



## CITY COUNCIL

### MINUTES

**Monday, January 12, 2026 at 6:30 PM**

Work Session, 5:45 PM

Council Chambers Conference Room, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, Salem,  
Virginia 24153

Regular Session, 6:30 PM, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, Salem, Virginia 24153

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### WORK SESSION

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#### 1. Call to Order

A work session of the Council of the City of Salem, Virginia, was held in the Council Chambers Conference Room, City Hall, 114 N. Broad Street, Salem, Virginia, on January 12, 2026, at 5:45 p.m., there being present the following members of said Council to wit: Renée Ferris Turk, Mayor; Anne Marie Green, Vice-Mayor; Council members; Byron Randolph Foley, H. Hunter Holliday, and John Saunders; with Renée Ferris Turk, Mayor, presiding; together with Chris Dorsey, City Manager; Rob Light, Assistant City Manager and Clerk of Council; Rosie Jordan, Director of Finance; Crystal Williams, Assistant to the City Manager; and Laura Lea Harris, Deputy Clerk of Council; and the following business was transacted;

#### 2. New Business

##### A. Discussion Items

##### Council Retreat Follow-Up Discussion

A discussion was facilitated by Mr. Dorsey, Mr. Light, and Mrs. Williams as follow-up to the Council Retreat which was held on September 29, 2025. Council discussed the draft mission statement that was developed and concurred that they wished to make this their official mission statement. The core values of Council were noted as well as strengths, challenges, and opportunities for the City of Salem. Mr. Light acknowledged that a review of the Economic Development Strategic Plan was presented at the retreat by Tommy Miller, Director of Economic Development. Discussion was held on collective Council goals. Mayor Turk

requested an update from the Water Department at a future work session on the status of the City water and sewer projects.

### 3. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Turk adjourned the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

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## REGULAR SESSION

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### 1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Salem, Virginia, was called to order at 6:30 p.m., there being present the following members to wit: Renée Ferris Turk, Mayor; Anne Marie Green, Vice-Mayor; Councilmembers: Byron Randolph Foley, Hunter Holliday, and John Saunders; with Renée Ferris Turk, Mayor, presiding together with Chris Dorsey, City Manager; Rob Light, Assistant City Manager and Clerk of Council; Rosie Jordan, Director of Finance; Mary Ellen Wines, Zoning Administrator; Mike Stevens, Director of Communications; and Jim Guynn, City Attorney.

### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

### 3. Bid Opening, Awards, Recognitions

Mayor Turk asked Matthew Dade Hutchison and Deputy Drew Sturgill to come forward. She noted that the City of Salem Sheriff's Office hired Matthew Dade Hutchison on January 4, 2026. She shared that he came to Salem from the Western Virginia Regional Jail where he was employed for three and a half years as a jailor. Mayor Turk added that Hutchison was a Salem High School graduate in 2020 and that he resides in Salem. Accompanying Hutchison this evening was Field Training Deputy Drew Sturgill. Mayor Turk and Council welcomed Hutchison to the Salem Sheriff's Office family.

### 4. Consent Agenda

#### A. Citizen Comments

Comments from the public, limited to five minutes, on matters not already having a public hearing at the same meeting.

John Breen, 142 Bogey Lane, spoke in opposition to Senate Bill 97, which is currently awaiting action in the Senate Local Government Committee and has a corresponding bill already passed by the House. He cited concerns that state-mandated housing growth requirements and related zoning and density changes could negatively affect neighborhood character, infrastructure, public safety, traffic, and property values. Mr. Breen questioned the local benefits of the required housing increase, expressed concern over potential state override of local land-use decisions, and requested that Council adopt a resolution opposing the bill and convey that position to state legislators.

Mayor Turk noted that this action was being considered by the state representatives and that City Council had no power over this potential action. She emphasized that Council was asking the citizens to contact their state representatives with their concerns on this and that Council appreciated the support of the citizens in this.

**B. Minutes**

Consider acceptance of the December 11, 2025, Work Session and Regular Meeting minutes.

The minutes were approved as written.

**5. Old Business**

There was no Old Business this evening.

**6. New Business**

**A. Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance**

Hold public hearing and consider adoption of ordinance on first reading for the request of Khalili LLC, property owner, and Jay Patel or Assigns, contract purchaser, to rezone the property located at 1000 Electric Road (Tax Map #221-2-1) from RB Residential Business District to HBD Highway Business District to allow the installation of fuel tanks and a canopy for operation of a gasoline station (Advertised in the December 25, 2025, and January 1, 2026, issues of *The Salem Times-Register*). (Planning Commission recommended approval.)

Mayor Turk requested that Ms. Wines share information on this item for the benefit of the public.

Ms. Wines shared that 1000 Electric Road is a 0.647-acre tract of land, which sits in the RB Residential Business District. This was formerly a Speedway gas station and convenience store. Residential Business does not allow for gasoline stations currently. When Speedway left in 2023, they removed the gas canopies and the gas tanks, which ultimately removed their grandfathering to allow a gas station at this location. In order to have a gas station here, they are requesting to rezone the property to Highway Business District to allow for that use, as well as the convenience store.

Mayor Turk opened the public hearing.

Steve Drake, representing Wainwright & Co. Realtors, in Salem. He noted that JFM Hotels, C Stores will renovate an existing gas station and convenience store site that has operated in this location since the 1980s. The project does not introduce a new use. The renovation represents more than \$2 million in acquisition and improvement costs and is expected to create 14 full- and part-time jobs. Prepared food sales are projected at \$500,000 in the first year, generating approximately \$30,000 in tax revenue for the City. In addition, an estimated \$700,000 in annual taxable sales from

general merchandise is expected, producing additional 1% local sales tax revenue, exclusive of fuel, tobacco, alcohol, lottery, and deli sales.

Mayor Turk closed the public hearing.

Hunter Holliday motioned to adopt the ordinance on first reading for the request of Khalili LLC, property owner, and Jay Patel or Assigns, contract purchaser, to rezone the property located at 1000 Electric Road (Tax Map #221-2-1) from RB Residential Business District to HBD Highway Business District to allow the installation of fuel tanks and a canopy for operation of a gasoline station. Randy Foley seconded the motion.

Ayes: John Saunders, Hunter Holliday, Randy Foley, Anne Marie Green, Renée Turk

Nays: None

Abstaining: None

**B. Amendment to the City Code**

Hold a public hearing and consider adoption of ordinance on first reading amending Chapter 66 Signs of the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA (Advertised in the December 25, 2025, and January 1, 2026, editions of *The Salem Times-Register*). (Planning Commission recommended approval.)

**Recommend holding the public hearing and continuing first reading of the ordinance to the February 9, 2026, meeting.**

Mayor Turk asked Ms. Wines to provide background information on this item.

Ms. Wines noted that staff had concerns regarding the increased use of strip, string, and accent lighting throughout the City and the potential impact on the character and brightness of key corridors, including West Main Street and downtown areas. She expressed that while accent lighting can enhance buildings, widespread and unregulated use could detract from corridor aesthetics. Staff initially proposed amendments to restrict certain types of lighting in specific districts; however, further discussion indicated the issue is more complex than a single regulatory change. Staff recommends taking additional time to study the matter and to provide opportunities for input before moving forward with any proposed regulations. Staff requested that Council continue the first reading of the ordinance.

Mayor Turk opened the public hearing.

No one came forward to speak.

Mayor Turk closed the public hearing.

Randy Foley motioned to continue the first reading of the ordinance to the February 9, 2026, meeting. Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

Ayes: John Saunders, Hunter Holliday, Randy Foley, Anne Marie Green, Renée Turk  
Nays: None  
Abstaining: None

Mayor Turk noted that the public hearing had been held this evening and requested that citizens send any comments, concerns, or feedback to Council or Community Development. She reiterated that there would not be a second public hearing.

**C. Resolution 1516 -Constitutional Officer Salary Supplement**

Consider adoption of Resolution 1516 approving a 5% salary supplement for those individuals duly sworn as Constitutional Officers effective January 1, 2026, in the City of Salem not already receiving a 5% Virginia Retirement System (VRS) supplement from the City which is required for others per the Virginia General Assembly, Chapter 822, 2012 Acts of Assembly.

City Manager Dorsey noted that this item related to the provisions of Act 822 of the 2012 General Assembly, which addressed retirement contributions for constitutional officers. Under the Act, constitutional officers employed in a constitutional office as of June 30, 2012, were eligible to receive a 5% retirement supplement to offset changes requiring employees to pay their own Virginia Retirement System (VRS) contributions. Due to ambiguity regarding the status of certain local constitutional officers at that time, staff was requesting that Council consider a one-time action to apply the 5% supplement to all constitutional officers sworn in effective January 1, 2026, in order to ensure fairness and consistency. This action was noted as a one-time adjustment and not a change to ongoing policy.

Randy Foley motioned to adopt Resolution 1516 approving a 5% salary supplement for those individuals duly sworn as Constitutional Officers effective January 1, 2026, in the City of Salem not already receiving a 5% Virginia Retirement System (VRS) supplement from the City which is required for others per the Virginia General Assembly, Chapter 822, 2012 Acts of Assembly. Anne Marie Green seconded the motion.

Ayes: John Saunders, Hunter Holliday, Randy Foley, Anne Marie Green, Renée Turk  
Nays: None  
Abstaining: None

**D. Boards and Commissions**

Consider appointments to various boards and commissions.

Randy Foley motioned to reappoint Steve Poff for a five-year term ending January 1, 2031, to the Board of Appeals (USBC Building Code); to appoint Chris Roberts, upon CPMT approval, as an additional alternate for the Court Services Unit to the Community Policy Management Team; and to reappoint Tommy Miller as a full member for a four-year term ending February 3, 2030, and Crystal Willimas as an alternate for a four-year term ending February 3, 2030, to the Western Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority. Anne Marie Green seconded the motion.

Ayes: John Saunders, Hunter Holliday, Randy Foley, Anne Marie Green, Renée Turk  
Nays: None  
Abstaining: None

7. Adjournment

Mayor Turk noted informational postings found on the City website for the benefit of the public and encouraged them to utilize this resource.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

Submitted by:



H. Robert Light  
Clerk of Council

Approved by:



Renée Ferris Turk  
Mayor