

**A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TOWN COUNCIL
OF
THE TOWN OF LURAY, VIRGINIA**

Monday, June 9th, 2025

The Luray Town Council met in regular session on Monday, June 9th, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the Luray Town Council Chambers located at 45 East Main Street, Luray, Virginia, at which time there were present the following:

Presiding: Mayor Stephanie Lillard

Council Present:

Ron Vickers
Jerry Dofflemyer
Alex White (via phone)
Jason Pettit
Joseph Sours
Chuck Butler

Also Present:

Bryan Chrisman, Town Manager
Michael Coffelt, Assistant Town Manager
Danielle Babb, Clerk-Treasurer
Danielle Alger, Deputy Clerk Treasurer
Lonnie Foster, Luray Police Department
Jason Botkins, Litten & Sipe
Brooke Fox, Planning and Zoning
Jackie Wood, Luray Downtown Initiative
Dow McGrady, Boy Scout Troop 100
Powell Markowitz, Boy Scout Troop 100
Roger Rothgeb, Boy Scout Troop 100
Kevin Painter, Stanley Fire Department
Mike Foltz, Stanley Fire Department
Susan Corbett, Citizen Comment-Hawksbill Creek

(This meeting was made public via the Town's Facebook page. Public comments were accepted prior to the meeting via e-mail to bchrisman@townofluray.com).

A quorum being present, Mayor Lillard declared the Council to be in session for the transaction of business. All present stood for a moment of silence. Mayor Lillard led everyone in the United States Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was then called with all Council members present, with Councilman White joining by telephone.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Councilman Vickers motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with corrections as presented, motion seconded by Councilman Sours with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, White, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 6-0**

Consent Agenda

- (A) Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting -05/12/2025
- (B) Minutes of the Special Meeting – 05/27/2025
- (C) Financial Reports Ending- 05/31/2025
- (D) Accounts Payable Totaling- **\$169,386.41**

GENERAL CITIZEN COMMENTS

Susan Corbett, 397 Riverbend Road, Stanley

Ms. Corbett informed Council that she was here to voice her concern again over the water quality of the Hawksbill Creek. Ms. Corbett stated that the signs that the Town displayed need to be larger.

COUNCIL RESPONSE

Mayor Lillard mentioned the possibility of adding a QR code to the signs and will check into making the signs larger. Ms. Corbett stated that her goal is for everyone to eventually be able to swim and wade in the Hawksbill Creek.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Luray Downtown Initiative

Jackie Wood, LDI President, provided pictures and stated that she was thrilled to announce the new billboards. Ms. Wood thanked Bob Brown along with Councilman Pettit and LDI co-workers for help on this project. Ms. Wood stated that she has heard positive feedback from the billboards. Ms. Wood stated that the Luray Downtown Initiative is nationally accredited and with this comes perks with grants and design works. Ms. Wood announced the retirement of Cathy Frazier from Frazier and Associates. Ms. Wood added there will be someone new taking Ms. Frazier's place and she will notify Council at the July meeting. Ms. Wood stated the grand opening of Appalachian Trail Outfitters went great. Ms. Wood added she is working with Susan Corbett on the Cody building to get that space filled.

Employee Recognition-Donna Pullen

Mayor Lillard thanked Ms. Pullen, of the Luray Police Department, for her years of service. Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, read aloud the proclamation honoring Ms. Pullen. Ms. Pullen has retired effective June 1, 2025 after serving the Town for 37 years.

Motion: Councilman Dofflemyer motioned to approve the Proclamation of Recognition for Donna Pullen for her 37 years of service as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Pettit with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, White, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 6-0**

Stanley Volunteer Fire Department

Dow McGrady with Boy Scout Troop 100 thanked Council for allowing use of the Hawksbill Creek for their Annual Fishing Tournament. Mr. McGrady added that this is a joint fundraiser for the Boy Scouts and the Stanley Fire Department. Mr. McGrady's request is to move the event back to April. He added there were several functions going on the same day as their event this year, which was held in May 2025. Mr. McGrady also added that the temperatures in May caused many of the fish to die due to warmer water temperatures. He added that moving it back one week the water would be cooler. Mr. McGrady also stated that they wait until after February 1st to visit any businesses to inquire about donations/prizes for their tournament, so this doesn't interfere with the Parks and Recreation Department and their youth trout derby.

Mayor Lillard thanked Mr. McGrady for coming and speaking. Councilman Vickers stated that he had no idea that one week would change the water temperatures. Councilman Vickers also stated that it would be good to have another meeting with Superintendent Jen Jenkins, Parks and Recreation, to come up with a solution and date for Stanley's event. Mr. McGrady mentioned that it may be a good thing to have these events back-to-back. Mr. Chrisman stated that they will see if the dates could be moved around.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Subdivision Code Changes

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, requested Council conduct a Public Hearing to receive citizen input and to consider the adoption of changes to the Subdivision Ordinance of Town Code to be in conformity with State Law changes that will become effective July 1, 2025.

The Town Attorney has crafted the changes, both in red-line and in clear copy, for review and consideration. Both are included in tonight's packet.

Since the Town has, or soon will have, a population of 5,000 or more, the locality needs to select a "subdivision agent" other than the Planning Commission. As the Town's Zoning Administrator, a prudent choice may be to appoint the Town Manager as the subdivision approval agent for Luray.

The changes appear to be focused on streamlining and expediting the review process for subdivisions.

Town staff continue to remain concerned that approval of subdivisions without the necessary and sufficient infrastructure (utilities, roads, stormwater, etc.) in place to service the new parcels will lead to situations in the future whereby owners of the new parcels will expect infrastructure to be readily available.

Mayor Lillard opened the hearing for public comments. Hearing none, she closed the hearing.

Motion: Councilman Sours motioned the Subdivision Changes be approved, as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Vickers with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, White, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 6-0**

FY26 Budget and Tax, Rate and Fee Increases

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, requested Council conduct a Public Hearing to receive citizen input regarding the FY26 Budget and the associated Tax, Rate & Fee Increases.

A copy of the proposed budget and tax/rate/fee schedule is included in tonight's packet for Council's review and discussion. This will cover the Fiscal Year period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. Specifically included are:

- FY26 (2025-2026) Budget Summary
- FY26 (2025-2026) Budget Revenues
- FY26 (2025-2026) Budget Expenditures
- FY26 (2025-2026) Tax, Rate & Fee Schedule

The Council cannot act on any of these items until at least seven (7) calendar days after the date of the Public Hearing.

These items are intended to be Action Items on the June 24, 2025, Council Special Meeting agenda.

Mayor Lillard opened the hearing for public comments. Hearing none, Mayor Lillard closed the hearing.

Mr. Chrisman thanked Treasurer, Danielle Babb, for adding graphs to the packet for Council's review. Councilman Vickers added that it makes it much easier to understand. Councilman Dofflemyer inquired about the lodging tax revenues being lower. Ms. Babb stated that a few properties have moved to long-term rentals and that along with market saturation have affected the lodging revenues. Mr. Chrisman stated that while taxes are higher the gross sales have decreased based on the information that Ms. Babb has provided. Councilman Dofflemyer inquired if the Town could get something stating that these folks need to notify us if they decide to close. Ms. Babb stated that the Town could certainly add that.

Sewer Fund Financing Resolution & Bond

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, requested Council conduct a Public Hearing to receive citizen input and to consider the approval of financing for several sewer infrastructure projects.

The Town Attorney has crafted the documents which are included for your Council's reference this evening.

The proposed financing with Blue Ridge Bank is designed to be a ten (10) year note for \$1.6 million at a fixed rate of 5.52%.

Debt service expenditures (Principal \$92,000, Interest \$65,000) are included in the FY26 budget.

With closing slated to be completed by July 1, 2025, the funds will be available in the new fiscal year to begin completing the essential projects.

Mayor Lillard opened the hearing for public comments. Hearing none, Mayor Lillard closed the hearing.

Motion: Councilman Butler motioned the Financing Resolution & Bond be approved, as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Vickers with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemeyer, White, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 6-0**

ACTION ITEMS

Virginia Code 2025 Readoption

Town Attorney, Jason Botkins, requested Council discuss and take action on the included 2025 Virginia Code Readoption.

Mr. Botkins has recommended the enclosed Ordinance for consideration.

Motion: Councilman Sours motioned that the Virginia Code 2025 Readoption Ordinance be approved, as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Butler with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemeyer, White, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 6-0**

Code Changes Ordinance- TOT

Town Attorney, Jason Botkins, requested Council discuss and take action on the included Code Changes Ordinance regarding Transient Occupancy Tax.

Mr. Botkins has recommended the enclosed Ordinance for consideration.

These changes to the Town Code will align with action by the General Assembly to alter the State Code effective July 1, 2025.

Motion: Councilman Sours motioned that the TOT Code Changes Ordinance be approved, as presented. Councilman Dofflemeyer seconded the motion with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemeyer, White, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 6-0**

Fluoride Use

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, requested Council discuss and take action on the issue of stopping or continuing the use of fluoride in the Town's drinking water.

Council was briefed on this issue at the May 27, 2025, Special Meeting by the Superintendent of the Water Treatment Plant, Joey Haddock.

Mr. Chrisman stated there are advantages and disadvantages to utilizing fluoride in drinking water. Given the advancements in dental care and dental care products, the strong advantages noted in past medical studies in earlier decades have diminished in importance.

Due to customer choice, chemical product availability, cost, corrosiveness, operator safety, and the difficulty with regulating amounts in the drinking water (especially with naturally occurring fluoride in Town water sources), the staff recommendation is to suspend the addition of fluoride to the Town's drinking water. This option provides consumers a choice with relation to fluoride and dental care.

If the Council elects to suspend fluoride inclusion in the Town's drinking water, we need to notify the Virginia Department of Health – Office of Drinking Water and then wait for a ninety (90) day period before ceasing the addition of fluoride.

During this 90-day period, we are required to notify the community and water customers via a variety of means including, but not limited to, a direct-mailed letter, a notice in the utility bill, a posting to our website, and/or on our social media outlets.

Mr. Chrisman stated that it boils down to being a personal choice. He added that much of the community wishes that we didn't provide fluoride, but you also have a portion that would like us to continue providing fluoride. Mr. Chrisman stated the amount that is added into our water is miniscule. Councilman Vickers stated that the County doesn't have this option, and they do not have fluoride since residents have well water. Councilman Butler stated that he would be interested in knowing the dental health between the Town and County and argued that the Town residents probably have better dental health than County residents. Mr. Sours stated that if it's in the Town's water, people don't have a choice to not have fluoride. He added if it's not added to the water, people would have a choice. Councilman White stated that there were good points to having it and not having it. Mr. White added that he has looked at several studies and it proves to be better with having fluoride in the water. However, he added that he will most likely take an abstention from tonight's vote due to wanting to wait at least six more months for more discussion and research. Mr. Pettit inquired about the supply chain and it changing from a powder form to a liquid. He added that citizens really don't know what they are getting as far as fluoride is concerned. Mr. Chrisman stated there's a whole list of criteria and stated that Mr. Pettit had a good point. Councilman Sours stated there are pros and cons along with good arguments both ways. Councilman Pettit inquired if the Town was currently using powder or liquid. Mr. Chrisman stated that due to the new pumps, we use liquid form. Mayor Lillard reminded that Mr. Haddock had concerns with staff handling of the heavy materials. Councilman Pettit stated that many people that he has talked to are fine with the Town removing the fluoride and he added that he has a problem with adding something to the Town's already good water. Councilman White stated that he appreciated the work put into the information provided, but wishes there were more controlled studies, which is why he said he will be sitting this vote out.

Motion: Councilman Vickers motioned that the use of Fluoride in the Town's drinking water be suspended, as presented. Councilman Sours seconded the motion with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Pettit, Sours. NAY: Council Members Dofflemyer, Butler. Abstain: Councilman White. **Approved 3-2**

TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No further comments.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Vickers inquired if any other members would be attending the Stanley Parade.

Councilman Dofflemyer and Councilman Butler stated they would be attending. The event will be held on July 5th. Councilman Dofflemyer inquired about the Town Employee picnic. Ms. Babb stated the event will be held on Thursday, July 3rd. The office will be closing at noon, and the meal will follow at Lake Arrowhead. Ms. Babb added the office will be closed on Friday, July 4th as well.

Councilman Dofflemyer stated the VML registration is now open and suggested rooms at Hotel Roanoke. Councilman Vickers added the dates for the conference are October 12th, 13th and 14th and all members plan on attending. Councilman Butler stated that the 250th Anniversary of American Independence Committee plan on doing a historic display on Memorial Day. He added at some point they will be visiting Council about putting a marker somewhere in Luray. Mr. Butler is a member of the committee.

Mr. Chrisman stated that the Lake is going good with the new changes. Ms. Babb added there have been shelters reserved that normally wouldn't have been since the new Information Station has been added. Councilman Sours would like to get more data on the Lake revenues and Ms. Babb stated that once she obtains more data that she would provide him with that information.

Mayor Lillard inquired if anyone had heard feedback from the Luray Little League. Mr. Chrisman stated they had heard nothing so far.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Lillard reminded everyone of the office closure for Juneteenth, which is on Thursday, June 19th.

ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Stephanie Lillard
Mayor

Danielle Alger
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer