TOWN OF HURT 2026

MEETING MINUTES

MONTHLY WORK SESSION MEETING

Date: October 20, 2026	Location: TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER 533 POCKET RD. HURT, VA
Time: 6 pm	Adjournment: 8:40 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
Steve Worley

Council Members Absent:

Paul Johnson

TOWN STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:

Brian Sisk, treasurer
John Eller, town attorney
Tristan Markins, town officer
Jason Lovelace, Police Chief

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hodnett called meeting to order at 6:05 pm 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.
- Mayor calls for individual votes on the motion with Hurt Town Council voting 5-0 in favor of the closed session.
- The motion is passed, and the Hurt Town Council moves into a closed session at 6:07 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 Vice Mayor Majure, council voted 5-0 in favor and approves the certification of the closed session.

Councilman Worley leads the invocation.

NEW BUSINESS & ITEMS ARISING SUBSEQUENT TO NOTICE

Employee Handbook Review

Vice Mayor Majure presented a draft handbook revised using prior meeting minutes. The council discussed the following provisions and directed that a clean draft be prepared for review and a planned vote at the next business meeting:

- **COLA raises:** Tied to the fiscal year, taking effect July 1 rather than January.
- **Paid holidays:** Election Day and Veterans Day would be listed as holidays.
- **New hires:** A 90-day probationary period.
- **Sick leave:** Taken in four- or eight-hour blocks, as described in the draft.
- **Holidays:** Employees would need to work the day before and after a holiday to receive holiday pay.
- **Vacation payout and separation:** The draft provided for vacation payout when an employee gives two weeks' notice; it also discussed rehire eligibility when notice is not given.
- **Health insurance:** A 90-day waiting period was described.
- **Work injuries:** The first injury report would go to the clerk, then be escalated through the workers' compensation process.
- **Attendance:** Employees should call in at least one hour before a shift if they cannot come in. The draft's occurrence language was discussed, but the transcript is unclear on its exact wording.
- **Town vehicles:** The proposed requirement was age 21 or older with a clean driving record.
- **Police handbook:** Vice Mayor Majure said he had cross-checked it against the town handbook for conflicting provisions.

The above provisions were presented as updates or items already discussed, rather than each being voted on separately in this meeting.

The council also discussed:

- **Bereavement leave:** Five paid days for immediate family members and three paid days for other covered relatives. The existing provision allowing up to 80 hours of emergency leave at the mayor/town manager's discretion would remain.

- **Performance evaluations:** Annual written evaluations were supported, with the goal of tying raises to performance.
- **Overtime:** Cash overtime was favored over compensatory time, with supervisor approval required. The police department's separate Section 7(k) overtime and meal-period provisions require review.
- **Meals and breaks:** Discussion supported an unpaid one-hour meal period and 2 paid 15-minute rest breaks for non-police staff. Final handbook language remains subject to review.
- **Parental leave:** The council supported an eight-week paid parental leave policy as a compromise between the prior 12-week trial policy and shorter options discussed.
- **Grievances:** Given the town's staffing level, the council supported an informal resolution process involving the mayor/town manager and council, rather than adopting the state's multi-step procedure.
- **Discipline:** The draft will remove documentation of verbal counseling as a formal discipline step. Written discipline will be documented, with an opportunity for the employee to respond. The handbook will also state that employment is at will.
- **Legal provisions for review:** Pregnancy and lactation accommodations, Virginia Human Rights Act language, FMLA wording and applicability, and police overtime/meal-period language were referred for legal review.
- **Other draft updates:** The draft ties annual COLA raises to the July 1 fiscal year, identifies Election Day and Veterans Day as paid holidays, and includes other previously discussed handbook provisions.
- **life-insurance premium contribution:** the amount is to be confirmed before it is stated in the handbook.

Door-to-Door Vendor Ordinance

Council discussed revisions to the draft ordinance. The discussion supported retaining fingerprinting and providing a photo-identification permit. Solicitation hours were set at **9 a.m.–6 p.m. during Eastern Daylight Time** and **9 a.m.–5 p.m. during Eastern Standard Time**. The vague "unsatisfactory" application-denial criterion is to be removed. The ordinance will also reflect the agreed permit and application provisions.

Other Business

East Spencer Road: Council discussed reports of speeding and reduced dust after rock was spread. The cost of speed-limit signs and posts remains to be determined.

Plaza project: The mayor reported that the contractor was working to finalize crews and begin as soon as possible; no start date was available.

Public comment: Mrs. Poindexter questioned whether paid rest breaks were needed given staff's access to facilities and ordinary breaks.

Action Items

- Prepare a clean employee-handbook draft with an updated table of contents for the next business meeting.

- Revise the handbook to reflect the council's direction, including bereavement leave, parental leave, evaluations, overtime, meal/rest periods, and other discussed provisions. **Vice Mayor Majure**
- Review the handbook's legal language, including grievance procedures, pregnancy/lactation accommodations, Virginia Human Rights Act provisions, FMLA applicability, and police overtime/meal periods. **John Eller**
- Confirm the town's basic life-insurance premium contribution. **Brian Sisk**
- Finalize the vendor ordinance with the agreed fingerprinting, photo-ID permit, seasonal hours, and application-denial language. **John Eller**
- Confirm with the county how vendor fingerprints are processed and retained. **Chief Lovelace**
- Determine the cost of East Spencer Road signs and posts. **Joe Smith**

Next step: The clean handbook draft is to return to council for review, with a vote planned at the next business meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Hodnett adjourned this meeting at 8:40 pm.