TOWN OF HURT 2026

MEETING MINUTES

MONTHLY WORK SESSION MEETING

Date: August 18, 2026	Location: TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER 533 POCKET RD. HURT, VA
Time: 6pm	Adjournment: 7:58 pm
Meeting called to order by:	MAYOR GARY HODNETT

COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE ESTABLISHING A QUORUM

Vice Mayor Bob Majure
Alice Bond
Gary Poindexter
Jimmy Harding
Paul Johnson
Steve Worley

Council Members Absent:

None

TOWN STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Shannon Race, town clerk
John Eller, town attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hodnett called meeting to order at 6:02 pm and presided. Roll call by the clerk.

CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Hodnett requests a motion to move into closed session.

- Councilman Poindexter moves that the Hurt Town Council convene a closed session in accordance with Virginia Freedom of Information Act as amended. Siting Authorization: § 2.2-3711 A (1) Personnel, (3) Real Estate, (5) Prospective Business, (8) Legal Counsel (as applicable).
- Vice Mayor Majure seconds the motion for the closed session.
- Clerk calls for individual votes on the motion with Hurt Town Council voting 6-0 in favor of the closed session.
- The motion is passed, and the Hurt Town Council moves into a closed session at 6:03 PM.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION, INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

- Mayor Hodnett calls for motions to return and certify a closed session.
- Vice Mayor Majure makes a motion for the certification of the closed meeting, citing the Virginia Freedom of Information Act **(Requirement: VA FOIA § 2.2-3712 (D))**
- Mayor Hodnett calls for a second, which is given by Councilman Harding, council voted 6-0 in favor and approves the certification of the closed session.

Councilman Worley leads the invocation.

NEW BUSINESS & ITEMS ARISING SUBSEQUENT TO NOTICE

Door-to-Door Sales Ordinance

Town Attorney John Eller presented a draft ordinance, modeled on Alta Vista's code, to regulate door-to-door vendors within the Town of Hurt. Ordinance would require:

- peddlers and solicitors to register with the Town Clerk and obtain a permit before conducting door-to-door sales, providing detailed information including name, address, employer, description of goods, duration of activity, and vehicle and insurance details.
- A $20 permit fee is currently specified in the draft, but Mr. Eller recommended revising the language so that the fee is referenced from the Master List of Rates and Fees instead of being embedded in the ordinance text.

The ordinance includes exemptions for activities conducted on behalf of:

- nonprofit, charitable, civic, or religious organizations, which would cover typical school and club fundraisers (e.g., cookie and popcorn sales).

Council discussed enforcement provisions, noting that unpermitted solicitation would constitute a Class 2 misdemeanor, and that residents would be able to request to see a vendor's permit.

Council members also discussed:

- the possibility of notarizing (officially stamping) permits and requiring them to be shown visibly
- publicizing the ordinance via the town website and newspaper,
- potentially using signage or message boards to alert door-to-door vendors that permits are required.

Council members shared concerns about misleading or aggressive sales tactics, especially toward senior residents, and heard examples of individuals falsely claiming affiliation with Dominion Energy to sell solar products.

Mr. Eller noted that background checks may be beyond the intended scope of the ordinance, but that employer information and State Corporation Commission records could be used to verify legitimate businesses.

Motion: Councilman Poindexter moved to schedule a public hearing at **the September 15, 2026, work session** on the proposed ordinance in Chapter 6 of the Town Code to

regulate door-to-door vendors within the Town of Hurt municipal limits.
Councilman Johnson seconded the motion.

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote: Worley – Yes; Johnson – Yes; Harding – Yes; Bond – Yes; Majure – Yes; Poindexter – Yes.

Employee Handbook

Mayor Hodnett reported that work on the draft employee handbook is ongoing. He stated that he, Brian, and Evelyn have been reviewing the document, but that progress has been slower due to recent workload on financial matters, emphasizing that the handbook has not been forgotten and that significant work remains to be completed.

Clerk noted that she and at least one other councilmember were unable to access the shared electronic copy of the handbook due to permission issues.

Vice Mayor Majure indicated he had approved access requests but would instead download the current handbook and distribute it as an email attachment so that council members can review it without further technical difficulties.

Tree and Fence Damage at Eller Goodman Property

Mayor Hodnett reported that trees located on Town property behind Ms. Eller Goodman's residence, near the old Blackstock shop, have fallen onto her chain-link fence on more than one occasion, bending the top rail and causing repeated damage.

He noted that this issue was discussed with council several years ago and that tree contractor **John McGill** previously provided a price estimate to cut and remove the trees, but no action was taken at that time.

The mayor stated that Ms. Goodman is now pressing for the matter to be resolved, and he expressed his view that, because the trees are on Town property and have damaged a neighboring fence, the Town should move forward with addressing the problem.

Council discussed obtaining an updated quote from Mr. McGill and at least one additional quote from another tree contractor for comparison, as well as the likelihood that a separate fencing contractor will be needed to evaluate and repair the damaged aluminum/chain-link fence.

The mayor agreed to contact Mr. McGill for a written estimate, and **Councilman Johnson** offered to help identify a local fencing provider to quote the repair work.

Town Website Platform

Clerk reported that the Town is approaching a deadline to decide whether to continue with the CivicPlus website platform and sign a new agreement for an updated design and transition, or to pursue an alternative provider. She noted that a new company recently contacted her offering to assist the Town in building and hosting its own website, rather than continually renting from a third-party platform and requested that Council delay a final decision until she can obtain more information and report back.

Councilman Poindexter reviewed the Town's history with its website, emphasizing the importance of having a current, well-maintained site, and cautioned that any solution must be workable for staff, user-friendly, and affordable, noting past difficulties keeping the site updated.

Mayor Hodnett expressed concern about the additional workload that an in-house or partially-in-house solution would place on staff—particularly the clerk—and suggested using this as an opportunity to compare CivicPlus with other platforms and pricing rather than bringing extensive web maintenance back in-house.

Council also discussed the existing integration between CivicPlus and Municode, the fact that Pittsylvania County and nearby localities such as Chatham use CivicPlus, and the quality of CivicPlus's newer design templates.

No action was taken; clerk will gather details on the new option and other platforms and report back for further Council consideration.

Plaza Leases and Tenants

Mayor Hodnett reported that work is ongoing to finalize lease agreements for the tenants at the town plaza. He stated that the Town is in the process of getting the leases in order, with particular attention to completing the lease for the fresh seafood business so that tenant can be "squared away."

The mayor indicated his goal is to have all plaza contracts completed and signed within the next several weeks.

In response to a question from **Vice Mayor Majure** about whether discussion of plaza businesses should be handled in closed session as "prospective business," the mayor clarified that the prospective tenants are comfortable with the matter being discussed in open session and are eager to move forward. He noted that if the seafood tenant obtains the necessary license promptly, he is expected to come in, sign the contract, and begin preparations to open at the plaza.

Feral Cat Complaints

Council discussed ongoing complaints regarding a large population of cats in certain areas of town, including reports of property damage such as torn motorcycle seats, disturbed flowerbeds, and cats climbing on vehicles.

Town **Attorney John Eller** summarized information from Pittsylvania County and the SPCA, noting that the County does not pick up feral cats, but the SPCA can trap, spay/neuter, ear-tip, and return cats to their original location, which helps control population growth but does not eliminate nuisance behavior.

Mr. Eller explained that for enforcement or nuisance actions, the Town must be able to show that specific residents are effectively "owning" the cats by feeding and sheltering them, which requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

Jason was asked to investigate four addresses identified by the complainant, speak with residents, and document whether they are harboring the cats, with an update to be provided at a future meeting.

Council members expressed concern about the impact on residents, acknowledged the limitations imposed by state animal cruelty laws (including strict penalties for killing

cats), and agreed that any long-term response will likely involve a combination of SPCA assistance, investigation, and resident cooperation rather than lethal control.

Police Vehicle Computers

Council discussed equipping police patrol vehicles with in-car computers.

Mr. Eller explained that most law enforcement agencies in Virginia, including the State Police, Pittsylvania County, and nearby municipalities - routinely use computers in patrol cars to allow officers to check license plates, access information in the field, and complete administrative work while on duty.

Mayor Hodnett stated that providing this equipment would improve efficiency and officer safety by enabling officers to multitask and obtain information about vehicles and drivers before approaching a stop.

Motion: Councilman Johnson moved that the Town obtain price quotes for law-enforcement-grade computers for the existing police vehicles and proceed with the best price identified. The motion was **seconded by Councilman Harding** and approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Master List of Rates and Fees – FY 2026–2027

Councilman Poindexter presented the updated Master List of Rates and Fees for fiscal year 2026–2027, including the accompanying Schedule of Water and Wastewater Connection and Recovery Fees.

He explained that the water and wastewater schedule had been revised to incorporate updated three-quarter-inch service connection charges recommended by Joe and Paul, resulting in an increase to the water connection fee and a corresponding adjustment to the total fees for that service size.

Mr. Poindexter also noted that the mobile restaurant permit had been moved from the zoning section to the business and professional section, consistent with prior council direction, and that no other substantive changes were proposed beyond those previously authorized in the budget process.

Motion: Vice Mayor Majure moved to approve the Master List of Rates and Fees for FY 2026–2027, including the Schedule of Water and Wastewater Connection and Recovery Fees, as presented. The motion was seconded by **Councilman Johnson** and approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Water Treatment Plant Grant Award

Mayor Hodnett announced that the Town of Hurt has been awarded an estimated $8.3 million federal grant for the water treatment plant project. He reported that this award was the highest grant amount received among applicants in five states and described it as extremely positive news for the Town.

Council members expressed their appreciation and excitement, with several noting the importance of this funding to the community.

The mayor thanked **Pittsylvania County staff**, as well as **Rachel Dalcampo** and **her team**, for their substantial work and support in preparing the successful grant application.

Following the announcement, **Mr. Eller** noted that, with funding now assured, the Town must move promptly to secure a revised right-of-way for the project to replace an existing 80-foot right-of-way that is no longer acceptable, including obtaining a plat and associated documentation to confirm the Town's rights for construction of the plant.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Hodnett adjourned this meeting at 7:58 pm.