



# Town of Vienna

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

## Meeting Minutes Town Council Meeting

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Monday, April 8, 2024

7:30 PM

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

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### Invocation: Reverend Brenda Burns, Vienna Assembly of God

*Mayor Colbert called on Brenda Burns, Pastor, Vienna Assembly of God to provide the evening's invocation.*

### Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

#### 1. Roll Call

**Present:** 7 - Sandra Allen, Chuck Anderson, Roy Baldwin, Ray Brill Jr., Jessica Ramakis, Howard J. Springsteen and Linda Colbert

#### 2. Acceptance of the Minutes:

- A. [24-4375](#) Acceptance of the Draft Conference Session Minutes of March 7, 2024, March 11, 2024 and the Draft Meeting Minutes of March 18, 2024

*Draft minutes of the March 7, 2024, March 11, 2024 Conference Sessions and the March 18, 2024 Regular Council Meeting were approved as presented.*

**A motion was made that the Action Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Allen, Anderson, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis, Springsteen and Colbert

#### 3. Receipt of petitions and communications from the Public that are not on the Agenda. (Limited to 3 minutes per issue and no formal action can be taken this evening)

#### 4. 7:50 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Reports/Presentations

- A. [24-4361](#) Proclamation for Steve, the Referee, Salyer

*Mayor Colbert recognized Steve, the Referee, Salyer, for his dedication to youth sports in Vienna VA.*

- B. [24-4373](#) Proclamation for International Dark Sky Week

*Council Member Springsteen read the proclamation identifying April 2 – April 8, 2024 as International Dark Skies Week in Vienna, VA.*

- C. [24-4367](#) 2024 Arbor Day Proclamation

*Council Member Ramakis read the proclamation identifying April 28, 2024 as Arbor Day in Vienna, VA.*

**D. [24-4374](#) Proclamation for Volunteer Recognition Day**

*Mayor Colbert recognized Tuesday, April 16, 2024 as Volunteer Recognition Day.*

**A. Report and Inquiries of Council Members**

*Mayor Colbert opened the floor for comments by Council.*

*Council Member Springsteen called attention to an editorial entitled "Vienna Residents Should Not Be Treated as Second Class Citizens" addressing the issue of school crossing guard elimination in Vienna. He also provided photographs from his hometown in New Jersey depicting the coexistence of sidewalks and trees.*

*Council Member Anderson commented on receipt of the Parks and Recreation Statistical Survey regarding the Parks Master Plan. He noted the thoroughness of the survey and encouraged all who received it to respond.*

*Council Member Brill remarked on the well-attended April 6, 2024 health fair co-sponsored by The Town of Vienna and the Vienna Business Association.*

**B. Report of the Town Manager**

*Town Attorney Briglia noted the passing of a Christopher Caldwell.*

**C. Report of the Mayor**

*Mayor Colbert encouraged Council and all Vienna residents to attend the Volunteer Day Reception on April 16, 2024. The event will be held at the Fire Hall beginning at 7:00 PM. She also noted opening day for Vienna Little League as Saturday, April 13, 2024.*

**D. Proposals for Additional Items to the Agenda****E. Closed Session Report**

*It was moved that the members of the Vienna Town Council be polled to affirm that a Closed Session was held on April 8, 2024 at 6:30 PM in accordance with Virginia Code, Section 2.2-3711, (1), for discussion or consideration of personnel matters, specifically the interviewing of individuals for consideration of appointment and/or reappointment to Town Boards and Commissions.*

*It was further moved that the Certification Resolution be adopted in accordance with State Statutes, and that the Town Clerk is authorized to execute the Certification Resolution.*

*And it was further moved that the Closed Session be continued to Monday April 29, 2024 at 6:30 PM in accordance with Virginia Code, Section 2.2-3711, (1) for discussion or consideration of personnel matters, specifically the interviewing of individuals for consideration of appointment and/or reappointment to Town Boards and Commissions.*

*Motion, Council Member Ramakis; second, Council Member Springsteen. Motion carried unanimously.*

*It was moved that Mike Gadell be recommended to the Fairfax County Circuit Court for reappointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals.*

*It was further moved that Lea Gionanniello be appointed to the Conservation and Sustainability Commission for a two-year term. Said term shall be effective April 9, 2024 and expire April 9, 2026.*

*Motion, Council Member Ramakis; second, Council Member Springsteen. Motion carried unanimously.*

**A motion was made by Jessica Ramakis, seconded by Howard J. Springsteen, that this was approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Allen, Anderson, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis, Springsteen and Colbert

## 5. Public Hearings

### A. [24-4368](#)

8:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m. Public Hearing for 2024-25 Operating Budget

*Mayor Colbert opened the first of two public hearings at 8:05 PM. All Council were present.*

*Mayor Colbert called on Marion Serfass to present the Item for consideration by Council.*

*The Town Manager's proposed budget for fiscal year 2024-25 has been presented to the Mayor, Town Council, and residents. The proposed budget was reviewed by Town Council during conference sessions on March 11 and 16, 2024. This public hearing is held so that Town of Vienna citizens may provide public input.*

*The Town Manager's proposed FY 2024-25 budget reflects current economic conditions expected over the next 12 to 24 months, and the top-ranked new initiatives as identified by Council. The general fund budget includes no change in the real estate tax rate of \$0.195 per \$100 of assessed value and increases in salaries and other costs to meet current economic conditions.*

*The proposed fiscal year 2024-25 Town of Vienna budget totals \$53,766,620 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, and is broken down as follows:*

*General Fund \$33,074,250 - Under this proposed budget, the general fund will likely increase 4.9 percent due to real estate assessments. It is important to note that over the past four years the Town has experienced a 14 percent decrease in tax rate based on the philosophy of setting a tax rate that can be sustained over time.*

*Debt Service Fund \$ 6,511,700 - The debt service fund budget is proposed to increase by \$1,041,680 or 19.0 percent. The largest driver of the increase is the structure of the 2020 debt which incorporates increased principal payments after the 4th year.*

*Water & Sewer Fund \$13,410,950 – The water and sewer fund is proposed to increase by 9.5 percent. The main drivers are increases in wholesale water purchases, sewer treatment costs and transfers to the general fund for indirect costs and debt service fund, to pay for water and sewer debt issued in 2024. It is believed that the Town can find strategies to slow the rate of increase in subsequent years.*

*Stormwater Fund \$ 769,720 – Established in 2013, the stormwater fund accounts for*

*funds that Fairfax County collects from Town residents. Fairfax County currently collects 3.25 cents per \$100 of property assessment from homeowners to comply with state and federal stormwater requirements. The Town receives a portion of these funds each year and partners with Fairfax County on stormwater projects that directly impact the Town. The fund budget increase of 2.4 percent over last fiscal year reflects minor cost increases partially offset by increased funding and higher interest earnings.*

*The proposed budget includes no change in the real estate tax rate and one personnel addition, plus two other changes based on the top-ranked items from the January 2024 new initiatives discussion. The changes included are:*

- New policy granting employees childcare and family care leave. This policy has no explicit budgeted cost but may result in slight increases in overtime to cover positions utilizing the leave.*
- Addition of one full-time equivalent (FTE) position in information technology (IT) to support the police department. The police department requires 24/7 IT support with the increased reliance on technology, and current staffing levels cannot provide night shift support.*
- Addition of night shift differential for the police department. This is both necessary to meet industry standards and will support recruitment and retention of hard-to-fill positions.*

*The Town continues to use a vehicle replacement plan which replaces older vehicles on a schedule. No funds were borrowed in FY 2022-23 for vehicle replacements. Instead, borrowing was undertaken during FY 2023-24 for a greater amount than normal and at a higher interest rate than in prior years. The Town owns over 100 vehicles and with replacement costs and the cost of borrowing dramatically increasing the FY 2024-25 budget includes borrowing \$1.55 million.*

*One of the largest drivers for the general fund budget is the increase in wages. A classification and compensation study was completed during FY 2023-24, which resulted in only minor scale and position adjustments incorporated into the budget. General employees are budgeted for a 3.0 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) plus a 1.0 percent merit increase for a 4.0 percent total increase. Sworn law enforcement officers are budgeted for a 2.5 percent step increase plus a 3.0 percent MRA for a total increase of 5.5 percent. The classification and compensation study showed Town salaries overall at the 60th percentile for the region, so budgeted salary increases will assist with employee recruitment and retention pressures. If the budget is accepted as presented tonight, adoption is scheduled for May 20, 2024.*

*Town Manager thanked Director Serfass and all Staff for the effort to prepare the proposed budget. Mayor Colbert opened the floor for comments from Council.*

*Council Member Anderson presented a comment received via email where a resident points out a discrepancy. Basically the Town is keeping the tax rate flat but increasing assessments at an average of 6.2 percent for residential.*

*Director Serfass - It decreased by 1.2 percent for commercial.*

*Council Member Anderson - This might explain the difference then because the proposed tax rate would be increased by 3.3 percent and there is a disconnect between the two.*

*Director Serfass - So 6.2 percent represents the dollar value of those assessments one year over the other. That does not account for the tax rate because this is just the assessed value, not the levee itself. I believe you are referring to the levee.*

*Council Member Anderson - It would seem that if I would keep the rate flat and the assessment increased by 6.2 percent then the taxes would increase by 6.2 percent.  
Director Serfass – Actually commercial decreased by 1.2 percent so the total amount is 5 percent.*

*Council Member Anderson – But there is still a gap between 5 percent and 3.3 percent.*

*Director Serfass - April 29, 2024 is the Real Estate Tax hearing. Those definitions are defined in the State Code and I'll be prepared to speak about those at that time.*

*Council Member Springsteen addressed a resident email with suggestions regarding the water rates and usage. He believed she made interesting points on how to make the Town more competitive.*

*Director Serfass – I worked with Deputy Director Barlow, Town Manager Payton and Mayor Colbert to prepare a response. We are definitely open to making changes.*

*With no further comments, Mayor Colbert called for a motion to close the public hearing. Motion, Council Member Springsteen; second, Council Member Anderson. Motion carried unanimously.*

*Mayor Colbert opened the floor for Public comment. With no comment from the floor, Mayor Colbert called for a motion on the item. Prior to vote it was clarified that this a motion of intent to adopt. Council can make cuts to the proposed budget but cannot increase the budget once this motion passes.*

*It was moved that the Town Clerk be directed to advertise a Notice of Intent to Adopt the Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget at the May 20, 2024 Town Council meeting, following Town Council's consideration of the real estate tax rate.*

*Motion, Council Member Springsteen; second, Council Member Baldwin. Motion carried unanimously.*

**A motion was made by Springsteen, seconded by Baldwin, that the Action Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Allen, Anderson, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis, Springsteen and Colbert

**B. [24-4364](#)**

**8:15 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Public Hearing on FY2024-25 Water and Sewer Rates**

*Mayor Colbert called the second of two Public Hearings to order at 8:20 PM. All Council were present. Mayor Colbert recognized Steven Barlow, Deputy Director, Finance, to present the Item.*

*During FY2023-24, the Town of Vienna contracted with an expert consultant to provide a water and sewer rate study. The study was presented to Council at a Conference session on March 16, 2024, Council meeting on March 18, 2024. The study found that the following factors are responsible for driving the proposed rate increases:*

*Water and sewer infrastructure and capital (maintenance and improvements);  
Increased borrowing costs (interest rates);  
Wholesale water purchase costs;  
Increased operational costs (inflationary);  
Rising sewer treatment costs.*

*Based on the findings of the consultant, rates will increase by 10.6% for FY2024-25 to*

*maintain an adequate cash balance in the fund. Overall, the average residential customer's bill will increase \$25.25 per quarter or \$101.00 per year. Water availability fees will also rise in line with Fairfax County Water Authority's rates.*

*This public hearing is held to provide water and sewer customers with an opportunity to offer comments.*

*Mayor Colbert opened the floor for comment from the public. With none forthcoming she called for a motion to close the public hearing.*

*Motion, Council Member Springsteen; second, Council Member Anderson. Motion carried unanimously.*

*It was moved to approve water and sewer rates and fees for FY2024-25 as presented.*

*It was further moved that the Town Clerk be directed to advertise a Notice of Intent to Adopt water and sewer rates and fees for FY2024-25 at the May 20, 2024 meeting.*

*Motion, Council Member Springsteen; second, Council Member Baldwin. Motion carried unanimously.*

**A motion was made by Springsteen, seconded by Baldwin, that the Action Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Allen, Anderson, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis, Springsteen and Colbert

## 6. Regular Business

### A. [24-4366](#)

8:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Request to Direct the Town Clerk to advertise a Notice of Intent to Adopt Text Amendments Related to Preserving and Enhancing Tree Canopy in Chapters 17, 18 and 27 and creating a new Tree Advocacy Committee to replace the Tree Board.

*Mayor Colbert called on Town Attorney Briglia to present the Item for consideration by Council. Chapters 17 and 18 will be considered separately from Chapter 27.*

*Comments and questions from Council are summarized as follows:*

- *During the three month pre adoption period it is possible that a parcel could be clear cut; Replanting would still be required;*
- *VA Code 15.2961 provided the language for the standards present in the amendment; Amendment contains strongest language allowed within VA law;*
- *A credit system is included in language – allows for retention of larger trees;*
- *Confirm that quarterly inspections are conducted prior to receipt of certificate of occupancy;*
- *Text amendments can still be tweaked but any substantive changes would require referral back to Planning Commission.*

*With no further comments by Council, Mayor Colbert called for a motion.*

*It was moved to direct the Town Clerk to advertise a Notice of Intent to adopt the proposed text amendments related to the creation of a Tree Commission as well as the preserving and enhancing of tree canopy during development in the adoption of a new Chapter 17, TREE PRESERVATION AND CANOPY REQUIREMENTS DURING DEVELOPMENT for April 29, 2024, with an effective date of July 29, 2024 and to include amendments to Chapter 17 as presented to Council on April 8, 2024.*

*Motion, Council Member Anderson; second, Council Member Baldwin. Motion*

carried unanimously.

Mayor Colbert recognized Town Attorney Briglia who reviewed draft changes and modifications to Chapter 27. Council further clarified suggested tweaks.

With no further comments, Mayor Colbert called for a motion.

It was moved to direct the Town Clerk to advertise a Notice of Intent to adopt the proposed text amendments related to the creation of a Tree Commission as well as the preserving and enhancing of tree canopy during development in Chapters 18 and 27 TREE PRESERVATION AND CANOPY REQUIREMENTS DURING DEVELOPMENT for April 29, 2024, with an effective date of July 29, 2024 and to include amendments to Chapter 17 as presented to Council on April 8, 2024.

Motion, Council Member Anderson; second, Council Member Baldwin. Motion carried unanimously.

**A motion was made by Anderson, seconded by Baldwin, that the Action Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Allen, Anderson, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis, Springsteen and Colbert

**B. [24-4363](#)** 9:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Request to Award a Design Contract to Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP, for Nutley Street Culvert Replacement.

Mayor Colbert called on Brad Baer, Director, Public Works, to present the Item.

Comments and questions from Council are summarized as follows:

- Director Baer was directed to ensure that any disruptions to the project be clearly communicated to the public while additionally reiterating the overall value of the project;
- Project is planned in response to a problem inherited by the Town as the Town developed over time; Project has been a part of CIP for many years.

Mayor Colbert called for a motion on the Item.

It was moved to approve the motion to award a \$230,936.50 on-call Civil Engineering contract to Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP utilizing contract RFP 23-37.

Motion, Council Member Springsteen; second, Council Member Baldwin. Motion carried unanimously.

**A motion was made by Springsteen, seconded by Baldwin, that the Action Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Allen, Anderson, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis, Springsteen and Colbert

**C. [24-4362](#)** 9:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. Request to Approve Design Contract for Ayr Hill Avenue, NW, Traffic Calming Improvements at the Lawyers Road Intersection

Mayor Colbert called on Brad Baer, Director, Public Works, to present the Item.

Comments and questions from Council are summarized as follows:

- Currently unaware of any contentious comments from residents; public comment will be directly sought following design.

*It was moved to approve the design contract for the Ayr Hill Avenue, NW, Traffic Calming Improvements at the Lawyers Road Intersection, in an amount not to exceed \$116,000.*

*Motion, Council Member Springsteen; second, Council Member Anderson. Motion carried unanimously.*

**A motion was made by Springsteen, seconded by Anderson, that the Action Item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 6 - Anderson, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis, Springsteen and Colbert

**Nay:** 1 - Allen

**D. [24-4365](#)**

10:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. Continued Discussion (Part 2) of Potential Zoning Amendments, as Follow-Up to Code Create

*Mayor Colbert called on David Levy, Director, Planning and Zoning to present the Item.*

*Comments from Council are summarized as follows:*

- *Suggest adding language to add permanency to decision regarding sidewalks in the historic district;*
- *Consider changing default language to “no public improvements in Windover Heights unless deemed necessary by Public Works”;*
- *Urge consideration of suggestions by Windover Heights Board of Review;*
- *Must address two separate issues 1) stormwater management; 2) mandate for sidewalks;*
- *Would require language changes to both Chapter 18 and Chapter 4.*

*Council directed Planning and Zoning Staff to develop language reflecting the above discussion, for further consideration.*

*Director Levy provided background for the ensuing discussion. During the recent code update process, it was determined that the ordinance is a dynamic document subject to regular review. As such, throughout the rewrite process certain topics were identified as “pinned” items that, for various reasons, would need to be addressed after the updated Chapter 18 was adopted. The process was begun on February 12, 2024. Director Levy related that the intention of this discussion was to review as many of the 36 remaining “pinned” items as time permits and receive guidance from the Council on which to advance for additional zoning amendments. Given the time constraints on Staff and the desire to allow time for the recently adopted code to be put into use, Council has been asked to determine which of the pinned items require more immediate consideration. Council’s priority assessment is organized into three options:*

- *High interest*
- *Low interest*
- *Not in favor*

*Of the six items considered, only the issue of increasing the buffer between nonresidential use and residential use was determined to be of high interest. The remaining five items (three involving building heights and two relating to pergolas) were deemed of low priority. Council was reminded that all items remain in formal discussion and any item, whether deemed of low interest for immediate discussion or not, can be brought forward by a Council Member.*

## 7. Meeting Adjournment

*Mayor Colbert called for a motion to adjourn at 10:30 PM.  
Motion, Council Member Baldwin; second, Council Member Brill.*

**A motion was made by Howard J. Springsteen, seconded by Ray Brill Jr., that this was adjourned.. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye:** 7 - Allen, Anderson, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis, Springsteen and Colbert

*THE TOWN OF VIENNA IS COMMITTED TO FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STANDARDS. TRANSLATION SERVICES, ASSISTANCE OR ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS FROM PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE TO BE REQUESTED NOT LESS THAN 3 WORKING DAYS BEFORE THE DAY OF THE EVENT. PLEASE CALL (703) 255-6304, OR 711 VIRGINIA RELAY SERVICE FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED.*