

**Town Of Iron Gate**  
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The Iron Gate Town Council Meeting was held March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 7 p.m. in  
Town Hall

Councilwoman Norvella Burrell gave the invocation.

The Pledge of Allegiance was then cited.

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

**Present:**

Mayor Kawahna Persinger, Councilwoman Jennifer Tyree, Vice Mayor Brandon Marshall, Councilman Neil Hardesty, Councilwoman Norvella Burrell, and Town Clerk/Treasurer Ashley Prior. In attendance for the community are, Jimmy Jeffries, and Randy Unroe. Also present, Jennifer Bailey of the Alleghany Journal, and David Crosier from the Bath County Recorder.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mayor Persinger said she needs approval of the minutes for the February Council Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup>, and the Work Session for March 17<sup>th</sup>. A motion was made by Councilwoman Tyree, and seconded by Vice Mayor Marshall. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilwoman Tyree – “Yes”

Vice Mayor Marshall – “Yes”

Councilman Hardesty – “Yes”

Councilwoman Burrell – “Yes”

The motion carries unanimously to change the approve the minutes.

**Receipts and Disbursements:**

Mayor Persinger informed council that the receipts and disbursements should be in the back of your packet as far as what has been paid. Mayor Persinger asked for a motion to approve the Receipts and Disbursements. A motion was given by Councilman Hardesty, and seconded by Councilwoman Burrell. Mayor Persinger then continued to the Mayors Report. Mr. Unroe said ma’am you need to make a motion

to pay the bills. Mayor Persinger said oh, do I have a motion to pay the bills. A motion was then made by Vice Mayor Marshall, and seconded by Councilman Hardesty.

### **Mayor's Report:**

Mayor Persinger said each of the members have a copy of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. This is what was taught to in Clifton Forge earlier this month that some were unable to attend, but it gives an overview of what it is, what someone can ask for, how you respond, etc.

Iron Gate applied for a grant from Alleghany County for two thousand dollars (\$2,000) on behalf of the Parks and Recreations and we received the check in yesterday. Ashley had to call the county and say we appreciate the funds, but where to direct it to.

Mayor Persinger said we also received the newest bill in the mail from our attorney. He has another attorney who works with him, and when we text, or call, and whomever we deal with be are getting the bill from. This latest bill we have received is one thousand and eighty dollars (\$1,080.00) that is for five hours and forty minutes, and will be paid in April.

Thrasher met here with us last Thursday and everything is going according to plan, they are right on schedule even with all the snow days. They have come down the mountain by Balsler and have been actually been working in the veteran's park putting pipes down.

Core and Main also came the same day and they are going to look at some things that can possibly help Iron Gate with the I & I. One of the things they mentioned was a cover that can go over the manholes, it's a cover that looks like an upside-down trashcan. You take the manhole off, slide the upside-down trash can in there and then put the manhole back on and it seals it. They run about one hundred dollars each (\$100). Junior is going to let us know where the really bad ones are and how many he thinks we can use, and we will see if that is something we can purchase. Core and Main also got permission from us to get copies of the diagrams that will help them as to where the flow is. They said it will take about three weeks to get a copy, so I should have it for the next council meeting.

I wanted to let you know we are still doing clean up in April for the town. I am hoping that the residents will still get out and clean their own yards, even if they don't want to do anything on 220. I am going to see if I can borrow the vest from Clifton Forge for 220. Councilwoman Tyree asked what day that was. Mayor Persinger replied April is clean up month and we are going to be celebrating it down here the week of April 20<sup>th</sup> through 26<sup>th</sup>. Councilwoman Tyree said you will be posting where the trailer is going to be. Mayor Persinger responded yes ma'am we will be putting that out for residences. If you are putting in tires or appliances you have to call and let us know because the guys will have to pick that up separately. Councilwoman Tyree asked if they are accepting tires. Mayor Persinger said no, I don't believe so. Councilwoman Tyree replied so why would we accept them. Mayor Persinger said I think that they were taking the tires in Clifton behind Hardees, but I don't know if they still are. Vice Mayor Marshall said I am pretty sure there is one day a year where you can take tires to the dump.

The past two weeks there have been two vagrants here in town, we spoke about this at the Work Session. One of them went in to the Rusty Hinge and left, then came back proceeded to the Post Office to camp out, the Rusty Hinge called the sheriff's department who came and picked him up. Several days later there was another vagrant walking down Tannery Rd near Councilman Hardesty's home, I don't know if he decided to camp out or not.

Ashley is still dealing with the IRS for the town refund. She was on the phone yesterday and the day before and apparently part of the people she spoke with said yes, I see what you're talking about, and when she called back, they said we don't have anything you need to send it again. This time we sent it through certified mail for them to sign for it.

There is a VML Regional briefing coming up in South Boston, VA on April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9 am until noon. This is going to be bringing us up to speed on the changes that have been made in the General Assembly this year. I would like to attend that, it's free so its just the gasoline to go.

I just want to let everyone in the town know, and this is straight from the Clerk/Treasurer. If you are doing business in the Town of Iron Gate it is essential you have a business license. You cannot just send us a check, there is paperwork that needs to be filled out as well. She has reached out to several people saying we have your check but we do not have the paperwork, and she is not getting any replies.

This is a copy, Ashley received this today. It is time for the town to have another audit, which is long overdue. We had on in March of 2014, one in September 2016, one in June 2018, and one in May 2020, and one in September 2023 (this particular audit cost the town \$10,500). The estimate that we just received for this year is twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000). I will let council look at this and the second page tells us how much and when we started paying them, and it has literally doubled this year. Councilwoman Tyree asked if there is a certain time an audit needs to be done, and is there a certain auditor that can do it. Mayor Persinger replied I do not know if there are certain auditors that do this because we are a town or we can just call a CPA. That is the last thing I have for the mayor's report unless someone has anything to add.

Mayor Persinger moved on to Committee Reports.

### **Committee Reports:**

Mayor Persinger asked for committee reports, there were none.

### **Public Comments:**

Mayor Persinger said Mr. Unroe I see where you signed in. Mr. Unroe asked about the financial reports. Ashley replied I have one right here for you. Mayor Persinger said that is the same thing as a FOIA request, and if you want them again you will have to write a request. Mr. Unroe asked if he would be charged for that. Mayor Persinger replied not this time. Mr. Unroe asked when he can come in and see the financials, you can't hide them. Mayor Persinger responded you can come in and see them anytime, and we are not hiding them.

Mayor Persinger asked if anyone else has anything. Hearing none Mayor Persinger moved onto old business.

### **Old Business:**

Mayor Persinger said I do not have anything for old business. Councilwoman Tyree said at the end of the last meeting things got a bit chaotic and I made a motion that we need to make the Vice Mayor an official

position in the charter. Who will appoint his or her duties and that person will have voting rights as a member of council to be given to the General Assembly the same we lower the council seats.

Mayor Persinger said do I have a motion that when we start the process of reducing the council seats from six (6) to four (4), that we also move to add the Vice Mayor as an official position for the Town of Iron Gate with voting rights. A motion was given by Councilwoman Tyree, and seconded by Councilman Hardesty. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilwoman Tyree – “Yes”

Vice Mayor Marshall – “Abstain”

Councilman Hardesty – “Yes”

Councilwoman Burrell – “Yes”

The motion carries to add the Vice Mayor as an official position for the Town of Iron Gate with voting rights in the town charter.

With nothing else to discuss, Mayor Persinger moves to new business.

### **New Business:**

Mayor Persinger said we are going to need to adjust the operating days and hours for the town.

Unfortunately, both your Clerk/Treasurer and your Mayor are having health issues, and we are not going into any more detail than that. We can still do our jobs, but there needs to be an adjustment made. What we are going to do is beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, the office hours will be Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from ten am to three pm (10 am – 3 pm). Ashley and I will both be here on the first of every month due to it being water bill day. We will also be here on the 21<sup>st</sup> of each month when the water bills are due. Ashley commented unless it falls on a weekend. Mayor Persinger said we apologize for the inconvenience, it was put in the paper last Thursday, this Tuesday, and Today.

The next thing I want to discuss is the robo calls, and I going to let Ashley take over because this has been her project.

Ashley began by saying before the work session I had sent out a mass email to council regarding this. I spoke to Josh with textmygov again today, this program is robo calls in a way except with text messaging. It will send out a massive text message to people and it is online, so when I am not here at the office, I can still access it from anywhere. I usually post things on the Facebook page, however, some people may not have Facebook, so this is a backup. With our UBMax software we had was called public alerts and when UBMax did the software update, I was told the public alert code was killed. I know the mayor has been looking into several other options as well. When I spoke with Josh, I asked him what about people who don't have a cell phone, how can we let them know. Josh told me that we could have an add on with voice calls (robo) where I would have to manually type the number and what I want it to say. Councilwoman Tyree asked what the base price is. Ashley replied the base with just the text messaging is seventeen hundred and fifty dollars (\$1,750), this is including a two hundred and fifty dollar set up fee (\$250), and this is billed annually. If we were to have the add on, which is the robo call it will be five hundred dollars extra (\$500). Mayor Persinger said I called Alleghany County to see what system they use and Iron Gate can actually use that system. We will just need to call and have them put that message out there, however their system does not differentiate between Iron Gate citizens and Alleghany County citizens, so when we put a message out, it will go to everyone in Alleghany County and vice versa.

Mayor Persinger asked for a motion to reduce the office hours to Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from ten am to three pm (10 am – 3 pm) with the stipulation that the Clerk/Treasurer and Mayor are always present on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> on each month unless they fall on a weekend. A motion was given by Councilman Hardesty, and seconded by Councilwoman Burrell. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilwoman Tyree – “Yes”  
Vice Mayor Marshall – “Yes”  
Councilman Hardesty – “Yes”  
Councilwoman Burrell – “Yes”

The motion carries unanimously.

Mayor Persinger asked if she could get a motion on the robo calls, or would council like to wait until next month and get the information on the other three businesses that I contacted. Vice Mayor Marshall said he will make a motion to table, and seconded by Councilman Hardesty. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilwoman Tyree – “Yes”  
Vice Mayor Marshall – “Yes”  
Councilman Hardesty – “Yes”  
Councilwoman Burrell – “Yes”

The motion carries unanimously.

Mayor Persinger asked for a motion to call different companies and gather quotes for an audit. A motion was made by Councilwoman Tyree, and seconded by Vice Mayor Marshall. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilwoman Tyree – “Yes”  
Vice Mayor Marshall – “Yes”  
Councilman Hardesty – “Yes”  
Councilwoman Burrell – “Yes”

The motion carries unanimously.

Mayor Persinger said the dates for next month’s Work Session is April 14<sup>th</sup>, and the date for next month’s Council Meeting will be April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Persinger asked for a motion to go into closed session under VA Code 2.2-3711 Item 7 to discuss legal, and VA Code 2.2-3711 Item 4 to discuss personnel. We will not be discussing anything other than legal and personnel matter. A motion was made by Councilman Hardesty, and seconded by Councilwoman Burrell. A roll call vote was taken.

Councilwoman Tyree – “Yes”  
Vice Mayor Marshall – “Yes”  
Councilman Hardesty – “Yes”  
Councilwoman Burrell – “Yes”

The motion carries unanimously.

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Kawahna C Persinger, Mayor

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Ashley C Prior, Clerk