



REGULAR MEETING OF STAUNTON CITY COUNCIL
Thursday, May 28, 2026
7:00 p.m.
Rita S. Wilson Council Chambers

PRESENT: **Vice Mayor Brad D. Arrowood**
 Jeff L. Overholtzer
 Corrie R. Park
 Alice L. Woods

ABSENT: **Mayor Michele D. Edwards**
 Adam F. Campbell
 Blake N. Shepherd

ALSO PRESENT: **Leslie Beauregard, City Manager**
 Amanda DiMeo, Deputy City Manager
 John Blair, City Attorney

Vice-Mayor Arrowood called the meeting to order: Vice-Mayor Arrowood called this meeting of Staunton City Council to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

The invocation/moment of silence was given by Councilor Overholtzer who introduced Pastor Elaine Rose to provide the invocation.

Proclamation—LGBTQ+ Pride Month & The Shenandoah LGBTQ Center

VICE-MAYOR'S REPORT

Vice-Mayor Arrowood noted the end of the school year and the beginning of summer camp season for Staunton parents. He stated that he was proud of the Council for keeping Camp Staunton as the lowest cost option for area camps.

He also invited the public to attend the Gypsy Hill Park Pool House ribbon cutting on May 29 at 10:00 a.m.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS BY MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Councilor Overholtzer stated that there will be a joint City Council and Comprehensive Plan Committee Work Session on June 3 at 6:00 p.m. at the Staunton Public Library's large meeting room.

Councilor Woods made the following motion out of the Nominations Committee (No second was required as the motion was out of committee.):

I move to recommend that the Staunton City Council:

Appoint Mark Andrus to the Library Advisory Board for a three-year term commencing June 1, 2026 and ending May 31, 2029.

Ms. Woods	aye	Ms. Park	aye
Mr. Shepherd	absent	Vice Mayor Arrowood	aye
Mr. Campbell	absent	Mayor Edwards	absent
Mr. Overholtzer	aye		

REGULAR MEETING

A. Consent Agenda (Note: A copy of all Ordinances, Proclamations and Resolutions approved on the Consent Agenda and during the Regular Meeting shall appear at the conclusion of these minutes.)

A.1. Approval of Minutes

Work Session and Regular Meeting of May 14, 2026

A.2. Consideration of Proclamation to be Presented in Council Chambers—Lyme & Tick-Borne Illness Awareness Month

Vice-Mayor Arrowood made the following statement:

“Per Procedure Memorandum No. 14, it is the policy of City Council to have routine, non-controversial items placed on a Consent Agenda. All items on the Consent Agenda will be voted on in one motion. If separate discussion of an item is requested by any member of Council, that item shall be removed and considered separately at the end of the regular meeting agenda.”

Vice-Mayor Arrowood asked if any Councilmembers desired to remove any item from the Consent Agenda to be placed on the regular meeting agenda for separate consideration.

Councilor Overholtzer moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Woods and carried as follows:

Ms. Woods	aye	Ms. Park	aye
Mr. Shepherd	absent	Vice Mayor Arrowood	aye
Mr. Campbell	absent	Mayor Edwards	absent
Mr. Overholtzer	aye		

B. Public Hearing for Ordinance to Amend the FY2026 Budget Ordinance for the City of Staunton by Adding Budget Amendment Number Three

Jessie Moyers, Chief Financial Officer, presented the following information: The third budget amendment for fiscal year 2026 has been prepared for review and discussion. The total budget amendment equals \$1,771,691. This budget amendment does require a public hearing, which was properly advertised on May 20, 2026 in the News Leader. Discussion and the public hearing are scheduled for May 28, 2026 and consideration of the ordinance is scheduled for the June 25, 2026 council meeting.

City Budget Amendment—\$766,799

1. General Fund amendment of \$88,158
 - \$5,478 – Appropriate Insurance Recoveries
 - \$2,600 – Appropriate VRSA Safety Grant
 - \$15,600 – Appropriate DMV Grant for Overtime
 - \$57,297 – Appropriate DCJS Grant for SRO
 - \$6,000 – Appropriate Virginia Walkability Action Grant
 - \$1,183 – Appropriate Kiwanis Reimbursement
2. Grants Fund amendment of \$1,900
 - \$1,900 – Appropriate DCJS grant
3. Bond Fund amendment of \$28,856
 - \$28,856 – Appropriate Interest Earned
4. Blue Ridge Court Services amendment of \$9,976
 - \$9,976 – Adjust Grant Revenue
5. Environmental Fund amendment of \$13,263
 - \$13,263 – Appropriate Insurance Recovery
6. HUD Fund amendment of \$624,646
 - \$55,000 – Appropriate Transfer from General Fund
 - \$63,559 – Appropriate HUD Grant Admin Funds
 - \$5,049 – Appropriate CVHD1 Funds
 - \$34,221 – Appropriate 2023 HUD Funds
 - \$212,579 – Appropriate 2024 HUD Funds
 - \$254,238 – Appropriate 2025 HUD Funds

School Budget Amendment—\$1,004,892

1. Education Fund amendment of \$939,892
 - \$400,000 – Appropriate TEES Grant
 - \$45,150 – Appropriate Targeted School Improvement Grant for Ware
 - \$45,150 – Appropriate Targeted School Improvement Grant for Shelburne
 - \$264,653 – Appropriate State Revenue for Bonus
 - \$180,946 – Appropriate fund balance for local share of Bonus
 - \$3,820 – Appropriate VRSA Safety Grant
 - \$173 – Appropriate Insurance Recovery
2. School CIP Fund amendment of \$65,000
 - \$65,000 – Appropriate Interest Income Earned

Vice-Mayor Arrowood asked about the purpose of the TEES Grant. Ms. Moyers stated that the majority of the grant would go to Shelburne Middle School and also noted that \$81,000 of the grant would be used for educational supplies.

Councilor Overholtzer asked if any of these grants were not anticipated. Ms. Moyers stated that these are normal grants and they were anticipated. However, she explained that the budget amendment is necessary because the revenue is not accounted for until the grant funds are approved.

Councilor Overholtzer asked why there were three separate years of HUD funds appropriations. Ms. Moyers stated that HUD's regulations require three separate appropriations rather than one combined appropriation.

Vice-Mayor Arrowood opened the public hearing.

Aaron Barmer stated that he had a question for the CFO regarding CIP interest that he would ask her outside of the meeting.

With no one else wishing to speak, Vice-Mayor Arrowood closed the public hearing.

C. Consideration of Application for Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant

Jason Ball, Fire Chief, presented the following information:

The Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grants are managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) Program Office. SAFER Grants provide financial assistance to help fire departments increase their cadre of frontline firefighters. The goal is to assist local fire departments with staffing and deployment capabilities so they may respond to emergencies whenever they occur, assuring their communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.

These grants are awarded directly to combination and career fire departments to enable them to reach the NFPA 1710 standard for personnel on scene of incidents. Grants for hiring of firefighters provide fire departments with funding to pay salaries and benefits over a three-year period of performance.

- FY2027 (Year 1) and FY2028 (Year 2) - The grant funds 75% of the eligible salaries and benefits.
- FY2029 (Year 3) - The grant funds 35% of the eligible salaries and benefits during the third year.
- FY2030 (Year 4) - Grantees must maintain their staffing at the level that existed at the time of application, as well as the SAFER-funded staffing for the three-year period of performance. Grantees cannot lay off any firefighters during the three-year period of performance.

At present, the department consists of 36 staff members; there are three assigned to administrative positions and the remaining 33 are assigned to three shifts (eleven per shift). Each shift is a 24-hour shift with a minimum staffing of ten. It is the ultimate goal of the department to increase the shift staffing to 15 personnel per shift.

As described below, the SAFER grant for which the department intends to apply would fund three shift positions. Increasing the staffing levels will provide safer incident operations and assure that the department is closer to national recommendations of both adequate staffing levels on apparatus and, most importantly, on the scene of emergency incidents.

The City of Staunton Fire and Rescue Department respectfully request authorization to make an application for a SAFER grant for a total of three firefighter positions. The fiscal impact to the local general fund budget is summarized below.

The fiscal year 2027 local funding requirement could be funded with one-time fiscal year 2025 carry over funds resulting from the 2025 real estate assessment increase. Local funding for fiscal year 2028 and future years would need to come from new city revenues or a reduction of current expenditures. There is a potential to reduce the part-time fire department budget, but the exact amount is unclear at this point.

Councilor Woods asked what the NFPA acronym stood for. Chief Ball stated the National Fire Protection Association.

Councilor Woods inquired about the NFPA standard for response times and whether the SAFER grant could assist the Department with this standard. Chief Ball stated that the NFPA standard is seventeen firefighters within eight minutes of a fire event when using a ladder truck. He stated that the SAFER grant could assist the Fire Department in meeting this standard as well as bolstering or improving the City's ISO rating.

Vice-Mayor Arrowood asked how Staunton can count Augusta County personnel in its response rate. Chief Ball stated that since Augusta County's Fire Station 10 is located within the City of

Staunton, its personnel can be counted towards the NFPA standard when Fire Station 10 responds because the response is automatic and not part of a mutual aid request.

Councilor Overholtzer asked when the City's 2025 SAFER Grant application was denied. Chief Ball said last Fall.

Councilor Overholtzer asked why the SAFER grant was not part of this year's budget deliberations. Chief Ball stated that the Fire Department did not know with 100% certainty that the SAFER grant program would be available in 2026 until very recently.

Councilor Overholtzer stated that he didn't want to turn down free money and he sees lots of benefits if the City is selected for the SAFER grant. However, he expressed concerns about the future financial commitment of the City after the grant funds are exhausted. Chief Ball and Ms. Moyers stated that the positions in question would need to remain in place for three years after the exhaustion of the grant.

Vice-Mayor Arrowood said that the City is growing and the SAFER grant would allow the City to ease into the growth's requirement for more services.

Councilor Park moved that City Council authorize staff to apply for the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant.

The motion was seconded by Councilor Woods and carried as follows:

Ms. Woods	aye	Ms. Park	aye
Mr. Shepherd	absent	Vice Mayor Arrowood	aye
Mr. Campbell	absent	Mayor Edwards	absent
Mr. Overholtzer	aye		

D. Consideration of an Exemption from Virginia Code Section 10.1-1424.3

This matter was removed from the Agenda due to the applicant's request to withdraw its application for an exemption.

MATTERS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Ms. Beauregard presented updates and information on the following items:

The Staunton Public Library's Summer Reading Series will kick off on June 1 at the Gypsy Hill Park bandstand at 1:00 p.m. with music being provided by the Hot Mamas.

The dedication of the Queen Miller Home Historic Marker will take place on May 30 at 1:00 pm. at 2624 West Beverley Street.

MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

Vice-Mayor Arrowood read the following statement:

“This part of City Council’s agenda is entitled matters from the public. It is a time that Council sets aside to hear from citizens and others about a wide variety of subjects. A copy of the Staunton City Council’s ‘Matters from the Public’ rules is available in paper form at the Clerk’s desk and online at the City of Staunton webpage. You are asked to familiarize yourself with those rules before commenting. Please come to the podium or raise your hand, identify yourself, and complete your remarks within five minutes.”

Randolph Burton of the Lewis Creek Watershed Advisory Committee mentioned his efforts to obtain a benthic macroinvertebrate certification from the Izaak Walton League. This training will help citizen scientists study insect larvae to detect the health of streams. He mentioned that the first monitoring indicated that the Lewis Creek is in a gray zone. It is neither impaired nor healthy.

Susie King of the Staunton Augusta County African American Research Society thanked the Council for its appropriation of funds to restore the Shea House and invited the Council to an open house to celebrate the project’s completion.

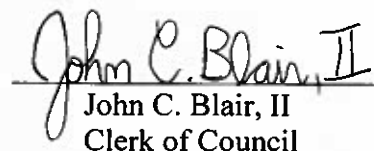
Melissa Warner expressed concern about the amount of vape shops opening in the City. She also stated that the City lacked affordable housing. She requested that the City provide safer bike infrastructure.

John Baber, Staunton Commonwealth’s Attorney, urged residents to lock their car doors. He mentioned that he recently prosecuted two very serious cases of car theft in which dozens of cars were broken into and resulted in many thefts including the thefts of firearms.

Aaron Barmer noted that this is the second consecutive meeting that gun thefts have been mentioned. He stated that gun owners have responsibilities to secure their firearms and asked the Commonwealth’s Attorney to educate gun owners about their responsibilities to secure their firearms.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.


John C. Blair, II
Clerk of Council



CITY OF STAUNTON, VIRGINIA

Proclamation

LGBTQ+ Pride Month & The Shenandoah LGBTQ Center

- WHEREAS,** our nation was founded on the principle of equal rights for all people, but the fulfillment of this promise has been long in coming for many Americans; and
- WHEREAS,** the historical riot at Stonewall in New York City on June 28, 1969 is recognized as the beginning of the modern-day LGBTQ+ civil rights movement and, as a result, June has been celebrated as LGBTQ+ Pride Month nationwide for over 50 years; and
- WHEREAS,** everyone should be able to live without fear of prejudice, discrimination, violence, and hatred based on race, ethnicity, religion, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, mental, or physical disability; and
- WHEREAS,** the fabric of our community is strengthened when we center the values of equity, justice, diversity, acceptance, inclusion, and kindness, not only during this month of recognition, but throughout the year; and
- WHEREAS,** Staunton has a diverse LGBTQ+ community and is committed to uplifting the voices and dignity for all people in the community; and
- WHEREAS,** the Shenandoah LGBTQ Center of Staunton, Virginia was established in July 2018 by Christopher Wood to address the unique challenges faced by the rural LGBTQ+ community, strengthening it through advocacy, education programs, and safe spaces; and
- WHEREAS,** consistent with the efforts of the Center, the City of Staunton strives to be a community where everyone is celebrated for our differences, rather than limited by what might divide us.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by Staunton City Council that the month of June 2026, is hereby designated as

LGBTQ+ Pride Month

in the City of Staunton, and Council honors the Shenandoah LGBTQ Center and their work to serve the LGBTQ+ community, encourages the citizens of Staunton to celebrate our diverse community, and join in celebrating the resiliency of LGBTQ+ people of all ages.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand and caused the seal of the city to be affixed, adopted this 28th day of May, 2026.

MICHELE D. EDWARDS, MAYOR

ATTEST: _____
CLERK OF COUNCIL