

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

Monday, July 14, 2025

The Luray Town Council met in regular session on Monday, July 14, 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
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
Bow Cook, Police Chief, Luray Police Department
Jason Botkins, Litten & Sipe
Brooke Fox, Planning and Zoning
Jackie Wood, Luray Downtown Initiative
Leslie Currle, Page County EDA
Susan Corbett, Citizen Comment
Rod Graves, Luray-Hawksbill Greenway Foundation
Gladys McNemar, Luray-Hawksbill Greenway Foundation
Bill Dudley, Luray-Hawksbill Greenway Foundation
Curt Brodie, Alley Vacation Request, Public Hearing

(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.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Councilman Vickers motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with corrections as presented, motion seconded by Councilman Butler 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 -06/09/2025

(B) Minutes of the Special Meeting – 06/24/2025

(C) Accounts Payable Totaling- **\$612,215.86**

GENERAL CITIZEN COMMENTS

Susan Corbett, 379 Riverbend Road, Stanley

Ms. Corbett thanked Council for the signage on the Greenway. Ms. Corbett stated that she hasn't seen any activity with people using the Hawksbill Creek. Ms. Corbett would like the town to write a letter to the VA Agriculture Commissioner's office about cleaning up the creek and making farmers fence their cattle. Ms. Corbett stated that her goal is to get the e-coli levels as low as possible.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Luray Downtown Initiative

Jackie Wood, LDI President, started off by saying how well the 4th of July Downtown event went. Ms. Wood gave a shoutout to Jen and Greg with Parks and Recreation along with their staff and the Luray Police Department. Ms. Wood said they handed out over 480 bottles of water that Liberty Tax had graciously donated. Ms. Wood requested to attend the August work session about the work plans. Ms. Wood stated that all of the Evenings on Main events have been indoors due to the weather and is hoping to be back on the plaza soon. Ms. Wood stated the Alcovia Mortgage property is up for lease as well as the Cody building. Ms. Wood stated the new restaurant Taste of Home Downtown will be opening on July 17th. Lastly, Ms. Wood stated that the mural has been completed and looks beautiful.

Greenway Extension Report

Gladys McNemar, Luray-Hawksbill Greenway, touched briefly on the survey results. She stated the survey results are available on the town's website. Ms. McNemar highlighted that by the looks of the survey not only the locals will utilize the new expansion but visitors as well. Ms. McNemar thanked Susan Rocke along with Jen Jenkins and Sherri Glenn with the Parks and Recreation Department for putting together the survey and

Elenor Ames for getting the information out. Ms. McNemar reiterated a huge thanks to everyone, especially the Luray Parks and Recreation Department.

Rod Graves, Luray-Hawksbill Greenway, stated that he wanted to get everyone's blessing on the new trail slogan. He added that he was aware that Councilman Vickers liked it. He added by saying the name of the slogan will be "Forge Ahead to Redwell Furnace". Mr. Graves stated that it has been a lot of work but thanked Council for their support.

Bill Dudley, Luray-Hawksbill Greenway, would like help with funding for the expansion of the Greenway project. Mr. Dudley also mentioned that he would like to have a 25th Anniversary Celebration of the Phase 1 Groundbreaking in 2026 and would like everyone's support.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Alley Vacation Request (Brodie)

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, requested Council conduct a Public Hearing to receive citizen input and to consider the request to vacate a portion of the undeveloped neighborhood right-of-way (alleyway) adjacent to parcels owned by the applicant, Curt Brodie.

The applicant/owner is requesting that the Town vacate any interest they may have in a portion of the alley between Fifth & Sixth Streets and between Seventh & Eighth Avenues.

A sketch was enclosed for Council review. The applicant owns Parcels 3 through 5, including the house at 211 Fifth Street.

The adjacent parcel owners have all been notified by mail.

If approved, the Council authorizes the Town Attorney to draft the required Ordinance document(s) necessary to pair with the applicant's survey plat in order that both may be properly recorded in the Land Records of Page County. Such an approval would authorize the Town Manager to complete any needed documents or processes to effectively enable the request.

The owners of 508 Eighth Avenue have been notified and may want to obtain half of the alley that abuts their parcel 14. As noted by the Town Attorney, providing all the alley to Mr. Brodie (as requested) would leave Parcel 14 land locked. There was no contact by the 508 Eighth Avenue Owners.

Mr. Chrisman stated that it makes sense and is in the best interest of the town.

Mayor Lillard opened the Public Hearing for discussion, hearing none, she closed the hearing.

Motion: Councilman Vickers motioned that they Alley Vacation Request be approved as presented. Councilman Butler seconded the motion with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, White, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 6-0**

DISCUSSION ITEMS

CCC Memorial Scenic Byway

Town Councilman, Alex White, requested Council review and discuss a proposal for the CCC Memorial Scenic Byway.

In January of this year, the Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors officially endorsed designating all of SR 675 (Edinburg Gap Rd, Camp Roosevelt Rd, Fort Valley Rd, etc.) from the Page County line to the West Virginia line as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Memorial Byway through the Virginia Scenic Byways program. The important initiative recognizes and connects two historically significant sites: Camp Roosevelt, the first CCC camp in the nation, and Wolf Gap, one of the earliest Black CCC camps.

The Civilian Conservation Corps, created during the Great Depression, provided employment, training, and community for young men across America while contributing to vital conservation and public works projects. The CCC left a legacy on our landscapes, parks, and local economies—a legacy deeply rooted in this region.

While the CCC is often associated with Edinburg, it is important to note that Camp Roosevelt was situated on the Page County line. Corps members frequently looked to Luray for supplies, recreation, and social opportunities – including baseball games and other activities. In many ways, Luray served as a critical hub for the camp. Additionally, the CCC was involved in SNP’s development in Page (re: Big Meadows, where President Roosevelt visited).

Now that Shenandoah County has taken meaningful steps to honor this history through the CCC Memorial Byway designation, it is time for Luray to help “finish the job” and ensure this story is fully and visibly told. Specifically, I recommend the Town support extending the CCC Byway designation to include the eastern “beginning” of SR 675 (Mechanic Street), as well as encourage Page County to designate Bixler’s Ferry Road from the town limit to the county line.

This is not a name change; it is a designation that involves installing supplementary signage to raise public awareness and celebrate this heritage. A prominent location for signage could be near the corner of Mechanic and Broad, maximizing visibility for residents and visitors alike.

Mr. White urged Council to formally endorse and support this initiative, working with Page County and VDOT to secure the necessary designations and signage. Doing so could connect local people with their history and drive visitors to overlooked arts of our county.

Mr. White has included documentation of Shenandoah County’s decision-making process and endorsement herein for your review.

Councilman Dofflemyer inquired if the Town would be responsible for the sign. Councilman White stated they have a foundation account in Woodstock and large donor in Winchester and would like to talk to Shenandoah

County and get their input with the monies. Councilman Pettit stated that he liked the concept but would want to know the Town's responsibilities if anything other than the signage. Mayor Lillard stated they could check with the County on use of the TOT money.

Renaming Inn Lawn Park

Town Councilman, Alex White, requested Council receive information regarding this topic.

The proposal is attached for Council's review.

Councilman Dofflemyer stated the Luray Park Board has been doing some research regarding the original naming of Inn Lawn Park. The common theme is that since these areas were the front lawn of the former Luray Inn that burned, the name was selected by the Park Board at some point in their history.

Councilman Dofflemyer stated that both he and Mayor Lillard serve on the park board. Mr. Dofflemyer stated there were a few challenges since the passing of Lowell Baughan which has left a big void on the board. Councilman Dofflemyer stated that after Mr. Baughan's passing the Park Board was considering changing the name in honor of him. Councilman White stated that he believes they could work something out and it would be wonderful.

Request for the Planning Commission to review Data Center Zoning

Town Councilman, Alex White, requested Council receive information regarding this topic.

Councilman White has attached information in tonight's packet.

Mr. White stated the Town Attorney has been informed of this request for potential action by the Council. It is likely that the Council will need to act on a Resolution in making the request for topic study, and draft Ordinance creation, to the Planning Commission.

Data centers have sparked intense controversy across Virginia, and Luray is not immune to the challenges they pose. Many town and county governments have been riven by division, heavy lobbying, and widespread misinformation surrounding data center development – a situation comparable to the solar debates but magnified a hundredfold.

These controversies stem from several significant impacts:

- Strain on public water systems, which are heavily drawn upon to cool data centers.
- Intensive energy demands, threatening local electricity reliability and increasing prices.
- Viewshed and noise impacts, disrupting rural character and quality of life.
- Low employment density, as data centers occupy valuable industrial or business land yet provide very few jobs per square foot.
- Broken revenue promises, with developers frequently exaggerating benefits while demanding costly concessions and tax breaks from local governments.

Councilman White stated in his report that Luray is far from insulated. As Northern Virginia communities tighten restrictions after negative experiences, data center developers are looking to rural localities, including ours. Mr. White recently spoke with a wealthy M1 property owner from Northern Virginia who is holding land here purely in anticipation of a future data center boom. This speculative behavior ties up prime real estate and distorts our economic development priorities.

Mr. White also stated in his report that recent announcements in Botetourt County (which lacked a data center ordinance), Lexington, and Strasburg show that rural areas are increasingly targeted. A number of new transmission lines & other infrastructure projects on the horizon will only open more rural places to data center development.

Mr. White encourages the Planning Commission to draft an ordinance that:

- Explicitly defines data centers and related infrastructure, closing loopholes that have allowed developers to push through projects as by-right-industrial or utility uses (as happened in Loudon County's early days)
- Prohibits data centers as a permitted use, preventing divisive special use permit debates like those that fractured Warrenton and Middleburg.
- Clarifies that no water of infrastructure support will be provided to data centers outside town limits and prohibits private construction of related infrastructure in town limits.

Councilman Dofflemyer stated that Councilman White brought up good points and read that it is a minimum of 40 acres. Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, stated the Town has 2 or 3 parcels that exceed that size but are zoned R1. Councilman Pettit appreciated the work that Councilman White did on the Data Center. Mr. Chrisman stated that Town Attorney, Jason Botkins, has drafted a resolution for this. Councilman Butler stated that the 4th paragraph should be pulled but other than that it looked good to proceed to the Planning Commission. Councilman Vickers stated that he would like to see what the public have to say on this. Mayor Lillard stated it would have to go to Planning Commission first.

Motion: Councilman White motioned the proposed Resolution excluding the 4th paragraph be approved as presented. Motion seconded by Councilman Pettit with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, White, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 6-0**

Establishment of a Legislative Priorities List

Town Councilman, Alex White, requested Council receive information from him on the Establishment of a Legislative Priorities List.

An example of the legislative agenda format from Councilman White is attached.

Councilman White stated there are obstacles that still exist with how laws are written and would like Council Members to think about what would be some changes that the town could adopt from the State to make things easier. Councilman White added that Mr. Gilbert was promoted to serve as the Department of Justice and there will be a new delegate. He added now would be a good time to have a legislative list. Councilman Dofflemyer stated that he thought Mr. White had a good format.

TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No further comments.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilman Butler thanked Police Chief, Bow Cook for attending and driving Council Members through the Stanley Homecoming Parade. Mr. Butler added that both Town of Luray and Town of Stanley need to begin coordinating the 4th of July in 2026. Mayor Lillard stated that she would be sure to contact Town Manager, Terry Pettit, and get that on the agenda at the next combined Town and County meeting. Mr. Chrisman believes the next meeting will be in September. Chief Bow Cook stated the Luray Volunteer Fire Department submitted a permit for a 125th Anniversary Parade. Councilman Butler reminded members of the traveling museum coming to Luray and added their will be 2 reenactments as well at Luray Caverns. Mr. Butler serves as a member on the 250th Anniversary of the Nation board. Discussion ensued on whether a work session was needed for this month. Mayor Lillard stated the July work session would be canceled and will resume with the Regular Session on August 11th.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Lillard stated if anyone had any future items for the agenda to be provided by Monday prior to each Council meeting by 11am. This helps get the agenda packets out in a timely manner.

ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Stephanie Lillard
Mayor

Danielle Alger
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer