



Town of Vienna

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

Meeting Minutes Town Council Work Session

Saturday, March 14, 2026

9:00 AM

Vienna Town Hall, 127 Center St. Vienna VA

1. Regular Business

A. Proposed Fiscal Year 2026-27 Operating Budget Work Session #1

The Work Session was called to order at 9:00 A.M. All seven members of The Town Council were in attendance. The Town Manager introduced the structure of the budget work session and outlined that the proposed budget is balanced in accordance with Town and State requirements. The Town Manager noted that this was the first of two scheduled work sessions and that department directors would present items included in the budget.

The Finance Director provided an overview of the proposed budget, including the format of the budget document, key assumptions, and the economic context within the Town. The presentation emphasized that revenues and expenditures are balanced, and that the budget maintains existing service levels while reflecting a lean approach to spending. Major cost drivers, including employee compensation and health insurance increases, were also highlighted.

1. Proposed Budget Overview

The Finance Director presented the proposed budget, noting that the total operating budget is approximately \$58 million, with the General Fund at approximately \$35 million and increasing by 2.7 percent. The overall budget reflects an approximate 5 percent increase, with a continued focus on maintaining services, supporting employee compensation, and exercising fiscal discipline. The proposed tax rate remains unchanged; however, due to increased property assessments, the average homeowner is expected to see an increase.

The Town Council discussed the proposed deferral of the vehicle replacement program, with several Council Members expressing concern about delaying equipment purchases and the potential for increased costs in future years. Staff indicated that the deferral is manageable in the short term and that additional analysis would be presented at the March 16 work session. The Town Council also discussed overall budget structure, revenue trends, and the importance of maintaining long-term fiscal balance.

2. Compensation

The Human Resources Director presented proposed compensation adjustments, including a 2 percent market increase for all employees, a 1 percent merit increase for civilian staff, and a 2.5 percent step increase for police personnel. The presentation included regional comparisons and emphasized that the proposed adjustments are intended to maintain competitiveness and address compression within the pay structure.

The Town Council discussed the projected increase in health insurance costs and its impact on the General Fund. Council Members also discussed cost-sharing structures, regional trends, and the long-term effect of personnel costs on the budget. Staff noted that the Town remains competitive within the region and

emphasized the importance of maintaining workforce stability and retention.

3. Council Initiatives / Town Manager Budget

The Town Council elected to defer discussion of Council initiatives to a later time in the meeting or to the March 16 work session. The Town Manager's budget presentation was also deferred in order to proceed with the remaining agenda items and maintain the meeting schedule.

4. Economic Development

The Economic Development Director presented the department's budget and activities, noting that the mission is to enhance the Town's commercial tax base and reduce the tax burden on residents. The presentation included updates on business attraction, retention, marketing initiatives, and partnerships with regional organizations, as well as data reflecting strong performance in sales and meals tax revenues.

The Town Council discussed commercial vacancy rates, rental costs, and the limited supply of retail space within the Town. Council Members emphasized the importance of maintaining a strong commercial base to support overall revenues and reduce reliance on residential taxes. Additional discussion addressed redevelopment activity, site-specific constraints, and the role of economic development initiatives in sustaining business activity.

5. Human Resources

The Human Resources Director provided additional information on Human Resources and Risk Management operations, including staffing, benefits administration, and workforce trends. The presentation highlighted ongoing recruitment efforts, retention considerations, and the structure of employee benefits. The Town Council discussed workforce challenges and benefit structures, including the financial impact of employee-related costs on the overall budget. A brief recess was taken and the meeting later reconvened.

6. Finance Department

The Finance Director continued the presentation with additional detail on revenues, transfers, reserves, and tax-related items. The presentation included discussion of key revenue sources such as real estate taxes, business license taxes, and meals tax revenues, as well as mid-year budget adjustments and financial management strategies.

The Town Council discussed revenue trends, tax structure, and fiscal sustainability, including the importance of maintaining a balanced budget while continuing to provide high-quality services. Discussion also included the relationship between assessment growth and tax impacts on residents.

7. Police

The Police Chief presented the Police Department budget, noting that the proposed budget supports continued delivery of public safety services and maintains current staffing levels. The presentation included discussion of personnel costs, recruitment efforts, and anticipated retirements within the department.

The Town Council discussed staffing levels and regional competition for qualified officers, with staff noting that while the department is near full staffing, upcoming retirements will create vacancies. The Town Council emphasized the importance of maintaining competitive compensation and benefits to support recruitment and retention of sworn personnel.

8. Information Technology

The Information Technology Director presented the IT budget, including planned investments in cyber security, system maintenance, and technology infrastructure. The presentation highlighted increased costs associated with cyber security enhancements and ongoing software and service needs.

The Town Council discussed the importance of maintaining strong cyber security protections and reliable technology systems. Staff noted that IT-related costs contribute to increases in purchase services within the General Fund and are necessary to support Town operations.

9. Public Information

The Public Information Officer presented the department's budget and activities, including communication efforts, public engagement, and support for Town initiatives. The presentation emphasized efforts to improve transparency and enhance communication with residents.

The Town Council discussed the role of public communication in supporting Town operations and community engagement, noting the importance of clear and consistent messaging.

10. Parks and Recreation

The Parks and Recreation Director presented the Parks and Recreation budget, providing an overview of departmental operations, including recreational programming, facility management, and community events. The presentation highlighted continued demand for programs and services, as well as the department's role in maintaining parks, coordinating events, and supporting community engagement. Operational priorities include maintaining existing facilities, supporting popular programming, and addressing ongoing maintenance needs across parks and Town-owned recreational spaces.

The Town Council discussed program participation levels, facility conditions, and long-term planning considerations, including the need to balance increasing demand with available resources. Council Members also discussed the importance of maintaining high-quality recreational offerings and ensuring that facilities remain well-maintained and accessible to residents. The Parks and Recreation Director noted that the department continues to evaluate programming and operational needs to ensure efficient service delivery while supporting community expectations.

The work session concluded at 3:31 p.m.

2. Meeting Adjournment