



January 2026 Work Session Minutes

Tuesday, January 6, 2026, at 6:30 PM

Virtual Meeting

3820 40th Avenue Cottage City, Maryland 20722

This meeting was hosted in person and on Zoom:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/BA1h4YDpZb1RV8Zb708xycEaBQYQC6tYDM0T7KtylZQv_L7YvF7kujsd40lQNySe.fK1lWLgYFUQUsFz?startTime=1767742111000

Phone: 301-715-8592 | Meeting ID: 896 3829 4683 | Passcode: ^cd%34vZ

Call to Order at 6:31 PM

Attendees

1. Ward 1 – Commissioner Salsich
2. Ward 2 – Commissioner Henderson
3. Ward 3 – Commissioner Wheatley
4. Ward 4 – Commissioner Givens
5. At-Large – Commissioner Brooks
6. John Hoatson – Town Manager
7. John O'Connor – Grants Manager
8. Kevin Best – Town Attorney
9. Ann Young – resident

Agenda

1. Call to Order and Roll Call (2:07)

All Commissioners are present and accounted for. Town Manager added a new computer for the office manager and the Mayor's Conference to his portion of the agenda.

2. Public Comments (4:15)

Question from Ann Young about food aid which will be addressed later.

3. Motion to Suspend the Rules (6:19)

The motion to move to suspend the rules to be able to vote in a work session by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

4. Approval for SFMS contractor for 43rd Avenue Project (7:17)

Project came in \$15,588.87 under budget. There are still funds from the CDBG grant that can be used for erosion control, and SFMS suggested additional erosion control maintenance to use the remaining funds. That will close out the CDBG grant.

Commissioner Brooks made a motion to approve the new work for \$15,588.87. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

5. Town of Cottage City Ordinance 2026-01, Amending Chapter 9 of the Town Code to enhance unpaid traffic ticket enforcement (10:53)

The town currently has approximately \$2 million in uncollected fines. The new ordinance, written by Town Attorney Best, would give the town a way to make an unpaid infraction court enforceable in whatever jurisdiction the offender resides in. The cost of writing the ordinance should be covered by the revenue from the speed camera system. The cost of collections would come from the offenders and would therefore be revenue neutral as unpaid tickets would take on up to another \$1,000 in fees. Town only pays lawyers' fees if there's a valid collection. This would be a process after Red Speed is unable to collect.

6. Staff Retreat (38:29)

Staff retreat this upcoming weekend is aimed at setting town goals and priorities for FY27. That information will go out to the public at the next Town meeting.

7. Town of Cottage City Resolution 2026-01, Appointment of Resident Agent (39:39)

A new resident agent will be appointed for the town. Town has not had a resident agent since 2016 though it is required by law. Town Manager will be appointed resident agent. Commission is authorized to make that appointment. This will be voted on at the next Town meeting.

8. Resolution of the Cottage City Commission for Speed Monitoring System Ombudsman (42:11)

Proposal that John O' Connor will serve as the Ombudsman, David Thompson will be program administrator, and Jenny Davila Bernel will be operator of the Speed Camera Program. This will be voted on at the next Town meeting. This needs to be in place to comply with Maryland laws.

9. Professional Service Agreement between Traffic Safety Group and Town of Cottage City (45:17)

This will help with collection of infractions and fines. This agreement enables the Traffic Safety Group to get information on previous vendors and unpaid fines. Traffic Safety Group will work closely with the Town to ensure it follows Town guidelines.

10. Giant Food Cards and Share Food Program (48:26)

Discussion on keeping Share Food Program. ARPA funds are done in February. Chair Wheatley would like to keep the program going. Residents would like to keep the program but the funding is in question. Commissioner Givens suggested taking the money from the funding

that was allocated for trash removal from ARPA funds and allocate that to Share Food. Commissioner Brooks thinks that it doesn't make sense to duplicate county services and suggests people use other existing resources to get food.

Ann Young wants to keep the program. Laura Guischard does not think the program should continue if it relies on general tax revenue.

Commission wants the Town Accountant to see if there is funding or grant sources for the program. Commissioner Brooks suggests working with the county to work in concert with a local food program or if there are other grants.

11. Servicing Police Vehicle 127 (1:13:31)

Parts and labor to service the 2013 Ford Explorer is \$2,900. It's been at the service station for a couple of months. This can be voted on during the next Town meeting.

12. Burn Prevention Month (1:17:41)

February 1 to 7 is National Burn Awareness Week with a focus on preventing burns in the workplace. Town will make proclamation to that effect. Information will be added to the February newsletter.

Commissioner Givens wants to emphasize drug collection drive.

13. Proposed Data Center (1:21:35)

Colmar Manor resident Paul Howe sent a letter opposing the new proposed data center. Commission generally agrees with signing onto letter, with Commissioner Givens wanting more information.

14. New Computer for Office Manager (1:27:35)

Peake quote in the amount of \$1,572.09. The old one was beginning to fail.

Commissioner Brooks made a motion to approve the new computer for \$1,572.09. Commissioner Henderson seconded. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

15. Maryland Mayor's Association Conference (1:30:20)

Conference is in Annapolis on March 4 – 6 and there is over \$10,000 unused in the training budget.

16. Move to a Closed Session (1:35:54)

Closed session proposed to be able to discuss personnel matters under Article 3-305 (b), to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction, any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals, to consult with attorney to obtain legal advice, and with staff or consultants or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

The Commission is going into a closed session to discuss a legal matter regarding the Cottage City Police Department.

The motion to move to a closed session was made at 8:06 PM by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.

17. Report From Closed Session (1:38:58)

Commission discussed a personnel matter regarding a former employee, salary increases, a contractor matter in litigation. They got advice from the Town Attorney.

18. Adjournment (1:40:04)

All meetings are subject to closure pursuant to the Maryland Open Meetings Act: Pursuant to the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article Section 10-508(a), the Council by majority vote may retire to executive or closed session at any time during the meeting. Should the Commission retire to executive or closed sessions the Chair will announce the reasons, and a report will be issued at a future meeting disclosing the reasons for such closed session.

The motion to adjourn was made at 10:01 PM by Commissioner Brooks and seconded by Commissioner Henderson. Salsich-Aye, Henderson-Aye, Wheatley-Aye, Givens-Aye, Brooks-Aye. Motion passes without nays or abstentions.