

1 | **Appomattox Town Council**
Council Retreat
May 18, 2024

The Appomattox Town Council held a Council Retreat on Saturday May 18, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. at the American Civil War Museum, 159 Horseshoe Rd, Appomattox, Virginia.

Town Council members present were James J. Boyce, Sr., Mary Lou Spiggle, Claudia G. Puckette, Jane T. Allen, Nathan Simpson; Timothy W. Garrett (arriving late at 11:55 a.m.)

Others present were Christy Torrence; Interim Clerk of Council, Richard Conner; Mayor, Kimball Payne and Dr. Michael Gillette; facilitators.

Mayor Conner called the retreat business meeting to order.

On a motion by Ms. Spiggle, seconded by Mr. Simpson, Council voted to accept the retirement of Town Manager, Richard Terry McGhee on the terms discussed in the closed session meeting on May 13, 2024.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Allen – yes, Boyce – yes, Spiggle – yes, Puckette – yes, Simpson-yes. Motion carried 5-0.

On a motion by Ms. Spiggle, seconded by Mr. Simpson, Council voted to appoint Robert Fowler as interim Town Manager as outlined in the agreement submitted to Mr. Fowler on May 17, 2024.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Allen – yes, Boyce – yes, Spiggle – yes, Puckette – yes, Simpson-yes. Motion carried 5-0.

The business meeting concluded, and the retreat commences at 9:30 a.m.

Mr. Payne and Dr. Gillette introduced themselves, referred to the day's agenda, suggested goals for the retreat and offered ground rules. The agenda, goals, and ground rules were accepted by Council with unanimous consent.

Council members were asked the following three questions:

- Why did you decide to serve on Council?
- What legacy would you like to leave after your term of service is over?
- What do you hope the Council accomplishes by the end of the retreat?

(Pictures of the flip charts which contain the answers to these questions are included at the end of these minutes.)

Mr. Payne reviewed with Council the common themes that he heard from members during the pre-retreat interviews. He defined a common theme as an issue raised by two or more members. The review of the common themes led into a discussion of the principles of the Council/Manager form of government. Mr. Payne and Dr. Gillette shared their different perspectives, as a former Manager and a former Mayor.

As a whole, Council expressed a desire to act consistently with the principles of the Council/Manager form of government as stipulated in the Town Charter and Town Code

The facilitators reviewed the Vision Statement, Mission Statement, and Core Values that had been adopted in 2010. Council members were satisfied with the statements and agreed that they could be revisited in the future after other priorities, such as rules of procedure, were adopted.

The facilitators asked Council to consider how its vision was achieved. The following resources were identified (see flip chart #5):

- Staff
- Finances
- Planning
- Processes-policies, procedures, practices
- Relationships/partnerships
- Communications

Opportunities for improvement were identified in the areas of staff utilization, processes, and communications.

Council recessed for lunch at noon and reconvened at 12:30 p.m.

The facilitators engaged Council in a discussion about developing rules of procedure for its operations, from agenda preparation to how meetings are conducted. Council agreed that adopting rules of procedure was a priority and that it would task the Town Attorney with drafting a document for its consideration.

The recruitment process was discussed for hiring the next Town Manager. Mr. Payne identified the key steps in the recruitment process (see flip chart #7). Council discussed whether the recruitment process could be handled in house with the new Human Resources Director. An alternative would be to utilize a third-party consultant firm. Council agreed to solicit proposals from third parties for the service.

The facilitator asked Council to identify action steps, with deadlines, and assignment of responsibility. The following action steps were agreed upon:

- Adopt Rules of Procedure by July 1, 2024 (drafting assigned to Town Attorney).
- Find the old guidelines under which previous Councils operated, by May 30th (assigned to Council Member Nathan Simpson, who said that he had seen references to them in other documents).
- Develop a council Member Handbook to include the building blocks identified earlier. Provide an index of topics by July 1, 2024, with completion by the end of the calendar year (assigned to the town Manager and Clerk).
- Hire a new Town Manager; seek proposals from recruitment firms; start the process immediately.

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Adjournment:

Mayor Conner declared the retreat adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Christy Torrence
Interim Clerk of Council

Richard C. Conner, Mayor