



Marina
757-787-1930



Town Office
757-787-7117

Absent: Charles Elliott, Mayor
Glenn Schagelin, Councilman

Town Council Present:

Sandie Puchalski, Vice Mayor
Robert Bilicki
Craig L. Baker
Aileen Joeckel
Robert Hipple

Clerk: Susan Springer

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
February 12, 2025
VIMS SEASIDE HALL

Town Council Meeting

Meeting began at 7:00 pm

I. Vice Mayor Puchalski called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Resident Arthur Mendez led the meeting Prayer.

III. Public Comments.

Resident Lynda Clary expressed concern for the closure of the Island House, noting how it was a destination restaurant that brought many visitors. She also expressed concern for the amount of trash and debris she sees along the waterfront, expressing a desire to see the Town cleaned up, possibly with the Town providing clean up bags and sponsoring a clean up competition. Resident Deborah McCormick also expressed concern over the amount of trash and debris by the Lilliston Seafood store as well as the amount of houses and trailers in disrepair and also expressed concern over the amount of boats parked in the streets. Resident Steve Joseph spoke on the possibility of rezoning a portion of the spoils site to commercial. He cited the possibility of leasing it for a solar powered battery station for a rental of \$10,000 a month. He explained the lease would buy power at night and store it to sell back during peak hours. He noted both Parksley and Tasley have leased land for this use. Resident Judy Bilicki reported on the success of the Holiday stroll in December, noting it was attended by about 150 persons, many from out of Town, and the success of the stores, noting Lilliston Seafood gave out about \$100 cups of chowder, running out before the close of the event. The General Store also reported good traffic, with about 68 sales that evening. The event will be planned again for next year. Resident Liz Joseph reported on the upcoming Galentines celebration to be held at the General Store that will involve a flower bar, mocktails and food samples. She noted the first sitting is sold out, with only 3 reservations left available on the second sitting. Resident Beth Mendez reported on a new art project underway, noting it would involve murals inside the new Carnival Building, to be created by local artists, that would provide an excellent backdrop for photos. She also noted that Fire Dept. Chief Sean Fate would be refurbishing an old Ferris Wheel seat for a unique photo opportunity this year as well. Planning and Zoning Commission Chair Jim Bell reported the Town's new website would be turned on March 1, 2026 with some new features being built in the future. He expressed an interest for more residents to submit photos to be included in the new website.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Approval of Town Council Meeting – December 11, 2025

Motion to accept as revised made by Councilman Joeckel
 Motion 2nd by Councilman Hipple

	Yes	No	Absent
Sandie Puchalski	X		
Bob Bilicki		Abstain	
Aileen Joeckel	X		
Craig Baker	X		
Robert Hipple	X		
Glenn Schagelin			X
Charles Elliott – if in tie			

Approval of Town Council Meeting – July 10, 2025 – No Action taken

V. Review of Financial Reports

Approval of Town of Wachapreague December 2025

Motion made by Vice Mayor Puchalski
 Motion 2nd by Councilman Hipple

	Yes	No	Absent
Sandie Puchalski	X		
Bob Bilicki	X		
Aileen Joeckel	X		
Craig Baker	X		
Robert Hipple	X		
Glenn Schagelin			X
Charles Elliott – if in tie			

Approval of Port of Wachapreague December 2025

Motion made by Councilman Bilicki
 Motion 2nd by Councilman Hipple

	Yes	No	Absent
Sandie Puchalski	X		
Bob Bilicki	X		
Aileen Joeckel	X		
Craig Baker	X		
Robert Hipple	X		
Glenn Schagelin			X
Charles Elliott – if in tie			

Approval of Town of Wachapreague January 2026

Motion made by Councilman Bilicki
 Motion 2nd by Councilman Hipple

	Yes	No	Absent
Sandie Puchalski	X		
Bob Bilicki	X		
Aileen Joeckel	X		
Craig Baker	X		
Robert Hipple	X		
Glenn Schagelin			X
Charles Elliott – if in tie			

Approval of Port of Wachapreague January 2026

Motion made by Councilman Bilicki
 Motion 2nd by Councilman Hipple

	Yes	No	Absent
Sandie Puchalski	X		
Bob Bilicki	X		
Aileen Joeckel	X		
Craig Baker	X		
Robert Hipple	X		
Glenn Schagelin			X
Charles Elliott – if in tie			

VI. Unfinished Business

A. Maintenance

With the absence of Councilman Schagelin Vice Mayor Puchalski read from a list of repairs needed to Town vehicles, and noted it would be discussed in more detail by Glenn at the next Town Council Meeting. She also noted the change in staff hours as Maintenance Assistant Dylan Eder would working Tuesdays and Wednesdays only to accommodate a work schedule for another job. She noted that Maintenance Supervisor JD Bradshaw found this to be acceptable.

B. Powell Park

Vice Mayor Puchalski reported that the fencing on the North side of the dog park had been repaired, with just a little clean up left to finish the project. She noted that Treasurer Mary Jo totaled \$1600 needed to be moved from reserve to cover the finishing of the tennis/basketball/pickleball courts.

C. Seaside Park

Councilman Baker noted no news at Seaside Park, however the broken granite bench has still not been repair by the company that had committed to the repair. Vice Mayor Puchalski offered to reach out to the company as well.

D. HRSD

Project Assistant Arthur Mendez reported that everyone on Phase II was not hooked up and operational on the sewer system. He noted the only remaining work was some final end of project paperwork.

E. Derelict Properties

No Update.

F. Marina

Vice Mayor Puchalski reported that there was some scraping and caulking to be done at the Marina. She also noted the soundings were done for the dredging, which should start in early March, noting the permit and grant were through 2027. Vice Mayor Puchalski further reported that the Flounder Tournament would be held this year, and operated out of the Island House Tackle shop. She noted that in the event the Island House would be sold prior to the Tournament she would be prepared to host the weigh station at the Town Marina.

G. Tourism

Councilman Joeckel opened her report with the news that the Tourism Summit would be held February 23rd in Cape Charles and was already sold out. She noted the upcoming visit by Consultant John Shalamont who would be interviewing the Wachapreague Inn, and taking the Town as a whole. She noted how this would coincide with the Outdoor Channel’s feature of Wachapreague and the Eastern Shore in whole, this summer.

H. Floodplain Administrator/CRS Coordinator/RAFT

Councilman Bilicki reported on the adjunct team he pulled together to form a committee to review the Engineer’s Coastal Resiliency Plan, noting the intent is to make sure the Plan is site specific, and not an off the shelf template. He noted that this Plan would overlap with the oversight of the Drains and Ditches by Councilman Hipple and both Councilmen agree to coordinate.

I. Town Beautification

No updates, just a note that she will be working toward obtaining proper containers to store the new Christmas Lights to be keep dust and damage from them.

J. Safety/Security

Councilman Hipple reported on the recent assessment he did on the potholes and the street lights, noting in particular many recently reported non working street lights are in fact working, that some of photo cells take a little longer to bring the lights on. He noted the ease with which residents can write down the pole number and call A&E themselves directly, suggesting that perhaps the A&E phone number and directions to report a light out could be posted on the website.

K. Historic District

Planning and Zoning Commission Chair Jim Bell reported that the Town would find out if the Town receives acceptance at the National level in April, at which time plans could go forward for signage.

L. Streets and Drainage

Councilman Hipple reported that after an assessment based on a list given to him, the pothole concerns on the list have since been patched and that at this time there are no potholes in Town. He discussed the culvert at the Marina that is in need of repair and reported that it would found to be a VDOT culvert and he would be contacting our regional VDOT Supervisor to discuss. He reported on the South Ditch project, noting that the letter to the Army Corp of Engineers had been sent and expected a 3-4 week period to pass before a response is sent and after all permitting is complete he would looking for prices from three contractors. He noted he has been reassuring residents along the South Ditch that project was on track to happen. He then discussed the drainage issue on the North end, noting there are multiple areas of concern that would be best addressed first by identifying the cause, using a CCTV camera.

Motion made by Councilman Hipple to utilize John Maynard, Inc. to camera the identified areas for a price not to exceed \$2,000

Motion 2nd by Councilman Bilicki

	Yes	No	Absent
Sandie Puchalski	X		
Bob Bilicki	X		
Aileen Joeckel	X		
Craig Baker	X		
Robert Hipple	X		
Glenn Schagelin			X
Charles Elliott – if in tie			

M. Planning Commission

Councilman Joeckel reported there were 2 persons interested in joining the Commission and was hopeful that after talking with them the Commission could come forward to the Council to fill the vacancies.

N. VIMS/PILOT

Discussion was given on VIMS participation in the States Pilot Program (Payment in Lieu of Taxes). Councilman Baker explained he returned to the County Assessors Office, who supplies a list of the properties which is mixed, some by the Commonwealth, some by The College of William and Mary, and some titled to VIMS. Discussion ensued, with an agreement to keep the item on the Agenda for further discussion. It was suggested the Council check with other Town's to see how they handle the college campuses within their jurisdictions. It was also suggested the Town reach out to new Director Stacy Krueger Hadfield.

VII. New Business

Discussion was given to who had authority to act in an emergency if action was needed before a meeting could be called. This discussion continued to include discussion on the search for a new Town Attorney who could and would be more responsive. It was noted the lack of available attorneys, as well as doctors and dentists, on the rural peninsula. Several attorney's were suggested and Councilman Joeckel agreed to reach out to them.

Councilman Bilicki explained again the process for the Conceptual Coastal Resiliency Plan funded by the CFPF Grant, noting that progress payments would need to be made, then submitted to CFPF for reimbursement. Council all signed the Agreement with Weston Sampson Engineers for the design of the Plan. It was noted there was a signature line for the Town Treasurer as well.

Some discussion was given to number and date ranges of workshops needed to complete the FY2027 budget. Clerk Springer reminded all of the advertising requirements prior to each workshop, as well as the advertising requirements for the completed proposed budget in conjunction with the required adoption date.

Discussion was given to the future of the Nature Conservancy parcel for bird watching activities. The Council noted that the idea of the platform, with steps and ramp, was good, but would require the acquiring the parcel first. Discussion was given to the cost, and funding sourcing of the Oyster Fishing Pier. Discussion then moved to the other possible Nature Conservancy Parcel, Finney Creek. It was suggested the Town speak directly with the developer donating the land to the Nature Conservancy to see if they would like to donate it directly to the Town, possible after the Town committed to a land use plan. Councilman Hipple offered to use his background in financial planning and speak with the developer, perhaps along with another Council member.

Discussion continued on the VA energy grant, and the Town's need and desire for improved cellular service. Councilman Baker expressed a desire to see the Town install emergency call boxes that are solar powered able to reach 911 at any time or during any event. Discussion followed on cost and location, to be explored further.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion made by Councilman Joeckel to adjourn.

Motion 2nd by Councilman Hipple. All in favor.