

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

**Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

The Luray Town Council met in regular session on Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 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 Lillard

**Council Present:**

Ron Vickers  
Ryan Dean  
Jason Pettit  
Chuck Butler

**Council Absent:**

Jerry Dofflmeyer  
Joey Sours

**Also Present:**

Bryan Chrisman, Town Manager  
Danielle Babb, Clerk Treasurer  
Danielle Alger, Deputy Clerk Treasurer  
Chief Bow Cook, Luray Police Department  
Lonnie Foster, Luray Police Department  
Brooke Fox, Planning and Zoning  
Town Attorney, Jason Botkins, Litten & Sipe  
Jackie Wood, Luray Downtown Initiative  
Gina Hilliard, Luray-Page Chamber of Commerce  
Leslie Currie, Page County Economic Development Authority  
Powell Markowitz, Luray-Page County Airport Authority  
Giovannella Frankel, Citizen Comment  
Dylan Cooper, Citizen Comment

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.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion:** Councilman Vickers motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, motion seconded by Councilman Butler with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dean, Pettit, Butler.  
**Approved 4-0**

### *Consent Agenda*

**(A) Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting –02/09/2026**

**(B) Work Session Minutes- 02/24/2026**

**(C) Accounts Payable totaling- \$166,037.46**

**(D) Financial Reports for the period ending 02/28/2026**

## **GENERAL CITIZEN COMMENTS**

### **Dylan Cooper- 300 Springfield Road, Luray**

Mr. Cooper stated that he is the Outdoor Columnist for Page Valley News and wanted to address the Lake Arrowhead Swimming Area. Mr. Cooper stated that in the Town's Comprehension Plan last year, the Town stated they would be adding restrooms, more recreational activities but nothing pertaining to swimming. He added that he is aware of the petition that has been signed by over five hundred people.

### **Giovannella Frankel- 160 Riverbend Drive, Luray**

Ms. Frankel stated that the petition that she had started has grown quite a bit since last month when she attended the Town Council Meeting. Ms. Frankel stated she had received staff correspondence and was sad to hear there was a negative response from Council. Ms. Frankel stated that she inquired about the cost of lifeguard training and doesn't understand why the Town can't pay for the certification.

Councilman Vickers stated that the Town went through many efforts to obtain adequate lifeguards but there were no applicants.

Mayor Lillard stated that Ms. Frankel could reach out to members after the Council meeting. Mr. Butler explained that the certification required for open water lifeguards is more extensive than pool lifeguards.

## **BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **Luray Downtown Initiative**

LDI Director, Jackie Wood, stated there were a lot of good things going on with LDI and Downtown Luray. Ms. Wood stated LDI hosted a retreat in February funded by Virginia Mainstreet. She stated that it was an honor to be selected. Ms. Wood thanked everyone for making it a huge success. Ms. Wood stated that 45 directors said that Luray was doing it right and added how good our streets looked. Ms. Wood said there will be several new businesses coming to downtown in the next few months. Ms. Wood stated they were asked to spearhead the VA 250 Flag project. She added that 250 Betsy Ross flags will be going up in the historic district. She added this project will be ready to launch in May. Ms. Wood advised Council Members of a new applicant for the facade grant.

### **Luray-Page Chamber of Commerce**

Gina Hilliard, stated on January 1<sup>st</sup>, the Chamber had a new executive committee. Ms. Hilliard said they are thriving with 10 ambassadors and 385 members. Ms. Hillard said they will be celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chamber this year. She encouraged everyone if they are not a member to join. Ms. Hilliard thanked everyone for coming to the Networking Breakfast. She added there will be many events coming up including the Laurel Ridge job fair, ribbon cuttings, annual banquet and awards and women in business opportunities. Ms. Hilliard stated that Jen Jenkins was the guest speaker for March Tourism Tuesday and thanked the Town for their sponsorship.

### **Page County Economic Development Authority**

Leslie Currle, stated the housing study is currently under way with a roundtable comprehensive assessment of Page County's housing needs and what potential housing would look like. She added the feasibility study for public transportation has been completed. Ms. Currle stated discussions are underway to assess future water and sewer costs. She added the meat processing facility continues to move forward in Shenandoah. Ms. Currle also stated there is a short term rental study going around analyzing short term rentals in the County. She added the goal is that short term rentals do not ruin rural neighborhoods. Ms. Currle stated that the EDA meetings are open to the public and meet the fourth Monday of every month. Ms. Currle stated that People Incorporated a non project group supports small businesses and added they were recently awarded Page, Shenandoah , and Warren County funding. She stated there will be quarterly trainings held at the Chamber in March, June and September. She stated there will be funding options for existing businesses.

Councilman Vickers inquired about the update on funds for the roundabout. Mayor Lillard stated that she could give an update on that. Ms. Lillard stated the County has 75k set aside to support that project and added the director was out for some time which has caused a delay.

## **Luray-Page County Airport Authority**

Powell Markowitz with the Airport Authority stated their main accomplishment was closing their USDA loan. Mr. Markowitz stated they were originally borrowing 4.3 million but ended up borrowing 3.9 million. Mr. Markowitz stated they added eighteen hangars and a new terminal building. Mr. Markowitz stated they have fifteen active full-time positions at the Airport and are bringing in more traffic. Mr. Markowitz stated that there will be a new business there which includes an avionics shop.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **Sommers Alley Vacation Request- 312 N Court Street**

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, requested Council discuss and consider taking action on the requested alley vacation request from:

Royce & Irene Sommers

312 North Court Street

Mr. Chrisman stated they are requesting vacation of the alley beside their home due to encroachment by their principal structure at 312 N Court Street. Mr. Chrisman stated the situation hasn't changed much since the last discussion and there were no material changes since the last meeting packet.

Council held a Public Hearing and discussed this at their February 9, 2026, meeting. One of the owners, Irene Sommer's, was present at that Public Hearing and spoke.

As noted in the accompanying information, this would be the first step of many required to bring this situation into compliance. As shown on the original and recent survey plat, there has been significant construction at the site without zoning or building permits. The recent survey plat shows that nearly all this additional work over the years encroaches into, and across, the pre-existing alley.

Since we have no records of applications for any of this work, we cannot say who owned the property when the various stages of construction occurred. We do know, from the applicants, that they completed the most recent additions.

Copies of the request letter, information, and aerials were included for Council's review.

Councilman Butler inquired if the neighboring landowner had been contacted. Mr. Chrisman stated that he was unaware if that had taken place. Mr. Butler stated he doesn't want to act on this until hearing feedback from the neighboring landowner. Mr. Chrisman stated that a lot of things need to line up prior to making a decision and will reach out to Mr. and Mrs. Sommers and have them reach out to the other property owner. Mr. Vickers inquired if anything has been torn down in the past due to the zoning. Mr. Chrisman stated there was a property in Forest Hills that wasn't surveyed correctly a few years ago. Mayor Lillard inquired if it could be approved with a contingency until staff hears from the property owners. Town Attorney, Jason Botkins, stated that a boundary line easement or adjustment could be done. Councilman Pettit stated he believes the property owner was misled by previous property owners.

Mr. Chrisman stated there is a fourth option as well until they can gather more information. Councilman Pettit stated that he was thinking to deny it.

**Motion:** Councilman Butler motioned to deny the Alley Vacation Request & Ordinance, as presented. Councilman Pettit seconded the motion with the vote as follows: Council Members: YEA: Vickers, Dean, Pettit, Butler. **Approved 4-0**

### **County of Page Alley Vacation Request- 215 West Page Street**

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, requested Council discuss and consider taking action on the requested alley vacation request from:

County of Page

215 West Page Street

Requesting vacation of a portion of the alley beside their property for the construction of a new retaining wall to support 215 West Page Street.

Council held a Public Hearing on this issue at their February 9, 2026, meeting. A neighbor spoke against the request due to his access concerns. The general feeling was that the County should consider replacing the current retaining wall where it is currently located. Therefore, a vacation of a part of the alley would not be required. A temporary construction easement could be granted to allow construction while neighboring access would be maintained.

The Town postponed action to await a Site Plan from the County. Additionally, the alley property pins and/or line were to be survey-marked in the field.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **Sign Ordinance Amendments**

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, requested Council consider adopting the proposed sign ordinance amendments.

These changes have been proposed by Town staff and formulated by the Town Attorney.

A copy of the latest proposed Ordinance and Exhibit are included for review.

Principal elements of the proposed amendments include, but are not limited to:

Reducing the size and scope of the Ordinance

Increasing the type of signs allowed without a permit

Increasing the size and/or number of certain allowable sign types

Consolidating several sections of the Ordinance

Eliminating unneeded portions of the previous Ordinance

Ensuring conformity with applicable state codes

Simplifying the Ordinance for use by customers and staff

Council held a Public Hearing on this topic at their February 9, 2026, regular meeting. No action was taken since the Council was awaiting a recommendation from the Planning Commission.

**Motion:** Councilman Vickers motioned the Sign Ordinance Amendments be approved, as presented. Councilman Butler seconded the motion with the vote as follows: YEA: Council Members Vickers, Dean, Pettit, Butler **Approved 4-0**

## **TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

### **Civil Penalties for Zoning Ordinance Violations**

Town Attorney, Jason Botkins, stated that Zoning Ordinances have traditionally been enforced by prosecuting violations as crimes. Mr. Botkins stated there is a general reluctance by Courts to impose a criminal penalty for violating a zoning ordinance. This usually results in numerous continuances spanning a significant time-period, sometimes years, to provide the owner with every opportunity to comply. The process and outcome are often unsatisfactory due to the time and cost involved to abate a violation.

Mr. Botkins stated the service of process is also an issue for owners that live outside of Virginia because it requires cooperation by non-Virginia law enforcement to obtain personal service. The Virginia Code 15.2-2209 authorizes a civil penalty that replaces the criminal penalty for violating a zoning ordinance. The ceilings on the penalties are:

- \$200 for first violation.
- \$1,000 for the second violation.
- \$1,500 for a third or subsequent violation.
- A total of \$4,200 for all violations within a 12-month period.

Civil penalties totaling \$5,000 or more may still be prosecuted as a criminal misdemeanor.

The summary process was provided in this evening's council packet.

## **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilman Vickers suggested an idea for a better budget. Mr. Vickers stated that if part time employees do not receive health insurance coverage, then Council Members shouldn't receive that benefit. Mr. Vickers believes this should be considered as a cost savings method.

## **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Lillard reminded everyone there will be no work session for March.

**ADJOURN**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

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Stephanie Lillard  
Mayor

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Danielle Alger  
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer