

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

Tuesday, September 29th, 2026

The Luray Town Council met in a work session on Tuesday, September 29th, 2026, 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 Stephanie Lillard

Council Present:

Ron Vickers
Jerry Dofflemyer
Ryan Dean
Jason Pettit
Joseph Sours
Chuck Butler

Also Present:

Bryan Chrisman, Town Manager
Bow Cook, Assistant Town Manager
Danielle Babb, Treasurer
Danielle Alger, Assistant Treasurer
Chief of Police, Lonnie Foster, Luray Police Department
Brooke Newman, Planning and Zoning Coordinator
Tyler Austin, Racey Engineering

(This meeting was made public via the Town's Facebook page.)

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.

ROLL CALL

The roll was called with all members present.

UPDATES & DISCUSSION ITEMS

WWTP Preliminary Engineering Report

Tyler Austin with Racey Engineering stated he met with WWTP Superintendent John Sonifrank , Brandon, and Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman at the Wastewater Treatment Plant to see if they could come up with a plan for the sewer system. Mr. Austin stated they would be able to double the usage with the capacity expansion. Mr. Austin stated their next step would be to gather long-term operational costs and see what their options were. Mr. Austin stated the MBR plant in Woodstock are having them tour their location and see how their system works and talk to their engineers. Mr. Austin stated it was good news knowing they can upgrade the current site without having to find a new site.

Mayor Lillard thanked Mr. Austin for the positive news and inquired about a timeline. Mr. Austin stated this might run into the first quarter of next year, but the project itself would probably be completely operational within two to three years.

Councilman Vickers asked Mr. Austin for a visual depiction of the overall plans. Councilman Sours inquired about the “per user” on the water billing side of things. Mr. Austin suggested that was a good idea and he would look into this information. Mr. Chrisman stated Consultant Carl Brown did a rate study for the town years ago and would check to see if he is still in business.

Mayor Lillard and Mr. Austin commended Superintendent John Sonifrank for being on board with this project. Mr. Austin stated that he was very positive and receptive of the plans. Mayor Lillard stated how helpful John was when the Council Members visited their plant and would like to visit again in the near future.

Proposed Taxation Amendments

Town Treasurer, Danielle Babb, requested Council receive a briefing from her regarding proposed taxation amendments. Mrs. Babb stated she has been working with Jason Botkins, Town Attorney, to finalize these proposed changes.

Mrs. Babb stated recent correspondence with the Town Attorney has included discussions regarding the Town’s Business License Ordinance and how it relates to festival vendors who sell domestic items that they have personally produced. **Va. Code 58.1-3703 (c) (2)** offers exemption *for those selling farm or domestic products or nursery products, ornamental or otherwise, or for the planning of nursey products, as an incident to the sale thereof, outside of the regular market houses and sheds of such county, city or town, provided such products are grown or produced by the person offering them for sale.* The term domestic goods could potentially include items that are sewn, crocheted, or handcrafted generally. **Town Code 30-96** currently provides only for *exemption for an itinerant merchant who sells wood, charcoal, meats, butter, eggs, poultry, game, vegetables, fruits, or other family supplies of perishable nature of farm-grown products produced by them.* The proposed revision would provide greater clarity regarding when the business license is required for individuals selling products they personally have produced and is especially helpful for vendors participating in festivals, farmers markets, and other similar events.

Additionally, an ordinance amendment is proposed to create an exemption for itinerant merchants conducting business at an event that is hosted by and benefits a nonprofit organization. The \$500 annual permit fee for itinerant merchants has received increased attention in connection with nonprofit events. Requiring vendors that are participating in these events to obtain an annual Itinerant Merchant permit creates a financial and administrative burden for nonprofits seeking to host community events. Under the proposed amendment, the exemption would only apply to merchants conducting business at an event that is hosted by and benefits a non-profit organization.

Mrs. Babb provided a draft Ordinance amending Town Code 30-96 to address the two items.

If Council is inclined to concur with the recommended changes, they can apprise staff who may begin the needed steps for Council adoption.

Mrs. Babb stated these are things we have been discussing and are trying to be business friendly. She stated she was happy to answer any questions that Council may have.

Councilman Vickers inquired if the Heritage Festival was considered in town limits. Mrs. Babb stated yes that the fairground is in the town limits. Councilman Pettit inquired if there should be a minimum percentage of proceeds required to be provided to the host

Mayor Lillard inquired if the fee is to participate or is it generally a percentage of the sales. Mrs. Babb stated that the amounts are variable. She added that it depends on what type of booth they rent at the festival. She stated the fair requires a percentage of proceeds.

Mr. Chrisman stated the state code may dictate what percentage qualifies and that he would get with Town Attorney, Jason Botkins and see what he determines. Mrs. Babb maintained that these are real conversations with local vendors. Councilman Sours inquired if Mrs. Babb could find out how many permits would be impacted and how many total permits are there. Councilman Pettit thanked Mrs. Babb.

Special Event Venues

Town Manager, Bryan Chrisman, requested Council to receive an updated version of the relevant Code amendments regarding this topic:

This version was created by the Town Attorney based on Council comments during the August 2026 regular meeting.

Mr. Chrisman stated this was in informational item only, since the included Resolution of Referral to the Planning Commission will be an agenda item on the Council's regular meeting agenda on Wednesday, October 14, 2026.

Councilman Butler inquired about the million-dollar insurance coverage. Mr. Chrisman stated this is normal practice to do a flat million-dollar coverage.

FY26 Annual Report- Planning Commission

Town Planning and Zoning Technician, Brooke Fox, requested Council receive an update regarding the annual report produced for the Planning Commission.

As you may note, this report has been expanded significantly, both in scope and information provided. The data has been broken out into meaningful categories. The graphs show usage trends given the timelines utilized.

Mrs. Fox provided a copy of the report for Council members and stated it would be posted online. At its next review, she stated she intends to include a summary of the annual reports into the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Chrisman thanked Brooke for her stellar work producing this document. He hopes she takes full credit for this as she has done exceptional work. Mr. Chrisman added the Planning Commission was adamant on her taking full credit for this as well.

Mrs. Fox stated that it was great to do that almost everything that she needed was there.

Mr. Chrisman stated that Planning Commissioner, Barbe Stombock, pushed for the commission and the town to adopt a more meaningful set of data. Councilman Vickers and Councilman Pettit stated this was great. Councilman Sours stated that it would be neat to see five years prior to this. Mayor Lillard said this was great work all the way around.

MAYOR COMMENTS

Mayor Lillard reminded everyone about the Council questionnaire but doesn't have to be done tonight. Mayor Lillard also reminded members about the LDI appreciation on October 8th at Porch & Vine. She reminded everyone of the upcoming VML conference the second weekend in October.

ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Stephanie Lillard
Mayor

Danielle N. Alger
Deputy Town Clerk