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**Town of Louisa  
Monthly Meeting  
January 16, 2024**

**Present:** R. Garland Nuckols, Mayor; Danny Carter, John J. Purcell IV, Sylvia Rigsby, Vicky Harte, Council members; Elizabeth T. Nelson, Town Manager; Jessica M. Ellis, Clerk/Treasurer; Craig Buckley, Chief of Police

**Absent:** Jessi Lassiter, Vice-Mayor; Jeff Gore, Legal Counsel

**Also in Attendance:**

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

Mayor Nuckols called the Louisa Town Council meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

**BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

None.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mrs. Nelson reported that the bill list is higher than usual this month due to water leaks in December.

Council member Carter made the motion to approve the agenda. Council member Rigsby seconded the motion. The vote went as follows: 4-0 in favor.

Following the approval of the consent agenda, Council member Harte stated that she would like to amend the minutes. Mayor Nuckols and members of Council responded stating that the minutes are approved as part of the consent agenda. Mayor Nuckols questioned what Mrs.

1           Harte wanted to correct. Mrs. Harte stated that, on page 3 line 29,  
2           she was speaking of EMS personnel not having access, not individual  
3           access.

4  
5           After reviewing the minutes, a motion to amend the minutes was  
6           made by Council member Harte. Council member Purcell seconded  
7           the motion. The vote went as follows: 4-0 in favor.

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9           **NEW BUSINESS**

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11          **1) Action/Discussion: VDOT Transportation Alternative Grant –**  
12          **Extension Letter**

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14          Mrs. Nelson reported that due to inclement weather, the committee  
15          was unable to meet, but at the request of Thrasher, agreed to  
16          approve the extension letter that was included in the packet. Mrs.  
17          Nelson stated that the letter expresses that the town still wishes to  
18          pursue the grant opportunity and added that we are also going to  
19          pursue additional funding sources to help make up the budget  
20          differences. Mrs. Nelson stated that, at this point, VDOT will either  
21          approve or deny our extension request; and commented that,  
22          hopefully, this will provide us with supplemental funding sources or  
23          possibly a funding source that would help us avoid paying any out of  
24          pocket expenses as we are now looking at a little over \$1,000,000  
25          due to cost increases over time.

26  
27          Mrs. Nelson stated that the action needed by Council this evening  
28          would be to approve the letter in the packet for submission.

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30          Council member Purcell made the motion to approve the letter as  
31          written in the packet. Council member Rigsby seconded the motion.  
32          The vote went as follows: 4-0 in favor.

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34          **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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36          **Personnel Committee:**

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38          Mrs. Nelson reported that the committee met on Friday and  
39          discussed: the absence of John Robins and the workload that the

1 office staff has had to take on; the vacant Public Works Department  
2 positions; and the vacant Police Department positions.

3  
4 Mrs. Nelson stated that the committee recommended that, in addition  
5 to advertising the vacant positions with the PD and Public Works, we  
6 also advertise hiring a full-time Project Manager (with a start date  
7 closer to the new fiscal year). Mrs. Nelson reported that in the main  
8 time, Paul Snyder will be joining staff on a part-time basis to assist  
9 with zoning requests, and Julia Skare has joined us contractually to  
10 review engineering plans.

11  
12 Mrs. Nelson reported that the committee would like to hire someone  
13 to join the Public Works Department who would assist John Jones  
14 and learn his position in order to facilitate the transition after Mr.  
15 Jones' retirement. Mrs. Nelson stated that the position would be  
16 lateral in nature, and that neither would report to the other. Mrs.  
17 Nelson stated that while Mr. Jones' plans are unknown at this time,  
18 we want to be proactive as he has been with the town for 54 years  
19 and we would like to be prepared for when he decides to leave the  
20 town.

21  
22 Mrs. Nelson also stated that the committee plans to advertise for a  
23 part-time position within town hall to assist with answering phone  
24 calls, filing, help customers, etc.

25  
26 Mrs. Nelson explained no action is needed from Council at this time.  
27 She stated that if we decide to advertise and find employees sooner  
28 rather than later there would be no salary issues as there is funding in  
29 the current budget for all of the above positions. However, those  
30 salaries would need to be budgeted for in the upcoming new year.

31  
32 **STAFF REPORTS**

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34 **Police:**

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36 Chief Buckley reported:

- 37  
38 • The Health Department is hosting an Open House on Tuesday,  
39 January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

- 1 • The police department attends training as often as possible and is  
2 currently participating in a two-day threat assessment training that  
3 was opened to houses of worship. Chief Buckley also reported on  
4 an upcoming violence prevention training through the DCJS for  
5 houses of worship. Chief Buckley stated that he reached out to the  
6 local churches to invite them to attend. He also reported that a  
7 three-day multi-county training opportunity will be held here at  
8 town hall in the theater January 30<sup>th</sup>-February 1<sup>st</sup> and will cover  
9 topics such as search and seizure and drug recognition.
- 10 • Officer recognition awards will be presented next month.
- 11 • He recently attended a DCJS certification meeting, and the  
12 department is on course.
- 13 • Graffiti or “tagging” was reported in town recently. The graffiti is  
14 gang affiliated and our department has written up the necessary  
15 reports and shared them with the Sheriff’s office. Aside from  
16 tagging, there has been no increase in crime.

17  
18 **Project Manager:**

19  
20 Mrs. Nelson reported:

- 21  
22 • The Streets & Sidewalks committee will reschedule the meeting  
23 that was cancelled due to inclement weather in February.
- 24 • A recent issue with the VDOT Transportation Alternative Grant is  
25 that VDOT is unsure that the water line can be replaced while  
26 conducting the sidewalk project. Mrs. Nelson stated that the  
27 waterline replacement had been included in the budget from the  
28 start and that it would be a huge setback for the town.
- 29 • There are still easements and ROWs that have not been approved  
30 or waived.
- 31 • Pedestrian refuge and additional sidewalk expansion requirements  
32 for pedestrians are going to cause ingress and egress disruptions  
33 for businesses.
- 34 • If the town’s extension should be approved, we are looking at a  
35 15-month easement acquisition time frame for tiny pieces of  
36 property that will be costly to the town.

- 1           • We have received permission from USDA to take the water project  
2 (involving the four water lines) to bid and hope to do so in  
3 February.
- 4           • Eric would like to sit down with staff to review maps and any  
5 documentation on hand to prepare for the project.
- 6           • The planning Commission will be holding their final Region Ten  
7 site plan review. The site plan, which has been shared with the  
8 town for several months, does not include a sidewalk on Elm  
9 Avenue, and according to code should have been included. The  
10 matter was not addressed by previous staff and was only brought  
11 to light recently. The issue will be discussed at the next meeting,  
12 and Mrs. Nelson stated that she will share the info with Council  
13 following tonight's meeting.
- 14          • The SUP for Epworth Phase 3 will be heard at the next Planning  
15 Commission meeting. Letters were sent out to all adjacent  
16 property owners.
- 17          • Florida LLC has applied for a SUP to renovate apartments at 302  
18 W. Main Street. Mr. Cooke previously owned the building, and  
19 under his ownership MACCA applied for a SUP for the school on  
20 the bottom floor of the building. The building is now owned by  
21 Breese Glennon. Ms. Glennon plans to renovate the old  
22 apartments that are located on the second floor. This will also be  
23 on the agenda at the Planning Commission meeting.

24  
25 **Legal Counsel:**

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27 Mrs. Nelson reported that at our last meeting Mr. Gore looked briefly  
28 for any EDA legislation changes and did not find anything. He has  
29 since looked further and has been unable to find any immediate EDA  
30 action items.

31  
32 Council member Harte reported that she attended another VML  
33 meeting and there is an EDA legislative item that is pending and will  
34 be submitted in the coming weeks.

35  
36 **Clerk/Treasurer:**

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38 No report.

1           **Manager:**

2  
3           Mrs. Nelson reported:

- 4
- 5           • December was a tough month for water leaks – there was one on
  - 6           McDonald Street on Christmas Eve.
  - 7           • The county recycling center staff has reported no rate increase at
  - 8           this time.
  - 9           • The supplemental packet has a copy of the MOU for the
  - 10          Hometown Heroes. It is the final draft, and has been executed by
  - 11          Mrs. Nelson and Mr. Gore as directed by Council.
  - 12          • Tracy Clark had planned to be at the meeting to give an update
  - 13          but was unable to attend. The strategic market analysis was
  - 14          included in the packet for council to review.
  - 15          • We are waiting for a quote on a replacement light poles as the last
  - 16          vehicle accident left us without any in reserve. This may require a
  - 17          budget amendment as we are trying to buy several to keep in
  - 18          stock. They are costly as they are specially made.
  - 19          • We are waiting for supplies to test the LED lights on the poles in
  - 20          the downtown area.

21

22           **COMMUNICATIONS**

23

24           Council member Harte made mention of the national issue that

25           electric cars are experiencing due to cold temperatures. She

26           questioned if the charging stations that will be installed on our

27           property will be outfitted to address the issue. Mrs. Nelson responded

28           that we do not own the charging stations and are only leasing the

29           property to Rappahannock Electric, therefore, it would be a matter for

30           them to address, however, she would give them a call and report

31           back.

32

33           Council member Harte also reported that she would not be able to

34           attend the upcoming Cemetery meeting and questioned if it could be

35           rescheduled. Mrs. Nelson stated that she was trying to schedule the

36           meeting around Abby's availability, but would like everyone to attend.

37           She stated that she will look at the calendar for other possible dates.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

Council member Rigsby made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m. Council member Purcell seconded the motion.

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Mayor

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Clerk