

**MEETING MINUTES  
REGULAR SESSION  
APRIL 08, 2025**

The Council for the City of Covington held a Regular session meeting on **Tuesday, April 08, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.** in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 333 West Locust Street, Covington, Virginia.

Mayor William E. Carson Jr. called the meeting to order. Mayor Carson asked City Clerk Amber Nicely to show that all Council members were present.

Council members in attendance were Mayor Carson, Vice Mayor Fred Forbes III, Councilwoman Susan S. Crowder, Councilman Raymond C. Hunter, and Councilwoman Susan S. Wolfe. Also in attendance were City Manager Allen Dressler and City Attorney Mark Popovich.

Preacher Doug Hollenbeck delivered the meeting invocation.

Followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mayor Carson motioned to approve the agenda. Vice Mayor Forbes seconded the motion. With all in favor, “aye”.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

No citizen speakers.

**CONSENT TO MINUTES**

Vice Mayor Forbes motioned to approve the following meeting minutes. Councilwoman Wolfe seconded the motion. The Council approved the following meeting minutes without any corrections, with an all in favor “aye” from all Council.

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Called meeting to appoint a new City Clerk                            | March 04, 2025 |
| 2. Work session meeting  | March 04, 2025 |
| 3. Regular meeting   | March 11, 2025 |
| 4. Called Joint meeting with the Alleghany Highlands Public School Board | March 18, 2025 |

**ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

**Vice Mayor Forbes started the section for ordinances and resolutions.**

1. **To consider Ordinance 0-25-02: Tax Exemption for Widows of Fallen First Responders.**  
Vice Mayor Forbes invited Chief of Police Chris Smith to the podium to explain Ordinance 0-25-02. Chief Smith explained that O-25-02 is to grant a real estate tax exemption to widows of fallen first responders. Motioned for approval by Vice Mayor Forbes. Motion seconded by Councilman Hunter. With an all-in-favor vote via Roll Call as follows: Councilwoman Crowder, For. Councilman Hunter, For. Councilwoman Wolfe, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.
2. **To consider Resolution R-25-09: Wastewater Disposal – Thompson & Litton, Final Payment of \$72,789.54 for the EQ Basin Project.**  
Motioned for approval by Vice Mayor Forbes and seconded by Councilman Hunter. With an all-in-favor vote via Roll Call as follows: Councilwoman Crowder, For. Councilman Hunter, For. Councilwoman Wolfe, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.
3. **To consider Resolution R-25-10: \$2500 Donation to the Alleghany Humane Society with no City match.**  
Mr. Dressler informed the Council that Smurfit Westrock has donated \$2,500 to each locality in Alleghany County, Virginia. The City of Covington has allocated its \$2,500 donation to the Humane Society to cover expenses related to spaying and neutering animals.  
Motioned for approval by Vice Mayor Forbes and seconded by Councilman Hunter. With an all-in-favor vote via Roll Call as follows: Councilwoman Crowder, For. Councilman Hunter, For. Councilwoman Wolfe, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.
4. **To consider Resolution R-25-11: Covington Parks and Rec Youth Day – Similar to Bike Rodeo.**  
Mr. Dressler explains that Resolution R-25-11 began as a bike identification service that former City of Covington Police officer Darrel Hicks and Mr. Dressler would provide to children. They would mark each bike with a unique branding at the Main Street Park. They did the program for several years and

the program grew successfully. Retired Alleghany County Deputy Barry Rose expanded the program to become what is now known as “Bike Rodeo,” an event that would give the area children bicycles. Chris Fisher later took over with gathering donations and funding for the Bike Rodeo. This year, 2025, will be the first year that the Bike Rodeo will not take place in the Alleghany Highlands. As a response to the Bike Rodeo not taking place, the City of Covington Parks and Recreation department, in conjunction with the Alleghany County Sheriff's Office and Bath County, Virginia, will hold Youth Day. Youth Day will be a special way to give bicycles and other prizes to area children. Donations will go into an individual finance account that the City of Covington's Finance Department has created for any funding for Youth Day. Motioned for approval by Vice Mayor Forbes and seconded by Councilman Hunter. With an all-in-favor vote via Roll Call as follows: Councilwoman Crowder, For. Councilman Hunter, For. Councilwoman Wolfe, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.

5. **To consider Resolution R-25-12: 2025 Personal Property Tax Relief Allocation.**

Vice Mayor Forbes invited the City of Covington's Commissioner of Revenue, Cathy Kimberlin, to explain R-25-12. Ms. Kimberlin advised that this discount percentage started in 1998 as a way to phase out Personal Property taxes on motor vehicles. In 2005, with the discount percentage reaching and halting at 70%, the state of Virginia capped the allocation at \$950,000,000. The \$950,000,00 is dispersed throughout the different localities in Virginia, and the amount given to each locality is dependent upon how much tax each locality made each year. Since 2005, each year the City of Covington has received \$545,479.17. This year, the discount percentage for the City of Covington is 43.5%. In 2006, when the City of Covington started, the discount percentage was 60%. The decline in the percentage discount is due to discounts given for multiple vehicles owned by citizens. This resolution has to be passed each year for the Commissioner of Revenue to set the new personal property discount percentage. Citizens with vehicles that are valued up to \$1000 get a discount of 100% and do not pay taxes. Citizens with vehicles valued from \$1001 up to \$20,000 get the 43.5% discount. Citizens with vehicles valued over \$20,000 will have to pay the full personal property tax amount. Motioned for approval by Vice Mayor Forbes and seconded by Councilman Hunter. With an all-in-favor vote via Roll Call as follows: Councilwoman Crowder, For. Councilman Hunter, For. Councilwoman Wolfe, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.

6. **To consider Resolution R-25-13: Opioid Abatement Authority with no City match.** Motioned for approval by Vice Mayor Forbes and seconded by Councilman Hunter. With an all-in-favor vote via Roll Call as follows: Councilwoman Crowder, For. Councilman Hunter, For. Councilwoman Wolfe, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.

## APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Carson began the Appointments portion.

1. **Appoint a representative to the Industrial Development Authority (IDA).**

- a. To consider Lee Roe for placement upon the
  - i. Councilman Hunter, For. Councilwoman Wolfe, For.
- b. To consider Julie Stanley for placement upon the IDA.
  - i. Councilwoman Crowder, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.

**With a majority vote, the Council appointed Julie Stanley to the IDA.**

2. **Appoint a representative to the Alleghany Highlands Economic Development Corporation (AHEDC).** *Expired on 03-10-2025, to fill the vacant seat of representative Xavier Storey.*

- a. To consider Lee Roe for placement upon the AHEDC.  
Councilwoman Crowder, For. Councilman Hunter, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.
- b. To consider Julie Stanley for placement upon the AHEDC.  
Councilwoman Wolfe, For.

**With a majority vote, the Council appointed Lee Roe to the AHEDC.**

**MEETING MINUTES  
REGULAR SESSION  
APRIL 08, 2025**

3. **Appoint two Planning Commission Representatives:** Vice Mayor Fred Forbes requested a roll call vote for the Planning Commission appointments.
  - a. To consider John “Jay” Crowder for placement upon the Planning Commission.  
The Council voted for John Crowder’s Planning Commission appointment via roll call vote as follows: Councilwoman Crowder abstained. Councilman Hunter, For. Councilwoman Wolfe, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.
  - b. To consider Gene Mundy for placement upon the Planning Commission.  
The Council voted for Gene Mundy’s Planning Commission appointment via roll call vote as follows: Councilwoman Crowder, For. Councilman Hunter, For. Councilwoman Wolfe, For. Vice Mayor Forbes, For. Mayor Carson, For.

**The council appointed both John “Jay” Crowder and Gene Mundy to the Planning Commission.**

4. **Appoint a representative for the Housing Authority:** *Expired on 03-31-2025, to fill the vacant seat of Richard “Bert” Baker.* The Council tabled the Housing Authority appointment until the May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Regular Council Meeting.

After the Planning Commission appointments, Mr. Dressler thanked all the applicants for their willingness to serve on local area boards and informed the Council on upcoming information for the boards. The IDA met today at 2 PM. The next meeting for the IDA will be in July 2025. The next AHEDC meeting will be Wednesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 9 AM. Planning Commission will not meet again until Tuesday, May 06<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 5:30 PM in the Covington City Council Chambers for a Joint Committee meeting with the City Council. Advised the public that if there are citizens interested in joining local boards, they will need to send a letter of intent to the City Clerk, Amber Nicely, stating their interest in joining a Covington City-appointed board.

Mayor Carson concluded the Appointments section.

**REPORT OF CITY MANAGER**

Mr. Dressler started off his report by thanking the Council and the audience for being in attendance and supporting local government. A Landmark Property Management Company from Winston-Salem, North Carolina, team John Stilner and Sam Sari, for the design and development of the Rivermont School. The project will start accepting bids in the next 60 days. Susan Hammond, with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), advised that the Rayon Bridge is on schedule, with land surveys currently taking place.

The historic Hawthorne Street bridge project will take bids in July 2025 or August 2025. Citing that several challenges with the Department of Transportation delayed the Hawthorne Street bridge project.

410 On Main representatives advised that Mountain Rush will have a soft opening in April 2025. Mountain Rush’s founder Richard Mansell will also be working with the Covington’s Parks and Recreation department to provide entertainment for the upcoming Youth Day on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, from 10 AM to 2 PM.

Virginia Tech Applied Research Corporation (VT-ARC) has given a grant with a match to provide STEM enrichment to Middle school-aged children. The City’s vision and goal is to get Middle school-aged children interested in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

The Green House and Hydroponics program across from the Covington Middle School has been successful at educating Middle school-aged children on planting, raising, and harvesting produce and vegetation.

VT-ARC has shown interest in the Alleghany Highlands Industrial Heritage and Technology Discovery Center, located at 227 North Maple Avenue, Covington, Virginia.

The Mid-City Mall paving project has found that the Terracotta lines for sewer are in desperate need of repairs. The sidewalk on Locust Street is currently being placed.

The blocks for the concession at the mini golf course were placed yesterday and today.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Olde Town Covington Tea Party was a success with many in attendance. The next Olde Town Covington event will be the Cinco De Mayo event on Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, from 5 PM to 9 PM.

The Easter Parade is this weekend, Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Parade line up at 9:45 AM at the Mid City Mall parking lot, with the Parade starting at 10 AM. The parade will end at the Main Street Park, where the kids will be able to take pictures with the Easter Bunny and find Easter eggs.

**MEETING MINUTES  
REGULAR SESSION  
APRIL 08, 2025**

Youth Spring Sports Opening Day will also take place on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025. This year is the largest attendance of area children, with 800 children signed up to play Tball, Baseball, and Softball this spring in the Alleghany Highlands.

The Greenbrier Girls Softball Association brought all their teams over to play at the Jackson River Sports Complex over this past weekend for their Early Bird tournament. The relationship between the City of Covington and the Greenbrier Girls' Softball Association is crucial to the City of Covington due to the use of area facilities, and the Greenbrier Girls' Softball Association brings more business to the area.

Milling asphalt started on Royal Avenue today. The Paving schedule will be Royal Avenue, Craig Street, and then the side streets that were damaged due to the Columbia Gas projects.

On Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 722 South Alleghany Avenue, Dr. Cynthia V. Carter and Mrs. Darlene Smith, with the support of the City of Covington, will host an event to honor their mother, the late Vandelia Tracy Carter Pettus. Mrs. Pettus was a beloved member of the community, renowned for her florist business, which was the first and only florist owned and operated by an African American woman in the City of Covington.

Mr. Dressler finished his report and started taking Council questions.

Councilman Hunter asked when the anticipated start date of the Alleghany Avenue sidewalk project. Mr. Dressler advised that the bid will be sometime in late Summer 2025. The project will cover the area from Beech Street to Pine Street.

No other questions from the Council were asked.

**NEW BUSINESS**

No new business

Vice Mayor Fred Forbes motioned to adjourn the meeting, with Councilman Hunter seconding the motion. Followed up with an all-in-favor vote of "aye" by the Council. With no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

---

WILLIAM E. CARSON JR., MAYOR

ATTEST:

---

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:  
AMBER NACOLE NICELY, CITY CLERK