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**Town of Louisa  
Monthly Meeting  
December 15, 2020**

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Please note that this meeting is being held by all-electronic means with no physical quorum of council members assembled together and no staff or members of the public assembled together. This meeting is being conducted pursuant to Va. Code 2.2-3708 (A) 3 as authorized when the Governor has declared a state of emergency in accordance with Va. Code § 44-146.17, provided that (i) the catastrophic nature of the declared emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe to assemble a quorum in a single location and (ii) the purpose of the meeting is to address the emergency.

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**Present:** R. Garland Nuckols, Mayor; Jessie Lassiter, Vice-Mayor; A. Daniel Carter, Bud Dulaney, John J. Purcell IV, Sylvia Rigsby, Council members; Jeff Gore, Legal Counsel; Elizabeth T. Nelson, Town Manager; Jessica M. Ellis, Clerk/Treasurer; Tom Leary, Chief of Police

**Absent:** None

**Also in Attendance:** Sergeant Terry Tussing, Town of Louisa Police Department

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

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

**BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR**

Mrs. Nelson read a letter aloud that was received from Jade Lourenco and Debbie Wollett, owners of Obrigado and Floozie's, thanking Council for their assistance and support over the past several months.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mrs. Nelson noted that there was one item to add to the agenda this evening – a budget appropriation to cover the Police Department

1  
2 flood expenses. Mayor Nuckols stated that the appropriation would  
3 be added under New Business for discussion as item no. 4.

4  
5 Council member Lassiter made the motion to approve the agenda as  
6 amended. Council member Carter seconded the motion. The vote  
7 went as follows: 5-0 in favor.

8  
9 **OLD BUSINESS**

10  
11 **1) Discussion/Action: Change Order – Sewer System**  
12 **Improvements**

13  
14 Mrs. Nelson explained to Council that since last month's discussion, a  
15 few changes have been made wherein some quantities were  
16 adjusted and prices reduced, and a section of line on W. Main Street  
17 that runs alongside the railroad was added to be cameraed. Mrs.  
18 Nelson stated that both Dewberry and USDA had reviewed the  
19 change order as well.

20  
21 Council member Dulaney posed a few questions to Mrs. Nelson  
22 about the project including: the cost of the project (a little over  
23 \$707,000 per the contract with Tri-State Utilities); additional money  
24 paid out in the first change order (a little over \$114,000); what funds  
25 are being used to pay for the cost of the project and changes,  
26 including the second change order up for consideration that will take  
27 the cost of the project over \$859,000 (the money is coming from the  
28 USDA 80/20 grant loan split); if any funds were being used outside of  
29 the grant/loan funds to pay for any expenses (no additional funds are  
30 being used).

31  
32 Council member Purcell made the motion to approve the change  
33 order. Council member Rigsby seconded the motion. The vote went  
34 as follows: Dulaney, against; Rigsby, for; Purcell, for; Lassiter, for;  
35 Carter, for (4-1 in favor).

36  
37 **NEW BUSINESS**

38  
39 **1) Discussion/Action: 2021 Holiday Schedule**

1  
2 Mrs. Nelson reported that this schedule mirrors the State of Virginia's  
3 schedule.

4  
5 Council member Carter made the motion to approve the 2021 Holiday  
6 Schedule. Council member Lassiter seconded the motion. The vote  
7 went as follows: 5-0 in favor.

8  
9 **2) Discussion/Action: CARES Act Funding**

10  
11 Mrs. Nelson began the discussion by informing Council that the EDA  
12 had met and reviewed the small business grant applications and  
13 reported that \$80,000 out of \$100,000 allocated by Council will be  
14 awarded to eight qualifying small businesses.

15  
16 Mrs. Nelson reported: that she is still waiting for more information on  
17 outfitting Council's board room; the quote for outfitting the theater  
18 came in less than initially expected – the total cost will be around  
19 \$10,000; the police department cameras are onsite and ready for  
20 installation – the additional \$5000 associated cost that was  
21 addressed in late November actually ended up being \$3100; there  
22 are no alternatives to obtaining easements to get the necessary fiber  
23 across/under the railroad tracks to upgrade town hall internet service  
24 - and after discussing the need for the survey and the associated cost  
25 (approximately \$3940 – within the Town Manager's spending  
26 authority) with Legal Counsel, Mrs. Nelson stated that she and Mr.  
27 Gore felt CARES Act funding could be used in this situation.

28  
29 Mrs. Nelson stated that, due to time constraints set forth by the state  
30 to spend CARES Act funds and not having all necessary quotes in  
31 hand, she needed some guidance as to how Council would like to  
32 proceed with authorizing the board room expenditures prior to the  
33 December 31, 2020 deadline – the next Council meeting in January  
34 would be too late.

35  
36 After some discussion on appropriate use of CARES funds, and  
37 advice from Mr. Gore, Council took the following action:

38  
39 Council member Dulaney made the motion authorizing the Town

1  
2 Manager to spend up to \$15,000 on equipment for Council's board  
3 room. Council member Carter seconded the motion. The vote went  
4 as follows: 5-0 in favor.

5  
6 **3) Discussion/Action: Water and Sewer Rates**  
7

8 Council member Purcell began the discussion by reporting that the  
9 Water/Sewer Committee has held three meetings wherein they  
10 looked over several years of records and data reporting from in order  
11 make a recommendation to Council. Mr. Purcell stated that they  
12 recommended increasing the sewer rate 18% based on a study of  
13 utility rates from surrounding areas. This would bring the base bill to  
14 \$77.85 for 0 - 4,000 gallons consumed monthly.

15  
16 Council member Dulaney questioned if the increase will be  
17 comparable to the recommendation from the 2015 Dewberry study  
18 conducted on our water and sewer system. Mr. Purcell responded  
19 that it would be close, but not quite as high as they recommended so  
20 as to allow for some wiggle room.

21  
22 Council member Rigsby commented that she felt the sewer increase  
23 would help with balancing out the water and sewer accounts – that it  
24 wouldn't solve the issue, but would move us in the right direction.

25  
26 Mrs. Nelson also noted that the Water Authority's rate increase would  
27 also decrease the water surplus.

28  
29 Mrs. Nelson then stated that the committee's recommendation  
30 includes taking the matter up for discussion in a public hearing at the  
31 January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, then voting on the increase in February, and  
32 pending approval, billing at the new rate in March.

33  
34 **4) Discussion/Action: Budget Appropriation – Police Department**  
35 **Flood Expenses**  
36

37 Mrs. Nelson reported that when the Police Department recently  
38 flooded, it was initially thought that a pipe burst and filled the  
39 basement, however, it was discovered that surface water from

1  
2 multiple rain events made its way into the basement where it floated  
3 the hot water tank and resulted in a broken line. Mrs. Nelson  
4 reported that we have flood insurance, but the deductible is \$25,000  
5 and the damages definitely do not exceed that amount, therefore she  
6 recommended a budget appropriation of \$7,117.98 from reserves to  
7 remove and replace all that was lost. She added that a possible mold  
8 remediation may be necessary in the future.

9  
10 Council member Dulaney made the motion authorizing the  
11 appropriation of \$7117.98 from reserves to remove and replace all  
12 that was lost in police department basement. Council member  
13 Purcell seconded the motion. The vote went as follows: 5-0 in favor.

14  
15 **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

16  
17 **Water & Sewer:**

18  
19 Council member Purcell reported that the committee recommended  
20 an in-house replacement of the water valve located near the Henson  
21 Building on West Street. Mr. Purcell stated that staff has the  
22 experience to do the work.

23  
24 Mrs. Nelson added that she believes that the cost to do the  
25 replacement will be within her spending authority and we already  
26 have the valve in stock. Mrs. Nelson did state that we may want to  
27 have the excavation work performed by an outside company to make  
28 the process go more smoothly and hopefully be completed in more  
29 timely fashion so as not to have the water turned off in the area any  
30 longer than necessary.

31  
32 Council member Dulaney questioned if the committee had discussed  
33 the replacement of the water line on West Street while expressing his  
34 desire to see the project done sooner rather than later due to the  
35 number of breaks in the areas, the length of time customers are  
36 without water, the time of day the breaks tend to occur, the safety  
37 of our staff, and the expense of the repairs. Mr. Dulaney stated that  
38 he has a difficult time voting to spend money on other projects when  
39 he feels that the water line replacement on West Street is more

1  
2 pressing.

3  
4 Council member Purcell responded saying that the committee has  
5 reached out to a few people in this field for guidance and information  
6 regarding the committee's ideas to get the project underway. Mr.  
7 Purcell stated that they do not have information to share at this time.

8  
9 **Personnel:**

10  
11 No report.

12  
13 **STAFF REPORTS**

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15 **Police Chief:**

16  
17 Chief Leary and Sergeant Tussing reported on several items at  
18 length. They made mention of the following:

- 19  
20
- Student intern from Randolph Macon coming on board in January.
  - Continuing with Lock it / Lose it & Business Watches
  - Running radar and issuing warnings and summons for speeding in town – have seen quite an increase in recent weeks – warnings serve as a traffic calming technique to keep other motorists and pedestrians safe.
  - Continuing with Community Policing projects
  - To date, five of our officers will be living in within the County of Louisa – good to note in regards to take home cars, etc.
  - Officer Julius Morton has shown his generosity to those in need in the area by purchasing turkeys for their holiday meal – example of community policing.
  - Officer Travis Williams has been working with a juvenile in the area who is in foster care – Officer Williams is spending time talking with the child and recently sat down with him and put together a model air plane – another example of community policing.
  - Continuing to provide mutual aid to the Louisa County Sheriff's Office.
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- 1       • IBR submissions are now current and is being submitted on
- 2       schedule
- 3       • Accreditation is continuing as Emily Shiflett, their Admin. Assistant,
- 4       diligently works to maintain policies.
- 5       • Chief Leary recently completed a task/course with VRSA as
- 6       required by executive order (Safe Communities).

7

8       Council member Dulaney commended the town's decision to pursue

9       accreditation - in light of all that has happened over the course of

10      the past year, and government issued mandates.

11

12      Mayor Nuckols reported that the new radio system at the Sheriff's

13      Office is now live – as a result of a grant – and thanked Mr. Babyock

14      and all those involved for incorporating the town.

15

16      **Legal Counsel:**

17

18      No report.

19

20      **Clerk/Treasurer:**

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22      No report.

23

24      **Manager:**

25

26      Mrs. Nelson reported:

- 27
- 28      • She and Chief Leary are working on an MOU with the Chiefs
- 29      Association. The cost of the MOU to the town will be \$3500.
- 30      • Mr. Gore has reviewed the MOU.
- 31      • This MOU will aid the town in the search for a new Chief of Police.
- 32      • Chief Leary has committed to staying on to help the town find a
- 33      candidate to fill the position.
- 34      • The Virginia Department of Health has denied the grant the town
- 35      was seeking to help with the planning and design of the replacement
- 36      of aging and asbestos piping in various areas of town.
- 37

- 1 • Municipal Utility Funding Relief has been made available via the
- 2 State for eligible customers in the amount \$14,719.69. Guidelines
- 3 have been set and an application process has been put in place.
- 4 • The town was awarded the full Transportation Alternatives Grant for
- 5 the W. Main Street sidewalk project. Necessary class was
- 6 completed to fulfill grant requirements.

7

8 Council member Dulaney commented that he was impressed with

9 the EDA grant meetings, and thanked Mrs. Nelson and Mrs.

10 Throckmorton for all their hard work. Mr. Dulaney also questioned

11 if Mrs. Nelson thought there would be an extension for the use of

12 CARES Act funds to which both Liz and Mr. Gore responded saying

13 they did not have any indication that an extension would be given

14 at this time.

15

16 **COMMUNICATIONS**

17

18 None.

19

20 **ADJOURNMENT**

21

22 Council member Carter made the motion to adjourn the meeting at

23 7:05 p.m.

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25 \_\_\_\_\_

26 Mayor

25 \_\_\_\_\_

26 Clerk

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