

**APPROVED MINUTES  
TOWN OF URBANNA TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 12, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Urbanna, Virginia, was held on the 12th day of December, 2024 beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall located at 390 Virginia Street, Suite B in Urbanna, VA.

**AGENDA ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

Mayor Goldsmith called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**AGENDA ITEM 2. ROLL CALL**

Marjorie Austin	Present
Larry Chowning	Present
Alana Courtney	Absent (Arrived prior to Agenda Item 6.)
Mayor Bill Goldsmith	Present
Merri Hanson	Present
Beth Justice	Present
Sandy Sturgill	Absent

**Others Present:**

Ted Costin, Town Administrator  
Andrea Erard, Town Attorney  
Michele Hutton, Town Treasurer  
Christine Branch, Town Clerk  
Members of the public

**AGENDA ITEM 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Major led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**AGENDA ITEM 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilmember Austin made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilmember Justice seconded. The Major called for any discussion. The members were polled:

Marjorie Austin	Yes
Larry Chowning	Yes
Alana Courtney	Absent
Mayor Bill Goldsmith	Yes
Merri Hanson	Yes
Beth Justice	Yes
Sandy Sturgill	Absent

**The motion passed 5-0 w/2 absent.**

**AGENDA ITEM 5. REMEMBRANCE OF FORMER MAYOR HOLLBERG**

Major Goldsmith noted that Steven S. Hollberg, former Mayor of the Town of Urbanna, passed away on November 22, 2024. Councilmember Austin said she would let Council know when arrangements have been made. The suggestion was made that staff send a Norfolk Pine to Mrs. Hollberg as a remembrance from Council. This will be done when arrangements are announced.

**AGENDA ITEM 6. PUBLIC HEARING**

**6.a. Resolution 2024-005 – Charter Change**

Mayor Goldsmith noted the arrival of Councilmember Courtney.

Mr. Costin provided background on the need to amend the Town Charter to clarify that the Mayor’s presence at Council meetings counts toward the determination of a quorum.

Mayor Goldsmith opened the public hearing. There being no speakers, Mayor Goldsmith closed the public hearing.

Councilmember Austin made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-005 which requests a change to the town’s charter by the General Assembly to establish the mayor as a member of council and as such counts towards the determination of quorum. Councilmember Justice seconded. The Major called for any discussion.

Councilmember Chowning said there have been a few times in the past where this was an issue and approving this amendment would prevent it from happening in the future.

The members were polled:

Marjorie Austin	Yes
Larry Chowning	Yes
Alana Courtney	Yes
Mayor Bill Goldsmith	Yes
Merri Hanson	Yes
Beth Justice	Yes
Sandy Sturgill	Absent

**The motion passed 6-0 w/1 absent.**

Counselor Erard said she would track the bill through the General Assembly and keep Council updated on its progress.

**RESOLUTION 2024-005**

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL TO REQUEST THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO AMEND THE TOWN CHARTER TO CLARIFY THAT THE MAYOR’S PRESENCE AT TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS COUNTS TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM**

**WHEREAS** the Charter for the Town of Urbanna is not clear as to whether or not the presence of the Mayor at a meeting counts toward the establishment of a quorum; and

**WHEREAS** the Urbanna Town Council requires clarification that the Mayor does count toward the establishment of a quorum so as to ensure the efficient and proper operation of the Town;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Urbanna Town Council at its regular monthly meeting on December 12, 2024, following a duly advertised public hearing, that the Urbanna Town Council respectfully requests that the General Assembly amend the Charter of the Town of Urbanna to clarify that the Mayor’s presence at a meeting counts toward the establishment of a quorum.

**DONE** this 12<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2024.

**AGENDA ITEM 7. MINUTES**

There were no minutes available for review.

## **AGENDA ITEM 8. REPORTS**

### **8.a. Town Administrator**

Mr. Costin presented his report. He noted the Environmental Site Assessment for the 390 Virginia Street property was received that afternoon and showed that nothing of concern was found. He will review the report in more depth.

Mr. Costin discussed the availability of a grant to secure an energy audit and provided a draft of a letter in support of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant for Marketing, Education, and Outreach committing to work with Middlesex County on this effort (Attachment A). He said the Town has a good shot at the grant since the deadline has already been extended twice.

Councilmember Austin made a motion to endorse the letter to be executed by the Mayor confirming the Town's support of the grant application and its willingness to engage in the work of the grant.

Councilmember Justice seconded. The Major called for any discussion.

Councilmember Hanson asked if we needed to confer with the current building owner. Mr. Costin said no because the proposal is to move forward with other Town properties first. The grant allows up to 10 Town facilities, including street lights.

The members were polled:

Marjorie Austin	Yes
Larry Chowning	Yes
Alana Courtney	No
Mayor Bill Goldsmith	Yes
Merri Hanson	Yes
Beth Justice	Yes
Sandy Sturgill	Absent

**The motion passed 5-1 w/1 absent.**

### **8.b. Treasurer**

Ms. Hutton presented the October 2024 Treasurer's report, which was emailed to Council and was included in the meeting agenda packet posted to the Town website. She said an additional \$9,000 in real estate tax and \$400 in personal property tax had been received since the report was run.

Ms. Hutton said there is a property which has 4 years of delinquent taxes owed which may have to go to a tax sale. Councilmember Chowning said the Town should partner with the County in the sale. Ms. Hutton said the County uses a different service than the Town and that she has been in discussion with them.

Councilmember Chowning asked the percentage collected. Ms. Hutton said approximately 93% of all taxes owed have been collected.

Councilmember Austin asked if all the Oyster Festival meal taxes have been paid. Ms. Hutton said the deadline has not passed yet. She said she tracks the vendors' figures over the past several years to help ensure sales are accurately reported.

Ms. Hutton took the opportunity to give an update on the Christmas Parade weekend activities and thanked everyone for their support. She said she would be submitting an article to the Sentinel to thank everyone involved.

**8.c. Finance Committee**

Mayor Goldsmith said the committee did meet but Councilmember Sturgill was unable to attend tonight’s meeting to provide a report. He said the most important thing discussed was the MPPDC Surety Agreement, which is later on tonight’s agenda.

**AGENDA ITEM 9. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**AGENDA ITEM 10. COUNCIL COMMENT**

There were no council comments made at this time.

**AGENDA ITEM 11. OLD BUSINESS**

Councilmember Chowning said the replacement sign from the accident was put up today. The Town has now depleted its supply of poles. Mr. Costin said this could be discussed next month during budget discussions.

Councilmember Courtney said there has been no resolution to the need for a No Parking sign at the Virginia Street terminus property. She said a school bus and other trucks park there regularly and are causing damage to the land. Mr. Costin said a drawing had been provided to Docks on the Bay for a rehab project there and we are awaiting their response. Councilmember Hanson asked if a temporary sign could be placed there. Mr. Costin said yes but enforcing it would be a challenge. Mayor Goldsmith suggested using one of the No Parking signs from the Oyster Festival.

**AGENDA ITEM 12. NEW BUSINESS**

**12.a. MPPDC Regional All Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Mr. Costin said the Town’s hazard mitigation plan is maintained by the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC) and is in need of an update. A draft Service Agreement was included in the agenda packet. He said the fiscal impact to the Town is less than \$400. He recommends the Town Administrator be the lead contact with the Mayor as backup.

Councilmember Austin made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to execute the service agreement with the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission to undertake the All Hazards Mitigation Plan Update and to participate as fully as possible. Councilmember Justice seconded. The Major called for any discussion.

Mayor Goldsmith said this is just one of things the MPPDC does for the Town and it would be arduous if we had to do it ourselves.

The members were polled:

Marjorie Austin	Yes
Larry Chowning	Yes
Alana Courtney	Yes
Mayor Bill Goldsmith	Yes
Merri Hanson	Yes
Beth Justice	Yes
Sandy Sturgill	Absent

**The motion passed 6-0 w/1 absent.**

**12.b. MPPDC Surety Agreement**

Mr. Costin explained that many of the programs managed by the MPPDC for the Town and region operate on a reimbursement basis and they have been granted a line of credit by the Virginia Resources Authority (VRA). VRA is now seeking the support of Middle Peninsula local governments to act as a third layer of collateral by serving as “co-signers” and providing a moral obligation pledge. Staff recommends that

Council support the agreement providing moral obligation and support for the MPPDC’s VRA financing with the caveat that all MPPDC member jurisdictions agree.

Councilmember Chowning said the caveat is important.

Councilmember Hanson asked the possible fiscal impact to the Town. Mr. Costin said \$24,000 for each town; counties commit to a higher amount. Major Goldsmith summarized how MPPDC projects work and said this is not a great risk to the Town.

Councilmember Austin made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to execute the Surety Agreement as presented, providing moral obligation and support for the MPPDC’s VRA financing and to convey to the MPPDC that support is in anticipation of all member jurisdictions participating. Councilmember Hanson seconded. The Major called for any discussion. The members were polled:

Marjorie Austin	Yes
Larry Chowning	Yes
Alana Courtney	No
Mayor Bill Goldsmith	Yes
Merri Hanson	Yes
Beth Justice	Yes
Sandy Sturgill	Absent

**The motion passed 5-1 w/1 absent.**

**12.c. 2025 Organizational Meeting Date**

Mr. recommended the normal second Thursday meeting date be used for the initial 2025 organizational meeting – January 9, 2025. Councilmember Hanson said she would not be available on that date.

Councilmember Austin made a motion that Council hold its 2025 organizational meeting on Thursday, January 9, 2025 at 6 pm in the council chambers of the town’s office at 390 Virginia Street, Suite B in Urbanna. Councilmember Justice seconded. The Major called for any discussion. The members were polled:

Marjorie Austin	Yes
Larry Chowning	Yes
Alana Courtney	Yes
Mayor Bill Goldsmith	Yes
Merri Hanson	No
Beth Justice	Yes
Sandy Sturgill	Absent

**The motion passed 5-1 w/1 absent.**

Mr. Costin asked Councilmembers to be thinking of the top five things they’d each like to accomplish in 2025 and bring that list to the January 23, 2025 work session for a strategic planning session.

**AGENDA ITEM 13. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Tammie Putney said there used to be a barrier on the Virginia Street terminus property and someone moved it to the side. He said moving it back would prevent buses and other vehicles from parking on the property. Mayor Goldsmith said that would be a groundskeeping issue and could be taken care of.

**AGENDA ITEM 14. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Goldsmith wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Councilmember Hanson mentioned the Urbanna Main Street Home Tour and Polar Express events both happening this weekend.

**AGENDA ITEM 15. ADJOURN**

Councilmember Austin made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Justice seconded. The members were polled:

Marjorie Austin	Yes
Larry Chowning	Yes
Alana Courtney	Yes
Mayor Bill Goldsmith	Yes
Merri Hanson	Yes
Beth Justice	Yes
Sandy Sturgill	Absent

**The motion passed 6-0 w/1 absent.  
The meeting was adjourned at 6:54pm.**

ATTEST:

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William Goldsmith, Mayor

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Christine H. Branch, Town Clerk

**Approved by Council: January 9, 2025**

# ATTACHMENT A



## TOWN OF URBANNA

390 VIRGINIA ST. SUITE B, PO BOX 179, URBANNA, VA 23175  
PHONE: 804-758-2613, FAX: 804-758-0389

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December 13, 2024

Address:

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Dear ???????:

This is to advise you that at its regular monthly meeting held on December 12, 2024, the Urbanna Town Council voted to support the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant for Marketing, Education, and Outreach submitted by the County of Middlesex.

The Town of Urbanna, located in Middlesex County, is committed to its partnership role set out in the grant to find and implement sustained impacts for energy efficiency and conservation not only for the town, but also for residents throughout Middlesex County.

Should you have any questions or concerns about this endorsement, please direct them to the Town Administrator, P. S. T. (Ted) Costin at the above or [t.cosin@urbannava.gov](mailto:t.cosin@urbannava.gov).

Thank you.

Respectfully,

William Goldsmith, DVM  
Mayor, Town of Urbanna

Cc: Matt Walker, Middlesex County Administrator