

**Town of Louisa
Monthly Meeting
November 19, 2024**

Present: Danny Carter, Interim Mayor; Jessi Lassiter, Vice-Mayor; John J. Purcell IV, Vicky Harte, Council members; Jeff Gore, Legal Counsel; Elizabeth T. Nelson, Town Manager; Jessica M. Ellis, Clerk/Treasurer, Kellye Throckmorton, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer; Paul Snyder, Project Manager & Zoning Administrator; Anthony Larry, Public Works Superintendent

Absent: Sylvia Rigsby, Council member

Also in Attendance: Roger Henry, town resident at 303 Cutler Avenue; Garland Nuckols, town resident at 110 Patrick Henry Drive; Danny Crawford, town resident at 107 Patrick Henry Drive; Jay Sanudo of Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates

All copies, including: reports, handouts, and documents can be found following the minutes.

Interim Mayor Carter called the Louisa Town Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Roger Henry, town resident at 303 Cutler Avenue, stood and addressed Council stating that it was his understanding that the current Town Manager would be leaving her position soon and took a moment to endorse the Chief of Police as an interim candidate for the position. He also commented that it was his understanding that the town attorney had begun consulting with outside sources in the search for an Interim Town Manager and questioned who gave him the authority to do so because that decision should have come before Council.

1 Garland Nuckols, town resident at 110 Patrick Henry Drive, stood and
2 addressed Council stating that he was informed via hearsay that the
3 town was planning to sell the backhoe and expressed that he felt it
4 was still in good condition and needed a little work, but was worth
5 keeping. He also questioned the possible purchase of a dump trailer
6 and commented on item no. 3 on the agenda stating that it was
7 unclear as to what it entailed.

8
9 Danny Crawford, town resident at 107 Patrick Henry Drive, stood and
10 addressed Council stating that it was his understanding that the Town
11 Manager's last day would be December 6th and wished her good luck
12 on her future endeavors. He then went on to recommend Craig
13 Buckley as the Interim Town Manager.

14 15 **CONSENT AGENDA**

16
17 Council member Harte requested adding a discussion pertaining to
18 the required funding for the water treatment plant to the agenda (item
19 no. 4 under New Business); and Mrs. Nelson requested a discussion
20 pertaining to the vacancy of the Town Manager's position as item no.
21 5 under New Business.

22
23 Council member Purcell made the motion to approve the amended
24 consent agenda. Council member Harte seconded the motion. The
25 vote went as follows: Purcell, for; Lassiter, for; Harte, for (3-0 in
26 favor).

27 28 **PRESENTATION**

29 30 **2024 Audit Report by Jay Sanudo – Robinson, Farmer, Cox** 31 **Associates**

32
33 Mr. Sanudo began his presentation by referencing a page that was
34 included in the supplemental packet that he prepared for Council to
35 use as he spoke to specific pages and numbers in the budget. Mr.
36 Sanudo highlighted key areas of interest and concluded his
37 presentation by stating that: there were no internal control findings;
38 they will most likely have to conduct a single audit next year due to
39 the amount of federal money spent (ARPA); and that over the past

1 seven years working with the town in his capacity with RFC, the
2 current Town Manger and Treasurer have done the best job.

3
4 **NEW BUSINESS**

5
6 **1) Discussion/Action: CHA Consulting, Inc. – Work Order No.**
7 **2024-3 Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSES) and Flow**
8 **Monitoring Services**
9

10 Mrs. Nelson commented that CHA Consulting, Inc. is prepared to
11 start the Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSES) and Flow
12 Monitoring Services work as outlined in the work order and noted that
13 it aligns with the RFP that was awarded to CHA as the town
14 continues to utilize the ARPA funds to improve water and sewer
15 infrastructure. Council member Harte questioned whether additional
16 funds were being requested for the task, to which Mrs. Nelson replied
17 that no additional money has been requested and that the task is
18 being covered by ARPA funds.

19
20 Council member Lassiter made the motion to approve Work Order
21 No. 2024-3 Sewer System Evaluation Study (SSES) and Flow
22 Monitoring Services. Council member Purcell seconded the motion.
23 The vote went as follows: 3-0 in favor.

24
25 **2) Discussion/Action: Authorized Signers on the Town Bank**
26 **Accounts**
27

28 Mrs. Nelson reported that Council needed to appoint and approve
29 authorized signers on town bank accounts to ensure that there are no
30 gaps in obtaining needed signatures as the current signers are
31 Garland Nuckols, Liz Nelson, and Jessi Lassiter. Mrs. Nelson
32 recommended appointing Mr. Carter, Mrs. Ellis, and a third signer.
33 Mrs. Nelson reported that in the past, the Treasurer has not been a
34 signer on the account because of separation of duties, but because
35 Mrs. Ellis doesn't print AP checks, she could sign those checks in
36 case of an emergency.
37

1 After some discussion, it was suggested to have a Council member
2 Rigsby be a designated as a signer as she is a member of the
3 Finance Committee.
4

5 Council member Purcell made the motion to appoint Mr. Carter, Mrs.
6 Ellis, and Ms. Rigsby as designated signers on the town bank
7 accounts. Council member Harte seconded the motion. The vote
8 went as follows: 3-0 in favor.
9

10 **3) Discussion/Action: Allocation of Funds for the Public Works** 11 **Department**

12
13 A lengthy discussion was held between staff and Council wherein the
14 Streets and Sidewalks committee reported having met to consider the
15 equipment, safety, and improvements needed in the Public Works
16 Department. Anthony Larry specifically addressed issues with meter
17 replacement, the need for a tractor attachment, dump truck safety
18 issues, the need for a dump trailer and a leaf vac. Anthony stated
19 that these items would save the town money and allow the staff to be
20 more efficient. Mrs. Nelson remarked that allocating funds would aid
21 in these efforts and reported that funds could be transferred from
22 reserves – specifically the line item that was initially budgeted for the
23 Transportation alternative Grant with VDOT that was recently
24 withdrawn. Mrs. Nelson reported that it was the town's portion of the
25 estimated budget for the project.
26

27 At the conclusion of the discussion, Council took the following action:
28

29 Council member Harte made the motion to approve allocating funds
30 for the Public Works Department. Council member Lassiter
31 seconded the motion. The vote went as follows: 3-0 in favor.
32

33 **4) Discussion/Action: Required Funding for the Water Treatment** 34 **Plant**

35
36 Council member Harte started a discussion about the \$2,000,000 in
37 funding needed from the town for work needed at the wastewater
38 treatment plant. Mrs. Harte stated that she was approached at the
39 Board of Supervisor's meeting about whether the town had the

1 money, and also expressed her concerns on how the town plans to
2 come up with the funding in such a short period of time.

3
4 A lengthy discussion then ensued between Council and staff which
5 resulted in the Water and Sewer Committee recommending a
6 meeting with Pam Baughman from the Water Authority for an update
7 on the matter.

8 9 **5) Discussion/Action: Town Manager's Position Vacancy**

10
11 Mrs. Nelson reported that she had given her resignation, and that
12 Council would be going into closed session to discuss the vacancy
13 more in depth. She then referred to public comments made earlier in
14 the meeting about Mr. Gore seeking a contractor without Council's
15 approval and stated that no one from the town has been looking for a
16 contractor. Mrs. Nelson stated that they have only been exploring
17 their options to find out what resources are available.

18 19 **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

20 21 **Personnel Committee & Police Matters Committee:**

22
23 The two committees met to discuss the Police Department staffing
24 review wherein the majority of the items discussed were done so in
25 closed session and would also be discussed with Council during
26 closed session later in the meeting.

27 28 **Water and Sewer Committee & Streets and Sidewalks** 29 **Committee:**

30
31 The two committees met to discuss: Work Order no. 3 with CHA; the
32 needs of the Public Works Department; construction for the water
33 infrastructure project projected for early next year; and a
34 beautification project for Route 208 for the removal/repurposing of the
35 old wastewater treatment plant.

36 37 **STAFF REPORTS**

38 39 **Police:**

1 Chief Buckley reported that there has been a delay in the security
2 upgrades to the police department building due it being a law
3 enforcement/public safety building that requires two DCGS-certified
4 folks on site while work is being done and they only had one at the
5 time. The contractors should be back within the next week or two to
6 continue working. There will also be cameras on the back of the
7 building that will provide some security to the public works area as
8 well.

9
10 The Chief also reported that he attended the IACP conference in
11 October in Boston where it was his mission to go and specifically
12 speak with folks who could provide the town with additional grant
13 funding. He went to two seminars put on by the U.S. Department of
14 Justice that were specifically related to small and rural agencies. He
15 had a fairly lengthy meeting scheduled with three program managers
16 from the Department of Justice and found out that there are multiple
17 micro-grants that the town is eligible for - up to \$40,000, and there is
18 a \$150,000 block grant that we're also eligible for.

19
20 **Project Manager:**

21
22 Mr. Snyder reported that there was an application for a special use
23 permit to build additional units in Duke Square Park, but it has been
24 postponed as they are revisiting what exactly they want to do there.
25 Mr. Snyder recently met with Kelsey Schlein who is representing the
26 Laurel Ridge development and she reported that they are considering
27 revisions to their plans. He stated that he made her aware of the
28 expansion of the airport/landing strip. He also reported that an
29 application for a special use permit for two duplexes on Barnstormer
30 Circle has been submitted. It is scheduled to go to the Planning
31 Commission at the end of this month.

32
33 Paul also took a few moments to inform everyone of his plans to
34 retire, and thanked staff and Council for their faith and support.

35
36 **Public Works:**

37
38 Mr. Larry reported:

- They have been focusing on meter issues and replacing meters that have not been functioning properly.
- They have cleaned up the area in front of the police department and were able to redistribute the flowers and shrubs in different areas of town.
- They have been doing a lot of training to improve basic skills, and to learn proper safety training.
- He's looking into remedies for the numerous broken flags in the downtown area.

Legal Counsel:

Mr. Gore reported that the special election order for Mayor was received and scheduled for next November.

Clerk/Treasurer:

No report.

Manager:

Mrs. Nelson reported:

- The Louisa County Water Authority was under a boil water notice today. It did not impact the town.
- The Parks and Rec Christmas Parade is Saturday, December the 7th.
- The tree lighting on the courthouse lawn is scheduled for the 6th.
- Last week a citizen had an immediate need in Hillcrest cemetery. His father was expected to pass soon, and he wanted to use a poly vault which is something that town regulations do not currently address. Mrs. Nelson reported that the industry standard is concrete, and because of the emergency need, we reached out to Mr. Crawford due to his expertise in the industry and he explained the differences. Staff made the decision to allow the poly vault, but we feel the matter is one that the cemetery committee and Council need to consider. She also reported that the committee should be aware that there was some back and

1 forth conversation with the citizen as to whether or not the town
2 even required vaults, however, the code implies that a vault is
3 required.

- 4 • Our summer intern will return over winter break and work on a new
5 project – digitizing town records such permits and cemetery
6 records.
- 7 • Notices hit the mail today for our lead service line inventory - a
8 requirement of the regulation. We have to notify any home that is
9 impacted and most of them were galvanized pipes that require
10 some potholing. CHA will be on site to do some of that with our
11 staff. We were well within compliance and there were very minimal
12 traces of lead or copper throughout our entire system.
- 13 • Our cell phone provider has been able to help us with our internet
14 problem by conducting speed tests and installing two new units
15 that have increased our speed considerably. They have put us on
16 an essential services plan and we will be going to 5G in August.
17 We paid roughly \$700 for the equipment and will cost \$40 per
18 month. This will serve as a crutch until we can get on with Firefly.

19 20 **COMMUNICATIONS**

21
22 Mrs. Nelson informed Mayor Carter and Mr. Gore that there was a
23 need to go into closed session to discuss personnel matters.

24
25 Mr. Gore provided the appropriate code, and Council made the
26 following motion:

27 28 **CLOSED SESSION**

29
30 Vice-Mayor Lassiter made the motion to go into closed session as
31 permitted by Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(1), to discuss Personnel
32 Matters involving specific town employees in relation to the town
33 manager's vacancy. Council member Purcell seconded the motion.
34 The vote went as follows: 3-0 in favor.

35 36 **OPEN SESSION & CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION**

37

1 Vice-Mayor Lassiter made the motion to return to open session
2 certifying that, in the closed session just concluded, nothing was
3 discussed except the matter or matters (1) specifically identified in the
4 motion to convene in closed session and (2) lawfully permitted to be
5 discussed under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information
6 act cited in that motion. Council member Purcell seconded the
7 motion. The vote went as follows: Purcell, for; Lassiter, for; Harte, for
8 (3-0 in favor).
9

10 **ACTION**

11
12 At the conclusion of closed session, Council took the following action:
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14 Council member Lassiter made the motion to approve a contract with
15 BCS Consulting Firm for Mr. Buckley to provide consulting services to
16 the Town of Louisa Police Department for a term of up to six months
17 at \$50 per hour to begin on December 1, 2024 subject to his
18 resignation as Police Chief; and, to approve the appointment of Craig
19 Buckley as Interim Town Manager on a part-time basis effective
20 December 8, 2024 with a rate increase to \$60 per hour until such
21 time as Council appoints the next full-time Town Manager or until the
22 interim services are no longer required as determined by Council;
23 and, subject to the town attorney finalizing the terms of the consulting
24 contract consistent with the terms discussed by Council for the
25 Mayor's signature. Council member Purcell seconded the motion.
26 The vote went as follows: 3-0 in favor.
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28 Council member Lassiter made the motion to appoint Martin
29 Nachtman as Chief of Police in a part-time capacity at \$53 per hour;
30 and, to direct the town attorney to prepare a contract according to
31 terms discussed by Council and to be executed by the Mayor.
32 Council member Purcell seconded the motion. The vote went as
33 follows: 3-0 in favor.
34

35 Council and staff then discussed having the Personnel Committee set
36 up a meeting in December to begin the search for a full-time Town
37 Manager.
38
39

ADJOURNMENT

Council member Lassiter made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 p.m. Council member Purcell seconded the motion.

Mayor

Clerk