

# COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 02, 2026

The Regular meeting of the Town Council of Drakes Branch was held Monday, February 2nd, 2026 at 7 P.M. in the Municipal Building located at 4801 Drakes Main Street, Virginia.

Mayor Deborah Kennedy called the meeting to order and Stephanie Clay, Clerk, recorded the minutes. Members present were as follows: Vice Mayor Peery Wells, Sr., Eugene Wells, Jr., Liz Davis, James Gregory and Thomas Pettus. Charles Errickson was absent. Peery Wells Sr. gave the Invocation and Mayor Deborah Kennedy led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

- A motion by Thomas Pettus to accept the January Public Hearing Meeting Minutes, held prior to the regular meeting, and the January Regular Meeting Minutes seconded by Eugene Wells Jr., passed on a unanimous voice vote of all AYES.

**ACCOUNT BALANCES** with The Bank of Charlotte County were as follows:

SECURITY DEPOSIT ESCROW	\$4,130.42
WATER/SEWER	\$21,316.04
GENERAL FUND	\$67,647.23

#### LGIP ACCOUNT BALANCES

LGIP	\$307,505.25
LGIP- EM	\$205,055.92

- After reviewing all ACCOUNT BALANCES, BILLS PAID and TO BE PAID, a motion by Peery Wells Sr. to accept, seconded by James D. Gregory, passed on a unanimous roll call vote as follows: AYES: Liz Davis, James Gregory, Thomas Pettus, Eugene Wells Jr., and Peery Wells Sr., NAYS: None, ABSENT: Charles Errickson.

#### SPEAKERS

- Kenny Tharpe, Fire Chief, DBVFD, spoke on behalf of the Fire Departments, asking for Town Council and Community support of the DBVFD applying for a USDA grant to replace the current EMS vehicle. A motion to support the DBVFD & grant application was made by Eugene Wells Jr., seconded by Liz Davis, passed on a unanimous voice vote of all AYES.
- Fred Black, representative for the Estate of Bruce Mittleman addressed the Town Council with frustration on how long it has taken for the Town to move forward with the purchase of the building(s) located 4860 Drakes Main Street, belonging to the estate of Bruce Mittleman. The Mayor explained to Mr. Black that the town had to purchase buildings in steps, each step dependent on FEMA providing reimbursements on grant funding. Mr. Black feels the LOI from previous Mayor, Phil Jackson should be honored. The Town Council agreed to discuss and respond to Mr. Black as soon as possible.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Finance:** Nothing to report.

**Streets:** Light at War Memorial is out. Mayor asked Clerk to have the lights at corner of Farmers Market and light on right before crossing old RR tracks checked out because they have been cycling off and on.

**Museum:** Nothing to report.

**Water/Sewer:** White Street water main line break incident has been resolved.

**Personnel:** To be discussed in closed session.

**Grants:** Nothing to report.

**Events:** Nothing to report. Mayor Kennedy advised Event Committee of 2 events, 100-mile yard sale in July and Veterans Day Parade in November.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

- A motion was made by Eugene Wells Jr., seconded by James D. Gregory to adopt new language in Water/Sewer ordinance to better cover the Town for malicious damages done to water/sewer systems. Council asked Clerk to notify constituents of change in verbiage. A motion passed on a roll call vote as follows: AYES: Liz Davis, James Gregory, Thomas Pettus, Eugene Wells Jr., and Peery Wells Sr., NAYS: None, by unanimous vote. ABSENT: C. Errickson
- Motion passed by consensus to upgrade phone, internet and credit card service in clerks office based on Clerks recommendation.
- Casey Stewart Bennett's proposal for emergency readiness classes was tabled until March meeting. Council members were asked to review the material Casey provided and prepare questions before next meeting. Casey will be invited to March meeting.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A motion was made by Liz Davis to re-appoint Janice Wells to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Motion was seconded by Thomas Pettus. Council requested the Clerk send a letter of notification to Janice Wells. This was passed on a roll call vote as follows: AYES: Liz Davis, James Gregory, Thomas Pettus, and Eugene Wells Jr., NAYS: None, by unanimous vote. ABSENT: C. Errickson  
ABSTAINED: Peery Wells Sr.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Clerk was asked to gather information on Farmers Market and make a recommendation for an annual contract for next meeting.
- Thomas Pettus agreed to review the IFP for the Downtown Demolition Project and provide notes for next meeting.
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#### **CLOSED SESSION:**

A motion made by Liz Davis, seconded by Peery Wells Sr., that the Council convene in CLOSED SESSION under Virginia Code 2.23711 (A)(1), seconded by Peery Wells Sr., to discuss personnel matters concerning job performance, and Town Sergeant position and passed on a roll call vote as follows: AYES: Liz Davis, James

Gregory, Thomas Pettus, Eugene Wells Jr., and Peery Wells Sr., NAYS: None, by unanimous vote. ABSENT: C. Errickson

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION:**

A motion by Liz Davis, seconded by Peery Wells Sr., to return to Open Session, was passed on a roll call vote as follows: AYES: Liz Davis, James Gregory, Thomas Pettus, Eugene Wells Jr., and Peery Wells Sr., NAYS: None, by unanimous vote. ABSENT: Charles Errickson

A motion was made by Liz Davis and seconded by Eugene Wells Jr. to adopt Exhibit A, the Certificate of Closed Session, the motion passed on a roll call vote as follows: AYES: Liz Davis, James Gregory, Thomas Pettus, Eugene Wells Jr., and Peery Wells Sr., NAYS: None, by unanimous vote. ABSENT: Charles Errickson

- Council addressed the issue of job performance, evaluations to be included in the revising of the employee handbook
- Charlie Brinkley will remain employed as Town Sergeant until a replacement can be made.

Eugene Wells Jr. made a motion to adjourn the Town Council meeting, seconded by Liz Davis. All Agreed on a unanimous voice vote of all AYES.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 P.M.

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Deborah Kennedy, Mayor

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Stephanie Clay, Clerk