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Regular Council Meeting
October 14, 2025

The Appomattox Town Council held a Regular Council meeting on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at the Appomattox Municipal Building, 210 Linden Street, Appomattox, Virginia with Mayor Richard Conner, presiding.

Members present: Vice-Mayor Timothy W. Garrett, Council Member James J. Boyce, Sr., Council Member Mary Lou G. Spiggle, Council Member Nathan Simpson, and Council Member Jack Hensley.

Members absent: Council Member McKinley Cardwell

Others: Carlton Duck, Alive Media; Dianne Tanner, Deputy Town Clerk; Michael Campbell, Town Manager; Robert S. Fowler, Director of Community Development and Planning; and Jefrado Granger, Community Planner, Central Virginia Planning District Commission.

Mayor Richard Conner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Reverend Duck led the prayer and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Approval of the Agenda:

Mayor Richard Conner asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda.

On a motion by Council Member Nathan Simpson, seconded by Vice-Mayor Timothy W. Garrett, the Council voted to accept the agenda as written. All members present voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Richard Conner read into the record a letter received from Representative John McGuire: Mayor Conner, Congratulations on the momentous occasion of Appomattox County's one-hundred-year anniversary. The Centennial milestone is a profound testament to the enduring spirit, rich history and vibrant community defining Appomattox County (and the Town). Over the past century, Appomattox County has grown and thrived, building a legacy rooted in resilience, dedication and a strong sense of community pride. From its historic landmarks to its devoted citizens, the County continues to embody the values that make it a remarkable place to live, work and visit. The anniversary is more than a celebration of years, but it is a tribute to the people, partnerships and values that have defined your journey. As you celebrate this significant anniversary, I commend all that have contributed to the county's progress and success. May the next one hundred years bring continued prosperity, unity, and growth for Appomattox County and its residents. Congratulations again on this remarkable achievement. Signed by Representative John McGuire.

I am glad to read this; I will talk to him about his wording...a little bit. But we are a community, and the Town is just one important piece to that community. I am glad we get to lead it and

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guide it and hopefully enhance it for the future. As always, I want our citizens free to bring their redresses and grievances to us in a peaceful manner. I think that is the best way to be done so that democracy...representative democracy can carry on in this fine country. Alright. Thank you all. Do we have any scheduled public appearances? Next item is the adoption of the Consent Agenda.

Adoption of the Consent Agenda:

Mayor Richard Conner read the rules for the Consent Agenda to the record and listed the adoption of the Council Meeting Minutes for September 8, 2025, and September 23, 2025, Council meetings.

On a motion by Council Member Nathan Simpson, seconded by Vice-Mayor Timothy W. Garrett, the Council voted to approve the Council Meeting Minutes for September 8, 2025, and September 23, 2025, Council meetings. All members resent voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Unfinished Business:

Jefrado Granger, Community Planner, with the Central Virginia Planning District Commission (CVPDC) gave a presentation to Council on the preliminary findings from the survey responses for the update to the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Council members provided their feedback of items for the updates to the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Granger indicated the process forward would be a draft of the updates to the Comprehensive Plan by the end of October or beginning of November, the draft would be open to the public for comment for thirty days, and the final version of the updated Comprehensive Plan would be delivered to the Planning Commission and ultimately to Council in December. Michael Campbell, Town Manager, indicated that the updated Comprehensive Plan would be revisited by Council after the Master Utility Plan is completed. Robert S. Fowler, Director of Community Development and Planning, provided Council an overview of the open houses held to get the survey results used in updating the Comprehensive Plan.

New Business:

The Mayor, Richard Conner, asked for any items of new business. There were no items of new business presented.

Standing Committee Reports:

The Mayor, Richard Conner, asked if there were any standing committee reports. There were no standing committee reports presented.

Citizen Comment:

The Mayor, Richard Conner, opened the floor for citizen comments.

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Zamora Olin: One of the things I noticed about the Comp Plan that I did not see anything as it related to economic development for small businesses. So, I am a small business owner. Um...I moved to the area during the pandemic, so um...

Mayor Richard Conner: Ma'am can I ask you to go ahead and step to the mic? So we can do this properly. Thank you, ma'am. Uh...did you...were you able to sign in on the sign in sheet over there?

Zamora Olin: I did not, but I will do that.

Mayor Richard Conner: I'll ask that you to do that before you leave tonight, please.

Zamora Olin : Yes sir. So, my name is Zamora Olin. I am a resident...I was going to say citizen...but resident of Appomattox. So, I was saying is one thing I noticed about the Comprehensive Plan was that there was nothing in there really as it relates to small business owners. So, I am an entrepreneur. I have been in business for ten years. So, I moved to the area about four years ago. So, all of my networking happens in Lynchburg and abroad. So, it would be nice to...um.... connect here and bring my resources back to this area. So, I wanted to...um...grow and help the people where I live grow. So, it would be nice to see...um...where we can create some kind of hub for small business owners here.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: That's an excellent suggestion...idea.

Council Member James J. Boyce, Jr.: Might I ask what kind of business you're in, ma'am?

Zamora Olin: I have a...um... technology consulting company. So, I...um...do a mixture of commercial and federal contracting work.

Council Member Nathan Simpson: Oh, can I ask a follow-up? My background is in federal contracting. So, I am just curious, what type of IT are you in?

Zamora Olin: So, I...we do digital transformation. We build apps and systems integration type work. And then, as it relates to our federal contracting, we have some aviation..um... maintenance type contract work that we're doing. In addition to...um... workforce training and contracting professionals. We support...um... with training acquisition professionals and doing that work with the...within the federal government.

Council Member Nathan Simpson: What would be...like...if you could waive a magic wand, what would be the Appomattox small...what would the Appomattox small business community look like? Would it have a physical space? Would it just be events? What...what do you think?

Zamora Olin: It can be physical. It can be...um.... networking in person. There's something about when you get to see, touch, and feel...um... your other small business owner. Um, entrepreneurship can be very lonely. So, having..um... other entrepreneurs to connect with helps. So...um, you know who you can contact...um...when you need something.

Also...um...you want to be able to partner...um...with other folks that have complimentary skills. Um, you know, or that...that are providing services that you can...um...bring them on board. So, one of the things I would love to do, as an entrepreneur, ... I'm always building strategic partners. So, I can't do everything as a small business owner. So, I'm always looking for other companies to kind of come in and we go after it together. And I'm also a veteran. So, um finding...um, other veterans that can come in with me...um... and sort of...um...influence the procurement process. That makes a big difference.

Mayor Richard Conner: Sure, because you've got a dynamic workforce. How many of them are in this area? And, uh...in this day and age and with the advent of Starlink, my former boss, where I work now is a resident of Florida and the last two times I've talked to him, he's been in Michigan and the Poconos, respectively. Is your workforce here or....?

Zamora Olin: We have teams...um, in Arizona and in the DMV area. So, I would love to employ folks that live right here. Un, one of the...another problem that I had was finding office space. So, I have to...um...have an office space...um...in Lynchburg, but it would be really nice to be able to do that here. So, if I live here, I want my money to be here.

Mayor Richard Conner: Oh, yes, I understand.

Mary Lou Spiggle: So, you moved here from the Lynchburg area, or...?

Zamora Olin: No ma'am, I moved here from the DC area.

Mary Lou Spiggle: Okay. Gotcha.

Zamora Olin: Yeah. So, I'm sorry. What did you say ma'am?

Mary Lou Spiggle: I said I got you. That's interesting.

Zamora Olin: Yes.

Mary Lou Spiggle: And, of course, things in general are somewhat less costly than in Northern Virginia.

Zamora Olin: It is. Um, so, funny story...my husband and I, we both found a house that we enjoyed and we said, "I have a house I want you to see." It was the same house. And, so, we moved here and we love it. So, um, we would like to see the Town grow. I loved some of these things that you had on there, because these are things that we talk about...um...around our kitchen table. So, we are looking forward to seeing the improvements.

Mayor Richard Conner: Are there certain infrastructure improvements you see we need in the Town? That...

Zamora Olin: The biggest thing, I think...um...so, we love American history in my family. So, we go...um...my kids are homeschooled...um...so we like to take trips...um...and see different museums. So, knowing the history of Appomattox, we feel like this should be a premier spot on everyone's list. So, beautification of the city. Um...when you first come into town...um...it is not as pretty as it could be. So, that's one of the things I would love to see...just beautification.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: That's a very kind way to put it.

Council Member James J. Boyce, Jr.: Yeah, that is keeping it kind.

Mayor Richard Conner: Yes. And we realize there are some structures on the periphery and within the Town that need to be corrected. And, uh, we've got a team of folks that's working on that diligently. Unfortunately, I've learned the term, since I've been in office, of the speed of government. And it's not as fast as we would want it to be. Uh, the certain reaction from the higher levels...actions are faster than they should be. Anyway...

Zamora Olin: Yeah, well, as citizens, we're here to help as much as we can. So, um, thank you for your time.

Mayor Richard Conner: Thank you for being involved in the process. We appreciate your coming out.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: We do. I'm...I'm so happy to meet you.

Council Member Timothy W. Garrett: Since we brought some other topics back up. But, about a year ago, we talked about having a workforce incentive program with the high school. With the businesses in Town of coming up if you hired a student of the high school, in the Town, that would give an incentive. The Town would put up some money to give a business an incentive to hire these people, to teach them how to use their hands. And, I'd like to see us add that to the list to probably grow that and make it what we was talking about. Um, I don't know where we're going to find...we got to find the money to back it up. But, if we are serious about economic development and...and providing people that can do these jobs, we got to put some money to it.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Training.

Council Member Timothy W. Garrett: So, I would like to see us add that to the.... uh...creating...we already go it in our minds what we want to do but create an incentive program. We've already talked to the people at school...about it, and they were doing a lot of the leg work...leg work on the school side for us picking these students and that's what she's doing, now...she's picking these students and getting jobs for them. Uh, half a day...they go to school half a day and then they go to a real job the other half and learning trades. So, I'd like to see us moving forward with that too.

Mayor Richard Conner: Back in the day, cooperative education was a big part of our school system when I was going through, and we had several students that worked half days. They take

the core classes and...and...get the hands-on one of their other jobs. Um, you know, some rise to great things. I was talking to one of my coworkers today. He had an uncle who started off as a crane operator, retired at 56 as the chief buyer for heavy duty equipment for SpaceX. He said, "Yeah, I'm putting in for a job there." So, you know, I don't know what part of SpaceX we can bring to Appomattox, but if that's in the cards, we would like to see it.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: We actually had...last year...uh, Mike, we had Timmy invited them from school. It was two teachers...two educators that came when we first started talking about this. But we've never been able to get it off the ground. And I would...I'm with Timmy. I would love to see that happen sooner than later. We don't do it now. Skip a generation. The ideas. They were agreeable with us to...to work with us to do that...to start the program.

Mayor Richard Conner: Alright, so maybe we can look into it better. Alright, at this time, I have our Town Manager's report. Sir.

Town Manager's Report:

Speaking to the Comprehensive Plan, you know, one of the reasons why we've kept it fairly basic and...and, I must say, I truly appreciate Jefrado's work on this. It's been invaluable. You know, these things are complicated and they can be extremely costly. And, with the cooperation of the PDC and with Rob and Jefrado's work, this is...we're going to...we're going to be in compliance and we're going to have a good update. I just would...would...uh, put out there that we have a lot of things that we know we need to accomplish for the Town. Um, the main crux of all that is finding the revenue.... uh, creating the revenue to fund...to fund the projects. And, as part of that, I believe I sent an email to Council, but I just informed the general public and Council that we conducted...we put out an RFP for a Master Utility Plan. We received some very good proposals. We interviewed three firms. Um, and we ended up selecting...uh...I am happy to say...and it wasn't because we have...have prior work with them, but it doesn't hurt. We selected CHA to conduct our Master Utility Plan. Which they will be utilizing Davenport and Raftelis for financials...uh, as a major part of that Master Utility Plan that the product as since the Town...the main thing that we do here in Town is utilities. That's the crux of what we do. Obviously, we have our zoning, and we have economic development. I have an update for you on that in just a second, but you know the utilities situation. Kind of, that is your civilization, that's the basis, the bedrock of everything else. That's how you get your economic development and...um, so that the outcome. That Master Utilities Plan will be a major driver on how we move forward with everything else. It will include the finances. It will include reports and options on how to pay for the things that we need and how to plan for our capital needs really for the next...at least...at least the next decade. It should be a guiding document, um, that really needs to be married to the Comprehensive Plan because it's...it's...it will be how the Town needs to conduct business for the foreseeable future. From an economic development standpoint, I will tell you that I've had...um...some very good talks with the Virginia Housing and Chris McNamara and Philip Jamerson regarding the Garment Factory. I feel like we've come up with...um, I bounced some ideas off of Mr. McNamara. I bounced some ideas off of him on the grants that they offer. The grants that they offer are limited to 1/16th of the total

project's cost. So, we're...I'm going to meet with Philip next week and go over some game planning on...on how we can get something done with the Garment Factory for some housing. How we can do that where their grant dollars are for us...for the Town of Appomattox. We are required to put up a twenty-five percent match doesn't necessarily need to be cash. In other words, we don't actually have to put up money. We can...we can do in kind or we can do...we can donate land. We can...there's a...there's a lot of ways we can work that out. So, um, Chris tells me that there's an opportunity for us to get up to a half a million dollars. Mr. Jamerson had initially asked for three hundred thousand dollars. So, if we're successful in this endeavor, we ought to see the Garment Factory come down fairly quickly in the grand scheme of construction, right? Hopefully we'll have it knocked down within a year. That would be great, wouldn't it?

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Or less maybe.

Town Manager Michael Campbell: Yes.

Mayor Richard Conner: Be happy with a year.

Michael Campbell, Town Manager: We need funding in place and, um, we need a proper site plan to get it done. I think that the last update I have, um, is just a procedural thing. A policy I wanted to make sure that everybody was aware of. So, on the website, it does need to be updated with Dianne's information, but when people make a request or they want to FOIA the Town, we do have a FOIA email box. It's been there. It's just under Cindy's name, but we're going to have that changed here very shortly. Hopefully next week. All FOIA requests from anyone else. I mean, it would obviously be from someone outside of Town. We'll need to go to the FOIA inbox and that inbox will direct it to our Deputy Town Clerk, our Office Manager, Christy Torrence, and to myself. So we will all be aware. And, Dianne Tanner, our Deputy Town Clerk, is our FOIA Officer. So, I just wanted to make everybody aware of that. Put that out there for the public, if anybody wants it. Feel free to make any requests. That's just the route they need to go. It's very easy.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: It absolutely is. And it streamlines the process when you take the proper steps to make a FOIA request.

Michael Campbell, Town Manager: Yeah, it's really...you really...I mean, you send an email, and you just need to be specific what you're asking for. And, um, we'll, you know, we'll work with them. And get them...try to get them what they're asking for.

Mayor Richard Conner: This is...is this a template file that generates the email and then it's...?

Michael Campbell, Town Manager: No, I believe... I believe it. It's a hyperlink address.

Mayor Richard Conner: I understand that. But that's...that's something I've seen in my workplace...that oh we need this information and as you fill this in once you're done it puts it as an email and sends it to the proper thing.

Michael Campbell, Town Manager: Do you know if it opens up to like the...our same text box like we have for...in other words, is it a web hosted email, or does it open up to your personal email account?

Dianne Tanner, Deputy Town Clerk: The option to email...um, which is kind of the conversation I was having with you earlier today.

Michael Campbell, Town Manager: Yeah.

Dianne Tanner, Deputy Town Clerk: In investigating the contract that hosts the website and Municode, which does the agenda, to kind of have those interface and work a little more seamlessly. That's something that I'm kind of investigating the way things kind of marry together to make it streamlined.

Michael Campbell, Town Manager: Yeah. I'll just bookend that by the discussion that we had is I'm very grateful for Dianne and in digging into this and seeing if there's not a more efficient and possibly less costly way for us to manage that. Along all the way over to our agendas and our publishing instead of Municode. She brought this to me today and I think it's a wonderful idea. And so, uh, hopefully we can figure something out and make something happen so that we can be as transparent as possible and at the same time, um, have as few pinch points as possible and as little room for mistakes as possible.

Council Comments:

The Mayor, Richard Conner, opened the floor for council members if they had any comment.

Council Member James J. Boyce, Jr.: I just had an informative weekend at VML and I certainly thank the Town and staff for making the conference available. I think it would sure...should, certainly be something that would benefit all Council members and Mr. Mayor. Uh...because the more that we can learn as a unit, the more we can stay in unity on certain projects or whatever. Uh, another comment I'd like to make, thank you for your service, ma'am. I am also a veteran and I know the... I know the...uh...trials and tribulations that can be put on a family. But again, thank you for your service and thank you for coming to Town. I mean...I mean...you...you...you coming from DC, you had a lot of places you could have been. We are certainly glad you landed here. And that's about it.

Council Member Timothy W. Garrett: I'm good.

Council Member Jack Hensley: I'm good.

Council Member Nathan Simpson: Um, just a couple things. Um, VML conference was great. I echo Jim and I think McKinley said he was going to have a report for us, but he would keep it short to just one page, front and back. So, I look forward to hearing that. It was very short. He told me that the other night. Um, the...uh...I...I haven't had time to form my thoughts on it yet,

but...um...we...Timmy and I put in...uh, some effort toward the Railroad Festival. Um, in regard to our centennial and...um, we got some stuff printed...uh, by Bobby Swanberg and I think it turned out great. Um, they're still currently in the Train Depot. Um, but I think I want to, of course, it's Council's discussion and prerogative to deal with this, but I had someone approach me at the festival saying, "Hey, you know, this is a great space. We could do like an exhibit for the Fire Department or something here." And I think they are right, and that obviously we don't want to staff a full-time museum. Um, but just seeing that space used with...um, you know, some permanent exhibits set up and then room for...uh...rotating or seasonal exhibits that we could open on days like Railroad Festival or other...or the Christmas Festival, or other downtown events. Um, I'd really love to see that happen and we could go the permanent exhibits I would see is, you know, we have some really cool history that we've preserved in the last year with the Times Virginia and some other sources and getting a few more of those printed out pretty large...um, and mounted to the walls as a permanent exhibit. I...I think...um, that would be a huge value to the community and just having a permanent place for the history to be preserved. Um, but that's something I'm...I'm continuing to think about and we'll put probably a plan together for us to consider. Um, and I...I wanted to say thank you for coming and a warning. You...you sound...um, super into Appomattox and I love that. But, uh, you're going to get thrown on every committee...on everything and...um, you just seem like you got a lot of energy for the Town and I, you know, I...it's...it's super important that we have people like you engaged, but if you keep showing that energy, you're going to be put on everything. So, just be ready. That's all I have.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Um, first, I'd like to ask you if you have a business card you could give us? (Zamora Crawford Olin indicated "Yes ma'am" to this question) So we thank you. And don't run out. We'll...we'd like to talk to you.

And I would just like to...um...echo...um...what Nathan said about our centennial display at the Railroad Festival. I thought it was very good and I spent some time reading all of the...not all of them...but some of the articles and I think that that is a great...that's going to be, if we go that route, because we'll all have to decide this, but that would be an excellent, um, way to utilize the space in the...at the end of the Train Station, which sets vacant, and uh, I'm involved with the...uh...the Carver Price Legacy Museum. Deeply involved with that. Which is in Town and the Carver Price Complex. And I was talking about that. We have many museums which do that. They have a moving exhibit. Meaning, they will have an exhibit, and it will last for a certain amount of months. I think they do that at the museum. American Civil War Museum. Let me get it straight. I want to say the Civil War Museum and it's...anyway...they have that. They utilize that, and I think that's an excellent way...cause...if we're going to have a obviously a lot of local people coming in and out and in and out, as well as tourists. Uh, and it...you don't want to keep that same exhibit forever and ever, because they will say, "Have you got anything new? What can you show me that I haven't seen before." And, because I'm a tour guide over at the Museum. I'm a tour guide over at the museum...uh, a volunteer tour guide because I'm on the Board. And I delight in having people learn new things that they knew about it, but they didn't realize we had a Rosenwald School in the Town of Appomattox. One of the few that are remaining across the whole country, and I think that is exciting. But, uh, after that you want to see some exhibits. And I think we've got plenty of things. And, I think even Carlton Duck, uh,

hit on that when he was talking about doing some promos for the Town. Uh, on his live TV and putting out something different each time. So, it captures people's interest and they want to listen. They want to hear what's the next...what's going to be the next that I can, uh...people who are interested in... not just people who are interested in history, but the everyday people who we can pique their interest into the history. We have such a rich history in this community. And I am all for that, Nathan. And I think, uh, that's a great...that's going to be a great way to exhibit. Cause the Centennial will come and go, but we are still here for a hundred years and one hundred and one. We have a lot to show you. We want to show you what it is like and was like. Not just history but future...future things. So, I am all for that. That's all I have to say. I've said enough.

Carlton Duck: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Richard Conner: Yes sir.

Carlton Duck: Just one quick thing.

Mayor Richard Conner: Yes.

Carlton Duck: We are getting ready to release a program that's about an hour program on Appomattox County High School. I sat down with Luke Cunningham. We went through all of the educational processes in the school. We are putting the final touches on that, and...uh, we should be on air sometime next week with that. Talking about highlighting the Town.

Mayor Richard Conner: Are these items that we are putting out there into broadcast, for lack of a better term, are these ending up on the internet and on our web pages with links for the Town? They will?

Mayor Richard Conner: Okay, that's fine.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: That sounds great.

Carlton Duck: You don't really have...on your...to my knowledge, on your internet website, you don't have any place for video.

Mayor Richard Conner: Okay.

Carlton Duck: To my knowledge, no media was put into that when it was developed. It really needs it. And the Facebook page needs things like this. Because if you don't have new things on there every week/day that is fresh, people do not come back. I deal with this all the time.

Mayor Richard Conner: Yes sir. We do.

Carlton Duck: And it's the only way you keep it.

Mayor Richard Conner: I deal with it.

Carlton Duck: Get people into it.

Mayor Richard Conner: We deal with it on a daily basis. I understand that.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: They want to see something new and interesting. All done.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Vice-Mayor Timothy W. Garrett, seconded by Council Member James J. Boyce, Jr., the Council voted to adjourn at 7:55 pm. All members present voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Dianne Tanner
Deputy Town Clerk

Richard C. Conner
Mayor