. Attorney Kallas said if a FOIA request comes in, we need to answer as quickly as possible. Laura would already have everyone's emails and could do a search and have that information instantly. Mayor Higdon said maybe we need to discuss this more. If we are going to do emails, we have to establish some protocols on how that email is to be used (**not for personal use) and a signed written agreement for proper use** before emails are issued. We will continue this discussion at the November meeting. Recorder Reed suggested we also have legal advice when making a decision concerning emails.

4. Discuss/Approve new park inspection proposal
Councilperson Victoria Gale explained that with the help of Laura, we found someone to inspect the park and they are local. We previously had a contract with Metro Recreation approved in April, but they never showed up to do the inspection for $960.

Mayor Higdon said we have had concerns from citizens that have reached out about concerns of equipment in the park. This should help in identifying these concerns.
Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to approve Playground Guardian,LLC Quote#65212 for $1000 for Inspection of Bolivar Children's Park Playground and Equipment. Councilperson Charlma Quarles seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0.

5. Further discussion of the disc course golf located @ the Bolivar Nature Park
Councilperson Charlma Quarles was a bit bothered because she never heard from the town that this was installed. She heard from her neighbor. Charlma is concerned about the lack of communication. We need to communicate effectively about and before they happen and this did not happen and I just want us to do better communicating and not just through the grapevine. Mayor Higdon agreed with Councilperson Quarles. Mayor Higdon said when he talked to Jennifer Myers and Chris Craig she would take care of the notification that this was taken care of. Jennifer did not keep her commitment. Laura will put a newsletter in the kiosk every month. Councilperson Quarles said she felt we could do better as a Council and volunteered to help in any way.

New Business

1. Discuss/Approve proposals to repave town owned street(s) in Bolivar
Councilperson Sarah Shafer asked about the turn- around time for this work. Laura said they could be scheduled before the end of the month. Councilperson Charlma Quarles asked about a warranty for their work. Councilperson Dan Jimeno asked about work experience.
Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to approve All American Paving, LLC Estimate #1087 for $349,340.00 as detailed with Project Schedule and Disclosed Warranty. Councilperson Charlma Quarles seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0.
NOTE: Councilperson Dan Jimeno we need to let Citizens know the schedule of the streets that will be paved in order to plan appropriately.

2. Discuss/Approve proposal to seal/restripe community center parking lot
Mayor Higdon said this is part of the on- going beautification of the town. It has been quite a number of years since the parking lot has been sealed or restriped.
Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to approve All American Paving, $2,900.00 Bid #1088 To seal and restripe the community center parking lot. Councilperson Victoria Gale seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0.

3. Discuss/Approve request from Mike Lowrey regarding Bolivar Municipal Parking lot
Discussed under Mayor's report on page 3
After a long discussion, Mayor Higdon asked for this agenda item be tabled and moved to next month.

4. Discuss/Approve advertising for snow removal 25-26 season
Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to authorize Laura Whittington to advertise for Snow Plow removal for 2025–2026 season. Councilperson Dan Jimeno seconded the motion and asked we advertise this in the local newspaper. Motion passed 5 – 0.

5. Discuss/Approve October event in the park
We are late with a plan, but we have one. We do not have a lot of time to plan, but our first event in the Children's park will be an addition to regular Trick or Treating. They will be welcome to do both. So anyone that would like to bring their candy to the park and give out to children may do so. We will have tables available in the park for you. Please join us for more events through the year.

Councilperson Victoria Gale moved to advertise a Halloween tradition Friday, October 31, from 6:00pm until 8:00pm in the Bolivar Children's Park. Recorder Reed seconded the motion. Councilperson Charlma Quarles abstained from voting. **Motion passed 4 with 1 absent and 1 abstaining.**

6. Discuss/Approve proposal for tree removal in Bolivar Children's Park
Laura said this is a tree in the Children's Park that needs to be trimmed back from leaning on the fence. **Councilperson Victoria Gale moved to accept bid # 1132828 from Viking Tree Service, LLC for $450 to trim back the tree and waste removal. Councilperson Sarah Shafer seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0.**

7. Discuss/Approve proposal for fence(s) repair in Bolivar Children's Park
Laura said this is to replace the damaged fence caused by the tree leaning over the fence. Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to accept estimate # 3852 from RD Fence LLC, for $2,400 for Mesh Fence installation in the Children's Park. Councilperson Victoria Gale seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0.

8. Discussion/Action to amend Bolivar's administrative Code, Article 131.01 regarding Planning Commission Membership and article 131.02 regarding Planning Commission Organization, Rules, Staff and Finances
Attorney Kallas explained the portions that were changed by law with some discussion from the Council Members. Attorney Kallas reminded everyone we need a second reading of the proposed ordinance and passage by this governing body.
Councilperson Victoria Gale moved to approve the first reading of 131 Planning Commission Membership Ordinance as presented by Attorney Kallas. Councilperson Sarah Shafer seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 – 0.

9. Discuss/Approve hire of new webmaster (possible executive session)
Mayor Higdon explained the reason for this item on the agenda.

- Mayor Higdon said he learned that our information for our web-page was being managed by an outside person that we were paying. He said he did not feel like it was up to date, not flashy and not informative. It was being managed in terms of content. I want control back in the office. This is what I would like to do. We have the opportunity from a volunteer to basically take our office information and pretty it up, market it better than what we are producing to date.

Full disclosure, this volunteer is my daughter and she has been making things on her own just trying to help her community. The last town newsletter came from her.

We do not have the ability to have all the managing of Facebook and our web-site from within the office. That is not a dig on either of our employees at all. But we have the opportunity from somebody that takes controlled information to be able to pretty it up to perceive authorization to put it back out there. Attorney Kallas asked Mayor Higdon if his daughter lived with him. Mayor Higdon said no. Attorney Kallas also asked this is a paid position. Mayor Higdon said no, it is fully a volunteer. Mayor Higdon said the person presently doing this job will be paid thru October 31, 2025. Mayor Higdon said he just wants to make sure we are okay with moving forward with this after the 31st. Councilperson Victoria Gale said over time we may want to revisit this if it does not work out. Mayor Higdon said, if this got to the point and it involved money, I would not want her to be involved. I want her to earn her strips as a community volunteer.

Councilperson Victoria Gale moved to hire Caitlynn Ledsome as Bolivar's new webmaster volunteer and marketer.

NOTE: Councilperson Dan Jimeno said from a risk management perspective we need assurance the transition from Jessica Gormont (old webmaster) to Caitlynn there may be an extra back door to Laura so she has credentials to both Facebook and the website.
Mayor Higdon said so we can get access to the archives on Facebook.
Councilperson Dan Jimeno said when Jessica no longer is contracted to us, we need to put in safeguards that Jessica is locked out and documented that this was done on the webpage side and on the Facebook side.
Laura said the website Jessica does not have access to it. She said Sarah Gordon left this to me, I did it. Recorder Reed said this is what happens to Laura every time someone comes up with a great idea that they start out with and then they leave, it is dropped in her hands to take care of. We need to be careful we don't lose her. Councilperson Dan Jimeno said he would recommend checking in on Caitlynn maybe 3 months or 6 months to just see how things are going, do you need anything. Mayor Higdon said he would have Caitlynn attend a town meeting to meet the Council.
Councilperson Sarah Shafer seconded the motion.
Councilperson Charlma Quarles abstained from voting. Motion passed 4 with 1 absent and 1 abstaining.

Adjournment

Councilperson Sarah Shafer moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilperson Victoria Gale seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 - 0.
Meeting adjourned 9:45pm

P. Jean Reed
P. Jean Reed, Recorder

Chris Higdon, Mayor