



Town of Vienna

Charles A. Robinson Jr.
Town Hall
127 Center Street South
Vienna VA, 22180

Meeting Minutes Town Council Work Session

Saturday, March 15, 2025

9:00 AM

Charles Robinson Jr. Town Hall, 127 Center
St. South South

1. Regular Business

Roll Call

Council Present: Council member Sandra Allen, Council Member Roy Baldwin; Council Member Ray Brill; Council Member Jessica Ramakis; Council Member Howard Springsteen and Mayor Linda Colbert.

Absent: Council Member Anderson

Staff Present: Mercury Payton, Town Manager; Steve Briglia, Town Attorney; Leslie Herman, Director, Parks and Recreation; David Levy, Director, Planning and Zoning; Steven Barlow, Director, Finance; Tony Mull, Director, Information Technology; Michele Crabtree, Director, Human Resources; Melanie Clark, Town Clerk; Nichole Toulouse, Director, Economic Development; Brad Baer, Director, Public Works; Karen Thayer, Director, Public Information; Jim Morris, Chief, Vienna Police Department

A. [25-4954](#)

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Fiscal Year 2025-26 Proposed Budget Work Session #1

Mayor Colbert opened the first of two budget Work Sessions at 9:00 AM by calling on Mercury Payton, Town Manager and Steven Barlow, Director, Finance, to present an overview.

The proposed fiscal year 2025-26 \$5.5 million balanced budget covers the Town's four operating funds: general, water and sewer, debt service, and stormwater and reflects an increase of \$1,706,070, or 3.2%, compared to the current fiscal year. The majority of this increase is attributable to the general fund, with the remainder related to increased costs in the water and sewer fund and stormwater fund. Among the assumptions were an unchanged tax rate, an increase in assessments and an increase in the water and sewer rates.

Major highlights for the fiscal year included hiring of new directors for both the finance and economic development departments; completion of the Maude Robinson Trust sidewalk projects, long range plans for the Annex and the online payment portal for real estate taxes, etc.

In response to Council questions regarding the current economic uncertainty, Director Barlow stated that the Town of Vienna, in planning for a possible recession, has \$1 M in a revenue stabilization fund. Further, 18% of next year's budget will be placed in unbalanced reserve. It is assumed that the Town is in a stable position for the remainder of 2025 and through 2026.

Comments from Council included:

- *Several towns throughout Northern Virginia, including Vienna, are taxed by both the Town and the County;*

- *One hundred seventy nine households in Vienna qualify for real estate tax relief;*
- *Community for Helping Others provides a resource for those individuals needing help to pay water bills;*
- *Water/sewer rate consists of a fixed rate plus a volume metric rate based on consumption;*
- *Every household pays fixed water rate; Basic service is same for everyone across the income levels.*

Compensation – Michelle Crabtree

- *Regional situation is very fluid;*
- *Increase of 3%; in line with rest of region.*

General Fund Revenues – Steven Barlow

Biggest revenue drivers include:

- *Property taxes • Total real estate assessed values increased by \$411.3 million to \$7.5 billion (5.8 percent increase);*
- *Increase in residential redevelopment;*
- *Assessments; • Total assessed value increase from new construction and improvements was \$138.6 million;*
- *Business license taxes.*

Action Item - provide breakdown of rate for real estate assessment increases per housing sector by valuation.

Council Initiatives – Mercury Payton Town Manager

The top three new initiatives, as voted on by Council (Landscape Services - Funded FY25 Carryforward Parks and Recreation \$90,000; Fitness Center Operating Reserve Parks and Recreation \$200,000; Parade/Event Fencing, \$25,000); Included in proposed budget.

Carry forward process (September discussion) will address the next eight ranked items for possible funding (Tree Planting; Multimedia Design Specialist; Drop Off Composting; Preventative Building Maintenance; Urban Forestry Maintenance Staff; Streetscape Beautification; Preventative Building Maintenance; Administration Specialist).

Action Item - provide information on past years new initiatives that have become part of the regular ongoing budget and those that can potentially be sunsetted; assess past budget decisions that may present opportunities for budget savings.

Mayor Colbert called for a break at 10:30 AM. Meeting reconvened at 10:45 AM.

Economic Development – Nicole Toulouse

Challenged to find ways through social media to highlight successful business community issue resolution by TBLC/Council.

Human Resources / Risk Management – Michelle Crabtree

Every full time employee with over six months employment has opportunity to participate in the pension plan.

Finance – Steven Barlow

- *Tax relief program is administered by the County of Fairfax.*
- *Vienna Fire and Rescue is a volunteer nonprofit organization independent from*

the Town of Vienna; receives contribution from the Town of Vienna

Police – Chief Morris

- *Local recruitment efforts are beginning to pay off.*

Information Technology – Tony Mull

Public Information – Karen Thayer

- *Explore ways to fund multimedia position through cross department funding;*
- *Encouraged to continue video content supportive of new initiatives throughout the Town.*

Planning and Zoning – David Levy

- *Budget should remain firm; no specific project planned for these dollars;*
- *Investigating ways to allow public access to status of various projects across town;*
- *Research options for greater readability of project signage.*

Mayor Colbert called for a break at 2:20 PM. Meeting reconvened at 2:55 PM.

Public Works – Vehicle Replacement Plan– Brad Baer

Composting initiative supported but must be confident with the numbers before adopting a year round program.

Water and Sewer Fund Revenues and Expenditures – Marvin Lawrence

- *Water breaks on par with region;*
- *All breaks confined to older pipelines.*

Stormwater Revenues and Expenditures- Brad Baer

2. Meeting Adjournment

Mayor Colbert concluded the work session at 4:40 PM.

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