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February 26, 2019

The Citizens of Louisa County
Louisa County, Virginia

Citizens of Louisa:

According to our Mission and Core Values, Louisa County is a place “where citizens matter,” and the Board of Supervisors continues to make earnest efforts in response to citizen input. As February draws to a close, I am pleased to report continued progress on several important efforts in this regard. Revised growth area maps, land use definitions and enhanced measures to protect our rural portions of the County will be presented at a series of three Comprehensive Plan community meetings. An enhanced Ag/Forestral and Rural Preservation Committee has been formed and will hold its first meeting in the near future. The proposed fiscal year 2020 budget funds core services and projects with no tax rate increase, and it includes a proposal to assist our local businesses in their growth and success.

Three more Comprehensive Plan community meetings have been scheduled (advertised dates are in [The Central Virginian](#) this week and further detail is on the [County's website](#)). At these meetings, citizens will be able to review and provide input on concepts such as revised (smaller) growth area maps, future land use definitions, and measures to protect rural areas and prevent the sprawl of unplanned growth in the County. Staff have worked hard to develop these concepts based on citizen input from our seven community meetings last year. I am pleased to report that as a result of your input, County growth area acreage has been reduced by over 60% (more than 20,000 acres). The County continues to grow, and the Board of Supervisors knows that growth should happen in a purposeful, planned manner – the proposed changes reflect this intent. Citizen attendance and participation in these three meetings is vital, and I thank you in advance for your continued involvement.

The Board of Supervisors has appointed a new Ag/Forestral and Rural Preservation Committee. In addition to overseeing the County's current and future Ag/Forestral districts, this Committee will be charged with developing innovative concepts regarding both rural preservation and economic growth which supports it. I am hopeful that this Committee will serve as a watchdog and take proactive steps to advocate for rural Louisa. Please support them in this new endeavor.

The proposed budget for fiscal year 2020 funds the County's operating expenses and current year CIP projects without raising the tax rate. The budget includes a modest

savings plan for future capital projects and additional staff in fire and emergency services to ensure the County’s ability to safely and capably meet increasing citizen call demands. I am also very pleased to report that the proposed budget includes funding for 8 additional open hours at the regional library, rather than just the 4 hours which they requested. Although the library requested another full-time staff person for the additional hours, the County’s funding increase supports a reasonable compromise of additional hours for the existing three part-time staff members. Full details on the proposed budget are available at louisa.com/finance, and required public hearings and final consideration are scheduled for March and April.

During the Regional Business Park meetings, citizens asked if the County had plans to assist existing businesses in their growth and development. In response, the Louisa Opportunity Fund (LOF) has been proposed. The LOF would provide County funding for competitive loans and possibly grants for applicable local business projects. An appointed credit committee (of citizens, business leaders and County officials) would review applications for use of the LOF, which would provide gap funding to help Louisa businesses grow and flourish. Stay tuned as the Board and staff continue to develop this program.

The Board continues to value your involvement and it is our duty to be responsive to your input. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you, the Citizens of Louisa.

Respectfully,

R. T. Williams, Jr.

Chairman
Louisa County Board of Supervisors