

**APPROVED MINUTES
TOWN OF URBANNA TOWN COUNCIL
WORK SESSION OF JANUARY 22, 2026**

A work session of the Town Council of the Town of Urbanna, Virginia, was held on the 22nd day of January, 2026 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

Mayor Goldsmith called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

AGENDA ITEM 2. APPROVAL OF ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION BY A COUNCIL MEMBER

Not necessary.

AGENDA ITEM 3. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Marjorie Austin Absent
Larry Chowning Present
Alana Courtney..... Present
Mayor Bill Goldsmith Present
Merri Hanson Present
Beth Justice Absent
Robbie Wilson Present

Others Present:

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

AGENDA ITEM 4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Mayor led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ITEM 5. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF MEETING AGENDA

**Councilmember Hanson made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.
Councilmember Wilson seconded. The Mayor called for any discussion. All were in favor with none opposed. The motion passed 5-0 w/2 absent.**

AGENDA ITEM 6. PUBLIC COMMENT 1 & COUNCIL RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT 1

There were no speakers.

AGENDA ITEM 7. WORK SESSION MATTERS

7a. Council Priorities for 2026

Mr. Costin presented the issues identified by Council as priorities for the 2026 calendar year.

Councilmember Hanson said priorities should be set to include future goals rather than just putting out current fires.

Councilmember Wilson said we need to create a long-term plan for updating and maintaining the water system including phases and timelines and identifying what problems may be coming down the road. Mayor Goldsmith said the Town will also be required to dig another well in about seven years.

Councilmember Courtney said she has heard rumblings of dissatisfaction regarding the Payne's Landing property. Mr. Costin said planting is to begin in the spring.

Regarding the Marina, Mayor Goldsmith said the Town is contractually obligated to maintain access to transient boaters through December 31, 2035 because of grant funds received.

Regarding the height of buildings on the waterfront, Mr. Costin said this would be part of the Zoning Ordinance update and should be considered and addressed along with the additional dwelling unit concerns. He said addressing multiple issues at the same time would save the Town money in areas such as public hearing advertising and code updating. Mr. Costin will also check to see if the General Assembly will be addressing ADU issues again this session.

After much discussion, the priorities for 2026 were set as follows:

1. Bridge to Marina
2. Water System
 - a. Pump House Repairs
 - b. Water system distribution line renovations in consideration of public safety/fire suppression.
3. Town Hall
 - a. Complete move to 300 Virginia Street
 - b. Find, fund, develop council chambers space
4. Expansion of Town boundary lines (to increase tax base and encompass current water system users)
5. Address shortfall of pool revenues
6. Funding for Marina upgrades
7. Personnel Policy

Mr. Costin circulated a letter of support for obtaining grant funding for the repair/replacement of the Marina Bridge amongst Council for their signatures. He said letters of support are not required but are helpful and encouraged according to Representative Wittman's office.

AGENDA ITEM 8. ACTION ITEMS

8a. Approval of January 8, 2026 Regular Meeting Draft Minutes

Councilmember Chowning made a motion to approve the January 8, 2026 minutes as presented. Councilmember Courtney seconded. The Mayor called for any discussion. All were in favor with none opposed. The motion passed 5-0 w/2 absent.

8b. Personnel Policy Review

Ms. Erard presented a draft of Chapter 2 of the updated Personnel Policy. She said she was using a template provided by the Virginia Risk Sharing Association (VRSA), who insure the Town and have specific criteria that must be met for personnel manuals.

Ms. Erard said her goals for updating the policy are:

1. Review it in bite-sized pieces,
2. Structure the review such that federal policies can be easily updated without needing to fully overhaul the entire manual,
3. Get input from current staff and Council, and
4. Produce a manual specifically tailored to the Town.

She said she will prioritize the chapters where the laws have changed the most.

Ms. Erard went over probation (line 208) and Council discussed their issues of concern.

Ms. Erard went over the definition and differences between Exempt and Nonexempt employees and the differences between comp time and overtime (line 491).

Ms. Erard explained the concept of a Sick Leave Bank (line 1535).

Council will review the draft of Chapter 2 and come up with their questions and concerns for Ms. Erard to address at a future meeting.

8c. Agreement – Middlesex Volunteer Fire Department (VFD)

Mr. Costin presented a draft agreement with the Middlesex VFD for the usage of meeting space for Town Council and other public meetings. The cost would be \$100 per meeting. Larger public meetings such as Council, Planning Commission, HARB, and BZA would be held at the firehouse. Committee meetings could be held in the Town conference room since they are smaller and don't draw as much public participation. Ms. Hutton said the fee helps cover heating and cooling costs at the firehouse.

Mr. Costin said staff looked at the space and found it suitable. We will take the Lite Touch monitor to the firehouse to use for recording meetings and viewing presentations. The microphones and camera equipment currently in chambers will be stored for future use. Using the Lite Touch means members will need to speak clearly in order to be picked up and audience members will need to be aware that any whispering to each other may also be picked up and recorded.

Councilmember Hanson made a motion to adopt the Agreement with the Middlesex Volunteer Fire Department for the purpose of using their Event Hall as meeting space for the Urbanna Town Council and other entities of the town for public meetings until a more permanent facility is constructed. Councilmember Wilson seconded. The Mayor called for any discussion. The Mayor called the roll:

- Marjorie AustinAbsent**
- Larry ChowningAye**
- Alana CourtneyAye**
- Mayor Bill Goldsmith.....Aye**
- Merri HansonAye**

Beth JusticeAbsent

Robbie Wilson.....Aye

The motion passed 5-0 w/2 absent.

AGENDA ITEM 9. PUBLIC COMMENT 2 & COUNCIL RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENT 2

William Mayo of Rappahannock Avenue said the Town used to have a height requirement for buildings in the past.

Mayor Goldsmith said yes, it is part of the Zoning Ordinance and there has been a request to consider reducing it.

Councilmember Courtney said people building up the land height needs to be addressed.

Mr. Costin said the building height is based on ground elevation.

AGENDA ITEM 10. COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS & REQUESTS

There were no announcements or requests.

AGENDA ITEM 11. CLOSED MEETING (if necessary)

A closed meeting was not held.

AGENDA ITEM 12. ADJOURN OR RECESS

Councilmember Courtney made a motion to adjourn. All were in favor with none opposed.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30pm.

**Respectfully submitted,
Christine H. Branch, Town Clerk**

Approved by Council: February 12, 2026

ATTEST:

Christine H. Branch, Town Clerk