

**Virginia Beach VA250 Committee
Meeting Minutes
Approved October 9, 2025**

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

ATTENDEES:

Members:

Christi Lyons, Vice Chair; Chris Pieczynski, Vice Chair; Bobbie Gribble, Secretary

C. Drummond Ball, Suzanne Camden, Linda Carrington, Al Chewning, William Curtis, Robert Dozier, Sharon Felton, Patrick Hannum, Becky Livas, Michael Winner

Council Liaison:

Staff Liaison: Mark Reed

City Staff: Ellie Dauernheim

Welcome

The meeting was opened at 5:30 p.m. by Vice Chair Christi Lyons. Ms. Lyons welcomed William (Bill) Curtis, a recently appointed member of the Committee. Mr. Curtis said he is Assistant Director of Virginia's Department of Housing and Community Development. He said he retired from the U.S. Navy and has been a resident of Virginia Beach for 26 years. The Committee members gave brief introductions.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – August 14, 2025

Ms. Lyons asked the members to review the minutes of the August 14, 2025 meeting. Mike Winner made a motion to approve the minutes from August 14th as presented. Al Chewning seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Past Events

Pat Hannum discussed the commemoration of the Battle of the Virginia Capes that took place on September 6. He said he assisted in putting the event together and said the financial support for the tent, chairs, and portable facilities from the VB VA250 Committee was greatly appreciated. Mr. Hannum said the ceremony went smoothly and attendance was around 350 people. He mentioned some of the dignitaries that were in attendance.

Suzanne Camden, a co-coordinator of the event, said they appreciated the committee having a table with VB VA250 swag, which was given away.

Dr. Hannum mentioned that next year will be the 400th Anniversary of the French Navy, so it will be a big commemoration.

Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) Tourism Grants

Mark Reed discussed two tourism grants given to MOCA. He said the meeting packet contains information on the projects that were funded.

Mr. Reed said that the VA250 Marketing Leverage Program is a grant through VTC. He said he received a letter of congratulations for a \$10,000 award which he did not apply for. It seemed to have been mistakenly awarded to VB VA250. He worked out the details after a few phone calls and found out that MOCA had received an earlier grant that they had not been informed about.

Mr. Reed said it got straightened out and MOCA will be able to utilize both grants that were awarded. He said he thought the Committee would want to know about the VA250 grants awarded to a Virginia Beach museum.

Old Business

Mr. Reed discussed additional funding for FY25. He said City Council will approve \$7,793 carry forward funding from unspent FY25 VB VA250 funding on September 16. That amount will be added to the committee's FY26 budget.

Mr. Reed said that VB VA250 Chair, Jimmy Wood, will be speaking to the committee's City Council Liaisons about the request that was made for \$25,000 for Sail250 Virginia events and the \$25,000 for additional expenditures.

Conflict and Independence

Mr. Reed said we are getting to a critical time with planning for the Skirmish at Kemp's Landing event that will be held November 15 and 16. He said he still needs to receive a formal proposal with a budget request from the 7th Virginia Regiment so he can process a Purchase Order. He said the 7th Virginia Regiment has provided an estimate of \$17,500 but they need to submit it on their letterhead and provide a W-9 form.

Ms. Lyons said she has been creating advertisements for the Skirmish at Kemp's Landing event. She said that the current draft has an inoperable QR code and she is working on fixing it. Information about the event is posted on the VA250 web site. Ms. Lyons passed around a draft program for the Kemp's Landing event.

There was discussion about historical organizations having tables at the event to distribute information. Mr. Chewning said the Historical Society would like to have a table. Mr. Reed said the Virginia Beach History Museums are interested in having a table, also.

Ms. Lyons said the Historic Preservation Commission's Student Leaders Committee will be there to hand out activities for children and would be able to hand out other information.

Dr. Hannum asked how we are advertising the event and the schedule. Ms. Lyons said she has put the schedule on VA250.org.

Mr. Reed said Cultural Affairs has a contract with a firm that prepares the graphics for their advertising. They have offered to cover the cost for the creation of a print ad for the Skirmish at Kemp's Landing event. Mr. Reed said he was working with them on developing a full-page ad for insertion in VEER Magazine's October issue, which will come out in the middle of October.

Request for relocation of Battle of the Capes Interpretive Sign

Mr. Reed said that the National Park Service is okay with the move, and they want to be kept informed. He said the Chesapeake Bay Foundation is okay with the move if it is okay with the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). Mr. Reed said a proposed location between 35th and 40th Streets at the beachfront appears to be the best location. He said SAR needs to give approval (they were part of the placement in 2015). He will send an email to Dr. Hannum to request their consideration. Parks and Recreation will need to select the location. Mr. Reed said a recommendation then needs to be sent to the Mayor.

Dr. Hannum suggested the sign could be dedicated July 4, 2026, or have it removed, presented at the Battle of Capes Ceremony next year, then moved again.

Countdown to 250

Dr. Hannum said Kevin Kattwinkel is still working on this. An informational release could go out daily or monthly. Some subcommittee members are looking at this. Dr. Hannum said they have determined releases once a week are more doable than daily. He said they are still looking for a good distribution method.

Ms. Lyons said she would get Mr. Wood to reach out to Mr. Kattwinkel.

Sharon Felton said she wanted to reiterate that the committee ends on July 4, 2026. She said the committee has done a lot to awaken the community and make them aware. When asked about the termination date, Mr. Reed said as it stands now, July 4, 2026 is a hard cut-off. Ms. Camden said there are two significant events in 1781 that happened here. Mr. Reed said that any extension would be up to City Council. He said the Council Liaisons needed to get the Committee funding through the reconciliation process and this past year could only get two-thirds of what we requested.

Dr. Hannum said that not much happened in this immediate area after the British left in 1776, until 1781 with Benedict Arnold's arrival. He said the Norfolk SAR will continue to commemorate the Battle of the Virginia Capes leading up to the 250th anniversary in 2031. Ms. Lyons asked Mr. Reed if the Historic Preservation Commission might be able to support that event moving forward. Mr. Reed said the SAR could make a request to them. He said funding events isn't typically what the Commission does.

New Business

Civil Liberties and Rights

Sharon Felton said she is working with Linda Carrington and Becky Livas to create a celebratory event of the African American women who worked in Azalea Gardens under the Works Progress Administration project there. She said they had their first meeting last month.

Indigenous Peoples

Mr. Reed said he received an email from Lee Lockamy, and he is not able to attend this evening's meeting. Mr. Reed said Chief Emeritus Lockamy thought Chief Anderson of the Nansemond Indian Nation is exploring the possibility of doing the Pow Wow on the Boardwalk in 2026.

James Bass Marker

Pat Hannum said there will be a dedication of a James Bass marker at the Battle of Great Bridge site on December 6.

Events

Mr. Reed said events would be coordinated through Beach Events. He said with the passing of Bobby Melatti and no additional funding, it looks like planning has been suspended

Adjournment

Ms. Lyons said the next meeting of the VB VA250 Committee will be on October 9, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

