Virginia: **At the regular meeting of the Council of the Town of Chilhowie held at the Municipal Building, June 12, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.**

Present: **Honorable Gary L. Heninger, Mayor presiding; Councilors Bill Clear, Shannon Donnelly, Brent Foster, Bob Jeter, Julie Sturgill, and P.J. Wolfe.**

Absent: **None.**

Also Present: **Mr. Brian Martin, Town Manager; Mrs. Felicia Eller, CMC, Clerk-Treasurer; Messrs. Paul Cassell, Town Attorney; Andrew Moss, Police Chief; Chris Johnson, Foreman Building, Grounds, and Streets; Leroy Sullivan, Wastewater Operator and Tyler Keen, Public Works Director**

Mayor Heninger called the meeting to order. Reverand John Chapman, Calvary Church of Southwest Virginia, gave the Invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion by Bill Clear, second by Brent Foster Council, approves the regular May 18, 2025, Council meeting minutes as presented. The motion was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

Public Hearing: Mrs. Eller presented the following:

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
2025-2026 BUDGET PROPOSAL
TOWN OF CHILHOWIE, VIRGINIA

Pursuant to Section 15.2-2506 of the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, the Council for the Town of Chilhowie will conduct a Public Hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2025-2026 Town Budget beginning at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, June 12, 2025, in Council Chambers, 325 East Lee Highway, Chilhowie, Virginia.

This synopsis is published for information and planning purposes only and will serve as a guide to earmark expenditures and allocate revenues. The proposed budget in no way obligates the Town of Chilhowie to any expenditure. Any citizen is invited to attend the public hearing on the budget proposal and state their views thereon. A copy of the proposed budget is on file and may be examined in the office of the Clerk located in the Municipal Building, 325 East Lee Highway, Chilhowie, Virginia 24319.

By Order Of the Chilhowie Town Council – J. Brian Martin., Town Manager

Estimated Revenues	
Property Tax	$635,007
Business License	160,600
Bank Stock Tax	40,000
Utility Tax	104,000
Communication Tax	22,000
Consumption Tax	10,000
Sales Tax	90,000
Meals Tax	901,500

Proposed Expenditures	
Administration Wages, Fringe	$440,679
Contract Services	80,000
Community Development	75,380
Building Inspection	500
Operations, Utilities	232,238
Capital Outlay	1,000
Wellness & Parks Wages, Fringe	75,147
Operations	59,700

Cigarette Tax	165,000
Other Taxes	30,150
Fines	90,000
Law Enforcement Funds	146,000
Rolling Stock Tax	3,000
Miscellaneous	113,328
Garbage	163,450
Recreation	45,000
Building Inspection	2,000
Snow Removal	20,000
Water Billing, Penalties, Fees Connections	1,858,999
Fire Protection, Hydrant Replacement	26,000
Sewer Billing, Penalties, Fees, Connections	929,372
Smyth County Sewer Reimbursement	250,000
Fire/EMS Billing	500,000
Fire/EMS Grants	29,300
Smyth County Contributions Fire/EMS	553,190
Smyth County Training Center	9,000
Sale of Equipment	2,000
Miscellaneous	101,500
SNAP-Farmer's Market	500
Revenues	**$7,000,896**

Capital Outlay	4,620
Building & Grounds Wages, Fringe	239,516
Operations, Utilities	184,212
Capital Outlay	45,000
Garbage	163,580
Public Safety Wages, Fringe	664,014
Operations	185,696
Capital Outlay	78,725
TRAN, Line of Credit Interest	54,450
Water Wages, Fringe	627,393
Operations, Utilities	410,962
Fire Protection Hydrant Replacement	26,000
Debt Service	412,696
Capital Outlay	487,000
Sewer Wages, Fringe	291,298
Operations, Utilities	347,632
Debt Service	380,284
Capital Outlay	93,000
Fire/EMS Wages, Fringe	832,776
Operations, Supplies – Fire/EMS	331,088
Capital Outlay	25,000
Fire/Rescue Academy	10,890
Debt Service	139,920
SNAP-Vendor Payment	500
Expenditures	**$7,000,896**

NOTE: This budget includes:
- Outside Corporation Water Rate Increase 5%
- Inside Corporation Water Rate Increase 9%
- Outside Corporation Sewer Rate Increase 5%
- Inside Corporation Sewer Rate Increase 9%
- Utility Disconnect Fee Increase from $25 to $50

Publish in Smyth County News Messenger:
May 28 and June 4, 2025
Posted on Bulletin Board at Town Hall
Posted on www.chilhowie.org

Mayor Heninger opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 p.m.
No one wished to speak.
Mayor Heninger closed the Public Hearing at 7:06 p.m.

Citizen Time:

No one wished to speak.

Old Business:

- Update on Removal or Repair of Identifies Unsafe (Burned Out) Structures - The Town has made progress removing burned out structures. The Town has four (4) burned out properties. One residence is under contract and the closing on property to be held next

week. Chief Haynes is working towards a plan for the burned-out structures on Sunset and Vance Drive. Mr. Martin is working with the property owner on Old Stage Road, and the owner will provide a plan for cleaning the property up within two weeks. The property owner on Greever Street has been in contact with the Town and is working diligently to clean up the property. The property owner on Sanders Avenue plans to demolish the burned-out structure this Summer. Appreciation was expressed to the Town Staff for their efforts in the clean-up process and mowing the abandoned properties. By the end of the 2025-year additional liens will be placed on each property the Town is maintaining by mowing.

- Update for Weed, Trash and Clutter Ordinance Violations-Mr. Martin, Town Manager, sent out a letter on possible abandonment on West Avenue. The yard has been neglected and is in disarray.

- Update on Sewer Infiltration and Inflow Project –The original scope of work has been completed. The Infiltration and Inflow Project is under the anticipated budget. Town staff is working with Hurt and Proffitt to identify additional areas within the Town to utilize the remaining funds to further improve the sewer collection system. One area added to the project is an additional segment of piping near the Wastewater Treatment Plant that leads into the Industrial Park. The contractor has indicated that section of the Project will be completed. Pay Request Number 11 is in the amount of $179,388.66.

  A progress meeting was held on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, for the Infiltration and Inflow Project. Following the progress meeting, a meeting with the Virginia Department of Transportation and Contractors was held to review other areas that need repair such as manholes along Highway 11 and Lyons Gap that are in the amount of $136,926.60. Concerning sewer issues on Skyview Drive, roughly 1,000 feet of sewer line is deteriorating in the ground. Hurt and Proffitt is in the process of reviewing the project and making sure that all the cleanup and restoration work is completed. Mr. Dennis Amos, Hurt and Proffitt, reported the Town is almost to the end of a very successful Infiltration and Inflow Project.

  Hurt and Proffitt is in the process of obtaining permits and completing the design for the Seven Mile Ford Project. A meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 12, 2025, with Town staff, Hurt and Proffitt, and the Virginia Department of Transportation to ensure the designs will be approved by the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Town advertised the Category Exclusion in the Smyth County Newspaper.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Bill Clear Council accepts the Pay Request Number 11 in the amount of $179,388.66. The motion was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Bill Clear Council approves Change Order Number 2 in the amount of $136,926.60. The Motion was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Update on Hurricane Recovery - The biggest and most extensive repair to the Town's infrastructure is not complete. The design of the replacement crossing for the three Arial crossings is complete. The Arial Crossing designs were submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers which has restrictions as to when the work can be done in the stream. Only during the months of October, November, December, January, the Contractor will be allowed to work within the stream, protecting endangered species that live in the waters. July 16, 2025, the Town will hold a Bid Opening for the project. There is a considerable amount of work outside the river, temporary road work, mobilization, and site preparation that can be done before October 1, 2025.

- Approval of purchases and mounting monitors for Council Chambers-

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Julie Sturgill Council, approves the purchases of monitors and equipment for the Council Chambers. The motion was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Update on Aker Avenue Paving Project – The paving project for Aker Avenue was carried over from Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget to the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget. The project is currently included in the Budget in the amount of $60,000. At the April 10, 2025, Council meeting, Council authorized Mr. Martin to move forward with the paving project for Aker Avenue and advertise for bids. It was brought to Mr. Martin's attention that the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Training Center has money from Smyth County for paving of the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Training Center parking area. Mr. Martin respectfully requested to advertise for bids for the paving of Aker Avenue and Fire and Emergency Medical Service Training Center parking lot

together. The Town received two bids. AAA Paving provided a bid for milling and overlaying to VDOT specifications for Aker Avenue. W&L Construction provided a bid for paving of the Fire Training Center parking area.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Bob Jeter, Council accepts the bid from AAA Paving & Sealing LLC, in the amount of $42,250.00 to mill and overlay Aker Avenue. Council accepts the bid from W&L Construction in the amount of $100,00.00 for the paving of the Fire Training Center parking area. The motion was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Discussion of Proposed Water Meter Tampering Policy – The Town would like to remind water customers removing shut-off locks and or bypassing water meters could result in criminal charges for destruction of property or theft. This has been an issue for years now. An Ordinance or Town Code is not required, but a Public Notice is to be issued on Facebook, Town's Website, marquee, printed on all Utility Bills and be posted in Town Hall, Bonham House, and the Old High School.

  Motion by Brent Foster, second by Julie Sturgill Council authorizes the Public Notice to be posted on the Town's Facebook page, Town's Website, printed on all Utility Bills and be posted in the Town Hall, Bonham House and the Old High School. The motion was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Beautification of Front of Town Hall – The Town is very proud of the Town Hall; it is the center of the Town's Government. The front of the Town Hall requires renovation and modernization. Council continued this matter to July 10, 2025, the Council meeting.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Shannon Donnelly Council continues this matter. The motion was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

New Business:

- Discussion of Proposed Ordinance Prohibiting Camping on Public Property. There is an increase in the homeless population in this region and surrounding areas. Other Municipalities are adopting Ordinances due to public safety concerns. The Supreme Court also authorizes such Ordinances.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Shannon Donnelly Council authorizes the Town Manager to advertise for a Public Hearing to be held at the regular Council meeting scheduled for July 10, 2025, at 7:00 pm. The motion was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Presentation of Town's F.O.G. (Fats, Oils, Greases) – Mr. Leroy Sullivan, Wastewater Operator, reported in the wastewater world grease is a major problem. Grease comes from cooking and preparing food. A letter was hand delivered to each restaurant located in Town, for inspections of the grease traps. All restaurant owners were very cooperative. The Town has a right to inspect the grease trap. Wastewater can inspect the conditions of the grease traps and ask the restaurant for their records for grease pumping/removal, if necessary, given the conditions of the grease traps a re-inspection could occur. Reducing F.O.G. will be very helpful with the wastewater treatment plant operations.

- Updates on Removal of Biosolids- Mr. Leroy Sullivan, Wastewater Operator, thanked the Town Manager and thanked the Council for the support of the transit from land application of the Biosolids to the hauling process to remove the Bi products. All the Biosolids have been removed from wastewater holding facility.

- Renewal of Wastewater Treatment Plant Permit- Mr. Martin reported the agreement with Hurt and Profitt for assisting with permit which was due May 26, 2025, at an hourly rate came to the total of $32,000.00

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Bob Jeter Council ratifies the agreement. The motion and was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

- Request for Sponsorship, Chilhowie Community Apple Festival- Council continued the matter until July 10, 2025, Council Meeting.

- Surveillance Cameras for Town Hall and Police Department- Mr. Martin, Town Manager, reported staff is still gathering information and requested to continue the matter.

- Presentation from Smyth County Tourism Association- Mrs. Amanda Livingston, Executive Director of Smyth County Tourism Association, appeared before Council to give an update on tourism in Chilhowie. A new sizzle video has had 34,000 views on Facebook. The measuring of lodging and meals tax are showing flatness and a decline due to the economy being down 2.5% nationwide. Hopefully, families will travel to Smyth County for a more affordable vacation destination. Currently laying groundwork for future tourism to partnership with Smyth County and Smyth County EDA are working with consultants paid for via grant funds. They are currently discussing alternative transportation and gaining access to a grant writer for the next fourteen months. Mrs. Livingston is also working on a new advertising campaign with Virginia high points. Mrs. Livingston requested Council's assistance for the Virginia 250 (250 years for the State of Virginia in July 2026) Community Celebration for July 4, 2026.

- Discussion of Town Owned Property, Overlook Drive- Mr. Martin reported the Clerk of Circuit Court was very helpful during the research of the Town owned property on Overlook Drive. The Deed says The Chilhowie Redevelopment Housing Authority. The first lot was to build a subdivision behind Hardees, with the first lot being 1 tenth of an acre and the other 1.5 acre. The Town of Chilhowie can work with Mt. Rogers in building two houses. Which in return would generate revenue for the Town for water and sewer services. The lots are all grown up, and Council continues this matter until Fall when the vegetation dies off and the property layout can be seen.

Department Reports:

Mr. Martin, Town Manager, reported the drainage issues related to the damaged metal grate on Whitetop Road across from McDonalds, is scheduled to be repaired before July 1st. The new concrete drainage tiles have been delivered to the Virginia Department of Transportation shop in Chilhowie and the Town will be notified prior to replacement.

The Smyth County Office of the Virginia Cooperative Extension reached out to the Town regarding the 103rd Virginia 4-H State Conference, which will be held at Virginia Tech on June 24th-27th. Four students from Chilhowie High School will be attending the Conference. On behalf of the Mayor and the Chilhowie Town Council, Mr. Martin approved a $600.00 donation from the Town to offset the expense.

On June 4th, Don Cole, Tyler Keen, Felicia Eller, and Mr. Martin attended a meeting with the Washington County Service Authority (WCSA). The meeting was held with their leadership team to discuss the status of the VDH FCAP funding application that, if approved, will facilitate needed pump repairs/improvements at the Mill Creek Treatment Plant. Mr. Martin feels the meeting was very productive and it is intend to continue having these meetings on a semi-annual basis.

Mrs. Felicia Eller, Clerk-Treasurer, reported on the account balances. Mr. Martin, Town Manager, has been with the Town almost one year, and it is time for his evaluation. Mrs. Eller requested during the leave of two staff members for the Administrative Office close from 1:00 pm- 2:00 pm each day for lunch. Council agreed with the suggestion.

Mr. Andrew Moss, Police Chief, reported about an event held at the Chilhowie Ministry Center for teaching Senior Citizens about scams. It was a very successful event for Seniors. Chief Moss also attended a training, Sheilds and Stars, he stated it was very helpful, and informative.

Tyler Keen, Assistant Public Works Director, reviewed highlights from the past month. Miss utilities marked, unstopped 2 sewer lines, installed new fire hydrant at the Old High School, changed faulty pressure reducer valves, checked on possible leaks, repaired 5 mainline leaks of which 3 repairs were in one day. Made 2 new water connections and 2 new sewer connections. Pressure washed splash pad and opened splash pad for season. Set up tents and helped cook service over 650 hot dog plates for Older America Days. Thirteen Water crew employees completed Flagger training and received certificates. Cooked and set up and cleaned up for Mr. Danny Combs retirement party.

Chris Johnson, Foreman Building, Grounds, and Streets, reported the Splash Pad has been pressure washed, repairs had been made. Mowing all the properties around town. Mr. Johnson stated progress was being made on how local Churches can participate in decorating the Town for Christmas.

Any Other Council Business:

Councilman, Brent Foster spoke about the dedication of the splash pad for Hunter Reedy, to recognize Hunter and a bench for Chris Pascel that were killed in the line of duty. Chief Moss was going to talk with the family members to see what the family would like for the Town to do for each Hunter and Chris.

Councilman, Bob Jeter, thanked Chief Moss for the escort out of Town for the Chilhowie High School Baseball Team.

Motion by Brent Foster, second by Julie Sturgill Council continues this meeting until the July 10, 2025 Council meeting p.m. The motion was approved with the following recorded vote:

Bill Clear	Aye	Shannon Donnelly	Aye
Brent Foster	Aye	Bob Jeter	Aye
Julie Sturgill	Aye	P.J. Wolfe	Aye

_____Mayor
Gary L. Heninger

_____Clerk
Felicia Eller, CMC