

Virginia Beach VA250 Committee
Meeting Minutes
Approved February 12, 2026

8 January 2026, 5:30 PM
Department of Planning and Community Development
Building 3, 2403 Courthouse Drive, Conference Room 110

ATTENDEES

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

C. Drummond Ball; Al Chewning; Patrick Hannum; Kevin Kattwinkel; Becky Livas;
Michael Winner

Council Liaison:
Worth Remick

Staff Liaison:
Mark Reed

City Staff:
Ellie Dauernheim

Public:
Sandy Bowie
Jeb Raitt
Florence Reese
Joel Rubin
William Younce

Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 p.m. by the Chair, Jimmy Wood.

Mr. Wood turned the meeting over to Pat Hannum. Dr. Hannum said his SAR Chapter wanted to recognize people for doing good things. He introduced Jeb Raitt, President of the Norfolk Chapter Sons of the American Revolution. Mr. Raitt presented the following awards:

- Mark Reed – Bronze Good Citizenship Medal
- Chris Pieczynski – Bronze Good Citizenship Medal
- Bobbie Gribble – Henry Knox Achievement Medal (note: Mr. Raitt said it was a Martha Washington Medal)
- Drummond Ball – Certificate of Appreciation
- Becky Livas – Certificate of Appreciation
- Jimmy Wood – Certificate of Appreciation
- Kevin Kattwinkel – Certificate of Appreciation

Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 11, 2025

Mr. Wood asked the members to review the minutes of the December 11, 2025 meeting. He asked if there were any additions or corrections. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made by Mr. Pieczynski. The motion was seconded by Dr. Hannum. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Continuation/Extension of Virginia Beach VA250 Committee

Dr. Hannum discussed the December 17 meeting that several committee members had with Mayor Bobby Dyer and Council Member Worth Remick. He said they met with the Mayor about extending the term of the VB VA250 Committee to 2031 and possibly beyond. Other committee members in attendance were Jimmy Wood and Becky Livas. A private citizen, Joel Rubin, also attended.

One of the topics of discussion was the appropriate City department to support the committee. Dr. Hannum said the Mayor thinks we need to tie into the school system better than we are currently. This would be accomplished better through affiliation with a department that does this.

Dr. Hannum said Mr. Rubin attended and talked about the potential for partnering with the private sector. He said they have followed up with a couple meetings.

Dr. Hannum said the Mayor seemed to be in favor of extending the term.

Council Member Remick said he doesn't want to see great things end on July 5. He said there is a lot of history beyond the American Revolution. He said he will talk with the Mayor and Dr. Ross-Hammond.

Mr. Rubin introduced himself as president of the Rubin Communications Group. He said we talked about partnering with the private sector both financially and involvement with events. One idea was partnering with Sentara Medical and doing something with education and medicine.

There was some discussion about next steps. It was acknowledged that as it stands now, all terms end July 4, 2026. Mr. Wood said this committee, if extended, should be placed under Cultural Affairs. He said he felt it was a great meeting with the Mayor and he thinks there will be a positive outcome.

Mr. Rubin asked what the Mayor and Council would need to consider extending the committee. Council Member Remick said they will need a white paper. Mark Reed asked if this would be in the form of a CCSR – City Council Staff Report. Council Member Remick said that might be the format.

Mr. Wood said we should put a white paper together. He said he will work with Mr. Reed to get something drafted.

Mr. Rubin said he sees this as something that companies would like to attach their names to. There is a lot of great education that is coming out of the VB VA250 Committee. He said we

should not miss this opportunity. He noted that it is a five-year time frame for the extension, so we have time to really organize events and expand it out as a community-wide thing.

There was some discussion about funding and events. Mr. Reed said the initial appropriation in FY25 was \$60,000. Of that amount, \$10,000 went to Cultural Affairs and \$50,000 was for the VB VA250 Committee. In FY26, the appropriation was \$50,000. Half of that funding went to the Skirmish at Kemp's Landing event.

July 4, 2026 Event/Activity Ideas

Mr. Wood said he and Mr. Reed had a meeting with Beach Events folks last month. He said William Younce of Beach Events is here this evening and he will be back next month to present to us about their plans for events that will occur in July.

Mr. Younce said the *Racing the Night* play will be presented for at least 4 weeks during the summer.

Mr. Reed said he wanted to note for Mr. Ball that Mr. Younce said costumed folks at the oceanfront on July 4 would add a lot to what is going on.

Mr. Ball said the 7th Virginia Regiment has a meeting coming up soon. He said that is when they are looking at what events they may want to participate in during the year. He said he can talk with them about having re-enactors participate during the July 4 celebration.

Funding Requests

Mr. Reed said we have some funding requests on the agenda. He noted that the financial report in the meeting packet shows we have \$11,636.31 on hand

Mr. Reed said we have a request from the Norfolk Chapter SAR to support their Battle of the Virginia Capes commemoration in September 2026. The request is for \$4,000.

Mr. Reed said we also have a somewhat related request from NATO for a Battle of the Virginia Capes Maritime Memorial Garden and production of a book. That request is for \$3,000 to \$5,000.

Dr. Hannum said the 400th Anniversary of the French Navy is this year. He noted Suzanne Camden attended one of the planning meetings. Admiral Vandier is the Commander of the French Navy and heads the NATO office here. Dr. Hannum said the French Navy wants to make some improvements at the de Grasse Statue. They also want to produce a book about the battle.

Dr. Hannum also noted that this is the 50th Anniversary of the French giving the deGrasse statue to the United States. He said the Governor of Virginia was there for the original dedication of the statue.

Mr. Reed said the statue was given to the City of Virginia Beach with the stipulation it was to be placed at Cape Henry. Dr. Hannum noted that it is in the possession of the federal government and is U.S. government property.

Mayor Dyer and Jimmy Wood will be meeting with Admiral Vandier this month.

Mr. Wood brought the discussion back to the funding requests. He recommended that the Committee defer a decision on the SAR request until we know if VB VA250 will be extended beyond the current termination date.

Mr. Wood recommended funding the NATO activities. The amount requested is within our means and their projects require a good amount of lead time.

Council Member Remick asked about funding needs for July 4 activities. Mr. Wood said he expects such needs far exceed our available funds.

Chris Picczynski brought up sponsorship of the annual Independence Day YMCA run. He said he thought the sponsorship would be in the \$2,500 to \$3,000 range.

Mr. Wood made a motion to fund the NATO request in the amount of \$4,000. Kevin Kattwinkel seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Under Old Business, Mr. Reed reminded those in attendance that Virginia Beach Restaurant Week is coming up January 16 to 25. He said there is a link to the web page on the agenda that was sent out. He noted that both of our logos are posted on their website and their Facebook page. We are getting a lot of exposure for the \$1,000 sponsorship. Mr. Wood said he had several people mention they saw our logo.

Mr. Reed also reminded those in attendance that The Musical 1776 is coming up February 27, 28, and March 1 at the Sandler Center. He said tickets are still available Mr. Kattwinkel said he has landed a part in the play.

Conflict and Independence

Request for Relocation of Battle of the Capes Interpretive Sign

Dr. Hannum said he and Mr. Reed met on Tuesday at the oceanfront. They walked the north end of the Boardwalk to scope out viable locations.

Mr. Reed said they walked from 35th Street to 40th Street. He noted that the connector park on 37th street does not have much there. Dr. Hannum said this seems like a good location as there is space to place it without interfering with existing monuments.

Mr. Reed said Parks and Recreation staff will make the ultimate decision. Once that is approved, the Committee can respond to the Mayor's request.

Countdown to 250

Mr. Reed said he is waiting to hear back from the City's web team. He noted that Saturday January 10 is 25 weeks from July 4. His pitch to them is to start a 25-week countdown this week.

Each week would have an article posted about events and activities related to the American Revolution in our region. Mr. Reed said he is also working on getting a blog about the Countdown to 250 in the City's weekly newsletter – Be In The Know. He is also hopeful that they can include an occasional banner to try to get people to the Countdown to 250 page.

Sail250 Virginia

Mr. Wood said we will discuss Sail250 Virginia at the February meeting.

New Business

Under New Business, Mr. Ball said the 7th Virginia Regiment will have its annual meeting soon. He said the Skirmish at Kemp's Landing event will be discussed and he is sure they will talk about how smooth it went. There was plenty of space and everyone pitched in. The Regiment is thankful for the support from the VB VA250 Committee, the City, and the re-enactors. Mr. Ball said he worked with Derrick Sutton so all the re-enactors could get a commemorative coin. There were some coins left over and the Regiment would like to give members of the committee a commemorative coin. Mr. Ball handed out coins to the VB VA250 Committee members.

Adjournment

Mr. Wood said we will adjourn until next month on February 12. Mr. Younce will return to present information from Beach Events. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.