



CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

Tuesday, May 26, 2026, at 6:30 PM

Work Session, 6:00 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

WORK SESSION

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 May 26, 2026, at 6:00 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 (participated remotely); 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; Larado Robinson, Director of Water/Sewer Department; Nathan Carroll, Assistant Director of Water/Sewer Department; Chris Dadak, on behalf of City Attorney, Jim Guynn; Crystal Williams, Assistant to the City Manager; and Laura Lea Harris, Deputy Clerk of Council; and the following business was transacted;

Mayor Turk reported that this date, place, and time had been set in order for the Council to hold a work session; and

2. New Business

A. Discussion Items

City Administration Updates

Larado Robinson, Director of the Water/Sewer Department, presented an update on ongoing and future Water/Sewer projects. Nathan Carroll, Assistant Director of the Water/Sewer Department, was also in attendance. Council asked questions and received responses from Mr. Robinson and Mr. Carroll. Discussion was held on some of the projects.

Mr. Dorsey shared information with Council on a Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development Community Block Grant (DHCD CDBG) for which Community Development is in the process of applying. This is a Planning Grant that would fund a comprehensive Housing and Future Needs assessment. He shared information on what was involved in this application process.

Ms. Jordan shared proposed revisions to the Fee Schedule for Fiscal Year 2027 that Council would be voting on this evening. These revisions were to copy costs and would help create greater consistency among departmental fees and better align charges with current production costs.

3. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Turk adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

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; Council members: Byron Randolph Foley, Hunter Holliday, and John Saunders (participated remotely); 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; Chuck Van Allman, Director of Community Development; Mike Stevens, Director of Communications; and Chris Dadak, on behalf of Jim Guynn, City Attorney.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Turk requested that Mr. Light read a request from Councilman Saunders to participate remotely in this meeting.

Mr. Light noted that Councilman Saunders asked him to read the following request on his behalf. "In accordance with Section 2.2- 3708.3 B (1) of the Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Remote Participation Policy of the City of Salem, I hereby request to participate remotely due to a temporary medical condition that prevents my attendance."

Randy Foley motioned to accept the remote participation of Councilman Saunders. Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

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

Nays: None

Abstaining: John Saunders

3. Awards & Recognitions

A. Salem High School Girls Basketball Team

Recognize the accomplishments of the Salem High School Girls Basketball Team.

Mayor Turk shared that Council would like to recognize the Salem High School Girls Basketball team this evening. She shared details of the accomplishments of Coach Scott Jester and his team over the past few years. Council expressed pride in the team, and pictures were taken of the team and Council by Mike Stevens.

B. Salem High School - State Championship - Individual Debate

Consider the adoption of Resolution 1529 honoring Salem High School Individual Debate members Dylan Hancock, Luke Stovall, and Kody Hinnant for their VHSL Class 4 State Championships.

Mayor Turk shared that Council would like to recognize individual members of the Salem High School Debate team Dylan Hancock, Luke Stovall, and Kody Hinnant for their VHSL Class 4 State Championships.

Mayor Turk invited the students and coaches forward and read Resolution 1529 for those present.

Randy Foley motioned to adopt Resolution 1529. Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

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

The students were each presented with a copy of the resolution and a Salem Championship pin. City Council expressed congratulations, and pictures were taken by Mike Stevens.

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.

No citizens signed up to speak this evening.

B. Minutes

Consider acceptance of the May 11, 2026, Work Session and Regular Meeting minutes.

The minutes were approved as written.

Mayor Turk requested that the City Manager provide an update on current items in the City of Salem.

City Manager Dorsey provided an update on recent and upcoming activities and events in the City of Salem.

5. Old Business

A. Resolution 1530 adopting the City's Fee Schedule for Fiscal Year 2027

Consider the approval of Resolution 1530 adopting the City's Fee Schedule for Fiscal Year 2027

Mayor Turk requested that Ms. Jordan provide information on this item.

Ms. Jordan explained that the proposed fee schedule is part of the annual budget process and includes all City fees except taxes, which are adopted separately by resolution. Three minor revisions to the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 fee schedule were presented.

The proposed changes include:

- Reducing the Commissioner of Revenue's fee for copies from \$0.50 to \$0.25 per page for consistency with other departments;
- Increasing the Communications Department staff member fee from \$5 to \$8 per quarter-hour to better reflect current staffing costs; and
- Increasing Communications Department photocopy fees from \$0.10 per page to \$0.25 per black-and-white copy and \$0.50 per color copy.

It was recommended that no change be made to Library copy fees for patrons. The Friends of the Library group currently covers copy fees for patrons. This arrangement is also utilized by neighboring localities. Staff is requesting that the current Library copy fee structure remain unchanged to maintain consistency and continue supporting patrons who utilize multiple library systems in the region.

Hunter Holliday motioned to approve Resolution 1530 adopting the City's Fee Schedule for Fiscal Year 2027 with the changes presented. Anne Marie Green seconded the motion.

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

Nays: None

Abstaining: None

B. Resolution 1531 adopting the budget for Fiscal Year 2027

Consider approval of Resolution 1531 adopting the budget for Fiscal Year 2027.

Mayor Turk asked Ms. Jordan if she had any comments on this item for the public that was not in attendance at the previous meeting.

Ms. Jordan explained that the adoption and appropriation of the budget is a two-step process. The current action represents the first step, which is adoption of the budget. It was noted that the changes incorporated into the proposed budget were reviewed at the previous meeting and that only minimal revisions were made to the proposed budget that was originally presented to City Council. Council was requested this evening to adopt the resolution in order to have the budget in place for July 1, 2026.

Hunter Holliday motioned to adopt Resolution 1531 adopting the budget for Fiscal Year 2027. Randy Foley seconded the motion.

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

Nays: None

Abstaining: None

C. Budget Appropriation Ordinances

Individually consider on second reading the ordinances appropriating funds for:

(a) Fiscal Year 2027 City of Salem operating budget and approval of the Schematic List of Positions and Pay Scale for Fiscal Year 2027 and:

(b) Fiscal Year 2027 City of Salem capital budget and:

(c) Fiscal Year 2027 budget for Salem City Schools

Randy Foley motioned to adopt on second reading the ordinance appropriating funds for the Fiscal Year 2027 City of Salem Operating Budget and approving the Schematic List of Positions and Pay Scale for Fiscal Year 2027. Anne Marie Green seconded the motion.

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

Nays: None

Abstaining: None

Anne Marie Green motioned to adopt on second reading the ordinance appropriating funds for the Fiscal Year 2027 City of Salem capital budget. Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

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

Nays: None

Abstaining: None

Hunter Holliday motioned to adopt on second reading the ordinance appropriating funds for the Fiscal Year 2027 budget for Salem City Schools. Randy Foley

seconded the motion.

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

Nays: None

Abstaining: None

6. New Business

A. Amendment to the City Code - Chapter 106, Zoning

Hold a public hearing and consider the ordinance on first reading for the request of ABoone Real Estate Inc. to amend Chapter 106 Zoning, Article III Use and Design Standards, Section 106-304.17(G)(4) Townhouse, of the CODE OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA pertaining to separation between townhouse groupings. (Advertised in the May 7 and 14, 2026, issues of the *Salem Times-Register*.) (Planning Commission recommended approval).

Mr. Van Allman explained that the requested amendment would align the City's requirements with those of surrounding localities and provide greater consistency. He stated that the existing 40-foot separation requirement originated from older building codes developed when firewalls and separation did not meet current standards. Advancements in fire-rated windows and openings, along with modern fire safety and maintenance codes, have made the separation requirement largely obsolete. Mr. Van Allman further noted that the Fire Department would continue to have adequate access and that the current separation distance exceeds what is necessary for safety purposes.

Mayor Turk asked to confirm that this is basically to allow people to have doors and windows on a side.

Mr. Van Allman confirmed this.

Mr. Light noted that this does not change the density, so the same number of townhomes per acre is still applicable. This does not had more townhomes to the acre.

Mayor Turk noted that Council had discussed this in the last Work Session, that the Fire Chief was in attendance, and that this proposal fit the needs of the Fire Department.

Mayor Turk opened the public hearing.

John Breen, 142 Bogey Lane, expressed opposition to the proposed Code change. He expressed concerns regarding increased housing density, fire safety, privacy, and the financial impact of residential development. Mr. Breen asserted that Salem has no identified housing crisis, noted that other localities maintain greater townhouse separation requirements, and urged Council to pause and consider alternative approaches.

Stella Reinhard, 213 N. Broad Street, noting that she had emailed her concerns to Council earlier, expressed concern about the proposed zoning amendment and suggested the matter be considered through a special exception process to allow additional time for review of potential impacts on other zoning provisions and future development. She referenced the Comprehensive Plan process and stated that more time should be taken before implementing related zoning changes.

Ms. Reinhard also raised concerns about procedural consistency in public participation, questioning differences in speaking privileges between residents and non-resident developers, and requested clarification on how such matters are addressed under the City's code.

Councilman Foley noted that a citizen that had been noted by Ms. Reinhard was allowed to speak at Council meetings.

Mr. Light noted that public hearings are open to anyone to speak.

Mayor Turk closed the public hearing.

Randy Foley motioned to adopt the ordinance on first reading amending Chapter 106, Zoning, Article III, Use and Design Standards. Renée Turk seconded the motion.

Councilman Holliday noted that he did not have an objection to the proposed request for the Wheeler property; however, he suggested that the matter be addressed through a special exception process rather than a broad zoning amendment. Councilman Holliday expressed support for evaluating similar requests on a case-by-case basis and noted agreement with concerns raised during the public hearing. He asked if the proposal could be considered on a limited basis at this time, with further review of the approach at a later date.

Mr. Van Allman clarified that the proposed amendment would not eliminate the existing 20-foot separation requirement contained in the code. He explained that the change relates primarily to design flexibility, particularly regarding exterior features such as windows, doors, and access ways, rather than building separation or open space. It was noted that under current standards, developments may either maintain a 20-foot separation without windows or incorporate windows within that same separation distance under revised provisions, with no change to the minimum separation requirement.

Councilman Holliday asked to confirm that there would be no decks on the sides either way.

Mr. Van Allman confirmed that this was correct because that would be considered a structure within that and would add to the 20 feet. He emphasized that this would not change the 20-foot requirement and ABoone could still do that. This would just relate to whether they could add windows and doors.

Council member Green stated that she had previously voted against the original concept but noted that the approved plan reflected a 20-foot separation as adopted by Council. She indicated that the current decision point was related to design considerations within that approved framework and characterized the issue as one of aesthetics within the existing 20-foot standard.

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

B. Abstract of Votes

Receive the Abstract of Referendum Votes cast at the Special Election held on April 21, 2026.

The Abstract of Votes was received by Council.

7. Adjournment

Councilman Foley announced that he would not seek re-election in the upcoming November election. He expressed that it had been an honor and privilege to serve the City and thanked family, friends, City staff, and the voters for their support over the past two decades. Councilman Foley reflected on his tenure, noting pride in accomplishments achieved during his service and expressing gratitude for the memories, partnerships, and experiences gained while serving on Council.

Council expressed sorrow at hearing this news, and also appreciation for Councilman Foley's work and service to the City of Salem.

Councilman Holliday announced that the 52nd Annual Salem Distance Run will be held on August 8 in Salem. He provided brief historical background on the event and encouraged community participation and sponsorship support. It was noted that proceeds from sponsorships will benefit Preston Place. The event will include both 5K and 10K races.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Submitted by:



H. Robert Light
Clerk of Council

Approved by:



Renée Ferris Turk
Mayor