Appomattox Town Council
Workshop Meeting
May 26, 2026

The Appomattox Town Council held a workshop meeting on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, in Appomattox, Virginia with Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett, presiding.

Members present: Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett, Council Member James J. Boyce, Sr., Council Member Mary Lou G. Spiggle, Council Member Danielle Ulmer, Council Member McKinley Cardwell, and Council Member Jack Hensley.

Members absent: Mayor Richard Conner

Others: Carlton Duck, Alive Media; Dianne Tanner, Deputy Town Clerk; and Michael Campbell, Town Manager, Gary Elder, Esquire, and Catherine Douglass, Esquire.

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda: There was no approval of the agenda called for or voted on.

Public Appearance:

Two local youth volunteers with Share the Air addressed Council to give a PowerPoint presentation containing information about the Share the Air campaign.

Discussion Items:

There was no discussion items brought forth.

Closed Sessions:

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett read to the record the first closed session pursuant to Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, for the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment as the Town Attorney for the Town of Appomattox. There was a motion by Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle to enter closed session pursuant to Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, for the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment as the Town Attorney for the Town of Appomattox, seconded by Council Member McKinley Cardwell, and a ROLL CALL vote called: Boyce-aye, Cardwell-aye, Garrett-aye, Hensley-Aye, Spiggle-Aye, and Ulmer-Aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett read to the record the second closed session pursuant to Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, regarding the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officer, appointees, or employees of any public body, specifically involving a board member. There was a motion by Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle, to enter closed session pursuant to Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended regarding the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or

resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body, specifically involving a board member, seconded by Council Member McKinley Cardwell, and a ROLL CALL vote was called: Boyce-aye, Cardwell-aye, Garrett-aye, Hensley-aye, Spiggle-aye, and Ulmer-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

The Deputy Clerk of Town Council, Dianne Tanner, read the certification of the closed session that to the best of each member's knowledge, the only subjects just discussed or considered in the preceding closed meeting were those: (i) lawfully exempted from the Freedom of Information Act's open meeting requirements and (ii) property identified in the motion that convened the closed meeting, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) for the discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment as the Town Attorney for the Town of Appomattox. A ROLL CALL vote was called: Boyce-aye, Cardwell-aye, Garrett-aye, Hensley-aye, Spiggle-aye, and Ulmer-aye. Council certified the closed session by a vote of 6-0.

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett asked if there was a motion for Town Council to come out of closed session. A motion was made by Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle to bring Council out of closed session, seconded by Council Member McKinley Cardwell, and a ROLL CALL vote was called: Boyce-aye, Cardwell-aye, Garrett-aye, Hensley-aye, Spiggle-aye, and Ulmer-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Council Member McKinley Cardwell to retain the law firm of Elder, Friedman, and Allen, as the Town Attorney for the Town of Appomattox, seconded by Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle, and a ROLL CALL vote was called: Boyce-aye, Cardwell-aye, Garrett-aye, Hensley-aye, Spiggle-aye, and Ulmer-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

The Deputy Clerk of Town Council, Dianne Tanner, read the certification of the closed session that to the best of each member's knowledge, the only subjects just discussed or considered in the preceding closed meeting were those: (i) lawfully exempted from the Freedom of Information Act's open meeting requirements and (ii) property identified in the motion that convened the closed meeting, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) regarding the assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officer, appointees, or employees of any public body, specifically involving a board member. A ROLL CALL vote was called: Boyce-aye, Cardwell-aye, Garrett-aye, Hensley-aye, Spiggle-aye, and Ulmer-aye. Council certified the closed session by a vote of 6-0.

A motion was made by Council Member McKinley Cardwell to accept the resignation of Kenneth Gobble from the Town Economic Development Authority, seconded by Council Member James J. Boyce, Sr., and a ROLL CALL vote was called: Boyce-Aye, Cardwell-aye, Garrett-aye, Hensley-aye, Spiggle-aye, and Ulmer-aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Town Manager's Comment:

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: The first thing I would just like some feedback from you, no action required, just feedback. As you are well aware, of the back and forth. The Town has been back and forth with VDOT regarding the median on Old Courthouse Road. It finally lead to having Kathy Wright sending a letter to VDOT saying, you know, we are not....you need to show us some proof of a maintenance agreement or something. We are not interested in, and we cannot afford the money to afford this median. That prompted a visit to my office from Robert, with the residency. We had a discussion. About half way through the discussion he offered for VDOT to cover half of the expenses to continue to maintain these things. The landscaping in the median. I had told him that we were not interested in spending any money on the maintenance of it. Without going into any great detail, I will tell you what I will do. I will speak to Council and see if they are interested in entertaining the idea of a maintenance agreement and splitting the costs with VDOT. Staff recommendation is that we do not do that. And so, I've just...does anybody have any strong feelings, one way or the other?

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: Well, what is the cost if we...if, like they proposed, the half?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: I mean...it's.... it's...it's...we....I think we spent ten thousand dollars on it last year. And to be honest...

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: Just that little median?

Town Manager Micheal Campbell: Well, it's...

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett: From the bridge...

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: Just that little median? Talking about the bridge area?

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett: From the bypass all the way into Town.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: You know, by Cory's. I mean....

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: And that was bare minimum maintenance. It is obviously not thriving.

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: Okay.

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett: Has he looked into...have we looked into anybody who would be interested, in the Rose Program, to take that over?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: No.

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett: If they pay...a third party to take that over and put their signs up?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: No. No. The Rose Project is just…it's just…it's just got wheels underneath of it with the EDA. And…and…um…we have to make a lot of changes, get a lot of things going there. I also would say that…um…we…that is…that is intended for…you know…we…we…we don't want to get…we don't want to take on the responsibility where we should have never had the responsibility of maintaining this stretch.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Monetarily that is too much for the EDA.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: I guess at the bare bottom maintenance….when I say maintenance…it's…you know…getting the leaves out of it and pulling the weeds was ten grand. To make it thrive and look good, double that. And, um…my recommendation is…is…it would…if we did find a business that was willing to put up twenty…ten to twenty thousand dollars for the Rose Project for that median…I mean I don't know I kind of hope we could redirect that amount of money to somewhere else.

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett: I was thinking half. Talking about VDOT paying half, but the conversations, the only conversation we had was to maintain the lights and pay the electric bill for the lights.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: I was presented with the minutes and…um…the person…he doesn't…he was out of his depth. So, it was an olive branch for me to say "I'll tell you what, I will ask Council."

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: Could it be a community service project? That somebody in the community can take on?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: I mean, obviously we are going to do whatever it is that Council decides. But, if we don't take this opportunity to get out of this, the Town will be forever hung with it. Because what we will have done is admitted or acknowledged…that we have accepted some responsibility for it.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: When you say that you were presented with the minutes, what does it say in the minutes?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: It…they just talk about the landscaping and the light bulbs and all this stuff, then it says…was it, Gary? Was Gary here for that?

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Yeah.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Gary just says yeah we just have to pay for maintenance. It doesn't specify for what. And we can go out there right now…I don't know why we would…just to give you an example I used with Mr. Butler, I could send my Public Works crews out there right now and yank those lamp posts out of the ground. Nobody has anything to say about it because they are ours. Can I pull that landscaping up? We have been told absolutely not. Since the day it went in. But because it's not ours, there is no maintenance agreement. The minutes do

not reflect that the Council voted yes to maintain the landscaping in that median. Kathy, our attorney, sent the letter which prompted this. We are on pretty strong ground. They will not be happy with the answer, and I have talked with some folks to, you know, go "well is the juice worth the squeeze?" Do we really want to…the answer is yes this is wrong. This is…in my opinion it is not a decision to be made worried about upsetting VDOT. Especially with what we do as a Town. If anything is more detrimental to me and my career moving forward to get on VDOT's crap list, then it is to the Town.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Well, the problem with not working together it's going to create potential, and we can easily say it won't, but it will. You know how human nature is. Any grants or programs that we put in for…

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: The residency has nothing to say about any of that.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Well, that would be good, but I know how phone calls can be made.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Well, yeah, and I worked for the agency for three years. Yeah, it's, you know…

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: I am not saying that is a reason to do…to spend this money. What I'm saying is it will be ramifications. Everything has ramifications. It will.

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: So, do you think that pulling out of it and leaving it in their hands, that it…will it become an eyesore?

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: It's already an eyesore.

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: Right, but do you think something will improve or get worse?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: I think that when people call the Town to complain about it we tell them to call the residency.

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: Okay.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Because it belongs to VDOT.

Council Member McKinley Cardwell: I think the main thing, and this is just in my opinion, is that we have so many other things that we have to fiscally prioritize, and I think the beautification of a median is not in the best interest of our population right now. We really have to figure out our agency's reliance, I mean pretty much everything else. I would rather see from a concerted we are hearing standpoint is that VDOT needs to acknowledge that, you know, roads is your job and ours is to make sure that our people have viable clean drinking water as well as making sure that the sewer system is operating and we focus on the things we need to focus on.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: It in no way, shape, or form serves the residents of the Town of Appomattox and the argument on their ends is that well the project spent a hundred thousand, two hundred thousand dollars on landscaping. Why? Why?

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: That was the whole purpose…the whole purpose of it was to create a gateway into Town. To beautify it up and make it a gateway to the Town.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Was it a streetscape project or a smartscale project?

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: It was a smartscale. Smartscale.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: I don't remember which one it was.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: I remember it. Smartscale.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Yeah...

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Because it was a grant starting out and Phillip Gabitour wrote for the grant, as well as other communities.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: We had nothing to do with it. They came in here and said this is what we are going to do.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: And they paid a hundred percent of it.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: And this is what it's going to look like.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Precisely.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: And we did not have a say in it. We could have said no we don't want to do it. They still would have done it. It was supposed to be a turnaround thing and take the light out a Dairy Queen and put in a turnabout and all of that, but they deducted that. It was like a thirteen-million-dollar project and it ended up about a seven or eight.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: So, we're spending time and effort, blood and sweat, in maintaining something the Town never asked for, doesn't need, and doesn't want.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: I don't have a problem saying no. I am just saying how is this going to affect other things that we are having to deal with? The local VDOT.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: It would be more cost effective, as Mr. Carter said, to do away with the flowers and the plants and make it all grass. But even at that…

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Somebody's got to mow it.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Somebody's got to cut the grass.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Right, that was my…what I essentially told them was either you all can maintain it or I am going to put in under grass. And he said you can't do that. And I said perfect. Why?

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: It's their right-of-way.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Yeah. Exactly right.

Council Member Jack Hensley: VDOT is or is not maintaining it at this point?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: The Town has been maintaining it since installation.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: And he just said…

Council Member Jack Hensley: So, it is costing us ten thousand dollars?

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Ten thousand.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Last year. Ten. For the year it was ten thousand dollars. Just to make it. I mean, you see how it looks now.

Council Member Jack Hensley: I think it looks like crap.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Yeah. It wasn't ten thousand for them to go in put fertilizer, replant...it was ten thousand for them to go in and clean it up.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Yep.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: So, again, I don't need action, I just need direction.

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: Was it our Town employees cleaning it up and doing the maintenance, or were we contracting it out?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: We had to contract it. We would literally have Public Works crews working on it for about a week. We can't…we can't…

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: We don't have that much staff to…

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: We can't put them on weeding a garden bed for a week.

Council Member James Boyce, Sr.: Roundup and Astroturf.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Did they say what they were going to do with that space if we didn't do anything?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: No…well…it's so precious I would assume they were going to rehab it and take wonderful care of it. I am sorry for being like that.

Council Member Jack Hensley: Say that again. Say that again.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: No.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: I said, apparently it is so precious that they are going to rehab it and take wonderful care of it.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: No.

Council Member Jack Hensley: Have they told you that?

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: He was being sarcastic.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: No. I have no idea what they would do. I think in all likelihood…ironically, I bet you they would just be putting it back to grass if they are responsible for it.

Council Member Jack Hensley: I mean, as ugly as it is right now…

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Grass would look a lot better. Grass is always better than dead plants. Or mud.

Council Member Jack Hensley: I don't know whose plant idea that was, but it was dumb.

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: They didn't choose good plants. They didn't choose the right kind of plants for that.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: Well, when they were putting the plants in, I had personally received several phone calls saying no. Assuming that the Town was doing it. No, you're not...that's wrong…you need to do this, that, and the other. We had no control over it whatsoever.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: So, I guess…would anybody be inclined to entertain the idea of splitting the costs and signing a maintenance agreement with VDOT? Accepting responsibility for this thing?

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: No.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: I am not.

Council Member McKinley Cardwell: I am a no.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: Okay, that's all I need. The second part is, I just need to give you a heads-up with the emergency project at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. So, you remember that Mr. Carter came here and told you that we should budget one hundred and seventy-seven thousand dollars for the project. We completed the project with Henderson for one fifty that they stated that they quoted us. It was one forty-nine seven hundred and forty-eight dollars or something like that. We don't have the final final price on the generator. I feel confident saying eighteen thousand dollars or less, probably less. And I authorized the purchase of a wire stripper, and they stripped all of the old copper with a wire stripper. I think it cost three hundred and fifty bucks for the wire stripper. And we got thirteen and a half thousand dollars back in copper. So, instead of one seventy-seven, we are basically one fifty essentially is what we paid for the project and it's complete. And that's all I have. Oh, and one last thing before we adjourn, is the…

Deputy Town Clerk, Dianne Tanner: The Town Picnic. I just want to bring that back up. We had decided to that August 1st would probably be an opportune time to have that. I just have the question, school starts on the sixth, I don't know how busy families would be to attend the picnic as they are getting ready to go back to school, and if that changes any thought on when to have the Town picnic?

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: Or it can be the last hoorah. I have to go back July 30th.

Deputy Town Clerk, Dianne Tanner: I went back into the book for scheduling Abbitt Park, and I have it reserved. I just wanted to revisit with Council to see if the thought is that is the opportune time to hold the Town picnic.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: I think there's always going to be someone or some certain people who have conflicts with any date we set. Cause that was the way it was when we had it in the Fall. Raiders. It's a football night. So, what do you think?

Council Member McKinley Cardwell: I mean I wholeheartedly agree with you that those things were…we do the best with what we are dealt with and most of it is just dealing with going back to school and also vacations but nothing critical to our local school schedules or schedules when it comes to their after school stuff and everything, so I would feel comfortable to leave it as it is August 1st.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: That's a Saturday.

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: What day of the week is that?

Deputy Town Clerk, Dianne Tanner: That I believe is a Saturday.

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: I am looking at it. It is a Saturday.

Deputy Town Clerk, Dianne Tanner: I went ahead and reserved the 1st date and then figured out that school started, so the 1st would probably be the best option?

Council Member McKinley Cardwell: Yep.

Deputy Town Clerk, Dianne Tanner: So, I did pencil that in the scheduling book for Abbitt Park and sure enough the Library contacted us the next day looking for that day. I just wanted to make sure that's what we wanted to drive forward with. If that's the case, then I will go ahead and drive on.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Anything else, Michael?

Town Manager, Michael Campbell: No.

Council Comments:

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Mr. Cardwell?

Council Member McKinley Cardwell: I am good. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Mr. Boyce?

Council Member James J. Boyce, Sr.: No sir. I am good.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Ms. Spiggle?

Council Member Mary Lou Spiggle: None.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Mr. Hensley?

Council Member Jack Hensley: None.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: Ms. Ulmer?

Council Member Danielle Ulmer: No sir.

Vice Mayor Timothy Garrett: I don't have any either. So, are there any standing committee reports?

Standing Committee Reports:

There were no standing committee reports.

Staff Reports:

The Town Treasurer provided her monthly Town Financial Status Report for review and any comment by Town Council. There were no comments.

Town Manager, Michael Campbell, indicated that he would be providing Town Council with a list of accomplishments over the last year. Once he is done putting that together with the assistance of staff, he will get the Deputy Town Clerk to distribute that to Town Council digitally and to place a paper copy in Town Council Member's mailboxes. He indicated that would probably arrive by the end of next week.

Vice-Mayor Timothy Garrett asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Council Member McKinley Cardwell, seconded by Council Member Jack Hensley, the Council voted to adjourn at 8:20 p.m., with a voice vote being called and all members present voting aye. Motion carried 6-0.

Dianne Tanner
Deputy Town Clerk

Richard C. Conner
Mayor

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