

The Mayor's Corner

BY MAYOR BETH A. TAYLOR

May 2024

I welcome the opportunity to talk to you regarding your ideas and concerns. I can be reached by phone, mail or email.



(276) 223-3356

150 East Monroe Street
beth.taylor@wytheville.org

A Note to

Fellow Citizens

Dear Fellow Citizens of the **Town of Wytheville**, we have so much to be thankful for in our small town (in 2020 the population was 8,265). I know we all get frustrated at times and wish that we had more restaurants, and retail stores that larger municipalities have. I can assure you that neither Town Management, Town Council, JIDA or Downtown Wytheville influence businesses not to come to Wytheville. In fact, it is the opposite, we welcome new businesses, and frequently reach out to invite them to our Town. We are so fortunate and thankful for what we do have.

We are very fortunate to have a fully accredited **Police Department** that holds our safety first and foremost. We also have fully qualified and staffed **Fire and EMS Departments** that, like the Police Department, provide 24/7 coverage for the Town of Wytheville. Let's take a brief look at some of the amenities that The Town offers its citizens. **Public Works** has numerous sub-departments including some that are available 24/7 for water and sewer emergencies. They stay extremely busy keeping our infrastructure up and working and they also handle the maintenance of streets, parks, pools, and tree management, as well as free brush pickup and optional trash pickup. The Town has a **Health and Wellness Center** that has an indoor pool, and don't forget **McWane Pool** for outdoor fun in the warm months. The **Parks & Recreation Department** also offers numerous activities for children and adults. We are fortunate to have a **State Community College** that partners with the **Wythe/Bland Foundation** to offer high school graduates free tuition. We have parks for walking, hiking, playing, picnicking, and relaxing. There are seven museums in our small town and each tells a story of our community. We have a lovely "**Revitalized Downtown**" that includes a revitalized theater on Main Street and a farmers' market, to mention a few.

From the Wytheville Fire & Rescue Department

The Fire and Rescue Department is proud to announce the following promotions. **Matt Akers** has been promoted from Captain to **Battalion Chief**. Battalion Chief Akers has extensive experience in emergency services and public safety having worked as a firefighter/paramedic for Carroll County Fire and Rescue and Roanoke City Fire EMS as well as a Conservation Police Officer for the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, prior to joining our department in 2020. He has 20 years of experience as a volunteer firefighter. Matt is a paramedic and holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Fire Protection Administration from Eastern Kentucky University. **Samantha Amburgey** has been promoted from firefighter/paramedic/field training officer to the rank of **Captain**. Samantha has many years of experience as a paramedic, starting in Nashville and eventually coming to work with Wythe County Rescue Squad. Samantha joined the department in 2019. She holds an Associate degree in Applied Science with a major in Emergency Medical Services Technology from Southwest Virginia Community College.

The Fire and Rescue department recently presented their first ever annual awards and commendations:

- **2023 Firefighter of the Year** - Captain Anthony Marshall
- **2023 EMS Provider of the Year** - FF/Paramedic Samantha Amburgey
- **2023 Distinguished Service Award** - Ashley Showalter
- **2023 Incident Citation** - FF/Paramedic David Ausmus, FF/Paramedic David Harvey, FF/EMT Tyler Wilson, and Assistant Chief Everett Lineberry
- **Five Years Service Recognition** - Charles Miller and Kevin Russell
- **Ten Years Service Recognition** - Jeff Hodge and Paul Cornett



From the Wytheville Police Department

Peace Officers Memorial Day and **Police Week** is a week-long observance that honors law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. It is held every year in May, with **May 15th** designated as **Peace Officers Memorial Day**. The observance was first established in 1962 by President John F. Kennedy. In his proclamation, Kennedy said that the day should be a time to “pay tribute to the law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and to voice our appreciation for all those who currently serve on the front lines of the battle against crime.”

Peace Officers Memorial Day and **Police Week** are a time to remember the sacrifices that law enforcement officers make every day. They are also a time to show our appreciation for the officers who put their lives on the line to keep us safe.

On behalf of the Town of Wytheville, we wish to pay tribute to four officers who gave their lives in the town of Wytheville:

WALTER R. MCCLINTOCK



End of Watch: December 19, 1908

Chief McClintock was shot and killed when he and other officers attempted to arrest two brothers on robbery charges.

The officers approached the brothers on Main Street, in front of the Wythe County Courthouse, and informed them they had warrants for their arrest. One of the brothers immediately produced a handgun and opened fire, striking Chief McClintock.

Despite being mortally wounded, Chief McClintock was able to return fire and killed the suspect. The other brother was taken into custody. The surviving brother was convicted of Chief McClintock's murder and sentenced to 16 years in prison.

RAYMOND ALBERT CHAPMAN & CLAUDIUS EDGAR IRVIN

End of Watch: August 25, 1963

Officers Raymond Chapman and Claudius Irvin were killed in an automobile accident.

As the two officers were responding to a call, a tractor trailer jack-knifed, struck their patrol vehicle, killing them both instantly on Main Street.



CLIFFORD ERNEST DICKER

End of Watch December 6, 1994

Deputy Sheriff Clifford Dicker was shot and killed by a juvenile suspect he was taking into custody for stealing a vehicle.

Deputy Dicker was a U.S. Air Force veteran and had served with the Wythe County Sheriff's Office for 14 years.



To pay tribute to these four officers in person visit the **Officer Down Memorial Wall** located inside the **Wytheville Police, Fire, and Rescue** exhibit located in the **Wytheville Visitors Center, 975 Tazewell Street, Wytheville**. The exhibit is free to the public, open seven days a week from 9am to 5pm.

TOWN OF WYTHEVILLE **TREASURER'S OFFICE** WILL BE **CLOSED**

The **Town of Wytheville Treasurer's Office** will be **closed** from **12:00pm - 5:00pm** on **May 20th, 22nd, 23rd, 28th & 29th, 2024** for training. We apologize for any inconvenience.

For **payments**, please use the **night drop box** located at the front of the building or use the **online payment** option at **www.Wytheville.org/Online-Payments**.



WATER TREATMENT PLANT WYTHEVILLE, VIRGINIA

2023 - Annual Drinking Water Quality Report

The Town of Wytheville 2023 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report is now available online by accessing the following link:

<https://wytheville.org/docs/notice/Wytheville2023CCR.pdf>

A paper copy of the report may be obtained by calling Robby Krunich, Water Plant Superintendent at 276-223-3322 or Public Utilities and Engineering at 276-223-3434.

Festivals & Special Events

- **Saturday, May 11, 2024, 7:00 p.m.** – FREE movie at the **Millwald Theatre** – “Night at the Museum – Battle of the Smithsonian.” At the movie, get a ticket for FREE tours of local museums on the following Saturday, May 18.
- **Saturday, May 18, 2024, is National Museum Day.** FREE admission from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m. Bring your FREE ticket and visit one or all the local museums. Hop on a FREE shuttle at the municipal parking lot at 150 East Monroe. Museums participating:
*African American Heritage Museum; 410 E Franklin St • Edith Bolling Wilson Birthplace Museum; 145 E Main St
Great Lakes to Florida Highway Museum; 975 Tazewell St • Haller-Gibboney Rock House Museum; 205 Tazewell St
Octagon Mansion History Museum; 585 W Main St • Thomas J. Boyd Museum; 295 Tazewell St
Wythe County Decorative Arts Museum; 1125 Tazewell St*
- **Saturday, May 18, 2024.** Head to Withers Park on Saturday, May 18, for the **Seventh Annual Chautauqua Brews and Bands!** Sample craft beers while cheering on your favorite local bands (5) as they compete for “Band of the Year.” Food vendors and nonalcoholic beverages will be available all day at the family-friendly event. The first band takes the stage at noon (until 6pm). Don’t forget your lounge chairs. The winner will perform at the Chautauqua Festival in June.
- **Wednesday, May 22, 2024 – Wall of Honor Remembrance Ceremony** beginning at **7:00 p.m.** in **Withers Park**. There will be a **Memorial Day Ceremony** followed by a **Candlelight Vigil** in honor of those who gave all in service to their country.
- **Wednesday, May 22, & Thursday, May 23, 2024, Run For The Wall** returns. The group will enter Wytheville via Exit 70 and Fourth Street at approximately 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday. After a brief welcome ceremony, the group will parade down Main Street to their hotels. The following morning, beginning at 9:00 a.m., Spiller Elementary School will present a musical program before Run For The Wall departs at 9:30 a.m.
- **Saturday, June 1, 2024** - Homestead Museum will host the second annual **BABA (Bands, Art, Bourbon, and Ale Festival)**. Admission to the festival is free, food and beverages (adult and non-adult) will be available for purchase. The event will be held from 2:00-8:00 p.m. and will feature musical artists including Adam Bolt, Nate Montgomery, and Annabelle’s Curse. Watch for more details!
- **Wythe-Co Wednesdays in June and July** - Every Wednesday in June and July – **FREE admission for all Wythe County residents** (driver’s license or other form of ID for proof of residency) for the following: Haller-Gibboney Rock House Museum, Thomas J. Boyd Museum, Great Lakes to Florida Museum, and Wythe County Decorative Arts Museum & Homestead. Wednesday tour hours are 10:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. (closed for lunch 12-1)
- **Friday, June 7, 2024,** is the first **After Hours Concert** in **Withers Park** with the ACE Party Band on stage. Show times are 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., gates open at 5:30 p.m. Admission is \$7 at the gate, children free. Tickets can be purchased at the Wytheville Community Center for \$5 in advance.
- **Friday, June 14, 2024, Saturday, June 15, 2024, and Sunday June 16, 2024,** are the dates for the **Chautauqua Balloon Glow** at **Wytheville Community College**.
*Saturday, June 15, 2024, Chautauqua Festival Parade • Saturday, June 15, 2024, Chautauqua Fun Run
Saturday, June 22, 2024, Chautauqua Festival 5K • Thursday, July 4, 2024, 4th of July Celebration*
- **Friday, August 2, 2024, After Hours Concert** in **Withers Park** with the band Too Much Silvia on stage. Show times are 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., gates open at 5:30 p.m. Admission is \$7 at the gate, children free. Tickets can be purchased at the Wytheville Community Center for \$5 in advance.
- Let’s not forget the **Farmers Market** located at **210 W. Spring Street** in Wytheville. Check their web site at **www.wythefarmers.org/** for hours and special events.
- The schedule for the **Vintage Base Ball** season will be out soon. Watch for more details from the **Wytheville Department of Museums**.

Council Actions

April 8, 2024:

- Conducted a public hearing to consider appropriations to the Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget in order to amend departmental budgets due to expenditures for sewer improvements and approved the appropriations to the Fiscal Year 2023-24.
- Approved the request of Downtown Wytheville, Incorporated to provide traffic control on Thursday, July 4, 2024, for the 4th of July Celebration & Street Festival.
- Approved the request of Wythe Arts Council, Ltd. for traffic control on Saturday, October 19, 2024, for the Arts at the Crossroads/Apple Atcha Fest.
- Approved the request of the Wytheville-Wythe-Bland Chamber of Commerce for traffic control on Friday, May 3, 2024, for a Community Connections Day event.
- Reviewed Ordinance No. 1430, an ordinance amending and reenacting Ordinance No. 1028, generally known as Personnel Rules, Regulations, and Policies, of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, so as to amend Section 6. Benefits, Subsection 6.4 Retirement Benefits.
- Approved capital and one-time expenditures to the General Fund and the Water and Sewer Fund for Fiscal Year 2024-25.
- Scheduled a public hearing for the April 22, 2024, Town Council meeting to consider a revised Master Fee Schedule that includes water and sewer rate increases.

April 22, 2024:

- Conducted a public hearing to consider increasing the Lodging Tax to a rate not to exceed ten (10) percent on the charge made to each room rented to transients.
- Adopted Ordinance No. 1431, an Ordinance amending Chapter 14, Taxation, Article VI. Lodging Tax, Section 14-107, Levy of Tax, of the Town Code, to increase the lodging tax from eight (8) percent to ten (10) percent, on first and final reading. The new tax rate is effective July 1, 2024.
- Conducted a public hearing to consider increasing Meals Tax to a rate not to exceed nine (9) percent on every meal served, sold or delivered in the town by a restaurant or caterer.
- Disapproved Ordinance No. 1432, an ordinance amending and reenacting Chapter 14, Taxation, Article V. Meals Tax, Section 14-79, Levy of Tax, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, to increase the Meals Tax from, eight (8) percent to nine (9) percent. Consensus of the Town Council to revisit this topic later in 2025.
- Conducted a public hearing to consider increasing the Lodging Tax to a rate not to exceed ten (10) percent on the charge made to each room rented to transients.
- Adopted Ordinance No. 1431, an Ordinance amending Chapter 14, Taxation, Article VI. Lodging Tax, Section 14-107, Levy of Tax, of the Town Code, to increase the lodging tax from eight (8) percent to ten (10) percent, on first and final reading. The new tax rate is effective July 1, 2024.
- Conducted a public hearing to consider increasing Meals Tax to a rate not to exceed nine (9) percent on every meal served, sold or delivered in the town by a restaurant or caterer.
- Disapproved Ordinance No. 1432, an ordinance amending and reenacting Chapter 14, Taxation, Article V. Meals Tax, Section 14-79, Levy of Tax, of the Code of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, to increase the Meals Tax from, eight (8) percent to nine (9) percent. Consensus of the Town Council to revisit this topic later in 2025.
- Conducted a public hearing to consider the Town of Wytheville Master Fee Schedule for Fiscal Year 2024-25 that includes increases to water and sewer rates, and adopted the Master Fee Schedule for Fiscal Year 2024-25.
- Approved Ordinance No. 1433, the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2024-25, on first, but not final, reading.
- Approved funding for the following Community Contribution requests: (1) Brain Injury Solutions - \$1,000; (2) Wytheville Training School Cultural Center - \$10,000; (3) Edith Bolling Wilson A First Lady's Birthplace Museum - \$10,000; (4) Wythe-Grayson Regional Library - \$4,000; (5) Open Door Community - \$10,000; (6) Millwald Theatre - \$75,000, and the Town Council will revisit in December 2024 after the Millwald Theatre Board provides financial statements to the Town.
- Adopted Ordinance No. 1430, an ordinance amending and reenacting Ordinance No. 1028, generally known as Personnel Rules, Regulations and Policies, of the Town of Wytheville, Virginia, so as to amend Section 6, Benefits, Subsection 6.4 Retirement Benefits, on first and final reading, as amended.
- Approved the request of the Wytheville Farmers' Market for issuance of a raffle permit for calendar year 2024.
- Approved the request of the Wytheville Training School Cultural Center for issuance of a raffle permit for calendar year 2024.
- Adopted a resolution of appreciation for Devoted to You for the "A Christmas to Remember" event.
- Scheduled a public hearing for May 13, 2024, Town Council meeting to receive bids and consider the sale of a non-exclusive franchise, privilege, lease or right for an electric, heat, and power transmission and distribution system to the Town of Wytheville.