



# Town of Vienna

## Meeting Minutes Town Council Meeting

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

Monday, December 8, 2025

7:30 PM

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

### Invocation: John Russo, Baha'i Community

*Mayor Colbert called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. John Russo of the Baha'i Community of Vienna provided the invocation.*

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

#### 1. Roll Call

*All 7 Council Members were present.*

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

#### 2. Acceptance of the Minutes:

*The draft minutes were accepted unanimously.*

A. Acceptance of Regular Meeting Minutes of October 27, 2025 and November 10, 2025, and the Work Session Minutes of November 17, 2025.  
*approved*

#### 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)

Board and Commission Appreciation

*Mayor Colbert recognized Brian Land and Gina Womack for their contributions to the Town as volunteers on the Pedestrian Advisory Committee as well as helping out in many other ways. They both will receive certificates for their work.*

Council Member Appreciation

*Mayor Colbert presented 2 plaques of appreciation to Council Member Allen and Council Member Brill who will both be departing at the end of the year as their terms end. Council Member Allen declined the plaque. Council Member Brill accepted the plaque. Mayor Colbert praised him for his service, leadership and dedication to the town. Council Member Brill thanked the Mayor and Council for all their time together. He also thanked the residents for their participation and all the work they do to make Vienna a great town.*

*Town Manager Mercury Payton presented framed photos of council to both Council Member Allen and Council Member Brill as a thank you for their service on behalf of*

*town staff.*

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

*Council Member Anderson offered appreciation to departing Council Member Brill, thanking him for his mentorship, all that he has done and all that he has stood for. He expressed that he would like to honor Council Member Brill by keeping his priorities alive going forward and will try to keep the council meetings short. Anderson also thanked Council Member Allen for her service and partnership over the past two years. He noted her historic role as an Hispanic leader in Vienna and encouraged her to continue her advocacy work.*

*Council Member Baldwin delivered remarks recognizing Council Member Brill's long-term contributions to the community. He reflected humorously on earlier impressions before knowing him personally and praised Brill's leadership and impact on the town.*

*Council Member Springsteen commended the recent Holiday Stroll event, noting strong attendance and community engagement. He endorsed earlier comments praising Council Member Brill's service, particularly his leadership on establishing a dedicated police pay scale. He also thanked Council Member Allen for her service.*

*Council Member Ramakis added thanks to Council Member Brill, emphasizing his neighborly spirit and community-oriented approach. She highlighted his initiative encouraging council members to identify four yearly priorities to maintain focus amid competing issues and emphasized that she would like to continue with these priorities. She also thanked Council Member Allen for her service and willingness to listen to different points of view.*

*Council Member Allen expressed appreciation for colleagues' well-wishes and congratulated newly elected council members. She described her purpose in serving and raised concerns about community issues that she believes are not being addressed.*

*When Council Member Allen began to make disparaging remarks about members of Council, Mayor Colbert expressed to Council Member Allen that she was out of order and briefly recessed the meeting.*

#### B. Report of the Town Manager

*Mayor Colbert called the meeting back to order at 8:00 p.m.*

*The Town Manager announced that Dan Janickey has been selected as the Town's new Chief of Police, effective February 1. He noted that Janickey was chosen following a highly competitive national process and highlighted his extensive background with Fairfax County, including SWAT, hostage negotiation, organized crime mitigation, and FBI Academy training. Janickey offered brief remarks expressing gratitude for the opportunity and appreciation for the mentorship of Chief Jim Morris.*

*The Town Manager also updated Council on funding challenges facing the Northern Virginia Emergency Response System due to reduced federal support. He reported that member jurisdictions are engaging legislators to address the resulting funding gap and asked Council to encourage local delegates and senators to support restoring the necessary emergency-response funding.*

### C. Report of the Mayor

*Mayor Colbert reported that the Church Street Holiday Stroll was highly successful, with what appeared to be record attendance and strong community participation. She expressed appreciation to the many contributing groups, including local choral performers, Parks and Recreation, Economic Development, participating shops and restaurants, and the children's gingerbread-ornament activity. She highlighted the collaborative spirit among businesses—mentioning Bard's Alley story reading and refreshments—as contributing to a “magical” community event.*

## 4. Reports/Presentations

### A. 8-8:30 Economic development quarterly update

*Director Nicole Toulouse reported that redevelopment along Maple Avenue will remain limited without zoning changes or property assemblage, noting that market feedback indicates current height restrictions make mixed-use retail projects difficult. He provided updates on continued outreach to cell service providers, an upcoming work session on regional connectivity, and plans to issue an RFP this spring for a new streetscape and placemaking plan. Staff also highlighted business-retention efforts, the launch of the Shop Vienna retail website, and strong early results from regional advertising. In addition, they noted high business participation during the Holiday Stroll and outlined plans for more proactive coordination with businesses along Church Street, Mill Street, and Dominion Road.*

*Ashley Curtis, Marketing and Business Engagement Specialist, introduced new storytelling tools, including expanded use of the Explore Vienna VA blog and the “4 in 4” itineraries to promote local businesses, and expressed her excitement about the program moving forward. Director Toulouse added that a full work session on the W&OD Center of Town project with NOVA Parks is planned for February.*

*Council Members expressed support for the streetscape and placemaking plan and suggested providing businesses with advance notice of events and infrastructure projects. They praised Vienna’s low vacancy rate of 2.9 percent and proposed mentoring programs and check-ins for new businesses. Concerns regarding long-vacant properties and redevelopment limitations were addressed by staff. Council Members emphasized the importance of preserving the town’s character and continuing outreach to restaurants during the meals tax transition. Staff acknowledged the feedback and highlighted upcoming initiatives, including Restaurant Week and ongoing business engagement efforts.*

### B. 8:30-9:00 Presentation of the 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)

*Kevin Xu, Deputy Director of Finance, introduced the Town of Vienna’s 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, thanking the finance team and town staff for their work. The report was audited by Robinson Farmer & Cox, and Mike Moran from the firm presented a simplified, high-level overview of key highlights. The presentation focused on clarity and accessibility, with Council members invited to ask questions during or after the presentation. Follow-up inquiries were encouraged to be directed to Kevin Xu via*

*email if needed.*

*After the presentation, Council Members asked follow-up questions for clarification on specific items in the ACFR. Questions focused on understanding key financial figures and trends highlighted in the report. Moran and Deputy Director Xu provided explanations and additional context in response to the inquiries. Council Members were generally appreciative of the clear presentation and the accessibility of the finance team for further discussion.*

#### C. 9:00-9:15 Boards and Commissions: Annual Reports and Discussions, Part 3

*Chair of the Board, Terry Bachmann highlighted stormwater issues on the southwest side of Pleasant Street, which create safety risks for pedestrians and cyclists, and noted that Public Works is exploring long-term solutions without a set timeline. They also improved the Windover Heights Board of Review application process and website for better clarity and public understanding. Outreach efforts, like “Meet the Board,” aim to engage residents and explain the board’s role in preserving neighborhood aesthetics.*

*Council Members asked for clarification on what the board means by maintaining “aesthetics” and whether it relates to historic standards. The board explained that architects guide projects to align with the district’s historic and architectural character, despite no strict code criteria. Council Members emphasized support for addressing stormwater issues and improving community understanding of the board’s work.*

#### D. Proposals for Additional Items to the Agenda

#### E. Closed Session Report

*“Upon the resignation of BZA Commissioner Daniel Nash, I move that Mr. Brian Condon be recommended to the Fairfax County Circuit Court for appointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals to complete the unexpired term of Council Member-Elect Nash.”*

*The motion was made by Council Member Ramakis, seconded by Springsteen. This motion passed unanimously. Council Member Allen abstained.*

**approved**

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

**Abstain:** 1 - Allen

### 5. Public Hearings

#### A. 9:15-9:45 Public Hearing on proposed changes to Chapter 10 - Offenses, Miscellaneous, Article 3, Offenses Against Property, Section 10-20.1 Same -Noise of the Code of the Town of Vienna.

*Mayor Colbert paused the meeting for a short break.*

*Mayor Colbert called the meeting back to order at 9:17 p.m.*

*Roll call for the public hearing was taken: all seven council members were present.*

*Mayor Colbert called on Police Chief Morris to provide a brief update. The proposed ordinance includes two main changes: banning contractors from working for profit on Sundays and federal holidays, and delaying the start time to 8:00 a.m. when using multiple landscaping or lawn care equipment on residential properties. Currently, only Sundays are fully restricted, while federal holidays previously had no full ban, only time adjustments. Residents using equipment for personal purposes are not restricted on Sundays or holidays, though the multiple-equipment rule still applies to them. The public hearing was held to gather input on these changes before moving forward.*

*Penny Oszak, 221 Nutley St. NW*

*"I am reading this letter on behalf of Judi Medwedeff. I do not know her exact address; I only know where she lives. She did say that she sent this letter to the Town Council and that I would be speaking on her behalf. We thought it was important that I read her comments aloud.*

*Dear Members of Town Council,*

*I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed restriction that would limit landscaping companies to using only one piece of powered equipment during the first hour of the workday, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m., Monday through Friday. This rule disproportionately targets the landscape industry, even though other businesses generate similar or greater levels of noise during the same hours but are not subject to the same limitations.*

*While the intent to reduce early-morning noise is understandable, this measure would not achieve that goal and would create significant operational and financial challenges for Vienna businesses. At first glance, limiting crews to one machine may seem to reduce noise, but in reality, it simply prolongs it. A two-person crew using two pieces of equipment can complete a property in roughly half the time. Under the proposed rule, the same task would take twice as long, meaning residents would hear equipment for a longer period rather than a shorter, more efficient one.*

*It is also important to note that sound does not increase exponentially. If one blower produces 60 decibels, two blowers operating together produce closer to 62 decibels, not double the noise. The difference to the human ear is minimal, but the impact of doubling the work time is substantial.*

*Furthermore, this policy would make it impractical for a two-person crew to begin work at the normal start time. With only one piece of equipment allowed, one worker would be forced to stand idle for the first hour of the day. The only feasible solution would be to shift the entire workday an hour later. This reduces productivity, compresses schedules, and pushes jobs into later hours when*

temperatures, traffic, and neighborhood activity are higher.

*The effects of this proposal would include reduced efficiency, as crews would complete fewer jobs per day, extending the duration of noise across the entire community. It would also cause economic hardship, as starting later and working less efficiently reduces billable hours and directly harms Vienna businesses. Scheduling disruptions would push work into later parts of the day, which may be less convenient for residents.*

*Vienna residents would also pay more due to the logistics of having only one crew member working at a time at the beginning of each day. Longer job times lead to higher labor and operating costs, meaning substantial price increases for the same services, while delivering a worse experience during the restricted hour because crews would be on-site longer.*

*While the effort to maintain a peaceful community is appreciated, this particular restriction would likely have the opposite effect—prolonging noise rather than reducing it—and would place an unnecessary burden on the businesses that serve Vienna residents daily. In short, this proposal would harm workers economically, extend rather than minimize noise, and unfairly single out one industry.*

*I respectfully urge the Council to reconsider this measure or work toward a more balanced solution that protects residents' peace without penalizing Vienna's workers and small businesses.*

*Thank you for your time, consideration, and continued support of the small business community.”*

*Bill Mims, 222 Talahi Road SE, Vienna*

*“Madame Mayor and members of the Town Council, thank you. My name is Bill Mims, and I live at 222 Talahi Road in southeast Vienna.*

*I am here to say that I appreciate the Town Council’s attempt to mitigate noise in the town, but I believe you are not going nearly far enough. When I moved here 45 years ago with my wife and our two young daughters, the town was a quiet place. That is no longer the case.*

*The cacophony of gas-powered lawn equipment pervades most days of the week in my part of town. Leaf blowers are the worst—they are the loudest. I would also like to clarify that the previous comment about noise levels was misleading. The decibel scale is logarithmic, not linear. A 10-decibel increase represents a hundredfold increase in sound as perceived by the human ear.*

*We used to be able to enjoy sunny afternoons, listen to our children, and hear birds. No more. Gas-powered leaf blowers are also a health hazard in multiple ways. At 50 feet, the average noise level of a gas-powered leaf blower is about 75 decibels, which is more than 100 times louder than normal human conversation.*

*In addition, leaf blowers disperse spores, seeds, and pollen into the air, affecting people’s health, and they emit gasoline pollution at a rate approximately five times*

*that of automobiles per gallon used. More than 70 cities across the United States have ordinances opposing gas-powered leaf blowers, and some prohibit their use entirely. These include cities in California, Michigan, Connecticut, Florida, and the District of Columbia, as well as Maryland.*

*Outlawing gas-powered leaf blowers at least one day a week would make Vienna a much more attractive and pleasant place to live. Please give us back some quiet by banning gas-powered leaf blowers on Sundays. Thank you.”*

*Tim Badillo, Prestige Lawn and Landscape, 310 Dominion Rd. NE*

*“Hello, I’m Tim with Prestige Lawn and Landscape. I’ve never been to one of these meetings before, and it’s good to meet you all.*

*I wasn’t planning to speak until Mr. Mims spoke. It’s my understanding that this ordinance also outlaws non-gas blowers during that period of time, so it does not specifically move us toward electric equipment. There still has to be an answer for people who want their leaves cleaned up; it can’t simply be to outlaw everything. If commercial companies aren’t doing it, homeowners will do it themselves.*

*By moving the start time one hour later, the noise is simply shifted later in the day. Mr. Mims mentioned wanting more peaceful afternoons, but this will push activity into those same hours. Landscapers often stop earlier in the day because residents prefer peace later on. We frequently go above and beyond legal requirements, staying off certain streets in the early morning or evening, and accommodating families with children, people napping, or those on hospice.*

*The more restricted we are by law, the less flexibility we have to make those accommodations. At this time of year, daylight is already limited, and losing another hour at the beginning of the day effectively shortens the workday even more.*

*Judi’s company runs two-person crews, and ours typically runs three-person crews. With only one person allowed to use equipment, there is very little productive work for others to do. While quieter technology may improve over time, this ordinance would still restrict electric equipment as well.”*

*Avril Garland, 917 Hillcrest Drive*

*“My name is Avril Garland, and I live at 917 Hillcrest Drive. I was disappointed to hear representatives from landscaping companies unwilling to compromise. They do not want their hours cut, and they want to use multiple machines at once.*

*There are other ways of doing business. Neighborhoods have been affected by this noise for decades, and it needs to stop. A landscaper called Littlefoot works for my daughter and offers many services beyond mowing and blowing. He suggests flower beds, weekly weeding, mulch, plant relocation, lawn aeration, and more. Mowing and blowing is only one of many services he provides.*

*He uses electric equipment, charges about \$10 more per month, and my daughter considers it an upgrade—no fumes, minimal noise, and a much better experience. People will pay more for upgrades.*

*This measure is a good start, but it does not go far enough. I would support a 9:00 a.m. start time, like in Montclair, New Jersey. Landscapers adjust, and no one loses money. Similar bans work well in Montgomery County, where enforcement requires minimal effort.*

*Thank you.”*

*Jenny Wheat-Kiehaber, Representative of Wheat’s Landscaping, 301 Mill St*

*“Hello, council members. I’m Jenny Wheat-Kiehaber, representing Wheat’s Landscaping, along with my colleague Tom Jacoby.*

*I urge you to reconsider the proposal to limit companies to one piece of equipment and to ban work on federal holidays. Coordinating these restrictions across multiple service providers will not reduce overall noise; it will only spread it out.*

*These restrictions harm our business by reducing efficiency and increasing disruption. The science does not support this rule. Because decibels are logarithmic, adding a second machine increases noise by at most three decibels—the smallest change humans can barely perceive—while doubling the time spent on a property.*

*Public safety is also a concern. Early service is sometimes necessary during snow, severe weather, or emergencies. Shifting work later will also increase traffic congestion during peak hours.*

*Regarding federal holidays, not all businesses observe them. Forcing this change targets our industry and reduces earning opportunities for hourly workers.*

*In short, this rule does not meaningfully reduce noise but does harm efficiency, local businesses, public safety, and traffic flow. Thank you.”*

*Lee Giovanello, 317 Broadleaf Drive NE*

*“I wasn’t planning to speak tonight, but I want to advocate for peace and quiet in our neighborhood. My husband and I mow our lawn ourselves with a quiet mower, but for months at a time, we are never free from noise.*

*The sounds of birds and neighborhood life are drowned out by large, loud machines operating in teams across the neighborhood. It is stressful, even with windows closed.*

*I would like to see rules put in place that reduce noise levels and restore some peace. Thank you.”*

*Penny Oszak, 221 Nutley St. NW*

*"I am speaking for myself this time. When I first heard about the proposed noise ordinance, I was excited. But after reading Judi's letter and speaking with her, I realized it disadvantages landscaping companies.*

*There is noise from many sources in Vienna—construction, garbage pickup, loading and unloading. Landscaping is a major contributor, but it is not the only one. I support addressing noise comprehensively in a way that is fair to both residents and businesses.*

*Thank you for the opportunity to speak."*

*Council Member Springsteen motioned to close the public hearing, Council Member Ramakis seconded.*

*The public hearing was closed at 9:42 p.m.*

*Council Members discussed complexities in the ordinance, including enforcement, decibel measurements, and federal holiday restrictions, noting the need for further study and clarification.*

*The council agreed to delay action, potentially commission a noise study, and revisit the ordinance rather than vote on it immediately.*

*Council Member Anderson's motion to approve did not pass.  
Failed*

**Aye:** 1 - Anderson

**Nay:** 6 - Allen, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis, Springsteen and Colbert

## 6. 9:45 Consent Agenda

*Both consent items were moved to regular business as items B. and C. Council Member Anderson motioned to move the items to regular business, Council Member Springsteen seconded.*

**approve**

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

**Abstain:** 1 - Allen

## 7. Regular Business

**A.**

**PROPOSED - Memorandum of Understanding between and among the Mayor and Town Council Members and the Town Manager**

*This MOU was brought forward by Council Member Brill.*

*Council discussed the importance of limiting meeting length for efficiency and resident engagement, aiming for a two-hour regular meeting and three hours for public hearings.*

*A memorandum of understanding between the mayor, council, and town manager was noted as an aspirational guideline to help achieve this goal.*

*Council debated a proposed aspirational goal to limit meeting length, with some members expressing concern over enforceability while others supported it as a formal statement of intent.*

*The measure was backed as a way to keep meeting efficiency top of mind for the town manager, despite being nonbinding.*

*Council Member Baldwin made a motion to approve the MOU, Council Member Anderson seconded.*

**approved**

**Aye:** 5 - Anderson, Baldwin, Brill, Ramakis and Colbert

**Nay:** 1 - Springsteen

**Abstain:** 1 - Allen

**B.** Approve Spending with Davenport & Company as Financial Advisor for 2025 Bond Issuance

*Council discussed approving payment for McGuire Woods and Davenport for bond-related legal work, noting the budget was included in the 2026 CIP and work is ongoing.*

*Concerns were raised about the timing, as most work had already been completed before formal approval of the fees.*

*It was clarified that both firms operate under existing contracts and bond counsel services are exempt from competitive bidding due to their specialized nature.*

*Council approved the expenditure with the understanding that payment occurs after performance, emphasizing that this should not become standard practice.*

**approved**

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

**Abstain:** 1 - Allen

**C.** Approve Spending with McGuire Woods, LLC as Bond Counsel for 2025 Bond Issuance

*Council Member Anderson's questions were addressed on the previous item so this item proceeded straight to vote.*

**approved**

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

**Abstain:** 1 - Allen

## Second Closed Session

*Noted in the Town Council Minutes that Council Member Allen left the meeting prior to the second closed session.*

**approved**

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

**Absent:** 1 - Allen

## 8. Meeting Adjournment

*Meeting was adjourned at 10:42 p.m.*

*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.*

Draft