

Virginia Beach VA250 Committee
Meeting Minutes
Approved as Amended May 8, 2025

10 April 2025, 5:30 PM

Department of Planning and Community Development Conference Room
2875 Sabre Street, Suite 500

ATTENDEES:

Members:

James B. Wood, Chair; Christi Lyons, Vice Chair; Chris Pieczynski, Vice Chair; Bobbie Gribble, Secretary

C. Drummond Ball, Linda Carrington, Al Chewning, Robert Dozier, Patrick Hannum, Kevin Kattwinkel, Becky Livas, Lee Lockamy

Council Liaison: Amelia Ross-Hammond

Staff Liaison: Mark Reed

Public: Suzanne Camden, Florence Reese

Welcome

Chair Jimmy Wood opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – March 13, 2025

Mr. Wood called for the approval of the minutes of the March 13, 2025 meeting. Christi Lyons made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Lee Lockamy seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The March 13, 2025 minutes were approved unanimously as presented.

Old Business

Under Old Business, Mark Reed reported for Michael Winner on ordering branded items to help promote VB VA250. He said that there was information in the meeting packet on the items and pricing. He said the quotes were on 250 items each for pens, key tags, cups, sticky note pads, stickers, and magnets.

Mr. Reed noted that Committee had approved \$500 for stickers and magnets. He said the quote for stickers and magnets was just under \$500. Mr. Reed said the Committee approved \$750 at its March meeting for additional promotional items. He noted that the total of the quotes received for the cups, pens, key tags, and sticky notes exceeds the approved amount by over \$300.

Mr. Reed suggested that the Committee should consider increasing the number of stickers to 500 and also including 250 of the slim koozies in the order. He said slim cans are often served at music events at the oceanfront and are very popular. Most people have regular koozies, but not

the slim ones. Mr. Reed said if the Committee increased the approved total amount to \$3,000 it would cover the koozies and the additional stickers and magnets.

Becky Livas asked about pins. Mr. Reed asked if she was referring to enamel pins. Ms. Livas responded that she was. Mr. Reed said they had not been included in the quotes received, but they certainly could be considered.

Mr. Wood suggested that if promotional enamel pins were desired, a motion to approve \$4,000 for promotional items with at least \$1,000 reserved for enamel pins would cover everything that had been discussed.

Ms. Livas made a motion for the Committee to approve \$4,000 for promotional items with at least \$1,000 allocated for enamel pins. The motion was seconded by Al Chewning. There was no additional discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

VA250 Conference

Christi Lyons reported on the VA250 Commission Conference - A Common Cause to All. Ms. Lyons said it was a motivating and an educational meeting. She said there was a lot of educational materials there that we can pass on to Virginia Beach schools. Ms. Lyons also noted that attendees saw a preview of Ken Burns new documentary on the American Revolution, which will air in the fall.

Planning Department Office Move May 1

Mr. Reed reported the Planning Department will be moving to new offices beginning May 1. He said the next meeting for VB VA250 will be on May 8 and will be held at the new location, which is Building 3, 2403 Courthouse Drive. Mr. Reed said he is assuming there will be some security for the meeting since it will be after regular hours.

Kevin Kattwinkel brought up the performance of *1776* by Virginia Musical Theatre, that will be done in February 2026. He said the cost will be in the range of \$280,000. Mr. Kattwinkel made a motion for the Committee to approve up to \$10,000 in current year funds for Virginia Musical Theatre to support the performance of *1776*. The motion was seconded by Mr. Pieczynski.

Mr. Wood called for discussion. Council Member Amelia Ross-Hammond asked if we could explain more about the event. Mr. Kattwinkel said this musical production of *1776* will be performed by the Virginia Musical Theatre at the Sandler Center in February 2026. He said Mark Reed had suggested that the theater company could ask for up to \$10,000. Council Member Ross-Hammond asked about whether additional funding from Council was needed. Mr. Reed said Council Member Remick had mentioned some ideas for other funding mechanisms in the city and should be consulted.

The motion was called by Mr. Wood. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Funding Request – National Lighthouse Day 2025 Support

Chris Pieczynski reported Preservation Virginia has asked for \$1,200 for t-shirts plus chair and table rental for their August 7th National Lighthouse Day event. He stated this is the first year

they will create t-shirts for the event. Our VA250 logo may be able to be on the t-shirt as a sponsor.

Mr. Wood said he was abstaining from any discussion or vote as he is on the Board of Preservation Virginia.

Mr. Pieczynski made a motion to approve the \$1,200 to support the 2025 National Lighthouse Day event at the Cape Henry Lighthouse. Lee Lockamy seconded the motion. Christi Lyons called the vote. It passed unanimously.

2026 American Flag Initiative

Mr. Wood brought forward his idea for an initiative - Flags of Freedom Virginia Beach 250. He said flags would be distributed to/purchased by citizens and businesses and everyone would be requested to display the American flag in 2026.

Mr. Wood said the plan would be to work with the Committee's Council Liaisons and the Mayor. Various city departments will be asked to participate. Mr. Wood said he is envisioning visitors coming to Virginia Beach would be greeted with an impressive display of flags.

Suzanne Camden asked to speak and said the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) has a flag code booklet. She said she can get them to go along with flags that will be given out. She notes that the DAR is already in the City of Virginia Beach City Public Schools with contests for the 4th grade about the American flag.

Florence Reese spoke and said the DAR also goes into the 1st grade classes and gives presentations on the American Flag.

Mr. Wood asked if this is something the Committee should pursue. There was a general consensus to move forward.

Subcommittee Meetings/Reports

Conflict and Independence

Patrick Hannum, Chair of the Conflict and Independence subcommittee, said Drummond Ball would report on the plans for the Skirmish at Kemps Landing Commemoration

2025 Skirmish at Kemps Landing event (November 15 and 16)

Mr. Ball reported and said they have created an event layout, which is a preliminary drawing of where the activities will take place. He says they prefer to call it a battle rather than a skirmish. The 7th Virginia Regiment is taking the lead in planning the event. He gave some historical background on the 7th Virginia.

Mr. Ball said the 7th Virginia will provide all the reenactors that are needed for the Colonial side. He said there is a possibility of two more regiments with the British. Certificates of insurance from participating groups will be needed. Mr. Ball is checking on that.

Dr. Hannum said the SAR will need to have a formal ceremony for the Battle of Kemps Landing, which means seating. He said the ceremony will last for about an hour and will begin at 12:00 p.m. He noted the color guard is lined up.

Mr. Ball said he was in Gloucester this past weekend and the VA250 Mobile Museum was there. He asked the manager of the Mobile Museum if it might be available during the November event dates. He said it was. Mr. Bell noted the noise from the trailer's generator, which has to be taken into account when locating it for the reenactment. He said it would be great if the VA250 Mobile Museum can come a little early so the elementary school children can take a tour.

Mr. Reed said forms have to be signed by 5 people in the city for the application to have the event at the park. He said security has to be provided and the sponsor has to provide hotel accommodations for the people with the mobile museum.

Council Member Ross-Hammond asked how much the event will cost. Mr. Reed said it was included in the \$75,000 FY26 budget request that was submitted. The request identified \$25,000 for the Kemps Landing commemoration.

Request for relocation of Battle of the Capes Interpretive Sign

Dr. Hannum provided an update since the last meeting. He said the National Park Service paid for the sign and Dr. Robert Selig wrote the text. Dr. Hannum said the Order of Cape Henry did not want the sign at Cape Henry and noted this apparently goes back to 1976 when the French donated the de Grasse statue that was placed at Cape Henry. Nicole Yancey is aware of the original sign placement. Barbara Henley and Ruth Frazier were originally involved, plus Dan Smith, who was with Colonial National Historical Park.

Dr. Hannum said the subcommittee members provided some suggestions of placement:

- Leave it where it is
- Boardwalk
- Lynnhaven Colony Park
- First Landing Park
- Great Neck Park
- City-owned Boat Launch

Dr. Hannum said coordination must occur with the National Park Service because they own the sign. The Council may need to approve the move and placement if it goes on City property. The primary question seems to be, "Where is the most visible location?"

Mr. Wood said our directive from the Mayor was to provide a recommendation.

Dr. Hannum made a motion that the recommendation from the Virginia Beach VA250 Committee is for the sign to be moved to an appropriate location at the oceanfront. Mr. Ball seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wood asked Mr. Reed to prepare the letter of recommendation.

Linda Carrington asked when we post signs if we go in the neighborhood to talk to them about the sign's placement. She said Edna Hendrix has been threatened about the Hodges sign being located in Kempsville. Edna had suggested they should call Mark Reed.

Mr. Reed said the historic marker was placed in the City right of way and the Public Works Department has approved placing the marker there. The marker belongs to the state and the state has approved the location.

Dr. Hannum noted that we had discussed the Virginia Musical Theatre performance of *1776* under New Business.

Plaque – Princess Anne County Militia Officers

Dr. Hannum turned the discussion of the proposed plaque for local militia officers to Florence Reese. Ms. Reese said she has researched the Militia Officers, Virginia Line and the Navy. There are over 100 names of officers. The cost of the plaque would be about \$4,000. A location for the plaque has not been identified.

Ms. Reese said she has been working on this research since September 2024. She will put the research into the Central Library.

Dr. Hannum stated one of the issues of identifying people is they created Minute Battalions. Regiments come from all over Virginia. Once Norfolk was destroyed, everyone was living in the countryside. The Militia Officers are the only ones that can be identified because they were by county.

Mark Reed stated the sign would need to be designed. Ms. Reese said it has been designed.

Dr. Hannum spoke about the challenges of doing this type of sign. As an example, he said they have found that the John Ackiss sign has been moved several times. We would have to figure out where the new plaque will be located. Dr. Hannum said it has the potential to be a good project.

Mr. Wood said at this point it needs to go to the committee to figure out location and also the design of the sign. Ms. Reese was asked to send her investigation to both Mr. Reed and Dr. Hannum.

Dr. Hannum passed around examples of the six coins the Norfolk Chapter SAR had struck as a fundraising activity. He said they are \$20 each and represent these historical events:

- The Gunpowder Incident
- Hampton
- Kemps Landing
- Great Bridge
- Burning of Norfolk
- Gwynn's Island

Civil Liberties and Rights

List of Organizations to invite to participate in Boardwalk History Festival.

Mr. Wood said this is a list of the organizations to invite to participate in the Boardwalk History Festival. He asked members to please get the list together and send it to Mr. Reed. He said no date has been set for it, but it will be in 2026.

Becky Livas asked about the Revolutionary War reenactments. She asked if African Americans will be participants in the reenactment now that we are more aware of the participation of African Americans. Mr. Ball said he cannot guarantee it because there aren't many African American reenactors for the Revolutionary War that he knows of. He said he is aware of one regiment in Rhode Island. He will appeal to them since it is the 250th.

Ms. Carrington said, at the last meeting, we were talking about getting students from the colleges to assist us. She said Dr. Ophera Davis said she would support getting her students together. Ms. Carrington said last Friday she had Nat Turner's great-great grandson. Dr. Davis teaches Black history at Virginia Wesleyan University.

Indigenous Peoples

Lee Lockamy said the Nansemond Indian Nation Pow Wow will be on May 17 at Mt. Trashmore. It will start at noon with the grand entry, and will be from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Chief Lockamy said he will get information to Ms. Lyons for the VA250 calendar.

Events

Boardwalk History Festival 2026

July 4, 2026

Mr. Wood said he and Mark Reed will get together with the Beach Events folks to discuss this.

Mr. Kattwinkel put forward a suggestion for Virginia Beach to do a countdown to 250 that starts 250 days before July 4, 2026. He said it would be a tidbit of history each day leading up to July 4. Schools might distribute it and maybe students could help put together what those tidbits of information would be.

Ms. Camden said there is a 400 facts pamphlet that was created in 2007. It is in the library. She said it was a booklet that was created by the public library. It was noted that it is on the Princess Anne County Virginia Beach Historical Society's website.

Mr. Wood suggested we might talk to the City's Communications Office about the idea and doing it in Virginia Beach. Mr. Kattwinkel was asked to create a vision of what this would look like using the template Mr. Wood created for the 2026 flag initiative.

Adjournment

Mr. Wood said the next meeting will be on May 8, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Wood adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.