



Office of the Town Manager
Frank Cassidy

STAFF REPORT

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

Council Meeting Date:	January 13, 2026
Agenda Title:	Council Retreat Discussion
Requested Action:	For Discussion
Department / Agency Lead:	Town Manager/Human Capital
Staff Lead:	Stephanie Miller, Acting Town Manager Kasey Braun, Human Capital & Risk Management Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The last Town Council retreat was held on January 26, 2024. Three of the Council seats are now held by new members. Several Council members have expressed interest in a Council retreat in the new year. Staff is seeking to determine if it is the will of Council to conduct a retreat and if so, identify potential dates and goals for the retreat.

BACKGROUND

Council retreats serve to foster collaboration and provide a strategic forum for members to align their goals with the Town's mission, vision, and long-term objectives, thereby ensuring effective oversight and leadership. Council has conducted retreats roughly every two years in the recent past. In January 2024, the Council held a retreat at 18 Court Street. Ms. Jane Dittmar from the Virginia Institute of Government facilitated the meeting and provided recommendations for the Council to implement. Prior to that retreat, the last retreat was held in Fall 2022.

Facilitators that have been identified for Council to consider include:

- Mr. Doug Walker, Executive Manager with The Berkley Group, has availability in early 2026 to facilitate a retreat. His biography is attached to the agenda item for review.
- Mr. Kim Payne, Executive Manager with The Berkley Group
- Mr. Charles Hartgrove with the Virginia Institute of Government

Potential locations in town for the retreat include:

- 18 Court Street
- Sycamore Room at the Hospital
- PATH Foundation

Funding for a Council retreat was removed from the adopted FY26 budget, so an appropriation will be necessary if Council wishes to move forward.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Consider the possibility of a retreat in early 2026 and direct staff to identify facilitators and venues for Council consideration.

Service Level/Collaborative Impact

n/a

Policy Direction/Warrenton Plan 2040

n/a

Fiscal Impact

The estimate for a Council retreat is around \$5,000.

Legal Impact

n/a

ATTACHMENTS

1. Douglas C. Walker Bio
2. Kim Payne Bio
3. Charles Hartgrove Bio

Attachment 1: Douglas C. Walker

Executive Manager

Doug Walker's extensive practical experience and demonstrated expertise as an effective manager and inspiring leader is fully evident in the depth and breadth of knowledge of all functional areas of local government service delivery and organizational performance. Doug's distinguished career spans over 30 years of combined service to five Virginia localities and the local government management profession. Doug's strengths include organizational development with an emphasis on strategic alignment; senior leader talent recruitment and development; individual leadership and management coaching; team facilitation and employee performance management; and connecting the work of staff and elected governing bodies within the framework of the council-manager form of government. Doug is a graduate of the Virginia Institute of Government's Senior Executive Institute and remains a regular instructor and facilitator for all SEI and LEAD programs at UVA. Doug served 35 years as a member of the International City/County Management Association and Virginia Local Government Management Association including a term as president.

Attachment 2: L. Kimball Payne, III

Executive Manager

L. Kimball Payne III, ("Kim") served as Lynchburg City Manager from February 2001 until his retirement at the end of June 2016. Prior to that he served as the County Administrator of Spotsylvania County, Virginia, from February 1987 to February 2001, and as Assistant County Administrator in Spotsylvania from February 1984 to February 1987. Kim holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Duke University and Master of Planning and Master of Arts in Public Administration degrees from the University of Virginia. He completed the Senior Executive Institute at the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia. He is an Adjunct Professor at Virginia Tech, teaching local government management. He is a retired Commander in the Naval Reserve, and completed nearly eight years of active duty as a Naval Flight Officer with his last assignment as a Naval ROTC Instructor at the University of Virginia. He is a member of the International City-County Management Association (ICMA), an ICMA Credentialed Manager and a Senior Advisor.

Attachment 3: Charles Hartgrove

Managing Director, Virginia Institute of Government

Charles W. Hartgrove, ICMA-CM, is the managing director of the Virginia Institute of Government (VIG) at the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. He is responsible for VIG's operations, leadership development, research, consulting services, and training programs. The Cooper Center strives to build good governance, equity, and resilience across the Commonwealth and beyond. VIG serves local governments, state agencies, and other entities by providing a portfolio of partnerships and best practices to help communities and organizations build governance capacity, develop leaders at all levels, and provide policy and operations solutions. Prior to joining the Cooper Center staff, he most recently served as the chief deputy commissioner of the Virginia Department of Taxation. He served as the agency's chief administrative officer and was responsible for the organization's strategic plan. He led special projects and served on several committees for the Governor and Secretary of Finance's offices regarding the gig economy, worker misclassification, and local government issues. Charles worked as a senior executive for Virginia local governments for over twenty years. He served as the deputy city manager of Lynchburg and as the town manager of Ashland, Middleburg, and Gate City. He is an International City/County Management Association Credentialed Manager (ICMA-CM). Charles previously served on the Executive Committee of the Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA). Charles obtained a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in government, from the University of Virginia's College at Wise. He also received a Master of Public Administration degree from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia's Senior Executive Institute, the Virginia Executive Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University, and the University of Oklahoma's Economic Development Institute. Charles, a lifelong Virginian, was born in Portsmouth, raised in Gate City, and currently resides in Richmond.