

MINUTES
WORK SESSION
PUBLIC HEARING: O-25-02
TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2025

The Council for the City of Covington held a **Public Hearing and Work Session** on **Tuesday, April 01, 2025**, at **6:30 p.m.** in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 333 W. Locust Street, Covington, Virginia.

Mayor William E. Carson, Jr. called the meeting to order with the City Clerk, Amber Nicely, to show the following members present: Mayor William E. Carson, Jr.; Vice Mayor Fred F. Forbes; Councilwoman Susan S. Crowder; Councilman Raymond C. Hunter; Councilwoman Susan S. Wolfe. Also present were the City Manager, Allen Dressler, and City Attorney Mark Popovich.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Forbes motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Wolfe. All members were in favor with “aye” votes.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Carson briefly explains that the Public Hearing is being held to consider Ordinance 0-25-02: Tax Exemption for Widows of Fallen First Responders. Mayor Carson asked for speakers either for or against the Ordinance. There was no one to speak for or against the Ordinance. With no speakers present, Mayor Carson closes the Public Hearing for O-25-02.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

No one signed up to address the Council.

REPORT OF CITY MANAGER

Mr. Dressler praised the new City Clerk, Ms. Nicely, for her excellent work on the agenda. Ms. Nicely has been with us for a month and has diligently handled the Council members' business cards. Mr. Dressler thanked her for being open with the City Manager's office, asking questions, and actively learning. He expressed his hopes and enthusiasm for a long tenure with Ms. Nicely as City Clerk.

Mr. Dressler informed everyone that all city departments are extremely busy this time of year. He gave special recognition to the Director of Parks and Recreation, Lisa Worley, and Administrative Assistant C.W. Smith. Mr. Dressler noted that Mr. Smith has been a fantastic new employee, bringing a wonderful attitude and a lot of energy to the team.

A couple of weeks ago, we welcomed over 30 baseball teams, and the weekend before last, we hosted 40 teams. This past weekend, a dozen slow-pitch adult softball teams played. Looking ahead, this weekend, Saturday, April 5, 2025, and Sunday, April 6, 2025, we will be hosting the entire Greenbrier Girls Softball Program, with at least 50 to 60 teams participating. Mr. Dressler is eagerly anticipating these events, as the contributions made by these visitors are very beneficial to the area.

This weekend also marks the Third Annual Tea Party hosted by Olde Town Covington, with support from the City of Covington and Good News Church. There are over 80 registrants for the event, and the Easter Bunny will make an appearance. Mr. Dressler extended his gratitude to Olde Town Covington, Good News Church, and all the volunteers involved in making this a special occasion for the daughters, mothers, and grandmothers attending. The Annual Easter Parade is scheduled for Saturday, April 12, 2025. The parade lineup will begin at 9:45 AM at the Mid City Mall parking lot, with the parade starting at 10:00 AM. An Easter egg hunt will follow at Main Street Park, where the Easter Bunny will be available for photos after the parade.

Additionally, the Opening Day Ceremonies for the area's Youth Spring Sports will be held on Saturday, April 12, 2025, at 1:00 PM at the Jackson River Sports Complex. This year, over 800 players are registered, and we have made every effort to accommodate all teams by utilizing all 16 fields in Covington.

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In June 2025, the city pool will be filled. Minor maintenance work has started; the pool has been drained and will be patched as part of our proactive annual service to ensure the pool remains in good condition for many generations to come.

The City's Director of Finance and HR, David Bryant, and Mr. Dressler have met with representatives from Bath County and Alleghany County regarding the Island Ford Transfer Station. The City Attorney, Mark Popovich, has drafted a joint service agreement with the localities. Mr. Bryant and Mr. Dressler are satisfied with the agreement and the associated costs to use the Transfer Station.

Mr. Bryant and Mr. Dressler received an email today from Thompson & Litton. The Firm recommends that the last day to use Peter's Mountain Landfill will be Friday, August 1, 2025. Once Peter's Mountain Landfill closes, there will be specific closing procedures to follow, which will be provided at a later date. After the landfill's closure, the mountain on which it is located will need to be managed for 30 years.

The Virginia Department of Health and Office of Drinking Water (ODW) has required a Utility Rate Study to be performed. Mr. Bryant received bids and has now obtained a company from North Carolina to perform the Utility study. The company has been in communication with the city about the costs for performing the analysis on water, wastewater, and refuse collection.

The Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce and its Executive Director, Josh Taylor, are hosting several Virginia Tourism tours. The tours of the Alleghany Highlands provide Virginia citizens with the opportunity to explore what the Alleghany Highlands have to offer. They recently had a tour, and one of their stops was the Jackson River Sports Complex. The tour participants stated the Jackson River Sports Complex as the highlight of their visit.

The Mid-City Mall parking lot project is ongoing. Sewer lines at Mid-City Mall are dilapidated and will have to be replaced before concrete can be poured. The City's Public Works crews will be working on the sewer replacement. While the contractors are working on other projects. New plastic sewer lines will be installed. There will be a separate drainage system for water runoff.

Paving was scheduled to start this week, but has been moved to next week due to paving crew illnesses. The planned paving schedule will begin with paving South Royal Street next week. South Craig Avenue will begin after the completion of South Royal Street. South Marion and the surrounding side streets will be the third area set for paving. Once these areas are complete, there are plans to complete planned paved areas at Pitzer Ridge Road, the neighborhood of Idlewilde, Parklin Heights, East Asbury Street, Fudge Street, and then paving at Cedar Hill Cemetery.

Smurfit WestRock recently met with various governing bodies throughout the Alleghany Highlands and donated \$2,500 to each of the following: Alleghany County, Town of Clifton Forge, and the City of Covington. This funding is designated for the Alleghany Highlands Humane Society. The \$2,500 donation with no city match has been successfully given to the Humane Society.

Mr. Dressler asked if there were any questions.

Vice Mayor Forbes asked for the time of the Tea Party. Mr. Dressler advised 11 am for the Tea Party and 10 am for the Easter parade on Saturday, April 12, 2025.

Mayor Carson asked if there were any tickets left for the Tea Party. Mr. Dressler advised that he cannot speak about the current ticket status. Councilwoman Crowder is on the Olde Town Covington Board, and she advised that they had 82 seats sold with 100 seats available.

Mr. Dressler concluded his report.

**APPROVAL OF APRIL 08, 2025 AGENDA
ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

1. To Consider Ordinance 0-25-02: Tax Exemption for Widows of Fallen First Responders.

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- Vice Mayor Forbes motioned to be moved to the April 08, 2025, agenda. Motion seconded by Councilman Hunter. With all in favor.
2. To Consider Resolution R-25-09: Wastewater Disposal - Thompson & Litton Final Payment for EQ Basin Project.
Vice Mayor Forbes motioned to be moved to the April 08, 2025, agenda. Motion seconded by Councilman Hunter. With all in favor.
 3. To Consider Resolution R-25-10: Donation to the Alleghany Humane Society – No City match
Vice Mayor Forbes motioned to be moved to the April 08, 2025, agenda. Motion seconded by Councilwoman Wolfe. With all in favor.
 4. To Consider Resolution R-25-11: Covington Parks and Rec Youth Day – Similar to Bike Rodeo
Vice Mayor Forbes motioned to be moved to the April 08, 2025, agenda. Motion seconded by Councilman Hunter. With all in favor.
 5. To Consider Resolution R-25-12: 2025 Personal Property Tax Relief Allocation
Vice Mayor Forbes motioned to be moved to the April 08, 2025, agenda. Motion seconded by Councilman Hunter. With all in favor.
 6. To Consider Resolution R-25-13: Opioid Abatement Authority – No City match
Vice Mayor Forbes motioned to be moved to the April 08, 2025, agenda. Motion seconded by Councilman Hunter. With all in favor.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Appoint a representative for the Industrial Development Authority (IDA).
2. Appoint a representative to the Alleghany Highlands Economic Development Corporation
3. Appoint two Planning Commission Representatives:
Mayor Carson motioned for all appointments to be moved to the April 08, 2025, agenda. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Forbes. With all in favor.

Mr. Dressler reminded everyone that those interested in joining area boards need to send a letter of intent to the City Clerk.

REPORT OF CITY ATTORNEY

Mr. Popovich asked to address the council. He informed the Council that there was a \$5 million lawsuit filed against the Department of Social Services and Director Tammy Wilson by Ms. Deanna Ratliff. On March 20, 2025, a jury verdict was entered in favor of the Department of Social Services, and the courts dismissed the case. The case has been removed from the docket. With the possibility of an appeal.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

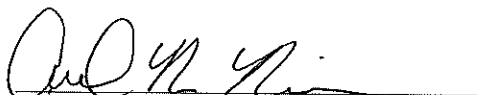
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ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Carson motioned to adjourn, seconded by Vice Mayor Forbes. All Council members were in favor with "aye" votes.


WILLIAM E. CARSON, JR., MAYOR

ATTEST:


RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY
AMBER N. NICELY, CITY CLERK