

TOWN OF AMHERST

Council names interim town manager

Former city manager to fill post while town's chief administrative official recovers from accident

BY JUSTIN FAULCONER
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Former Lynchburg City Manager Kimball Payne has agreed to become interim town manager for Amherst while Sara Carter, the town's current chief top administrative official, recovers from injuries recently suffered in an accident.

Amherst Town Council unanimously tapped Payne, who served at the helm of the city of Lynchburg's local government from 2001 to his retirement in June 2016, following a closed session at a special called meeting Wednesday, said Amherst Mayor Dwayne Tuggle. Payne's first day in the role is set for Aug. 3, Tuggle said in an email.

The Berkley Group, a Bridgewater-based professional firm that helps provide experienced management services while a locality has a vacancy, helped facilitate the hire.

"We would like to thank the Berkley Group for their assistance and Mr. Payne for his willingness to step in during this time," Tuggle said.

Reached by phone Wednesday, Payne said he is glad he can help serve the town while Carter, who started her post in January 2018, heals from injuries. He said the plan is to work 20 hours a week or more as needed.

"I'm hoping she heals quickly," Payne said of Carter, adding: "I'll do whatever is necessary to get the job done."

Carter was injured in an accident in early July and Tuggle served as the town's acting chief administrative official in her absence prior to Payne's hire.

Payne holds master's degrees in planning and public administration from the University of Virginia and has served in active duty as a naval flight officer and retired as a commander in the naval reserves. His career in local government began in 1984 as the assistant administrator in Spotsylvania County. He was promoted three years later to the position of county administrator,



Former Lynchburg City Manager Kimball Payne, pictured here in June 2016, will act as interim town manager for Amherst while Sara Carter, the town's current chief top administrative official, recovers from injuries recently suffered in an accident.

"When I worked with him while serving on Lynchburg City Council, he was approachable, communicated with council very well and helped us navigate difficult decisions."

— Turner Perrow, served on council during Kimball Payne's tenure as Lynchburg City manager

a role he held for 14 years before starting his Lynchburg post in February 2001.

In Lynchburg, Payne oversaw daily operations of more than a dozen departments and about 1,200 employees at the time of his retirement. The town of just more than 2,000 residents has about 30 town government employees, including part-time workers.

Payne said the year after he retired he facilitated a retreat for the Amherst Town Council and has had past conversations with Carter about the town. "I'll be picking her brain a lot," he said of serving in an interim capacity.

He has familiarity with the town and county's role in the

Greater Lynchburg region and looks forward to getting to better know Amherst.

"I have plenty to learn about the community," Payne said.

Former Lynchburg mayors Mike Gillette and Joan Foster in interviews with The News & Advance around the time of Payne's 2016 retirement described him as an extraordinary city manager with unquestioned integrity and extreme professionalism who led the city government through years of growth and major investments in its downtown.

"He's a gem, and, of course, when you have a gem you don't want to let it go," Foster said in the 2016 interview.

Turner Perrow, who served on

council during Payne's tenure and this summer moved to Madison Heights after his most recent term as a councilman ended, described Payne as a tremendous asset to Lynchburg.

Perrow, who is slated to soon join the Amherst County Service Authority's board of directors, said Payne is a proven leader and an excellent choice to keep the town's daily operations running smoothly until Carter's return.

"When I worked with him while serving on Lynchburg City Council, he was approachable, communicated with council very well and helped us navigate difficult decisions," Perrow said. "He didn't try to influence council members; he helped us understand the facts, so we could be fully informed on the issues."

An avid fisherman, Payne said he spent much of his retirement on the riverbanks, including Madison Height's border with the city.

"If you're fishing on the James around here, you're in Amherst County," Payne said.

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TODAY IN ... 1914

» Germany declared war on Russia at the onset of World War I.

TODAY IN ... 1981

» The rock music video channel MTV made its debut.

CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS

Singer **Ramblin' Jack Elliott** is 89. Former Sen. **Alfonse D'Amato**, R-N.Y., is 83. Actor **Giancarlo Giannini** is 78. Basketball Hall of Fame coach **Roy Williams** is 70. Blues singer-musician **Robert Cray** is 67. Singer **Michael Penn** is 62. Rock singer **Joe Elliott** (Def Leppard) is 61. Rock singer-musician **Suzi Gardner** (L7) is 60. Rapper **Chuck D** (Public Enemy) is 60. Actor **Jesse Borrego** is 58. Actor **Demian Bichir** is 57. Rapper **Coolio** is 57. Actor **John Carroll Lynch** is 57. Rock singer **Adam Duritz** (Counting Crows) is 56. Movie director **Sam Mendes** is 55. Country singer **George Ducas** is 54. Country musician **Charlie Kelley** is 52. Actress **Jennifer Gareis** is 50. Actor **Charles Malik Whitfield** is 48. Actress **Tempestt Bledsoe** is 47. Actor **Jason Momoa** is 41. Actress **Honeysuckle Weeks** is 41. Singer **Ashley Parker Angel** is 39. Actress **Taylor Fry** is 39. Actor **Elijah Kelley** is 34. Actor **James Francis Kelly** is 31. Actress **Ella Wahlestedt** is 22.

VA. LOTTERY

Friday's drawings
Day
Pick 3: 5-3-7
Pick 4: 1-6-5-0
Cash 5: 8-23-28-30-32
Night
Pick 3: 4-6-6
Pick 4: 5-8-2-2
Cash 5: 1-20-29-32-34
Cash4Life: 11-12-26-27-32;
Cash Ball: 3
Mega Millions
12-35-46-48-69
Mega Ball: 23
Jackpot: \$22 million

CORRECTIONS

The News & Advance corrects all substantive errors of fact that appear in the newspaper. Please call the appropriate department if you wish to request a correction.

BRIEFLY

New home-based cheesecake business opens in Lynchburg

A cheesecake bakery has opened in Lynchburg. Home-based baker Michelle Dowell opened Cherry on Top back in January briefly before COVID-19 hit.

This month she relaunched the business. The cheesecakes can be ordered online at cherryontopcheesecake.com and picked up at her home near the Lynchburg General Hospital.

Various flavors range from vanilla to Reese's cup to white chocolate raspberry and lemon blueberry. They come in three different sizes: 4-inch, 6-inch deep dish, and 9-inch.

"I started baking when I was younger and would bring cakes and cookies to different events," Dowell said. "After I started focusing on cheesecakes, I started getting tons of compliments and finally listened to my friends and family and started selling them."

Once Dowell can hire more help, she plans to offer delivery.

— Rachael Smith



Lynchburg home-based baker Michelle Dowell relaunched her business, Cherry on Top, this month.

Va. Legal Aid encourages unemployed residents to apply to insurance programs

The Virginia Legal Aid Society is encouraging residents who have lost their employer-provided health insurance during the coronavirus pandemic to apply to one of the state's public health insurance programs.

Eligible Virginians can enroll in the state's Medicaid program or the Family Access to Medical Insurance Security, the state's health insurance program for

children. Both programs cover the cost of COVID-19 testing and treatment.

According to a VLAS news release, eligibility for the free coverage is based on family size and monthly income. Home, land, retirement savings and unemployment benefits do not count as income and will not affect eligibility.

VLAS has made two local outreach workers available to those who need assistance applying or renewing Medicaid or FAMIS coverage. An outreach worker can be reached by calling

(434) 515-0497 or emailing lizc@vlas.org or shanab@vlas.org.

More than 5.4 million Americans lost their health insurance when they lost their jobs due to the ongoing health crisis, according to the Urban Institute and Families USA. In Virginia, more than 525,000 people have lost their employer-provided insurance.

— Richard Chumney

Va. in state of emergency ahead of Hurricane Isaias

RICHMOND — Gov. Ralph Northam has declared a state of emergency in advance of Hurricane Isaias, which is expected to begin affecting the state's coast Monday.

The move allows Virginia to mobilize resources and equipment needed for response and recovery efforts.

Northam's office said in a news release Friday while the track of Isaias still is uncertain, it appears increasingly likely Virginia could see effects and must prepare for the possibility of flooding, high winds and potential storm surge.

— From wire reports

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