

Fries Town Council
August 4, 2026
Minutes

Members Present: Yvonne Burr, Mary Ann Cubbage, Bill Davis and Jo Ann Gunter.

Others Present: Cynthia Grant, Mayor; Deputy Thompson, Grayson County Sheriff's Department and several town citizens and guests.

Call to Order: The Mayor called the meeting to order, and JoAnn Gunter gave the invocation.

Minutes & Bills: JoAnn Gunter moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and to approve the minutes and bills as presented. Mary Ann Cubbage provided the second to the motion. All present voted aye, and the minutes and bills were approved as presented.

Police Report: Deputy Thompson provided the police report for July, which included: Routine activities: 79 closed business checks, 14 service calls, 45 directive patrols, 4 open business checks, 31 church checks, 3 warrant service attempts and 15 forestry checks for a total of 170 hours. The Mayor reminded Deputy Thompson that the ongoing work at the hydro plant at the dam presented a safety hazard to the public. Crowder Construction had requested that the area be patrolled to help prevent accidental injuries resulting from trespassing. Deputy Thompson stated that he would relay the request to the rest of the department.

Mayor Commentary: Mayor Grant reported a list of accomplishments since her last report at the July meeting that included the following:

July 8th—VDOT meeting concerning several safety issues in town, completed our 599 application and submitted it and researched 5 potential grants.

July 10th—met with possible contractor for bell. Inspected the bell for damage. It appeared to be intact. Also met with a contractor and Mr. Sparks in the town park to discuss location and details of the permanent restrooms. Scheduled AEP tree work for the park.

July 11th—Thanked Jill for staffing the market.

July 12th—Jesuit High School students arrived.

July 13th—Students began working in the community.

July 14th—meeting with Brian Reed concerning ongoing grants and then field work within the town.

July 15th—Received complaint concerning 2 more vehicles going over the bank in front of the caboose in July.

July 16th—Students worked on town projects. Painted gas shed and worked on various projects at the water plant and wastewater plant. Requested guard rails in multiple locations in the town, including the bank in front of the caboose.

July 17th—meeting with Grayson County Administrator. Reported sink hole at the school to VDOT. Met with a resident concerning downtown window murals project with the school.

July 18th—Thanked Jill for staffing the market.

July 22nd—Community Center roof inspected. Found small issue in corner near the chimney. Grace Baptist Church donated a few pieces of playground equipment to the town.

July 23rd—Jesuit Students left after a wonderful trip. VDH virtual meeting. Virginia Hurricane Season Preparedness webinar.
 July 24th—met with Town Attorney. Met with local insurance agent.
 July 25th—Thanked Yvonne and Kevin for staffing the market.
 July 27th—Removed old power poles from town park.
 July 30th—Meeting with Brian Reed. Meeting with Lane Group/RDA. USDA Rural Development Call.
 August 1st—Fence installed around playground for children's safety. Hazardous trees cut down at water treatment plant. Thanked Jill for staffing the market.
 August 3rd—Interviewed and hired a part-time public works employee.

Organization Updates:

1. Fries Tourism Report: Yvonne Burr reviewed the submitted report:

Tourism Director's Report
 Town of Fries Town Council
 August 2026
 Submitted by Kevin Combs, Tourism Director

This has been another productive month for tourism in Fries as we continue working toward the long-term goal of making our town one of Southwest Virginia's premier heritage tourism destinations. Our efforts continue to focus on attracting visitors, strengthening our partnerships, preserving our history, and encouraging investment in the community.

Preparations for the 59th Annual Fries Old-Time & Bluegrass Fiddlers' Convention are now in their final stages. The convention has become one of the Town's signature events and remains an important driver of tourism and economic activity. This year's marketing campaign has included radio advertising, print advertising, social media promotion, posters, and regional outreach. Because the convention follows immediately after the Galax Fiddlers' Convention, we are emphasizing Fries as the last major fiddlers' convention of the summer, encouraging visitors already traveling to the region to extend their stay.

One of the most exciting developments continues to be our Virginia Humanities project, From Mill Town to Music Town. The oral history interviews have exceeded my expectations in both quality and depth. The stories being collected demonstrate that the closing of the textile mill did not end the culture that built this town. That culture continues today through music, family traditions, community values, and the lives of the people who call Fries home.

Plans are moving forward to begin publicly sharing portions of these interviews during Fiddlers' Convention weekend. These presentations will introduce visitors to the remarkable stories behind Fries' musical heritage and provide another reason for people to spend additional time in town. This project is becoming much more than an oral history collection; it is evolving into a long-term cultural asset that will help preserve our heritage while attracting future visitors.

Looking beyond the convention, preparations continue for our first participation in the Grayson

County Ag & Art Adventure this September. This countywide event will introduce a new audience to Fries and provide an excellent opportunity to showcase our artists, our history, and our Appalachian cultural heritage. I believe this event has the potential to become another important annual tourism opportunity for our town while highlighting the creativity and craftsmanship that continue to thrive here.

Our partnership with Grayson County Tourism continues to be outstanding. We are working together to market Fries as a destination and to ensure our events receive regional exposure. Cooperative marketing efforts allow us to reach audiences that would otherwise be difficult for a small town to reach on its own.

The Historic Fries Theatre continues to be one of our strongest tourism assets. Thursday Night Jam attendance remains strong, with an increasing number of visitors experiencing Fries for the first time. Many of these guests also patronize our restaurants, explore the New River Trail, and visit other businesses while they are here. The theatre continues to demonstrate how cultural programming can directly support economic development.

As always, I continue to seek opportunities to market Fries through partnerships, media coverage, and personal networking. Every visitor we attract represents not only immediate economic activity but also a potential ambassador who shares their positive experiences with others. Tourism remains one of the most practical and sustainable opportunities available to strengthen our local economy, support our businesses, and build pride within our community.

I appreciate the continued support of the Mayor and Town Council as we work together to tell the story of Fries and build on the momentum we have created over the past several years.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Combs
Tourism Director
Town of Fries

***Full financial report was given to council for review.**

2. Fries Historic Theatre Report: Yvonne Burr reviewed the submitted report:

Historic Fries Theatre Board Report to Fries Town Council
August 2026
Submitted by Kevin Combs on behalf of the Board of Directors

The Historic Fries Theatre continues to play an important role in strengthening both the cultural life and the tourism economy of Fries. As we move through the summer season, we are seeing continued growth in attendance, increased visitation from outside the area, and a growing recognition of the theatre as one of the community's signature attractions.

Our Thursday Night Jam at the Dam remains the cornerstone of our programming. Attendance continues to be strong, but perhaps more significant is the increasing percentage of first-time visitors. Through radio advertising, social media, Grayson County Tourism, The Crooked Road,

and word of mouth, we continue to welcome people who have never before visited Fries or the theatre.

One observation has stood out throughout the summer. A friend and colleague who is an expert in Appalachian culture noted that many visitors are witnessing something they have likely never experienced before: musicians playing together entirely by ear, without sheet music, while genuinely enjoying one another's company. The smiles, laughter, dancing, and obvious camaraderie create an authentic cultural experience that cannot be manufactured. Visitors frequently tell us that this has been the highlight of their trip to Southwest Virginia and that they plan to return.

These visitors do not come only to the theatre. They eat in our restaurants, purchase fuel and supplies, explore the New River Trail, visit local businesses, and often return for other community events. In that sense, the theatre serves as an economic engine as well as a cultural institution. Every successful Thursday evening benefits not only the theatre but also the Town of Fries.

As is our tradition, we paused programming during the week of the Mount Airy Fiddlers' Convention and will also take a break during the Galax Fiddlers' Convention. This allows many of our musicians and volunteers to participate in those important regional events while returning refreshed for the remainder of our season.

Preparations are now focused on supporting the **59th Annual Fries Old-Time & Bluegrass Fiddlers' Convention** on August 14–15. The theatre will welcome many convention visitors to downtown Fries and will serve as another opportunity to showcase the town's rich musical heritage. Together, the theatre, the convention, and other community attractions present Fries as a destination where Appalachian culture is not simply remembered—it is still being lived.

The Board of Directors remains committed to preserving the unique heritage of Fries while using that heritage to strengthen the town's economy and quality of life. We appreciate the continued support of the Town Council and look forward to building on this momentum throughout the remainder of the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Combs
On behalf of the Board of Directors
Historic Fries Theatre

3. Fries Community Center: No report submitted.

Old Business:

1. AEP/Asplunch Tree Proposal: The Mayor reported that the tree work in the park playground had been completed and the largest tree was saved.

2. Town Park Fence: The Mayor reported that the project had been completed.
3. Hazardous Trees at the WTP: The Mayor reported that a total of 8 trees had been removed.

New Business:

No new business was discussed.

Announcements:

1. Reminder: The deadline to be included on the agenda is Tuesday, one week before the meeting.
2. Fries Town Market, every Saturday from 9am—1pm.
3. Thunder by the River: August 22nd, Fries Town Park

With no further business to discuss, Mary Ann Cabbage moved to adjourn. Yvonne Burr provided the second. All present voted Aye, and the meeting was adjourned.

Signed: _____

Attest: _____

Fries Town Council
July 7, 2026
Minutes

Members Present: Yvonne Burr, Mary Ann Cubbage, Bill Davis, Jo Ann Gunter, Richard Hawks and Karen Snyder.

Others Present: Cynthia Grant, Mayor; Kevin Combs, Tourism Director; Deputy Rice, Grayson County Sheriff's Department and several town citizens and guests.

Call to Order: The Mayor called the meeting to order, and JoAnn Gunter gave the invocation.

Minutes & Bills: Bill Davis moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and to approve the minutes and bills as presented. Yvonne Burr provided the second to the motion. All present voted aye, and the minutes and bills were approved as presented.

Police Report: Deputy Rice provided the police report for June, which included: Routine activities: 2 warrants, 239 closed business checks, 20 service calls, 1 first responder, 67 directive patrols, 7 open business checks, 78 church checks, 6 warrant service attempts and 33 forestry checks for a total of 171.50 hours. The Mayor thanked Deputy Rice for his report and for his continued dedication and service to the Town.

Mayor Commentary: Mayor Grant reported a list of accomplishments since her last report at the May meeting that included the following:

May 6th—Went to Miller's Creek, NC and purchased a backhoe.

May 6th—DEQ came to WWTP and inspected the underground storage tank. The tank was in compliance.

May 9th—Thanked Mary Ann for staffing the Town Market.

May 12th—Short meeting with VRWA representative.

May 15th—Held Budget Workshop

May 15th—Signed new waste collection contract with Grayson County.

May 16th—Thanked Jill for staffing the Town Market.

May 18th—Took parade forms to the State Police office in Galax to get approval.

May 18th—Submitted Budget Public Hearing information to be advertised.

May 19th—Meeting at Town Park to discuss fencing options.

May 20th—Attended VDH Fluoridation Webinar.

May 21st—Meeting with Crowder Construction.

May 21st—Received email notification from Mark Warner's office that the Town will be receiving 1 million in congressional earmarked funds for water and wastewater to address stormwater damage from Helene.

May 22nd—Meeting with Bobby Sparks.

May 22nd—Conference call with The Lane Group/RDA.

May 23rd—Thanked Jill for staffing the Town Market.

May 27th—Meeting at the Hydro Plant to discuss upcoming 2-year project.

May 27th—Zoning Committee Meeting.

May 27th—Meeting with paving contractor.

May 28th—Meeting with town engineer.
 May 28th—Meeting with Asplundh representatives.
 May 29th—Safety meeting at WWTP.
 May 30th—Thanked JoAnn for staffing Town Market.
 June 2nd—Budget Public Hearing and Council Meeting.
 June 3rd—Conference call with Brian Reed concerning the congressional funding.
 June 3rd—Contractor meeting to get quote on Community Center Porch/Balcony repair.
 June 4th—Meeting in Independence.
 June 5th—Meeting with citizen concerning fireworks complaint.
 June 6th—Thanked JoAnn for staffing the Town Market.
 June 9th—Signed contract for road work with contractor.
 June 9th—Signed and submitted Req#12 for the VDH Infrastructure grant.
 June 9th—Short Asplundh meeting.
 June 10th—Sheriff Hash visited us at the Town Hall.
 June 12th—Purchased and installed new carpet on Community Center porch.
 June 13th—Thanked Jill for staffing the Town Market.
 June 16th—Asplundh/AEP meeting.
 June 16th—Town WTP staff and Public Works staff in a joint effort, replaced a foot valve at the water plant.
 June 17th—Conference call with Brian Reed.
 June 17th—Conference call concerning fencing at the playground. Anticipated date of installation is August 1st and 2nd.
 June 17th—Received praise for our public works department for recent tree trimming and council received praise for installing speed signs from two citizens.
 June 20th—Thanked Jill for staffing the Town Market.
 June 27th—Thanked Jill for staffing the Town Market.
 June 29th—Annual water quality reports and cross connection surveys were mailed out.
 June 30th—Meeting at Independence with Mark Warner.
 July 1st—She congratulated Fries Dam Steakhouse for receiving their liquor license.
 July 4th—She thanked Jill, JoAnn & Kari for staffing the Town Market
 She then thanked Jeff Shaffner and Jared Anders for fabricating and installing a safety grate for the Fries Community Center pool equipment room.

Organization Updates:

1. Fries Historic Theatre & Tourism Report: Kevin Combs reported the following:

Tourism/Theatre Report

Fries Town Council

July 7, 2026

Good evening.

Tourism activities continue to move forward on several fronts, and I believe we're seeing the results of the work that so many people are putting into making Fries a destination.

The From Mill Town to Music Town project continues to progress very well. I have now completed 15 oral history interviews and have identified five additional interviews that I hope to conduct before the project is complete. The people interviewed included former mill workers, musicians (and in many cases both), dancers, family members of musicians, and scholars. Together, these interviews tell the story of how the textile mill shaped the culture of Fries, how that culture gave rise to a remarkable musical tradition, and how that musical heritage continues to define our town today.

Our next major milestone will be a screening party during one of our Thursday night jam sessions, where we'll premiere a video featuring highlights from the interviews. The complete project remains on schedule and should be wrapped up by the end of the year.

Fries will also participate for the first time in the Fifth Annual Grayson County Ag & Art Adventure on September 12 and 13. This countywide event opens farms and artists' studios to the public, with both guided bus tours and self-guided maps available for visitors.

I plan to exhibit my visual artwork—including photography, painting, woodworking, and design—as well as videography at the soon-to-open Grayson & Whitter's coffee house. The Depot will also be one of the featured stops, where three local artisans are currently scheduled to exhibit their work.

The second day of the Ag & Art Adventure will feature a special concert honoring Otis Burris and his musical family, presented by Legends of Grayson. For the first time, this event will be held at the Historic Fries Theatre. Bringing this countywide event to Fries is a significant accomplishment and will introduce many new visitors to our community.

Our Summer Concert Series continues to be successful. The second concert, held in June, had to be moved indoors to the theatre because of the extreme heat, but attendance was good and the evening was well received. The third concert is this Friday, July 10, featuring The Crooked Road Ramblers at The Depot, weather permitting.

The July Fourth weekend was another reminder of the growing appeal of Fries as a tourism destination. Businesses throughout town and the surrounding area were busy all weekend. In fact, while I was in Galax yesterday, one of the bank tellers asked me, "I'll bet Fries was busy." I hear comments like that regularly from tourism professionals in neighboring communities. It's encouraging because it shows that Fries is increasingly being recognized throughout the region as a place where things are happening.

Marketing efforts continue as well. During June, I recorded an interview with Bill Bartee that aired on WBT, and I was also a guest on Cousin Andy's radio program promoting Fries and our upcoming events. I'll be back on Cousin Andy's show again this Thursday morning at 8:30.

Finally, on a personal note that also reflects positively on the town, I've been playing each week with an Appalachian string band at the Farmers Market. It has been rewarding to see that market continue to grow. Kari has done an outstanding job developing it into another attraction that brings both residents and visitors to Fries. Every successful event we add—from the farmers market to the Thursday jams, concerts, festivals, and arts events—strengthens the overall tourism experience and gives people more reasons to spend time in our community.

As always, thank you to the Council, our volunteers, our businesses, and the many organizations and individuals who continue working together to make Fries a vibrant place to live and visit.

*Full financial report was given to council for review.

2. Fries Community Center: No report submitted.
3. Fries Fire & Rescue: The Mayor presented Chief Randy Lineberry with a check for \$15,000 received through the Aid to Localities (ATL) Grant from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs. The Town applies annually for these funds on behalf of the Fire Department. She also presented Chief Lineberry with the Town's contribution toward the July 4th fireworks display.

Chief Lineberry thanked the Town for securing the ATL funding and for partnering with the Fire Department to provide the community's Independence Day fireworks. He reported that, year to date, the Department has responded to 65 fire calls and 345 rescue calls. He also thanked the community for its continued support.

Lisa Chrystie, a Town resident, asked what citizens could do to help beyond making financial donations. Chief Lineberry explained that donations of water, Gatorade, and food are always appreciated during fire calls. He also shared that the Department accepts donations of clothing and furniture items for individuals and families who have lost their homes and belongings due to fire.

The Mayor thanked Chief Lineberry and all members of the Fire Department for their dedicated service to the community.

Old Business:

1. AEP/Asplunch Tree Proposal—Will Smith:

AEP representative Will Smith reported that AEP had planned to remove trees in the Town Park for the past four to five years because of their proximity to the three-phase power line that serves approximately 371 electric meters throughout the Town. However, due to severe storms and the damage caused by Hurricane Helene, the work has been delayed until now.

Mr. Smith explained that the trees were already contacting the power lines, causing minor power outages on a nearly daily basis. He also stated that the situation posed a significant public safety hazard, as the trees could become energized and present a risk to anyone in the park. He advised that the tree nearest the Café was located directly beneath the power line and would have to be removed to comply with current AEP and federal vegetation management standards. He emphasized that the matter needed to be addressed as soon as possible.

Council Member Mary Ann Cabbage asked whether AEP could cut a "V" through the tree rather than remove it. Mr. Smith replied that current federal standards no longer permit that practice. Mrs. Cabbage then suggested pruning the oak tree on the caboose side of the park since it was besides, rather than directly under, the power line. Mr. Smith explained that doing so would require pruning both sides of the tree, which would ultimately kill it.

A citizen asked whether the power lines could be relocated. Mr. Smith responded that they could not, noting that AEP holds a 40-foot utility easement and that the tree is located within that easement. He further explained that if the tree were to bring down the line, it could interrupt service not only to the Town but also damage the substation, potentially causing an outage extending as far as Independence.

Another citizen commented that oak trees are keystone species that provide habitat for wildlife, shade, cooling, and oxygen. She expressed concern that the Town had already lost many trees in recent years due to natural causes and felt it would be unfortunate to lose additional mature trees.

Mr. Smith also offered to provide replacement trees for the Town to plant at locations of its choosing. He stated that the replacement trees would be available in April 2027.

Following further discussion, Mrs. Cubbage made a motion to remove the tree beside the Café as required by AEP and to trim the oak tree on the caboose side of the park in accordance with AEP specifications. The motion was seconded by Yvonne Burr. All members present voted "Aye," and the motion carried.

2. Benefits of trees letter: Sharon Billings submitted the following:

Letter to Fries Town Council, July 2026 from Sharon Billings, Friends of Fries

Where have all the trees gone in Fries?

I have noticed recently the disappearance of many of our mature trees in town. 1. Several mature pines were cut down across from the theater. 2. Three mature pines removed from Riverview Ave, and I am told the rest will also be eliminated. 3. I am told that the large oaks at the end of Riverview Ave/school area are to be removed. 4. All of the mature Ash trees were killed and removed due to the Ash borer insect. 5. Now Appalachian power wants to cut down 2 mature oaks and a sycamore that are near the playground.

Why should we protect these mature trees?

Very old, large trees provide disproportionately greater environmental benefits compared to their younger, smaller offspring, especially in carbon sequestration. This results in greater amounts of oxygen produced for us humans and other animals. Veteran trees offer homes, shelter, hunting spots, transport routes and food for animals ranging from birds to bats to beetles. A mature oak tree can be home to over 300 species of caterpillars which birds use to survive and feed their young. To raise a clutch of young birds, parents will transport over 6000 caterpillars to complete their growth. Oak trees are considered to be **keystone species** since they support so many different species of insect pollinators.

As far as benefit to us humans in Fries. These mature trees provide oxygen and shade (reducing temperatures significantly) and a magical ambiance. The children playing at the playground benefit from this particularly. If the trees are removed, these benefits disappear for these children and new trees will only benefit their grandchildren, maybe.

Recommendations: Why cannot the power company just prune the few invading branches of these trees with a cherry picker instead of killing the trees? Also, it is a very good idea to now **planting new trees** to replace those we have lost for future generations. Below are recommended native trees that are beneficial to pollinators:

- American Holly (*Ilex opaca*) — Provides year-round cover through dense foliage. The flowers provide nectar for bees and butterflies, including Henry's elfin butterfly.
- Black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) — Hosts as many as 450 insect species, including tiger swallowtail, red-spotted purple and spring azure butterflies.
- Carolina silverbell (*Halesia caroliniana*) — Hosts seven species of butterflies and moths, including eastern tiger swallowtail, mourning cloak and red-spotted purple butterflies.
- Chickasaw plum (*Prunus angustifolia*) — Hosts spring azure, red-spotted purple, coral hairstreak and other butterflies.
- Common persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*) — Hosts luna moths.
- Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) — Hosts juniper hairstreak butterfly. Songbirds and small mammals eat its fruits.
- Hackberry (*Celtis laevigata*) — Exclusively hosts caterpillars of the hackberry emperor, American snout, tawny emperor, and other butterflies.
- Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) — Hosts zebra swallowtail.
- Serviceberry (*Amelanchier Canadensis*) — One of the first native trees to bloom. It provides flowers for the earliest group of pollinators and is a larval host to the red-spotted purple and the viceroy butterflies.
- White oak (*Quercus alba*) — Hosts hundreds of insects, including hairstreak and duskywing skipper butterflies, imperial moths, treehoppers and walking sticks.

New Business:

1. Park Permanent Restrooms/Bobby Sparks: Bobby Sparks, organizer of the annual Thunder on the River events, updated Council on the joint effort to construct permanent public restrooms in the Town Park.

Mr. Sparks reported that he had secured commitments from three donors to assist the Town with funding the project. He also stated that he had worked with Town staff to identify a suitable location for the building. The proposed site is near the caboose, as it is adjacent to existing water and sewer lines and is the only area of the park located outside the floodplain.

Mr. Sparks presented a rough sketch of the proposed structure, which includes men's and women's restrooms and a small covered front porch. He advised that he planned to meet with a contractor to obtain a turnkey construction estimate and anticipated receiving the estimate within the next few weeks.

A citizen suggested that the Town consider installing timer-controlled door locks similar to those used at the public restrooms in Floyd. Mr. Sparks responded that he would look into that option.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Sparks for his time, dedication, and continued efforts to move the restroom project forward.

2. Permanent Restrooms: Dennis Hines:

Dennis Hines addressed Council and stated that he had also come to discuss the need for permanent public restrooms in the Town Park. He advised that he had identified a donor who was willing to contribute \$5,000 toward the project. The Mayor suggested that Mr. Hines coordinate his efforts with Bobby Sparks, who is already working with the Town on the project, and thanked him for bringing the information forward.

Mr. Hines then expressed concerns regarding the speed bumps located on Riverview Road. He stated that he did not believe they were needed in their current location and felt they had not been effective in addressing speeding.

A Riverview Road resident disagreed, stating that the speed bumps had successfully reduced vehicle speeds and had also encouraged motorists to stop at the nearby stop sign.

Mr. Hines further stated that he had witnessed a young child run in front of a vehicle while crossing the dirt roadway between the caboose and the Town Park. He suggested that the Town install speed bumps in that area and create a marked crosswalk to improve pedestrian safety.

The Mayor advised that the Town had already coordinated with the Boy Scouts, Precision Landcare, and Southwest Farm Supply to install a fence at the Town Park. She reported that the fence installation was scheduled for the first weekend in August.

Following additional discussion, Council expressed support for installing a marked crosswalk across the dirt roadway between the caboose and the Town Park. Council agreed to move forward with the project after the park fence had been installed.

Mr. Hines left the meeting before the discussion concluded. As he departed, the Mayor thanked him for his comments, concerns, and interest in improving public safety.

Announcements:

1. Reminder: The deadline to be included on the agenda is Tuesday, one week before the meeting.
2. Fries Town Market, every Saturday from 9am—1pm.
3. Thunder by the River: July 18, 2026, Fries Town Park

With no further business to discuss, Yvonne Burr moved to adjourn. Mary Ann Cubbage provided the second. All present voted Aye, and the meeting was adjourned.

Signed: _____

Attest: _____

Fries Town Council
June 2, 2026
Budget Public Hearing
Minutes

Members Present: Yvonne Burr, Mary Ann Cubbage, Bill Davis and Jo Ann Gunter.

Others Present: Cynthia Grant, Mayor; Kevin Combs, Tourism Director and several town citizens.

Call to Order: The Mayor called the hearing to order, and Jo Ann Gunter gave the invocation.

The Mayor stated that the purpose of the public hearing was to present the first reading of the duly advertised proposed Fiscal Year 2026–2027 Budget. She then requested that the Town Clerk read the proposed budget aloud for the record. Below is the proposed budget she read:

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 15.1-16.2 of the 1950 Code of Virginia as amended, of a public hearing on the proposed Town of Fries budget for the fiscal year beginning on July 1, 2026. The public hearing will be held in the Historic Fries Theatre at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, June 2, 2026. Town residents are welcome to attend and express their views. The Final Budget meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 2, 2026, at 7:00 pm in the Historic Fries Theatre.

The tax rates will be as follows:

\$.40/\$100 value—Real Property
\$2.25/\$100 value—Personal Property
\$2.25/\$100 value—Machinery & Tools
\$.40/\$100 value—Public Utility Real Estate

Water, Sewer & Garbage rates will be as follows:

\$ 29.50 for 1st 2000 gallons—Water
\$ 5.25 for each additional 1000 gallons—Water
\$ 25.25 for 1st 2000 gallons—Sewer
\$ 5.75 for each additional 1000 gallons—Sewer
\$ 20.00 per month—Garbage

The proposed budget shall be for planning purposes only and obligates the Town to no expenditure.

Town of Fries Proposed Budget FY2026/2027

Revenue

General Fund

Real Estate, P. Property, M&T Tax	\$211,000.00
Del. Tax	\$ 20,000.00
Pen. & Interest	\$ 2,900.00
Utility Tax	\$ 12,500.00
BPOL	\$ 3,000.00
Meals Tax	\$ 38,000.00
CATV	\$ 9,000.00
Vehicle License Fee	\$ 5,000.00
Refunds, Gifts, Misc.	\$ 20,100.00

Lodging Tax	\$ 17,000.00
VDH Infrastructure Grant	\$912,000.00
DEQ/Congressional Funding	\$1,900,000.00
Misc. State Funds:	\$ 58,600.00

Sub Total:	\$3,209,100.00
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Enterprise Fund	
Water, Sewer, Garbage, Penalties & Deposits	\$341,548.00
Sub Total	\$341,548.00

TOTAL REVENUE	\$3,550,648.00
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Expenditures	
Gen. Government	\$118,628.00
Police	\$ 36,000.00
Public Works	\$144,408.00
Rec., Fire, Admin., Grants & Reserves	\$2,861,900.00
Water	\$169,098.00
Sewer	\$161,574.00
Garbage	\$ 59,040.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$3,550,648.00
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Following the reading of the proposed budget, the Mayor invited comments or questions from the public. A member of the audience asked what the Police Expenditure line item covered. The Mayor responded that, under the Town's contract for law enforcement services, the expenditure provides 160 hours of dedicated police service to the Town of Fries.

There being no further questions or comments from the public or members of Council, Jo Ann Gunter moved to adjourn the public hearing. Bill Davis seconded the motion. All members present voted "Aye," and the motion carried unanimously. The public hearing was adjourned.

Signed: _____

Attest: _____

Fries Town Council
June 2, 2026
Regular Session
Minutes

Members Present: Yvonne Burr, Mary Ann Cubbage, Bill Davis, Jo Ann Gunter and Karen Snyder.

Others Present: Cynthia Grant, Mayor; Kevin Combs, Tourism Director; Deputy Thompson, Grayson County Sheriff's Department and several town citizens and guests.

Call to Order: The Mayor called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

Minutes & Bills: Yvonne Burr moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and to approve the minutes and bills as presented. Karen Snyder provided the second to the motion. All present voted aye, and the minutes and bills were approved as presented.

Police Report: Deputy Thompson provided the police report for May, which included: Routine activities: 171 closed business checks, 21 service calls, 1 first responder, 69 directive patrols, 13 open business checks, 45 church checks, 5 warrant service attempts and 17 forestry checks for a total of 165 hours. Deputy Thompson also reported one speeding ticket that was not included in the written report.

The Mayor reported that she had recently attended a meeting with representatives from the Hydro Plant and Crowder Construction. Due to the large amount of equipment that will be stored on the property during repairs to the canal, the representatives requested additional law enforcement patrols in the area to help provide security. Deputy Thompson stated that he would relay the request to his supervisors.

The discussion then turned to speeding concerns on Firehouse Drive by the Town Park. Council explained that Firehouse Drive is maintained by Virginia Department of Transportation; therefore, the Town does not have the authority to install speed-reducing devices on the roadway. Council requested that Deputy Thompson and other patrol officers provide additional traffic enforcement in the area, particularly near the Town Park, to help reduce speeding and improve public safety. The Mayor also reported that a fence will be installed around the Town Park later in the summer to enhance safety and help protect children using the park. The Mayor thanked Deputy Thompson for his report and for his continued dedication and service to the Town.

Mayor Commentary: In the interest of time, the Mayor stated that she would forego her usual commentary and provide her report at the next meeting.

Organization Updates:

1. Fries Historic Theatre Report: Kevin Combs reported the following:

The Historic Fries Theatre Report
Submitted by Kevin Combs
On Behalf of the Board of Directors

The Historic Fries Theatre continues to stay active as we move into the busy summer season.

The theatre recently hosted the first concert of the Summer Concert Series after weather forced the event to move indoors from The Depot. While we would have preferred to hold the concert outside as planned, the theatre provided an excellent backup venue and allowed the event to proceed successfully. The concert drew a strong crowd and demonstrated once again the importance of having a functioning performance space available in Fries.

The Grayson County JAM program recently concluded its spring session with a recital at the theatre. The recital showcased the progress made by the students over the course of the semester and highlighted the importance of providing opportunities for young people to learn traditional Appalachian music. We appreciate the instructors, volunteers, parents, and students who continue to support the program.

As usual, the Thursday Night Jam sessions continue to grow busier as tourism season increases. We are seeing more visitors from outside the area attending regularly, along with strong participation from local musicians and dancers. The jam continues to be one of the most important ongoing cultural activities in Fries and remains a major draw for visitors interested in authentic Appalachian music and dance traditions.

The theatre also continues to support ongoing work connected to the “From Mill Town to Music Town” project. Several oral history interviews connected to the project have either taken place at the theatre or are helping contribute to the theatre’s growing role as a center for preserving and interpreting the cultural history of Fries.

The Board of Directors appreciates the continued support of the town, volunteers, musicians, dancers, and community members who help make the theatre successful.

2. Fries Tourism Report: Kevin Combs

Tourism Director’s Report
Kevin Combs
Town of Fries

Tourism season is now underway, and there has been a great deal of activity in Fries over the past month.

I recorded a new series of radio commercials promoting the Summer Concert Series at The Depot. Although our first concert had to be moved indoors to The Historic Fries Theatre due to weather, the event was still successful and well attended. The advertising campaign appears to be working. Numerous people have told me they heard the commercials on the radio, which is helping increase awareness of Fries and our events throughout the region.

I am continuing to work with Tracy Cornett and Grayson County Tourism on plans for the upcoming “Legends of Grayson” concert, which will memorialize Otis Burris and honor the musical legacy of the Burris family. This event has the potential to draw visitors while also celebrating an important part of our local cultural heritage.

Fries will also be participating in the county-wide Ag & Art Adventure tour this September. I will be

exhibiting my own work, and at least two additional artisans from Fries are also planning to participate. This gives Fries another opportunity to showcase local creativity, craftsmanship, and Appalachian culture to visitors from outside the area.

The Virginia Humanities-funded project, "From Mill Town to Music Town," continues to progress very well. I have now completed 14 oral history interviews with former mill workers, musicians, and dancers connected to Fries and its musical traditions. The interviews are providing tremendous insight into the culture and history of the town and are documenting stories that might otherwise be lost. I am planning to present highlights from these interviews during the weekend of the Fries Fiddlers' Convention, likely at The Historic Fries Theatre and possibly at the ballpark during the convention itself.

I also continued regional promotion efforts through radio appearances. I was interviewed on WBRF with Cousin Andy and also appeared with Tim Frye of WPAQ. During those programs, we discussed Fries, the New River, the New River Trail, the Summer Concert Series, the Fries Fiddlers' Convention, the Classic Car Cruise-Ins, Fries Fire & Rescue, Fries Dam Steakhouse, and Windy River Café. These appearances help position Fries as an active cultural and tourism destination across a wide listening area.

The recent Fiddlers' Convention fundraiser was both a successful fundraiser and a strong community event. The evening featured food, music, silent auction items, and live auction items. Thanks to strong community support, the event raised over \$5,800 for the Fries Fiddlers' Convention.

The town also recently hosted students from East Tennessee State University during their Alternative Spring Break program. The students worked on projects in Independence, Galax, and Fries while learning about the culture and history of the region. They also attended the Thursday Night Jam at The Historic Fries Theatre, giving them an opportunity to experience the living music traditions of Fries firsthand.

Looking ahead, I am scheduled to be interviewed in June by Bill Bartee for his radio program on WBT in Charlotte. This will provide another opportunity to promote Fries and its tourism assets to a large regional audience.

As always, I appreciate the support of council and the many volunteers and community members who help make these activities possible.

*Full financial report was given to council for review.

3. Fries Community Center: Director Alicia Jeffery submitted the following:

Fries Community Center

- Hosted dining room/ gym parties
- Community food pantry continues to be open and stocked for the community
- Lobby remains open Monday-Thursday 3:30pm-6:30pm
- Offered yoga class on Monday's

Things we are planning for Spring/Summer

- Kids dance
- Kids lego club in the lobby

- Pie Day Fridays at the depot
- Ladies Night

Thank you,

Fries Community Center Board

*April and May Financial reports were submitted to council for review.

Old Business:

1. DEQ Grant for WWTP: Bid opening was held and one bid received. Lane Group was working to certify the bid.

New Business:

1. AEP/Asplundh Tree Proposal: The Mayor reported that she had recently met with representatives from Asplundh to discuss a proposal regarding the removal of two trees located in the Town Park playground area. Due to their size and encroachment on nearby three-phase utility lines, the trees were identified as a potential ongoing risk to the electrical infrastructure.

AEP/Asplundh proposed, at their expense, to remove and dispose of the two trees and to purchase and plant six replacement trees at locations to be determined by the Town. They requested that Council review the proposal and consider granting permission to proceed.

Following discussion regarding possible alternatives, including relocation of utility lines and options for tree maintenance and preservation, Council member Mary Ann Cubbage made a motion to table the matter in order to allow additional time to investigate alternatives. Karen Snyder seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, and the motion to table carried unanimously.

2. Mower Quotes: The Mayor reported that Town staff was currently operating with only one functioning zero-turn mower and presented Council with several quotes for consideration regarding the purchase of a replacement unit. After reviewing the submitted quotes and discussing the options available, Council member Mary Ann Cubbage moved to approve the purchase of a new commercial mower for use by Town staff, with a maximum expenditure not to exceed \$11,000. Jo Ann Gunter seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, and the motion carried unanimously.
3. FY2026/2027 Budget Discussion: The Mayor conducted the second reading of the proposed budget. Council member Mary Ann Cubbage moved to adopt the proposed budget as presented. Yvonne Burr seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, and the motion carried unanimously. The FY2026/2027 budget was adopted.

4. Closed Session: 2.2-3712: Pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Council by affirmative vote went into closed session as provided by Section 2.2-3712. (Moved by Yvonne Burr, Karen Snyder provided the second).

Karen Snyder moved to exit the closed session. Jo Ann Gunter provided the second. All present voted Aye and the motion carried.

As required in Section 2.2-3712.D of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, Council certified that to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting by Town Council.

Certified by: Yvonne Burr, Mary Ann Cubbage, Jo Ann Gunter, Bill Davis, Karen Snyder and Cynthia Grant.

5. Paving Quotes: Council reviewed the paving, patching, and tar-and-chip quotes along with the list of town streets to determine which areas should be prioritized in order to maximize the available funding. After discussion, Council agreed to prioritize Smith Street, Hester Street, Laurel Street, and Vaughan Street for the current phase of work. Members noted that the patching and tar-and-chip method was the most cost-effective option and would allow the Town to resurface all four streets rather than paving only one or two under the available budget. Mary Ann Cubbage moved to proceed with resurfacing the four selected streets. Yvonne Burr seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, and the motion carried.

Announcements:

1. Reminder: The deadline to be included on the agenda is Tuesday, one week before the meeting.
2. Fries Town Market, every Saturday from 9am—1pm.
3. Thunder by the River: June 20, 2026, Fries Town Park

With no further business to discuss, Karen Snyder moved to adjourn. Yvonne Burr provided the second. All present voted Aye, and the meeting was adjourned.

Signed: _____

Attest: _____

Fries Town Council
May 5, 2026
Minutes

Members Present: Yvonne Burr, Mary Ann Cubbage, Bill Davis, Jo Ann Gunter, and Karen Snyder.

Others Present: Cynthia Grant, Mayor; Kevin Combs, Tourism Director; Ed Rehkopf, Gil Caldwell and several town citizens.

Call to Order: The Mayor called the meeting to order and Jo Ann Gunter gave the invocation.

Minutes & Bills: Bill Davis moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and to approve the minutes and bills as presented. Jo Ann Gunter provided the second to the motion. All present voted aye, and the minutes and bills were approved as presented.

Police Report: No Report.

Mayor Commentary: Mayor Grant reported a list of accomplishments since the last meeting that included:

1. April 8th—Meeting with NRTSP and Thunder by the River regarding permanent restrooms in the park. Meeting with Fries Fire Department regarding the siren, events, forming an emergency preparedness committee and more.
2. April 10th—met with a homeowner to discuss property maintenance and upkeep guidance.
3. April 11th—She thanked Jill and Karen for working the indoor market.
4. April 13th—Awarded tree removal contract. Work will be performed in July.
5. April 15th—Meeting with Grayson County Sheriff and Fries Fire Department.
6. April 16th—Pre-bid conference with Lane Group for the DEQ grant for the WWTP. Met at playground with Boy Scout Leader and Fencing Company to discuss fencing options for the playground. Decided on dimensions and discussed possible low cost/no cost options. Project is moving forward.
7. April 20th—Met with a contractor concerning building problem. Met with a local business owner to resolve an issue. Field work concerning a water leak.
8. April 21st—Attended ARPA webinar and then submitted final report on funds that were used for the water treatment plant filters.
9. April 22nd—Meeting with a plumber.
10. April 23rd—Mount Rogers Mobile Heath Unit provided services at the Depot.
11. April 24th—Field work-reviewed the mulch work at the park.
12. April 28th—Bid opening for the DEQ grant for the WWTP. One bid was received and is being negotiated. Met with the AFLAC representative.
13. April 29th—Contacted several more paving companies in an effort to get another quote.
14. April 30th—Meeting with Lane Group Engineer and a meeting at the bank.
15. May 1st—Mailed out personal property tax bills. Met with garden leaders and loaded fertilizer and soil. She thanked the Lions Club for donating to the garden. Cleaned the depot restrooms.
16. May 2nd—Opening Day for the Market. She thanked Jill for working the market.

- 17. May 4th—Met with another paving contractor and received a quote. Field work—reviewed the handrails and light poles that had been painted near the depot. Also inspected the new lights that were installed near the depot.
- 18. May 5th—Assisted in the installation of the speed signs on town property.

Organization Updates:

1. Fries Historic Theatre Report: Kevin Combs reported the following:

The Historic Fries Theatre – Monthly Report (May 2026)

We continue to experience ongoing issues with the Theatre’s heating system. During the month of April, \$1,300 was spent on necessary repairs. This remains an area of concern as we work to maintain a reliable and efficient system for the building.

In April, the Theatre hosted a collaborative visit from The Crooked Road and Virginia Folklife. They filmed material for an upcoming video podcast mini-series focused on traditional dance. The segment recorded at the Theatre is one of three being produced along The Crooked Road and highlights flatfoot and square dancing. This project places Fries in a prominent position within a regional storytelling initiative centered on living Appalachian traditions.

Attendance at the Theatre continues to increase as we move into warmer weather and the tourism season. An analysis of cakewalk proceeds—which closely track attendance—shows a clear upward trend, indicating growing participation in Thursday night activities.

Anecdotal feedback from attendees continues to underscore the importance of the Theatre and the weekly Thursday night jam. One observation worth noting is that the Theatre represents a unique type of tourism experience: the evening unfolds in the same authentic way regardless of whether visitors are present. This means that tourists are not seeing a staged performance, but rather a genuine community gathering. They are experiencing traditional music as a living, evolving practice—one that continues to shape and reflect the lives of those who play, dance, and listen.

The Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAM) program resumed in March with strong participation. Students receive instruction not only on their instrument of choice, but also in the broader context of Appalachian music, dance, and cultural traditions. The program continues to integrate well with the Thursday night jam, providing a pathway for younger musicians to engage with and sustain these traditions.

The Historic Fries Theatre continues to serve as both a cultural anchor and an economic driver for the town. By offering an authentic, community-based experience that cannot be replicated elsewhere, the Theatre attracts visitors who contribute to local businesses while also strengthening community identity. As attendance grows and partnerships expand, the Theatre is playing an increasingly important role in positioning Fries as a destination for heritage tourism and traditional Appalachian music.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Combs

On behalf of the Board of Directors

*Full financial report was given to council for review.

2. Fries Tourism Report: Kevin Combs

Tourism Report – May 2026

Much of the past month was devoted to preparation for the Fries Fiddlers' Fundraiser, including securing items for the silent auction and promoting the event. The fundraiser was successful, and a full financial and operational report will be presented at the June meeting.

Tourism season is now gaining momentum, and we are beginning to see increased activity across multiple areas. This is particularly evident at The Historic Fries Theatre, where attendance trends reflect a rise in visitation. Additional details are included in the Theatre report.

Tourism and The Historic Fries Theatre are again co-sponsoring the Summer Concert Series at The Depot. Four concerts are planned for May, June, July, and September, with August intentionally skipped due to the Fries Fiddlers Convention. These concerts continue to serve as an important draw for both residents and visitors. Other recurring events contributing to tourism activity include Thunder by the River cruise-ins, weekly bike nights and karaoke at Windy River, and the Thursday night jams at the Theatre.

Councilwoman Yvonne Burr and I traveled to Floyd, Virginia with a prospective business owner to attend a workshop focused on the coffee business. This effort reflects ongoing work to support new business development in Fries and strengthen our local economy.

The From Mill Town to Music Town project continues to progress. To date, ten oral history interviews have been completed toward a goal of 12–15. These interviews are already capturing valuable insights into the relationship between the town's industrial past and its musical traditions. The completed project will result in interpretive materials that further establish Fries' role in the history of American music and enhance our cultural tourism offerings.

I visited the office of The Crooked Road in Abingdon, Virginia to advocate for The Historic Fries Theatre and strengthen our partnership. I also obtained promotional items to support the silent auction fundraiser.

The New River Trail Races were held in mid-April under excellent weather conditions. More than 200 runners participated across distances of 10K, 25K, 50K, and 100K, along with a community 5K event. This race continues to be a significant tourism driver, bringing visitors from outside the area who contribute to the local economy through lodging, dining, and other spending.

Work is underway with the Fries condo property to develop a gallery space for photography and visual art. Fries is scheduled to be a stop on the Grayson County Ag & Art Tour in September. Depending on logistics, the tour stop may be hosted at the condo or at another participating business in town. This represents an additional opportunity to diversify and expand our tourism offerings.

I am also working with East Tennessee State University and The Crooked Road to explore bringing students to Fries for an alternative spring break focused on community service projects. This initiative has the potential to create both immediate community benefit and long-term awareness of Fries among younger audiences. Fries received regional exposure in the May–June issue of Blue Ridge Outdoors. In addition, a new visitors guide featuring an updated Fries advertisement has recently been released, further supporting our marketing efforts.

Closing

Tourism efforts in Fries continue to focus on a combination of event-driven visitation, cultural heritage programming, and strategic partnerships. By building on the town's unique identity as both a historic mill town and a living center of traditional Appalachian music, we are not only increasing visitation but also strengthening the narrative that sets Fries apart. These efforts position the town for sustainable growth by attracting visitors who are seeking authentic, experience-based tourism and who are more likely to return and invest in the community.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin Combs, Tourism Director

*Full financial report was given to council for review.

3. Fries Community Center: Director Alicia Jeffery submitted the following:

Fries Community Center

- Served free community meal.
- Hosted dining room/gym parties
- Community food pantry continues to be open and stocked for the community.
- Lobby remains open Monday-Thursday 3:30pm-6:30pm.
- Hosted kids dance.
- Offered yoga class on Monday's.
- The community center bank account is stable we are working on many events to make sure we are able to keep it that way.

Things we are planning for Spring/Summer

- Kids dance.
- Family game night in the lobby
- Kids Lego club in the lobby
- Pie Day Fridays at the depot
- Ladies Night
- Paint Night

Thank you,

Fries Community Center Board

*No financial report given to council this month.

4. Fries Fire & Rescue: No report given.

Old Business:

1. DEQ Grant for WWTP: Bid opening was held and one bid received. Lane Group was working to clarify the bid.
2. Noise Ordinance: The formation of the committee was still pending.
3. Paving Bids: Council reviewed three paving quotes that had been provided in their packets. Following discussion, Mary Ann Cubbage moved to table the matter to allow Council members an opportunity to inspect the streets and make a recommendation at the next meeting. Karen Snyder seconded the motion. All members present voted Aye, and the matter was tabled.

New Business:

1. Fenders Curve/VDOT Issue: Ed Rehkopf: Mr. Rehkopf presented the following for consideration:

Petition to Fries Town Council

Re: Accident Mitigation at Fender's Curve

My wife and I purchased the Fender House at 1004 East Main Street in May of 2021. We have very much enjoyed the house and our time in the Fries community, but I have grave concerns about the east entrance to the town.

The sharp 90-degree turn, locally known as Fender's Curve, on State Road 606 as it turns up the hill as East Main Street, is a significant danger to drivers, as well as pedestrians and bicyclists who walk up the hill from the New River Bike Trail or the new RV Park.

Most, if not all, the traffic on this road is local and drivers are aware of the turn. A 15-mph speed limit sign is posted on the right side of the road as drivers approach the turn from Low Bridge, but during the summer months this sign is often obscured by bushes and vines. There is also a large Right Arrow sign directly ahead on the opposite side of the road at the turn, but it is not obvious until a car is fast approaching the turn.

In the five years we have lived in our home, there have been 16 accidents that I have direct knowledge of and others I only know from damage to our trees and yard from drivers have missed the turn and crossed the oncoming downhill lane departing town. These accidents occur most frequently at night, but also during the day.

Two and a half years ago, I contacted the Virginia DOT and reported the dangers of this turn. DOT responded by reducing the speed limit on the Fries Road at the Carroll County Line. But the problem continues to happen with at least eight accidents since the speed limit change.

Given that most of the traffic on this road is local, I am convinced that the primary cause of these accidents is driver inattention. I can only speak for myself but believe that all of us have much on our minds and are often distracted by matters other than the road ahead. Without some effort to mitigate the dangers of these continuing accidents, I fear a head on collision with traffic descending the hill to head out of town.

I have again contacted the VA DOT to inform them that accidents continue to happen and suggested the installation of rumble strips to alert drivers of the impending turn. We all recognize the effectiveness of the rumble strips on Highway 94 west of town where it meets Scenic Drive, alerting drivers of the approaching stop sign. It seems like this would be the perfect solution to the issues at Fender's Curve.

I was informed that the DOT could not install rumble strips without the Board of Supervisors' approval. They gave me a phone number to contact the local Board of Supervisors. I called and it was Jill's number, so I assume the Fries Town Council would have to be the approving authority.

I therefore respectfully request that the Fries Town Council approve a request for the VA DOT to install rumble strips on Highway 606 on the east end of town as it approaches Fender's Curve.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Ed Rehkopf, 1004 E. Main Street, Fries, VA 24330, 276-233-5662

Following discussion, Mary Ann Cubbage moved that a letter be sent to VDOT requesting the installation of rumble strips at Fender's Curve, as suggested by Mr. Rehkopf. Jo Ann Gunter seconded the motion. All members present voted Aye, and the motion carried.

2. Grayson County Garbage Contract: The Mayor reported that the contract had not been updated in 6 years and was up for renewal. The county increased the cost of service by \$2.00 per household. After some discussion, Jo Ann Gunter moved to approve the contract as presented. Mary Ann Cubbage seconded the motion. All members present voted Aye, and the motion carried.
3. Water Treatment Plant 2025 Gold Award: The Mayor announced that the Fries Water Treatment Plant had received the 2025 Gold Water Treatment Plant Performance Award for Excellence in Clarification, Filtration, and Backwash. She expressed her appreciation for the efforts of the plant operators, Dillon Gunter and Scott Brooke, whose dedication and commitment to excellence enabled the facility to achieve this recognition under Virginia Department of Health standards.
4. Budget Schedule: The Mayor announced that the budget workshop would be held on May 14th @ 10am. The Budget Public Hearing was scheduled for June 2nd @ 6:30pm.

Announcements:

1. Reminder: The deadline to be included on the agenda is Tuesday, one week before the meeting.
2. Mount Rogers Mobile Health Unit will be here May 19th at the Depot.
3. Large Item Curbside Pickup will be held in town limits on June 1st.
4. First Cruise-In of the season, May 23rd @ 2pm.
5. Fries Town Market, every Saturday from 9am—1pm.

The Mayor recognized Gil Caldwell, who requested to address Council. Mr. Caldwell stated that he had previously served on councils in other localities and commended the Town Council for its work. He remarked that he believed everyone shared a common goal of doing what is best for the Town.

Mr. Caldwell then inquired about the Town's leash law. The Mayor confirmed that the Town does have a leash law in effect. Mr. Caldwell reported that he had experienced issues with a loose dog and had submitted several videos to the Grayson County Animal Control Officer but had received no assistance.

The Mayor advised that she had recently met with the Grayson County Sheriff to discuss concerns regarding animal control services. She reported that the Sheriff is in the process of hiring a dedicated Animal Control Officer to address such matters. The current officer has multiple responsibilities and is unable to devote the necessary time to responding to the volume of animal control calls received.

Next, Mr. Caldwell advised that parking was an issue in the town. He gave examples of people parking on both sides of the street on Smith Street being dangerous, and the Mayor parking on the wrong side of the street in front of the Town Hall. After the laughter subsided, he also said that he thought that the Mayor and town officials should have permanent parking spaces assigned to them anyway. The Mayor stated that council would take his suggestion under advisement and thanked him for bringing his concerns to council.

With no further business to discuss, Karen Snyder moved to adjourn. Yvonne Burr provided the second. All present voted Aye, and the meeting was adjourned.

Signed: _____

Attest: _____