



Town of Luray

45 East Main Street
P.O. Box 629
Luray, Virginia 22835



PUBLIC NOTICE

August 11, 2020

At their August 10, 2020 Council Meeting, the Luray Town Council reviewed the following issues and took the following actions.

Under the Roll Call item:

All members were present with no members attending electronically.

Under the Continuity of Government Announcement:

- 1) Mayor Presgraves announced that the meeting was conducted pursuant to the April 13, 2020 Ordinance for Continuity in the Government of Luray with the public able to attend the meeting following guidelines and provide input and comment through contact to the Town Manager prior to the meeting

Mayor Presgraves Statement

Thank you to everyone here tonight and your interest in our Town. The last eight days have been the most difficult time for our community, my family, and me. I want to make this very clear to everyone, with absolutely no qualifications. I understand what I posted on social media was wrong, offensive, and unbecoming. It does not reflect what was in my heart. I also want to make a direct apology to all people of color and women. Passing off demeaning and worn out racial stereotypes as humor isn't funny. I now fully understand how hurtful it is. I can and will do better, and we can all do better. We must. From the bottom of my heart I am sorry and humbly ask for your forgiveness and your grace. Thank you for listening, and God bless each and every one of you.

Under the Consent Agenda item:

- 1) Council unanimously approved minutes from the July 13th Council Meeting and June 28th Work Session, and the Accounts Payable checks.

Under the Discussion of Town Charter:

- 1) Town Attorney Jason Botkins presented an overview of the Town's Charter that does not allow members of Town Council the authority to vote to remove other elected members of Council from office. The Charter follows the General Assembly in asserting the elected representatives are accountable to the citizens of Luray. The State Code provides the citizens the ability to pursue a petition the Circuit Court to recall elected representatives.

Under the Citizen Comments agenda item:

The following citizens spoke in regard to the social media posting of Mayor Presgraves:

- Audre King – 1 Jordan Street, Luray
- Audrey Tutt Smith – 116 Cole Street, Luray
- Dean Peterson – 789 Ridge View Lane, Shenandoah
- Theresa Posey – 15 Woodland Avenue, Luray
- Barbara Veney -161 Hillside Road, Luray
- Laura Ausberry – 153 Hillside Road, Luray

Phone: (540) 743-5511 ● Fax: (540) 743-1486 ● www.townofluray.com



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- RJ Judd – 24 Zerkel Street, Luray
- Logan Horng – 112 South Marye Lane, Luray
- Pat Taylor – 660 West Main Street, Luray
- Penny Good – 532 West Main Street, Luray
- Cindy Baron – 3 Hudson Drive, Luray
- Maxine Tutt – 637 West Main Street, Luray
- Michelle Billings – 16 Springcrest Drive, Luray
- Melvin Tutt – 113 Meade Street, Luray
- Tesa Conlin – 100 Grand View, Luray
- Ken Johnson – 611 Jewel Hollow Road, Luray
- James North – 5 South Court Street, Luray
- Mike Nester – 14 Springview Avenue, Luray

The following individuals provided electronic comments:

- Wendy Brown – 104 North Hawksbill Street, Luray
- Judy Peabody – 418 East Main Street, Luray
- Suzanna Grant – 125 Pass Run Drive, Luray
- Cathy Herbert – 201 Hawksbill Heights Drive, Luray
- Scott & Kelly Zitzer – 7 Johnson Drive, Luray
- William Kelly & Cynthia Smith – 7 Jamison Road, Luray
- James Turner – 830 Mill Creek Cross Road, Luray
- Venessa Acham – 5 Summer Street, Hanover New Hampshire
- Jodi Arbor Johnson – 5398 Harbor Court, Alexandria Virginia
- Monica Gilley – 100 Luna Park Drive, Alexandria Virginia
- Chris Hurlbert – 220 Water Street, Brooklyn New York

Under the Presentations agenda item:
No Presentation provided

Under the Public Hearing agenda item:

- 1) Town Council conducted a public hearing to receive citizen input on a proposed Code Amendment to Chapters 202 and 406 of the Town Code regarding artisan manufacturing in the Business Zoning District. No comments were provided. Council unanimously approved the Code Amendments as presented.

Under the Action & Discussion agenda item:

- 1) Town Council unanimously approved the agreements for the Luray Meadows Apartments project to allow the CDBG funded improvements associated with the project to be conducted by the Town.

Under the Town Attorney's Report item:

No discussion



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Under the Mayor's Announcements:

No statement

Under the Closed Meeting agenda item:

Town Council conducted a Closed Meeting to consider the performance of the Mayor and the use of social media by the Town's public officers and to consult with the Town Attorney about these matters. Following the Closed Meeting, the Town Council voted 5-1 with Councilwoman Pence voting no to censure Mayor Presgraves for his social media postings. Town Council issued the following statement:

The Luray Town Council hereby adopts this formal censure of Mayor Barry Presgraves for his choice of harmful words posted on Social Media. While the Town Council affirms the freedom of speech guaranteed by the U.S Constitution, as elected officials, we are held to a higher standard within our communities.

Statements by public officials have a powerful impact on the community. We have listened carefully to and reflected deeply upon the public comments shared with the Town during the past week.

Your apology is a step towards reconciliation with our citizens, however damage both internal and external to our community remains.

This statement of censure focuses on the action. The Town Council expects your highest level of commitment and dedication to serving all citizens of Luray as we move forward without regard to race, sex, or other characteristics.

We recognize that words alone will not advance this cause or any other. We are dedicated to working in a transparent manner to build public trust in Town governance and move our great Town forward during this time of healing.

For more information about the August 10th Council Meeting, please contact the Town Manager at sburke@townofluray.com or (540) 743-5511.