



Town of Vienna

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Meeting Minutes

Town Business Liaison Committee

Thursday, February 13, 2025

7:00 PM

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

1 Roll Call

Call to Order: Chairman Jen Morrow called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Item 1. Roll Call:

Members present: Brenda Burns; Bill Comerford; Najee Davis; Mark Lander; Tracy McCarty; Jen Morrow; Preeti Penati

Members absent: Bob Marsh

Staff Present: Nicole Toulouse, Director, Economic Development; Ashley Curtis, Marketing and Business Engagement Specialist, Economic Development

2. Presentations

Introduce new Economic Development Director

Chairman Morrow welcomed Nicole Toulouse, the incoming Director for Economic Development.

3. Approval of the Minutes:

November TBLC minutes

Attachments: [Draft November Minutes](#)

A motion was made to approve the edited regular meeting minutes of November 2024 and December 2024.

Motion, Tracy McCarty; second, Bill Comerford. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Regular Business

January new businesses

Attachments: [January New Businesses](#)

The table of newly licensed businesses for the month of January 2025 was presented.

Update on Town Council's proposed meals tax increase

Attachments: [TBLC 012725 Memorandum](#)

Chairman Morrow shared the memorandum submitted to Town Council. Feedback indicated that the memo was beneficial to Council's decision to postpone the vote until the August Town Council Meeting.

Additional discussion and comments included the following:

- *Postponement will allow time to see if Fairfax County raises meals tax rate;*
- *Town Manager exploring possible Capitol Campaign; Would allow for reduced timeline for increased meals tax;*
- *Parks and Recreation will lead campaign;*
- *TBLC should be represented in discussions – actively participating in ways to reduce the meals tax burden on businesses;*
- *Najee Davis will represent TBLC in Capitol Campaign discussions;*
- *TBLC Members must continue to engage with those most vocal business owners.*

The Item will remain on the agenda going forward.

TBLC memo on parking recommendations

Attachments: [Kelly OBrien memo summarizing TBLC comments on parking study](#)

Committee Members were invited to review the memo to Town Council. Council will address the remaining study recommendations during the meeting of March 3, 2025. This Item will remain on the agenda going forward.

5. Economic Development Department Updates

Director Toulouse shared information from the upcoming presentation to Council. She stressed that all Economic Development work revolves around assuring that businesses are making sales and winning contracts and filling up commercial building space.

The program calendar for 2026 includes the following:

- *Restaurant Week - March 7, 2025 – March 16, 2025*
- *Economic Development Week – May 11, 2025 – May 17, 2025; Suggest combining Thrive awards with GrowCon;*
- *International Shopping Center Conference – Seeking new tenants for Vienna*
- *Comprehensive Plan Update – TBLC must see more than just the Economic Development section; Will meet with real estate consultant to determine what is possible for Maple Avenue;*
- *Virtual Office Hours will continue on the first Thursday of each month;*
- *Ribbon cuttings continue.*

6. New Business

Town event impacts on Church Street businesses

Chairman Morrow indicated that this is a continuation of an earlier discussion. Following a meeting with Mayor Colbert, Chairman Morrow urged the Committee to leverage the positives of Town events by working with Parks and Recreation. These events are a part of the culture of the Town.

The following is a representation of comments from the Committee:

- *TBLC should provide feedback to Parks and Recreation during the rewrite of the nonprofit special events guidelines;*
- *Assure that physical design of event does not impact businesses;*
- *Request relaxed outdoor dining standards for duration of event;*
- *Events should enhance businesses not serve as competition;*
- *Seek optimum communication between owners/sponsors of each event and businesses;*

- *Suggest that Town should acknowledge the negative impact of these events on businesses and consider ways to compensate for road closures;*
- *Urge businesses to consider positive ripple effect of these events;*
- *Challenge business owners to find creative ways to draw event participants into their establishments.*

The idea of a working session was discussed. Participants would include staff and the owners/sponsors of each event and representatives of TBLC.

This Item will remain on the agenda going forward.

Spring awards planning

Chairman Morrow reported on the outcome of a meeting with the Mayor regarding the Special Awards. TBLC has been given the authority to select the Carole Wolfand award if no applications are received. Two recipients may be selected for the Bob Leggett award. These awards will be conferred at the Mayors Awards Reception on April 22, 2025.

Nominations will close on April 1, 2025.

Planning for Thrive Business Awards Ceremony

7. Chair's Report

Tracy McCarty reported on the Casino proposal, Senate Bill 982, which was killed for the 2025 legislative session.

5. Meeting Adjournment

*Chairman Morrow called for a motion to adjourn at 9:20 PM.
Motion, Mark Lander; second, Preeti Penati*

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