Town of Cleveland
September 10, 2026
Town Hall
6:00pm

Audience gave Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.
Council member Alex Faulkner led in prayer.

Meeting was called to order by Mayor James Sullivan at 6:00pm.

Roll Call:

Council members Jason Grigsby, Donna McDougal, Monica Moorer, and Alex Faulkner were present. absent Chad Pass

Others present:

Town Clerk Miranda Shirley, Office Manager Michele Sanders, Superintendent Steve Pass, Mike Killette, Town Attorney Alex Smith, Justin Ragsdale, Police Chief Ken Evans, Coach Angelo

Reading of August 13 ,2026 minutes. A motion was made by Donna McDougal and second by Monica Moorer all yes approved as submitted.

Reading of August 31, 2026, minutes. A motion was made by Donna McDougal and second by Jason Grigsby all yes approved as submitted.

Mayor Report:
Waiver for water and sewer tie on for upcoming business – tabled at this time

Blount County Education fund, we have $2500.00 last month per paperwork they submitted but we had to do same thing last year comeback and give an additional $1500 so we can give 4 teachers in Cleveland $1000 grant.
Councilmember Alex Faulkner made a motion to amend and give additional $1500.00 to BCEF. Councilmember Monica Moorer seconded the motion. All Yes. Motion carried with roll call vote.

Proclamation from the daughters of the American Revolution for the week of September 17-23rd to be recognized as Constitution Week. Councilmember Donna McDougal made a motion to adopt the Proclamation naming September 17-23rd as Constitution Week. Jason Grigsby second the motion. All Yes. Motion carried with roll call vote.

Mayor Sullivan, we need to amend the 2025-2026 budget for the purchasing of 2 police vehicles, in the amount of $120,023.00.

Councilmember Monica Moorer made a motion to amend the 2025-26 budget in the amount of the 2 police vehicle purchase. Councilmember Jason Grisby seconded the motion. All Yes. Motion carried with role call vote.

Park Board:
Councilmember Alex Faulkner, the park board, decided to meet at the park over there and we just took time and walked around and looked at several things and I felt like we had a productive meeting over there.
And then the follow-up from that is Justin and I met again over there with the mayor and Steve and talked about some of those things that we pointed out.
We looked at a tree that needs to come down, Steve already handled per Mayor, came down today. Electrical things on those pavilions Steve is going to check on some of that for us.
Just cleaning out. We talked about cleaning out the shed where the mowers stay that they used to drag the fields and then another area that they used for storage.
Just cleaning out, trying to make things a little more accessible and looking a little bit neater over there. And we did talk about, since Steve's about to get into a culvert project over there, we talked about the seesaw that's been broken forever and there's another swing there that's loose. We talked about it while he was doing that culvert and got the equipment out there pulling up some of that stuff that's broken and really a hazard. Just little odds and ends things, you know, just trying to just be productive and get little, small projects done while we're waiting on this grant to get the big project done, the red pavilion, just right when you come into the park, there's an older pavilion. it has settled, and if you look at it, it's leaning. But maybe just trying to get little things done. And again, we're still working on numbers for some more equipment, pitching mounds and C &L screens like Chad asked about. So just be ready to be looking at some of that sometime before the end of the year before they get started with ball again.

Mayor James Sullivan has asked Ernie Swindle to look at the issues with pavilion, and it should be under the $50k bid law Councilmember Monica Moore was asking about.

Councilmember Donna McDougal asked about the massive pothole that’s concerning people walking and falling due to the pothole.

Councilmember Alex Faulkner Yes, I saw that text that you sent me, Miss Donna, about that pothole. That's just where that culvert has washed out to that point, we think. Working on getting that done.

Grant:
Mayor Sullivan, The grant we sat down this week and done the RFQ. That's where the engineer people that were for sent in their paperwork. We had to go through there and score them. We done the scoring and I done one, Miranda done one, and Sawyer, we were on a call reviewing our scores, and it was kind of odd. We were then one point on all our scoring. Nobody seen what nobody was doing. So, you know, one that I really picked low, they picked low too, So, but

we've got the scoring done and it's in Sawyer's hands now and he'll be contacting somewhere down the line and he's supposed to be trying to find out about our grant.
You know, he says, you know, he's getting anxious too. He's wanting, he says, you know, I'm I want to do a good job for us, but he says, it's like my hands are tied And I asked him, I said, well, you think, because the lady that we met that works for Aderholt you know, Jennifer, she told me if we needed anything to give her a call, so I asked him about it, He said, well, let me check first. And he says, if I can't do anything, said, you know, give her a call and see if she can get them to check up on it. So, we're working on it.

Medical Center:
N/A
Chamber -.
Councilmember Alex Faulkner The chamber, they pushed our meeting back to next week since this week there was a holiday

Utility Department-

Water Superintendent presented the resolution to increase the water and sewer rates by 6%. Resolution 2026-06 Increasing the Water and Sewer rates.
Councilmember Monica Moorer voiced her concern about the rate increase due to the social media post that happened about an increase in their water bill last month, Office Manager Michele Sanders stated that the customer failed to mention in that post that there was a water slide at their resident for 3 days.
Councilmember Monica Moore asked for the current rate and how much it would cost per minimum bill with the 6% increase

Office Manager Michele Sanders informed that she called on the surrounding area water systems and that we are the 2nd lowest in the area still but other are going up this year also. And the increase would be water and sewer increase on the minimum bill be $3.56

Councilmember Alex Faulker made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-06 Water and Sewer increase. Jason Grisgby seconded the motion.

Ayes:	Nays:
Jason Grisgby	Donna McDougal
Monica Moorer	
Alex Faulkner	
Mayor James Sullivan	

Motion carried with majority roll call vote.

Police Department
Working on graphics on new Tahoe's and getting the old vehicles repaired ready to sell

Old Business:

Permission Agreement with Coach Angelo, he needs to set up a time to come see the mayor and they sit down and talk and do from there, but he can finish his week out at the park. Coach Angleo agreed to come sit and talk with the Mayor on Monday when he pays for using the faculty.

New Business:

Mayor James Sullivan Bridging the Gap is asking for $500.00 donation we made this last year. Yes, it's for a food bank.

Councilmember Alex Faulkner asked if this was the food bank.

Councilmember Alex Faulkner made a motion to donate $500.00 to Bridging the Gap. Councilmember Jason Grisby seconded the motion. All Yes. Motion carried with roll call vote.

Mayor James Sullivan
On the 2026-27 General Fund budget council said that they would like only the cost of living raises to be given out in this year's budget for the general fund, which is 4%. So, anything other than the 4% budget, we'll have to take out of the general fund budget. Do I have a motion to accept the budget as is except for the only thing
On the rises there will be the cost-of-living raise. We'll have to go back and take anything else out. Is that what the council decided?

Councilmember Alex Faulkner made a motion to approve the General Fund budget with only 4% cost of living raises. Councilmember Monica Moorer seconded the motion. All Yes. Motion carried with roll call vote.

Councilmember Monica Moorer asked how many police officers we have a moment 4 and going to 5 officers. And asked if we were paying him the moment.

Police Chief answered we have 4 but at moment 3 because we have 1 deployed and we are not guaranteed that we will get anyone. We must pay him 168 hours of military time come January he is to be back in March or May if he is not stationed overseas another year. But on paper, but really there's just three of us and we're paying a pretty good bit in overtime. We still wouldn't have anywhere close to 24-hour coverage.

Councilmember Alex Faulkner asked if we had any overages on the General Fund.
Town Clerk Miranda Shirley explained that did occur on legals, insurance, dues fees and bonds nothing that council was not aware of.

Mayor James Sullivan is okay now to the Operation and Maintenance /Water Budget

Councilmember Monica Moorer and Alex Faulkner asked about the sewer bonds through the Bank of New York, they requested how much was left on the balance and when was the pay off date.
Town Clerk will have to get those totals to the council at a later date.

Superintendent Steve Pass stated that if you're not in debt for your sewer then you're not doing something right, Also that he put in budget a new hire that is to be like Parks employee to share with the water department because they are in need of help was in the budget from last year he just never hired anyone.

Councilmember Monica Moorer asked Superintendent Steve Pass if he only had the 4% cost of living raise among his staff.

Superintendent Steve Pass responded that he that and 2 employees with $1.00 raises. I had figured in the budget there for a dollar raise for 2 of the guys, one of them, especially, because I just found this out yesterday. I could be losing them to Remlap. You get to be a certified operator now, always looking for somebody.

Councilmember Monica Moorer asked So Alex, are they, is it okay to give a single raise in the water department or is that an across the board raise?

Town Attorney Alex Smith responded that Well, Is it outside the handbook? I mean, what's the, is it, Steve, is it, what's the basis on keeping him, I mean, on raising him and not everybody else?

Superintendent Steve Pass responded with Well, he's actually the last hired and to bring him up, you know, for the workload and the work he does, I mean, he's already become a certified operator, which he got a dollar at the end of that when he becomes a certified operator. I just had that figured in on the budget for another dollar this year just to try to bring him up to what everybody else in the county kind of makes and that way we wouldn't be hopefully losing anybody. And he did receive his $1.00 raise when he got his operator certificate.

Councilmember Alex Faulkner asked what he makes now?

Superintendent Steve Pass responded to $21 I think.

Councilmember Monica Moorer, I guess I just want to make sure with Alex Smith legitimately because we just had this discussion back there (Executive Session) about does it has to be across the board? No, I mean like is it across the board?

Attorney Alex Smith Right. It's supposed to be that one. That's why I was asking if there was a different situation. It's outside the personnel handbook. We really shouldn't be doing that unless there's some real justification for a certification or something.

Superintendent Steve Pass There's a 4% raise .But you can't give an individual a raise for job performance or anything like that?

Attorney Alex Smith Well, not part of the handbook. That’s the thing. So, I would say as our current structure is no. Now, certain positions are different. Miranda, for example, is different as an appointed person. She’s out from under all of that. But we maybe need to look at that. Well, we addressed this issue with the police officers a year or two ago. We kind of went in and across the board, if you remember, up their rate to be competitive. That may have been further back than that, but it was within the recent administration. But again, see, it was done across the board in the police department.

Council member Donna McDougal Steve, do we not have anything in place like we pay for them to do all these qualifications, and they get qualified and they have got nothing?

Superintendent Steve Pass Yeah, we do. If he was to go, I mean, we're protected, just like, say the police, or I mean, if all the money that we put into him getting certified, he's got to stay with us at least two years. He hasn’t signed any contract, that's state law.

Mayor James Sulivan but have you explained that to him, Steve, if he leaves?

Superintendent Steve Pass Yeah, he, but he's at two. See, if you, if he left, just say if he left tomorrow and he didn't have quite two, you're going to have to prorate that anyway. You ain't going to get the whole full thing back. That’s right. That’s not a, I'm not sitting here saying that it's going to happen. I’m just saying that I know he's approached. Honestly, I just don't like to be approached by other systems, that’s going to happen.

Councilmember Alex Faulkner I think what I'm hearing tell me if I'm hearing it wrong, is we approve the 4% cost of living rates across the board, but we should probably consider merit raises individually?

Councilmember Monica Moorer We can't give merit raises.

Attorney Alex Smith I think we need to look at the Personnel policy in terms.

Town Clerk stated that first year and five year is another dollar.

Councilmember Monica Moorer So if he's not coming up for five years, then he's just, how long has he been here? They get a raise after the first year too, right, they get a first-year raise? And they're getting a cost-of-living raise, and they get a five-year raise. Can we give him the first-year raise?

Attorney Alex Smith replied Absolutely.

Superintendent Steve Pass almost 2 years I don't know if, to be honest with you, I don't know if James got a first-year raise. He got a raise when he got certification. I mean, not being sarcastic, but I don't know if any of my guys or whatever's ever got a first year. I do know there's a dollar at the end of, if you got certified. It's in the handbook to give a dollar. Probably be my fault if it's in the book and all that. He got a dollar raised. He's got he's got cost of living raises, I do know that.

Town Clerk Miranda Shirley said we can go back and look in the minutes and in Dominion to see if he got his 1-year merit raise.

Councilmember Monica Moorer Yeah, that makes me have a question on the general fund side.

Office Manager Michele Sanders stated I know we said 4% across the board, but in March, Belinda will be a year full-time. So, will that just be something we bring back to the council at that time?

Mayor James Sullivan No, her dollar stayed, her dollar will stay in there.

Town Clerk Miranda Shirley stated that Ken Evans' 5-year merit raise in February was not in the budget.

Mayor James Sullivan, we need to amend the budget for his five years. So, make a note to amend the budget for him.

Councilmember Monica Moorer and check on James. Check on all the water employees and make sure they got the first year raises.

Town Clerk Miranda Shirley I know Eric got his 5-year merit raise I don't know about one year. I mean, because I was not here for one year, I know Eric got his five years now. His one year that was prior to me. Pretty sure how this handbook was adopted in 25, that takes effect in 25. What happened prior to 2025 doesn't matter because when we adopted the handbook in 2025, that superseded that anything else prior.

Councilmember Monica Moorer So it's up to us whether they get the raise then?
If the handbook was adopted after. Mayor, that's your question.

Mayor James Sullivan That'd be a question for Alex, Alex

Attorney Alex Smith I mean, on the legal side of it. Well, the 2025 re-adoption would incorporate any changes that were from the prior handbook provided for that, then it's in there.

Councilmember Monica Moorer So I don't want to vote on this until we know, or I don't want to, I mean, I'm okay with giving him a raise if it. Yeah, the cost of everybody cost a living raise

Mayor James Sullivan O&M budget, you want to make a motion to do the 4%

Councilmember Monica Moorer I make a motion to do the 4% cost of living on the O&M Budget. Donna McDougal Second the motion. All Yes Motion carried with roll call vote.

Mayor James Sullivan the raises. It's going to have to be looked into. Is that what I'm hearing?

Council member Alex Faulkner, I just want it to be fair. And that's what I want, to just be fair across the board.

Mayor James Sullivan Alex, would you look at the handbook and then get back with me and let me know?

Alex Smith, I just took it up and I'll do it.

Mayor James Sullivan We'll pass the budget other than the raises.If it comes back to say, yes, we can give, it's already here. If it's, we can't, then we take that out and amend this budget to whatever Alex comes up with. How's that?

Councilmember Monica Moorer made a motion to amend this budget for raises should anyone that didn't get merit raises or due merit raises gets added to budget. Jason Grigsby seconded the motion. All Yes. Motion carried with majority roll call vote.

Councilmember Alex Faulkner and I want to go on the record and say we don't want to lose James or I don't. We don't want to lose anybody.

Mayor James Sullivan presented the Franchise agreement from Farmers Fiber Optics.

Attorney Alex Smith will have to review and get back with council with the revisions on the franchise agreement.

Jason Grigsby made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Monica Moorer seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned

Respectfully Submitted,

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Mayor, James Sullivan

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Miranda Shirley, Town Clerk