

Town of Scottsville

Agenda

**Town Council Work Session
Monday, July 12, 2021, 7:00 PM
Victory Hall, 401 Valley Street**

This meeting will be held with both remote and in-person access.

The Town welcomes hybrid meetings when allowable under Virginia law. Remote access is available [online at this link](#) or call 301-715-8592, then enter meeting ID 880 5989 4673 and pass code 1744.

AGENDA

1. REPORTS

- a. Police Chief
- b. Chamber of Commerce
- c. Architectural Review Board
- d. Planning Commission
- e. Treasurer

2. MAYOR AND STAFF REPORTS

- a. Mayor
- b. Town Attorney
- c. Town Administrator

3. NEW TOPICS

- a. Budget focus on cash management and investments
- b. Itinerant business licenses

4. CARRY-OVER TOPICS

- a. VDOT sidewalk project scope and contract
- b. American Rescue Plan project reports

5. ADJOURNMENT

Town Administrator Report

Ending the Covid-19 pandemic emergency

The Commonwealth of Virginia ended its Covid-19 state of emergency on June 30th, having declared the emergency in March of 2020. This was the longest declaration of emergency in the state's history. Scottsville's local emergency has also expired. The most important effect of the local emergency's end is the requirement for in-person attendance by public officials to reach a quorum and vote in meetings. Zoom can be used for public comment, for work sessions, and for Councilors to listen but not vote.

Across Virginia, about half of the population is fully vaccinated. Combined with disease resistance from past exposure, this has been enough to reduce infections, hospitalizations, and deaths from Covid-19 to very low levels in the past month. Vaccination has slowed down from its peak in April. Everyone aged 16+ can make plans to get a shot. Residents can call the local hotline at 434-972-6261 or visit vaccinate.virginia.gov. The Scottsville Pharmacy also has vaccines now.

From March 2020 to June 2021, Covid-19 killed 20 people in Fluvanna County, 31 people in Buckingham County, and 83 people in Albemarle County. In the Scottsville zip code, 323 of our neighbors were confirmed sick from Covid-19, and unknown more spread undiagnosed infections.

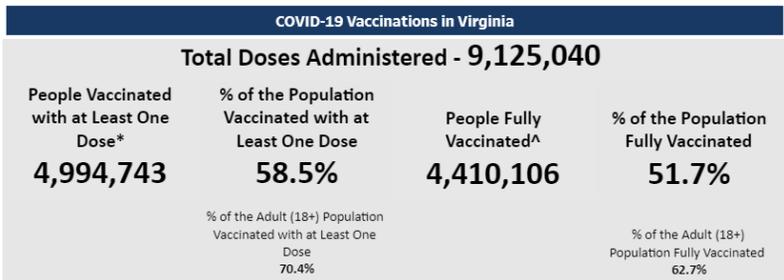
The Town of Scottsville will try to support our community's recovery in the years to come.



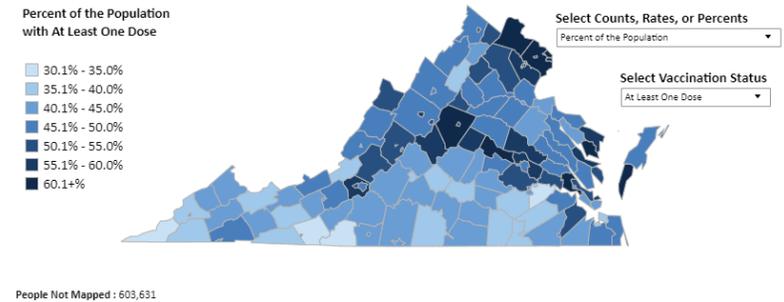
COVID-19 in Virginia: Vaccine Summary



Dashboard Updated: 7/7/2021



People Vaccinated by Locality of Residence and Vaccination Status - Percent of the Population

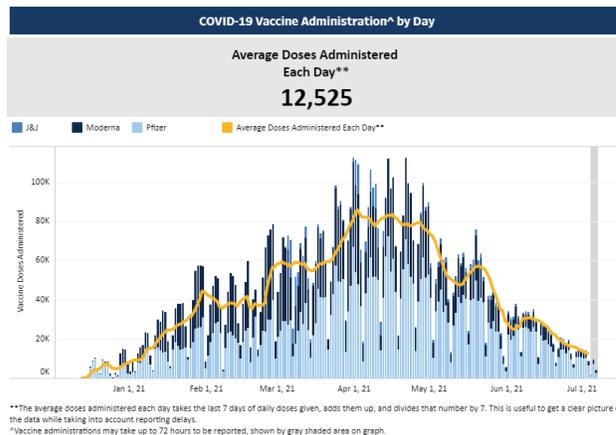


COVID-19 in Virginia: Summary

Dashboard Updated: 7/7/2021
Data entered by 5:00 PM the prior day.

Cases, Hospitalizations and Deaths					
Total Cases*		Total Hospitalizations**		Total Deaths	
681,599		30,666		11,436	
<small>(New Cases: 273)^</small>					
<small>Confirmed+</small>	<small>Probable+</small>	<small>Confirmed+</small>	<small>Probable+</small>	<small>Confirmed+</small>	<small>Probable+</small>
530,298	151,301	29,095	1,571	9,655	1,781

* Includes both people with a positive test (Confirmed), and symptomatic with a known exposure to COVID-19 (Probable).
** Hospitalization of a case is captured at the time VDH performs case investigation. This underrepresents the total number of hospitalizations in Virginia.
^ New cases represent the number of confirmed and probable cases reported to VDH in the past 24 hours.
† VDH adopted the updated CDC COVID-19 confirmed and probable surveillance case definitions on August 27, 2020. Found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmsd/conditions/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/case-definitions/2020/08/05/>



Budget focus on cash management and investments

July 1 starts a new fiscal year for the Town. Concluding the old fiscal year 2019-2020 involves audit field work, done in late August, with an audit delivered to Town Council before Christmas.

The year-end financial picture for the Town is very good. Even after the Council's supplemental appropriation, meals tax revenue exceeded expectations by \$13,000 (8%). Advertising the increased cigarette tax might have caused a spending spree and \$15,000 (27%) boost at year-end, though this might hurt the new year's revenue. Within department budgets, the biggest change was with the police, where a part-time position vacancy created about \$15,000 of savings. The team took the opportunity to purchase several needed computers and cameras while keeping a balanced budget.

Despite all of the pandemic's turmoil, the Town finished Fiscal Year 2020 with \$719,000 in spending and \$775,00 in revenue: a \$56,000 surplus. There was no draw-down of reserve funds during the year, so the Town's three accounts ended the year with almost \$620,000 on hand, a 10% increase from last year.

The first half American Rescue Plan payment arrived in July: another \$258,000 in the bank.

So, the Town has a good problem in terms of cash management and investments. There are long-term spending needs, from police equipment and flood control, but the Town is in a strong position to take on these projects. The Town Council's adopted Financial Policy offers two different guidelines on what to do with large cash balances:

- Use the investment accounts at the Treasury of Virginia's Local Government Investment Pool to earn interest. These rates are very low now. The Town earns only about \$20 each month on over \$400,000 in their accounts. For longer-term reserves not to be touched for two years, staff can earn slightly higher rates by committing to certificates of deposit.
- Invest in infrastructure consistent with Town plans. The price of construction is increasing faster than bond yields, so it is a good value to build or purchase capital now, rather than later. The Town's adopted budget has a strong capital investment in parks and public safety. Town Council can continue this program with confidence.

Itinerant business licenses

Council and staff have lately heard several complaints from itinerant business owners, especially food trucks, about the very high rates for their business licenses. The Town has licensed several firms at the rate of \$50 for a week, but we have never issued a \$500 annual peddler's license. This tax law is old and appears designed to deter travelling business while protecting brick-and-mortar. This is a legal and legitimate goal, but it may not be the intent of the current Town Council.

Location	Itinerant - Food	Itinerant - Other
Scottsville	\$500	\$500
Albemarle	\$50	\$500
Charlottesville	\$125	\$125
Nelson*	\$30	\$30
Buckingham**	\$0	\$0
Dillwyn	\$500	\$500
Fluvanna**	\$0	\$0

*Flat fee for all business licenses

**No business licenses

Action: Amend the ordinance or maintain the existing fee structure.

VDOT sidewalk grant contract

In October 2019, Town Council approved an application for VDOT sidewalk construction grants, with a project concept around Bird and Harrison Streets. The goal, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, was to improve pedestrian safety in an area suitable for future growth and investment.

In 2020, VDOT awarded the Town a \$320,000 grant with an \$80,000 match requirement. The Town delayed the start of the work during the pandemic and considered the overall value of the project. The Town has also adopted a small area plan and approved rezoning likely to increase population. During the public hearings, existing residents were concerned about traffic impacts and pedestrian safety. Sidewalk improvements could be helpful.

VDOT staff understand Town Council’s stated concerns about cost overruns and management fees. Their recommendation is to minimize VDOT’s role and hire a private engineer. The Town can lead a design process and listen to neighbor concerns: where is new sidewalk most needed, and where are crosswalks most important? Insisting on cost control and value engineering can be effective. VDOT staff advise that private engineering fees are lower than their own, state-regulated cost sharing rates. However, VDOT is now on their deadline to issue the Town’s grant fund, or move money elsewhere.

Action: Accept or reject the VDOT grant. If accepting the \$320,000 grant, the first step in design work would be to advertise and contract a private engineer instead of using VDOT internal administration. Control can be a priority.

American Rescue Plan project priorities

The passage of this federal law provides strong support for economic recovery in Scottsville. The direct aid to the Town is over \$500,000, to be used through 2024. Staff completed some compliance details, and the first half of the federal funds arrived on July 5th.

Town Council’s adopted budget includes five project categories to support the local recovery. Staff have progress updates on these but require Council guidance in some important areas.

Scottsville’s 2021-22 Projects for the American Rescue Plan	
Project	ARPA budgeted
DMV Select: provide a new basic service to bring traffic downtown	\$114,633
Streetscape and Landscaping: beautify visible space for visitors	\$28,573
Parks Enhancements: green infrastructure & public health	\$28,400
Community Partnerships: tourism and small business growth	\$13,500
Essential Staff & Safety: flood control, digital, & human resources	\$49,200

DMV Select progress report

This project has several parts to be completed before the launch on August 16th and grand opening ceremony on the 24th. The Government Services Committee is extremely helpful, as are DMV staff.

- DMV Contract and Budget. Approved by Council, underway.
- Hire staff. Ms. LaToya Hamlett will serve as DMV Supervisor, starting June 28. Recruiting for the two DMV Clerk hires is underway.
- Renovate office space. Two bids received, and Tocci Mid-Atlantic had the best bid. They have begun work. Purchasing furniture, hardware, and computers is underway.
- IT changes. Good opportunity to improve Town email, file sharing, and scheduling services. Town staff can upgrade existing Microsoft services. The adopted budget is adequate.
- Signs. DMV delivered some signs. New building signs approved by ARB in July.

James River Waterfront Improvements

A cleaner, more attractive riverfront is a Town Council priority for both environmental and economic reasons. This project has \$10,000 of American Rescue Plan funds in the budget, and the James River Association and Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources are supportive partners.

- A riverfront organizing plan. Scottsville's Green Infrastructure Center is under contract for \$5,000 to convene meetings and make drawings of an improved Ferry Street Launch. The plan should connect and include local businesses, as well as other parks assets in the region, both up- and downstream on the river, and elsewhere in the three nearby counties.
- Simple improvements around the boat ramp. Spend \$5,000 to spruce up the DWR site, about 1.25 acres on the riverfront. Details to be determined but may include trees, seating, parking, signs, or basic earthwork. DWR maintenance staff have already consented their support, and they observe that a basic need is some grading to improve drainage: the site has a bowl shape at present which stays muddy after a flood or heavy rain.

Community Business Launch

Another ARPA opportunity for action now is to recruit new small business into vacant storefronts. Council stated support for the grant matching program from the state government, the Community Business Launch. This would match \$10,000 of ARPA funds with \$40,000 of new state-level money. Scottsville's Chamber of Commerce is interested in supporting it further. It would support a marketing and training program for entrepreneurs. The Town makes a list of vacant storefronts and advertises a call for businesses. Startup teams go through a training program and compete for several cash prizes to start their businesses. The goal is at least three new businesses filling vacant spaces, with at least five full-time jobs. Councilor Munson is helping to apply for the state grant to match ARPA, with a July 16 deadline to apply.

Town Code Update

The Town Code is obsolete in paper format, lacking transparency to public and cumbersome for staff. The Municipal Code Corporation, which did the Town's paper updates ten years ago, is now branded as MuniCode and focuses on web-based legal services. The Town is under contract for \$15,000 of services for legal research, code updates, and digital hosting of an improved code of ordinances. The Government Services Committee is also comparing codes to look for new ideas helpful to the town.