

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact(s): Kyle D. O'Brien, Town Manager
(540) 896-5152
John Aulbach, P.E., Health Department
(540) 463-7136

BROADWAY, VA - The Town Council today entered into a long-term lease agreement (99 year renewable lease) with LockeWillow Farm, LLC for the use of the Plain's Mill spring as a future water source for Broadway. The spring, located east of Town and south of U.S. Route 211 is part of a 211-acre farm owned by LockeWillow Farm, LLC, and has water flows that average five million gallons per day, with flows as high as 10 million gallons per day. To put this figure in perspective, the Town's average consumption is currently 350,000 gallons per day. The natural flow is so prolific that during the summer drought of 2002, there was a several week period that the spring produced more water than the North Fork of the Shenandoah River at the Cootes Store Gauging Station.

Following the 1998-1999 drought, the Town made finding an additional water source one of its top priorities. In 2000, a geological study was commissioned, which identified five potential sites for a high yield well in the Broadway area. The Town drilled at the site selected as having the greatest potential for water, and came up almost empty - .5 gallons per minute. At that time, the Town reassessed its source potential, and realized that ground water was not the answer. In northern Rockingham County, high yield wells are scarce, and the probability of finding one or more that could serve Broadway's future needs was low, not to mention expensive, as the cost of drilling and developing a municipal well can easily exceed \$100,000, with no guaranteed flows. In reality, it would have taken more than one, and potentially as many as ten wells to secure the needed flow for the long-term future of Broadway.

This led to the search for surface water that is outside of the North Fork Shenandoah River and Linville Creek watersheds, which currently serve as Broadway's municipal water sources. The Town began monitoring the Plains Mill Spring, and identified it as the best possible source of water for Broadway's long-term needs. Discussions and negotiations have been ongoing with the property owner for approximately one year. In addition, exhaustive legal research was compiled to ensure the validity of the water rights, as well as to ensure compliance with applicable state and local laws. Preliminary engineering was performed in 2002 to examine options for treatment, development, and cost estimates.

The water has been extensively tested by the Health Department and it was concluded that the quality was such that it would make an appropriate drinking water source with traditional treatment.

The source will not be developed immediately, as the Town's current sources, the North Fork of the Shenandoah River and Linville Creek, are adequate for the foreseeable

future. “We do not envision developing the spring within the foreseeable future,” said town manager Kyle O’Brien; “however, the availability of grant funding to develop this source could possibly move the timetable forward. Our main priority up to this point was to secure an adequate source; we can now begin planning its development.” Total costs in today’s dollars for development, including the legal, engineering, land, easements, filtration, and associated piping to Broadway are approximately \$3,000,000. Financing for the project will probably be provided through a combination of Town reserve funds, bond proceeds, and possibly grant funding. Since the water is not needed immediately, the Town will have ample time to ensure proper planning, and will be able to take full advantage of all available outside funding sources.

“We view this as a historic day for the Town of Broadway” said O’Brien. “Water is a precious finite resource, a limited resource whose availability is coming to the forefront nationwide. Water quality and finding adequate sources will be one of the preeminent issues facing communities not only in the Shenandoah Valley, but also all across the country. The Plains Mill Spring should guarantee that the citizens of Broadway will have ample and adequate drinking water for generations to come.”

“This culminates over four years of searching for an additional water source,” said Mayor Wanda Wilt. The Mayor also noted that in a recent survey, 98.2% of Town residents stated that it was either very important or important to invest resources now to ensure the availability of drinking water in the future. In addition, in the same survey, Broadway citizens overwhelmingly stated that water supply was the main issue facing Broadway.

The Town Council greatly appreciates the assistance of LockeWillow Farm, LLC, for their willingness to work with the Town on bringing about a fair and mutually beneficial agreement.