

**Town Of Iron Gate**  
P.O. Box 199  
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Iron Gate, VA 24448  
Phone: (540) 862-0770

The Iron Gate Town Council Meeting was held August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 7 p.m. in Town Hall

Vice Mayor Erskine gave the invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance was then cited.

The meeting officially began at 7:00 p.m.

**Present:**

Mayor Gary Craig, Vice Mayor Richard Erskine, Councilpersons Jennifer Tyree, G.W. Reynolds, Councilperson Brandon Marshall, Councilperson Debbie Harris, and Town Clerk/Treasurer Ashley Prior. Mr. Jimmy Jeffries, and Mr. Larry Friend were in attendance for the community. Present by phone from Michigan was Councilperson Kawahna Persinger. Also present, Jerry Clark of the Alleghany Journal, and David Crosier of the Bath County Recorder.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mayor Craig asked if everyone had received their packets and if there were any comments, questions or concerns regarding the minutes, no one had questions. The mayor asked for a motion for approval. Vice Mayor Erskine made the motion which, was seconded by Councilperson Harris. A roll call vote was then taken.

Vice Mayor Erskine – “Yes”

Councilperson Tyree – “Yes”

Councilperson Reynolds – “Yes”

Councilperson Reynolds – “Yes”

Councilperson Persinger – “Yes”

Councilperson Harris – “Yes”

The motion carries unanimously.

**Receipts and Disbursements:**

Mayor Craig stated that council has received the receipts and disbursements in their packets along with the profit and loss. Mayor Craig asked if there were any comments, questions, or concerns. Councilperson Tyree stated that she knows a little bit about what it took to get where we are, and thanked Town

Clerk/Treasurer Ashley Prior. Mayor Craig asked if there were any other comments, questions, or concerns, there were none. Mayor Craig asked to get an approval of the Receipts and Disbursements. Motion was made by Vice Mayor Erskine, and seconded by Councilperson Reynolds. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilperson Tyree – “Yes”  
Councilperson Persinger – “Yes”  
Councilperson Marshall – “Yes”  
Councilperson Reynolds – “Yes”  
Councilperson Harris – “Yes”  
Vice Mayor Erskine – “Yes”

The motion carries unanimously.

Mayor Craig stated everyone has seen the payment of the bills, and I will note, Ashley has been on top of them pretty good, with paying everything she can pay as money becomes available. Mayor Craig then asked if there were any questions, comments, or concerns on payment of the bills. Hearing none, Mayor Craig then asked for a motion to pay the bills. A motion was given by Councilperson Harris, and was seconded by Vice Mayor Erskine. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilperson Tyree – “Yes”  
Councilperson Persinger – “Yes”  
Councilperson Marshall – “Yes”  
Councilperson Reynolds – “Yes”  
Councilperson Harris – “Yes”  
Vice Mayor Erskine – “Yes”

The motion carries unanimously.

### **Mayor’s Report:**

Mayor Craig Spoke of the weather and our town Public Works crew. Mayor Craig then stated that our town police officer has been patrolling and writing tickets. Mayor Craig continued, no one knows when he will be here and that is what we like. Mayor Craig said the park bathrooms are closed to the public now, with the exception of the river park bathrooms. Mayor Craig said that is all he has for his report

### **Committee Reports:**

Mayor Craig asked if there were any committee reports, there were none.

### **Public Comments:**

Mayor Craig introduced Mr. Larry Friend, who is looking to buy the house on 5<sup>th</sup> street behind Twink’s old 220 Diner. Mayor Craig then let Mr. Friend have the floor. Mr. Friend stated that he is waiting on the paperwork to purchase the house now. Mr. Friend continued; I have found out about the camper situation. I have come here to ask to be voted in, to allow me to live in my camper for six months while I

am working on the house. Mr. Friend said he has an electrician who is ready to wire the place, as well as Mr. Friend himself replacing all the water and sewer lines. Councilperson Marshall asked Mr. Friend if he will be able to do all of that in six months. Mr. Friend stated, yes, I use to be a licensed contractor and can do it all, I do not do electrical but, I have a friend of mine who is and will come in and do it all. Mayor Craig then asked if anyone else has any comments, questions, or concerns for Larry. Councilperson Tyree asked, six months from when. Mr. Friend replied, six months from the day I bring the camper in. It will take a little while to get the plumbing set up. Once I bring the camper in and set it up, six months from that day it will be out of there. Councilperson Marshall asked what the time frame is on when Mr. Friend will be able to get the camper down there and hooked up. Mr. Friend commented, Once I sign the paperwork, I want to have it ready and set up within a month. It would give me until at the least the middle of November to have it ready to be hooked up, and the camper will not be brought up here until it is ready to be hooked up. Vice Mayor Erskine asked where the camper will be set at. Mr. Friend said it will be in between the house and the big building. Mayor Craig asked if there is enough room to sit the camper there with the setbacks. Mr. Friend commented yes, plus some, there is plenty of room. Mayor Craig asked if there were any more comments, questions, or concerns, or someone can make a motion. Councilperson Persinger stated, if council approves Mr. Friend moving the camper on the property, there should be an end date of when the camper needs to be removed. Mayor Craig stated there is, it is six months. Councilperson Persinger replied, six from January. Mayor Craig stated six months from the date that he sets the camper on the property. Councilperson Persinger stated, she is afraid this is going to open up a can of worms to other people who want to twist and turn things around to fit their own agenda. Councilperson Persinger continued, I have nothing against him, I commend him for what he is trying to do to rebuild that all by himself. We need to look a little further down the road for possible issues with people wanting to do something similar. Councilperson Tyree stated she would like echo that, and she spoke to the zoning administrator before the meeting, and he said by our town ordinance you cannot hook up a camper with water and sewer on the property. Councilperson Marshall stated, he doesn't think council would be going against the ordinance, we would just be making an exception. Councilperson Tyree said, exactly, but we have had other people asking the same thing, numerous times. We've even had a business owner up at Hill Top Market who had a camper he wanted to use as an office, but council told him absolutely not. A person recently wanted to buy the house that is coming into Iron Gate as your heading south, and do the same thing, but the former council told them no, you can't do it. Councilperson Marshall stated we have different people on council now and things change sometimes. Mr. Friend commented, either way I will be fine with it, nothing is going to stop me from working on the house, it needs to be fixed. Mayor Craig asked if anyone else has any comments, questions, or concerns, there were none.

### **Old Business:**

Mayor Craig said he has a couple of things; the first one is the Thrasher Group. Friday eight thirty by noon, the first add run date is Tuesday 9/3/2024, second run date Tuesday 9/10/2024, mandatory pre-bid 09/17/2024 at ten am, end of questions Friday 9/27/2024 by close of business at three pm, addendums Thursday 10/03/2024, we will open the bids on Thursday 10/10/2024 at two pm. Mayor Craig then went to the next order of business, the Allegheny Highlands Public Schools sent council a letter stating;

*Hello! Hope all are well.*

*We are interested in doing a "State of the School Division" presentation for Iron Gate Town Council similar to last year at some point in the late summer/early fall. We enjoyed speaking with the council last year! :) It usually takes us about 20 minutes to make the presentation, but we can adapt to any meeting needs.*

*We do have presentation slides, but we can also bring handouts for your meeting if that suits everyone better.*

*Karen W, our clerk, is CCed here and can help make any appropriate arrangements.*

*Thanks so much!*

They are asking to come back and do another presentation; would council be fit to do another presentation at the next council meeting. Mayor Craig said, everyone is nodding their heads, Kawahna how are you with this. Councilperson Persinger said the next council meeting will be just fine.

Mayor Craig said council needs to vote on the house on 407 7<sup>th</sup> street where the garage is setting on town property, the house is under contract right now. There is a clause that states they have to tear the garage down and/or move it to the proper setbacks, the realtor has made note to let the homeowners know that it does need to be moved or torn down. There was an agreement made with Luther, the gentleman who had the house originally, but that agreement did not convey when he passed. Mayor Craig said council agreed to a straw vote on Mayor Craig speaking with the realtor, and an official vote will be needed on both. Councilperson Tyree said from what she understands the sewer goes down the actual alley, and then instead of going down and over the hill, does the sewer not come back out to Commerce. Mayor Craig stated, from what I understand I thought it went over the hill. Council continued discussing and, after much deliberation, agreed to table the vote. A motion to table was made by Councilperson Tyree, and seconded by Councilperson Marshall. Mayor Craig then asked if there were any comments, questions, or concerns, there were none. Mayor Craig stated that all of those in favor of tabling, until council does more research signify by saying "Aye."

Councilperson Tyree – "Aye"

Councilperson Persinger – "Aye"

Councilperson Marshall – "Aye"

Councilperson Reynolds – "Aye"

Councilperson Harris – "Aye"

Vice Mayor Erskine – "Aye"

The motion carries unanimously.

Mayor Craig then moved to the next order of business, the Law Enforcement Agreement between the Town of Iron Gate and the Sheriff's Department. Mayor Craig stated he has yet to speak to Sheriff Kyle Moore personally. The Sheriff's Department is disagreeing with the hours and pay, and I would like to set up a meeting with Sheriff Moore, council, and myself so we can come to a conclusion. Councilperson Harris asked what is his position. Mayor Craig said Sheriff Moore and his deputy asked what would happen if a deputy is at the end of shift and needs to work several hours over due to making an arrest, who will be responsible for paying for those extra hours. Council and myself need to sit down with Sheriff Moore and come to a conclusion that way there is no confusion. Mayor Craig asked council if council is okay with him setting up a meeting between Sheriff Moore, himself, and council. Councilperson Tyree said it would need to be at a work session or called meeting. Mayor Craig said we can set up a called meeting, that is no problem. Councilperson Persinger stated that we need to set the

meeting early and it took six months to get him here the first time around. Mayor Craig stated we have to make plans to get him here, we will do our part, and hopefully he will be quick to get here.

### **New Business:**

Mayor Craig stated he has an adjustment on a utility bill. Mr. Jerry Clark asked Mayor Craig, when will the pressure reducing valve actually be installed. Mayor Craig stated, the dates I was giving out earlier are for the Thrasher Group, for the bids to go out among everything else, so it will be sometime after the bids are open and we can start on that. Attentively, we are planning on having that in before the end of the year. Mayor Craig asked if there were any comments, questions, or concerns regarding the utility bill adjustment. Mayor Craig did inform council that the utility bill in question is a recurring bill, they do need help, and I am compassionate. Councilperson Marshall asked if this is the only time. Mayor Craig stated that it has been late in the past, and there have been numerous cut off notices sent in the past. Councilperson Harris stated yes, with the stipulation they bring it up to date by the twenty first of September. Councilperson Tyree stated she agrees with Councilperson Harris. Vice Mayor Erskine stated if they can bring it up to current. Councilperson Tyree asked if they would also pay late fees. Mayor Craig stated yes, and I have made the stipulation that no late fees are waived unless council waives them. Mayor Craig said council needs to make a nomination to approve allowing the utility bill to be paid on the ninth of September, and the resident is to be completely paid up to date by September twenty first. A motion was made by Vice Mayor Erskine, and seconded by Councilperson Reynolds. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilperson Tyree – “Yes”

Councilperson Persinger – “Yes”

Councilperson Marshall – “Yes”

Councilperson Reynolds – “Yes”

Councilperson Harris – “Yes”

Vice Mayor Erskine – “Yes”

The motion carries unanimously.

Mayor Craig moved to the next order of business of Mr. Larry Friend being able to live in his camper on his property for six months. Councilperson Marshall made the motion to allow Mr. Friend six months from the time Mr. Friend parks his camper on his property, and seconded by Vice Mayor Erskine. Mayor Craig asked if there were any comments, questions, or concerns, there were none. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilperson Tyree – “No”

Councilperson Persinger – “No”

Councilperson Marshall – “Yes”

Councilperson Reynolds – “Yes”

Councilperson Harris – “Yes”

Vice Mayor Erskine – “Yes”

Hearing four “Aye” and two “Nay” motion carries to allows for six months from the time he puts the camper on the property.

The next work session will be held on September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 7 pm, and the next council meeting will be held on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 7 pm. Councilperson Persinger said that the October council meeting falls on Halloween, and does not know if council would need to discuss moving the date in September. Mayor Craig stated that since council has not dismissed, would all of council be willing to move that back to October 30<sup>th</sup>, and all of council approved. Councilperson Persinger asked if Mayor Craig had any luck on speaking with VML regarding a Town Attorney. Mayor Craig replied, no I have not, but I will be in the office the first of the week making phone calls. Councilperson Persinger asked if Mayor Craig has found out if our Town Attorney resigning is allowed in the middle of a lawsuit. Mayor Craig said that is something he will need to discuss with VML when he speaks with them this coming week. Councilperson Persinger asked if the town is good on the 599 paperwork for the town. Mayor Craig stated yes, we are good on all of the 599 paperwork and funds.

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilperson Marshall, and seconded by Councilperson Reynolds. Mayor Craig said all those in favor signify by saying aye. The motion carried unanimously and meeting was adjourned at 7:48 pm.

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Gary A Craig, Mayor

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Ashley C Prior, Clerk