

Policy Briefing Summary

City Council



Regarding:	Consent and end to the January 24, 2026 local Declaration of Emergency
Staff Contact(s):	Samuel Sanders, Jr., City Manager
Presenter:	Samuel Sanders, Jr., City Manager
Date of Proposed Action:	February 2, 2026

Issue

City Manager Samuel Sanders, Jr., issued a Declaration of Local Emergency on January 24, 2026, ahead of a Winter storm. Per § 44-146.21 of the Virginia State Code, that declaration is subject to confirmation by the City Council at its next regularly scheduled meeting. That same statute also directs the City Council to take appropriate action to end the declared emergency when, in its judgment, all emergency actions have been taken.

Background / Rule

Virginia Code § 44-146.21. Declaration of local emergency, provides that:

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.

Analysis

Financial Impact

Per Virginia Code § 44-146.21:

B. A declaration of a local emergency as defined in § 44-146.16 shall activate the local Emergency Operations Plan and authorize the furnishing of aid and assistance thereunder.

C. Whenever a local emergency has been declared, the director of emergency management of each political subdivision or any member of the governing body in the absence of the director, if so authorized by the governing body, may control, restrict, allocate or regulate the use, sale, production and distribution of food, fuel, clothing and other commodities, materials, goods, services and resource systems which fall only within the boundaries of that jurisdiction and which do not impact systems affecting adjoining or other political subdivisions, enter into contracts and incur obligations necessary to combat such threatened or actual disaster, protect the health and safety of persons and property and provide emergency assistance to the victims of such disaster, and proceed without regard to time-consuming procedures and formalities prescribed by law (except mandatory constitutional requirements) pertaining to the performance of public work, entering into contracts, incurring of obligations, employment of temporary workers, rental of equipment, purchase

of supplies and materials, and other expenditures of public funds, provided such funds in excess of appropriations in the current approved budget, unobligated, are available. Whenever the Governor has declared a state of emergency, each political subdivision affected may, under the supervision and control of the Governor or his designated representative, enter into contracts and incur obligations necessary to combat such threatened or actual disaster beyond the capabilities of local government, protect the health and safety of persons and property and provide emergency assistance to the victims of such disaster. In exercising the powers vested under this section, under the supervision and control of the Governor, the political subdivision may proceed without regard to time-consuming procedures and formalities prescribed by law pertaining to public work, entering into contracts, incurring of obligations, employment of temporary workers, rental of equipment, purchase of supplies and materials, levying of taxes, and appropriation and expenditure of public funds.

Recommendation

By motion consent to the Declaration of Emergency by the local director of emergency management (City Manager) and further determine when the emergency ended.

Recommended Motion (if Applicable)

"I move that the City Council ratify and consent to the Local Declaration of Emergency issued on Janury 24, 2026 by City Manager Sam Sanders, and further move that the City Council declare the end of the emergency effective [date, time]."

Attachments

1. 20260124 Declaration of Local Emergency_winter storm
2. A Resolution Consenting to the City Manager Local Declaration