



Office of the Town Manager
Frank Cassidy

Warrenton Town Council
Carter Nevill, Mayor
Roy Francis, Ward 1
William Semple, Ward 2
Larry Kovalik, Ward 3
Michele O'Halloran, Ward 4
Eric Gagnon, Ward 5
Paul Mooney, At Large
David McGuire, At Large

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date:	January 14 th , 2025
Agenda Title:	Confirmation of Emergency Declaration- Winter Storm Blair
Requested Action:	Confirm the Declaration of the Local State of Emergency.
Department / Agency Lead:	Emergency Management
Staff Lead:	Frank Cassidy, Town Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On Friday, January 3rd, 2025, Governor Glen Youngkin declared a State of Emergency in the commonwealth of Virginia based on National Weather Service forecasts that indicate a severe winter storm with snow accumulations of several inches along with sleet, ice, freezing rain, and temperatures below freezing for several days that could cause transportation difficulties and power outages.

This declaration outlined a potential, serious threat to the public health, safety, and welfare was created by Winter Storm Blair in the Town of Warrenton beginning January 05, 2025.

On Saturday, January 05th, 2025, the Fauquier County Administrator, in her capacity as the local director of emergency management, upon the recommendation of the Fauquier County Chief of the Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management, issued a Declaration of Local Emergency for Fauquier County.

Town Manager Mr. Frank Cassidy, in cooperation with other Local Government Officials and the Emergency Coordinator of the Town of Warrenton determined that on January 5, 2025 at 7:00 PM under the Code of Virginia § 44- 146.19 Powers and duties of political subdivisions, and § 44-146.21 Declaration of local emergency, a local emergency exists in the Town of Warrenton, Virginia.

During the existence of said emergency, the powers, functions, and duties of the Emergency Manager and Emergency Management Coordinator of the Town of Warrenton shall be those prescribed by State law and the ordinances, resolutions, and approved plans of the Town including town code section Sec. 20-6. - Emergency powers, in order to mitigate the effects of said emergency, including:

All Town of Warrenton assets are hereby ordered to be placed at the disposal of the Town Manager or Emergency DRAFT

Management Coordinator

- All Town regulations prescribing procedures for the conduct of Town business, if strict compliance would hinder

necessary action in coping with the emergency, are hereby suspended. Suspension of such procedures shall be at

the direction of the Town Manager or Emergency Management Coordinator.

- All employees of the Town are hereby directed to exercise the utmost diligence in the discharge of duties required

of them for the duration of the emergency and in execution of emergency laws, regulations, and directives – state

and local.

- All citizens are called upon and directed to comply with necessary emergency measures, to cooperate with public

officials and emergency responders in executing emergency operations plans, and to obey and comply with the

lawful directions of properly identified officials.

Under Virginia State Code § 44-146.21. The Town Council must confirm the declaration mad by the Town Manager within 45 Days.

Virginia State Code § 44-146.21. Declaration of local emergency.

A. A local emergency may be declared by the local director of emergency management with the consent of the governing body of the political subdivision. In the event the governing body cannot convene due to the disaster or other exigent circumstances, the director, or in his absence, the deputy director, or in the absence of both the director and deputy director, any member of the governing body may declare the existence of a local emergency, subject to confirmation by the governing body at its next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special meeting within 45 days of the declaration, whichever occurs first. The governing body, when in its judgment all emergency actions have been taken, shall take appropriate action to end the declared emergency.

BACKGROUND

On Friday, January 3rd, 2025, Governor Glen Youngkin declared a State of Emergency in the commonwealth of Virginia based on National Weather Service forecasts that indicate a severe winter storm with snow accumulations of several inches along with sleet, ice, freezing rain, and temperatures below freezing for several days that could cause transportation difficulties and power outages.

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Sec. 20-5. - Declaration of emergencies.

- (a) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section or as otherwise provided by law, a local emergency may be declared by the director with the consent of the town council.
- (b) Prior to the declaration of a local emergency, the director shall attempt to obtain the prior formal or informal consent of the town council. However, if such consent is not reasonably practical under the circumstances, the declaration shall nevertheless be legally valid and of full legal force and authority.
- (c) The declaration shall be in writing. It shall remain in effect for forty-five (45) days or until confirmed, modified, extended, or canceled by official recorded vote of the town council, whichever occurs first. If the town council extends the declaration, it shall state the length of the extension and the conditions and procedures under which it shall be ended, if practicable. If the town council is unable to meet within forty-five (45) days, then the declaration may be renewed or extended by the director for an indefinite period of time unless and until later modified or canceled by the director or town council.
- (d) To the greatest extent practicable, the director, coordinator, or town clerk shall maintain a written record of all official actions taken hereunder for later review by applicable state, federal, and local agencies.

Upon completion of the State of Local Emergency, the Town Staff will provide a report on the proceedings to the Town Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Consider confirmation of the Declaration of the Local State of Emergency.

Service Level/Collaborative Impact

The local state of emergency allows the Town to pursue reimbursement and funding from FEMA and the state. It allows the Town to take all necessary actions to continue operations and respond to the emergency.

Policy Direction/Warrenton Plan 2040

Ensuring the continuity of Government operations is a key factor of Governance that affects all aspects of Warrenton Plan 2040.

Fiscal Impact

The Declaration allows the Town the opportunity to utilize additional resources for response from the Federal, State and Local Government Partners.

Legal Impact

This is a legal requirement under Virginia State Code § 44-146.21.

ATTACHMENTS

1. State Declaration of Emergency
2. Fauquier County Declaration of Local Emergency
3. Town of Warrenton Declaration of Local Emergency
4. Resolution for Council Consideration
5. Storm Spot Reports