



**Board of Supervisors
County of Louisa
Monday, March 2, 2026
Louisa County Public Meeting Room
3:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER - 3:00 P.M.

Chairman Adams called the March 2, 2026, budget meeting of the Louisa County Board of Supervisors to order at 4:00 p.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Tommy J. Barlow	Mountain Road District Supervisor	Present	5:00 PM
Fitzgerald A. Barnes	Patrick Henry District Supervisor	Present	5:00 PM
Christopher C. McCotter	Cuckoo District Supervisor	Present	5:00 PM
H. Manning Woodward, III	Louisa County Supervisor	Present	5:00 PM
R. T. Williams	Jackson District Supervisor	Absent	
Duane A. Adams	Mineral District Supervisor	Present	5:00 PM
Rachel G. Jones	Green Springs District Supervisor	Present	5:00 PM

Others Present: Christian Goodwin, County Administrator; Wanda Colvin, Deputy County Administrator; Patricia Smith, County Attorney; and Scott Raettig, Director of Information Technology

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Discussion – Fiscal Year 2027 Operational & Maintenance and Capital Improvement Plan Budget

This is the third budget worksession of the FY27 budget cycle, held to continue discussion of departmental requests, capital improvement planning, and public engagement related to the FY27 budget.

Finance Director Wanda Colvin. Ms. Colvin advised the Board that the work session would begin with presentations from the Sheriff’s Office, Fire & EMS, and Louisa County Public Schools.

Louisa County Sheriff’s Office

Lieutenant Jordan Alvis of the Louisa County Sheriff’s Office presented an overview of the agency’s current operations, staffing levels, and future staffing needs. He explained that the Sheriff’s Office provides 24-hour law enforcement coverage across approximately 500 square miles and serves a population of about 39,000 residents, with service demands increasing significantly during the summer months due to tourism at Lake Anna.

The county is divided into five patrol sectors, currently staffed with one deputy per sector and a roaming supervisor. The busiest patrol areas are East 1 (Bumpass/Lake Anna) and West 2 (Zions

Crossroads). In the previous year, the county received approximately 37,000 law enforcement calls, with the Sheriff's Office serving as the primary responding agency for 31,720 calls. The Town of Louisa Police Department recorded 5,274 calls, with the Sheriff's Office assisting when town officers are unavailable.

The Sheriff's Office currently has 27 full-time patrol deputies, with a minimum staffing level of three deputies on duty. Additional deputies are scheduled during peak hours between 2:00 PM and 2:00 AM, bringing ideal staffing to approximately seven deputies on duty.

Due to projected population growth—estimated to reach approximately 44,679 residents by 2030—the Sheriff's Office proposed increasing patrol staffing from 27 to 40 deputies to allow two deputies per sector, which would improve response times and ensure coverage when multiple officers are required for incidents such as domestic disputes or arrests.

Lieutenant Alvis also noted that Emergency Custody Orders (ECOs) can require deputies to remain with individuals at hospitals for extended periods, sometimes up to eight hours, placing additional strain on staffing resources.

The presentation also addressed impacts on other divisions, including the Civil Process Division and the Emergency Communications Center (dispatch). Dispatch currently has 16 authorized positions with four vacancies, and the department has proposed increasing staffing to 18 positions to accommodate growing call volume.

A three-year staffing plan was outlined:

- FY2027: Five patrol deputies, one civil process deputy, one emergency communications officer, and one full-time records clerk
- FY2028: Five patrol deputies and one civil process deputy and one communications officer
- FY2029: Three patrol deputies

Lieutenant Alvis noted that hiring and training a deputy takes approximately one year, including academy training and field training, and that equipping a new deputy can cost around \$100,000. He concluded by thanking the Board for prior salary increases that have improved recruitment and retention, and emphasized that the phased staffing plan is intended to help the Sheriff's Office meet the needs of a growing county while managing budget impacts.

Louisa County Fire & EMS

Chief Hawk presented an overview of the Byron Fire & EMS budget request, noting that public safety agencies provide 24/7 services and must maintain reliable operations regardless of weather or other circumstances. She reported that call volumes continue to increase, with EMS calls accounting for approximately 80–85% of total responses, while fire calls are also rising. She emphasized the need for adequate staffing, ongoing training, and compliance to ensure safe and effective emergency response.

Chief Hawk stated the department currently staffs 26 career personnel daily across five stations, with four vacancies and nine additional positions funded through the FEMA SAFER grant, which are expected to be filled with an academy starting in April. Those positions will staff a 24-hour fire engine at the Locust Creek station to improve response times in the eastern portion of

the county. She also noted that administrative staff often assist with high-acuity incidents and that increased call volume has recently led to more instances of “no units available.”

During discussion, Chief Hawk explained that major incidents—such as structure fires, serious vehicle crashes, or emergency medical transports—can require multiple units and personnel for extended periods, placing additional strain on staffing and resources.

Chief Hawk outlined the importance of adequate staffing for safety, reliable task assignments, improved response times, reduced overtime, retention, and preventing burnout among personnel. She also reviewed capital improvement needs, including apparatus replacement, renovations to older stations to support full-time staffing, potential relocation of the Zions Crossroads Firehouse, and expansion of the training center classroom.

She noted that major budget drivers include personnel costs, insurance, fleet maintenance, equipment, medical supplies, and fuel, and emphasized that turnout gear alone costs approximately \$5,000 per set.

Chief Hawk reported that FY25 call volume totaled approximately 7,900 calls, with response times considered strong for a rural locality. She also discussed rising apparatus costs, noting that ambulances cost approximately \$425,000–\$450,000, fire engines over \$1 million, tankers \$500,000–\$600,000, and ladder trucks \$2.0–\$2.4 million.

Deputy Chief Lee then reviewed grant funding secured by the department. Over the past five years, Byron Fire & EMS has received approximately \$6.3 million in federal and state grants, including \$5.9 million from FEMA, which helped support staffing, equipment, and operational needs. Additional grants funded firefighter safety equipment, ambulance equipment, wellness programs, and emergency shelter upgrades. He noted that these grants significantly offset costs that would otherwise fall to local taxpayers.

Board members commended the department for aggressively pursuing grant opportunities and noted that Louisa County’s high call volume and long hospital transport distances strengthen the department’s competitiveness for certain grants.

Louisa County Public Schools

Superintendent Doug Straley presented LCPS’s vision to become a world-class, forward-thinking school division and a model for the future, with a continued focus on challenging every student to reach their maximum potential. He reviewed the division’s mission to equip students with the “5 Cs” (including communication, collaboration, creativity, and citizenship/character) to prepare them for a changing workforce.

He highlighted major initiatives supported in recent budgets, including expanded early literacy support, full-time gifted services, 1:1 student devices, STEAM learning opportunities (including elementary labs and secondary innovation spaces), stronger CTE/workforce development programs, enhanced mental health supports, expanded extracurricular offerings, and division-wide safety measures (including school resource officers and weapons detection systems). He also noted recent facility improvements, including the LCMS addition and launch of the Marine Corps JROTC program.

The Superintendent reviewed recent performance highlights, including continued full accreditation, improved test scores at multiple schools, increased CTE completers, expanded teacher pipeline participation, strong community engagement events, and recognition of LCPS programs at the state and national level.

For the upcoming budget, he outlined three main areas:

- Operational increases, including insurance costs (with some final amounts pending).
- Staffing and operating needs tied to the LCMS addition, including a technology technician, cafeteria support, an agriculture teacher, custodial positions, and increased utilities/supplies.
- Compensation, emphasizing staff as LCPS's most valuable resource: a 3% plus step increase for certified staff, a 4% increase for classified staff, continued degree supplement adjustments, and pay scale updates for administrative assistants/secretaries.

He stated projected state funding figures were based on the Governor's introduced budget, with House/Senate impacts still unknown. Using projected state funding and VRS savings, LCPS identified a local request of approximately \$2.933 million plus final healthcare costs (pending).

Board members thanked LCPS for its work and asked questions regarding swimming lessons (held at the Brooks Family YMCA in Charlottesville), energy savings from solar projects, and test score improvements. The Superintendent attributed performance gains to strategies including the science of reading, tutoring/small-group supports, expanded learning opportunities, and staff retention supported through compensation.

The Board also discussed student mental health needs and noted the importance of continued counselor support. Finally, members raised concerns about a proposed high-voltage transmission line route potentially running close to school properties and requested the division monitor impacts to current and future school sites.

Discussion – Fiscal Year 2027 Operational & Maintenance and Capital Improvement Plan Budget (Continued)

Ms. Colvin reported that the operating budget is still being finalized, noting that final health insurance numbers are not expected for another one to two weeks and are projected to be higher than initially budgeted. However, the County realized a 1% savings in VRS contributions, totaling approximately \$256,000. Due to anticipated changes to the Children's Services Act (CSA) funding formula, which will increase the County's share, the VRS savings were reallocated to cover projected CSA expenditures.

She also reported that assessment values have been received, and adjustments have been made to the budget accordingly. A public hearing on assessments will be held at the March 16 meeting, with presentations from the Assessor's Office and staff.

The Board discussed funding for the Northern Virginia Emergency Response System, which replaced the former Thomas Jefferson EMS Council. Staff had originally budgeted \$13,000 based on preliminary guidance, but the organization later requested \$20,000. Because the County has not yet used the service and the benefit is still unclear, staff recommended beginning with \$13,000 to evaluate the value of services. The Board approved the \$13,000 funding level.

Mr. Woodward then discussed a capital improvement project for the former Girl Scout House/library building, which is currently used by Parks and Recreation and community groups. The building requires exterior siding and window replacement, estimated at \$225,000. While the Finance Committee had previously recommended moving the project to the FY28 budget, Mr. Woodward requested that it remain in the FY27 budget due to deteriorating siding and the continued use of the facility. The matter was referred back to the Finance Committee for further review.

Ms. Colvin reported that the current draft budget reflects approximately \$1.4 million available for long-term reserves, though additional adjustments are still under discussion. The Board agreed to hold an additional budget work session on March 16 at 4:00 PM prior to the regular meeting.

Staff also discussed potential congressionally directed funding requests, including public safety apparatus replacement, housing foundation initiatives, and possible animal shelter improvements, which could help offset capital improvement costs.

Next Worksession and Budget Roadshow Dates

The Board requested staff schedule a budget work session to finalize the overall budget before adoption. The next budget worksession will be held March 16, and the start time would be adjusted to 4:00 p.m.

Budget “roadshow” meetings were also scheduled:

- March 24, 2026 – Jouett Elementary School
 - March 31 – Louisa County Middle School Forum
 - April 1 – Trevilians Elementary School
- (Each from 6:00–8:00 p.m., at three locations.)

ADJOURNMENT

BY ORDER OF:
DUANE A. ADAMS, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
LOUISA COUNTY, VIRGINIA