



Town of Vienna

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

Meeting Minutes Town Council Work Session

Monday, March 9, 2026

7:00 PM

Vienna Police Department Community Room,
215 Center St. South

1. Regular Business

The Town Council Work Session was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Colbert, Council Member Nash, Council Member Francis, Council Member Springsteen, Council Member Baldwin, and Council Member Anderson were present. Council Member Ramakis was absent.

Before regular business began, Mayor Colbert recognized Scout Troop 1143 in attendance.

A. Tree Advocacy Committee Recommendations to Council (15 Minute Presentation)

The Tree Advocacy Committee along with staff representatives Matthew Fuller and Leslie Herman, presented its annual recommendations to the Town Council, including proposals to remove the street tree opt-out provision, establish a Tree Conservation Award, create a Heritage Tree Program, implement a "250 Trees for 250 Years" initiative, and include tree-related materials in new resident welcome packets. Committee members emphasized the loss of tree canopy due to redevelopment and the importance of expanding planting efforts, particularly in public rights-of-way and residential areas. The presentation highlighted data on tree planting opt-outs, survival rates of town-planted trees, and the need to utilize all available tools to increase canopy coverage. The Committee also outlined opportunities to partner with external organizations and leverage existing town communication channels to support education and outreach. Town Council members asked clarifying questions regarding implementation, feasibility, and coordination with existing town programs.

The Town Council expressed general support for several recommendations, particularly the Tree Conservation Award, the 250 Trees initiative, and the addition of tree-related materials to welcome packets. Council Members indicated interest in the Heritage Tree Program but noted the need for additional legal review and coordination with the Town Attorney. Discussion on removing the street tree opt-out provision reflected mixed views, with Council Members raising concerns about resident preferences, site-specific conditions, and community acceptance, while others emphasized long-term canopy goals and public benefits. Several Council Members suggested refining the process, including potential distinctions between existing residents and new development, as well as exploring alternative approaches such as appeals processes or enhanced outreach. Staff provided additional context regarding current planting procedures, site selection constraints, and resident notification practices. No formal action was taken, and the Tree Advocacy Committee was encouraged to return with more detailed proposals.

B. Presentation of Water & Sewer Rate Analysis (15 Minute Presentation)

Following a short break, Mayor Colbert called the Work Session back to order at

8:23 p.m.

Town Staff and Consultants Mike Maker and Connor Drucis from NewGen Strategies presented the Water and Sewer Rate Analysis to the Town Council, outlining key financial considerations for the enterprise fund, including operating expenses, wholesale water and wastewater costs, capital improvement needs, and indirect cost allocations. The presentation emphasized the importance of maintaining revenues sufficient to cover expenses, fund reserves, and support long-term infrastructure replacement, including increasing water main replacement from approximately one mile to two miles annually. Consultants reviewed major cost drivers such as debt service, PFAS treatment requirements, and inflationary pressures, as well as assumptions regarding customer growth and water usage trends. Town Council Members asked questions regarding indirect cost calculations, wholesale rate comparisons, infrastructure replacement timelines, and operational capacity to manage increased capital improvements. Additional discussion addressed system conditions, pipe age, and strategies for maintaining reliable service levels over time.

Consultants presented proposed rate adjustments, including a 4% revenue increase for water and sewer and a \$3 increase in the service charge for FY2027, along with projections indicating that additional increases may be necessary in future years. The Town Council reviewed both the current rate structure and an alternative structure that would align residential and commercial tiers, with the alternative shifting a greater share of costs to high-volume commercial users while reducing impacts on residential customers. Council Members discussed affordability concerns, public feedback, and the feasibility of reducing rates, with staff explaining that fixed costs and external obligations limit the ability to decrease rates. Additional discussion addressed PFAS-related costs, wholesale provider requirements, and potential future liabilities, including regional infrastructure impacts. Town Council Members expressed interest in further evaluating the alternative rate structure and requested additional information on impacts to major users and long-term debt obligations. No formal action was taken, and staff will provide additional analysis and conduct outreach prior to a future public hearing.

2. Meeting Adjournment

Mayor Colbert ended the Work Session by reminding people to submit applications for the upcoming Mayor's Volunteer awards.

With no further Business, the Work Session was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.