

Virginia Beach VA250 Committee
Meeting Minutes
Approved December 11, 2025

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

ATTENDEES:

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

C. Drummond Ball, Suzanne Camden, Linda Carrington (6:45 departure), Al Chewning, Robert Dozier, Sharon Felton, Patrick Hannum, Kevin Kattwinkel (5:50 arrival), Becky Livas

Council Liaison:
Dr. Amelia Ross-Hammond

Staff Liaison:
Mark Reed

City Staff:
Ellie Dauernheim

Welcome

Chair Jimmy Wood opened the VB VA250 Committee meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 11, 2025

Mr. Wood asked the members to review the minutes of the September 11, 2025 meeting and provide any corrections or additions. Drummond Ball made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Sharon Felton seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Skirmish at Kemps Landing Event

The upcoming Skirmish at Kemp's Landing event was discussed. Mark Reed said he is working on completing the Parks and Recreation Department's special events application, which is due next week.

Mr. Reed said he has received the cost proposal and W-9 form from the 7th Virginia Regiment. He said they will need the money in advance of the event. Mr. Reed asked Mr. Ball if he should contact Mr. Arrington, the treasurer of 7th Virginia Regiment, to work out the payment details. Mr. Ball said yes, and that he will supply the contact information.

Mr. Ball said the plans for the event are going well. He said the Principal of Tallwood Elementary will open the gate so re-enactors could park at the school and walk back and forth from the encampment to their cars. He said Mr. Tom Sasso, who chairs the Youth Virginia Regiment, has a youth program to present to the students of Tallwood Elementary. The presentation will be given to the students on Friday afternoon prior to the event.

Mr. Reed asked Mr. Ball how many re-enactor participants they have confirmed for the event. Mr. Ball said this is the period of time when we wait while members of the 7th Virginia Regiment and other organizations finalize their schedules to ensure they can participate.

Mr. Reed said they should meet on site a week or ten days before the event to go over final details. This meeting will include Parks and Recreation staff, Mr. Reed, and Mr. Ball.

Mr. Reed addressed some of the publicity details. He said there will be a full-page ad in VEER Magazine, which is carried in restaurants and other businesses around the region. He said the ad cost \$960. Mr. Reed said he is also working on getting articles published in the Local Sun Magazine and in Kempsville Living. These are mailed directly to thousands of homes in Virginia Beach.

Mr. Reed said he and Ellie Dauernheim met with City Communications staff to discuss additional avenues for publicity. A media plan is being developed. The City will promote the event via its website, and on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, etc. Mr. Reed said Bob Ruegsegger has given approval for the use of photographs he has taken of the 7th Virginia.

Patrick Hannum said he has sent out 500 emails about the event and also posted information about it on Facebook. He has asked the Mayor's office to present a proclamation and speak as part of the SAR chapter's commemoration ceremony. A member of the Ackiss family will also speak at the event. The Mayor, Councilman Remick, and Councilman Jackson-Green will have designated parking spaces

Michael Steen has been promoting the Dunmore Trail for VA250. He has put together exhibit panels and will be there with the panels.

Christi Lyons is creating handouts with puzzles, coloring books, and a scavenger hunt in the encampment, which will enable the children to engage with the re-enactors.

Mr. Reed said a Certificate of Insurance has been received from SAR. The 7th Virginia is working on getting their certificate submitted.

Funding Requests

Mr. Reed said we need to revisit the funding requests so organizations can plan their events. Jimmy Wood said Councilman Remick told him he did not expect that VB VA250 we would get additional money this fiscal year.

Mr. Reed asked members to look in the meeting packet for outside funding requests. He said VB VA250 contributed \$4,000 to the Norfolk Chapter SAR for the September 2025 Battle of Virginia Capes event. No other funding requests have been approved.

Mr. Reed said a funding request from the Nansemond Indian Nation is expected. He said he has been contacted by Chief Anderson, who will be sending an email with a funding request. The Chief said it would be a similar request to last year. Mr. Reed said VB VA250 contributed \$10,500 last year for performers and drummers for the Rising Sun Pow Wow.

There was no additional information about a plaque to document local Patriot officers at a cost of \$5,000 request. Discussion was deferred on the plaque.

Chris Pieczynski asked if we want to sponsor the YMCA's Independence Day Run on July 4th again. He said he will contact the YMCA for the cost of their sponsorship for 2026.

Ms. Felton mentioned that she is working on a project to commemorate the ladies who created Norfolk Azalea Garden for the WPA. At the time the Botanical Gardens was created it was part of Princess Anne County. She asked that some funding be reserved to support that activity.

Al Chewning said he thought it would be good to fund the request for the musical "1776". Mr. Chewning made a motion to approve a \$5,000 contribution to the Virginia Musical Theatre to support "1776" the musical. Robert Dozier seconded the motion.

Becky Livas made a substitute motion that VB VA250 provide a \$10,000 contribution to the "1776" musical. The substitute motion was not seconded.

Suzanne Camden asked if we could get details of the sources for their additional funding.

Mr. Wood called the question and the motion to contribute \$5,000 to the Virginia Musical Theatre passed, with 9 voting in favor, 0 voting against, and 3 members choosing not to vote.

No other requests were approved for funding.

Ms. Lyons said the 4th of July is going to be a big deal in 2026. She said we need to do something that represents our committee. Mr. Pieczynski said he agreed with Ms. Lyons. He said maybe there is some way to tie in Mr. Wood's idea of Flags over Virginia Beach, as well as Florence Reese's idea of the plaque commemorating local Patriot officers. He said one idea is that on each flag at the oceanfront there could be the name of one of the officers that Ms. Reese identified.

Mr. Wood said the December meeting is where we should discuss what the Committee should do for the 4th of July. He also said Mr. Reed and he should meet with William Younce, to learn about what Beach Events is planning for July 4th.

SWAG

Mr. Reed asked if the Committee members thought we should purchase additional Virginia Beach VA250 swag for the current year.

Mr. Reed provided the following inventory of items on hand:

Enamel Pin - 40

Key Tabs - 116

Note Pads - 119

Cups - 148

Pens (blue 61; red 56) 117

Slim koozies - 112

Magnets and Stickers - plenty on hand, these were double ordered

Christi said we were using our SWAG to promote events. Mr. Reed said we spent \$4,000 originally. He suggested everything could be purchased except cups, koozies, magnets, and stickers.

Drummond Ball made a motion that we spend no more than \$2,500 on additional SWAG. Becky Livas seconded the motion.

Mr. Chewning said we don't really get anything from the SWAG. He said he doesn't think we should purchase anything additional.

There was additional discussion. There wasn't substantial support for having tables at upcoming events to hand out SWAG. Ms. Camden made a substitute motion to amend the spending limit to \$500 to purchase only enamel pins. The substitute motion was seconded by Mr. Chewing. The motion carried.

Ms. Felton asked if the Committee would be at the Virginia African American Cultural Center event on Saturday. She said it starts at 11:00 a.m. Mr. Reed said he wasn't aware of the event. He said bad weather is currently forecast.

Old Business

Conflict and Independence

Request for relocation of Battle of the Capes Interpretive Sign – Mr. Reed said the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is okay with moving the sign. They said they had worked with the SAR and they want to be sure the SAR is good with the move. Mr. Reed contacted Dr. Hannum, and he sent the information to officers/members of the Norfolk Chapter SAR. Dr. Hannum said the SAR is okay with the move.

Mr. Reed said we now need to work with Parks and Recreation to identify the specific location. Once Parks and Recreation has decided the location, we can send a letter to the Mayor with the details of where it could go if moved.

Ms. Camden said she went to the current site and located the sign. It was difficult to find. She asked if the sign would be refurbished as part of the move.

Countdown to 250

Mr. Reed noted that the meeting packet has a list of potential subject matter for the Countdown to 250 initiative. He said Kevin Kattwinkel has been working on this.

Mr. Reed said when he and Ellie met with the Communications Office staff person, he shared what had been drafted for several potential postings. Their response was to ask if each could be reduced to one sentence.

Mr. Kattwinkel shared the draft with the subcommittee. They will decide the order and graphics.

Mr. Wood asked Ms. Felton if the schools could distribute the information. Ms. Felton said she will check with the Superintendent.

Mr. Chewing said the historical society's Facebook page is available for this. It was suggested we could involve Cultural Affairs. Ms. Camden suggested coordinating with the High School History Coordinator. Ms. Lyons said the High School History Coordinator would be too busy to do this.

New Business

Civil Liberties and Rights

Council Member Dr. Ross Hammond said a Virginia Beach cultural event will be held this Saturday at 11:00 sponsored by the VAACC. It is a Community Fall Festival. There will be a tent, and Edna Hendrix will do some Virginia Beach history. There will be a presentation on state markers. People will be there from The Norfolk 17.

Dr. Ross-Hammond said she is a member of the Military Economic Advisory Committee. They want to be involved in the VA250.

Dr. Ross-Hammond said people are asking what we are doing for the schools. Ms. Lyons said there is a lot of information available for schools to use. She said we could pull together a sheet of information to give to all the schools about VB VA250. There is a contest - What does America Mean To You? Ms. Lyons said she could talk to her friend, who is head of the Art Department in Virginia Beach Schools, about sharing this contest with all her art teachers.

Mr. Wood asked if we could make a presentation to the School Board. Mr. Chewing said he thinks we could be straying beyond the committee's purpose.

Adjournment

Mr. Wood suggested the VB VA250 Committee not meet November 13. He said we will all attend the Skirmish at Kemp's Landing event on November 15 and 16. The next meeting will be December 11. Those in attendance agreed with the cancellation of the November meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.