



Office of the Town Manager
Frank Cassidy

Warrenton Town Council

Carter Nevill, Mayor
Roy Francis, Ward 1
William Semple, Ward 2
Larry Kovalik, Ward 3
Michele O'Halloran, Ward 4
Eric Gagnon, Ward 5
Paul Mooney, At Large
David McGuire, At Large

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date:	July 8, 2025
Agenda Title:	Outreach and Transparency Initiatives Discussion
Requested Action:	Discussion
Department / Agency Lead:	Frank Cassidy, Town Manager
Staff Lead:	Frank Cassidy, Town Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since being promoted to your Town Manager, we have been changing the culture of our operations. This cultural shift is directed to providing the best government services. This means government services that are predictable, consistent, and open to all we serve. One of the foundational implementations for this has been the development and implementation through our Human Capital Department called "Excellence in Action." This is not just a catch phrase, this captures our mission of developing and building the best services for our community every day and in everything we do. It started with our leadership training via a training program designed and tailored to our Town by our Human Capital and Parks and Recreation Directors. A series of training modules were presented and the foundation for change and excellence was laid. This is being implemented for all staff through our implementation of continuous improvement initiatives. This requires a commitment to empowerment, leadership at every level, accountability, and responsibility. It is an establishment or support for our staff and providing opportunities for them to be the subject matter experts we have hired them to be. To implement policies, procedures, and protocols based on professional standards and requirements and to follow them. Gain training and certifications to advance their knowledge and professionalism. To accomplish this, we established openness and transparency in all we do.

Our "Excellence in Action" initiative has a multi-pronged approach to building strong teams, developing efficiencies in operations, and ensuring every staff member at every level is respected and has input in finding solutions. Every department and function thereof are required to follow this approach. Communication is one leg of this effort, and the most outward facing.

Therefore, I appreciate this opportunity to elaborate on our efforts and successes specifically regarding public information, transparency, and outreach. This involves the active participation of every department and is a major part of our initiative of "Excellence in Action."

These are designed to develop a government that is transparent, predictable and consistent. Today we will be discussing our efforts. A better-informed community, builds a more effective government.

BACKGROUND

We recognize the need to build trust in our government. We also understand we had to change our direction, our culture. Trust is manifested in openness, healthy discussions, and education. This must be instilled in the operational culture of the organization. In government, this approach is referred to as transparency. A definition of transparency to provide context for today's discussion is from Simon Sinek:

Transparency doesn't mean sharing every detail. Transparency means providing the context for the decisions we make.

When addressing transparency in government, we can also refer to the meaning of transparency which includes openness, honesty, ethics, and an adherence to policies and procedures. It involves making information accessible and understandable, fostering trust and accountability, and encouraging engagement at every level. Communications for transparency must include the following:

- **Openness and Honesty:** Sharing of information when requested. Providing explanations for restrictions, definitions of terms and acronyms, and providing as many details as possible.
- **Communication:** Our driving initiative to stay connected, be informed, be engaged drives our outreach and reinforces the commitment of education and public involvement.
- **Accountability:** A big part of building trust through transparency is admitting when we are wrong while also admitting if systems and processes need changing, we have the courage to do so. We learn from our mistakes, not hide behind them.
- **Accessibility:** We encourage everyone to ask questions and request information at every level. Go beyond FOIA requests, talk to staff and our Team.

The outline above serves as the basis of our communications objectives as we will discuss today. Our transparency initiatives also include being proactive with our efforts, accessible, being honest, and accountable. To accomplish this effectively, we have established policies, templates, consistent reporting formats, and regular distributions of information from daily operations to agenda items, to emergency alerts, special events, and so on. These efforts also require citizen engagement and participation. As you will see, this is also part of our commitment to transparency.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Discussion- Q&A

Service Level/Collaborative Impact

N/A

Policy Direction/Warrenton Plan 2040

Meets and Includes all Policy Direction to include Fostering an open operational based on predictable, consistent governing.

Fiscal Impact

N/A

Legal Impact

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

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1. Memo to Transparency Committee to Mr. Semple on April 3, 2025
 2. Annual Report Fiscal Year 24
 3. Data Consistency Project Reference Materials and Index
 4. Related emails