

May 13, 2025

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor LaWanda Tatum called the regular meeting of the Lawrenceville Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. on May 13, 2025.

#### ROLL CALL

Roll was called. Present: Council Members H. B. Brockwell, Jr., Jeanette Grimes, Robert F. Pecht, III, Alice Talbert and Anne Williams.

Absent: Council Members, Dora Hardy and Teya Whitehead.

Also present: Town Attorney, W. C. Outten, Jr., Town Manager, Randy Lynch, Town Clerk, Wanda Johnson, Special Projects Coordinator, Kimberly Martin, Interim Police Chief, Demetrie Coles, Bridget Charles, Paul Johnson, Phillip Goode, Keyonna Mangrum Tatum, citizens and the press.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Tatum led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED FY 2025-2026 BUDGET

Mayor Tatum opened the public hearing on the proposed FY 2025-2026 Budget. There was no public comment. Ms. Williams expressed a concern about sufficient reserves. We have not raised water rates or tax rates. She feels we are not raising reserves fast enough. Mr. Pecht said for several years we had substantial increases in water rates. We have built reserves that are due to being short staffed on employees. The finance committee felt we could hold rates with no increases this year. We did have better water sales due to volume, not just rates. Mayor Tatum closed the public hearing.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mr. Pecht and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to approve the minutes of the regular meeting on April 8, 2025, as received, suspend the reading and file.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Brockwell requested to add a closed session for personnel matters to the agenda. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to approve the agenda as presented, with the addition of a closed session for personnel matters.

#### RECOGNITION OF CITIZENS

##### BRIDGET CHARES AND PAUL JOHNSON, MELA WHOLE FOODS

Ms. Charles stated she and her partner, Paul Johnson, are retired veterans. Their project is titled Mela Whole Foods and their plan is to establish a grocery store bus in Lawrenceville. Lawrenceville is a designated food desert, and they want to bring affordable, fresh healthy food options to the community. They would like to hold a town hall for public input. They would

need warehouse space for storage and a bus for the mobile grocery store. They have researched a model that has been operating in Petersburg. Mayor Tatum thanked them for coming.

#### KEYONNA MANGRUM TATUM

Ms. Mangrum Tatum returned tonight to follow up on her town zoning application. She has been approved as a subsidy vendor and for tuition assistance. She said it is very important to increase the number of children she can accommodate. She has plans to open a family day home to provide early learning for kids in a home on Belt Road in Lawrenceville. She said she has completed a zoning permit application and was approved for four children. She invited council members to come by and tour the home. She has a finished basement that will provide space for a classroom and playroom. She has completed an application to increase the permit to allow ten to twelve children. She would serve children ages 16 months to 5 years. Mayor Tatum commented that child care and early childhood education is definitely needed in our community.

#### PHILLIP GOODE

Mr. Goode applied for a position as a police officer position on the Lawrenceville Police Department. He is following up on the hiring process. Mr. Lynch advised that interviews were conducted and decision phone calls will be going out soon.

#### LAWRENCEVILLE EDA

Mr. Brockwell reported that the LEDA secretary/treasurer and one other member have resigned from the LEDA. The LEDA meets tomorrow night and will undergo reorganization.

#### MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Tatum said she met with Ms. Charles last week. This type of grocery has been operating in Petersburg and is a benefit to that community. Mayor Tatum thanked Mrs. Martin for an amazing Easter egg hunt. The children enjoyed the egg hunt, games and food. There was baseball going on at the ballpark at the same time. It was an amazing day. Mayor Tatum has attended at least forty meetings or events since February. The first Community Thriver Award will be presented next month. The first one will be for the United Methodist Church for its playground.

#### REPORT OF TOWN ATTORNEY

There was no report.

#### REPORT OF THE TREASURER

##### CONSIDERATION OF ACCOUNTS

Mrs. Johnson reported the bills total \$137,258.12. On a motion by Mr. Brockwell, seconded by Mrs. Talbert and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to pay the bills in the amount of \$137,258.12 and post to the proper accounts.

#### REPORT OF TOWN MANAGER

##### NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY ADOPTION FOR PARK STREET COMMUNITY CDBG PROJECT

Mr. Lynch referred to the copy of the policy in the packet. He asked Council to adopt the Non-Discrimination Policy as presented and approve the mayor to sign and execute the CDBG project

document. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to adopt the Non-Discrimination Policy as presented and authorize Mayor Tatum to sign and execute the document.

### SECTION 3 BUSINESS & EMPLOYMENT PLAN ADOPTION FOR PARK STREET COMMUNITY CDBG PROJECT

Mr. Lynch referred to the required pre-contract activity for the project. He asked Council to adopt the Section 3 Business and Employment Plan as presented and approve the mayor to sign and execute the CDBG Project document. Ms. Williams expressed concerns about the statement encouraging hiring of lower-income persons. She said it should be open to everyone in a fair and equitable manner. She also questioned the manner of advertising. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried, Town Council voted to adopt the Section 3 Business and Employment Plan as presented and approved the mayor to sign and execute the document. Ms. Williams voted nay.

### SECTION 504 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE ADOPTION FOR PARK STREET COMMUNITY CDBG PROJECT

Mr. Lynch referred to the Section 504 Grievance Procedure in the packet. This is a required pre-contract activity. He requested Council to adopt the grievance procedure as presented and approve the mayor to sign and execute the document. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Council voted to adopt the Section 504 Grievance Procedure as presented and approved the mayor to sign and execute the document.

### FAIR HOUSING CERTIFICATION ADOPTION FOR PARK STREET COMMUNITY CDBG PROJECT

Mr. Lynch referred to the Fair Housing Certification in the packet. This is a required pre-contract activity. He requested Council to adopt the Fair Housing Certification as presented and approve the mayor to sign and execute the document. On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Council voted to adopt the Fair Housing Certification as presented and approved the mayor to sign and execute the document.

### BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES ON MAIN STREET (BOOMS) STUDY PILOT PROJECT

The BOOMS Study Pilot Project is in the packet for information only. The Commonwealth Regional Council has submitted a proposal to the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, and the Town of Lawrenceville has been one of the towns identified for the pilot project. The Town has completed the necessary steps to be in Phase II (Step 3) for this pilot project.

### RITE AID CLOSING

Mayor Tatum reported that Rite Aid is closing. The buyer is not planning to open a new pharmacy in that location. If you have prescriptions there, you need to move them before June 8, 2025.

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

Mr. Pecht reported there is an updated draft budget on the table tonight. The previous draft budget counted the proposed hazardous duty benefit cost twice. It was in the VRS formula and

on a separate line. With this correction, we now have a surplus. There were no public comments during the public hearing. The assumptions are Revenue: No water and sewer rate increase, no garbage rate increase, no tax rate increase. Expense: three percent raise for employees, Town continues to pay 100% of the eligible employee's individual health insurance premium, Town will pay 20% of the additional premium for dual or family, if selected. Actuarial study and consideration of enhanced hazardous duty benefits for police officers and adjust base salary for police officers.

#### TENTATIVE ADOPTION OF THE FY2025-2026 BUDGET

On motion by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mr. Brockwell and carried by all ayes, Town Council voted to tentatively adopt the proposed FY2025–2026 Budget as presented tonight. It is anticipated that the budget will be formally adopted in June.

#### FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

The April fire report is in the packet. The fire department responded to 18 calls in April. Of the 18, 6 were in the town limits and 12 were outside the town limits. Also, 16 were in the LVFD First Due area, with 2 being mutual aid to other agencies. Approximately 61-man hours were expended.

#### PERSONNEL

Mr. Brockwell provided each council member a blue packet and reviewed the employment opportunity materials it contains. The information is used for recruitment for open positions with the Town. Our open positions are listed on the Virginia Employment Commission site. Mr. Brockwell discussed stating veteran preference on job openings. If two candidates are otherwise equal in qualifications, the veteran would have preference. He indicated he would like to proceed with that in the future. Council did not vote on the matter.

#### POLICE

Ms. Hardy is ill and not in attendance tonight. The monthly police report is in the packet. Ms. Williams reported an accident that occurred between her house and Ms. Coles' house. Ms. Williams discussed ongoing issues and concerns with Interim Chief Coles. Mr. Brockwell asked Interim Chief Coles to check on the Brick & Tile property owned by the Town. He said tractor trailers are parking there, changing oil and dumping oil on the property behind the wall without permission.

#### PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Mr. Brockwell reported that a person is interested in the Brick & Tile property and plans to submit a contract proposal in the morning for Mr. Outten to review. Mr. Brockwell went to see Barry Carter about cleaning out the Southern States property and the property has been cleaned out.

#### STREETS, LIGHTS & CEMETERY

Mr. Lynch reported several poles and lights have been damaged. Replacements have been ordered. There is a twenty-week order time. Ms. Williams said there needs to be a curb at the corner of Windsor and Belt. She said people driving cut the corner close and almost hit a pedestrian. She said there is a yellow post that was almost hit also.

#### TOWN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Brockwell said there will be a comprehensive plan committee meeting on May 28, 2025. The project lists are in the packet. Ms. Williams provided a summary of the IDA meeting. The IDA has a new director, Jeffrey Reed from Roanoke, VA. Mr. Lynch spoke at the IDA meeting tonight.

#### WATER/WASTEWATER

Mr. Brockwell said members of the committee have met with the IDA and their new director. Mr. Brockwell spoke with Mayor Hayes in Alberta. Mayor Hayes is concerned about water availability for proposed residential development areas in Alberta.

#### HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT

Mr. Brockwell said we will have to address code enforcement at some time and it is going to be costly. He said we need to identify and notify absentee owners that their buildings are blighted and derelict.

#### PARKS/RECREATION

There was no report.

#### WELLNESS

Mayor Tatum advised May is Mental Health Wellness Month. Ms. Grimes advised Southside Wellness Coalition services our area if there is a need for resources in reference to mental health. Ms. Grimes is the community health worker with Brunswick Health Ambassadors. The number to call is 804-894-5700. Mayor Tatum said we also have J.C. and Ashley here in the community for crisis stabilization. She encouraged everyone to make sure we check on our people.

#### FARMER'S MARKET

There was no report.

#### LAWRENCEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION

There was no report.

#### CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting, Wed., May 28, 2025, 6:00 p.m.  
Remote Area Medical (RAM), Greensville High School, June 21-22, 2025  
Sparks in the Ballpark Spectacular, Friday, June 27, 2025, 6:00 – 10:00 p.m.  
BCSO Public Safety Discovery Camp, July 21 – 25, 2025

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### SOUTHERN STATES BUILDING

Ms. Williams asked if we are going to put up a sign and advertise the Southern States building for lease.

##### LOVE SIGN

Ms. Williams asked what is the status of the LOVE sign.

#### VCU MASSEY CANCER CENTER

Ms. Williams asked what is the status on the Massey Cancer Center building. She understands the lease has been terminated.

#### CABOOSE

Ms. Williams asked what is the status on the caboose. Are we going to do any repairs to the caboose? Mr. Brockwell said the IDA has a property they want to be a park. The Town owns the caboose on that property. The IDA has not expressed interest in buying the caboose.

#### TOWN MANAGER SECOND IN COMMAND

Ms. Williams asked who is second in command when the Town Manager is not available. She said we need to make a determination on who has authority to act on the Town Manager's behalf. Mayor Tatum said she and Mr. Brockwell have discussed this.

#### HAZARDOUS DUTY BENEFITS

Mr. Pecht asked that the resolution for hazardous duty benefits be included on the June agenda in order to adopt the hazardous duty benefits for law enforcement.

#### CLOSED SESSION – PERSONNEL MATTER

##### CLOSED SESSION-MOTION TO ENTER THE CLOSED MEETING

“Mr. Mayor, I move the Lawrenceville Town Council enter into a closed meeting pursuant to the provisions of Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter.” Motion: Mr. Pecht. Second: Mr. Brockwell. Roll call vote: Mr. Brockwell, aye; Ms. Grimes, aye; Ms. Hardy, absent; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, absent; Ms. Williams, aye.

#### MOTION TO EXIT A CLOSED MEETING AND RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

“Mr. Mayor, I move the closed meeting be adjourned and the Lawrenceville Town Council convene again in open session.” The motion was made by Mr. Pecht, seconded by Mrs. Talbert and carried by all ayes.

#### CERTIFICATION

“Be it resolved to the best of my knowledge (i) only public business matters exempted from open meeting requirements, under Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting.” Motion: Mr. Pecht. Second: Mr. Brockwell. Roll call vote: Mr. Brockwell, aye; Ms. Grimes, aye; Ms. Hardy, absent; Mr. Pecht, aye; Mrs. Talbert, aye; Ms. Whitehead, absent; Ms. Williams, aye.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Tatum adjourned the meeting.

LaWanda Tatum, Mayor  
Wanda Johnson, Clerk