



# Town of Vienna

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

## Meeting Minutes Town Council Conference Session

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Monday, March 13, 2023

7:30 PM

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

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### Budget Conference

#### 1. Regular Business

*Council Present: Council Member Chuck Anderson; Council Member Ray Brill Jr.; Council Member Nisha Patel (remote); Council Member Steve Potter; Council Member Ed Somers; Council Member Howard J. Springsteen and Mayor Linda Colbert.*

*Staff Present: Mercury Payton, Town Manager; Shelley Kozlowski, Deputy Town Clerk; Leslie Herman, Director, Parks and Recreation; Christine Horner, Acting Director, Public Works; David Levy, Director, Planning and Zoning; Marion Serfass, Director Finance; Karen Thayer, Manager, Communications and Marketing; Tony Mull, Director, Information Technology; Natalie Monkou, Director, Economic Development*

##### A. [23-3663](#)

##### Fiscal Year 2023-24 Proposed Budget Conference Session #2

*Mayor Colbert called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM with a review of the tax rate reduction initiative discussed at the Saturday, March 11, 2023 Conference Session. At that time Council directed Staff to reduce the rate by one cent.*

*The following provides a summary of comments by Council:*

- *Tax cut of .75% (as appears in proposed budget) is roughly in line with CPI; Town costs currently increasing in rate with CPI; Concerned with tax rate falling below CPI; Unable to sustain;*
- *Town tax has little impact on bill as Fairfax County continues to increase assessments;*
- *Financial markets volatile – recommend waiting to make final decision on total rate cut; Will advertise with .75% tax cut;*
- *Cost of delivering services increases annually; Residents will feel better about proposed salary increases if presented with one cent tax cut;*
- *Newly completed large commercial projects will help support tax rate cut;*
- *Proposed 2023-2024 budget can be balanced with the increased tax rate cut but cannot necessarily be sustained in future budgets.*

*Natalie Monkou, Director, Economic Development*

- *Suggest increased use of signage for event promotion;*
- *Business website well received; Consider adding section on why bring business to Vienna;*
- *Mentor program structured, in part, through building relationship with property owner – identifying ways to pinpoint businesses who might need assistance; Clarifying Economic Development role as supportive rather than punitive.*

*Christine Horner, Director, Public Works*

- *Illegal signage problematic; Consider charging fee for repeat offenders; Dispose of illegal signs immediately;*
- *New system for street light replacement – response time will improve;*
- *Snow plow (leaf truck) tracking available but costly – does not identify movement of vehicle;*
- *Consider providing hard achievement data for all departments (similar to miles of street paved) – will provide support information for Town tax rate;*
- *Request additional funds for street repair – goal to raise street assessment from current “fair” to “satisfactory” rating; Capitol Project item;*
- *Consider additional street sweeper passes on Maple Avenue; Additional passes will negatively affect number of passes in neighborhoods; Consider contracting for additional sweepers;*
- *Majority of snow removal budget (\$250,000) not expended in fiscal year 2022-2023*
- *Most efficient leaf removal program proven to be short haul from Beulah Rd. to compost facility; Request comparison of percent of hauls by Town Staff to contract personnel (to include wage, equipment cost, etc., information);*
- *Currently replacing water hydrants at rate of 10/year; Replace oldest (1950’s) first;*
- *Water main breaks currently at twice benchmark; Cast iron pipes approaching full lifespan;*
- *Current funding allows for 1% replacement of system; Increasing rate of replacement would raise taxes;*
- *Total replacement cost for cast iron pipes equals \$129 M; Water and Sewer study in progress – results will provide needed information to address issues.*

*A recurring Council concern was that of tree canopy.*

*Council reminded Staff to provide information on the potential to prioritize street tree replacement.*

*Decide priority of tree canopy maintenance or removal of invasives; Currently removing only those trees in danger of falling or invasives that are causing harm to other trees; Addressing issue holistically.*

## 2. Meeting Adjournment

*Mayor Colbert concluded the Conference Session at 10:45 PM.*

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