



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:	September 9 th , 2025
Agenda Title:	Emergency Management Appointment Confirmations
Requested Action:	Approve the Resolutions
Department / Agency Lead:	Office of Emergency Management
Staff Lead:	Frank Cassidy, Town Manager / Johnny Switzer, EM Coordinator

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of Warrenton, Virginia, recognizes the importance of proactive emergency management and in 2020 established an Office of Emergency Management to address potential hazards and protect its citizens.

This report outlines the legal basis and procedural steps taken to confirm the appointments of the Director and Coordinator of Emergency Management for the Town of Warrenton. Following its designation as an independent emergency management jurisdiction by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), the Town is required by the Code of Virginia to appoint a Director of Emergency Management, a role held ex officio by the Town Manager, and a Coordinator of Emergency Management. This report summarizes the resolutions to formally confirm these appointments, ensuring the Town's compliance with state law and solidifying its leadership structure for emergency preparedness and response.

BACKGROUND

The Town of Warrenton established the Office of Emergency Management by amending the Town Code with the addition of Chapter 20 - Emergency Management on July 11, 2022. This action was taken in accordance with the Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Law of 2000, § 44-146.13 et seq., Code of Virginia.

On April 22, 2025, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management designated the Town of Warrenton as an independent political subdivision for the purposes of emergency management. This designation obligates the Town to establish and maintain a comprehensive local emergency management program and a clear leadership structure as defined by state law.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the Resolutions as written.

Service Level/Collaborative Impact

Legal and Policy Requirements for Appointments

The legal requirements for the appointment of emergency management personnel are outlined in the Code of Virginia, Title 44, Chapter 3.2.

- **Director of Emergency Management:** The Code of Virginia, § 44-146.19, establishes that the director of emergency management for a political subdivision shall be the chief executive officer. The Town of Warrenton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 20, Section 20-3, aligns with this provision by establishing that the Town Manager shall serve as the Director of Emergency Management.
- **Coordinator of Emergency Management:** The Code of Virginia, § 44-146.19.4, also stipulates that for towns with a population in excess of 5,000 having an emergency management organization separate from that of the county, the mayor or town manager shall appoint a coordinator of emergency services with the consent of the council.

Confirmation of Appointments

In accordance with these legal requirements, the following appointments are being confirmed:

1. **Francis Cassidy, Director of Emergency Management:** Mr. Cassidy serves as the Town Manager, and by virtue of this position, is the Director of Emergency Management. The Town Council resolution formally confirms this appointment as of December 12, 2023, the date of Mr. Cassidy's appointment as Town Manager. This confirmation fulfills the requirement for the Town Council to consent to the appointment of the Director and ensures the position is formally recognized within the Town's organizational structure for emergency management.
2. **Johnny Switzer, Coordinator of Emergency Management:** Mr. Switzer was assigned the role of Coordinator of Emergency Management by Director Cassidy on August 20, 2024. This appointment is made with the consent of the Town Council and meets the requirement of the Code of Virginia for a town with an independent emergency management organization.

Policy Direction/Warrenton Plan 2040

With the new designation, the Town of Warrenton must establish and maintain a comprehensive local emergency management program. Key policy directions include:

- **Appointments:** The council must confirm the appointments of Mr. Frank Cassidy as Director and Mr. Johnny Switzer as Coordinator of Emergency Management.
- **Alert System:** The establishment of an "ALERT WARRENTON" notification and emergency warning system is a priority.
- **Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP):** The town will need to review and adopt the 2025 COOP update.

Legal & Fiscal Impact

The legal requirements for the appointment of emergency management personnel are outlined in the Code of Virginia, Title 44, Chapter 3.2.

The confirmation of these appointments carries no direct fiscal impact, as the roles are designated to existing staff. However, the legal impact is significant. By formally confirming these appointments, the Town of Warrenton ensures its compliance with the Code of Virginia and the terms of its independent designation by VDEM. This action solidifies the leadership structure, which is crucial for the effective and legal operation of the Town's emergency management program.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution – Confirmation of Appointment of Director of Emergency Management
2. Resolution – Confirmation of Emergency Management Coordinator