

**WORK SESSION OF
THE TOWN COUNCIL
OF
THE TOWN OF LURAY, VIRGINIA**

Monday, February 24th, 2026

The Luray Town Council met in work session on Tuesday, February 24th, at 5:30 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 Lillard

Council Present:

Ron Vickers
Jerry Dofflemyer
Jason Pettit
Joey Sours
Chuck Butler

Council Absent:

Ryan Dean

Also Present:

Bryan Chrisman, Town Manager
Danielle Babb, Clerk Treasurer
Danielle Alger, Deputy Clerk Treasurer
Chief Bow Cook, Luray Police Department
Brooke Fox, Planning and Zoning
Jen Jenkins, Superintendent, Parks and Recreation

(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.

UPDATES AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Parks & Recreation Community Survey

Jen Jenkins, Parks and Recreation Superintendent, briefed Council on their updated Master Plan survey. Ms. Jenkins stated that a favorable response was received and provided Council with a summary of the results. Ms. Jenkins stated that respondents were able to choose five options and an option to do a write in. Ms. Jenkins provided to Council the top twelve on the list. Most of these were also on the old master plan. Ms. Jenkins stated that Racey Engineering is in the process of updating backgrounds and mapping from the old plan as well as results from the new plan. Ms. Jenkins hopes to have a draft for the next meeting. Ms. Jenkins would like feedback from Council on whether she should do a follow-up survey and is happy to hear thoughts and suggestions.

Councilman Pettit thanked Ms. Jenkins on her work on the survey but didn't think there was enough response on the first survey to produce a second survey. Ms. Jenkins stated that it was advertised at the Recreation Park, Facebook Page, and went out in the utility bills. Councilman Pettit stated that only a small amount of people felt it important to respond to the survey. Councilman Sours stated that Town Hall would be a good place for citizens to pick up a survey. Councilman Pettit stated if it would've been at least twenty percent, he would be for a second survey. Ms. Jenkins inquired what Council suggested as what to put on the Master Plan, an outdoor or indoor aquatic center. Ms. Jenkins added that she wants to be prepared in the future and feel confident at funding options on the items on the Master Plan. Mayor Lillard thanked Ms. Jenkins and stated that it was a good place to start. Mr. Chrisman indicated that we would complete the Master Plan update with non-specific space allocations and not complete a second survey.

Draft Amendments to Chapter 98 - Parks

Jen Jenkins, Parks and Recreation Superintendent, discussed proposed changes to the Chapter 98 ordinance. These proposed changes are designed to better reflect current operations and needs. Ms. Jenkins would like Council feedback related to the proposed changes and give input on potential additions or modifications.

Mayor Lillard inquired about electric scooters on the greenway. Police Chief, Bow Cook, stated that he has seen them on the greenway and are typically very courteous. He added that it's a tough decision because bicycles go fast as well. Ms. Jenkins went through the different changes in the ordinance and provided these in the council packet for Council's review. Ms. Jenkins and Council discussed these updates. Ms. Jenkins will forward all recommendations/changes/comments to Town Attorney, Jason Botkins.

Ruffner Plaza Wall Mural (Pence)

Jen Jenkins, Parks and Recreation Superintendent, stated that the Ruffner Plaza Wall Mural proposed by Leah Pence has been reviewed and recommended with monetary support from the Tree & Beautification Committee by Artist Gary Grant. The agreement has been signed, and a copy was provided in tonight's Council Packet.

Councilman Butler inquired about who decides the artwork for the mural. Mr. Chrisman stated the Tree & Beautification Committee reviews and sends to Council then it moves forward from there.

Councilman Vickers inquired about the Parks and Recreation employees. Ms. Jenkins stated they have a full-time staff with no turnover. She added they do have part-time/seasonal positions posted. Ms. Jenkins stated they are in need of three to four seasonal park attendants for mowing, weed eating and trash pick-up. Councilman Vickers also inquired if they were able to utilize the trustees. Ms. Jenkins stated that it had been years since they were able to do that. Councilman Vickers stated that everything looks nice and added that she has a good crew. Mayor Lillard thanked Ms. Jenkins and her staff.

Council had no objections to the concept, or lease agreement.

FY27 Budget Priorities

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, gave an update on the Town's budget priorities. Mr. Chrisman stated they are trying local rate proposals to the Consumer Price Index and are looking at a few scenarios and percentages. Mr. Chrisman stated they are looking at a tiered COLA where the lower employees get the higher percentage, and the higher employees get the lower percentage. Mr. Chrisman stated he is working with department heads on their operational budget drafts. Mr. Chrisman added that Construction in Progress (CIP's) are important because they need prior authorization.

Treasurer, Danielle Babb, touched on a few things as well. Ms. Babb stated that she had received sample reports from the Commissioner's Office that indicate a forty percent increase in taxable values. Ms. Babb stated that a decision will need to be made on the tax rate. Ms. Babb provided a sample copy for the Public Hearing. She also added that she could provide this to Council in their weekly report. Mr. Chrisman stated that the April 13th meeting is the latest for the tax rate.

Ms. Babb touched on other revenue items. She added the Meals Tax is trending well ahead of what was projected in the current fiscal year. Ms. Babb stated that several new restaurants will be opening downtown, economically things are going well. Ms. Babb stated that the Lodging Tax is also doing good and trending well.

Ms. Babb stated there was a seven percent increase in health insurance. Ms. Babb added there hasn't been an increase since 2023, which is unheard of. Ms. Babb stated she has reached out to other localities, and they are seeing similar increases.

Mr. Chrisman added the draft will be at the March 24th work session and must be a balanced budget. Mr. Chrisman stated the sooner they get the information the easier it will be moving into the schedule. Ms. Babb stated that overall, the departments have been very conservative in their requests. Ms. Babb made Council aware that increases in water and sewer rates are driven by infrastructure costs. Councilman Pettit inquired about what the reserve looked like. He stated that in the first three years it wasn't touched while he was on Council but for the last two years, we had to use some of the reserves. Ms. Babb stated the Town is doing fine with the reserves. Ms. Babb added she is capitalizing on peak cash flow and money market interest. Mayor Lillard inquired about the bank franchise tax allocations. Ms. Babb stated that she should get those reports in about a month and they are usually the last thing to come in for the budget.

~**Recess**~

CLOSED SESSION

Discussion of the Hiring or Appointment of Specific Local Government Personnel- the Assistant Town Manager, the Chief of Police, and the Superintendent of Public Works

Town Council conducted a Closed Meeting for the discussion and consideration of specific local government personnel, and to discuss the hiring or appointment of said personnel, as authorized by Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1) of the Code of Virginia. The subject matter is the hiring or appointment of the Assistant Town Manager, the Chief of Police, and the Superintendent of Public Works.

Motion: Councilman Pettit motioned to convene and go into Closed Meeting for discussion and consideration of specific local government personnel, and to discuss the hiring or appointment of said personnel, as authorized by Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1) of the Code of Virginia. The subject matter is the performance and employment of the Town Manager, the Chief of Police, and the Superintendent of Public Works. Motion seconded by Councilman Sours with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 5-0**

~**Closed Meeting**~

Motion: Councilman Pettit motioned the closed meeting be adjourned and the Luray Town Council reconvene in open session. Motion seconded by Councilman Sours with the vote as follows: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 5-0**

Certification: Councilman Pettit asked members of Council with respect to the just-completed closed session and to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard discussed or considered in the meeting by the Town Council. Motion seconded by Councilman Butler with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dofflemyer, Pettit, Sours, Butler. **Approved 5-0**

ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Stephanie Lillard
Mayor

Danielle Alger
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer