TOWN OF HURT 2026
MEETING MINUTES
MONTHLY WORK SESSION MEETING

Date: September 15, 2026	Location: TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER 533 POCKET RD. HURT, VA
Time: 6pm	Adjournment: 7:40 pm
Meeting called to order by:	MAYOR GARY HODNETT

COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE ESTABLISHING A QUORUM

Alice Bond
Gary Poindexter
Jimmy Harding
Steve Worley

Council Members Absent:

Vice Mayor Bob Majure – work related
Paul Johnson – family member in hospital

TOWN STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Shannon Race, town clerk
John Eller, town attorney
Jason Lovelace, Chief of Police

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hodnett called meeting to order at 6pm and presided.

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).
- Councilman Harding seconds the motion for the closed session.
- Clerk calls for individual votes on the motion with Hurt Town Council voting 4-0 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.
- Councilman Poindexter 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 Worley, council voted 4-0 in favor and approves the certification of the closed session.

Councilman Worley leads the invocation.

Public Hearing for door-to-door Ordinance

Hearing is opened. John Eller gives a recap of the ordinance.

- **Background:**
  - A resident reported being approached by a very forceful door-to-door salesman, which she found disturbing.
  - Other similar concerns from residents prompted the proposal.
- **Purpose of Ordinance:**
  - To regulate door-to-door sales in the Town of Hurt.
  - Require salespersons to obtain a permit and business license from the Town before soliciting.
  - Ensure solicitors can be identified and tracked, especially if acting improperly.
- **Required Information for Permit Applicants (as described):**
  - Full name and age
  - Legal address and local address
  - Description of business and types of goods to be sold
  - Name and address of employer
  - Length of time they plan to do business in the town
  - Vehicle description and license plate number, if applicable
  - Location where goods are proposed to be sold and, if not sold on the spot, where goods will come from when delivered
- **Proposed Exemptions (no permit required):**

  1. Persons selling fresh farm products
  2. Persons selling newspapers
  3. Insurance agents licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia under the Virginia Code
  4. Nonprofit, civic, educational, or religious organizations soliciting
  5. Political candidates and political canvassers

- **Identification:**
    - Those receiving a permit would be issued identification to wear, showing who they are and the company they represent.

Discussion – Identification and Security

- Council suggestion: Add a requirement to obtain a copy of a state-issued ID from permit applicants.
- John Eller: Agrees that identification is required; open to adding explicit language requiring government-issued photo identification.
- Mayor Hodnett: Suggests possibly copying driver's licenses or similar.
- Chief Lovelace: Emphasizes the need for state-issued ID, noting that anyone could otherwise fabricate an ID.
- Fingerprinting Discussion:
    - Mayor Hodnett (partly in jest, partly exploratory) asks if the Town should fingerprint applicants.
    - John Eller expresses concern this may be going too far but indicates council could choose to do so.
    - Councilman Poindexter: Calls fingerprinting "a little bit of overkill".
    - Consensus at this point leans toward photo ID requirement being appropriate, while fingerprinting requires more research.

Discussion – Hours of Solicitation

- **Public Speaker Comment:**
    - Dixie Poindexter Suggests adding time restrictions because solicitors have come as late as 7:00 PM, near dark.
    - Requests limiting to business hours (discussion around 8–5 or 9–5).
- **Council Discussion:**
    - General support for restricting solicitation between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM.
        - Mayor Hodnett and others affirm 9–5 as reasonable.
        - Councilman Worley later explicitly supports 9–5 and notes people do not want knocks at 7:00 PM

County Practices & Fingerprinting:

- Chief Lovelace: Notes that when the county issues similar permits, he understands they require fingerprinting.
    - He often encounters solar salesmen who don't realize they've crossed into another jurisdiction.
    - He currently directs them to the county for permits and fingerprinting.

Discussion arises on whether the Town should:

- Require a Town permit, and also direct vendors to the county if selling there as well.
- **Uncertainty:** Chief clarifies this is somewhat based on hearsay and offers to call the county in the morning to verify.

Next Steps – Ordinance Finalization:

- John Eller suggests researching:
  - County fingerprinting requirements
  - How best to structure requirements
- Proposal to refine and finalize the ordinance language by the next council meeting (referenced as working on a "final version at the next meeting").
- **Key emerging consensus items to be added:**
  - Government-issued photo ID requirement
  - Restricted solicitation hours (9:00 AM – 5:00 PM)
  - Possibly alignment/awareness of county requirements regarding fingerprinting.

Permit Fee and Duration

- **Permit Form & Fee:**
  - Mayor Hodnett: Notes the Town will need an application form similar to existing forms.
  - Questions whether a fee should be charged.
  - John Eller: Cites that state code allows a $20 peddler's license fee.
- **Permit Duration / Validity:**
  - Dixie Poindexter asks how long the permit will be good for.
  - John Eller: Says applicants must specify the period of time they intend to sell.
  - Councilman Worley: Clarifies that the $20 fee is annual; discussion affirms that understanding.

Public Hearing Close

- After questions and comments, Mayor Hodnett moves to close the public hearing on the door-to-door ordinance.
- No formal vote
- Final vote on the door-to-door ordinance is extended to the next council meeting on October 6, 2026.

New Business – Municipal Project Updates

Presenter: Mayor Hodnett

1. **State Water Mandate**
    - The Town is "pretty much where we need to be on the state mandate."
    - Scott Bortz is reviewing a few remaining items.
    - Contractors are preparing to start work, and visible activity is expected soon.
2. **Plaza Redevelopment**
    - Mayor spoke with Matt today;
    - 3D scans have been completed;
    - Drawings and blueprints are ready.
    - Expectation: Within two to three weeks, some visible work at the Plaza should begin.
3. **Water Treatment Plant Project**
    - Mayor has spoken with Dewberry regarding the Water Treatment Plant.
    - Timeline requirements:
    - 1 year to complete all engineering work;
    - 2 additional years to complete construction.
    - Target: Plant should be operational within three years.
    - Coordination with new business:
    - Prospective businesses coming to town want assurance the Town's system will be ready when they are.
    - They do not want to tie into another water source temporarily and then later hook to the Town.
    - If the Town causes delay, Mayor implies the Town should bear any associated costs, not the business.
    - Council generally agrees with this expectation of responsibility.
4. **Employee Handbook**
    - Still being worked on with Evelyn Vaden
    - Progress is characterized as slow but ongoing.

Items Added Subsequent to Agenda

Police Department Clerk / Accreditation Position

- council discussed the need of a clerk for the police department in hopes of getting the department accredited.
- A potential study of a new employee (police department clerk)
- Organizational changes in other areas.

Original Motion:

Councilman Poindexter made a motion to authorize the Mayor to investigate and review the prospect of a properly certified clerk for the police department on a part-time (or full-time) basis, including cost and implications.

Clarification by Mayor:

- Not specifically "certified clerk," but bringing in someone to work toward department accreditation.

Amended Motion (restated by Poindexter):

- To authorize the Mayor to investigate hiring a police department clerk whose role would be to:
  - Work toward proper accreditation of the department;
  - Improve position for grant funding from external sources;
  - Redistribute paperwork;
  - Free up officers' time so they can be more present in the field.

Motion:

Councilman Poindexter made the motion to authorize the Mayor to investigate hiring a police department clerk whose role would be to work toward proper accreditation of the department; Improve position for grant funding from external sources; redistribute paperwork; and free up officers' time so they can be more present in the field.

Second by Councilman Worley with council voting 4-0 in favor of pursuing the clerk for the PD department.

Mayor is authorized and directed to research a police department clerk / accreditation support role and report back by October 6.

Flock cameras

- This discussion was postponed because Vice Major Majure was absent from the meeting.

Mayor to Assume Police Department Scheduling

- **Context:**
  - Councilman Worley references earlier closed session discussions about the Mayor handling scheduling for the Police Department.

Motion – Scheduling Authority:

Made by: Councilman Worley to place the Mayor in charge of scheduling the Police Department, i.e., controlling hours/schedules for officers.

- There is some verbal stumbling in framing the exact wording, but John Eller and Councilman Poindexter help clarify that the motion is:

"That the Mayor will be in charge of scheduling the Police Department."

Second by Councilmember Alice Bond motion passes unanimously.

Result: Mayor Hodnett is now formally in charge of scheduling for the Police Department.

Road Maintenance Discussion – East Spencer Road / Dirt Road Concerns

Issue Raised by: Councilman Worley

Resident Complaint & Scope

- Refers to a gentleman who had previously raised concerns about a dirt road at last month's meeting.
- Question: Has the Town looked into asphalt options or treatments for that road?
- **Mayor's Initial Response:**
    - Spoke with "**Jello**" (likely J.R. or another contact) who said full asphalt paving would be extremely expensive – estimates could reach around half a million dollars.

Approximate Road Length & Configuration

- The road is identified as related **to East Spencer Road** near the cemetery / New Prospect area.
- **Chief Lovelace:**
    - Describes the segment:
        - From the top of the street at the stop sign to roughly under the railroad overpass.
        - Approximate distance: 0.2–0.3 miles.
    - Notes it's not very long, but not short either, with about four houses on the gravel section.

Options: Asphalt vs. Gravel vs. VDOT Standards

- **Council Discussion:**
    - **Mayor Hodnett:** Suggests council should:
        - Assess the cost;
        - Set a target budget or a number they can "live within."
    - Major concern: To bring it up to VDOT/state standards (for possible county maintenance takeover) would be expensive.
- **State/VDOT Requirements (as explained by John Eller):**
    - Need a 50-foot right-of-way (current plat likely shows less, around 30 feet by recollection).
    - Require an 8-inch base and substantial construction before the state/county would assume maintenance.
- **Alternative – Gravel Solution:**
    - Councilmember Alice Bond: Suggests using gravel instead of full asphalt.
        - Shares experience from a farm driveway maintained with periodic gravel applications every 3–4 years.
    - Consideration of dust concerns:
        - Discussion about how much dust would blow back onto properties.
        - Washed #57 gravel (as used in drain fields) is suggested as a way to minimize dust.

Speed Limit and Signage

- Worley: Suggests that if the road is under town control, the town might:
    - Post a 10 mph speed limit to reduce dust and improve safety.

- Chief Lovelace: Notes there is no existing speed limit sign because it is in state maintenance status now.
- Idea emerges:
    - First steps could be:
        - Grading the road,
        - Applying washed gravel,
        - Considering speed limit signage,
        - Rather than pursuing costly full asphalt and VDOT takeover standards immediately.

Contractor & Cost Research

- **Past Contractor Use:**
    - Councilmember Bond and Worley mention Adams Trucking has previously supplied gravel for the Town and for private drives.
    - Chief Lovelace: Confirms Adams Trucking has graded and graveled the road in the past for the Town.
- **Motion/Direction (informal but clear):**
    - Councilman Worley volunteers to:
        - Measure the road (length and width);
        - Contact two or three asphalt contractors for ballpark estimates;
        - Also obtain estimates for:
            - Gravel solutions (e.g., washed #57 stone), and
            - Possibly surface treatments less expensive than full asphalt.
        - Specifically consult Adams Trucking for gravel pricing.
    - Several council members express support for:
        - Trying to help the residents,
        - At least improving the surface with gravel and possibly speed signage.
- **Condition of the Road (per Chief Lovelace):**
    - Road is actually in pretty good shape, structurally.
    - Likely has substantial existing gravel, but dust and loose dirt are issues.
    - Cemetery roads are in some ways worse with potholes.
- **Timeline:**
    - Worley indicates he will:
        - Gather quotes and figures and
        - Bring them back to council by the first of the month (implying before/at next regular meeting).

Result:

- No formal vote recorded, but clear consensus direction:
    - Councilman Worley to measure the road and obtain quotes for:
        - Asphalt paving,
        - Gravel/surface treatment, and
        - Related grading/maintenance options,

- And to report findings at an upcoming meeting.

Comprehensive Plan Completion

Raised by: Councilman Poindexter

Point:

The Town has "a whole gamut of projects" underway, and there are only three and a half months left in the year.
Among priorities is the need to address the Comprehensive Plan, which is not a small project.
Bob (not present at this meeting) has been looking into the comprehensive plan work.

Concern:

The comprehensive plan needs to be updated or completed between now and New Year's, and it takes time.
Poindexter expresses he is already overextended and cannot take on more, but wants to ensure it remains on the council's radar.

Mayor Hodnett:

Indicates his understanding that Bob is working on it and that this needs follow-up.

Result:

No motion; this functions as a formal reminder that the Comprehensive Plan remains a time-sensitive priority for completion or significant progress by year-end.

Administrative Item – Town Seal / Inker Purchase

Request by: Shannon Race

Issue:

For the door-to-door ordinance documentation, a stamped seal is requested by council. Current town seal is an embosser that creates a raised impression but no ink.
Shannon requests **authorization to purchase**:

- An inker made for embossers (so ink only hits the raised portion, preventing smearing),
- alternatively, to order a different type of seal that includes ink.

Cost:

Estimated around $40 (for inker), described as "not cheap, but will last a while."

Discussion:

Councilman Poindexter: Notes $40 is not a large amount.

- Asks what other uses this tool would have.

John Eller:

Demonstrates or describes another option:

- A seal with raised letters that flips onto an ink pad, producing a blue embossed ink seal.
- Suggests this may be simpler and possibly cheaper.

Poindexter:

- States he is fine with either approach, defers to staff preference as long as there isn't a large cost difference.

Worley:

- States he is fine with Shannon ordering what is needed.

Consensus / Direction:

- Council members present approve Shannon ordering an appropriate town seal solution (inker or new seal) to meet the ordinance and general administrative needs.

Result: Shannon Race is authorized to procure the town-seal inker or replacement seal as needed.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Hodnett adjourned this meeting at 7:40 pm.

