

Town Council Regular Meeting Minutes

July 1, 2026

7:00 pm

Daryl Graham, Mayor, called the meeting of the Claremont Town Council to order at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Members Present: Sue Gilbert, Louise Hansch, Paul Mauger and Tom Kent.

Public Announcements

- *Terrie Foster spoke about how disrespectful some council members have acted towards other council members and how this should not be allowed. She stated she felt there should be no degrading behavior allowed between council members.*

Citizens Comments

- *Terrie Foster provided that the Nottoway Pow Wow would next be held on the third weekend of September on Saturday and Sunday at Surry Parks & Recreation and all are welcome to attend.*

Correspondence

- *Sue Gilbert read a letter from Southern Corrosion thanking the Town for accepting their proposal to perform the water tank maintenance and they look forward to working with us in the future. The letter continued to state that as a result of our contract with them, Southern Corrosion would be donating \$250 to Victory Junction, which is a camp for children with serious illness and chronic medical conditions. Paul Mauger asked if we had received more than one bid for water tank maintenance. Sue Gilbert provided that we did not, and Paul asked if this was typical to just go with one bid. Sue provided that normally we obtain multiple bids, but that we met with the company twice. Louise Hansch provided that the company came highly recommended by VDH (Virginia Department of Health), VRWA (Virginia Rural Water Association) and our engineers. Louise also provided that in some cases it is hard to get more than one bid for a project as companies don't like to travel this far out, as what took place with the Water Upgraded Project where only one company bid after the project was posted twice. Paul Mauger asked to go on record that in the future when spending Town funds that we will request at least 2 to 3 bids from different companies. Louise provided that we did normally do that.*

Consent Calendar

- *Sue Gilbert Motioned to accept the consent report inclusive of the minutes from the June 10, 2026, Council Meeting and the Treasurer's report for June 2026, Tom Kent seconded the Motion, all Aye vote, Motion carried on 7/1/2026.*

Committee Reports

Finance & Budget

- *Louise Hansch motioned that we appropriate \$123,550.00 in funds for the Town budget for 2026-2027, Sue Gilbert seconded the motion, all Aye vote, Motion carried on 7/1/2026.*
- *Louise Hansch motioned that we appropriate \$224,193.92 in funds for the Water budget for 2026-2027, Sue Gilbert seconded the motion, all Aye vote, Motion carried on 7/1/2026.*
- *Louise Hansch motioned that we appropriate \$88,307.92 in funds for the Sewer budget for 2026-2027, Sue Gilbert seconded the motion, all Aye vote, Motion carried on 7/1/2026.*
- *Louise Hansch motioned that we move an overage from the 2025-2026 Town budget in the amount of \$19,439.36 to a fiscal year overage fund to be used for maintenance of the basketball court and other unforeseen town expenses, Paul Mauger seconded the motion, all Aye vote, Motion carried on 7/1/2026. It was explained that the basketball court needs to be completely repaved and restriped at an estimated cost of over \$17,000 and the Town did not have the funds to do this in the previous budget year. Sue Gilbert has*

obtained multiple bids for this project and is asking for those bids to be updated. A history of the basketball court was provided and why it is located where it is and how the Town agreed to maintain the property.

- *Louise Hansch explained that the water overage from the 2025-2026 Water budget was in the amount of \$14,380.27 and that we still had over \$22,000 in this overage account from the previous year's budget and that the project has not been completed yet. Louise Hansch motioned that we move that overage into the fiscal year overage fund for any additional charges, and if not used the funds would be moved into Capital Reserve , Tom Kent seconded the motion, all Aye vote, Motion carried on 7/1/2026.*

Mayor Graham introduced Ray Phelps the Chief of Emergency Management for Surry County. Ray spoke with Council regarding the Hampton Roads Hazard Mitigation Plan. The previous plan was updated last in 2022 and is updated every 5 years. In the past the County was able to represent the Town, however, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) has changed its guidelines, and the Town must now represent itself. If the Town does not participate in the plan, FEMA will NOT reimburse the Town in the case of natural disasters. Ray provided he has forwarded the participation package to the Town via email for us to begin to fill it out. For hazard mitigation we are looking at things such as highwater, land erosion, debris management and storm surge impact, as well as our infrastructure regarding the Town's capabilities to take care of itself. He also asked if we had a list of vulnerable seniors/citizens who may need assistance with getting out if an emergency happens. There was a discussion about the need for VDOT (Virginia Department of Transportation) to elevate the road on Mancha Avenue going down to the river as this area is highly susceptible to flooding. Ray confirmed that the Town had an emergency notification system and asked if he could be added to that system. It was confirmed the system we have is called IRIS (Immediate Response Information System) and that the clerk would add him to that system. Ray also provided that a boil water notice did NOT constitute an emergency, no water was an emergency, but a boil water notice was not because citizens still have access to water. Ray also asked to be provided with a list of where our fire hydrants are located and their capacity. The clerk will provide that to him. Ray would like us to begin work on the participation package in the next 2 weeks and he is going to be scheduling a meeting with our assigned council member and the Town of Dendron. In response to a question from Terrie Foster Ray went over the duties of a certified response team and they are trying to have one for each town.

Zoning Administrator

- *No update.*

Public Buildings, Streets & Grounds

- *Sue Gilbert provided that her update was regarding the basketball court and that was discussed previously. Paul Mauger asked if the court was actually used, Sue confirmed that it most definitely was used. Tom Kent asked if the basketball court could be moved over to the park and become a mixed-use course and used for pickle ball or other sports? Sue provided no it could not be moved; it was requested to be where it is currently located. Daryl Graham asked if the church has been contacted for funds for the paving, and Sue provided that she did ask them, but the church recently had to purchase a new generator.*

Water and Sewer Department

- *Paul Mauger provided that with the fire hydrant maintenance he had spoken with George Edwards and he is working with the hydrants, flushing, lubricating and weed eating around them. Paul would like to request funds, and he would do the work himself, to sand down and paint the hydrants. Louise asked what the purpose of that was, and Paul provided for visibility and appearance. It was discussed for the older smaller hydrants that due to the size of the 4 inch lines the fire department did not use them because it would collapse the lines. Louise asked him if he could provide an estimate of the funds needed. He said he would once he receives the list of where they are.*
- *Sue Gilbert provided that rural water was coming next week, on Thursday 7/10, to the sewer plant to use cameras and determine where the issue with the fields is. Richard Norris came earlier this week to bush hog the field.*
- *Louise Hansch provided an update on the Water Project. Louise, Daryl and Paul met with Nick and Brian from WACO, Tim from Bowman, and they are on track for the VFDs (variable frequency drives), gauges, globe valves and finish the piping. The delivery of parts should be coming in the next 4 to 6 weeks. Louise*

Hansch asked if she should reach out to Primis Bank to have our line of credit extended as the current extension is 7/31/2026. We don't think we're going to need the funds but should we just in case request a second extension. Daryl confirmed that he believes we should for at least another 2 months and Louise will take care of that extension request.

- Tom Kent asked if while we are discussing water and sewer if it would be possible for him to be given a letter authorizing him to speak with the bank regarding a possible loan for the sewer department. It was approved for him to meet with Primis Bank at the previous meeting. Louise provided that the vote at the last meeting was to give him permission to get information about how to get a loan and because we have voted and approved the budget for this year, that we do not need a loan for sewer. We can look into a loan for the sewer department as part of next year's budget if needed, but at this time a loan is not needed nor are the funds available to pay for a loan. Tom feels that there is a way to pay for the loan because we would be charging the users less. Louise provided that the budget had been set and could not be changed as we only can change fees once a year. Louise asked him what he was planning on changing and how he was going to pay for what he was changing, there would be an origination fee and other costs, and sewer is already paying back a loan of \$14,000 to water. Tom feels that we can borrow the money, pay off the current loan with those funds and reduce the fees to the users. Louise suggests that we can look for a loan next year, but for this year her vote as the finance council woman is no. Paul Mauger asked if we could revise the budget Louise provided we never have. Paul asked why we gave permission for him to go in the first place, and it was provided that we did try to discourage him. She provided that when she did the research for a loan for the water project she had to go to 5 different institutions before she could get approved by the 6th bank. It was discussed that someone not from Town Council was included in the meeting with Primis Bank and they should not have been included in a meeting regarding financial planning for the Town. Daryl Graham asked if everyone on Villa was a full-time resident would it qualify for a grant, Louise provided the answer is no, because only low-income grants were available. Tom Kent still feels we should start the loan process now for next year. Louise still provides that her response is no, and that it is too early to start a loan process now. Daryl provided we'll know more about the current sewer budget once the work is done by VRWA at the sewer plant.
- Paul Mauger provided that he had been notified by several people that he had been appointed to oversee water and sewer, but that he had yet been formally appointed as chair over that area. He requests to go on record and state that in light of the fact that the water project has been going on for some time and the current issues with that as well as the current sewer budget issues that he does not feel comfortable taking on responsibility for those projects in the current condition that they are in. He is declining that appointment unless he is given authority to manage it and assume the budgets for both divisions. Terrie Foster asked if she could address Mr. Mauger, and she suggested that maybe if he could meet with the former councilman, Phil Yerby, and with George Edwards, he would be more comfortable with the position. Paul provided that he did reach out to Phil but that he never returned his phone call. He did meet with George who provided that he could only cover the water system and not the sewer system.

Parks & Recreation

- Tom Kent provided he had no updates. Terrie Foster asked if he had any plans for Labor Day or anything else. He said he would be doing something on Labor Day and maybe some movie nights.

Emergency Services

- No update.

Planning Commission

- No update.

Board of Zoning Appeals

- Sue Gilbert provided that the Board of Zoning Appeals has met and elected officers and that Troilen Seward was still the chairman.

ONGOING BUSINESS

- Tom Kent re-read his resolution that was proposed at the last meeting and that our attorney had reviewed it and had no issues with it. Louise Hansch provided this was already covered in our ordinance guidelines and

we do discuss these items in council meetings. Tom Kent feels that we never discussed the sewer budget constraints and it was never discussed prior to actions being taken. Louise provided that in every meeting last year we had discussed how expensive the repairs were at the sewer and how it was going to impact the budget. Paul Mauger provided that Mrs. Hansch was correct and it was discussed in the meeting minutes from May. It was discussed how the letter that was sent to the residents on Villa Road was proposed at a meeting on Wednesday and mailed to the residents on Friday. It was felt by both Paul Mauger and Tom Kent that they were opposed to the time frame of the letter being sent. Paul brought up the options that were proposed by residents; however, Louise did confirm with him that there was no time to discuss those options prior to the scheduled hearing. She also provided that basically what we are doing is breaking that suggested larger lump sum payment of \$1000 or even \$500 into smaller monthly payments. He also wanted to confirm if the increase would be temporary and could it possibly be decreased. Louise confirmed that it was a one-year increase and could definitely be decreased. Louise Hansch did provide that there were timelines that had to be met by law with notifying the residents prior to the public hearing and how many days after the public hearing before we could hold a counsel meeting. Paul says as he is new to counsel he was not aware of the previous discussions regarding the sewer budget, and why did we have to wait to the last minute to discuss the increases. Louise provided that costs were constantly increasing with repairing damages, and that at the time Phil was the councilman in charge and was fully aware of the issues.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Louise Hansch provided an additional update to the Hampton Roads Hazard Mitigation Plan and the time frame of handling the issues. Louise had reached out to the lady in charge who had provided that the important thing is to respond to every notification we receive and that we acknowledge receipt of the notification listing what we are planning to do. Paul Mauger was assigned to handle this project and Louise provided all of the information she has to him. Louise also confirmed that on every communication that goes out either the town needs to be copied if sent by personal email, or have the clerk to send the email direct from the town.*
- *Paul Mauger provided that he had asked that we discuss the underground fuel tanks located at the circle store and Daryl Graham added the tanks at the old fire department location. Sue provided that our zoning administrator has been working with our attorney, Richard Matthews, to take them to court and to take down all of the dilapidated buildings. The underground tanks are in violation of the state code. The tanks need to be removed or filled.*

Adjournment

- *Louise Hansch Motioned to adjourn, Tom Kent seconded the Motion, all Aye vote, Motion carried on 7/1/2026, meeting adjourned.*

Respectfully submitted

Laura Crowder, Town Clerk