

**MEETING MINUTES  
WORK SESSION  
TUESDAY, MARCH 03, 2026**

The Council for the City of Covington held a work session on Tuesday, March 03, 2026, at 6:30 PM in the Council Chambers of City Hall, located at 333 West Locust Street, Covington, Virginia.

Mayor Fred F. Forbes III called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and asked City Clerk Amber Berberette to call the roll. The following members of Council were present: Councilwoman Susan S. Crowder, Councilman David B. Goff, Councilwoman Susan S. Wolfe, Vice Mayor Raymond C. Hunter, and Mayor Fred F. Forbes III.

Also in attendance was City Manager Allen Dressler and City Attorney Mark Popovich.

Mayor Forbes reviewed the agenda for the meeting. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mayor Forbes and seconded by Vice Mayor Hunter. The motion carried with all members voting "aye."

Mayor Forbes reviewed the agenda for the meeting. A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded. The motion carried with all members voting "aye."

Mayor Forbes invited Jeremy Holmes, Executive Director of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, to present the annual update.

Mr. Holmes provided an overview of the Commission's ongoing initiatives and regional efforts, including hazard mitigation planning, housing challenges, transportation policy advocacy, and environmental programs. He highlighted the importance of continued collaboration among localities and noted that the Commission assists with grant writing, planning, and project development.

Mr. Holmes discussed the Commission's involvement in regional housing initiatives, including support for the Rivermont redevelopment project, and emphasized the need for additional funding and policy adjustments to support affordable housing development.

He also outlined ongoing transportation efforts, including advocacy for changes to state funding policies to better support rural communities, and noted increased engagement with state officials and the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

Additional updates included environmental and water quality programs, such as septic pump-out initiatives, as well as the adoption of a regional opioid response plan aimed at addressing substance use and workforce impacts.

Mr. Holmes concluded by emphasizing the Commission's commitment to supporting rural communities and encouraging continued collaboration with the City of Covington.

City Manager Allen Dressler thanked Mr. Holmes for his work and noted the value of regional collaboration efforts, including recently established quarterly meetings among localities to discuss shared challenges and opportunities. He also highlighted ongoing coordination with the Commission on local projects and funding opportunities.

Council members discussed shared regional challenges, particularly workforce and housing needs, and acknowledged the importance of continued collaboration across jurisdictions.

There were no further questions, and Mr. Holmes was thanked for his presentation.

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Mayor Forbes presented items scheduled for public hearing at the March 10, 2026 Regular Meeting, including the proposed vacation of undeveloped public right-of-way adjacent to the former Rivermont School property.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Hunter and seconded by Councilwoman Wolfe, to move the public hearing item forward to the March 10, 2026 agenda. The motion carried with all members voting “aye.”

Mayor Forbes presented the following items for inclusion on the March 10, 2026 Regular Meeting agenda:

- Ordinance O-26-01: Vacating certain undeveloped public right-of-way adjacent to the former Rivermont School property.
- Resolution R-26-07: Accepting VDEM grant funds for Delta Advanced 911 services (no City match).
- Resolution R-26-08: Providing for supplemental appropriations in various funds.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Hunter and seconded by Councilwoman Wolfe, to move the public hearing item forward to the March 10, 2026 agenda. The motion carried with all members voting “aye.”

City Manager Allen Dressler presented his report and provided updates on several ongoing projects, initiatives, and operational matters within the City.

Mr. Dressler highlighted the continued coordination with regional partners and neighboring localities, noting the value of recently established quarterly meetings that allow for collaboration, information sharing, and discussion of common challenges and opportunities across jurisdictions.

He provided updates on infrastructure and capital improvement projects, including ongoing planning and funding efforts related to City facilities and utility operations. Mr. Dressler noted that staff are actively pursuing funding opportunities and working with regional partners, including the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, to support project development and implementation.

Mr. Dressler also discussed the status of current and upcoming projects within the City’s utility systems, including water, wastewater, and landfill operations, emphasizing the importance of long-term planning, cost management, and maintaining service reliability.

Updates were provided regarding procurement and bid processes for various projects, with Mr. Dressler noting that staff are working to ensure projects move forward efficiently and within anticipated timelines, particularly as the City approaches the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Dressler recognized recent personnel changes within City staff, including the retirement of a long-serving employee in the accounting department and the departure of another employee for new opportunities. He expressed appreciation for their years of service and contributions to City operations.

He further provided updates on ongoing coordination with utility providers, including Columbia Gas, regarding infrastructure improvements and upcoming work throughout various areas of the City. Mr. Dressler noted that these projects may result in temporary disruptions but are necessary to support long-term infrastructure improvements.

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Mr. Dressler emphasized that multiple projects are expected to take place throughout the spring and summer months, including construction, maintenance, and infrastructure improvements, and encouraged patience from residents as work progresses.

He also discussed planned and ongoing paving projects, noting both locally funded paving efforts and additional funding anticipated through the Virginia Department of Transportation. These projects are expected to address key roadways and improve overall transportation infrastructure within the City.

Mr. Dressler concluded his report by highlighting continued community engagement efforts, including participation in local business and economic development activities, and expressed appreciation for the support of City Council and the ongoing efforts of City staff.


There were no items of old business.

There were no additional items of new business.

With no further business to come before Council, Mayor Forbes requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Vice Mayor Hunter and seconded by Councilwoman Crowder. The motion carried with all members voting "aye."

The meeting was adjourned.

  
RAYMOND C. HUNTER, MAYOR

ATTEST:  
  
RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:  
AMBER N. BERBERETTE, CITY CLERK