

Virginia Beach VA250 Committee
Meeting Minutes
Approved June 12, 2025

8 May 2025, 5:30 PM
Department of Planning and Community Development
Building 3, 2403 Courthouse Drive, Conference Room 110

ATTENDEES:

Members:

James B. Wood, Chair (left at 6:30); Christi Lyons, Vice Chair; Chris Pieczynski, Vice Chair; Bobbie Gribble, Secretary

C. Drummond Ball, Linda Carrington, Al Chewning, Robert Dozier, Sharon Felton, Patrick Hannum, Becky Livas, Bobby Melatti

Council Liaison: Amelia Ross-Hammond, Worth Remick

Staff Liaison: Mark Reed

Public: Suzanne Camden, Florence Reese

Welcome

The meeting was opened by Chris Pieczynski, Vice Chair, at 5:35 p.m. Jimmy Wood, Chair, arrived at 5:36 and took up the leadership of the meeting.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 10, 2025

Mr. Wood called for the approval of the minutes of the April 10, 2025 meeting. Pat Hannum made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected prior to the meeting (the amended minutes were distributed in the meeting packet). Becky Livas seconded the motion. The April 10, 2025 minutes were approved unanimously.

BUDGET

Mr. Wood said City Council finalized most of the budget on Tuesday (May 6). Councilman Remick said the VB VA250 Committee is getting \$50,000 plus the rollover of unexpended funds from this year, which is about \$7,500. Mr. Wood said he spoke with the Vice Mayor this morning and they said the \$50,000 is set for VB VA250. Council Member Remick said we might be able to get \$10,000 more if a project comes up that will warrant it.

Project and Event Updates

Mark Reed provided some updates. He discussed the branded promotional items that have been ordered. He said the enamel pins will take about 25 days. They have been subject to tariffs, so prices have increased for them. Mr. Reed reminded the Committee that they had approved \$4,000 for promotional items with at least \$1,000 set aside for the pins.

Mr. Reed said all items have been ordered, but they will not arrive prior to the Rising Sun Pow Wow event at Mount Trashmore on May 17th. He said 250 each were ordered of the pens, cups, sticky note pads, skinny koozies, and key tabs. The VB VA250 stickers and magnets each had 500 ordered. He said it depends on the shape and size of the item whether the oval or horizontal design will be used.

Mr. Reed said two banners have been ordered. He said the horizontal graphic will be on a 6-foot banner and the oval graphic will be on a 4-foot banner. He noted the length of each banner was determined by height. He said you don't want the banner to be taller than the average table height, which is about 30 inches.

Mr. Reed gave a brief overview of VB VA250 associated events that are coming up. He said the Rising Sun Pow Wow will be held at Mount Trashmore on May 17. He said everyone on the Committee should have received an invitation to the Grand Entry at noon. He asked everyone to please respond by May 13 if they are planning to attend.

Mr. Reed said the Run to Remember VB 5K Race will take place at the Military Aviation Museum on May 26, Memorial Day. He said as sponsors we can have a booth or table. He said we are also allowed 4 entries to run or walk. Mr. Pieczynski said he and his son would like to participate in the race. Mr. Reed said he would work with them to get them entered.

Mr. Reed said he would be out of town on Memorial Day, so is not available to be at a table. He said the table would be from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and table set up starts no later than 7:00 a.m.

Coming up on July 4 is the YMCA Independence Day 5K Run/Walk at Mount Trashmore. Mr. Reed said this event is from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. He noted VB VA250 is a Silver Sponsor, and our graphic design will be included on the t-shirts.

Mr. Reed said the National Lighthouse Day event at Cape Henry Lighthouse is scheduled on August 7. He said the purchase order for \$1,200 to support the event was recently issued.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Mr. Reed informed the Committee that he has received a request for funding from the Virginia Beach Chorale. He said with City Council providing final approval of the FY26 budget next week, the June meeting would be appropriate for discussing the several budget requests that have been received.

Council Member Amelia Ross-Hammond said she had asked for \$75,000. She said she was told we had only used \$6,000, so they took it back. Mr. Reed said he called the Planning Department's budget analyst and told them we have expended \$52,500. Council Member Ross-Hammond said if we need more we need to itemize it and she will put forth a request.

Subcommittee Meetings/Reports

Mr. Wood said it was time for the subcommittees. He asked Mr. Reed if there were spaces for the subcommittees to have breakout sessions. Mr. Reed said their offices have just moved in and he wasn't sure which spaces might be available. He said he would work on those arrangements for the June meeting.

Conflict and Independence

Dr. Hannum said Drummond Ball will discuss the Skirmish at Kemps Landing event coming up on November 15 and 16. Mr. Ball said they have prepared the layout for the colonial group and several British regiments. He said the plan includes where tents, fire pits etc., will be plus the SAR ceremony and event. The major concern is the location of sprinkler heads.

Mr. Ball said Parks and Rec said they can have two cooking fires at the encampment. We can negotiate it out from there. He said Parks and Recreation needs to understand the cooking arrangements. More than one fire pit will be needed for the British side.

Mr. Ball said there is a need for metal bleachers, which they use for spectators at the Battle of Great Bridge. Dr. Hannum said this would solve the seating problem for the SAR ceremony and they could also be used to observe the reenactment.

Dr. Hannum discussed the request for relocation of the Battle of the Capes interpretive sign. He noted that the Committee voted last meeting to recommend it go to the oceanfront. We need to bring the Park Service into the discussion. Council Member Remick said he had a discussion with Ms. Yancey who wants it moved to the Fort Story area.

Dr. Hannum said the original issue with that location was the Order of Cape Henry objected to having it in the Fort Story location. Moving it onto the base means it is not likely to be seen by many in the general public. It is not easy to get on base.

Council Member Remick said he had not thought about the ocean front. Dr. Hannum said the battle itself was fought at sea. The fight occurred 6 to 7 miles off the coast. DeGrasse kept moving his ships south to draw the British away from the bay. The naval battle could have been visible from the oceanfront.

Mr. Reed said we need to bring the National Park Service into the loop on the discussion since it is their sign. He said he will write a letter to the Superintendent at the Colonial National Historical Park.

Dr. Hannum said Florence Reese has proposed a plaque to recognize the Princess Anne County Militia Officers from the Revolutionary War. Ms. Reese said it will be a bronze plaque and the cost is about \$5,000. She said there are 114 officers that have been identified. Dr. Hannum said it is a pretty comprehensive list. He said the plaque might belong in the courthouse complex. It is a great concept. Nothing like this has been done. Much of Princess Anne County's history has been lost. He said we can talk about it further in June.

Other

Mr. Wood said he would need to leave early at 6:30, so he wants to jump forward on the agenda to the Other area under the subcommittees. For Flags of Freedom, Mr. Wood said he had talked to Mayor Dyer about it. The Mayor was intrigued and excited about it. He suggested flying a massive American Flag at Mount Trashmore. Mr. Wood said, at this point there are more conversations that are needed to “flesh it out.”

Dr. Hannum talked about the Countdown to 250. He said the idea is to issue a historical fact daily starting 250 days prior to July 4, 2026. He said it needs some additional review. Dr. Hannum said Kevin Kattwinkle was not able to make tonight’s meeting. He is looking for a booklet that has 400 facts. Mr. Reed said he has a copy. He said some of it is accurate and some is not, and noted it is a starting point. Dr. Hannum said these will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Mr. Pieczynski said the key will be in the distribution of the information. It could be done by one or more TV stations, by the Virginian-Pilot, in a weekly packet for schools, or as a daily feature in some manner.

Events

Bobby Melatti reported for Events. He said that Gary Spell has written a number of vignettes that have been successfully presented at the oceanfront over the years. Mr. Spell met with the author of Racing the Night and has written a play based on the book that will be presented this summer. The play is a done deal as Mr. Spell has been paid to develop the play.

Mr. Melatti said it needs to be determined what Beach Events can do. He said he will meet with Jimmy Wood and Mark Reed to discuss ideas. He said there are several potential ones that could be done. Council Member Ross-Hammond asked how much they would cost. Mr. Melatti said some could cost tens of thousands of dollars. He said they will discuss ideas for the celebration. He said Beach Events will do whatever they feel is appropriate for the celebration.

Civil Liberties and Rights

Sharon Felton reported for the Civil Liberties and Rights subcommittee. She said the goal is to create a list of organizations to invite to participate in Boardwalk History Festival. The subcommittee is working with other organizations that have been involved in previous projects. She said they will work with Mr. Reed to put it together.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Christi Lyons said the next meeting will be June 12, at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m. by Ms. Lyons.