

TOWN OF HURT 2026

MEETING MINUTES

JOINT COUNTY PUBLIC MEETING & FINAL BUDGET APPROVAL

Date: June 24, 2026

Location: TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER
533 POCKET RD. HURT, VA

Time: 6 pm

Adjournment: 7:32 pm

Meeting called to order by: MAYOR GARY HODNETT

COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE ESTABLISHING A QUORUM

Vice Mayor Bob Majure

Alice Bond

Gary Poindexter

Jimmy Harding

Paul Johnson

Steve Worley

Council Members Absent:

none

TOWN STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Shannon Race, clerk

Bob Williamson, water plant operator

John Eller, attorney

COUNTY SPEAKERS

Rachel del Campo Gatewood, Pittsylvania County

Hollie Adams, Pittsylvania County

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hodnett called meeting to order at 6:05 pm and presided.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Councilman Worley leads the invocation.

Welcome/ Opening Remarks - Mayor

PRESENTATION:

Pittsylvania County CDBG Public Comments Meeting – Water Treatment Plant

Slides presented, Application Summary Fact Sheet provided

CDBG Program Overview

- **Presenter: Rachel Del Campo Gatewood** (River District Consulting Group), with partner **Holly Adams**.
- **Program:** Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
 - Federal program via **HUD**, administered in Virginia by **DHCD**.
 - Eligible activities: **housing rehab, water/wastewater infrastructure, streets/infrastructure, economic development & job creation, public facilities and services**.
 - Primary requirement: benefits must go mainly to **low-to-moderate income (LMI)** residents ($\leq 80\%$ of area median income).
 - **Pittsylvania County**, including the Town of Hurt, qualifies based on HUD LMI data.

Prior CDBG Use in Pittsylvania County

- **\$40,000 planning grant** – Gunn Garland Road area (Ringgold) for **housing rehab needs**.
- **\$330,000 COVID Small Business Recovery Assistance grant** – ~\$225,000 actually drawn for small business support.
- **West Piedmont PDC** has long-term CDBG experience and will assist with **compliance and management** on this project.

Community Needs Discussion (Open Comment Segment)

Key themes raised:

- **Affordability of Water Rates / Tax Burden**
 - **Councilman Harding:**
 - Concerned about **high water rates** and cumulative burden:
 - County assessment increases
 - County tax increases
 - Town tax and utility increases
 - Notes residents are facing a “double whammy,” though improvements are needed.
- **Water & Infrastructure**
 - **Vice Mayor Bob Majure:**
 - Priority on **core infrastructure**, especially **water**.
 - Notes high water rates tied to funding capital improvements.
 - Emphasizes infrastructure as foundation for **citizen services** and **business growth**.
- **Curb Appeal / Streetscape / Gateways**
 - Gloria Worley:
 - Suggests **landscaping, signage, and attractive exits** off Route 29 (similar to Lynchburg).
 - Encourages **business sponsorships** for interchange beautification.
 - Highlights the poor appearance of the **Staunton Plaza sign/shopping center** and desire for a facelift.
 - Stresses **curb appeal** as a factor in attracting visitors, residents, and businesses.
 - **Councilmember Bond & Gloria Worley:**
 - Reference Lynchburg Garden Clubs and Master Gardeners maintaining gateway landscaping.

- Note annual sponsorship models used elsewhere.
- **Housing Supply**
 - **Councilman Gary Poindexter:**
 - Notes regional shortage of housing stock, not just a Hurt problem.
 - Housing is critical for:
 - Major incoming employers (Ivy/Avio context)
 - Supporting/supplier businesses.
 - Lack of supply is a major constraint and “not easy to fix.”
- **Streetscape & Plaza Corridor**
 - Poindexter:
 - References prior streetscape vision from Family Dollar to SVMP that stalled due to lack of funds.
 - Now that the plaza is in town’s hands and with a major SVMP announcement, it is an opportune time to re-elevate streetscape planning.
 - Stresses need for external funding; “towns our size don’t write checks for that kind of project.”
- **Wastewater / Septic Failures**
 - Poindexter:
 - Points to a brewing septic perk problem, especially west of Prospect Road.
 - Warns of likely widespread septic failures over time.
 - Argues there is a real need for a public wastewater system:
 - Must be done without overburdening the town with debt or unaffordable utility bills.
 - Concludes: Hurt has a lot to be excited about, but also “a great deal of work to do.”

Proposed Water Treatment Plant Project – Presentation

Project Description

- Location: Same site as existing non-operational water treatment facility next to the industrial park.
- Initial Capacity: 0.5 MGD (500,000 gallons/day).
- Future Expansion: Designed to expand to 1.0 MGD or more without total rebuild.
- Service Area:
 - Current town water customers (inside and outside town limits).
 - Capacity for planned growth including announced Avio facility and associated development.
- Displacement: None – no homes or neighborhoods displaced; project on pre-designated infrastructure land.

Ownership & Operations

- **Town of Hurt:**
 - Majority owner.
 - Responsible for operations, staffing, cost control, and rate setting.
- **Pittsylvania County:**
 - Holds a minority interest (~10% non-voting share).
 - Provides fiscal oversight for grant funds only:
 - Administers CDBG, EDA, and SE Crescent funds.
 - Handles compliance, drawdowns, and payments.

Rationale & Benefits

- **Current situation:**
 - Town currently has no local treatment capacity and purchases water from an outside system.
 - Water rates are among the highest in Virginia.
- **Benefits of new plant:**
 - Local production to help stabilize and eventually reduce overall water costs (long term, not immediate).
 - Water security under local control.
 - Positions town to:
 - Serve existing and future customers.
 - **Support industrial and commercial growth** (Avio, suppliers, other businesses).
 - Benefit is town-wide: every resident and business uses water.

Funding Plan & Partners

Funding Structure (Approximate)

- **EDA (Economic Development Administration) grant:**
 - \$8.3 million – pending. Decision expected “any day.”
- **CDBG (this application):**
 - \$1.5 million – to be requested.
- **Southeast Crescent Regional Commission:**
 - \$500,000 – notice of award already received.
- **Local Match – Pittsylvania County:**
 - County has committed local match needed to bring the project total to about \$10.38 million.
 - Local match is structured to satisfy match requirements for the other grants (stacking funding).

Rachel notes:

- If the \$8.3M EDA grant is not awarded, the town does not have the capacity to simply substitute its own funds at that scale.

Key Partners

- **Town of Hurt** – owner/operator.
- **Pittsylvania County** – fiscal agent for grants and minority owner.
- **West Piedmont PDC** – compliance and procurement oversight.
- **River District Consulting Group** – grant management and coordination.
- **SR RIFA** – industrial park coordination.
- **Avio** – committed industrial park tenant; key driver for water capacity.

Timeline / Next Steps

- This meeting: First CDBG public hearing / comment meeting.
- Second public hearing: One week later, 6:00 PM, same location.
- After second hearing: Grant application will be submitted that evening.
- Fact sheets available at:
 - Hurt Town Hall
 - Pittsylvania County Administration Office

Town–County Water Plant Agreement Clarification

Question by: Vice Mayor Majure – asks how the town–county partnership is structured.

Response – Mayor Hodnett:

- An agreement has been conceptually approved by the Board of Supervisors; attorneys (including John Eller) will formalize it.

- Key points:
 - Town of Hurt has full operational control:
 - Staffing, operations, rates, and costs.
 - County holds 10% non-voting ownership:
 - No operational or rate-setting authority.
 - Purpose of county's share:
 - Protect county from future councils possibly selling or heavily leveraging the plant.
 - Sale or leveraging (e.g., high-dollar loan) cannot occur unless 100% ownership agrees, including county's 10%.
 - Right of first refusal: If Hurt decides to sell, Pittsylvania County gets first opportunity to purchase.
- Rachel confirms:
 - County wanted protection as town and county constituents overlap; both would get "phone calls" if something went wrong decades later.

Public Comment Wrap-Up

- Rachel invites any further questions; none substantial are raised.
- Reminder:
 - Second public hearing next week.
 - Public can submit questions or comments through Town Hall or County Administration.

Transition to Town Council Business

FINAL FY 2027 BUDGET APPROVAL

FY 26–27 Budget – Final Approval

Recap by Vice Mayor Majure:

- Total budget approximately \$3 million (vs usual ~\$1 million), due to grants that must be used for specific purposes.
- Key rate/tax elements:
 - Vehicle decal: \$40.75
 - Real estate tax: increase of 1.5¢ to \$0.15 per \$100.
 - Personal property tax: no change.
 - Meals tax: no change.
 - Cigarette tax: no change (no change noted).
 - Water volumetric rate: increase to \$19.40 per 1,000 gallons, per Davenport recommendation to maintain consent order compliance.
 - Quarterly base water charge: from \$26 to \$27.
- John Eller confirms figures are exactly as presented at last week's meeting; no changes.

Motion:

Councilman Gary Poindexter made the motion to issue final approval for the FY 26–27 operating budget as presented, second by Vice Mayor Majure.

Roll call Vote

- Steve – yes
- Paul – yes
- Jimmy – yes
- Alice – yes

- Bob – yes
- Gary – yes
- **Result:** Motion carried – FY 26–27 budget approved.

STATE FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH VRA

State Funding Agreement – Preliminary Discussion

- **Topic introduced by Mayor Hodnett.**
- **John Eller:**
 - Requests that council review the agreement and consider formal passage at the July 7 meeting.
 - Agreement involves:
 - Town Hall as collateral.
 - Interest charged for borrowed funds.
 - Reserve fund equal to 12 months of payments as a backup.
- No formal action taken; to be discussed and acted upon July 7.

Mobile Restaurant Ordinances – Procedure & Public Hearing

Background by John Eller:

- He prepared mobile restaurant ordinances previously.
- Couldn't attend the last meeting due to a family medical emergency.
- Ordinances were delivered for review, but:
 - They were not on the agenda for that meeting.
 - He intended review first, not immediate passage.
 - Believes these ordinances warrant public notice and hearing, particularly due to their impact on anyone operating in town and the \$25 permit fee.

Discussion:

- **Legal view:**
 - Towns are not strictly required to hold hearings for all ordinances, unlike counties.
 - However, best practice is to notify the public for broadly applicable ordinances.
 - Only a permit fee (not a tax) is new here, but still appropriate to hold a hearing.
- Public notice:
 - One newspaper advertisement is sufficient.
 - Timing recommendation: Ad around July 15; public hearing July 21 (work session).
 - Six days between ad and hearing is acceptable in this case.

Motion:

Councilman Poindexter made the motion to suspend the action taken June 17 regarding mobile restaurant ordinances.

- To advertise for a public hearing on these ordinance amendments.
- To hold the public hearing on July 21 at the monthly work session.

Second by Vice Mayor Majure.

Roll Call Vote

- Steve – yes

- Paul – yes
- Jimmy – yes
- Alice – yes
- Bob – yes
- Gary – yes
- **Result:**
 - June 17 action suspended.
 - Public hearing set for July 21, with one newspaper ad near July 15.

UVA Tadler Fellowship Program – Update

Report by Vice Mayor Majure:

- **Program:** UVA School of Leadership & Public Policy – Tadler Fellowship.
- **Function:**
 - Places graduate students in South/Southwest Virginia communities.
 - Helps with grant writing, public policy, comprehensive plans, economic development, etc.
- Meeting held with program leader Christine Mahoney.
- Potential roles for a fellow in Hurt:
 - Assist with:
 - Police department grants
 - Beautification & sponsorships
 - Comprehensive plan rewrite and modernization
 - Other grant opportunities
- Track record:
 - Examples (recent year):
 - \$192,000 for a community business startup program (Dickenson County).
 - \$600,000 for infrastructure and site development at a greenfield site (Buchanan County).
 - \$120,000 for a new amphitheater (Southern Gap) for tourism.
 - \$75,000 for a park in the Town of Bristol.
 - \$50,000 for a new stage project.
- Cost to town: Program is free to locality; provides students with experience and offers professional deliverables (plans, websites, etc.).
- Timing:
 - Looking for students to work with Hurt this summer and next spring (fall already committed).
- Additional note:
 - Vice Mayor seeking contact at Advanced Manufacturing Institute in south Pittsylvania for a potential \$100M BlackRock workforce development grant.

Comprehensive Plan – Need for Overhaul

- **John Eller & Councilman Poindexter:**
 - Current comprehensive plan is inadequate and not professional:

- Plain text, no visuals, weak as a marketing tool.
- Compare to Altavista's plan as a better model (graphics, positive messaging).
- Consensus:
 - Plan should be scrapped and rewritten, not just updated.
 - Should reflect the town's new economic reality and be usable for business recruitment.
- Tadler Fellowship seen as a strong opportunity to help rebuild the comp plan.

CivicPlus & ADA DocAccess

Report by Shannon Race:

- **Clarification from CivicPlus:**
 - The platform merger/major change will occur in July 2027, not July of this year.
- DocAccess / ADA Compliance Module:
 - Total setup cost: \$6,414.60
 - \$3,276.40 – system setup.
 - \$1,500.00 – implementation.
 - \$1,638.20 – annual fee (ongoing).
 - This would be in addition to existing CivicPlus costs for other applications.
- Current situation:
 - Shannon is learning to make documents ADA compliant manually (tag structure, etc.) using training and online resources.
 - It is time-consuming, but she is becoming more comfortable.
 - Town currently has relatively few online documents, but volume will increase with new projects and improved transparency.
- Council consensus:
 - No immediate decision required tonight.
 - Need more information and group discussion.
 - Likely revisit at July 7 or a future meeting.

Master List of Rates & Fees

Report by Councilman Poindexter:

- After finalizing the budget, he has:
 - Updated the master rates & fees schedule for FY 26–27.
 - Incorporated changes driven by the budget (e.g., water rates, taxes).
- Requests:
 - Mayor and staff to review and ensure:
 - No other changes from the past year were missed.
 - Prepare a clean copy for council adoption on July 7.
- John Eller adds:
 - Add a line for the new \$25 mobile restaurant permit fee once ordinance is finalized.
- Informal note:

- Poindexter jokes about needing reminders for details; acknowledges age-related memory issues humorously.

Closed Session

Purpose stated:

- **Personnel and prospective business/economic development matters.**

Motion:

Councilman Poindexter made a motion To move into closed session pursuant to § 2.2-3711(A)(1) (personnel) and (A)(5) (prospective business). Second by Vice Mayor Majure.

Roll Call Vote:

- Gary – yes
- Bob – yes
- Alice – yes
- Jimmy – yes
- Paul – yes
- Steve – yes
- **Result:** Motion carried; council enters closed session at 7:05 pm.
- **Mayor notes it “probably won’t take long.”**

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION

- Mayor Hodnett calls for motions to return and certify a closed session.
- Councilman Poindexter makes a motion for the certification of the closed meeting, citing the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Requirement: VA FOIA § 2.2-3712 (D))
- Mayor Hodnett calls for a second, which is given by Vice Mayor Majure, council voted 6-0 in favor and approves the certification of the closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Hodnett adjourned this meeting at 7:35 pm.