



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Tuesday, June 9, 2026 | 4:00 PM
2nd Floor Training Room - City Hall
900 Church Street
Lynchburg, VA 24504

AGENDA

- I. **Welcome** *Larry Taylor, Mayor*
- II. **Work Session Agenda Overview** *Wynter C. Benda, City Manager*
- III. **Bid Opening**
 - III.1. ApCo Easement - Milestone Towers Line (Bid Acceptance)
- IV. **Business Item Briefing(s)**
 - IV.2. Boards and Commissions Quarterly Reporting
- V. **Work Session Agenda Items**
 - V.3. Lynchburg Fire Department Climate, Culture, and Hiring Process Assessment
 - V.4. Vice Mayor Diemer: LU Enrollment Resolution
- VI. **Roll Call**
- VII. **Closed Session**



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

MEETING DATE

June 9, 2026

PRESENTED BY

Joseph Newland, City Engineer

AGENDA ITEM # III.1

ApCo Easement - Milestone Towers Line (Bid Acceptance)

RECOMMENDATION

Receive/open bids

SUMMARY

Bids were requested for an easement at 3525 John Capron Road

PRIOR ACTION(S)

May 12, 2026 - PDC

FISCAL IMPACT

None

CONTACT(S)

Joseph Newland, City Engineer

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Proposed Ordinance - ApCo Easement - Milestone Towers
2. Deed of Easement
3. Publication Affidavit

REVIEWED BY

Gaynelle Hart

Gaynelle Hart, Director of Public Works

Date: May 29, 2026



Gregory Patrick, Deputy City Manager

Date: June 04, 2026



Alicia Finney-Andrews, Clerk of Council

Date: June 04, 2026

Tax Map No(s).
11501003

ORDINANCE:

#O-26-_____

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE GRANT AND CONVEYANCE OF A RIGHT OF WAY AND EASEMENT TO APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY ON PROPERTY OWNED BY THE CITY OF LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA; MORE SPECIFICALLY 3525 JOHN CAPRON ROAD, LYNCHBURG, VA 24501

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LYNCHBURG:

**ARTICLE I. AUTHORIZATION TO GRANT
AND CONVEY RIGHT OF WAY AND EASEMENT**

1. That, subject to the forty (40) year term limitation described under § 15.2-2100 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, the City Manager, on behalf of the City of Lynchburg (City), is hereby authorized to grant and convey a right of way and easement to Appalachian Power Company on property owned by the City; more specifically, 3525 John Capron Road, Lynchburg, VA 24501 (Tax Map No. 11501003). The purposes of such right of way and easement being for an electric power line or lines, and communication lines, in, on, along, through, over, under, and across the aforesaid property in relation to providing electric service to Milestone Towers Limited Partnership-V and other related uses.

2. That the City Manager is hereby authorized to execute all documents and take all actions necessary to effectuate the said right of way and easement to Appalachian Power Company.

ARTICLE II. ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

This Ordinance was duly adopted by the Council of the City of Lynchburg, Virginia on the _____ day of _____, 20_____, and shall be effective upon adoption.

Certified: _____
Clerk of Council

ARTICLE III. ACCEPTANCE

By joining in this Ordinance through signature of its duly authorized representative, Appalachian Power Company hereby agrees to the entirety of the same as of its adoption date.

APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY

(SEAL)

By: _____

Printed Name: _____

Its: _____

ATTEST:

By: _____

Printed Name: _____

Its: _____

City of Lynchburg Eas. No. _____ R/W Map No. 3779-153-A1
3525 John Capron Road W.O. No. W003835901 Job No. 25310151 Prop No. 1/1
Lynchburg, VA 24501 Line City of Lynchburg Milestone Towers Line

THIS AGREEMENT, made this 9th day of June, 2026,
by and between City of Lynchburg, a Political Subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia,
herein called "Grantor", and APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY, a Virginia corporation, herein called
"Appalachian",

WITNESSETH:

That for and in consideration of the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00), or other good and valuable consideration from Appalachian, the receipt and sufficiency of which hereby acknowledged, Grantor hereby grants, conveys, and specially warrants to Appalachian, its successors, assigns, lessees and tenants, a right of way and easement for an electric power line or lines, and communication lines, in, on, along, through, over, and across the following described lands of the Grantor situated in the city of Lynchburg, State of Virginia.

Being a right of way and easement on the property of the Grantor identified as Lynchburg City, Tax Parcel Nos. 11501003 herein after referred to as "premises."

This right of way and easement shall be 40 feet in width, lying 20 feet on each side of the facilities as constructed and as approximately shown on certain Appalachian Power Company's drawing dated October 2, 2025, attached hereto and made apart hereof "Exhibit A".

TOGETHER with the right, privilege and authority to Appalachian, its successors, assigns, lessees and tenants, to construct, erect, install, place, operate, maintain, inspect, repair, renew, remove, add to the number of, and relocate at will, poles, with wires, cables, crossarms, guys, anchors, grounding systems and all other appurtenant equipment and fixtures, underground conduits, ducts, vaults, cables, wires transformers, pedestals, risers, pads, fixtures, and appurtenances (hereinafter called "Appalachian's Facilities"), and string wires and cables, adding thereto from time to time, in, on, along, over, through, across and under the above referred to premises. The right to cut, trim, remove and/or otherwise control, with herbicides or by other means, at Grantee's option (without any liability to Grantor), any trees, limbs or branches, brush, shrubs, undergrowth, of whatever size, or other obstructions that in Grantee's reasonable judgment endanger or interfere with the safety or use of its facilities, both within and adjoining the right of way and easement; the right of ingress and egress to and over said above referred to premises, and any of the adjoining lands of the Grantor at any and all times, for the purpose of exercising and enjoying the rights herein granted, and for doing anything necessary or useful or convenient in connection therewith. Within the Easement, Grantor shall not: place any buildings, structures, piles of debris, change the level of the ground by excavation or mounding. It will be the sole responsibility of Appalachian Power to maintain all Appalachian Facilities, including, but not being limited to, the pad mounted transformer installed on the premises.

It is further understood and agreed between Grantor and Appalachian that, as provided under Section 15.2-2100 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, this Easement will only exist for a term of forty (40) years, commencing on the date of this deed, and expiring on the 8th day of June, 2066. Upon such expiration, where a new easement is needed or where Appalachian Facilities remain on the premises, Appalachian and Grantor shall work together in good faith to establish a new easement.

THIS INSTRUMENT PREPARED BY AND UPON RECORDATION RETURN TO
APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY, PO BOX 2021, ROANOKE, VIRGINIA 24022

Approved As to Form

By: _____
Matthew C. Freedman City Attorney

STATE OF _____)
COUNTY OF _____) To-wit:

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this _____ day
of _____, 20____, by Matthew C. Freedman, City Attorney, of the City of Lynchburg.

Notary Public/Commissioner

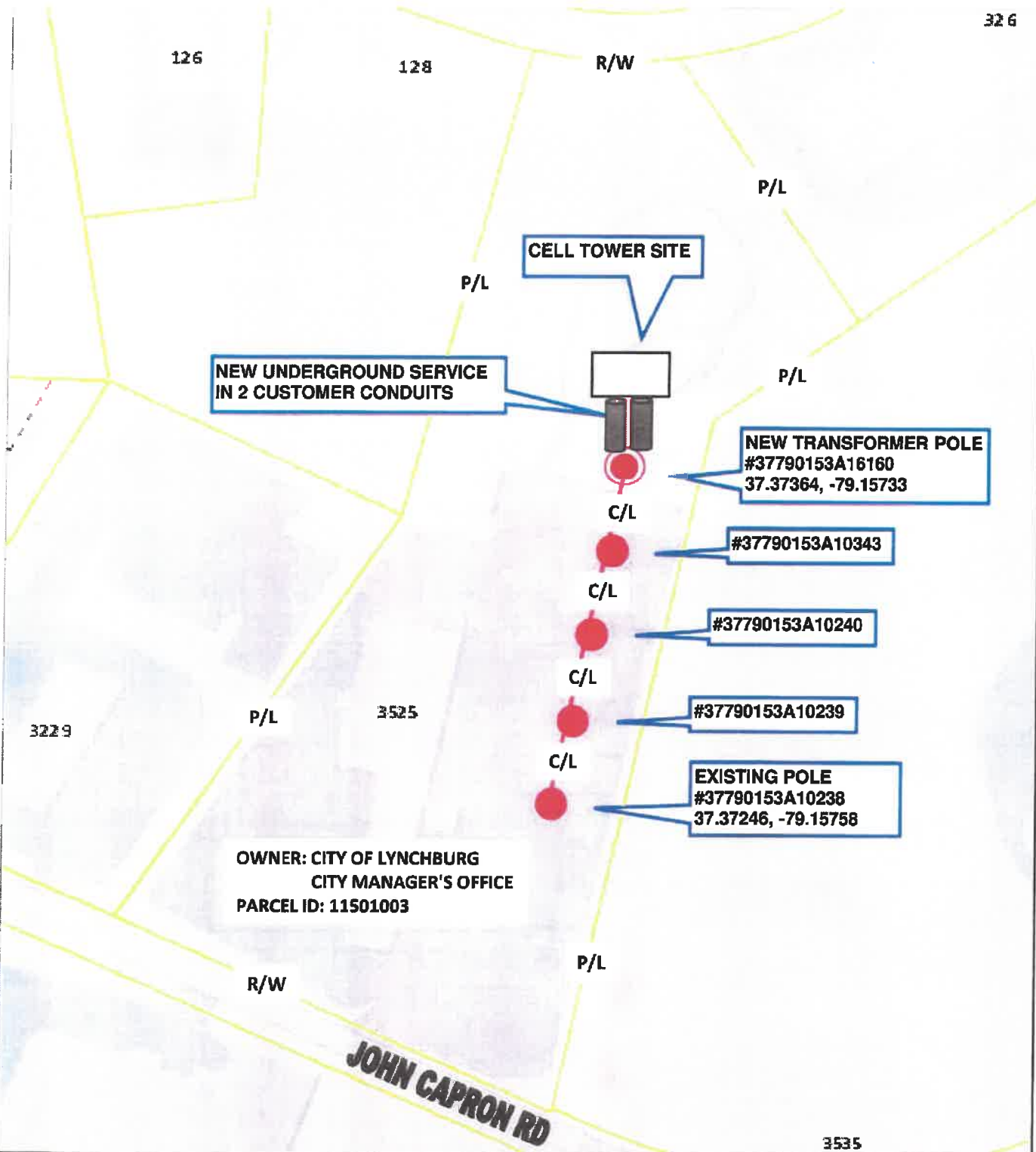
My Commission expires:

Notary Registration # - _____
(For Va. Only)



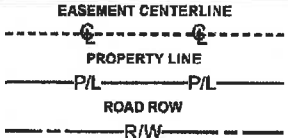
THIS INSTRUMENT PREPARED BY AND UPON RECORDATION RETURN TO
APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY, PO BOX 2021, ROANOKE, VIRGINIA 24022

"Exhibit A"

326



OWNER: CITY OF LYNCHBURG
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
PARCEL ID: 11501003

PROJECT: Milestone Towers Line Extension		CITY, STATE: Lynchburg, VA		COMPANY: APPALACHIAN POWER			
		COUNTY:		DESIGNER: Scott Benson			
		TOWNSHIP:		EASEMENT CENTERLINE			
WO# W003835901	NOT TO SCALE						
WR# 89954228	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>REVISION</th> <th>DATE</th> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>10/2/2025</td> </tr> </table>			REVISION	DATE	1	10/2/2025
REVISION	DATE						
1	10/2/2025						

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

State of Florida, County of Orange, ss:

Anjana Bhadoriya, being first duly sworn, deposes and says: That (s)he is a duly authorized signatory of Column Software, PBC, duly authorized agent of Lynchburg News & Advance, a newspaper printed and published in the City of Lynchburg, County of Campbell, State of Virginia, and that this affidavit is Page 1 of 2 with the full text of the sworn-to notice set forth on the pages that follow, and the hereto attached:

PUBLICATION DATES:

May. 19, 2026, May. 26, 2026

NOTICE ID: ZfqUiBVyXKiHW7tQQEiG

PUBLISHER ID: COL-4401467

NOTICE NAME: ApCo Esmt for Milestone 3525 John Capron

Publication Fee: 1045.28

Ad Size: 2 X 51 L

Category: General Legal Notice

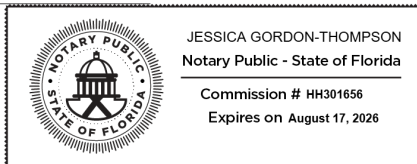
Under penalty of perjury, I, the undersigned affiant swear or affirm that the statements above are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Anjana Bhadoriya

(Signed) _____

VERIFICATION

State of Florida
County of Orange



Subscribed in my presence and sworn to before me on this: **05/26/2026**

J. Ra

Notary Public

Notarized remotely online using communication technology via Proof.

Notice

AN INVITATION FOR BIDS AND A PUBLIC HEARING ADVERTISEMENT FOR AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE GRANT AND CONVEYANCE OF A RIGHT OF WAY AND EASEMENT TO APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY ON CITY OF LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA PROPERTY; MORE SPECIFICALLY, 3525 JOHN CAPRON ROAD, LYNCHBURG, VA 24501

The City of Lynchburg, Virginia (City) is considering granting a right of way and easement to Appalachian Power Company for a term of forty (40) years upon City-owned property, more specifically, 3525 John Capron Road, Lynchburg, VA 24501 (Tax Map No. 11501003), as provided in a proposed deed/agreement dated June 9, 2026, between the City and Appalachian Power Company. The purposes of such right of way and easement being for an electric power line or lines, and communication lines, in, on, along, through, over, under, and across the aforesaid property in relation to providing electric service to Milestone Towers Limited Partnership-V and other related uses.

Because the right of way and easement proposed to be granted and conveyed will be in excess of five (5) years, the City is advertising for bids in accordance with Section 15.2-2100 *et seq.* of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended. Interested parties should submit their bid in the form of a "Letter of Commitment" and a completed "Acceptance" page of the proposed ordinance described below. Such bids should be marked as "City of Lynchburg Milestone Towers Line" in an envelope delivered by hand or otherwise to the City, Attn: Clerk of Council, 900 Church Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504. All bids are due on or before 5:00 p.m., on June 8, 2026. The Clerk of Council shall publicly open and announce all bids received during the City Council's Work Session on June 9, 2026, at 4:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as possible, in the Second Floor Training Room of the City Hall, 900 Church Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504. Bids shall further be received by the Mayor of the City thereafter during such Work Session. Where appropriate, the City Council will choose a successful bidder. The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

In the event a successful bidder is chosen by the City Council, a public hearing will be held before the City Council on June 9, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as may be heard, in the Council Chamber of the City Hall, 900 Church Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504, concerning the adoption of the proposed ordinance authorizing the grant and conveyance of the right of way and easement to the successful bidder. The cost of this advertisement shall be paid by the City and reimbursed by the person to whom the grant is made. A copy of the full text of the proposed ordinance and the said deed/agreement is on file with the Clerk of Council, and both are available for review at her office at the City Hall, Council/Manager's Office, 900 Church Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504, Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. All interested persons are invited to appear at the said public hearing and present their views. Questions and/or comments may be referred to Alicia Finney, the Clerk of Council for the City of Lynchburg, Virginia, who may be contacted by phone at (434) 455-3990 or by email at alicia.finney@lynchburgva.gov.
COL-4401467

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

MEETING DATE

June 9, 2026

PRESENTED BY

Alicia Finney-Andrews, Clerk of Council

AGENDA ITEM # IV.2

Boards and Commissions Quarterly Reporting

RECOMMENDATION

Review upcoming June and August appointments and any outstanding vacancies to Council-appointed boards and commissions.

SUMMARY

The following volunteer opportunities either currently exist or are upcoming:

- Central Virginia Community College Board
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Martin Luther King, Jr./Lynchburg Community Council
- Museum Advisory Board
- Economic Development Authority
- Building Code Appeals Board

Interested candidates are encouraged to apply by completing our online application at <https://www.lynchburgva.gov/570/Boards-Commissions>. Applications will be taken through Friday, July 3, 2026 and will be kept on file for one year for any future Council consideration unless advised otherwise by the applicant.

PRIOR ACTION(S)

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

CONTACT(S)

Alicia Finney-Andrews, Clerk of Council

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Quarterly Reporting_Q2_2026

REVIEWED BY



Alicia Finney-Andrews, Clerk of Council

Date: June 04, 2026

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS QUARTERLY REPORTING

June 9, 2026



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

1. Central Virginia Community College Board
 - One (1) reappointment
 - One (1) current vacancy
2. Historic Preservation Commission
 - One (1) reappointment
3. Martin Luther King, Jr./Lynchburg Community Council
 - One (1) reappointment
 - One (1) current vacancy
4. Museum Advisory Board
 - Six (6) reappointments
5. Economic Development Authority
 - Two (2) reappointments
6. Building Code Appeals Board
 - Seven (7) current vacancies

CVCC BOARD

- 3rd Wednesday of January, April, July, and October at 4pm at CVCC
- Acts as an advisory in the college's service area; makes recommendations regarding budgets, long-range planning, and curriculum; appoints curriculum advisory committee; establishes regulations on student conduct.
- Can serve up to two (2) consecutive 4-year terms
- Opportunities:
 - One (1) reappointment
 - One (1) current vacancy



Name	No. of Terms Served	Term Expiration Date
Justin Hensley (Ward 1)	1	06/30/2026
Roman Franklin (Ward 2)	1	06/30/2029
Bonnie Svrcek (Ward 4)	2	06/30/2027
VACANT		06/30/2027

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

- 3rd Monday monthly at 4:00pm City Hall, 2nd Floor Training Room
- The role of the HPC is to administer the City’s historic districts ordinance and to provide professional assistance and guidance to property owners in achieving appropriate alterations to their historic properties.
- Can serve up to three (3) consecutive 3-year terms
- Opportunities:
 - One (1) reappointment



Name	No. of Terms Served	Term Expiration Date
Peter Alexander (Ward 4)	1	06/30/2026
Gerry Sherayko (Ward 4)	2	06/30/2027
Austin Englund (Ward 2)	1	06/30/2027
Emmett Lifsey (Ward 1)	3	06/30/2027
Michael Erquiaga (Ward 2)	3	06/30/2027
Tracey Langseth (Ward 1)	3	06/30/2028
Palmer Ferguson (Ward 1)	1	06/30/2028

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR./ LYNCHBURG COMMUNITY COUNCIL

- Meets the 3rd Tuesday, at 5:00pm at the Main Library
- Recommends appropriate community observances around the national holiday honoring Dr. King.
- Can serve up to two (2) consecutive 3-year terms
- Opportunities:
 - One (1) reappointment
 - One (1) current vacancy



Name	No. of Terms Served	Term Expiration Date
Jibri Poe (District 2)(Ward 4)	1	06/30/2026
Dale Reed (Ward 1)	2	06/30/2027
Brenda Farmer (District 3)(Ward 2)	2	06/30/2027
Sharon Brown (Ward 2)	2	06/30/2027
Evelyn Dickey-White (Ward 1)	1	06/30/2027
Carl Conner, Jr. (Ward 1)	1	06/30/2028
VACANT		

MUSEUM ADVISORY BOARD

- Meets the 2nd Wed of Jan, March, May, July, Sept, and Nov at 4:30pm at Point of Honor
- Assists in planning activities for the Lynchburg Museum System and Point of Honor, guides museum programs within the budget, and coordinates fundraising efforts through the Lynchburg Museum Foundation.
- Can serve up to three (3) consecutive 3-year terms
- Opportunities:
 - Six (6) reappointments



Name	No. of Terms Served	Term Expiration Date
Kinkade Garland (Ward 3)	1	06/30/2026
Laura Crumbley (Ward 1)	2	06/30/2026
Michelline Hall (Ward 2)	2	06/30/2026
Hermina Hendricks (Ward 4)	2	06/30/2026
Lisa Richards (Ward 1)	1	06/30/2026
Jessica Watts (Ward 4)	2	06/30/2026
Lisa Beverly (Ward 2)	2	06/30/2027
Ramona Battle (Ward 4)	3	06/30/2027
Scott Kowalski (Bedford Co.)	1	06/30/2027
Mark Poole (Bedford)	2	06/30/2028
Cynthia Fein (Ward 2)	3	06/30/2028
Norman Darden, III (Ward 1)	1	06/30/2028
Douglas Lee (Ward 1)	3	06/30/2028
Jack Collins (District 2)(Ward 4)	1	06/30/2028
Clifton Potter (Ward 4)	3	06/30/2028

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

- Meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 8:30am in City Hall, Council Chamber
- Assists in promoting industry and developing trade in the area through financial assistance to new and existing industries.
- Can serve up to three (3) consecutive 4-year terms
- Opportunities:
 - Two (2) reappointments

Name	No. of Terms Served	Term Expiration Date
Sean Huyett (Ward 1)	1	06/30/2026
Sackett Wood (Ward 4)	1	06/30/2026
John Stone (Ward 2)	3	06/30/2027
Patricia Mosby (Ward 2)	2	06/30/2028
Kevin Pietrzak (Ward 1)	1	06/30/2028
Toby Tomko (Ward 4)	1	06/30/2029
Richard Tugman (Ward 4)	2	06/30/2029

BUILDING CODE APPEALS BOARD

Name	No. of Terms Served	Term Expiration Date
VACANT		
VACANT		
VACANT		
VACANT		
VACANT		
VACANT		
VACANT		

- Meetings scheduled as needed when a ruling on a building or fire code is requested.
- Considers variances/changes/adjustments in the Building Code/Fire Prevention Ordinance; hears appeals from building owners, determines if such buildings should be repaired/vacated/demolished in compliance with Code requirements.
- Can serve up to three (3) consecutive 4-year terms
- Opportunities:
 - Seven (7) current vacancies



NEXT STEPS

Closed Session Scheduled – July 14, 2026

Collecting applications and resumes through Friday, July 3, 2026



Alicia L. Finney

CLERK OF COUNCIL

O 434.455.3981

F 434.847.1536

alicia.finney@lynchburgva.gov



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

MEETING DATE

June 9, 2026

PRESENTED BY

Jonathan Ingram

AGENDA ITEM # V.3

Lynchburg Fire Department Climate, Culture, and Hiring Process Assessment

RECOMMENDATION

NA

SUMMARY

The City of Lynchburg engaged Raftelis, a nationally recognized public-sector advisory firm, to conduct an independent assessment of the Lynchburg Fire Department's organizational climate, culture, and hiring processes. Raftelis will present the results of the assessment.

PRIOR ACTION(S)

None.

FISCAL IMPACT

Will be determined upon implementation.

CONTACT(S)

Hollie Jennings, Special Assistant to the City Manager for Data & Innovation

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Lynchburg Climate Culture and Hiring Process Study - Final Presentation for City

REVIEWED BY

Alicia Finney-Andrews, Clerk of Council

Date: June 04, 2026

City of Lynchburg

Fire Department Climate, Culture, and Process Assessment Findings & Conclusions

June 2026





Agenda

1. Project Purpose & Approach
2. Key Engagement Themes
3. Key Conclusions
4. Recommendations
5. Q&A

Project Purpose



Evaluate Department's overall workplace environment and culture



Assess how the Department hires, develops, and manages its people

Our Approach



Department-Wide Survey

- Conducted Feb. 11-23, 2026
- 172 responses – 77% response rate
- 96 questions across 10 categories
- Key driver analysis identified factors most correlated with engagement and retention



In-Person Sessions

- 31 sessions in March 2026
- 24 station-based focus groups – all 8 stations, all 3 shifts
- Interviews with City Leadership, Department leadership, and City HR
- Separate sessions with Lynchburg NAACP, Progressive Firefighters Association, IAFF, and LFD retirees



Policy Review

- 4 personnel lifecycle domains: Recruitment, Hiring, Promotion & Development, and Discipline
- Personnel Policy Evaluation Framework applied across 5 dimensions: Completeness, Fair Application, Data & Accountability, Legal Factors, and Implementation Capacity

Key Engagement Themes



Engagement Summary

The project team gathered input in a variety of ways, including:



Employee Survey

77% response rate (172 responses)



City Leadership Interviews

City Council Members, City Manager's Office, & HR



Station and Shift Personnel Focus Groups

All stations and shifts



Department Leadership Interviews/Focus Groups

Deputy and Battalion Chiefs, Civilian Admin



Community Stakeholder Focus Groups

NAACP, PFA, IAFF, LFD Retirees

Engagement Themes

Community Engagement



- High-profile incidents impacted the **relationship with the community**
- Need for **improved, proactive engagement** with external stakeholders

Engagement Themes

LFD Direction and Leadership



- Perception that leadership **prefers safe choices** and **avoids confrontation**
- **Strength and presence of Battalion Chiefs vary** and significantly impact employees' work experience
- Several interim leadership roles contribute to **ambiguity** and **lack of direction**

Engagement Themes

Management and Accountability



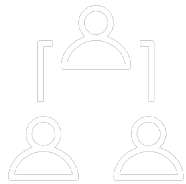
- Supportive relationships with **direct supervisors**
- Perceptions of **unfair and inconsistent discipline** across ranks
- Strong preference for promotion criteria to **balance leadership ability with years of service and experience**

Engagement Themes

Team Working Relationships



- Value the **physical, emotional, and mental support** from coworkers
- Team relationships are a **major strength** of the Department



Engagement Themes

Employee Engagement



- **Dedicated** and **committed** employees
- **Desire for improvements** in workplace culture
- Employees **value transparency**



Engagement Themes

Communication



- **Do not understand the reasoning** behind leadership decisions
- **Communication is inconsistent** across stations, battalions, and shifts
- Limited formalized communication of **important policy updates**

Engagement Themes

Hiring (New and Experienced)



- Need to identify more ways to recruit people to **broaden the candidate pool** and **increase diversity**
- Perception that hiring decisions are **not always made consistently** or **based on clear criteria**
- Desire for **stronger candidate standards**

Engagement Themes

Performance



- Perceptions of **unequal access to outside training** based on supervisor's discretion
- Perceptions that **station transfers** are used as **informal punishment** to sidestep the formal discipline process
- **Inconsistent** formal evaluation process

Engagement Themes

Health and Safety



- **Lack of confidence** that concerns will be dealt with **fairly**
- **Heavy workload** and **burnout** among paramedics

Engagement Themes

Physical Work Environment



- Stations in **need of repair**
- **Delayed** facilities request process
- Need for **gender-separate** bathroom and sleeping facilities

New Chief Attributes




Throughout focus groups and interviews, LFD staff were asked to identify key attributes they desire in the new Fire Chief.

This word cloud summarizes key themes mentioned in the exercise. Frequently mentioned words are displayed in larger text.



Strengths to Build Upon

In surveys and interviews, participants frequently highlighted the following key strengths within the Department

-  **Strong camaraderie within stations and shifts**
-  **Good supervisor-employee working relationships**
-  **Employees are deeply committed to their work and to serving the Lynchburg community**

Areas for Improvement

The engagement activities and policy review identified the following areas for improvement:

1 Leadership and Management Systems

Create new structures for organization leadership, management, and administrative capacity to improve culture and day-to-day operations

2 Employee Lifecycle Policies and Procedures

Improve communication, consistency of application, and fairness of personnel policies

Key Conclusions



The Department has a genuine and motivated workforce — that is where the incoming Chief must start

95%

Determined to give their best every day

95%

Report good working relationships with coworkers

88%

Agreement with Management & Accountability – strong trust in direct supervisor

- Station-level camaraderie is a documented organizational strength
- The workforce is ready to rally around stable, visible, and accountable leadership
- Organizational challenges are real but manageable for a leader who builds trust early and follows through consistently

The incoming Chief inherits a workforce that wants to succeed — stability at the top is the immediate need.

The transition to permanent leadership is the single most consequential near-term priority

52%

Believe the Department
is moving in the right
direction

42%

Trust Chief leadership

41%

Believe department
leadership adapts well to
changing demands

- Key driver analysis: **LFD Direction and Chief Leadership** has the highest correlation with employee engagement
- Only 53% feel Chief leadership creates an environment where everyone belongs
- Department's top three leadership positions are simultaneously serving on an interim basis
- The City is actively recruiting a permanent Fire Chief — this assessment is designed to support that transition

Communication is the Department's most significant operational gap

38%

Overall agreement in Communication — the lowest of any category

23%

Believe communication is effective throughout the Department

26%

Feel involved in decisions that affect them — the lowest individual score in the survey

- No written communication standards policy; no formal crisis communication protocol
- Policy review committee was disbanded
- Information flows through informal channels — geography, shift, and proximity to command determine what employees know
- The highest-correlation driver of engagement overall: feeling respected — and respect is delivered through honest, consistent communication

The Department's culture treats EMS as supplementary — the data shows it is the primary function

18,000+

Calls for service per year since 2016

83%

Of calls are EMS

17%

Of calls are fire — yet structure, staffing, and promotions are fire-first

- Of 128 operational firefighters, **102 hold BLS** certifications and only **26 hold ALS**
- Six ALS medic units across three shifts — structurally insufficient for the intended rotation system
- The "bubble" system has not operated as designed; many ALS providers remain continuously on medic units
- The **\$2.20/hour ALS** stipend was consistently cited as inadequate for the additional burden

The hiring process has documented gaps in oversight and documentation

29%

agree LFD's process
attracts the most qualified
candidates from all
backgrounds

- Focus group participants described final hiring decisions that did not align with committee recommendations — in both directions
- The Hiring Manager holds final authority with **no clear documentation requirement** for decisions that deviate from committee recommendations
- No structured independent review of non-standard selections before offers are extended
- Panel member training is online only — no oversight for consistent application of interview techniques
- Hiring panel notes are not retained in a format that allows systematic analysis over time

KEY CONCLUSIONS

The promotional process is more structured than employees believe — but documented gaps justify the skepticism

WHAT IS WORKING

- Master Firefighter and Captain promotions managed by Emergency Services Consulting International — an objective third-party provider
- Evaluations are structured, criteria-based, and scored
- Panel members receive bias mitigation training

DOCUMENTED GAPS

- Fire Chief may waive eligibility for any candidate with no documentation required
- Eligibility changes (e.g., Equivalent Service Credits) were not communicated department-wide
- No standalone evaluation of leadership and personnel management skills
- Access to development opportunities varies by station assignment and supervisor initiative
- Only 37% believe the process is fair — consistent across rank, shift, and tenure

The experience of women and non-White employees differs measurably from Department-wide averages

15 pts

gap in overall agreement:
non-White (61%) vs. White
(76%) respondents

7%

of LFD workforce is Black —
vs. 27% of Lynchburg
population

- Female respondents: 67% overall agreement vs. 75% for male; notably lower in LFD Direction & Leadership (50% vs. 63%) and Health & Safety (62% vs. 76%)
- Multiple stations lack separate gender bathroom and sleeping facilities — confirmed and documented
- The workforce gap vs. community demographics will not close through a passive recruitment model — it requires intentional, sustained outreach
- A representative Department requires both attracting and retaining diverse employees

Psychological safety needs improvement — directly connected to accountability gaps

54%

feel comfortable sharing concerns without fear of retaliation

56%

confident the Department would take a report of unfair treatment seriously

50%

trust HR to handle issues fairly and confidentially

- Both retaliation comfort and confidence in fair treatment have statistically meaningful correlations with overall employee engagement
- Personnel problems described as getting "shuffled" between HR and Department leadership without resolution
- Station transfers used as informal punishment; performance improvement plans are not used
- Well-intentioned open-door policies were used in practice to bypass chain of command and progressive discipline

The discipline policy contains a written contradiction that makes consistent application structurally impossible

Disciplinary Action Documentation Policy

- Verbal warnings go in the supervisor's own notes only — **not** in the employee's personnel file.

Disciplinary Action Form

- Verbal *and* written warnings "should be sent to the Chief's Office to be placed in the department's personnel file."

Two official documents. Two different instructions. One unresolved conflict.

The Department's recruitment approach is passive at a time when it needs to be strategic



Decrease in applicants
in recent years

- No formal recruitment strategy
- Limited active outreach to high schools, community colleges, EMT/paramedic programs, faith-based organizations, or civic groups
- Most recruits have historically come from surrounding volunteer departments, EMS-only agencies, or personal referrals
- Some recent recruit classes included individuals perceived as underprepared physically or professionally
- The community's inability to see itself reflected in the fire service directly affects public trust

The Department lacks dedicated HR infrastructure

200+

FTEs across 8 stations
and 3 shifts, 24/365

~\$102K

estimated annual cost
for a dedicated LFD HR
Manager

- City assigns one HR liaison through the shared-services model used for every other department
- That liaison serves multiple departments (including Police) and engages with LFD primarily reactively — only when formal complaints or documented discipline actions are filed
- No proactive supervisory coaching, no systematic process oversight, no fire-service expertise embedded in day-to-day HR
- Personnel issues have cycled between Department leadership and City HR, with neither party having clear authority at the early stages

City Council engagement in operational and personnel matters is a documented governance concern

Since 1920

Lynchburg has operated under a Council/Manager form of government – operational authority runs through the City Manager

- Direct Council engagement with Department personnel creates ambiguity in the chain of command and undermines the City Manager's authority
- Employees described personnel issues being "shopped" to whichever authority seemed most receptive — HR, Department leadership, or City Council
- This dynamic is documented, harmful to organizational functioning, and correctable

Training and development access depends too heavily on individual supervisor initiative

~\$109K

estimated annual cost
for a training
coordination position

- No formal incumbent training program; training calendar not consistently available to field personnel
- Live-fire and multi-company training events are largely limited to the recruit academy context
- Development beyond minimum compliance depends on each Captain's initiative, affecting promotional eligibility for those under less proactive supervisors
- An officer development program has emerged organically – led by Captains and Master Firefighters – and received positive feedback where active
 - › Not formally supported, not consistently structured, not tied to a budget, and not linked to promotional eligibility

Station facilities need sustained attention, and the shift schedule warrants a formal evaluation

38%

believe their workplace is in good repair

\$3M

committed for Station 1 beginning FY2027; Stations 8, 7, 2, and 6 phased through FY2030

- Focus groups described broken HVAC, unreplaced kitchen equipment, and stalled maintenance requests
- Multiple stations lack separate gender bathroom and sleeping facilities
- Nearly every station raised the 24/48 schedule as a workload and wellness concern — especially paramedics with high EMS call volume
- Most employees expressed preference for a 24/72 schedule

Recommendations



Summary of Recommendations

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

01 Complete Fire Chief search; establish consistent accountability mechanisms

02 Develop a formal written communication strategy (90-day priority)

03 Implement a formal anti-retaliation policy with a confidential reporting mechanism

04 Resolve the discipline policy contradiction; train all supervisors on the governing document

05 Define appropriate channels for City Council engagement with the Department

06 Create a dedicated, command-level HR Manager embedded within LFD (~\$102,000/year)

07 Commission a dedicated EMS staffing and deployment assessment (within first 6 months)

EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

08 Require documentation and independent review for any hiring decision that deviates from committee recommendations

09 Remove Fire Chief's eligibility waiver provision; standardize eligibility communication for every promotion cycle

10 Add a standalone leadership evaluation component to promotional criteria

11 Develop a strategic, ongoing recruitment program with intentional outreach to underrepresented communities

12 Formalize and fund the officer development program; add a training coordination position (~\$108,800/year)

13 Conduct a formal shift schedule analysis (24/48 vs. 24/72) with employee involvement

14 Protect the station capital improvement plan in the annual budget process; prioritize gender-inclusive facilities

Implementation



Key Priorities for New Fire Chief During the First Year



90 DAYS Listen. Learn. Stabilize.

Build trust with personnel at all levels, develop a clear and accurate picture of the Department's current state, and make early decisions that signal the kind of leader the new Chief will be.



6 MONTHS Structure. Engage. Build.

Begin making structural and policy decisions, engaging personnel in improvement efforts, and laying the groundwork for longer-term cultural change.



12 MONTHS Follow Through. Measure. Sustain.

Demonstrate sustained follow-through, show measurable progress on earlier priorities, and begin building the organizational infrastructure for long-term cultural health.

First Year Implementation Work Plan

Phase	Identified First Year Goal	Associated Recommendation(s)	Priority	Lead Role(s)	Support Role(s)
90 Days	Build strong working relationships with the City Manager, City Council, and department personnel.	Recommendation 2: Establish productive working relationships and accountability mechanisms	1	Fire Chief, Deputy Chief	N/A
90 Days	Develop a visible presence and establish open lines of communication by visiting stations and shifts on a consistent basis.	Recommendation 2: Establish productive working relationships and accountability mechanisms	1	Fire Chief	Deputy Chief, Battalion Chief
90 Days	Execute the primary objectives of the 2025 Revised Strategic Plan by establishing clear performance benchmarks and sharing progress reports with City leadership and stakeholders.	Recommendation 5: Develop and implement a Department-Wide internal and external communications strategy	2	Fire Chief	Deputy Chief, Battalion Chief
6 Months	Strengthen regional partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions and volunteer rescue agencies; update mutual aid agreements and explore shared training resources.	Recommendation 6: Redesign the recruitment process to reflect the community and reach new talent pools	1	Fire Chief	Deputy Chief
6 Months	Establish consistent conduct standards and promotional processes that prioritize fairness and organizational integrity.	<p>Recommendation 4: Create a dedicated Human Resources leadership position that is embedded within the Department</p> <p>Recommendation 10: Reassess promotion eligibility requirements and evaluation criteria</p> <p>Recommendation 13: Clearly define roles between City Human Resources and the Department</p> <p>Recommendation 14: Provide department-specific training on the progressive discipline policy to improve consistent application</p>	1	Fire Chief, Deputy Chief, Battalion Chief	N/A
6 Months	Coordinate with City staff to ensure all stations operate optimally and include modern firehouse amenities.	See Planned Investments in Fire Station Facilities	2	Deputy Chief	Battalion Chief, Captain

First Year Implementation Work Plan

Phase	Identified First Year Goal	Associated Recommendation(s)	Priority	Lead Role(s)	Support Role(s)
6 Months	Foster a collaborative and healthy work environment through intentional recruitment and an expanded wellness program; identify professional development and training opportunities.	<p>Recommendation 7: Clarify and improve the Department committee and panel process</p> <p>Recommendation 8: Consistently document hiring selection decisions</p> <p>Recommendation 9: Assign responsibility for periodic review and analysis of hiring data</p> <p>Recommendation 11: Establish a formal training program for current line staff</p> <p>Recommendation 12: Formalize an officer development program</p>	2	DC – Admin, BC – Training	Fire Chief
6 Months	Enhance progressive emergency medical services by conducting a comprehensive assessment of EMS staffing, deployment, and service levels.	Recommendation 3: Elevate the role of Emergency Management Services (EMS) within the Department’s organizational structure and culture	1	Fire Chief, Deputy Chief	Battalion Chief, Captain
12 Months	Modernize the department fleet by overseeing the acquisition of new medic units and apparatus to ensure personnel have dependable equipment.	N/A	3	BC – Logistics	Deputy Chief, Fire Chief
12 Months	Advance the design and construction phases for the new fire station while implementing priorities from the ongoing facilities study.	See Planned Investments in Fire Station Facilities	2	Fire Chief, Deputy Chief	Deputy Chief
12 Months	Lead the department through national reaccreditation with the Commission on Fire Accreditation International; conduct a dedicated review of all administrative and operational standards.	N/A	3	DC – Operations, Battalion Chief	Fire Chief
12 Months	Identify innovative opportunities for increased operational efficiency within the Advanced Practice Paramedic program to improve community outcomes.	Recommendation 3: Elevate the role of Emergency Management Services (EMS) within the Department’s organizational structure and culture	3	Fire Chief, Captain	Deputy Chief, Battalion Chief

Implementation Will Require Sustained Effort Over Years



The cultural, structural, and policy issues will take time to address



Sustainable improvement requires investment in personnel, training, and facilities



Implementation will require consistent Department leadership and support from the City over a five to 10- year implementation period

Q + A



Thank you!

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**CITY OF LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
RESOLUTION NO. _____**

**A RESOLUTION AFFIRMING THE CITY’S COMMITMENT TO
TRUTH, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACCURATE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE
REGARDING INFORMATION COMMUNICATED IN CONNECTION
WITH THE CITY’S SERIES 2026 GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS**

WHEREAS, the City of Lynchburg recognizes the importance of maintaining public confidence through accurate, transparent, and responsible governmental communications, particularly in matters involving public finance and the municipal bond process; and

WHEREAS, during presentations and communications associated with the City’s Series 2026 General Obligation Bond process, certain projections and related information concerning anticipated population and growth trends were communicated to credit rating agencies and later referenced in public reporting connected to the bond process; and

WHEREAS, subsequent concerns were raised regarding the sourcing, verification, and accuracy of portions of that information; and

WHEREAS, maintaining the public trust requires the City to respond directly and responsibly whenever inaccurate, unsupported, or insufficiently verified information may have been communicated to taxpayers, investors, financial stakeholders, or the public; and

WHEREAS, the Lynchburg City Council believes the principles of truth, transparency, accountability, and integrity must guide all public communications and financial disclosure practices of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Lynchburg, Virginia, that the City Manager and appropriate staff are hereby directed to review all relevant public communications, presentations, reports, and materials associated with the Series 2026 bond process for accuracy and completeness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager shall ensure that any necessary factual corrections, clarifications, or updated information are communicated in an appropriate manner to parties who may have reasonably relied upon the information, including Lynchburg citizens,

taxpayers, credit rating agencies, bond purchasers, financial institutions, investors, regulatory entities, news agencies, and other affected stakeholders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City shall take reasonable and appropriate steps to strengthen internal review and verification procedures related to future public disclosures, financial presentations, and external communications; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Lynchburg City Council reaffirms its commitment to honest government, accurate public disclosure, fiscal integrity, and the preservation of public confidence in the City's communications and decision-making processes.

Introduced by:

Curt Diemer
Vice Mayor
City of Lynchburg