

TOWN OF RICHLANDS

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

The Richlands Town Council held a “Regular Monthly Meeting” on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at 6:00 pm in the Richlands Council Chambers with the following present:

Mayor: Rod. D. Cury
Town Manager: Ron Holt
Town Attorney: Mike Thomas
Finance Manager: Ronnie Campbell
Project Manager: Absent
Town Clerk: Amanda Beheler
Council Members: Seth White, Gary Jackson, Jordan Bales, Jan White, and Laura Mollo.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm and opened with the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance by Mayor Cury.

IN RE: Additions, Deletions, or Corrections to the Agenda

The following additions/deletions were made to the agenda:

Mayor Cury asked if there was anyone present that would like to speak under Unscheduled Public Comments, there were none.

Mrs. Mollo requested the following changes be made to the Agenda:

- Add 15 (a) Appointment of Emergency Management Director

Upon on a motion by Jan White, seconded by Gary Jackson and the roll call vote of all members present, with Jordan Bales voting no, the Council voted 4-1 to approve the addition to the agenda.

IN RE: Authorization to Pay Bills (November)

There were no questions regarding the Bills for November.

Upon a motion by Seth White, seconded by Gary Jackson, and the unanimous roll call vote of all members present, the Council voted 5-0 to approve paying the bills for November.

IN RE: Minutes

Upon a motion by Laura Mollo, seconded by Jan White, and the unanimous roll call vote of all members present, the Council voted to approve the following Meeting Minutes.

- September 23, 2025- Special Called Meeting
- October 14, 2025- Regular Scheduled Minutes

IN RE: Scheduled Public Comments

Jared Sanders- Not present.

Karen Patton, 2304 4th Street-

Mr. Campbell- Inaudible.

Mrs. Mollo asked for clarification on the motion.

Mr. White advised that voting no was going against the Finance Director and the Electrical Committee, if you vote yes you agree with both.

Mr. Jackson asked if there was a timeframe on this, Mr. Bales advised it is evaluated monthly.

Mr. Mollo advised that she will be voting no on this, not because she doesn't trust the recommendation but because they told citizens that in November or December, they would be able to lower it.

Mr. Bales advised that was true and they could lower it right now, but they would have to make up those numbers later, possibly in the Spring and Fall. Mr. Campbell advised that was correct.

Mrs. Mollo stated that Mr. Bales was fair in what he was saying she doesn't disagree with him, she just wished they hadn't told citizens that it would be lowered in November or December, that makes this difficult.

Mr. White advised that it was based on during the first month when the numbers came in good, due to the mild weather.

Mrs. Mollo stated it was also due to the interest payment that they made.

Mr. White advised they have to pay what the power costs and that's how the Council got in trouble before, by not charging what they are paying for the power. Mr. White advised the goal of the Electrical Committee is to reevaluate it every month to make sure when there is an opportunity for them to lower it. Mr. White advised it was an investment in their future.

Upon a motion by Jordan Bales, seconded by Seth White, and the roll call vote of all members present, with Gary Jackson and Laura Mollo voting no, the Council voted 3-2 for the Power Cost Adjustment be adjusted to the level recommended by the Finance Director at no change.

IN RE: Energy Project Generator

Mr. Holt advised they had representatives from the Tobacco Commission and AMLAR onsite the past week, and Mr. Campbell represented the Town during that meeting to give them a project update in hopes that they could expedite the drawdown of the \$4 million dollars of grant funding.

Mr. Campbell advised the Tobacco Commission needs more of a timeline and percentage of completion and AMLAR is looking at it more from a dollar perspective where they are to meet the \$2 million dollar construction cost that they are looking for. Mr. Campbell advised this was not a problem because that will be a very small amount of the total construction costs and meeting that milestone.

Mr. Holt advised that they had to back out of the original AMLAR application, due to having to correct some information in it and they also reapplied under the FY25 application because of some of the environmental concerns that they wouldn't have to navigate through.

Mrs. Mollo asked for clarification on "continue on", stating that she has concerns. Mr. White advised that he also attended the meeting with the Tobacco Commission and they needed a specific timeline and Mr. Campbell is working with them on this so they can draw down the funds. Mr. Bales advised that is correct.

Upon a motion by Jordan Bales, seconded by Jan White, and the unanimous roll call vote of all members present, the Council voted 5-0 to direct the Town Manager and the Finance Department to continue working with their partners and get the necessary documentation to them.

IN RE: Generator Discussion

Mrs. Mollo advised that she requested this item because she feels like they should have a Generator Discussion every month, so everyone is on the same page regarding what's going on with the project.

Mrs. Mollo stated that she is also going to ask that the Council consider bringing GDS and AMP into the January meeting, because she has a couple of questions.

Mrs. Mollo also stated that the project is moving so quickly, that even as a Council Member she is lost at times, so she cant imagine how citizens are feeling and thinks it would be good to have a month to month conversation about where they are, what's changed, and what's going on, so everyone is on the same page.

Mrs. Mollo advised she has a couple of questions for the Electrical Committee that she had been asked and didn't know how to answer.

Mr. Bales asked if some of these could be put in a Motion for Point of Order so they could discuss.

Mrs. Mollo advised that she was going to bring this up later but stated that she had used her own money to pay for a consultation with Donald Garrett, a professional registered Parliamentarian based in northern Virginia, and had been speaking with him because she had questions about their Order and was confused.

Mrs. Mollo stated that Roberts Rules were very complicated, and she didn't believe that any of them had a good grip on them.

Mrs. Mollo stated that Mr. Garrett advised her that if something was listed on the Agenda and Council had voted to approve the agenda, then it was open for discussion.

Mrs. Mollo asked that the Council consider bringing a professional Parliamentarian in January to give them all a quick start guide to Roberts Rules.

Mr. Bales stated that his main concern is that their meetings get out of hand, and he feels like sticking to the strict rules will help them all move forward.

Mr. Bales stated he did not feel comfortable going with Mr. Garrett since Mrs. Mollo had already reached out to him and he may be biased, but if the Council wants to find another professional, he would be fine with that, and they could take it out of their Town Council line item.

Mr. Bales explained the different versions of Roberts Rules.

Mrs. Mollo asked Mr. Thomas for advice.

Mr. Thomas advised that he agrees with both Mr. Bales and Mrs. Mollo, it does mention having a motion on the floor before you can discuss, however under 49:21 Procedure in Small Boards it does give the ability for informal discussions if it stays on topic of what they are doing. Mr. Thomas stated that since it's a Town Council, they could have informal discussions, it would just need to stay on track.

Mrs. Mollo stated that everyone up there at some point has said something they shouldn't have said while tensions were high, but she believes they all are committed to fair, rational, and civil conversation and she has full faith in Mayor Cury to handle it if anything were to go sideways.

Mrs. Mollo asked to continue the meeting the way that they always have and to find a professional parliamentarian.

Mr. Bales asked Mr. Thomas if the Chair needs to rule on how they will continue the meeting.

Mr. Thomas advised that it would be appropriate.

Mayor Cury thanked both Mr. Bales and Mrs. Mollo for their points and advised that he wants to make every effort as the Mayor to conduct meetings in the most proper way possible.

Mayor Cury stated with great respect to both “Public Projects deserve Public Discussion”.

Mayor Cury asked Mrs. Mollo what she would like to discuss regarding the Generator.

Mrs. Mollo advised she has the following questions: 1. Monthly Cost of Operation, 2. Timeline/Savings, 3. Life Expectancy, and 4. Consider GDS & AMP Conversation.

Mayor Cury stated he would allow those questions but would like for it to be contained to just those questions.

Mr. Bales asked Mayor Cury for clarification on his ruling, were they going with small or more stringent rules. Mayor Cury advised small.

Mr. Holt advised they will have Quantum at the January Meeting, and they may be able to answer some of those questions.

Mr. Bales appealed the decision of the Chair.

Mr. Thomas suggested that Mrs. Mollo make a motion to bring those questions to the January Meeting and to invite GDS and AMP to the January Meeting.

Mayor Cury asked what the protocol is for Mr. Bales appeal to his decision. Mr. Thomas advised he was unsure.

Mr. Bales stated that it was Mayor Cury's ruling was to go with informal, and he thinks they should go with the formal, so it immediately goes to a roll call vote.

Mr. Bales stated he was fine to discuss these; he just doesn't want it to get out of hand.

Mrs. Mollo advised that she was fine with Roberts Rules but stated that they had already gone through twelve items on the agenda and haven't done this with any other item, advised that if Council votes to go with the strict rules, they have already broken those rules eleven times and will have a hard time getting through the rest of the agenda.

Mr. Thomas advised there needs to be a second, Mr. White advised he would second the motion for discussion.

Mr. White stated that Mrs. Mollo brought these questions to the meeting, not before, and some of the questions can be easily answered but some they may not be able to.

Mr. White advised he would caution that before they invite Blueridge and GDS, there would be a cost associated with it, and he would not vote on it until he knew what those charges would be.

Mr. Bales stated that he is fine discussing the items on the agenda, he just wants to abide by Roberts' Rules.

Mrs. Mollo advised she also wants to abide by the rules but wanted to point out that they did not have a motion on Invocation, Pledge, etc., it was only when the Generator Discussion came up and urged the Council to please allow the discussion, even if they didn't know the answers.

Mrs. Mollo stated that this is the third meeting that when they have come to the Generator Discussion, this comes up, and it does feel odd to her that it only comes up for this.

Mrs. Mollo advised that their agenda is incorrect based on Roberts' Rules of Order, it should include times and the Council Member Reports should be first.

Mrs. Mollo asked that they go with the relaxed version of Roberts Rules.

Mr. White advised that he would like to go with Mayor Cury's recommendation of the relaxed version.

Mr. White stated that this is continuing to turn into a witch hunt over something that it is not, it is nothing to do with the Generator Discussion, it is about the conduct of the Council.

Mr. Bales stated that he doesn't care what they discuss on the agenda, but he is getting bothered by the accusations and has had it with going out into the public and being stalked by people saying they will have their popcorn ready to watch the Council Meetings.

Mr. Bales advised he was not going to be made a mockery of because they don't want to follow the rules.

Mrs. Mollo agreed with Mr. Whites compromise, stating that is very fair and if anyone were to get out of hand they would be forced to go with stricter rules, but doesn't think anyone will do that.

Upon a motion by Jordan Bales, seconded by Seth White, and the roll call vote of all members present, with Seth White, Gary Jackson, Jan White and Laura Mollo voting no, the Council voted 1-4 to appeal Mayor Cury's decision to go with the Small Council Version of Roberts Rules- Motion Failed.

Mayor Cury advised that each topic that Mrs. Mollo presented will be allowed to have a five-minute discussion.

Mr. Holt advised that as far as the Cost for Operation, they do not know that information yet, because they haven't decided if they are going with an Economic Dispatch or a 90% run rate, this will be something they know more about in January when Quantum comes and when they have more conversations with GDS and Blueridge.

Mr. Holt also advised that due to the fact of not knowing how they will operate the Generator, they don't know when they will start to see savings, it will depend upon the timeline.

Mr. Holt stated that the Life Expectancy will also be dependent on the run rate, and he thinks they will have more information at the next meeting.

Mayor Cury asked Mrs. Mollo if that satisfies her questions.

Mrs. Mollo stated it did and that "We don't know yet" is still an answer and that satisfies what she's asking.

Mrs. Mollo asked that the Council inquire about the cost of having GDS and AMP in attendance at the next meeting.

Mr. Holt advised that they have entered into contracts for the maintenance of the Generator and as long as you re-up those contracts the life expectancy will be until you stopped entering into those contracts.

Mrs. Mollo inquired about how long the contracts are for and what are the costs of them.

Mr. White advised they are based on five years and when the project was first proposed they all voted on wanting the better maintenance package. Mr. White explained that the costs are already built in.

Mr. White advised they will own their own transmission lines; therefore, they will be paying zero in transmission fees.

Mr. White stated that they just learned that the new independent study is broken down into

Mr. White advised that the new independent study is broken down by 24 hours a day and 365 days a year, if they are allowed to dispatch on their existing purchase contracts, this project will get better, and they are hoping to have better figures in January.

Mr. White stated they got positive comments from the Tobacco Commission and AMLAR.

Mrs. Mollo asked Mr. White if his statement of generating power at less than five cents per kilowatt factors in the loan payment. Mr. White advised that yes it does, it was built into the pro formas from the very beginning.

Mr. Holt advised he will reach out to GDS and AMP to determine the costs to have them at the January meeting and will e-mail that information out to the Council for them to come to a consensus.

IN RE: Repeal ATV Ordinance O-2026-01-01 (First Presentation)

Mayor Cury read Ordinance O-2026-01-01.

Mr. Thomas advised this will be considered as the First Presentation of O-2026-01-01.

IN RE: Food Truck Ordinance O-2026-01-02 (First Presentation)

Mayor Cury read Ordinance O-2026-01-02.

Mr. Thomas advised that the Food Truck Ordinance was originally adopted in 2019 and was never given a Code Number or Incorporated into Richlands Town Code, it was a stand-alone Ordinance. Mr. Thomas stated that he gave it a Code Number and made the amendment to include "30 calendar days" at Councils request.

Mr. Thomas advised this will be considered as the First Presentation of O-2026-01-02.

IN RE: Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Campbell gave a brief overview of the Monthly Financial Report for October as follows:

- General Fund- Year to Date Net Income Loss is -\$1,045,748
- Water- Year to Date Net Income Loss is -\$612,764
- Sewer- Year to Date Net Income Loss is \$107,819
- Water and Sewer Line Maintenance Year to Date Net Income Loss \$490,735
- Electric w/o Generator Year to Date Net Income Loss -\$117,715
- General Fund- Reserved Cash Balance \$1,496,839
- General Fund- Unreserved Cash Balance \$726,325
- Water Department Reserved Cash Balance \$1,098,240
- Water Department Unreserved Cash Balance \$533,504
- Sewer Department Reserved Cash Balance \$497,262
- Sewer Department Unreserved Cash Balance -\$423,825
- Electric Department Reserved Cash Balance \$1,802,036
- Electric Department Unreserved Cash Balance -\$1,741,434

Mr. white asked Mr. Campbell if they are still looking into what's available for them where they are holding large fund balances in non-interest bearing accounts. Mr. Campbell advised they are. Mr. Campbell also advised that he has a new draft Financial Policy, and if the Council is comfortable with it, he will start putting out RFP's.

IN RE: Budget Amendment

Mr. Campbell advised the purpose of the amendment is to appropriate funds to the Public Works Street Department operating expense account and the Fund Balance Allocation revenue account (unrestricted funds) in the amount of \$76,375 for the Town of Richlands' Clatterback pavement markings budgeted in a different fiscal year.

Mrs. Mollo inquired that since it was going from one budget year to the next if it was going to require an amendment to the Budget Ordinance and if it will have an impact on the audit. Mr. Campbell advised he won't be able to post on in June 2025 because they have closed that year, but it corrects the presentation for FY 2026 and when looking at both years together, everything would net to zero.

Mr. Bales asked Mr. Campbell what the mathematical and accounting benefit of doing this was. Mr. Campbell advised it is balancing the expenses and the revenues between the two years, when the budget actuals were posted, it was purely presentation, the net impact is zero.

Upon a motion by Seth White, seconded by Jan White and the roll call vote of all members present, with Laura Mollo voting no, the Council voted 4-1 to approve this Budget Amendment.

IN RE: Draft Financial Investment Policies

Mr. Campbell advised that he had finished the Draft Financial Investment Policies to include comments from the last time he had presented it to Council. Mr. Campbell advised that Davenport had comments that he incorporated as well.

Mr. Campbell asked the Council to review the Draft Financial Policies and bring back any comments or recommendations to the January meeting.

Mayor Cury declared a ten minute recess.

IN RE: Attorney Report

Cedar Bluff Transfer Station Update- Mr. Thomas advised that he reached out to Eric Young regarding this, and he advised him that they have broken up their RFP into two different ones and are hoping to alleviate some of the costs and issues that they had previously.

Mr. Thomas advised those RFP will be returned in January and will keep the Council updated.

IN RE: Town Manager Report

Mr. Holt advised of the following:

Christmas Events- Mr. Holt thanked staff for helping with all the Christmas events.

Santas Hot Pursuit 5k- was well attended, no accidents, and over 30 runners. Thanked staff and Charity Hurst for their help.

Snow Removal- advised this was the first time the Town had ever been criticized for doing too much, staff has done a good job keeping the snow off the roads and keeping them safe.

Financial Policies- thanked Mr. Campbell for all his hard work on the Financial Policies.

IN RE: Council Member Reports

Laura Mollo-

- **Clerk-** Thanked Mr. Beheler for her work as the Town Clerk and stated that she had done an incredible job keeping them organized and that her minutes are the best that she had seen since she began reading them in 2008. Mrs. Mollo stated that Mrs. Beheler had been an asset to them.

- **Town Manager-** Stated that she hated seeing Mr. Holt go from his role as Town Manager at the Town Hall, advised that they have agreed and disagreed, but she has a lot of respect for him, and she is thankful that he is staying as the Towns Police Chief. Mrs. Mollo stated that the Police Department has been operating great since he became the Police Chief and is grateful that he is staying there.

- **VDOT Public Hearing-** Advised that VDOT is having a Public Hearing next week about turning the Town's roads into one lane and asked how did it get to the point of a Public Hearing.

Mr. Holt advised those were submitted some time ago and there were only certain roads that could potentially go one way. Mr. Holt stated it was part of Project Pipeline and VDOT wanted the public's input from it. Mr. Holt advised the Towns Director of Public Works and Billy Shelton will be attending the Public Hearing.

Mrs. Mollo advised they had pictures and diagrams of it and asked if the Town was obligated to it. Mr. Holt advised the Town was not obligated and could pick any element out of it that they want. Mr. Holt advised they would have to vote on it when it is time.

Mr. Holt advised he would e-mail the Council the details of the VDOT meeting.

- **Utility Meters-** Asked if they had a problem with the utility meters- Mr. Holt advised he would have someone check the system.
- **Parliamentarian-** Stated that she would like Council to consider putting out an RFP for a Parliamentarian. Mr. Thomas advised that he believes Richlands has recently become a member of the VA Institute of Government, and they potentially may have someone there that can do this for the Council.

Council gave consensus for Mr. Holt to contact UVA regarding

Jan White-

- **Front Street Bridge Update-** Asked for an update on the Front Street Bridge. Mr. Holt advised it looks promising as far as the timeline and as long as they don't encounter any other issues the next couple of months look promising.

Jordan Bales-

- **Real Estate Tax Tickets-** Advised he has had several people tell him they haven't received their Real Estate tax bills yet, and he advised them to call Town Hall. Mr. Bales stated that from his analysis almost all of them were out of town owners and would like the Town to do a cause analysis to
- **Guardrails-** Asked if Mr. Holt had an update regarding guardrails. Mr. Holt stated that Mr. Shepherd went to look at it and had some ideas, should be contacting him about it shortly.
- **HVAC at the REC Park-** Asked if someone could check the HVAC systems at the REC Park, stated that one of the units was very low and had been 56 the last few times he was there, advised it could be the change in the weather but needs to be checked in case it gets worse.

- **Christmas Tree Lighting-** stated that it was a great event, and everyone did an awesome job.
- **Snow Removal-** stated the snow removal crew was very proactive and he was a big fan of it, the roads looked good.

Rick Wood- Absent.

Gary Jackson- No comments.

Seth White-

- **Tree Trimming-** thanked Chief Holt and the Street Department for trimming the trees on the corner of Plantation Drive.
- **Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission's Christmas Dinner/Meeting-** advised that he attended as a citizen member and not as a representative of the Town Council, advised that it was a great meeting and a lot of people are excited about their project.

IN RE: Mayor Comments

Mayor Cury-

- **Christmas Tree Lighting-** advised that it was a great event and he left with the Christmas Spirit. Thanked the Richlands High School Band, the Richlands High School and Middle School Choir, and especially the Town Crew for all that they done.
- **Snow Removal-** Advised he was thankful for the Street Department and their snow removal.

- **Town Manager and Clerk-** Thanked Mrs. Beheler for her work as Clerk and Mr. Hols as Town Manager.

- **Christmas-** Wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

IN RE: **Executive Session**

Mayor Cury advised the Council would be going into Executive Session pursuant to:

VA Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) Personnel-

- Town Manager

- Appointment for Emergency Management Director

- Interim Town Manager

Upon a motion by Gary Jackson, seconded by Laura Mollo and the unanimous roll call vote of all members present, the Council voted to go into Executive Session.

Upon a motion by Gary Jackson, seconded by Jan White and the unanimous roll call vote of all members present, the Council voted to return to Open Session.

Upon a motion by Gary Jackson, seconded by Jan White and the unanimous roll call vote of all members present, the Council certified that only the following VA Code Sections were discussed during the Executive Session.

VA Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) Personnel-

- Town Manager

- Appointment for Emergency Management Director

- Interim Town Manager

IN RE: **Adjournment**

Upon a motion by Gary Jackson, seconded by Laura Mollo and the unanimous roll call vote of all members present, the meeting was adjourned.



Rodney D. Cury, Mayor



Amanda Beheler, Town Clerk