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City of Fairfax City Council Meeting, Tuesday, April 8, 2025

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[00:00:03] for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. It is now time to proclaim. So I would like to ask Suzanne Levy and Eric Carzon and anybody else from our city library to come down for the Library Week Proclamation.

[00:00:31] This is for National Library Week.

[00:00:51] Whereas libraries spark creativity, fuel imagination, and inspire lifelong learning, offering a space where individuals of all ages can explore new ideas and be drawn to new possibilities. And whereas libraries serve as vibrant community hubs, connecting people with knowledge, technology, and resources while fostering civic engagement, critical thinking, and lifelong learning.

[00:01:15] And whereas libraries provide free and equitable access to books, digital tools, and innovative programming, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background, have the support they need to learn, connect, and thrive. And whereas libraries partner with schools, businesses, and organizations, connecting the dots to maximize resources, increasing efficiency, and expanding access to essential services, strengthening the entire community.

[00:01:43] And whereas libraries empower job seekers, entrepreneurs, and lifelong learners by providing access to resources, training, and opportunities that support career growth and economic success. And whereas libraries nurture young minds through story times, STEAM programs, and literacy initiatives, fostering curiosity and a love of learning that lasts a lifetime.

[00:02:05] And whereas libraries protect the right to read, think, and explore without censorship, standing as champions of intellectual freedom and free expression. And whereas dedicated librarians and library workers provide welcoming spaces that inspire discovery, collaboration, and creativity for all. And whereas libraries, librarians, and library workers across the country are joining together to celebrate National Library Week under the theme, Drawn to the Library. Now, therefore, I, Catherine S. Reed, Mayor of the City of Fairfax, do hereby proclaim April 6th through 12th, 2025,

[00:02:42] is National Library Week in the City of Fairfax, and encourage the community during this week to visit their library, explore its resources, and celebrate all the ways that the library draws us together as a community. So, without further ado, remarks.

[00:03:00] I'm Suzanne Levy, and I have the honor to represent the city on the Fairfax County Library Board of Trustees. And I first want to introduce you to our branch manager, who's fairly new to Fairfax, Elena Quarles. When you come into the library, say hello.

[00:03:17] And our new director, Eric Carzon, who joins us from Montgomery County, he's been with us since, I think, the 4th of November, and he's still learning his way around the county, but we are delighted to have them both here tonight. I also wanted to mention that this month we are collecting food at the library. We have two bins inside the library, so if you're bringing books back and have some extra food to put into our food drive, we'd greatly appreciate it.

[00:03:45] Thank you. And it is National Library this week, so stop in and say hello.

[00:03:55] Okay. All right. Library is important. You know how you know libraries are important when you grow up in a small town that doesn't have one, and your only library as a child is your elementary

[00:04:34] school library? Then you start to really appreciate the value of being able to walk into a public library and check out any book you want. I'm going to call up the board for Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts. It's that time. Spotlight on the Arts is celebrating its 40th anniversary here in the city of Fairfax. It is very important to our city. All right, I shall proclaim to you. Whereas, established in 1985, Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts was the vision of founding board members

[00:05:08] John Mason and Jane Woods to put a spotlight on all the wonderful artistic opportunities that exist in Fairfax City and the surrounding area. Today, Spotlight has continued to be committed to supporting and encouraging awareness of cultural opportunities in the greater Fairfax community.

[00:05:25] And whereas Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts began as a small weekend initiative for some dedicated arts enthusiasts and has grown to be considered one of Virginia's foremost arts festivals with major collaborative efforts between the city of Fairfax, George Mason University, and Northern Virginia Community College.

[00:05:43] And whereas Spotlight also raises funds for scholarships that enable students from George Mason University and Fairfax High School to realize their dreams in the arts. As of 2025, Spotlight has awarded over 150 scholarships to deserving students. And whereas the success of Fairfax Spotlight on the

Arts and the passion of its members has allowed them to create opportunities for new arts groups, such as the Fairfax Art League and the Old Town Performance Series, and provides support for existing arts organizations. And whereas to celebrate 40 years of supporting the arts, the 2025 Spotlight on the Arts Festival will be held at Sherwood

[00:06:21] Center to capture the vibe and energy of the Stage Door Canteen, which served servicemen during World War II. In addition to the great lineup at Sherwood, patrons can visit Old Town Square to hear DC Spotlight Orchestra, Starlight Orchestra, play the big band hits of the 1940s. And whereas patrons of the arts can spend an evening under the stars with the City of Fairfax Theatre Company at Veterans Amphitheater, check out the finalists of the Spotlight on the Arts contest, sponsored by Capital One Hall, displayed at the opening reception.

[00:06:53] Now, therefore, I, Catherine S. Reed, Mayor of the City of Fairfax, do hereby recognize and honor Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts on their 40th anniversary and encourage the community to come out over the weekends of April 25 to 27 and May 2 to 4 to see some wonderful concerts and shows.

[00:07:11] So let's give it up for Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts and this wonderful board. Who would like to make remarks? Thank you, Mayor Reed. This is a very unfamiliar setting for me. So on behalf of the Spotlight on the Arts Board of Directors, I want to thank Mayor Reed and the City Council, not only for this proclamation, but for the council's steadfast support of the arts over the years.

[00:07:38] As the mayor said, we're celebrating our 40th anniversary of Spotlight. It was founded by former Mayor John Mason and former State Senator Jane Woods. And throughout the 40 years of its existence, it has been true to its mission, to enhance awareness of the arts, to support local and emerging artists, and to provide arts-related scholarships.

[00:07:58] This year, as the mayor mentioned, we're talking of the same talking points. We've awarded over 150 scholarships to some amazing students around the region who've continued their education in music and art. I also want to encourage the mayor and the council to come out to the opening spotlight reception to help us kick off this year's festival.

[00:08:21] It will be on Friday, April 25th at 7 p.m. at the Sherwood Center. We'll be celebrating the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and the amazing music from that era. And I just want to announce, I'm delighted to say that she's here.

[00:08:39] There she is. Jennifer Passi, a city resident, former member of the city council, and the senior director of communications for the USO, is this year's honorary chairperson. So thank you, and Jennifer, I really appreciate that. Thank you, Mayor Reed.

[00:08:55] I want to one last time encourage the council to come out for the opening reception. And all residents where you'll be able to vote and determine the winners of the second annual art contest, hear some live performances, including from some of our amazing scholarship recipients.

[00:09:10] Thank you very much.

[00:09:11] okay then we're gonna have a photo we can move to the adoption of the agenda is

[00:10:04] there a motion to approve the agenda I move to adopt the agenda as presented do I have a second appreciate guidance on whether that happens after the second after the second great okay in that case a second okay the motion has been I'm sorry if we want to pull something out of the consent agenda

this isn't the consent agenda my thought sorry okay the motion has been made and seconded a roll call vote actually I believe mr. Peterson wanted to make a okay a motion

[00:10:44] for to amend the agenda so discussion on the the discussion on the motion councilmember Peterson yeah this is a follow-up to a request from the city manager on Saturday regarding formal action that is needed on the authorization For the city to go to bed and proposal for the George Snyder trail and there's a Deadline associated with that. It's also a follow-up to two meetings we've had now at the Virginia Department of Transportation on Exploring the flexibility for project

[00:11:25] Modifications, so I wanted to make a motion that would address both of those issues So you want to first make a motion to amend the agenda to add this as a Okay topic so my first motion would be do we amend the agenda to add this topic is there a second?

[00:11:41] We have a motion to amend the agenda seconded by Councilmember Hall All those in favor just I I Okay, it is unanimous now you can proceed with a councilmember Peterson your motion. Well, thank you and let me actually City attorney provided a couple of copies here, I think, for council members.

[00:12:08] Let me hand these out. I'm going to read the motion, and then I think happy to proceed from there. I move that the city shall not advertise the George Snyder Trail project in its current proposed configuration. I further move that the city staff be directed to work with the city council on exploring possible modifications to the George Snyder Trail project.

[00:12:32] we understand that vdot the virginia department of transportation has given the city a deadline of december 31 2025 to advertise for construction do i have a second second okay a motion has been made by council member peterson and seconded seconded by council member hall a roll call vote council member amos aye council member hall aye council member hardy chandler aye council member peterson aye council member bates aye council member mcquillan aye motion passed unanimously Mayor Reed. I'm sorry we did skip one step if they could vote on actually

[00:13:10] adopting the agenda as well for the record. All right then. I have another. So let's suggest you adopt the agenda and then if someone wants to make another motion. Okay so we have had the motion has been made and seconded can we have a roll call vote on adopting the agenda. Councilmember Amos. Aye. Councilmember Hall. Aye. Councilmember Hardy-Chandler. Aye. Councilmember Peterson. Aye. Councilmember Bates. Aye.

[00:13:38] Councilmember McQuillan aye motion passed unanimously councilmember Hall so I move that the city move I'm sorry. I move that the city canceled the Country Club Hills connector trail is there a second second Okay, a motion's been made by councilmember Hall and seconded by Councilmember Peterson Is there any discussion on this motion?

[00:14:07] Councilmember Bates Thank you. I Thought we were going to wait until we had a work session to Discuss this council member Hall if I may it seemed that there was support based upon previous conversations And I think actually you were the one who brought this up before we even were elected that it was a An option and so I think that we should move forward with cancellation of this the council member Bates Council member party Chandler, okay council member Harden Chandler. I would be in favor of a work session on this and

[00:14:45] Other in terms of how it fits into the broader landscape council member Bates anything to add Yeah, I mean, I support canceling the trail, but I think that given all of the very extensive information that has been provided to council members on things like the budget, that it would only be fair to allow for council members such as Council Member Hardy Chandler, who haven't had the benefit of a work session such as I have, to have that discussion with staff and with our colleagues before making a final decision on this.

[00:15:20] So let's, can we confer with the staff on when that might be able to happen? We were thinking maybe the 22nd, and then we can kind of swap that out with the Old Town Hall discussion. Well, I think we need to leave Old Town Hall where it is for their own deadline reasons.

[00:15:40] We can certainly schedule this item as an additional item if the council desires that. And I do think that it merits further discussion because we also need to be clear on if any of these grants, and I think one is an \$8 million grant, and maybe, well, that one I think is an \$8 million grant.

[00:15:58] I don't believe any money has been spent, but we certainly need to be clear on the financial obligations, if any, for returning this money if we cancel the country Club Hills Connector Trail. So I do think that it merits some discussion, and I think the public needs to be aware, too,

[00:16:16] That we are basically giving back rent money to the NVTa and giving back \$8 million is not something we should do lightly, not just because we submitted that project, we're awarded the project and given money to complete the project, but the future award of contracts to an unreliable partner might be something we want to consider as well.

[00:16:46] And so I do think a discussion would be a good thing for the dais to have and also a good thing for the public to hear. Yes, Council Member Hall. I would still like to cancel. I recognize that a work session has been requested.

[00:17:02] That being said, a work session was not requested until I proposed canceling this tonight. And so I think we've had sufficient time in our conversations around the budget over the past six or eight weeks to be able to request information on things that we thought might important at the time so my motion still stands that I would like to propose to cancel the trail is there any further discussion councilmember Bates we had requested a work session some number of weeks ago on this and my understanding

[00:17:39] was that we wanted to kind of get the George Snyder trail taken care of first and that staff would look at doing that after the fact we also have had a lot of budget discussions and have had to prioritize that so this is not the first that we've proposed a work session on this and and we had a work session on this last year with the previous council but we haven't had one with the current council and there are five new council members and there has been a stated desire from one of them to have a work session on this before making a decision so I do not think it would be at all prudent to vote on this before having

[00:18:18] that work session thank you councilmember Amos so this will make my decision for me when's as soon as we can have a work session on this would be April 22nd there's there's multiple items on the agenda for that night as well but if council wishes to have it we'll certainly add it and then when would be the next opportunity for us to make a decision that would be the next meeting presumably at the next meeting however I will look to the attorney I said I assume after you have your work session you normally go back into regular

[00:18:57] session at which time you could make a motion after the after your work session discussion that's correct you have a lot of options on when you could do that I'll go ahead and preface by saying I also support canceling this but I also recognize that there have been especially amongst us we have felt kind of rushed into many of our decisions without the opportunity to actually look closer at it and I think that we should have a work session together so that's

[00:19:27] where I stand on that okay councilmember Peterson one concern that I have about a delay is the potential for the city to be expending any further resources on the development or implementation of this trail and it would seem to me that it would be prudent to freeze any activity on this unless until

[00:20:04] it's fully resolved but in the meantime that there should be no further activity engaged in on this trail and i think there's another trail project that may fit into the same category as well but one of the concerns that i have i think it may be shared by other council members is that because we have delayed taking action and considering these trails trail projects the meter has been running I do agree we asked a very long time ago for all of the trails to be part of a work session so that we could do exactly this and that has been

[00:20:39] delayed more than once and so I am very concerned about the risk that we're going to be expanding resources unnecessarily as this continues councilmember Hardy Chandler so let me ask what is the risk between now and April 22nd in terms of activity I'm looking for Ask Wendy to come forward please Good evening First I'll address the Country Club Commons

[00:21:18] We have not expended any funds on that project And we're not planning to in the next few weeks So I don't think there's any concern about that The other trail I believe that you're referring to is Pickett Trail That project is in the right-of-way phase And the city has expended funds To advance that project that project is an active project, and it's very close to Advertisement authorization councilman Peterson if I might a follow-up on that I know there has been a long-standing interest

[00:21:56] By a number of people I believe including councilmember Bates on looking at a project modification For the picket road trail. I think literally going from the east to the west side of route pick Picket Road, rather. That, again, sounds like an issue we want to explore further and understand more clearly without expending additional resources along the way in case a decision is made to make a change there.

[00:22:25] My understanding is there's a bit more learning we need to do around that, but I am concerned, just as I mentioned earlier, that we might continue with the expenditure of resources for that project when it may end up being a stranded cost. So I wonder whether that's one we should freeze so that we can have appropriate consideration of this.

[00:22:55] We can put this on as early as the next meeting, which is the 22nd. And as far as the long delays, I think we've been on this dais together for 98 days. So I don't know what anybody considers long. We can do a work session.

[00:23:12] Everything was moved off the work sessions for budget. And that was also a request from the dais that everything except budget be removed. But we will now add this, Trails, if the DIASO desires, to the 22nd, and we can get an update on where the Pickett Road is.

[00:23:29] We have been assured that no money has been spent on the Country Club Hills connector. So, Council Member Amos. Just because the motion still currently stands, if it's okay with my colleague, I'd

just like to add a friendly amendment saying until we have the work session, just freeze any activity at all so we don't have to think about it.

[00:23:50] I guess. I'll support that okay friendly amendment do we need a second on the friendly amendment so who seconded councilmember Hall sec no no action council member seconded needs to agree do you agree to the friendly amendment with clarification and perhaps if necessary staff clarification but when you're saying we freeze everything that would include the the CCH connector trail as well as the

[00:24:27] picket road trail both of them would be frozen until we talk about them date certain yes that was my intention okay in that event I will second okay so we have so just so we all understand the motion that's on the floor it's it's been modified to essentially freeze any city staff action with respect to country club hills trail picket trail anything else are there any other trails we need consider that we might not be aware of thinking of right at the moment that are in the cip for

[00:25:02] fiscal year 2026. i think we're safe this is just with the directive that nothing is to be done on trails in the city would be my understanding until the meeting until the work session on the 22nd council yes mr foster just for clear although the uh mr amos made amendment i think the original motion which is still on the floor is to cancel the country club hills project so if you vote for

[00:25:36] the motion i think you would be canceling the project unless you want unless you modify the motion i i took the amendment and it's entirely up to the maker in the seconder to actually modify the motion to simply pause expenditure of funds but if the maker would like to clarify if she is okay with that change or if she wants to continue with the motion to cancel the maker is not happy but the maker will amend to be friendly so the motion on the floor now is to pause the expenditure of any further funds with respect to those two named projects country club hills trail

[00:26:15] and picket trail and council member peterson well and to be safe because we didn't exactly get a response to the question of whether there are any other trails in the system i would like additional language added just to indicate those two trails and any other that are in development so that we have a carte blanche freeze on trail development.

[00:26:40] I think we all understand that. Sure. Okay, Councilmember Bates. Would the intention be to also include roadway projects that include shared-use paths, such as the Northfax East-West Roadway?

[00:26:58] I'm guessing no. Sir, are we only talking about dedicated shared-use path projects that don't include other elements? Mayor Reed, if I could make a suggestion. And just for cleanliness sake, perhaps the council should vote on the motion that's on the floor.

[00:27:15] And if there are any additional motions, someone can make them at an appropriate time. Okay. So the motion, as I understand it, is that we are currently voting to eliminate any activity related to any trails, independent of roadway projects, currently in process.

[00:27:44] Would that be accurate? Council Member Hall. yes okay and is that and do you agree with that councilmember peterson yes excellent so we will now take a roll call vote on that motion councilmember amos amos abstain councilmember hall yes councilmember hardy chandler no councilmember peterson yes councilmember bates yes councilmember

[00:28:16] mcquillan a motion passed three to two with one abstention well all right then now mayor uh one other housekeeping items since i was aware of council member peterson's initial motion i was not aware of the additional uh motions that were going to be made so uh it would be appropriate for someone to make a motion to further amend the agenda to have included that second motion so if someone could just make and second that motion we'll clean up the record to amend the agenda to include the motion on country club hills trail and picket trail and other trails that are not

[00:28:52] connected to roadways or whatever the motion read council member amos would you like to do that sure uh i move to it it's just i so move i so move we have a second you have a second some clarification as to what we're voting on now this is just amending the agenda to actually add the item that you all just considered so that the agenda will read appropriately once we do the minutes so so uh council member avis moved that would somebody like to second that second okay

[00:29:29] so we have a motion by council member amos and a second by council member hardy-chandler a roll call vote councilmember amos aye councilmember hall aye councilmember hardy-chandler aye councilmember peterson aye councilmember bates aye councilmember mcquillan no motion passed five to one we can move on to public hearings our first public hearing is a public hearing and council action on a request of the city of fairfax school board applicant by dan

[00:30:07] phillips agent for a special use permit pursuant to city code section 110-3.3.1 to allow continued use of temporary modular classrooms at providence elementary school and the rm residential medium zoning district an architectural control overlay district sorry on the premises known as 3616 germantown road and more particularly described as tax map parcel 47-3-01-040 claire schweiger will provide the staff presentation good evening married and council tonight we're discussing a

[00:30:45] special use permit request for providence elementary school we're currently in the public hearing phase of the development review process we did not conduct a briefing or a work session on this proposal since it's an extension of an existing special use permit so the applicant is requesting a special use permit to allow the extension of a previously approved special use permit for an expansion of schools elementary middle and high to allow continued use of modular temporary classrooms at providence elementary school this is the location of the subject

[00:31:21] property providence elementary school is located along germantown road the north of the subject property is the city county line in i-66 and across germantown road is the fairfax county property yard. The zoning of the subject property is residential medium in the architectural control overlay district. The comprehensive plan's future land use designation for this site is green social civic network. This place type includes public and private schools, public spaces such as active and passive parks, and playing fields and other public facilities.

[00:31:55] Here are some photos of the temporary classrooms. They're located in the rear of the school near the ball fields. So for some background, in 2008 the zoning administrator approved an installation of two temporary classrooms not to exceed one year and in 2009 city council approved a request to allow expansion of the governmental use for five years and then in 2019 city council approved an expansion of schools elementary middle and high for five years and the expansion that i'm referring to here is just to allow the temporary classrooms that were approved in 2008 to continue

[00:32:32] to be used so now the applicant is coming back to request an extension of the special use permit approved in 2019. In 2019, the projected student enrollment for Providence Elementary School was

897 students. Enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year was 918 students. And the applicant has indicated that the additional classroom space is requested to continue to accommodate general education students, as well as multiple programs, including English for Speakers of Other Languages, Special Education, Advanced Academics, and Title I. And after I give my presentation,

[00:33:09] I believe a representative of the school board is here to speak to give more context on why the renewal is being requested. So staff recommends approval of the special use permit with the condition that the special use permit shall be valid for a period of eight years. The way we got to the eight-year extension was through conversations with the superintendent and with the bond referendum that was passed with the last election.

[00:33:33] eight years should give the school board time to make the improvements to the schools so that a renewal will not be necessary in the future once we've reached the eight-year time limit. So that concludes my presentation. I'll invite Mr. Plattenberg and Mr. Phillips up to provide more contact. Thank you, city council members, and thank you so much, Claire, for all your support and your staff and the work in this endeavor. You know, certainly educational cottages or trailers as it's referred to are not desired on any site especially school

[00:34:09] sites it's our preference to eradicate and remove those in fact that was part of the facility condition assessment that was performed it was provided that identified the replacement remediation and removal of those to be in conformance with the requirements by the city we are fortunate enough that the voters an overwhelming majority of the voters the city of Fairfax voted in favor of the renovation of the elementary school to address that in that FCA and in the renovation we included two classrooms to eliminate the use of those trailers and two additional classrooms to accommodate growth in the

[00:34:47] hopes that we would meet back here before you asking for any other additional disturbances that are similar to this with that I'm ready to answer any questions I would like to add that our enrollment is up to 966 at Providence So it's well above the 918 that was on the original application, and that's a significant amount of, you know, business is good for education in the city.

[00:35:11] With that, Madam Mayor and members of the council, I'm ready to answer any additional questions you may have. Okay, I will open the public hearing. Ms. Shinneberry, has this public hearing been properly advertised? Yes, it has. Does the application, do you have anything you want to share prior to that?

[00:35:28] Okay. then I will ask the clerk to call the speakers forward so everyone on the dais will have an opportunity to ask questions after the public has had an opportunity to get public hearing I had nobody sign up prior so if there's anybody that would like to speak on this item they can come forward okay then I will close the public hearing council are there any questions of staff councilmember Hall I am in support of this I know we've discussed it I recognize that they are necessary I did just want to point out a couple things the first

[00:36:05] one is that at the elementary schools i recognize that there's an eight-year limit on it should the renovation hopefully be done sooner than that i think maybe it would be reasonable to have them gone within six months or a year or immediately since we are adding four classrooms on at each elementary school and hopefully they won't be needed that's a statement question on the the high school ones, we're not anywhere closer to getting rid of them. And I do just want to point out, I know we've discussed this before as when I was on the school board, but I do have

[00:36:43] concerns about the opening and closing of the doors that lead to the learning cottages that are off of the gym. And I recognize we don't have enough staff to be out there 24-7, well during the school day, but I do just want to point out that I do have concerns about that safety risk. Thank you uh any other questions of council member peterson this may be my limitation and getting through the background document here by staff but i do see a notation that the staff recommends

[00:37:20] approval with conditions if somebody might just clarify very briefly for me what those conditions are or direct me to them it would be helpful yeah so for the elementary school the only condition is that it shall be valid for a period of eight years.

[00:37:37] That's it? That's it for the elementary school. So it's condition, not conditions. Right. Great. Thank you. Council Member Hardy-Chandler? Could you talk a little bit more about the timing?

[00:37:55] The eight-year you mentioned was to align with the possible timing with the bond referendum and that kind of thing. Is there any question or hesitation around that? Part B is my question about the condition and maintenance for that long period of time.

[00:38:13] Any thoughts about that, recognizing that it's less than optimal but needed? Yes, thank you very much, Council Member Handley Chandler. I appreciate the questions. Specifically, the maintenance is the ongoing maintenance that will continue because they are, in my opinion, less than desirable.

[00:38:34] We have a really good maintenance program in terms of mowing around them and the skirting of the trailers, Any type of HVAC issues are addressed within short order. In terms of the timing, the timing that is set is set in accordance with what the facility condition assessment, cash flow and project schedule that were included in that condition assessment.

[00:38:56] And we're also a part of our bond action plan. We are currently in the process of we've received, we've advertised, put together the RFP, advertised for their architectural services, and have received those ever since the bond referendum. We've received them on April 3rd.

[00:39:12] We have a team that has signed the nondisclosure and confidentiality agreements working with the city on behalf, through the city procurement office, and we'll be evaluating that, hopefully bringing it before the school board, before the break for summer.

[00:39:28] That plan is to continue to get the community outreach on the initial design, the design charrettes, et cetera, to begin in the fall of the school year now this is predicated on the budget process so there are some factors that are at our control that that may end up impacting that but the timeline is set forth to accomplish not only the design but also the construction in that time frame councilmember amos are there any concerns with this if we were to one of the options on the tables to defer the school bond for a year any issues with that that you could say from my

[00:40:06] perspective i'm council member amos i'm always concerned about uh any delay deferral but i do understand the condition the difficult and challenging conditions we're in um we have a commitment to get things done um that that is i'm the type of person that likes to plant the grass seed that morning and mow that night um so i don't really have a good answer for you on that other than i'm going to try and get it done as soon as i possibly can and council member mcquillen I'm looking at the projected enrollment numbers and the actual.

[00:40:42] Is two classrooms going to be enough? We believe so currently at this point, but it depends. It's four total. It's two to address the, yeah, thank you very much for that. It's two to eliminate the trailers that exist and two for additional growth.

[00:41:00] We have had a lot of development in the city, and we have been receiving positive student yields that are significantly higher than what was forecast, in my opinion, from what we've seen. We've been working with Mr. Foreman on revising those forecasts and the yields.

[00:41:18] He does an excellent job on behalf of the city forecasting from a lot of the new development. But we do believe that that will accommodate the growth. That was the intention. That's the plan. However, if business continues to stay good, and what I mean by that is Fairfax County Public Schools has been stagnant, if not decreasing their enrollment, and we have had incredible growth in our enrollment.

[00:41:39] And you might hear a little bit more about that in the public hearing comment. But we believe at this time that should be able to address. Through the eight years? If I was able to forecast that, I probably wouldn't be here this evening.

[00:41:55] Thank you. But, yes, we anticipate it through the eight years. Thank you. But things can happen. That's why, for members of the audience, that's why you have a capital improvement program that's reviewed annually and that is forecast five years out. There we go.

[00:42:23] Anyway, so any other discussion on the motion? Okay. Do I have a motion? Council Member Hardy Chandler. I move that the City Council approve the request of the City of Fairfax School Board applicant for the special use permit pursuant to City Code Section 110-3.3.1 Schools Elementary Middle High Use to allow temporary expansion of Providence Elementary School using modular temporary classrooms in the RM residential medium zone on the premises known as

[00:43:00] 3616 germantown road and more particularly described as tax map parcel 47-3-01-040 subject to the following condition the special use permit scp shall be valid for a period of eight years is there a second motion's been made by council member hardy chandler and seconded by council member peterson is there any discussion on the motion seeing none a roll call vote council member McQuillan aye councilmember Bates aye councilmember Peterson councilmember Hardy Chandler. Aye councilmember Hall. Aye councilmember Amos

[00:43:39] Aye motion passed unanimously We'll go to the next public hearing which is a public hearing and council action on a request of the city of Fairfax school board Applicant by Dan Phillips agent for a special use permit pursuant to city code section 110 - 3 3.1 to allow continued use of temporary modular classrooms at Fairfax high school in the RM medium zoning district and architectural control overlay district on the premises known as 3501 lion run and more particularly described as tax map parcel 58-1-02-3003 Claire Schweiger will provide the

[00:44:18] staff presentation all right so similar to the last item on the agenda we're discussing a special use permit request for Fairfax high school we're currently in the public hearing phase of the development review process the applicant requesting a special use permit to allow the extension of a previously approved special use permit for an expansion of schools elementary middle and high to allow continued use of modular temporary classrooms at fairfax high school this is where the high school is located it's located to the north of blenheim boulevard and to the south of fairfax boulevard zoning of the subject

[00:44:54] property is residential medium in the architectural control overlay district the comprehensive plans future land use designation is green social and civic network and this place type includes public and private schools public spaces such as active and passive parks and playing fields and other public facilities here's some photos of the temporary classrooms they're located on the east side of the high school and within the parking lot so for some background in 2012 city council approved an expansion of a governmental use for two years and then in 2014 city council approved

[00:45:30] continued use of the expansion of a governmental use to allow temporary modular classrooms for five years. And in 2019, City Council approved an expansion of schools elementary, middle, and high for five years. So now the applicant is coming back to request an extension of the special use permit approved in 2019. In 2019, the projected student enrollment for Fairfax High School was 2,243 students. Enrollment for the 24-25 school year was 2,401 students. And the applicant indicates

[00:46:05] that this that this is 99 program capacity the applicant has indicated that the additional classroom space is requested to continue to accommodate advanced placement classes and the in-school suspension program and a study hall so staff recommends approval of the special use permit with the conditions that the special use permit shall be valid for a period of eight years and that the sheds in the parking lot in proximity to the temporary classrooms shall be removed out of any required parking spaces. So, similar to the elementary school conditional

[00:46:44] approval, staff expects that after eight years, the quads would be phased out. The second condition is referring to two sheds that are located within required parking spaces in the parking lot. As far as we know, the high school did not obtain permits to construct these two structures, and since they're located in required parking spaces that are intended to be utilized as parking, they should be removed. And so with that, staff recommends approval of the special use permit with the two conditions. And that concludes my presentation. And I'll again invite Mr.

[00:47:20] Plattenberg up to speak. Thank you again, Claire. I appreciate it. And thank you, council members and Madam Mayor. With this situation, it's similar to the one that I discussed before. However, we do not have a renovation. Those are the simple facts.

[00:47:38] In discussion with staff, we were trying to get an extension beyond the time. We came to negotiation of the amount of time that we have before we would have to come back the only thing I can say is when we did the facility condition assessment is we did include the addressing these issues as well as a part of the high school renovation due to the cost associated with the secondary schools both Katherine Johnson middle school and Fairfax high school the team determined that moving forward with the elementary school renovation similar to the precedent at what had been done historically in the city in the past

[00:48:12] would be our best foot forward that being said the intention and plan is at some point to address and remove these what we call quads two quads out there which are a combination of nicer trailers not that that really means anything than what is at the elementary school they are an integral part of the school of the high school a lot of the advanced placement courses out there as was mentioned it's not just in school suspension but it's also used for study and remediation as well, and they're a necessary part as we continue to have the positive enrollment that was shown here this evening.

[00:48:50] In addition, the academy has approximately 1,400 students that arrive on our campus each and every day. It's a busy place. It's an active place, but it's a very positive environment for the teaching and

learning that we have in this city. I'm ready to answer any questions you might have about this time, Madam Mayor.

[00:49:08] All right. I will open the public hearing. Ms. Shinneberry, has this public hearing been properly advertised? Yes, it has. Do you have any other remarks you want to make, Mr. Plattenberg, before we call up the first? No, ma'am. Is there anybody in the room that would like to speak on this item that did not sign up prior?

[00:49:29] All right. I will close the public hearing. Counsel, are there any questions of staff or applicant? Okay. Council Member Hall and then Council Member Hardy Chandler. Can you comment as to what the storage sheds are being used for? Well, the storage sheds currently are temporarily located there.

[00:49:47] We have a plan to remove them within two weeks. We've been looking at placement on the school site, and we believe we've found an appropriate location. Storage is, with the increasing in the number of sports and activities that we have, with the expansion of the number of programs and the club activities, there is a direct need for storage, and we believe that where we're gonna place it is down towards where other storage is, down in the lower part of the site in the back entrance towards the football field.

[00:50:18] Okay, so you're prepared to move them. It wasn't a problem. Yes, ma'am, absolutely. Was that our temporary press box, the one? It was. By the way, that was the other thing, Council Member Hall. Thank you for bringing that up. It was the temporary press box, and when we did invest in purchasing that temporary press box, because the prior press box was in such disarray, it had to be condemned, we have a brand-new press box there now, and it's been well-received by the community and by the coaches and the students.

[00:50:46] That temporary press box, we wanted to make sure that that dollar investment was not in vain, and we planned on using that for the storage that's needed once we did get the permanent press box in place. Thank you. I don't have a problem with this.

[00:51:04] I do have a kid who's out there twice a day, so again, I said my security risk is the wrong time, but I would like them to be safer. Thank you. Councilmember Hardy-Chandler. So my question has to do with clarifying the information that enrollment is at 99% of capacity.

[00:51:27] So this does not expand capacity over the next eight years, right? So how is additional projected numbers, how is that going to be compensated by the remaining structures?

[00:51:43] Yeah, that's an excellent question. In fact, we're looking at expansion of some electrical programs. Dr. Abe in this very room last night was presenting her state of the schools and her vision and her continued leadership at Fairfax High School.

[00:52:00] As far as the expansion, we really, she says that she can accommodate any children and any child that will have a need to be educated in the city in her building. She'll find whatever nook or cranny or space. But we are at a point where it is that percentage of capacity.

[00:52:17] We have had a little bit of a dip. I believe the number that you had up there originally was 24-1. We're at 2390 right now, and I'm going to double-check that too, but I have the number.

[00:52:37] Let me correct that. But anyway, we're down a little bit, but the thing is it does fluctuate. We're at 2390. That's the number I have. But 2360, 2390, you know, still business is good, but we're down from

that. Usually there's a lot of in-migration and out-migration during the school year.

[00:52:54] Hopefully, we'll be able to maintain at this level, but, again, we look at our forecast, and when you look at the out years, it says, you know, 2330, 2342. We don't believe that those are accurate. When you look at the current school year at 2296 when we have 2390, it's almost 100 students more.

[00:53:14] So, long story to say, Council Member Hardy-Chandler, that we're looking at this closely. We will be monitoring it. We don't really have any other plans because there is no space. We're bumped up against all the parking capacity that we possibly could have.

[00:53:32] That's why we have to move this temporary structure because it is taking up parking spaces now. But we will be monitoring it and speaking about it each and every year, as I mentioned about the whole CIP program. Councilmember McQuillan.

[00:53:50] This is more of a question for staff. It says that one of the recommendations is the sheds in the parking lot be moved. May I ask why that was recommended? Yeah, the two sheds that are there now are within required parking spaces.

[00:54:09] So those parking spaces are intended for cars to be parked. And so they're taking up spaces. And those structures were not approved to be constructed by staff.

[00:54:24] So that's why we added that condition. They should be removed. And if I might add to that, it clearly has taken up parking space where it's currently located. And we did temporarily put it there because we had to move it out of the way when we put the actual press box in place on the hill that appears that we put in place.

[00:54:44] So it was intended all along to be a temporary location while we found the best suitable place for it on the site. I just know that it's quite a hike for the athletes that train on that area to have to go all the way down, especially in the dark at night, late, you know, if they have to put equipment away.

[00:55:00] So, I mean, losing, how many spots is it that it was taking up? Like three? Maybe seven, if I'm counting right. If they were to leave the sheds there, they would need to revise the site plan for the whole high school.

[00:55:26] That would be challenging. Okay. I also want to echo Council Member Hall's statement about the security. I, too, am concerned about that, having been locked out during back-to-school night back there. In the dark, it's kind of scary, and I know that we're not in the winter right now, and so that's not an issue, but I do wonder why we have such focus on making sure we have somebody at the front and that we have security vestibules, one entrance into the building if somebody's able to drive around the back and access our children and teachers that way.

[00:56:03] So I just wanted to make that statement as well publicly. Thank you. Other questions or comments? Council Member Peterson. Just out of curiosity, the modular classrooms also are in a parking lot and displaced a certain number of vehicles.

[00:56:21] What adjustment was made for that capacity? Was there somewhere else on site that that was picked up? How is that being addressed? The actual location, sir? Well, they're in parking lots. Yes, sir. Right. I don't know what the displacement was in terms of the number of parking spots, but there was a significant number. How is that adjustment addressed at all?

[00:56:44] When we originally spotted and located the, and that was part of my time, but when it was originally spotted and located in that place, it was to still meet the accommodation so a total site plan revision wouldn't have to be gone through, from what I understand, and that they didn't have to do it.

[00:56:59] and that's why we are so concerned about the number of parking spaces that we displace because i think with the improvements and enhancements to the press box we also had to make some modifications to the parking there and just barely met it in under the amount that was required by zoning and i believe that's the answer to it well i guess it's still not desirable to your point sir yeah well the big picture question is is this a significant loss of capacity or is it's really not, given the scale of parking that's already in place.

[00:57:34] And if it is a significant loss in capacity, it's something you've already adjusted to, but you're going to have to continue to adjust to now for some period in the future. Just curious to know where it kind of fits into that. Yeah, we absolutely need the space. Yes, sir. Those quads, those buildings out there are absolutely necessary.

[00:57:51] As far as the storage shed, I believe we need the parking spaces back there. I've had to park back there many a time, and it does displace it, and it really doesn't belong in its current location. Just so I understand, though, with the modular classrooms themselves, have you successfully adjusted to the loss of parking spaces that were once there?

[00:58:21] Oh, yes, sir. I'm sorry, Ms. Councilmember Fitzgerald. Yes, absolutely. Those adjustments have been made. I don't know the original date that those quads were actually put in place there. Perhaps staff might have that information. more than 15 years yeah it's a more than 15 years is what i'm hearing okay 2012 well that's not 15 but still so apparently that whatever set of adjustments those are behind us and not there's no sort of continuing difficulty associated with the loss of those is what my guess would oh yes

[00:58:55] sir everybody has had to adjust yes sir any other questions or comments okay is there a motion councilmember hardy chandler i move that the city council approve the request of the city of fairfax school board applicant for special use permit pursuant to city code section 110-3.3.1 schools elementary middle high used to allow temporary expansion of fairfax high school using modular

[00:59:28] temporary classrooms in the rm residential medium zoning on the premises known as 3501 lion run and more particularly described as Tax Map Parcel 58-1-02-003 subject to the following conditions.

[00:59:46] This special use permit, SUP, shall be valid for a period of eight years. Two, the sheds in the parking lot in proximity to the temporary classroom shall be removed out of any required parking spaces. Is there a second?

[01:00:02] Second. A motion has been made by Council Member Hardy Chandler and seconded by Council Member Peterson. Is there any discussion on the motion? Seeing none, a roll call vote. Council Member McQuillan? Aye. Council Member Bates? Aye. Council Member Peterson? Aye.

[01:00:17] Council Member Hardy-Chandler? Aye. Council Member Hall? Aye. Council Member Amos? Aye. Motion passed unanimously. We'll go to our last public hearing item, which is the public hearing on the proposed FY26 budget. This is the third and final public hearing on the proposed FY26 budget.

[01:00:33] The city manager presented on February 25th, 2025. I will open the public hearing. Ms. Shinneberry, has this public hearing been advertised? Yes, it has. And I've had people sign up prior to the meeting of start of 7 o'clock.

[01:00:48] And after I go through the list, if there's anybody else that wants to speak, they can come forward and we'll start a line up against the windows. So our first speaker is Jennifer DeSano. Okay.

[01:01:06] Next speaker is Brian Sullivan. Good evening. Mayor, city council members, and Fairfax city residents.

[01:01:24] I'm here tonight as a Fairfax city resident and as the president of our Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department. If I'm honest, I struggled a little bit with whether to wear my fire uniform or in my civilian clothes, but I realized that my concerns are rooted in both. I am here, however, tonight primarily as a resident to express my concerns regarding the initiative to cut the 10% from the budget from our public safety services.

[01:01:49] I am fortunate to have a behind-the-scenes understanding of the resources needed to protect our community. I know I'm obviously very biased, but I believe our public safety is fundamental to the quality of life in our community and plays a significant role to what makes our city special. Our combined fire department operates efficiently, with 88% of our budget allocated directly to salaries and benefits for the career personnel who risk their lives daily.

[01:02:15] The remaining 12% covers essential operational expenses such as equipment, supplies, and crucial training, all vital for effective and timely emergency response. Our volunteers, although unpaid, dedicate countless hours to staffing apparatus, supporting operations, and contributing significant financial resources.

[01:02:34] Just recently, this included the transferring ownership of Station 3 to the city without any monetary compensation, a clear demonstration of our commitment to public safety and fiscal responsibility. Additionally, our volunteers consistently invest fundraising dollars to support essential operational needs, including sustaining frontline apparatus.

[01:02:54] Reducing our department's budget by nearly \$2 million as proposed in this exercise would have severe consequences, including the loss of 12 dedicated fire and emergency positions. But these are not just positions. These are firefighters, medics, emergency personnel who directly save lives.

[01:03:13] Our volunteers cannot replace these roles to maintain levels of public safety no matter how much I wish they could. The proposed cuts would decrease emergency response effectiveness, increase response times, jeopardizing public safety. They would undermine our ability to maintain recommended minimum staffing levels, putting personnel and residents at greater risk during emergencies.

[01:03:34] They would compromise emergency preparedness precisely when the demand for emergency services in Fairfax City has steadily increased over the past four years. These consequences are supported by evidence from FEMA and experiences with surrounding municipalities. I recognize the challenging budgetary environment, but compromising public safety to address fiscal shortfalls undermines one of our city's primary responsibilities, protecting its citizens.

[01:04:00] I aim to bring light rather than heat to this issue and urge this council to reconsider the proposed cuts to public safety, seeking alternate solutions to address these genuine financial challenges.

The safety of our community must remain a non-negotiable priority. The residents of Fairfax City deserve our steadfast commitment to their protection.

[01:04:19] Thank you. Our next speaker is Janet Jaworski. Good evening, Mayor Reed, members of the City Council.

[01:04:37] I'm Janet Jaworski. I'm at 3621 Heritage Lane here in the city. I do wear a number of hats here in the city. As you know, I'm here as a taxpayer this evening. I do have prepared remarks. However, I think I'm actually going to pivot and make a few remarks in light of Mr. Sullivan's comments.

[01:04:58] He's referring to some sort of cut to public safety, which is quite concerning to me. And I hope that that's not on the table. Having had to call 911 previously for a family member, I would hate to have our fire medics and paramedic staff be cut at all.

[01:05:19] I hope that you're looking to cut things rather than people. I don't think that people are on the table to be cut, but I'm a little concerned after hearing his comments that that might be on the table. So I would urge you to not make any personnel cuts to our public safety departments, police or fire, unless they're absolutely necessary.

[01:05:43] I think that there are a number of things that you can do prior to that. One of the first things I did after Mr. Foster unveiled the budget on February 25th is I took a very hard look at the CIP. Having served on the planning commission, I was familiar with that exercise.

[01:06:00] I went through it with the highlighter pen, post-it notes. I highlighted things. I came up with a lot of ideas that I was going to come and share with you. When I signed up to speak tonight, it was the end of March. Now, that was before I came to the work session last week and the open house.

[01:06:17] And luckily, you did start to dive into the CIP a little bit at the work session, and I was happy to see that because my analysis as a citizen but having served on the planning commission would be I would look at the CIP first and see what could be deferred what could be cut nobody likes to defer capital projects to the out years and you don't want to keep kicking the can down the road however if the choice is between that and cutting firefighters or police officers then, of course, we need to defer some things to the out years.

[01:06:53] So I was heartened to see that you guys started to get into it. And Mr. Summers came up and suggested things that could be cut from his budget. Chair pitches came up and talked about the softball field could be deferred. Those were all things that I had highlighted to discuss with you.

[01:07:09] So my comments are sort of moot at this point. I liked Mr. Martinez's five scenarios. I'm running out of time, I see, so I'll wrap this up. I prefer scenario four of those scenarios, keeps the public safety step increases in place. I don't think those should go away.

[01:07:26] So I don't envy the decisions that you need to make, but I have confidence that you're going to get there. And I hope that you're not cutting any city employees. Thank you. Our next speaker is Peter Bonner. Hi, good evening.

[01:07:48] I'm Peter Bonner. I live at 4334 Delegate Court. Quality of life in the city is great. Can you do something about the pollen? That's why my voice is as it is this evening. So my understanding is you started the budget preparation last fall.

[01:08:06] Last fall, inflation was coming down. Economic development was up. We are in a very different world right now. With what's going on with the federal cutbacks, with what's going on as you look at your 401ks, I did a little back-of-the-envelope calculation, And if the proportion of federal workers in Fairfax County to all the workers in Fairfax County is the same in the city, at the rate the cutbacks are going, we're going to lose

[01:08:42] about 6% of our workforce in the city when you look at the federal workers and the contractors associated with their work. Raising taxes in a situation like this and raising the tax rate, the real estate tax rate, when we're facing these types of dire economic times, it's just not the best approach.

[01:09:11] And I encourage you to go back and take another look at that. I was not aware of the cutbacks in the fire department, because I looked at as many of the budget documents as I could. A boss of mine said, if you're going to bring a problem, bring solutions.

[01:09:27] I don't know if these are solutions to look at or not. One of the things I saw in the presentation was non-negotiables and opening up. I encourage you to open up the non-negotiables. I know that includes public safety. I know that includes education. I'm the husband of a retired teacher at Fairfax High School.

[01:09:46] These are tough decisions to make, but any place that you can look at those and opening up those non-negotiables, I think, is going to be useful. Second thing I saw, the biggest increase appears to be the flow through from Fairfax County in education.

[01:10:03] I'm based on the budget documents and based on trying to look at the Fairfax County budget documents that frankly are not as good as yours, as ours, in terms of the transparency. Pushing back hard against that I think is one of the only ways to get the budget down that I can see.

[01:10:19] And the last thing I saw that I didn't quite understand was the debt service consolidation that went from \$2 million to \$13 million. I didn't see an offsetting decrease in some of those individual budgets and when that debt service consolidation increased that much.

[01:10:37] So those are just a couple of thoughts about this. Behavioral economists talk about loss aversion. You spent a lot of time on this already. I encourage you to combat that loss aversion as you look forward in the budget. Thank you for your time. Our next speaker is Carolyn Pitches.

[01:11:01] Good evening. My name is Carolyn Pitches. I live at 10840 First Street. I am here as chair of the City of Fairfax School Board. I apologize, some of this is going to be repetitive from last time I was here. I'm here to speak again about the tuition bill to provide clarity for the community.

[01:11:21] The school's tuition bill comes down to basic math. When operating costs go up and student enrollment increases, tuition costs rise, whether we contract with FCPS or we operate independently. Our tuition bill is increasing more than in past years for two main reasons.

[01:11:38] First, the cost of operating schools is up, but keep in mind, operational costs are up in every school division. This is not just an FCPS issue, it's a regional reality. Second, our student population is growing rapidly. In fact, while FCPS's overall enrollment is stagnant, our city's population is growing, which means we now make up a larger percentage of the total FCPS enrollment, and therefore we pay a larger share of the overall costs than we have in the past.

[01:12:08] We pay a reasonable per-pupil tuition rate. As I've previously stated, it's slightly higher than Manassas Park, Prince William, and Loudoun, but it's lower than Alexandria City, Falls Church City, and Arlington. And we're able to offer more programming and extracurricular options because of the scale of FCPS.

[01:12:30] In terms of student growth, the school board has cautioned about the impact of approving too many high-density residential developments because of student yields. Across FY25 and FY26, we are projected to add 161 new students.

[01:12:46] That alone accounts for \$3.2 million in increased tuition. More students equals higher tuition. It's that simple. For example, we were told that Scout on the Circle would yield very few students. We have 53.

[01:13:03] The point, we were told less than three students, we have 37. That's the equivalent of three and a half classrooms. a bus, an entire school bus. Boulevard 7, I'm sorry, Boulevard 6 has already yielded 12 students and there will be more students coming from the newer developments like North Vax, Overlook, Pocket Place and Park Road once they are complete. We must recognize that the role of residential development has played in driving enrollment growth and therefore tuition costs. The old assumptions no longer hold true. Apartments, condos and townhomes do yield students and the

[01:13:42] data is undeniable this increase in our tuition bill is not due to the mismanagement by the school board nor the any erroneous charges by fcps it's the result of rising operational costs in all school systems and of increased enrollment i urge us to refine our approach to residential development and prioritize diversifying our tax base if the long-term vision is to mirror jurisdictions like falls church and operate our own schools is on the table then we must build the commercial base to fund that vision. Our next speaker is Riley Brixis.

[01:14:32] Max Theater Company, or CFTC, to talk about why it's important to keep funding this program.

[01:14:50] I've been a part of the CFTC program for more than two years. CFTC is more than just a theater group. It's a place where kids like me can learn, grow, and have fun. Being part of CFTC has helped me become more confident. Now I can stand in front of you and speak, which is a big deal for me.

[01:15:09] Theater teaches us teamwork. We learn how to work together to put on a show. Everyone has a role, and we all depend on each other. This helps us make friends and learn how to communicate better. These skills are important, not just on stage, but in school and life too.

[01:15:26] CFTC also brings our community together. Our shows give families and friends a chance to come together and enjoy a nice night out. It's a great way to meet new people and support local talent. plus it makes our own town a more exciting place to live in. Funding CFTC means more kids can join and experience these benefits. It helps us get costumes, props, and everything we need to put on a great show. Without your support some kids might not get the chance to be part of something so special. Thank you for listening to me today. I hope you see how important CFTC is to me and our

[01:16:02] community. Please continue to support and fully fund our program. It means the world to us and with this extra time that I have, I would like to say that I agree with not putting the 10% or whatever it was off of the fire department because I think that that's a very important thing to have in our community.

[01:16:23] Thank you. Our next speaker, Steve Latourette. Hi, mayors and council members, mayor and council members.

[01:16:47] My name is Steve Latourette. I live at 3716 Richard Avenue. I've been living there since 2003. I'm a former member of the Commission on the Arts, and I'm here to advocate for performing arts and specifically for the bands.

[01:17:04] I entered the Commission on the Arts in 2018, and before I went to my first meeting, I had a heart attack. And then I went to the meetings, and they were so supportive.

[01:17:19] And one of the people who's here, Jeff Seffins, the soon-to-be former director of the Main Street Band. And, you know, it's a little too dramatic for me to say it saved my life, but it really made a difference to my life.

[01:17:36] And there's going to be lots of things that he's probably going to say and others might say about the value of performing arts from an economic standpoint and all those things. But the emotional side that I have is that this is a wonderful city, and one of the reasons it's a wonderful city is that it supports the arts.

[01:18:01] It would not have that kind of frisson of, I don't know, fun, of depth, of whatever it is. And so I clearly didn't have any prepared remarks, so it's a little rough. But I just urge you to continue funding the performing arts, to not think of it as something frivolous.

[01:18:21] It's a rather small portion of the budget, and it's not frivolous to make this a good place to live. And that's all I have to say. Thank you so much. Our next speaker is Laurie Hubberman-Hayes. Good evening.

[01:18:47] My name is Lori Huberman-Hayes, and I live on 10405 Stratford Avenue. So thank you for the opportunity to be here today to talk about something that's incredibly important to me and to so many others in our community, the arts. In a world where it's easy to focus on technology and industry, the arts often get pushed to the background.

[01:19:06] But I am here to tell you that the arts are not just a luxury. They are a vital and irreplaceable part of what makes our city and our lives so vibrant and meaningful. The arts are about so much more than just entertainment. They provide a platform for self-expression, foster creativity, and help shape the future of our children.

[01:19:25] They teach discipline, empathy, and teamwork, and they allow us to see the world through different perspectives. The arts are a cornerstone of the community where relationships are built and where we can come together, celebrate, and share experiences.

[01:19:41] For over a decade now, the City of Fairfax Theatre Company has been doing just that, enriching our city through the power of the arts. Since its founding in 2009, the theater company has not only provided outstanding performances, but it has also become a crucial part of our arts education landscape.

[01:19:59] Through its programs, it has given countless individuals the opportunity to engage with theater, develop new skills, and become active participants in the creative process. Moreover, one of the most impactful ways the theater company has contributed to our community is through its commitment to arts education.

[01:20:17] Every year we offer scholarships to children who might otherwise not have the financial means to attend camp. These scholarships ensure that kids, regardless of their background, have the chance to

experience the transformative power of the arts. And I can personally attest to the difference it makes.

[01:20:35] My children have been deeply involved in arts education through the theater company and I've watched them grow not only as performers, but also as young people with strong character, resilience, and compassion. The opportunities they've had to perform and learn alongside others have shaped them into who they are today.

[01:20:54] Talented individuals with a strong sense of purpose and lifelong friendships. These experiences have also made a profound impact on how they see the world and how they engage with others. Beyond individual growth, the arts have a powerful way of bringing people together.

[01:21:10] The City of Fairfax Theater Company has fostered a thriving arts community in our city where relationships are built through shared experiences and where the entire city can come together to celebrate creativity and talent. When we support the arts, we are building more than just an audience for performances.

[01:21:29] We are building a stronger, more connected city. By funding the arts, we are investing in the heart of our community. The arts improve quality of life, they create lasting friendships, and they contribute to the vibrancy of our neighborhoods. so thank you for your time today and let's continue to support the arts in our city thank you our next speaker is Ann Lauer good evening I'm Ann Lauer I'm an instructor at George Mason University

[01:22:08] a former student there and a member of the board for the fall for the books which has been a partner with Fairfax City for almost 30 years as you may know City of Fairfax has been a one-third owner since 1998 And this collaboration has involved a \$25,000 grant each year, 15% of our budget.

[01:22:32] It's a lifeline. It's not just funding for us. As so many other people have talked about it here, it's part of the art community that the council has been so good to support. It's just this is at a different level. There are huge economic benefits to hosting this particular fall for the books for the City writ large. We figure, based on economic studies, that the 10,000 attendees who come every year generate between five and seven times a return on the \$25,000 that Fairfax

[01:23:09] City provides us. These benefits are seen in business for restaurants, hotels, shops, and the like. In addition, the cut that is being considered here would zero out the \$25,000 amid rising city costs.

[01:23:28] And with potential national endowment for the arts cuts looming, this could end the festival and the year-round events like the author talks and youth literacy programs that we also support through Fall for the Books. I'd also like to mention that it would be 100% cuts in parks and rec, while general revenue like street paving and things like that could absorb a cut like this with a lot less impact.

[01:23:58] It's not a nice-to-have for us. It's an essential ingredient for us to continue this festival. But I think one of the things that's hard to capture and we can't put economic data to is the cultural importance. This festival has hosted authors like Stephen King, Amy Tan, Bonnie Garmas, who wrote Lessons in Chemistry.

[01:24:20] Some of the top writers in the country have come to this event. And if you'd been in the room last fall when we had Bonnie Garmas and 1,100 people listening to her every word, you would feel the joy that this created among all of us.

[01:24:36] And I think the main thing I want to say is that at a time of huge uncertainties in this world, there's nothing more important than the arts. Reading books has no downside risk. It's addictive in a positive sort of way. and this festival promotes it in a wonderful, joyful way.

[01:24:56] So I hope as a new council you will take a harder look at this potential cut and reconsider it because we would greatly request it if you could restore that \$25,000. It's so important to this program. Thank you. Our next speaker is Jeffrey Seffins.

[01:25:21] Hi, good evening. My name is Jeffrey Seffins. I live at 10,009 Cornwall Road, that's 1-0-0-0-9 Cornwall Road in Country Club Hills in Fairfax.

[01:25:42] And first of all, I want to commend all of the previous speakers. They were amazing and had quality, quantitative things to say, and that little girl was amazing. I would hire her in a heartbeat. So I would like to just say a few words this evening in support of both the arts in general and the City of Fairfax Band Association.

[01:26:03] From 2008 until 2021, I had the honor and pleasure of serving on the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts. I was a band person, but during my time on the commission, I came to understand and appreciate how important the arts are, all of the arts, creating and sustaining a vibrant welcoming and diverse community in which we live and to making the city of Fairfax a destination for visitors to enjoy cultural activity such as the upcoming spotlight event pretty cool the objectives for the cultural arts division of the Department of Recreation

[01:26:42] in the 2026 proposed budget reflects that same feeling when it says working in partnership with city businesses local schools performing groups artists to cultivate a creative community that will benefit benefit the many advantages and economic benefits that the arts can bring to all groups and levels of our community that's one of the things when i was on the commission it was often referred to as bringing with arts performances you have people coming in

[01:27:19] it for dinner before the performance or after you have this additional thing going on it really is a supporting of local businesses and what has been said recently about the other benefits in terms of the heat the spirit and what we learn from being with other people in the post recently they had a diagram of the world and the scale of happiness.

[01:27:45] And the U.S. is 24th behind the U.K. And the arts do an awful lot to improve the quality of life, whether it's reading, playing an instrument, singing, whatever.

[01:28:01] I do want to mention the City of Fairfax Band Association is one of those arts organizations which has brought attention to the City of Fairfax and has helped to make the city a destination both for the performing and visual arts as well as fine dining. Starting as one band in 1968, the association now includes two adult bands, a swing band, a German band, four ensembles, one of which was playing in the lobby before we had started the meeting, a youth outreach program.

[01:28:32] And we also have an honor flight band, which performs both at Dulles and Reagan, welcoming World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam veterans to the nation's capital as part of the honor flight program. This is a national organization that transports American veterans to Washington, D.C. to honor and celebrate them for their service and sacrifice and selfishness, selfishness, selflessness, boy, that came out wrong, and enable them to see their memorial.

[01:29:00] The city band organization has a lot of things that they do for the city, and there's a wonderful relationship. We value our relationship with city council. Thank you for all that you've done. I know you've got tough decisions. We hope you'll keep this in mind, though, as you begin to make those.

[01:29:18] Thank you very much. I'm sorry I'm late. Thank you. Our next speaker is Amanda Snellings. Good evening, Mayor Rita, members of the city council.

[01:29:38] My name is Amanda Snellings. I am not a resident of the city, but I feel like I might as well be working at George Mason University and here tonight in my role as Artistic Director of the City of Fairfax Theatre Company. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak tonight and for all of your past support.

[01:29:54] In 2024, your investment helped us accomplish incredible things. We produced five full-scale productions and one cabaret, including two premieres by local playwrights. 135 creative team members and 102 cast members came together to make this magic happen and brought in 3,631 audience members, helping to drive foot traffic and business to local restaurants, shops, and services.

[01:30:18] Even when we're not performing for an audience, we are active throughout the year with in-person gatherings for rehearsals, meetings, tech days, and education programs, such as our camps, which ran over eight weeks, serving 237 young people, including a new adaptive camp serving kids with different needs and producing two junior musicals with all things done by the kids.

[01:30:38] Importantly, we awarded \$7,500 in camp scholarships to ensure every child, regardless of financial background, could participate, learn, and grow through theater. Our work stretched across three performance venues and five rehearsal spaces in the city, further activating those spaces and reinforcing how integrated the arts are in the fabric of Fairfax.

[01:30:57] We donated 845 tickets to veterans, service members and their families, and committed funds to providing American Sign Language interpretation, audio description, and a sensory-friendly show for at least one performance of every single production, keeping live performance accessible to all.

[01:31:13] We were honored with 20 Washington Area Theater Community Honors Award nominations and seven wins, recognizing excellence on stage and off, and putting Fairfax in the spotlight among similar organizations across the entire D.C., Maryland, Virginia region. CFTC is more than a theater company.

[01:31:30] It's a driver of quality of life, youth development, and economic vitality. But we are an all-volunteer organization. We do not have a development director or any sort of full-time arts manager to go out and secure those big-time donations. We could not do the work that we do without the support of the city and especially the wonderful Parks and Recreation staff.

[01:31:48] We are deeply thankful for the city's commitment to the arts, and we urge you to continue supporting not only our work, but also the city band, Fall for the Book, Spotlight and the Arts, and all those cultural programs that make this city so vibrant. Thank you for believing in the power of the arts and for believing in the people who make them possible.

[01:32:07] We're proud to be part of what makes Fairfax such a special place to live, work, create, and visit. Thank you. Our next speaker is Nicholas Persini. Good evening, Mayor and Council. My name is Nicholas Persini.

[01:32:33] My pronouns are they, them, and I live at 10627 Ashby Place. I'm a member of the Commission on the Arts of Fairfax City. and I serve as the chair of the Performance Committee. The commission was notified in our last meeting that the parks and recs included cutting our budget as part of their proposed cuts.

[01:32:51] Given that, I just wanted to provide my perspective as a commissioner. The City of Fairfax Commissioning on the Arts receives an annual grant of \$40,000, or .02% of the city budget. This \$40,000 allows the commission to not only support programming directly to our city residents, but also supports local artists to further their programming to city residents.

[01:33:12] Half of our grant goes toward the Commission on the Arts Grant Program, where we give grants to organizations providing arts events and services to city residents. Some of our past recipients include Fairfax Art League, Fairfax Ballet, Fairfax Symphony Orchestra, FX Players, Jazz for Justice, and many more.

[01:33:32] The other half of the grant we receive goes toward programming the Bonita Lastina Old Town Hall Performance Series, fun day monday art screen arts walk and so so much more our programming also brings revenue to local businesses attendings at cultural arts event in the city spent an average of 22.61 cents as part of their arts outing that puts money directly into the city of fairfax economy that is a really huge return on investment for 0.02 percent of the city's budget on a more personal note the arts have always been my safe haven as a disabled transgender non-binary person and as a 16-year

[01:34:07] veteran of music education classroom, I can personally attest that a thriving art scene is a way to give space to everyone and celebrate all the unique identities that we hold. My service on the commission helps me provide that space to others, and our commission is a very dynamic, intergenerational group of passionate people that work hard to provide high quality arts programming for our city. Mayor Reed and Council, I thank you for your support, your past and continued support of the arts and the positive impact that they have on our life in the city.

[01:34:38] Thank you. Our next speaker is Alice Magelson-Green. Hello.

[01:34:55] My name is Alice Magelson-Green. I'm not a resident of the city, but I am here on behalf of Fall for the Book, whom which I work with. For those of you who don't know, Fall for the Book is a local nonprofit serving the community of the city of Fairfax, among others. We've been around since 1997.

[01:35:13] It really was a partnership born from the city of Fairfax, George Mason University, and Fairfax County Public Library. Happy Library Week. Thank you so much for that. And it was founded so that we could help readers connect to the writers that they love. Our goal every year is to find a book for every reader, and a lot of the work that we end up doing is bringing our community together.

[01:35:34] We've brought some really big-name writers who our residents have been able to go and see right here at the Sherwood Center, fighting out for, you know, fighting out for parking spaces in that parking lot along with people playing games in Van Dyke Park. They've gone to Mason's campus to see Stephen King, and they've done this for free. Generally, book festivals and local book festivals are supported oftentimes their entire budget by local cities. We're very lucky in that through this partnership that has built this independent nonprofit that the city of Fairfax gets this and gets year-round literary programming for \$25,000

[01:36:13] dollars a year and the generous use of your spaces. And again, the big name writers like Diana Gabaldon, Rainbow Rowell, Angelina Johnson, these get a lot of attention, but these events, they bring people together to talk about everything from soccer to addiction recovery to bringing a local elementary strings teacher who wrote a best-selling mystery novel about the theft of a violin and you had his former students of his and the audience cheering him on so that's what fall for the book brings to you again it's the \$25,000 is a huge amount for us we're a very small

[01:36:51] organization it's less than 0.1 percent of the city's budget I think probably one of the recurring themes you're hearing from all of my fellow colleagues in the arts is that we're doing a lot for very little. We really thank you for your support. None of this would be possible without the support of the city, and again, I think times are going to be quite challenging in the next couple of years. Having the arts as a free opportunity or a low-cost opportunity for your residents is really incredibly valuable, and at the same time, they are a driver of the economy.

[01:37:27] Thank you so much for your support, and I hope that we will see some of you at some of our upcoming book events. Our next speaker is Jennifer Rose. Good evening Mayor and Members of City Council. Jennifer Rose representing the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce located at 10304 Eaton Place. I'm here tonight to share the perspective of our chamber members and the

[01:38:02] broader business community who are vital to Fairfax City's economic and cultural fabric. You received a more detailed statement earlier today but I wanted to take this opportunity to reiterate our position. Raising the real estate tax rate alongside rising property assessments increases costs for both property owners and tenants. Some property owners have reported real estate tax assessments that have increased by as much as 150 percent, which directly impacts businesses of all sizes. Many businesses operate on paper-thin margins. These increases limit their

[01:38:36] ability to reinvest, hire employees, or even remain in the Fairfax City long term. Because many of them are not residents and have no vote, they could easily vote with their feet by leaving the city or not coming to the city at all. The proposed 50% meals tax increase disproportionately burdens local restaurants and food service businesses still recovering from pandemic-related challenges and our current economic challenges. This tax affects not just dining out, but also prepared foods purchased by busy families, making it a significant financial burden compared to

[01:39:10] neighboring areas that do not impose such a tax yet. The 6% increase for wastewater treatment and stormwater utility fees continue an unsustainable trend, adding more financial strain on property owners and businesses alike. In fact, the stormwater utility will have increased 19% since its 2022 introduction if the proposed rate is approved. As for the impact on economic development, these tax and fee increases send a negative message to potential businesses and undermine efforts to retain existing ones. They conflict with the city's stated priority of fostering economic development and improving its reputation as a business-friendly community.

[01:39:51] It isn't all doom and gloom from the Chamber. We are supportive of several items that were included in the proposed budget, including funds allocated for transportation improvements, merit increases for police and fire personnel, and dedicating part of the real estate tax to affordable housing. Because Chambers are problem solvers, we wanted to make the following recommendation for balancing priorities. Provide targeted relief programs for businesses to ease their financial burden to include expanding economic development initiatives such as the lift and fig programs as well as other marketing

and capacity building programs to support business retention and growth continue the funding and support for events and programs such as rock the

[01:40:29] block the independence day evening show spotlight on the arts festival of the book chocolate lovers festival asian festival on main street and the fall festival these events and activities draw thousands of visitors to fairfax city benefiting local businesses through increased foot traffic hotel stays, and local spending. In closing, Fairfax City small businesses are resilient and deeply committed to this community, but need your support to thrive amid rising costs.

[01:40:57] While we understand the need for responsible budgeting, we urge you to consider adjustments that balance fiscal responsibility with policies that foster long-term economic growth and preserve as well as improve our reputation as a business-friendly city. Thank you for your time and consideration of these perspectives tonight our next speaker is Imran Salik good evening mayor

[01:41:35] council members and city staff my name is Imran Salik and I'm proud I am proud to stand before you as the president of the city of Fairfax professional firefighters and paramedics IFF local 2702 I appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight on behalf of the men and women who serve this community every single day we understand that budgeting is never easy balancing the needs of a growing city with financial realities requires tough choices. But I'm here to remind you that public safety is not a luxury. It's a fundamental responsibility to its residents, and it depends heavily on two key things, proper staffing and strong infrastructure. Proper staffing is not just

[01:42:15] about efficiency, it's about safety. It ensures our firefighters can operate under safe conditions with the right number of personnel to handle emergencies effectively. When we're understaffed, we face greater risks on the fire ground and during medical calls. That compromises not only firefighter safety, but also the level of care and protection we can provide to our citizens.

[01:42:37] Reduced staffing leads to reduced service, and that means longer response times, fewer available units, and ultimately a community that isn't as well protected as it should be. Just as critical are our capital improvement projects. Our current ladder truck is outdated, becoming increasingly unreliable, thus more and more expensive to maintain. A new truck is vital to protecting our growing city, especially with the vertical development we're seeing, and our fire station.

[01:43:04] While it has served us well over the years, it is no longer suited to meet the demands of our modern fire service. It lacks the space, design, and infrastructure necessary to support current operations and ensure the health and safety of our personnel. Delaying these capital improvement projects only increases costs and compounds the risks.

[01:43:24] The longer we wait, the more expensive these investments become, whether through rising construction costs, increased maintenance of our aging equipment, or the operational strain placed on our firefighters. Every year we postpone these upgrades, we lose valuable time that could be spent improving service delivery and safety for both our crews and our citizens.

[01:43:44] Investing in a new, properly equipped station is not just about upgrading a building. It's about creating a safe, efficient, and sustainable environment to serve the community for decades to come. The fire department's proposals are not just numbers on paper. They're carefully considered plans based on operational needs, current challenges, and the future of our department.

[01:44:04] so with that we're not just asking for support we're asking for a commitment to the safety and well-being of every resident every business and every visitor in the city of Fairfax and we urge you to not only consider what's in the best interest of the citizens but also what's in the best interest of the dedicated employees who serve them every day thank you for your time your attention and your ongoing commitment to our great city all right is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on the proposed budget come forward and then if there's a line start by

[01:44:42] the window and bring you one by one. And we just ask that you state your name and street address and your comment. Val Morgan, 3617 Cornell Road. I was going to speak on trees, but you could save a lot of money to put for our band. I'm in one of the bands. I'm not a very good one. Richard is,

[01:45:15] and our director, Jeff, is great. I have talked to many people who see how we really needed to repave this street. I think we could save money by not paving the street so often. We could save money by this project out here that I think we spent \$650,000 on. Could have been not done at all because we don't have anybody to maintain it. And I know there were way too many plants in it, but nobody studied that but me. I also know that Board of Architectural Review, besides approving

[01:45:49] that, approved those stupid brick pillars over behind the police station and decided one needed to be in the park. Those weren't necessary for anything. They just thought they'd be cute decorative items. So we're putting money into stupid stuff. And like one more thing, we're killing our trees. We're supposed to be a tree city. If you ever look out in the woods and see a tree doing this and getting mulch up to its armpits, you don't. Do you ever see a tree hiring somebody to get some kind of trimming a device to go cut through its roots? No, you don't see it,

[01:46:26] but we do it here. It's like, why are we trying to kill our trees? And then they decided to lift the limbs up on seven trees over by the police station. I don't think they needed all their limbs lifted up. We need somebody to pay attention when we are deciding to do a project. I don't know who decided this project out here. The Board of Architectural Review had no idea about the plants that were there. And I did. And I said, this is way too many. And you're stuffing them all together.

[01:47:00] Nobody has a clue. Nobody will be able to maintain it because they don't know how to maintain anything now. I've watched it for years. We could save a lot of money if we just got a few people with common sense to look at some of this stuff.

[01:47:17] We could save a lot of money. And I know we don't need to pave these streets every time we turn around because, like, where's the boo-boo? like just a lot more thoughtful stuff and please put that george snyder trail thing in the trash can uh and the and the picket trail there's a sidewalk right there for god's sakes find some common sense somewhere i know it's a flower that doesn't grow in everybody's garden but it's got to grow in

[01:47:49] somebody's garden thanks next speaker can come forward madam mayor distinguished council members and wonderful staff. My name is Rory Burgess. I live in the city at 9803 Sharon Court. I'm here representing, in case it's too small to read, the City Fairfax Band Association. As you've heard,

[01:48:22] the City Fairfax Band started back in the late 60s, and in my 34 years in the band playing French horn, I've been honored to serve as president and vice president and president served at various times, also served seven years on the City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts as treasurer.

[01:48:43] So it's been through your support and governance and, you know, just the exciting programming we've been able to put on years and years that we've become one of the most admired bands in the country.

[01:49:07] One of my jobs when I was working on the search committee for our new director within the last two years was to find another band organization that operated, had the breadth and depth of your city, Fairfax band, and there were zero out of close to 700 members of the organization, Association of Concert Bands.

[01:49:30] No one does it better, and that comes largely because of all the support we get from you and other wonderful folks. Nationally, we're known as part of the organization for the honor flights. That's been about 13 years.

[01:49:46] I've been doing that. Dulles Airport, right in National Airport, people come out and volunteer. We take Fairfax, the city of Fairfax and its musicianship and culture to a number of ACB, Association of Concert Bands, conventions and spread that word around.

[01:50:09] We also, some of you may or may not, remember that we went to Normandy for the June D-Day celebrations back in 2017. So we took Fairfax and the nation over to Europe.

[01:50:29] Now, because of your generosity, the city's generosity, we were able to offer people, students, 25 and under, free into our concerts. We're able to take our groups to form with local schools, side-by-sides, and so on.

[01:50:47] We have 165 volunteers on a regular basis in the City Fairfax Band Association, and they give back to the community and to the city. And I just want to say that the council needs to know that our group loves the city.

[01:51:09] We want to continue supporting the city with wholesome, family-friendly entertainment of which the residents can be proud. Thanks for your support, and music for life. Next speaker can come forward.

[01:51:30] Good evening. I'm Leslie Hatch. I live at 3812 Hemlock Way, and I just wanted to say thank you for all that you're doing, particularly on this issue. I realize that it's very difficult. And while I was surprised when I got the letter that said what my taxes might be, I just wanted you to know that my second thought was I get my money's worth.

[01:51:56] I really appreciate all of the services that are in the city. It's a wonderful place to live. I have access to so many different things, more things than the people here have talked about tonight. And I just wanted to express how appreciative I am of all of that.

[01:52:19] And that when I talk to city employees, I always get excellent service. It's never been anything less than that. So I realize it's a very hard job you have in front of you, and I appreciate everything you're doing.

[01:52:41] Next speaker can come forward. Yes, hello. I'm David Geller at 10305 Darby Street, and it was just incredible to hear everybody today. I mean, we're talking about the arts.

[01:52:56] We're talking about books. We're talking about the fire department, and I understand there's some very difficult decisions that have to be made. Very difficult. I mean, I'm an artist. I'm a musician. I've been to a lot of the concerts.

[01:53:11] I love fall for the book. I mean, luckily, I haven't really needed the fire department, but I'm really glad they're there. But what I'm really asking, and it's probably common sense, and I'm sure you're all doing it now, is to look at the budget really carefully.

[01:53:29] And I'm sure you are, so I'm really just saying what I feel. It's probably not going to help. But line by line to see what is necessary, what might be necessary, what is nice to have, and what might really be a luxury.

[01:53:45] Because we're just not normal times. I think everybody would realize that. The financial situation of everybody is really up in the air. I mean, who knows what's going to, you know, when you read the paper tomorrow morning, what's going to be on the agenda.

[01:54:01] So that's what I'm asking. Carefully look at every line item to see where and what you can cut. And I know it's going to be hard, and I don't envy your job, okay? I really don't. I know how difficult it's going to be. But, you know, the tax increases on top of everything else are just not anything anybody's really going to want.

[01:54:23] So I appreciate your listening. Thank you. Next speaker can come forward. Hi, council members and mayor.

[01:54:38] Thank you for letting me speak. I'm Roxanne Morgan-Rowley. I'm at 10118 Cavalry Drive here in Fairfax City. I've been a resident of Fairfax City for 20 years. I married and bought my first home here. I'm raising two kids here, and I've grown my career and my artwork.

[01:54:56] I am a dancer and a choreographer, and I have a very small dance company here in Fairfax City. I felt very welcomed by Fairfax City Parks and Rec, and Megan Dubois and Christine Vincent of the Cultural Arts Development Division here.

[01:55:12] I have served also as a member of the Commission for Women for Fairfax City, and I love watching the programs there grow. So I'm also very, I have love for the social standings in the city, watching the Village Grow and the Women of Influence Award.

[01:55:30] I was sort of on the base of that, which was fun. That aside, so I was fortunate to find a home here to nurture my dance company and even connect through other artists. Megan Dubois has been wonderful at helping me connect where to rehearse, where to have my home, where to make work.

[01:55:51] um where to have performances even through covid the commission on the arts funded programming for me to do performances outside for the city residents um which was wonderful um i'm just advocating of course for the arts like everyone else seems to be here which is wonderful but we're such a small part and the grants that the commission um gives out are very small and that's part of the maybe part of the um siphoning off that might happen and i don't want that to happen because that's like my livelihood here. So anyway, please give that some thought. I am

[01:56:29] not used to talking in front of people. I am used to dancing in front of people. So I apologize. I'm so nervous. Anyway, please consider that. Thank you so much. Is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on the proposed budget? I guess we'll move on to general public comment.

[01:56:51] I need you to close the public hearing first. All right. I will now close the public hearing process on the proposed fy26 budget the budget adoption will be on may 6 2025 beginning at 7 p.m now we can go to general public comment okay i'm going to call the speakers who signed up by 7 o'clock p.m

tonight and then whoever else in the room can come up after uh so we'll start with philip latassa mayor and council i speak tonight representing the friends of akatink creek what an exhausting hike we have all been taking together debating the georgniter trail as we decide whether

[01:57:31] and how its vision can lead to a better future for this city. The Friends of Accident Creek say we can find that better future on the many miles of existing pavement we already maintain. Our forests cannot be improved by pavement, but our pavement can be greatly improved by enhanced pedestrian and bicycle safety and by finding room for a bit more greenery alongside.

[01:57:50] Our finite forests cannot fulfill the infinite demands we might make of them. The same reasoning also applies to plans for the Pickett Road Connector Trail, now made even more redundant by the new Route 50 shared-use path in the county. Thank you. All right, our next speaker, Shelly Vance.

[01:58:12] Hi, I'm Shelly Vance. I live at 3220 Cambridge Court in Cambridge Station. I am speaking this evening to again ask the city council to vote to stop the George Snyder Trail in its current design.

[01:58:29] If the city and VDOT must move forward with a connector bike trail, please create an alternative that preserves the woodlands between Eaton Place and the Mosby Woods neighborhood and overall preserves our wetlands and wildlife habitat.

[01:58:46] These would be admirable goals, even if they were the only benefits from a different trail footprint. But a different footprint, located on Eaton Place itself, would enable cyclists to access businesses at Point 50, where Andy's Pizza and Amazon Fresh are, and to access University Drive, and from that, Old Town Fairfax.

[01:59:09] Placed on Fairfax Boulevard, the trail would provide access to Fairfax Marketplace and other businesses as it moves east to Draper Drive. Two birds with one stone, preserving our natural wealth and providing access to our business offerings, neither of which is a feature of the current design.

[01:59:28] It's a win-win outcome. Thank you. Our next speaker is Tom Blackburn. Thank you. I'm a resident of McLean, Virginia, not of Fairfax City.

[01:59:53] I am speaking tonight on behalf of the 5,000-member Northern Virginia Bird Alliance, which is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. We do more than watch birds. We have a very active environmental practice. This is the fourth time I've spoken to this council about the George Snyder Trail, and I'd like to ask again tonight that the council make the decision to move the western portion of that trail out of the forest and onto the roads and cancel the eastern portion.

[02:00:23] I'm not a NIMBY. And I said I don't live in the county. I didn't even in the city. I didn't even know there was a forest in Fairfax City until I heard about this trail. But I'm here because this trail, as proposed now, will do irreparable damage to the environment. More than 900 feet of that trail will be on boardwalks or on ridges.

[02:00:49] A significant portion of that construction, as well as other on-ground construction, especially in the western portion of the trail, will be within resource protection areas. The fact that a significant portion of the trail is on a resource protection area should have been enough to stop the planning at the very earliest stages of this trail.

[02:01:14] There's a March 10 memorandum for the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services to the county's Department of Transportation that makes this very clear. They've

been looking at RPA issues and trail issues for 30 years.

[02:01:30] That memorandum states that hard surface trails should be constructed through RPAs only as a last resort. That means you don't construct the trail through an RPA if there's any other alternative. The memo points out that the trails through RPAs degrade the environment with significant impact to the wetland communities for a vector for invasive species.

[02:01:55] They exacerbate erosion, alter the floodplain's function, which is to protect the water quality, reduce stormwater runoff, and reduce erosion. There's 4,120 feet of the trail will be either above ground or below ground.

[02:02:15] And you've heard me speak or read what I've written about the impact of that. With slopes as high as 10 feet above grade, excavation 7 feet below grade, we can do better than this. There is an obvious alternative to the trail through the woods, and that is to move it off the woods and onto the road on the western side and cancel the eastern portion of the trail.

[02:02:43] And that is the role that I think makes by far the best sense. Thank you. Our next speaker is Mariana Fournier. I kind of had to rush to get over here.

[02:03:08] I'm Mariana Fournier, Spring Lake Terrace, Fairfax, Virginia. You know me. Okay, I was very excited about Tom's suggested way of dealing with VDOT.

[02:03:25] What I would suggest is all of you write your suggestions as to how it should be done right. Forward it to Tom, and you work with VDOT on their suggestions. Okay. Excuse me, I am getting old. I was really shocked that you didn't kill the connector trail.

[02:03:54] I thought you all realized what a mess that is. It is a matter of justice denied. It came about during COVID, and it was just sort of slid across without the necessary public meeting.

[02:04:17] It was poorly advertised, a minimum of engagement with the citizens. Now, I will look up my records, and I will send you all my speech to the council where I list all the things going against it.

[02:04:42] But the fact, if you haven't figured it out by now, I love procedure, I like rules, and I love going by the book. And this one was sloppy. No wonder many of us are incensed.

[02:05:06] Hate to tell you this, but for too long, former councils thought they knew best, and they treated Fairfax City as their own little fiefdom. I'm very happy to look and see smiling faces, as opposed to looking at what was like the judges of the Salem Witch Trial.

[02:05:29] Now, if there's anything I can do to help, you know I'm always here. but uh no the country club kills connector i really expect you to think we don't need all these projects let's get rid of one that people really ate thank you have a good evening our next

[02:05:57] speaker is val morgan uh 36 17 cornell road of course i'm here because a lot of us love trees because we breed um and there are a lot of birds there and there are insects we can't even see that live there, and we haven't figured out yet, most of us, or a lot of us, that we're part of

[02:06:37] nature, and when we kill it off bit by bit, we're killing ourselves off bit by bit, and at some point, it's going to be too late, and we're all done, and I have grandkids, and I really don't want to see us do all this stupid stuff. When there's a street right over there, you don't put a street through the woods. You use the

street. That's why it's there. It seems obvious, and we ought to have the trees in the city look have somebody run out and see what the trees in the

[02:07:13] woods look like the trees in the city should not have mulch it's terrible for the trees and having the guys take a trimmer like they use along the sidewalk of grass with a metal blade this deep cut through roots this big like the oak trees right in front of the police station why are we killing our trees they're going to try very hard it's hard to really kill them quickly unless you just cut them down but we're we're spending a lot of money to try and kill trees so we're going to

[02:07:50] have to be instead of tree city we're going to have to add tree killers usa because we're doing dumb stuff we don't need the guys i mean if that's what their job is then we don't need them so there's somebody we can get rid of it's the guys that are going around the outside of the mulch, taking out tree roots. I mean, that's dumb. And piling mulch up to kill the trees is also dumb. If you've ever watched the news and there's some news person standing at the White House and you see the trees in the background, there is no volcano mulch. If you go to Fredericksburg,

[02:08:28] no volcano mulch. I hear Charlottesville is the same. And most of the rest of the country doesn't do this either um and we also could just ditch these trails and save money and um i'm sure we could save money by not paving all the streets every time you turn around um and yay for getting the saving our bands they're really important um i mean i'm in the main street band they let me play the bass drum um so i'm not very good but uh our director who spoke jeff and richard who also spoke

[02:09:08] are great musicians and the gentlemen that were out playing uh the brass group out there they're super it does a lot for your spirit and your soul to attend these things so we need to keep these things up and we save a lot of money by not buying all that mulch to kill the trees and take away those toys that are killing trees is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on a

[02:09:35] general public comment we'll ask that you line up by the windows hi good evening my name is judy fraser 3514 spring lake terrace good evening mayor and council members i i don't know who suggested cutting all these wonderful programs but it's been at least wonderful to meet in a way all these lovely people in our community who do so much to make this a very special place so i know you won't

[02:10:12] cut their programs i'm i feel very very certain of that but i do appreciate hearing about the wonderful work that they are doing. Your efforts as well to find a better path forward for the GST has been noted and appreciated. The Woods themselves have received reprieve, if only temporary, tonight. This is because you all, VDOT staff, our staff, and the community work together. We have started that process. We need to keep going. I would like especially to make a call out to VDOT because they are an organization that often finds themselves in the center of

[02:10:47] controversy in the middle of opposing forces and angry voices. More roads versus protecting open space, for example. One of the more surprising revelations of this experience has been that, in fact, they were coming up with compromises that they would have liked us to consider years ago, but we didn't hear about them. And this is a reminder that our government employees generally know their job is to serve the community. In fact, if VDOT had been listened to those years ago, Your 98 days here probably would not have had anything, no time spent on the George Snyder Trail.

[02:11:26] What a timeline that would have been. Well, you might have gone to a ribbon cutting. But we know there is work to do, and certainly some unknowns, and many of us have committed to helping

engage the community going forward to find that better path.

[02:11:43] So thank you for your unanimity tonight. I think that was a great show of working together. And I am sure that staff will provide you the support that you've requested to find that path. Thank you. Our next speaker can come forward.

[02:12:06] My name is Susan Kyler. I live in Cambridge Station. I want to echo a lot of Judy's and others' remarks. I want to thank you for meeting with VDOT about the George Snyder Trail and for DDOT's willingness to consider alternatives for the western portion of the trail.

[02:12:24] As Judy noted, they suggested this a couple years ago, that the city build the western portion until the city could figure out how to address public concerns about the eastern portion. A few citizens have already developed a concept alternative for the western portion of the GST that goes from Chain Bridge Road along Eaton Place and Fairfax Boulevard to Fairwoods Parkway.

[02:12:47] The alternative moves the GST from the wetlands behind the Willowood office buildings to the sidewalks on Eaton Place and Fairfax Boulevard. One of our Mary Bann, Judy actually, was so encouraged by the opportunity that VDOP had granted us that she highlighted a city map to show where the GST grant money could be used to fill in the gaps between other existing, approved, and proposed bikeway segments, which do not use GST funds, to form a continuous bikeway from I-66 to Fairwoods Parkway.

[02:13:20] Some of the alternative benefits are it makes Fairfax Boulevard Eaton Place and key intersections safer for pedestrians and cyclists, something the city plans to do anyway and in some places is already doing. Two, it brings people from neighborhoods such as Cobdale, the Assembly, and Northvac safely across Route 123 to the businesses on Fairfax Boulevard.

[02:13:45] It provides access to Old Town on University Drive. It preserves the woodland buffer that protects the Moseley Woods neighborhood, and last but not least, it preserves our wetlands and wildlife habitats. I urge you to pass the resolution to pause the George Diner Trail bid advertisement to allow the Transportation Division, the Council, and concerned citizens to develop a concept alternative for the western portion of the George Diner Trail.

[02:14:11] This resolution will enable the city to take advantage of the opportunity VDOT has afforded us to direct the Transportation Division to work with Council, especially Councilmember Peterson, whom VDOT specifically mentioned in a meeting two weeks ago, to develop a concept alternative and public outreach program for the western portion of the GST.

[02:14:33] As another little thought, there are also alternatives for connecting to the Wilcoxon Trails as funds permit, such as extending the bikeway along Fairfax Boulevard, the western portion, or by using Cardinal Road through Draper Drive Park to Beach Drive to Fairfax Boulevard, not by tearing up people's front yards and sidewalks, as some have asserted, but by painting bicycle icons on the roads and making the Draper-Fairfax Boulevard intersection safer.

[02:15:02] I thank you so much for the resolution you have before you tonight, and I know that many of us want to work together to develop a good public outreach program for this. Thank you. Our next speaker can come forward. Hi, I'm Katie Johnson.

[02:15:21] I'm at 10132 Spring Lake Terrace. I want to say, much like the arts, I'm touched by what you guys were talking about, but I want to offer spending time in nature offers numerous benefits for both physical and mental health.

[02:15:38] Stress reduction, improved mood, enhanced cognitive function, increased creativity, lower blood pressure, improved immune function, reduced risk of chronic disease, increased physical activity. I'd like to say that the connection with nature, nature for nature's sake, not nature for our benefit, but nature for nature's sake.

[02:16:01] I'd also like to read, my daughter had, very timely, one of her questions on her homework tonight. I flipped it open. It's a practice test. It says, every year, more than 300,000 acres of wetlands are drained for building purposes. Three quarters of all North American waterfowl breed in wetlands.

[02:16:22] Imagine that at a local town meeting, there is a proposal to permit developers, that's the city of Fairfax, to use a substantial amount of wetland around your area. As an informed citizen, you need to take a stand on this issue um they're my daughter's 12 and they're asking her to make these decisions i'm asking tonight i'm stating our forest and wetlands cannot handle an additional 600 mature trees lost our wetlands and our forest cannot handle an additional seven to eight acres

[02:17:00] of disturbance please take advantage of the opportunity provided by vdot to realign the george snyder trail to preserve our remaining woodlands wetlands and all the life they support including ours is there anybody else in the room that would like to speak on their general public comment okay we can move to the consent agenda is there a motion to approve the consent agenda

[02:17:36] council member hardy chandler i move adoption of a consent agenda for item agenda item number 7a consideration of the march 18 2025 special meeting minutes agenda item number 7b consideration of appointments to boards and commissions agenda item number 7c introduction of an ordinance amending the re-adopted of the re-adopting amending and re-adopting chapter 90 article 2 division 1 section 90-33 of the code of the city of fairfax virginia pertaining to classification and taxation

[02:18:12] of certain real property in the city of fairfax used for zoned for used used for zoned for commercial and industrial purposes and to establish a separate tax rate on such real property effective as of january 1 2025 revenue from which would be used exclusively for the transportation purposes that benefit the city of fairfax agenda item number 7d introduction of an ordinance amending chapter 102 article 2 section 102-31 of the city of the code of the city of fairfax virginia to

[02:18:47] increase the wastewater utility rate by six percent for fy26 agenda item number 7e introduction of an ordinance amending chapter 102 article 5 section 102-203 of the code of the city of of fairfax virginia to set the rate for stormwater utility service furnished by the city at six percent billing unit bu agenda item number 7f introduction of an ordinance amending chapter 90 taxation article 6 tax on meals section 90-262 of the code of the city of fairfax pertaining to

[02:19:26] the levy and amount of tax on meals i move to approve the consent agenda items number 7a through F and the motion accompanying the consent agenda as item as printed motion has been made by councilmember Hardy Chandler is there a second mayor Reed councilmember Hall I'd like to pull out item 7d 7e and 7f and vote on them independently we generally do that when we have a second so my apologies would you like to say would you like to second the motion okay so a motion's been made by councilmember Hardy Chandler and seconded by councilmember Hall are there

[02:20:04] any items council would like pulled for additional discussion council member hall yes i would like to pull out item 7d 7e and 7f independently any other items from any other members of the dais so items 7d 7e and 7f will be removed for discussion roll call vote on the consent agenda minus agenda item 7d 7e and 7f council member mcquillan council member bates aye council member Peterson aye councilmember Hardy Chandler aye councilmember Hall aye

[02:20:43] councilmember Amos aye motion passed unanimously for 7a through C so 7d is the introduction of an ordinance amending chapter 102 article 2 section 102 - 3 1 of the code of the city of Fairfax Virginia to increase the wastewater utility rate by 6% for FY 26 I'll recognize JC Martinez chief financial officer good evening mayor council in conjunction with the city's financial advisors and consulting engineers a wastewater utility multi-year financial and capital planning analysis had been developed primary goal of the analysis

[02:21:22] was to create a comprehensive cash flow planning model taking into account existing and projected operating and capital needs while minimizing rate increases for for existing customers based on the analysis staff recommends a user rate increase of six percent in the city's wastewater utility the city raised rates of 10 in 2014 through fy 2020 8 in fy 2021 and six percent from fy 2022 to the fy 2025 increased residential and commercial wastewater user rates are required to fund the city's increasing costs

[02:22:02] associated with the aging infrastructure within the city and to cover its share of expenditures associated with the operation of and the capital improvements at the Nomen Coal M wastewater treatment plant also known as the plant the city contracted for six point two seven percent capacity in the plant which is owned and operated by Fairfax County major plant upgrades are necessary necessitated by stringent federal regulations designed to improve wastewater treatment and quality the critical plant construction and renovation projects needed to

[02:22:36] replace and improve aging infrastructure. The proposed 6% rate increase would impact user fees as follows. One, residential consumers for the first 5,000 gallons or less per quarter increase up to \$68.35 per 1,000 gallons. For all water in excess of 5,000 gallons, it would be \$13.07. Commercial consumers for the first 5,000 gallons or less, it would be \$80.42 per 1,000 gallons of water in excess of 5,000 gallons, it would be \$13.07.

[02:23:15] Apartment buildings would be billed at a minimum wastewater rate of \$53.31 per dwelling per month. Happy to answer any questions that you may have. Council Member Hall, do you have questions? No questions, just want to vote on them separately.

[02:23:31] Okay, Council Member McQuillan. Could you go into a little more detail on what the analysis composed of? You said it was based on an analysis. I'm just curious what factors were included aside from the county's increase of and federal regulations sure so the largest part of the analysis has to do with capital improvements to the plant we did have a discussion with them some years back them being Fairfax water specifically at the plants and some capital upgrades that were required I think we are in year three of year five of that plan significant capital

[02:24:11] contributions I think this year we're at either eight or nine million dollars trying to trail that down for the next two years about seven or eight million dollars for the next two years as well and then after that we should have a my words breather before other capital improvements will probably have to happen within that plant as well but that is the main driver of the cost is the capital infrastructure within

that that specific site councilmember Peterson Thank you. Those investments or improvements, were they planned and expected?

[02:24:51] Yes, they are planned and expected. As I mentioned, I think we are in year three of five. We did have a discussion with Fairfax Water specifically on the plant capital improvements right before I showed up, and that was the plan going forward that these were the capital improvements that were required.

[02:25:12] They had discussions with us, and we sort of agreed to that plan of capital improvements within that area. And are these attributable, the need for this, is this attributable solely to aging, or is it use-related?

[02:25:27] In other words, is this driven by the number of users, and is that causing the need for investment? Are we seeing an impact because of increased use, and that's what's driving this? So it's my understanding in discussions with Fairfax Water that this is just aged infrastructure.

[02:25:51] And this infrastructure has been in there for 20 or 30 years, if not longer. It just is routine maintenance. Our capacity has slowly been increasing as a city, yet we still have some capacity there. Again, it is mostly based on my understanding in discussions with them on just replacing aging infrastructure.

[02:26:14] Thank you. Any council member Hardy Chandler and just for clarification those rates that you gave for X number of gallons That was by quarter. Correct or correct Uh council member Bates just to clarify this being this we're just voting on the introduction Right and we can amend the ordinances when we vote on them to say amend the tax rate or or what have you That's correct. Correct. Okay. Thanks. This is just a procedural introduction. Yeah. Okay. Council member Amos

[02:26:51] I guess to just briefly build on that, just for logistical understanding, so we're voting to advertise the public hearing, and then we would make a decision on it. If we were not to approve it tonight, what would that mean? Just nothing happens?

[02:27:09] I'm not sure I understand your question. I mean, obviously the ordinance won't be introduced or advertised or any public hearing conducted if you don't vote to introduce the ordinance. anything else from the dais before we take a vote okay seeing none a roll call vote I'm sorry we need a motion to someone needs to be read the motion on item D because they were okay is there a motion for item D councilmember Hardy

[02:27:43] Chandler I move for adoption of consent agenda item 7d introduction of an ordinance amending chapter 102 article to section 102 - 31 of the code of the City of Fairfax, Virginia to increase the wastewater utility rate by 6% for FY26.

[02:28:06] I'm sorry, there's a motion attached to the actual agenda item and it's a little different than what you read. I'm sorry, if you could pull that up and actually the CFO may be handing you the motion. I move to introduce an ordinance amending Chapter 102, Article 2, Section 102-31B of the Code of the City of Fairfax, Virginia to increase the rates for wastewater service by 6%.

[02:28:38] further move to waive the first reading and set the public hearing for April 22nd 2025 is there a second second okay a motion has been made by councilmember Hardy Chandler and seconded by councilmember Amos is there any additional discussion on this motion seeing none a roll call vote

councilmember Amos aye councilmember Hall no councilmember Hardy Chandler aye councilmember Peterson. Aye. Councilmember Bates. Aye. Councilmember McQuillan. No. Motion passed

[02:29:15] 4-2. Okay, we'll go to 7E. The introduction of an ordinance amending chapter 102, article 5, section 102-203B of the Code of the City of Fairfax, Virginia. Set the rate for the stormwater utility service furnished by the city at \$34.30 per BU billing unit at 6% increase.

[02:29:42] recognize jc martinez chief financial officer good evening again mayor council the city's stormwater utility funds initial rate was at 28.80 per billable unit also known as bu and it was set at a time when the stormwater utility was created on december 14th 2021 this action is to set the rate at 34.30 cents per bu or a six percent increase for calendar year beginning january 1 2025. user fees are expected to generate the stormwater utility revenue of approximately

[02:30:20] 3.2 million an increase of about 184 thousand dollars happy to answer any questions do we have questions from the dais okay do i have a motion for 7e council member hardy chandler i move to introduce an ordinance amending chapter 102 article 5 section 102-203b of the code of the city of fairfax virginia increasing the rate for a billing unit used in calculating the stormwater

[02:30:53] utility fee for the calendar year beginning january 1 2025 to 34.30 i further move that move to waive the first reading and set the public hearing for april 22nd 2025. is there a second second okay uh item 7e has been removed by council member hardy chandler and seconded by council member peterson is there any items and is there any discussion on this item council member peterson the the rationale for the increase can you repeat that is this simply

[02:31:31] because it's expanding revenue generation or is there more to it than that sure so so the rationale is a couple of fold so the majority of the increase would go to offset increase investment within the stormwater utility requirements within the city the majority of these requirements are also federal requirements whether it's tdml and or other not vdot but the deq thank you sorry deq

[02:32:08] requirements regarding stormwater runoff there has been many years of deferment with investment within our infrastructure in the stormwater fund or utility that we are now trying to catch up as well that is listed in the cip and we're trying to maintain and catch up on that programming and investment back within our community for the stormwater aspect thank you any other discussion questions okay seeing none a roll call vote councilmember Amos aye councilmember

[02:32:46] Hall no councilmember Hardy Chandler aye councilmember Peterson no councilmember Bates aye councilmember McQuillan no their mayor votes aye four to three okay our last item the introduction of an ordinance amending chapter 90 taxation in parentheses article 6 and parents tax on meals section 90-262 of the code of the city of fairfax virginia pertaining to the levy and amount of tax on meals i'll recognize jc martinez chief

[02:33:22] financial officer again thank you mayor council as stated section 90-262 of the city code currently provides for a four percent meals tax the proposed ordinance would increase the amount of the meals TAX TO 6% AS SET FORTH IN THE CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED FY 2026 BUDGET. THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS CHANGE WOULD BE JULY 1, 2025. THE PREVIOUS MEALS TAX WAS CHANGED FROM 2% TO 4% IN 2004, OR 21 YEARS AGO. AN INCREASE TO THE MEALS TAX REDUCES THE FINANCIAL BURDEN ON RESIDENTS,

[02:34:01] AS THE MEALS TAX CAN OFFSET THE NEED FOR HIGHER REAL ESTATE TAXES DUE TO VISITORS AND non-residents paying this tax in the handout and the staff report there are deletions to the current language that's shown through strikethroughs and then additions would be double underlying tax the 2% proposed increase would generate approximately an additional 4.4 million dollars in meals tax revenue each 1% generates about 2.2 million the change would result in a tax increase of approximately \$1 on a \$50 meal happy to answer questions questions council

[02:34:40] council member Hardy Chandler so again this is an introduction but it doesn't necessarily lock us into that 2% specifically is that correct that's correct this establishes the maximum amount of an increase other questions councilmember Bates just want to reemphasize a point from the staff report that all else all equal other rates held equal and all other given a certain set of expenditures for the budget if we do not raise the meals tax

[02:35:18] that means that given the same amount of expenditures that amount of money has to be made up by another tax rate such as further increase in the real estate tax rate other comments or questions or okay do I have a motion for 7f council member hardy chandler i move to introduce an ordinance amending chapter 90 article 6 section 90-262 of the code of the city of fairfax virginia pertaining to the levy and amount

[02:35:53] of the meals tax i further move to waive the first reading and to set the public hearing for april 22nd 2025 is there a second second a motion has been made by council member hardy chandler and seconded by councilmember Peterson is there any discussion on the motion councilmember Amos would it be possible since we all kind of hate the meals tax to a degree and I think we're all recognizing that two percent is probably a little too high within context can we reduce it to one for the advertisement for the public

[02:36:28] hearing for the max to be considered you can certainly do that it again it's the maximum rate you could adopt and I think the other reason for staff recommendation in addition to it's incorporated in the proposed budget is it does allow you the flexibility if anything changes between now and when you adopt the budget that said you can certainly amend it upward or downward on

[02:36:55] the introduction sorry I'm just thinking about the sprout grant right now that the potential for lost grant over time is what bugs me but I also don't want to support this so just being honest well we're just this this is advertising it so that it can be just this is not locking us in it's kind of like i believe mr martinez's

[02:37:33] analogy of having a mortgage that's more than what you actually spend we're setting of this high higher we're saying this highest possible rate it doesn't mean that we're locked into this it just means that this is the upper limit of what we're saying of what we're stating that's my understanding is that correct mr martinez that's correct councilmember hardy chandler in In addition, the public hearing allows for the public voice, correct?

[02:38:00] Councilmember Amos. And I don't disagree with that, but I also note that it does fall on us to reduce the incoming debt that's coming. I would feel more comfortable if we capped ourselves at one. If folks are amenable to that, then I'd be willing to support this.

[02:38:21] Councilmember Peterson. Clarification. So our maximum right now, the maximum allowable rate is four, which is equal to the actual rate that is set. Is that correct? We set, I'm just looking historically,

we set the current rate at 4, is that right?

[02:38:41] That's correct. And absent any action to change it as part of this budget cycle, it remains at 4. And when we did that, just if anybody happens to know, did we advertise it at 4 and then move up to that from a lower level like 2? That I don't know.

[02:38:58] I'd have to go back and look. The only thing that I was able to find was specifically the date and the year that it was last changed. But I'm assuming we would have gone in compliance and would have had to advertise it, but I don't remember at what percentage it was advertised. Actually, I'm sorry.

[02:39:15] The staff report does note, again, that the previous meal tax change was from 2% to 4% in 2004. And my question is, so the procedure that was used at that point sounds like it would have been to advertise it for, and then following public hearing, et cetera, go ahead and move to that level.

[02:39:41] That is typically the process for most taxes that are advertised. There's a maximum advertised, and then it's in the hands of the council as to how it wishes to handle that. And the council wished to handle that by moving it up to the maximum rate that was advertised.

[02:39:59] Is that correct in terms of what happened? Again, we'd have to go back and look at that staff report. We don't have that institutional memory offhand. Council Member Amos. This is more of a question for my colleagues, because it would help me mathematically.

[02:40:16] Each percent that we take off, we have to find \$2.2 million. What is our target real estate tax rate we're thinking about? We were presented with some scenarios, but we're coming up for a vote here, and I'm wondering where are we going to find \$2.2 or \$4.4 million? Well, I think there's a strength, just a little bit, in trying to – this needs to be a vote on this ordinance and this tax rate.

[02:40:40] We're not locked in to this tax rate being what we adopt. If we pass this, advertise it, open a public hearing, and let the community come in and tell us, then decisions will be made by the dais. And the more robust conversation that you're looking to have, I think we will have in the work session, which is like, how do we make the math work out?

[02:41:05] I think at this juncture, the very narrow question we are asking is at what rate do we advertise this and open a public hearing? It does not lock us in to setting the rate at 6. There is every possibility that you could do this and keep the rate at 4.

[02:41:24] All it's doing is setting the upper limit. Councilman, Mr. Martinez. I appreciate that. I would say this is very similar to what the body did a couple of weeks back regarding the real estate tax rate, where the manager proposed a certain rate.

[02:41:44] Council went ahead and actually increased that advertised rate. Again, does not lock in council at all to maintain a potential \$1.15 tax rate. I think it seems like very understandable that it will not be anywhere near that.

[02:42:01] So, again, this just gives that option to council to potentially go there, but if need be, can go significantly less or at its current rate. Council Member Hardy Chandler. So, I think that Council Member Amos is making a good point, maybe for a different time, but hold on to that because I think looking at the landscape is exactly the approach we want to take. So I hear what you're saying in terms of the landscape and I think that that's part of the broader scenario discussion. Councilmember Amos. Since it's advertisement I'm willing to let it go

[02:42:37] although I likely won't support the full two percent when it comes out but I just also want to reiterate I've been pretty clear for about a month month and a half now that I want to know what we're trying to get to and I'm glad that we have the scenarios on board now but I haven't heard anything about what the ideal real estate tax rate is and right now that's kind of operating in tandem with this meals tax until i find out how we can reduce it so i just wanted to reiterate that well give us 15 minutes and we're going to get to that 50 minutes if we get through this

[02:43:11] motion and i think we're going to be where you want to be so um we have a motion on the floor at least i think we do have a mo do we have that with somebody keeping track okay we have a motion ON THE FLOOR. IT WAS MADE AND SECONDED. WE HAD DISCUSSION. IS THERE ANY MORE DISCUSSION BEFORE WE TAKE A ROLL CALL VOTE? APPARENTLY, WE ARE READ -- I THINK THE DILEMMA HERE IS PART OF IT IS CHICKEN AND EGG, WHERE WE'RE SEQUENTIALLY NOT CONSIDERING THIS AT A POINT IN WHICH WE NECESSARILY HAVE THE CONTEXT THAT WOULD LET US BE COMFORTABLE WITH THE LEVEL. GRANTED, THIS IS JUST AUTHORIZING A HEARING TO TAKE

[02:43:47] PLACE, BUT THIS ONE IS PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT BECAUSE I AM NOT HEARING, IN MY OWN CASE, any support for this from constituents and it does raise concerns that the presumption is we're going to move upward to a maximum rate and if that's not in the cards I'm not sure we want to be advertising at that and at this stage it doesn't sound like that's in the cards in terms of folks I'm hearing from which is pretty broad scale in terms of inputs on this so I am a little bit concerned about setting the stage for something that

[02:44:22] is not really supported and may not be something we end up wanting to pursue well councilmember Bates well I think it's safe to say that nobody supports raising taxes within itself but I think that residents do support the services that they get from the city and I am for later on during the work session I'd I'd like to propose a compromise that involves a 3.5 cent increase the real estate tax rate and then a 2% increase the meals tax rate.

[02:45:01] Sort of a somewhat modified version of Scenario 4, but I'd like to have a chance to discuss that and see if my colleagues are amenable to that. Council Member McQuillan. I am not amenable to that because I don't believe in the meals tax.

[02:45:21] I don't want to increase the meals tax. I've been pretty clear and honest with you guys about that. So just so that there's no confusion where I stand on that, I will not be voting for a meals tax to increase the meals tax. Okay, so this really is sort of a process question.

[02:45:36] This is just a process that we go through so that we can have a robust discussion about what the options actually are. In order to be able to consider all the tools we have in the toolbox, we have to put the tools in the toolbox, which to me, that's what this is. We are setting the stage to say we've got options, we've got tools, we've got we've got resources and we need to figure out in what combination those resources will or will not come together to get us to the tax rate that this body is willing to vote on right so this is a process to say if you don't support it you don't have to vote for it but

[02:46:10] this is a process to say these are the tools in our toolbox to get us to a budget and a tax rate to support the budget and it's just a process that we're going through so council member hardy Chandler and I am in support of hearing from the public and so if this is the door that opens and sets the public hearing so that we can hear from the public that's what I'm in support of so are we ready for a roll call vote okay I think we're ready councilmember Amos aye councilmember Hall no councilmember

[02:46:49] Hardy Chandler aye councilmember Peterson no councilmember Bates aye Council member McQuillan no may read the mayor votes. Yes motion passed four to three Well, all right, then so we are now going to go into our work session and take a five-minute break in between

[02:47:08] All right. Welcome to our work session

[02:59:23] Miss Shinneberry Discussion on the proposed FY 26 budget are recognized Brian Foster to city manager for the discussion Thank You mayor members of council So, again, this is to continue our discussion on the proposed budget.

[02:59:41] We've had several work sessions. We had what I thought was a very successful open house this past week, which we got a lot of feedback from our residents. And so this evening, again, there's no specific agenda.

[03:00:00] know there's several things that we can several directions we can go depending on the preference I know that last time there was a request for certain departments to be here I know you asked a lot of questions of individual departments especially I think as you had questions related the CIP so those those departments are here parks fire economic development specifically and then of course we have public works and and PD are also here

[03:00:37] earlier today JC sent out a revised it was in a spreadsheet form revised CIP that showed reductions or changes based on the previous discussion that we had so we had some suggestions from a bit at the last meeting from schools from public works from parks so we've incorporated all of those and so that was sent to you probably probably not all of you maybe had a chance to really digest it so

[03:01:14] we can we can review that if that's council's desire as well and then also we had the various scenarios that we presented last meeting which I know at the last meeting since we had just presented them I know you didn't have you did not have any time to discuss those or really ask any questions as I recall or at least very limited questions because you were just seeing that for the first time so we can also pull those back up and can talk about

[03:01:49] those in more detail if that's council's desire so anyways we're basically ready to follow your lead as far as specific questions or information that you would like to discuss so councilmember Amos I promised you 15 minutes to get back circle back around to your question so you you started out by saying that you have questions about the meals tax and the getting to the tax rate so where would you like to start I'm just trying to figure out where we're headed now I

[03:02:28] I'm glad we got scenarios on the table and I'm glad that we're looking at our overall debt considering that we also need to readjust with the school bond on the way but I am not completely clear on where we're heading with the real estate tax um and that's somewhat that's directly connected with the meals tax in my opinion currently so i would just like to know what direction we're heading do you think the scenarios are helpful with that is that a place to start yeah we can take a look at that and see if there's a preference for particular scenarios and we can work from there does that sound okay to everyone

[03:03:03] look to look at the five scenarios one more time and and pluck at those things council member Hardy Chandler and changes from the revised CIP okay okay does that sound all right with everyone councilmember Peterson well so it would be helpful I agree to kind of give a note get an overarching update on what has changed across the board with scenarios because there's been a lot of movement a lot of inquiry and a lot of updates on this that and the other but I'm wondering

[03:03:42] whether the format for that is to go through each and every scenario or whether it's to do an overview and then focus on a little bit more targeted manner. If that's the case, my own preference would be we start by getting a pretty clear update around what's going on with scenario five based on things that have been developed since we last met and how that potentially is affected by identification of reductions through CIP, et cetera.

[03:04:17] Okay, so we can pull up the scenarios. JC can pull up the scenarios that we presented last time. And I think I heard you say scenario five, so we can jump to that. Well, if I might, just the other piece of this, though, is that I think you have been working through responses to questions that have been submitted by council members, And we're not able to provide all of those responses to us prior to this meeting,

[03:04:55] but anticipated during the meeting verbally you might be able to provide responses because there was a question set, for instance, that Council Member Hall had. But is that correct? So Council Member Hall submitted additional questions this morning.

[03:05:14] Is that the ones you're referring to? There was a number of questions that we got this morning. we've gone through them we don't have very many answers yet but we are working on them but we can certainly share what it is that we do have and that was I believe relating to a lot of them focused around scenario five which if that's what it is if that's what you want is that the questions to which you

[03:05:52] are referring. Well, some of them are general questions in terms of some further inquiries around CIP issues, for instance. I think also there's some points that, from my standpoint, it'd be helpful to get some points of clarification. We received a very helpful response from Director Summerfield, but I think it might be, I have some follow-up questions around that that I would certainly like to have the opportunity to be able to walk through that understand that a little bit more clearly i have a follow-up question for director summers from the presentation he made that listed a series of potential cip reductions but i think they need

[03:06:30] a little bit further clarification from my standpoint so i was hoping we would have the opportunity to talk at least with some key people about some of those follow-ups from the information which we can i just don't know what you what what it is you want to do first again we we those folks are here we have the scenarios we can talk about we can have the the we can go through the the CIP which we can show you all of the comments that were made last time about CIP and potential changes the JC and his staff have gone

[03:07:05] so we can pull that up and show you how that the Delta would you know basically it's a reduction and we can show you what that reduction looks versus how the what was proposed versus what it looks like there. So, again, we can do all of that. I just need to know where you'd like to start.

[03:07:23] Mayor Reed. Yes, Council Member Hall. Sorry. In the interest of those that are here, I recognize we're probably going to need J.C. and Gwen for much of the night, but maybe it would be beneficial for the others if we could try to answer or ask our questions of them, and that way they can go home to their families sooner than later.

[03:07:40] Maybe start with Mr. Summers, Parks and Rec, et cetera. That's fine with me. I'm all about, you know, looking to the benefit of our staff who probably would like to go home before midnight. So is that all right with the rest of the dives that we start with our staff here and ask them the questions we want?

[03:08:03] Okay. So with whom would you like to begin, Council Member Hall? Maybe Mr. Summers. Okay. Mr. Summers, could you please join us? If I could also ask, I know that we also have Fleet here.

[03:08:18] Oh, you're already on your way up. Perfect. all right then questions for mr summers council member peterson just a math question that may

[03:08:50] involve more than one person thank you so much for running out a list of potentials for cip reduction that you did with us and my recollection in the meeting recognizing that it happened a bit on the hoof was that it totaled up knocking the door at about two million dollars and then we received a table afterwards which was somewhat less than that yeah it's around one and a half and the difference between the two is that just that we double check things or so yeah okay however

[03:09:27] um mr hall has some additional after i did my list i met with mr hall and he has some additional things he can offer i'd like to hear that go ahead just wanted to kind of get you oh sorry as i'm a rookie here right uh so with this with our fleet services i think it's around 11 million dollar capital improvement budget we have so we kind of have a plan here um i have a copy for

[03:10:01] everyone we can reduce uh 560 000 for fyi 26 um with that i just wanted to give an overview real quick that we have a very strenuous uh like we go we start in april every uh pre-budget year and We do our own defer process.

[03:10:20] So we started out in FY26 with 40 assets, and we reduced 19 assets by \$1.4 million. So we do hands-on evaluations. The certified technicians have a three-page inspection list. We do fluid analyst testing.

[03:10:36] We do data recording where our fleet management system will tell us by the records if something fits the criteria in a 15-point scale. And then from there, we still do a hands-on evaluation of pictures and looking at reports.

[03:10:54] And so with that, we're just being very strategic as we present this budget to, you know, mayor and council, just understanding that we understand the importance with this. So as we present this budget reduction right here, that's just a second reduction we've done so far in this budget season with our reduction.

[03:11:12] It takes us almost to \$2 million from our original replacement schedule. So I think we're very pleased to present this to you guys this evening. And any questions? Any questions? And Lee met with the specific departments who would receive these vehicles before he made these cuts.

[03:11:33] And just I know that, you know, fire is a hot topic. I can say our foundation here in the city is built to withhold these storms are going through. There's a lot of local jurisdictions that have not to have this foundation.

[03:11:48] And so the support with this, like prime example, we were pre-ordering apparatus that it has a 48 to 60 month lead times, but with that, the savings we have. So the tower truck that's on order, we have saved \$500,000 roughly by ordering it at that time because all of the increases, inflations, upcoming expenses, and we're staying within the replacement schedule.

[03:12:11] So with that, understanding the back part of it to know that those tough decisions that we have to make is for a long term here for the city to make sure that our services are not affected so all right questions yes council member hall i want to thank you for taking the extra time to do this um and for

those that are listening and watching at home i think i speak for everyone but if i don't please feel free to speak up for yourselves the 10 reduction especially for fire and police it was an exercise just like the fall for the books and all the other things it was just an exercise. No one's saying slash and burn 10% here, there, everywhere. It's an exercise. It's

[03:12:51] a conversation to get at numbers to see where we can be, where we need to be. So hopefully that's been reiterated for those at home. We certainly, I believe, don't want to make any decisions up here that are going to impact response time, the number of police officers or firefighters that are out there doing their jobs to serve our community. So we understand, I understand, excuse me that there are many many areas of our budget to be considered this was one of them police was another one and all the other departments were as well so thank you for doing this and just to confirm the things that you're proposing here

[03:13:28] are not going to be things that residents will see or feel or will have any disruption in service or response time is that correct yes ma'am thank you very much all right any other questions for mr. Hall or mr. Summers mr. council member peterson need a little help understanding the status of a couple line items and where they sit so first off let me just say these relate to climate programs which i

[03:14:06] of course support enormously but my understanding is that there are a couple of major projects that are either in FY25 but not yet conducted or in FY26 and again not yet conducted and I had a difficult time sort of figuring where they were and what it means for something to have been listed in FY25 but not conducted and so off the top of my head climate resilience plan for 220,000 I

[03:14:42] think there's a climate mitigation plan clean energy and climate mitigation for like another 220. There's a flood management mitigation plan for 350. My math is right. We're at 790 on that. And then we've got, at the same time, part of the reason I'm asking this is, unfortunately, I think that we may have lost a key staff person who served as a climate and energy manager who would have been with us for a stretch, which is completely unrelated, but unfortunate. But it

[03:15:13] reduces project management capacity in these areas. These are three complex sequential projects that have required a lot of technical and facilitative assistance and a very significant project management burden that actually probably would not have been handled by one person, probably is going to require a couple of people to handle. I mean, I don't know where all that stands but when you cobble that all together it's basically a million dollars worth of consulting

[03:15:47] projects happening the three big projects concurrently so my you know part of my question is where do these things stand and second are we still able to actually conduct this work given now the changes we've seen in staffing that affect these and and i just really couldn't tell when i looked into the documents yeah the um most of these uh programs you're talking about i believe are somewhat grant funded I know the stormwater resiliency I believe is 50 percent funded in our stormwater utility so that one I believe that as far as we

[03:16:24] know the grant is still viable but these projects they if they were funded in 25 they have started as far as the grant being lost for the climate resiliency And that's something that we'll probably have to figure out what we're going to do.

[03:16:49] I'm not sure if you're looking for cutting these programs. I'm not sure how much money we have spent yet, and I could follow up on that. I am not saying that I do want to cut these programs.

[03:17:06] I'm really saying right now I just would like to understand more clearly where things stand. And my understanding is that the resilience plan has not started and neither has the mitigation plan. And those, as I understood it, were both about 220 a pop. And then the flood mitigation plan is separate.

[03:17:24] I don't know its status, but it reads as if that also has not yet started. But it would be good to clarify the timing of these things. And then when you look at the realistic implementation schedule for them, some of these things, you know, various things delay these.

[03:17:43] I'd like to just get a better sense for what the timing and trajectory really looks like and whether some of this stuff is going to slip and go into next year anyway. And if that's the case, is there a way for us to reflect that in our understanding of the FI26 budget that makes it a little bit more current and accurate?

[03:18:00] I just don't know. I'm just observing that these things, you know, are at risk of delay, and that could have an implication here. Yeah, we could certainly get you that information. I will request that from Mr. Ito for the flood resiliency and the other projects are managed by Ms. Kupka.

[03:18:17] Right. So I will get you the status, where we're at, and what's the schedule for those. Fantastic. And, again, I'm not signaling a lack of support of these. I'm really just wanting to understand more clearly the realities of the timing that are involved and then the capacity for implementation, understanding the nature of these things.

[03:18:37] Those are pretty significant variables for us to sort of get a better sense of. Other questions? Council Member Hall. Recognizing that the fire station is a very large budget item, I don't believe we're going to have any sort of work session between now and when we need to vote on the budget.

[03:19:02] Is that correct? The station three project update is currently scheduled for the 22nd. Oh, okay. My apologies for missing that then. Thank you. Other questions, other questions?

[03:19:21] Council Member Peterson. I can't lay my hands on it at the moment, so I may be mistaken, but I thought I saw somewhere, and this is not in the grand scheme of things huge, but there's a reason behind this.

[03:19:39] I think I saw the acquisition of a \$62,000 vehicle for the urban forestry program. Again, I am not suggesting that's not an important, yeah. that was in the original proposed that was submitted in november after changes and looking at what we could afford on stormwater utility that was removed okay during the proposed budget full budget no wonder i can't lay my hands on it back in november uh but i guess the broader issue

[03:20:14] and and i'm you know really sorry that we live in this situation we we had a cancellation of a major grant, the Sprout grant. We're having some difficulties here because of federal funding impacts that are affecting grant programs, they're affecting staffing, they're affecting families that have a trigger effect in terms of staff retention here in the city. So these are difficult things we're going through. But with the loss of the Sprout grant, it would just be helpful to know

[03:20:44] whether there are ongoing expenses associated with that that will be terminated that were not a part of the grant, things that were sort of standing outside of it that should be incorporated into the budget.

[03:21:01] And I don't know the answer, except it may be that this is a grant that wasn't being funded entirely within the four corners of the grant. There could have been some additional staff support X, Y,

and Z. Do you have any sense of it? Because it's a big program, right? And I know there were a lot of sort of tentacles of this, if you will, that were reaching out into other areas.

[03:21:20] Just like I mentioned with Mr. Ito and Mr. Kupka, we'll reach out to our urban forester and get the information status on that. Yeah, that would be a big help. And, again, I'm so sorry this has happened. It's just kind of created a big gap that was very important to the city, but it does have financial implications.

[03:21:37] It would be good to understand. Okay. Anything else? Because I think Council Member Hall is on to something here. Councilmember Hardy Chandler no no I was just saying I think she's got the right idea about us giving people the leave to go home basically so that's what I'm asking you so councilmember McQuillan say ask what you have to ask this might not be specific for you but in general since he was asking about

[03:22:09] grants how do we have any operating expenses that are paid for by grant I'm will need to double check but I believe the answer is no okay I mean other than grant the funded positions but if you're if you're talking about like cost recovery from grants that I'm talking about all of it just because then the next question would be what's our plan should those grants get cut same thing is applied for any CIP projects that we are relying on grant money for sure so

[03:22:47] I mean obviously any if grants are canceled or reduced we would have to reevaluate whether we continue with whether it's a capital project whether it's operational so i mean the sprout grant was was pretty much all operational um and that was you know funding specifically amongst other things funding a position um and so that's a conversation so we we have that covered through the end of this current fiscal year so it's through june 30 of 20 that specific but that's one so that just happened on friday so uh as far as getting

[03:23:27] notice of the grant cancellation so we'll need to so we are already in the process of evaluating in terms of what the grant was paying for so are there programs that we want to continue that the grant was paying for and then how would we how would we pay for those so we're evaluating that right now and the same thing goes for the position is what do we want to do and so we just haven't had the time to really analyze and sort of figure that out yet but we'll we will be that is one of the things that our staff is working on now and but in terms

[03:24:05] of other I'll have to look as far as the staff that's here we I don't know if any of them have specific grants programs but again we would be have to do the same So certainly, most of our transportation projects are, I mean, I guess you could say they're a grant, but there's various pots of money, both federal and state, that fund a large portion of those.

[03:24:36] So, right now, I don't believe any of those are at risk, certainly the ones that are state-funded or through NVTa, but, again, if something were to happen, then, yes, we'll need to reevaluate those, but most of those funds are for capital projects, not a general operational something, so we can have to look at those should that happen.

[03:25:03] But, again, we don't, at least for the transportation side of things, we're not aware of anything that might happen as far as any of those projects yet. So aside from transportation, do we have any other large CIP projects that are grant-funded or heavily grant-funded?

[03:25:23] I'm going to look to the finance team to help me with that. Sure. So just as the manager stated, we actually have a very small amount of grants that we receive outside of other funding sources

specifically tied to either an enterprise fund, ARPA, which we've already obligated and have encumbered.

[03:25:46] There are other state and federal grants that we receive, either I-66, SmartScale, NVTC, the CNI, NVTa 30 and 70. The private grants specifically, very similar to Sprout, is a very small amount. It's about \$300,000 per year or so that we receive.

[03:26:06] I am only aware of two individuals right now that are associated to the grant, to any grant specifically. I will say that those two positions, when the offered letter is given to them, they are completely notified and aware that it is a restricted position exclusively tied to the grant funding.

[03:26:26] So they're aware of that. And in the case that we just had this past week, we notify the individuals and try to work with them if need be to extend any grant funds that we have. But our exposure to grants is very small, other than the transportation, like the manager was saying, specifically tied to other funding sources, NVTa 30, 70, the C&I tax, revenue sharing, DRPT, NVTC, I-66, and SmartSkill.

[03:27:01] Did you have something, Council Member Hardy-Chandler? I don't know if this is going to get everyone home early, but I certainly hope so. Bear with me. Over the weekend, we had an opportunity to talk through our priorities, right?

[03:27:18] And I hope that those discussions about our priorities actually frame where we're headed budget-wise and answers Council Member Amos' question. My priorities are certainly quality of life, and to me, that means honoring safety and our first responders, their needs, their spaces, and their equipment.

[03:27:41] The other thing, of course, is what we heard earlier and all of the very high return on investment, small dollar things that really add to our culture and quality of life in Fairfax. So when I think about those priorities, at least for me, as Council Member Hall talked about earlier, those things are just so important.

[03:28:04] They're preventative. So when I think about those things, it puts me between scenario, some mutated or altered is a better word, I guess, version of scenario three, four. That's where I'm sort of landing.

[03:28:21] So my question is, is there a variation on scenarios three and four that when you consider the revised CIP and remove the elements that impact people meaning positions I am not in favor of uh you know um any vacancies being frozen I think that that adds work to the remaining people um and um the non-profit grant program those kinds of things but I do think that the real

[03:28:58] estate fund is on the table the cash transfer I the deferral of the schools for as little time as possible from for and the Renaissance housing program so my question is could other things from the revised CIP make up some variation of those two possibilities and that might involve input from other people in the room efficiently to potentially get there and I hope that answers the question for you in terms of where I sit on this but again I go back to my priorities and that's

[03:29:36] what guides the opportunity here to look at some variation of three slash four is that a clear question I think it is and I think staff and I'm speaking for the manager but I think staff are always willing to make modifications and or do a subset of the five general scenarios that were presented last week. I think Councilmember Hall has already requested some modifications to the scenario. We can always modify other scenarios to try to figure out where there is commonality if

[03:30:14] need be. I will say very quickly on the CIP, so there is a summary tab that was emailed out. I will try to expand this. So the changes, not including what Mr. Hall just presented tonight, The changes there that incorporate everything makes the reduction of about \$4.5 million.

[03:30:39] So the top graph or top table is what was proposed as of the end of February when the manager proposed the FY26 budget. The revise incorporates those changes that were discussed by all the different departments last week, which was police, parks and recreation, schools, and public works as well.

[03:31:03] again does not incorporate what was presented this or this evening by Mr. Hall there is a reduction there in FY26 slight increase in 27 and then minor reductions in 28 29 and 30 overall reduction of about 4.6 million dollars over the span of the five years we can go through that I will note that as a potential and I would have to figure this out but as a potential schools did

[03:31:34] identify \$1.2 million that was appropriated in FY25 that was not being utilized and could potentially be given up. So these are a little of my notes on the side here of 1.2. We could reallocate that, and I did as an example. These are just examples. Ultimately, it would be council's will to sort of direct us how to do it, but we could apply a portion of that to the \$3 million dollars that would be needed to the to do the initial funding for

[03:32:09] schools so either that frees up of that three million dollars and use that word very loosely frees up that three million dollars to where if we were projecting a six or seven month potential deferral now we would actually be on target because we have almost half of that back potentially or utilize that somewhere else if need be but it was my suggestion to just apply it to the three million there so that that would be now an alternate scenario in that respect if need be or impact staff correct so you're talking about this 4 million right

[03:32:48] here mm-hmm it does not impact I think the managers been very clear that the CIP the only way to really impact the CIP is by reducing the transfer from the general fund cash to the CIP that is a part of one of the scenarios that varies based on uh overall net expenditures as that goes down so does the required five percent minimum on that transfer consistent about that okay that that's helpful and that makes me more optimistic about the plausibility of these scenarios thank you okay council member hall and then council

[03:33:25] member peterson thank you um do you know what the minimum transfer now would be or is it too early to tell with the other information that's still needed so this would be the CIP that doesn't really impact the net expenditures on the general fund that's what the policy is off of so I would need to know the net expenditures on the general fund side before I can figure out that aspect of it that's what I thought just want to make sure trying to take notes here good mathematician

[03:33:57] councilmember Peterson I go back to your comment on CIP and it's actually a question that I'm thinking Director Summers would be best at answering initially, but it's a broader question mark. And that is, I think the real question here is, what is the full costing of CIP?

[03:34:21] It is my understanding that the development of CIP itself, not to mention the ultimate implementation of CIP projects, which include maintenance and operations and what have you, is done by staff quite significantly yes we retain contractors we do extramural assistance for that but there's a very significant staff loading and it'll vary depending but I've heard anecdotally that a lot of staff time goes into getting these CIP projects one and then start it up and then

[03:35:00] implemented with transportation in particular but this could be any of these things how much of that is cost recoverable through the funding source is it cost recoverable and do you track it so that you can do cost recovery so the grant actually pays for that or are you only doing cost recovery for your extramural resources for the contracting etc that you do to be able to get these started for transportation projects the cost recovery is typically during

[03:35:35] construction so the folks that i use whether they're contractors or staff doing the construction management and the inspection are billed to that capital project is that what you're you're asking during construction right the staff are billed during construction to the project during design typically the consultant is is bill is doing the right is doing it as far as uh my staff time and Wendy's staff time and Sonny's staff time we do not bill to the project. And I think it's important

[03:36:11] because technically the cost of the CIP includes that staff time that is funded out of the general fund right is that correct and as a consequence that's actually tax financed it's not grant financed. You're talking about the public works staff time so for example like the project manager Sonny Cernar yes yes so they he is funded through the general fund but I think to a director summer's point if allowed they would be able to build back

[03:36:49] to the CIP well and and so allowable cost recovery is part of the issue the other part of the issue is having a measurement system that enables you to do that but it's my impression that a lot of staff time and it's and it varies but there's a really significant loading it's not an insignificant that's associated with being able to generate CIP and then actually implement it and that that's not always cost recoverable. That is something that's built into, that's an expense that's associated

[03:37:19] with the CIP. And so when we talk about the benefits of reducing CIP volume, one of the benefits of that is reducing the staff expenses that are paid for by the general fund that are associated with that. How big that is, I wouldn't know until somebody was able to provide some measurements around it, but it's possible that that's a really significant number in some areas.

[03:37:47] But I just want to note, unless I'm mistaken, that that is a general fund expense and it's a significant one that is CIP driven. Is that not the case? It is a general fund expense. I would hesitate to say how significant it is until the analysis was done. I would say it's probably larger in transportation than the other divisions, you know, because of the effort involved in getting the grant money, you know, the buckets of money available, and in administering a design project

[03:38:20] for a very big project. So, yeah, but for the other divisions of public works, there really isn't that, those large capital projects where you need that much oversight. And a lot of it is required by VDOT because they have a dashboard and they manage how we're doing.

[03:38:43] So in order to get this funding and retain this funding and be in their good graces, the effort needs to be there, especially for transportation. Well, again, it's just very helpful because I think it's important not to leave the impression that all of the CIP-related expenses by the city are paid for by grants.

[03:39:06] There's the upfront, which is not typically unless you're in a particular cost recovery, and then there's later stage, right? But there's another side of that coin because, and I mentioned this earlier, when I construct a large transportation capital project, that takes away all these elements of the infrastructure that normally I would have to maintain with operating funds, like paving, concrete, pipe replacement.

[03:39:32] All that stuff gets done as part of the CIP, which reduces some of my maintenance expenses, which is a good question that comes up about, you know, I believe that there are things in the CIP that maybe aren't CIP projects like paving and some of my maintenance, pipelining and all.

[03:39:53] Years ago, they were decided to be put into the CIP, but to me, they're non-discretionary maintenance. But there will be CIP things that result in new infrastructure being built. That's a different story, right?

[03:40:09] Okay. I think it's just really important to keep that in mind when we look at the full costing of the CIP loading we have. And I would like to just say real quickly that I would be careful about the Wastewater Enterprise Fund because I know we're asking for 6%, but of the \$15 million that's spent in wastewater, \$11 million is Nomen coal plant contribution, which is non-discretionary.

[03:40:37] They treat all our wastewater. So that leaves me around \$4 or \$5 million to maintain all of the wastewater lines, pump stations, manholes in the city. And if you look at the CIP, it's pipelining and repair.

[03:40:53] And what happens if I don't line these pipes, then I can't line them and I've got to replace them. And the cost goes up six, sevenfold. So to take away my maintenance money for storm or wastewater is going to cost a lot more down the road because I can't line it when they reach a certain deterioration.

[03:41:15] And the amount of compliance requirements that are required for both storm and wastewater and maintenance, there really isn't a lot of wiggle room. So I just wanted to put that out there. Just my final, I'm guessing, knowing you as I do, I think I do, that when you identified whatever, this \$1.5 million or whatever, you certainly did that in a way that was careful not to create a false economy series and do that, right?

[03:41:46] Yes, sir. Got it. Thank you. Council Member Amos. Just a quick clarifying question. so for the 1.2 million back from schools and if we were to receive that and allocate it towards the school bond but we also considered the option of deferring the school bond by seven months to a year how exactly does that look can we redistribute it elsewhere or what would the plan for that be we could redistribute it elsewhere if need be it's currently in the CIP so the way I

[03:42:20] I LOOK AT THIS, AND BEAR WITH ME, IS SO YOU HAVE THE MINIMUM CASH DISTRIBUTION OF THE 5% FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE CIP. SO THAT'S YOUR LEFT ARM. IF WE WERE TO FUND THE INITIAL \$3 MILLION FOR SCHOOLS, THAT WILL ALSO COME OUT OF THE GENERAL FUND TO THE CIP FUND. THAT'S YOUR RIGHT HAND. SO YOU GOT TWO PARALLEL TRACKS, TWO TRANSFERS going into the cip from the general fund because 1.2 already resides in the cip from a previous year

[03:42:55] appropriation i could reduce the right hand transfer that three million dollars if need be there so again in some of the different scenarios one scenarios we funded completely if that was the i think that was the manager proposed scenario if that was the case then now that sort of frees up 1.2 million dollars that I would not have to transfer from the general fund to the CIP in a different scenario we start potentially pushing that out either by one and a half million or six

[03:43:29] months I can still push it out for or reduce the transfer by one and a half knowing that I have 1.2 so almost the one and a half there so it actually can start on time but not have to transfer the full amount as well and i can walk through these some of these scenarios now that um we started having more

guidance or clearance on where the cip might be coming in at if that's council's will again so i just put it there as a placeholder if i if we get directed to move it somewhere else then we

[03:44:03] could do that as well uh councilmember hall if it's okay with everyone could we maybe get back to the departments and then do those tax scenarios kind of after i just again i want to be respectful of their time. Okay, so do we feel like we can bid a good night to Mr. Summers and Mr. Hall? Yes?

[03:44:26] We, yes, fond adieu. Fond adieu. Council Member Hall? EDA, maybe hopefully quickly. I just, can I start? Yeah, sure.

[03:44:54] I just want to thank you for giving back the \$5 million and in such a quick turnaround and conversation. I think that was very helpful. I'm sorry that it came to that. and I do hope that those funds or other funds like it will be available in the future to have another conversation with.

[03:45:14] Council Member Peterson. 10% exercise. Would love to know your thought process on how you approach that, what you found, how people should understand that.

[03:45:32] We really are trying to help everybody understand that across the board for all of the departments and related units of government. I know people who are listening in are very interested and they're learning a lot just by the thought process, how you would approach this.

[03:45:50] And if you could just share with us a little bit about how you approached it and what you found. We recognize, as I think we stated at the outset of this 10% exercise, that not all agencies are created equal, right? So that said, but if you would share what you did and found and thought.

[03:46:09] We are a little different than most of the other agencies. We don't have a capital improvement program. So the 10% exercise that we undertook looks at the services that we provide directly to businesses and the people that provide those services. We did go through the exercise. I believe you received a briefing document. I'm happy to go through some of the specifics of it.

[03:46:31] But from a high level, what we did, we sort of broke them down into, we broke our programs down into two categories. Things that we have been running that have a direct capacity building component to businesses and then larger programs that serve as investment or marketing or provide marketing services for the city and for the business investment programs that we do run.

[03:46:55] As I've mentioned before, the Economic Development Office is sort of broken into a number of portfolios. One portfolio is business investment. We have programs. I'm actually joined tonight by our Assistant Director of Programs Management. We have finance and operations, which sort of runs the background scene to keep the entire operation moving.

[03:47:13] And then we have a public relations and marketing portfolio. We also have a subset of programs is tourism. And then sort of on top of that, we have this sort of amorphous real estate reuse and reinvestment portfolio that works with us and across the portfolios.

[03:47:29] And then we have the economic development authority management portfolio that is shared across all of the divisions. So we sort of triaged when we were going through the 10% exercise to determine what we could continue providing a basic level of services without.

[03:47:46] And that's where this document that you have hopefully in front of you, where it was in the memo that I believe finance had sent last week, came from. What we've done is we've looked at, you know, the sort of least painful reductions. So we've removed about \$39,000 from our program's portfolio, which

includes, honestly, elimination of some programs that people like but they are programs that we can suspend or pause for a year and then look to reinstate with cost savings in future years some of those programs include the culinary careers collaborative which is a partnership with the town of Vienna the women's

[03:48:22] empowerment luncheon and a number of our ribbon-cutting programs and reserve funding for promoting new business events of that nature somewhere else that we reduced additional funding was in our public relations and marketing programs. Most of these were funds that were dedicated to support George Mason University programs and collaborations. It's only a reduction of \$34,000 so that's it's a substantial piece of that program but it is something that we could continue providing the actual service without marketing the specific program. The business investment program we we proposed a reduction of \$45,000

[03:49:00] and that's mostly in conference travel and some of our strategic partnerships I will be honest that is probably a pain point for these reductions because a lot of what business investment is is promoting the city beyond the city to potential investors for businesses and frankly it's where we've seen a lot of success over the last couple of years filling some of our office spaces but it is what we proposed as a reduction hoping that it would be more of a temporary reduction for the coming year or two. We also removed or reduced some of our executive director budget, which I actually, saying that out loud, really dislike the name, but that's where we

[03:49:40] have funds reserved for legal counsel for the Economic Development Authority if they're involved in any kind of transaction that requires independent legal counsel. So those are sort of the first bucket of funds that we've reduced from the ongoing programs.

[03:49:55] The second bucket, which is, I think, the bulk and probably the one you're most interested in, is \$206,000 from the Economic Opportunity Fund. So this fund is actually similar to the Real Estate Opportunity Fund, which we discussed last week. This is a fund that the council has been funding for at least 15 or more years, which has enabled the Economic Development Authority commissioners to make decisions to develop programs that serve as incentives for new businesses or property owners to reinvest in their properties or new businesses so for example the reduction here would unfortunately or fortunately include the reduction of the facade and

[03:50:32] interior improvement grant program which is what we call fig and the lease incentives for Fairfax tenants program I do believe that those would that would be another pain point but it would it would not mean that we could not provide basic services through the economic development office is that an adequate answer for the first part. Council Member Hall. Would cutting that in half allow you to still do the LIFT and the FIG programs or not? Not meaningfully, unfortunately. The LIFT program

[03:51:09] alone is \$300,000, I believe. And I think the Facade and Improvement Interior Investment Program is \$400,000. It is worth mentioning that after speaking with a couple of other departments that analyze this information, a \$400,000 investment actually resulted in approximately \$2.8 million of private investment on those projects for 33 projects. So they are good programs that generate revenue. Similarly, the Lyft program, if I can find it quickly, thank you, Tara. We invested \$300,000

[03:51:48] and it resulted in approximately \$1 million of generated revenue. And through the 18 tenants that we've issued lift grants to it it was approximately 25,000 square feet a little bit more than that actually in leased space that participated in this program over the past nine months so it hasn't even been a full

year it's been a very popular program we have had a lot of requests to continue the programs both of them from the broker community and the property owner community to answer your question not really councilmember Amos just to touch on that a bit more because I

[03:52:24] know that while Jennifer was here earlier with the Chamber, I do wonder if the meals tax were to be increased, can a percentage or portion of it be dedicated specifically to those programs? I think that would, that's more of a finance question. It might be a finance legal question, but I believe we should have the authority to dedicate it. Yeah, Councilmember Ramsey, if you wish to carve out a specific you know funding source that you do have the ability to

[03:53:00] do that yes mr. Martinez if I could add as well with the meals tax so there is and I think Vienna does it as well so you can actually in addition to a carve out also do a sunset as well that's something that can be potentially utilized as a signal to businesses that it's not a permanent tax you can identify a time frame associated with that if need be council member amos can you also set a sunset for and this is odd but let's say you wanted to sunset the meals tax once the one percent sales

[03:53:39] tax for school construction was received could you do that as well that way we're not just double taxing restaurants and businesses if we were to go down this path i don't in essence yes i don't think you would sunset it you would just choose to reduce it just choose to reduce or eliminate because you wouldn't typically with a sunset you're specifying the sunset date in advance and with the one person you wouldn't know that if this one percent school funding were to come about but in but in essence what you're asking is yes if you want to do that you you certainly

[03:54:17] could you know offset if that's something you're wanting to do although we would definitely need to check to make sure there's no provisions about supplanting existing revenue in the legislation. But since the legislation hasn't been adopted, we'll cross that bridge down the road.

[03:54:38] - Council Member Peterson. - A big picture question that I hate to ask, and I hope it's nothing that we ever experienced, but what impact does recession have on you? And then in budget land, what does it do to you?

[03:54:55] 'Cause this is a bit of a new ball game since you got started on FY26. Yes. So I think, well, let me back up and say the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance, which we are a member of, is actually about to start studying what impact both recession and then the question around government contractors is having on the Northern Virginia region specifically. Certainly there's a spectrum of impacts that we would anticipate from people going to restaurants, but also to businesses, contractors, leasing space and office buildings um i suspect there would be an there certainly would be an impact and it would

[03:55:30] mean we'd have to adjust and be somewhat flexible part too soon to tell what that would do to any of your line items yes other questions other questions well are we ready to let them go home okay we bid you this is like the sound of music so long farewell we hate to okay goodbye it's all those theater people who showed up tonight. I feel like singing show tunes now.

[03:56:08] Okay. Council Member Hall, who else? I probably fire will be faster than park. Sorry. Okay. Fire is fast. Chief O'Neill. Been waiting for you to sing to me all night.

[03:56:35] Well, there you go. I've got more tunes. I've got a lot of show tunes. First thing with show tunes. Okay. Council Member Peterson. We truly did miss you last time we were together and are glad to have you back.

[03:56:53] We started a line of questioning with everybody that we wanted to pick up again when you were able to join us here, which is the general question of how things went in terms of the 10%, both with capital improvements and then other areas of expense, general fund, and where you saw the opportunities for how did that land for you?

[03:57:19] In the memo that I've provided the city manager, I stated that 88% of our cost is salary and benefits. That leaves 12% for general operations. When you look at our operating cost over the last two to three years, they've remained almost flat.

[03:57:37] So our purchasing power is even less today, particularly with a lot of contractual obligations. It wasn't clear to me to look at or possibly recommend deferring any capital projects. Since that time I've certainly heard you know your line of questioning at the other meetings and I've looked at it I know that Mr Hall had looked at something a while ago and I think 275 of that 500 000 he was offering up came from fire and certainly we're supportive of that and his rationale to it looking at FY26 if I had to defer something it would be that 1.6 for the foam

[03:58:17] equipment and hope that we don't have an incident at our largest target hazard in the city and hope that we don't have an incident with the 400 gasoline tankers up and down our city streets. That's what we looked at. Thank you. Other questions for the chief? Yes. Council Member Amos. Just wanted to say we appreciate you and our condolences to you and your family. So more power to you during this time. Thank you.

[03:58:51] I appreciate that. I know several of y'all have reached out, and it really did mean a lot. It's been tough losing both mom and dad within a four-month period. So you've got a firetruck on order, I think, Mr. Hall.

[03:59:08] We basically said we ordered early. The savings was. We have two. I actually have three currently on order. Right, and the money was set aside for that. I just want to bring that back to everybody's attention that we had to set aside the money at the time we ordered it. So that's not really on the table because they've been ordered, and we had to have a purchase order, all kinds of things.

[03:59:24] But in the long run, it has saved us money because it just gets more expensive. The cost of escalations have been ridiculous in that industry. I would think so, too. And so with your foam equipment, what is the likelihood that deferring it is going to dramatically increase what it costs if we put it back next year?

[03:59:41] By deferring it, there would be a cost increase, what that estimate would be. I'm not exactly sure. Some of it is like with all vehicles and the potential of tariffs have that impact on it. But it's not the same as a custom fire apparatus, I would say.

[03:59:59] Not as great, I would guess. But you're considering that the foam equipment is essential and critical. And you mentioned gas specifically. So why is this such a critical tool to have? In what cases would this be the most effective way of responding to an incident?

[04:00:28] Typically, you can't put out fuel, particularly liquid fuel-driven fires, with water. You need something to suppress the vapors of the foam. The foam suppresses the vapors of the gasoline or diesel or even avgas or jet fuel.

[04:00:47] So in addition to tanker trucks colliding, which could happen anywhere, but we do have the tank farm here in the city. Correct. Which makes us a little different maybe from other jurisdictions that don't have a tank farm. It's our most maximum risk in the city right right so I just kind of want to put that out there too is to the fact that we're in a different situation because of that tank farm and if this is in the budget there's a reason it's in the budget and even though it might be it could be deferred I mean and it has been deferred has been deferred in the past for a couple of years based on mr.

[04:01:21] Hall's recommendation because it much like the command post that was discussed before with the police department because it is a low mileage vehicle if you will so for several years it was deferred because of that and then last year we actually opted as the department to defer it while we were looking at what green you know foam that we were going to transition to and the platform associated with that to get away from PFAS driven foam and are those in our greener materials available yes they are so that's what we would be looking to do oh yes okay yeah that's

[04:01:59] the plan. And with the foam engine that's on order, that's the plan. And recently the military had approved several mil-spec foams, which kind of drives what the airport fire departments and DOD fire departments use. So there are several on the market now that seem to be of high quality and better than the first version of green foams that came out as far as suppressing those vapors.

[04:02:23] So if we don't have this in the city, what would be kind of the nearest fire station maybe in the county let's just say to the tank farm as far as being able to respond to a fuel driven incident they have a couple of foam assets you know one of them of course is over by their you know fuel farm in the newington section and then that's kind of a far away and then the other one is off etzel road the station off the interstate okay so that seems pretty far away to me seems kind of far away to me if something's fuel something's burning and it's fuel uh based okay well again i

[04:03:02] just want to dig a little deeper that this is I mean some of the things we're looking at we have to consider we don't need it every day but the one time you need it and you don't have it because it's a Newington or it's a road like I said you know both before because it was a low use slows mileage vehicle you know mr. Hall had recommended deferred several years ago like I said last year we had recommended it for another year so we could decide what platform we're going to go to mr. Hall's assessment when we talked to him about it this year was that the general mechanical condition, particularly of the truck itself, was in fair condition.

[04:03:38] Okay. Okay. Well, just all this is very important for us to consider, especially with fire and first responders. Any other council member call? I'm half-joking in bringing this up, but someone did message it to me.

[04:03:55] There's been a request maybe to bring back bingo at the fire station, which would also be a fundraiser opportunity. So I'm glad you mentioned that. I love a good dapper so you know the Fairfax volunteer fire department while it's our partner is a private independent corporation that was their decision and a lot of it had to do of course with covet at the time but even before covet they were struggling with staffing that now the Fairfax volunteer fire department does do significant fundraising and helps offset support to some smaller vehicles when they can and support equipment when they can and the proposal that

[04:04:35] we have to rehab the existing ladder truck so we have a mechanical reserve something that we're lacking now and something that we can't always borrow with the climate of particularly replacing

apparatus not only for us but regionally and across the nation at their board meeting they have discussed in supporting us of paying you know half of that half a million dollars so 250 k to go towards the rehab of that ladder truck to be partners with us but their membership has not taken action yet so it's not in writing so i haven't sent it to the city leadership yet so

[04:05:10] but but i i hear that all the time i'm particularly on the fourth of july you would be surprised at the number of times that people tell me or recommend to bring back bingo if if we could find people that were willing to be your mc for the evening is it something that could be considered and as an aside growing up um we we used to go to a pancake breakfast a couple times a year, which was a huge fundraiser and was just a lot of fun, especially for young kids.

[04:05:41] Yeah, the volunteer department does continue to do the Christmas pancake breakfast. I forget what it yielded this past year. They had a good year. \$3,800. You know, if I remember correctly. It was huge, though.

[04:05:58] It was huge. If I remember correctly, you know, when they were doing bingo, that would net, I think, around between \$80,000 and \$100,000 a year. So I think you have your first volunteer here for being an emcee and i think we could certainly find others to do it if it's something that you were all open to yeah we we have one of the volunteer board members here and i'm sure he'll more than gladly take it to the uh back to the board and certainly i can bring it up as a talking point

[04:06:31] when i first started volunteering in 1977 it was started as volunteering with bingo and at that point in time there was still smoking in the firehouse i think that's where a lot of our occupational cancer has probably came from back in these days but honestly I think the fundraising is a side benefit of it but I do think it's a really good wholesome fun activity that's kind of lacking I know when they do the elementary school every year it's a huge event so I would certainly be on board council member Amos I don't know the answer to this question so I would

[04:07:05] appreciate someone's input from a zoning perspective I've seen with the county that you know when certain developments go in they can also proffer a condition for them to issue some kind of infrastructure money to oh I know but they can proffer some type of infrastructure money for for example fire stations with lights can we do that with some of our staff mr. Hardin is coming to answer that question proffers can be applied to to capital improvements they can't be applied to

[04:07:38] operational costs so so that would also apply to for example vehicles if that were to be something that we'd like to consider at some point the only time that that that I've been aware that's been discussed was regarding Qbus and I don't believe Qbus qualify within the state code parameters that's the one

[04:08:11] that comes to mind but you know physical fixed infrastructures is certainly can be I know that the legislation changed several years ago that made it more restrictive. So who wants to sponsor a poll? Yeah, the fire poll, right? Well, that's something to think about, I guess. Okay, all right. Any other questions for Chief O'Neill before we sing him

[04:08:48] off the stage? Okay, so long, farewell, we hate to say goodbye. Thank you very much. Okay, thank you. Go, Rachel. All right. Council Member Hall. Parks and Rec plus, I think, probably zoning to discuss collectively.

[04:09:13] Willard Sherwood, please. But if there's other Parks and Rec questions for us, please feel free. May I ask, are we planning on talking with our police department or no? I am not. I thought we did the 5%, but you certainly can.

[04:09:33] Well, it's always great to hear from them. I guess I'm wondering whether we need to retain them for the evening. I feel safer when you're here, but I don't want to keep you from your loved ones. I'll leave it to the dais. They answered, okay, well, okay.

[04:09:50] So long, farewell, we hate to say goodbye. Goodbye.

[04:10:06] All right, then. Council Member Peterson, do you have things you'd like to start with? Yes. So, again, thank you for your follow-up on the parks and recreation issues.

[04:10:29] A couple of clarifying questions. If you could just, again, explain the 500 and where that sits and what impact that has on budget. Is that money that's already built into a budget and it's been adopted, so your description of that program was merely describing a cash flow that doesn't have any potential for reduction, or was there something more to it than that?

[04:10:58] Nova Parks, CIPs, and they have the same picture. So I know in the past it has been confusing. They're both gateway park. And so there is already allocated funding for the eventual rehabilitation and improvement of that park into a wetlands educational area.

[04:11:17] That's the current Nova Parks plan. I have reached out to the executive director of Nova Parks to find out kind of a timeline on where they are on that renovation project. I have not heard back yet. I will say the other thing to just note is that Paul Gilbert, who is the executive director, has announced his retirement.

[04:11:35] as of the end of the year so his job has just been posted he sent out a message to all of us kind of letting us know and so I think there might be a delay in some of the projects they have in the pipeline but yet unseen and then the second Nova Park CIP is our annual contribution and that is for that comes out of both CIP and operating and when Gwen and I were going through our CIP it came to both of us that the operating had been counted twice so the operating was included in the CIP and was also included in our operating budget. So we were able to reduce the amount of ask by \$53,000 because it appeared in both

[04:12:15] places. Well, thank you. And then one more, the 1.6. So if I understand it correctly, you were able to identify this as something that could be redeployed. I guess my question is whether the only option is to redeploy or whether there's an option here where those funds can in any way contribute to an FY26 savings of some kind?

[04:12:55] Yes. So just to explain for anybody at home. Yeah. I'm sorry to speak in code language here. No, no, that's okay. I don't think because it's just been sent to council, there was \$1.6 million held in an FY22 CIP, which was the remaining balance when Stafford Park was built.

[04:13:16] And when Stafford Park was built, it was budgeted as a two-terf field, lighted park. It was reduced in scope to a one-terf field, and then it remained unlit due to neighborhood input, and that there was not an interest in having that field be lit. Those funds have remained in the CIP, just kind of hanging out there, because they are there was kind of this thought that at some point we might put in the field lighting and the conduit was run but the field lighting was never installed and at this point it doesn't seem like something that's immediately on the

[04:13:51] horizon and so we had looked at potentially reallocating that we had had a lot of community push to increase some security measures at the park including security cameras blue light emergency buttons and safety lighting and And so that could cover some of that project.

[04:14:13] It could also cover the remainder of our CIP requests for the upcoming year. We don't have a lot of them, but it could cover all those with funds remaining. I guess the bottom line question is how much could that \$1.6 million contribute to the achievement of a budget scenario here by identifying some funds that are either going to be categorized as a reduction or an alternative for funding something that's in the scenario?

[04:14:50] I mean are we going to be able to capitalize on this in some way that helps us achieve some of these reduced tax rate scenarios I think the answer to that question could be zero to 1.6 million dollars um it's very similar to the schools 1.2 I can put it somewhere to sort of show as all as is listed on the screen and displayed there what Stacy was mentioning that I reallocated and it basically did way with any FY26 Parks and Recreation expenditures

[04:15:30] other than Willard-Shilwood. Or I could change that and apply it to something else, very similar to the transfer that would be required from the general fund to the CIP or to schools or some other CIP project as well.

[04:15:46] That that is ultimately what council would direct us to do. What do you need from us to make that decision? think a little more clarity of what the intent would be I think very similar to what councilmember Amos has been sort of hinting at those are my words of what council sort of wants us to be at as a direction if if we want a close to zero tax rate if we want a one penny two penny something that provides direction

[04:16:21] that I can sort of mold and modify scenarios to bring back to council to show what that would look like uh that's helpful very very helpful and um something i i anticipate we should follow up on but as we do that i guess my question would be from your standpoint um the trade-offs associated with not redeploying those funds you mentioned there's some security issues etc if there's something that involves risk exposure we'd certainly want to know about that

[04:16:59] we make this determination I do think there is quite a community push for more security at the parks especially where we have a lot of kids out on us I think the first two identified were Draper and Stafford Park given some incidents that had occurred there and the number of youth that are on site every day but it is ultimately the will of the council as to what you want to do with the funds. Council Member Hall. I would strongly support, I think, security at both Stafford

[04:17:37] and Draper. I have a couple questions. First is, I believe that funds were allocated in a previous year for the turf fields at the middle school. Where does that stand? Where are those funds? They are still being held. We have \$4 million. The estimate for the upgrade, regardless of synthetic or natural turf, sits in the range of \$10 million, simply because the site has some difficulties with stormwater and that is comprised mostly of fill that is made

[04:18:09] up of the previous middle school. So when they redid KJ, they took a lot of the old school and buried it underneath that field. And so included in the plan that's been proposed, because we had been working with the middle school, was two fields, two multipurpose fields, fenced, a perimeter gravel trail

that could be utilized by the middle school cross-country program because that was a desire of the school. They can't leave the school grounds to run cross-country.

[04:18:42] And then to improve the track facility so that it is a standard distance. The current one is not a standard distance, so they have to run, I think, like 2 and 8, you know, around. And so it's an odd amount. And then to include a small paved section in the center to be utilized by the gym classes the individual facilities are not the big expenditures the site work is the big expenditure bless you okay and what year was that allocated do you recall was it wasn't last year would have been it was

[04:19:18] 43 I believe it was FY 23 it was originally ARPA dollars which we then shifted around to utilize those ARPA funds at vice Park so that we wouldn't

[04:19:30] lose them. Okay. Yeah, that's curious. I know that's a pretty controversial conversation regardless of, well, not regardless, but depending upon which type of field we were to go with. It's also a large amount of money to be sitting for years to not have a purpose. Thank you for clarifying that. That's a good thing to consider on, I think. Okay. Does anyone have other specific parks and rec questions? I don't want to take over from anyone, but I have

[04:20:14] a bigger question after this well i just just to follow up on this point so what is the translation then of that four point million and a potential opportunity to give us some help with the f26 budget is this something that's a candidate for a push forward i mean what where does that leave us i so we we there's um really it's really unlikely that it would be expended in the next year so we could push it forward and then i will leave it to mr martinez to tell us what that would

[04:20:49] to the budget yeah i i don't know if that project has been officially canceled in any way if if council in in my opinion were to sort of say that this project is not viable to sort of return those funds back then we would go ahead and do that but until we have that direction i think the intent would be either to continue to try to find additional funding and complete the project and hold those in reserve until that time is identified or until we get a different direction

[04:21:24] i think in the other two previous projects that were mentioned tonight one for schools that was clearly told and demonstrated to us that that was not going to happen and that that we're being told at that point by the school board chair to go ahead and not do that and then the stafford drive one where that doesn't seem viable as well given community feedback and no movement on that project And I would just like to add that with the KJM turf fields, that is a safety issue.

[04:21:58] There are safety concerns with the current field, so we would like to maintain those funds and try to add to them, either through foundation dollars, additional dollars to be added in the future, especially to be able to make those improvements with the additional fact that the middle school is adding sports programs.

[04:22:18] More questions, Kim? Just a comment. Personally, I would think keeping those funds for right now and not recalling them would be the best choice. I do have concerns about where we're going to be headed with middle school sports with the county at this point in time, but I'm hopeful that that is a bit of a short-term burden that will eventually be worked out.

[04:22:44] But I don't want to completely take away the option by recalling the \$4 million dollars and again not potentially solving some of the other like issues that are going on as opposed to just pulling money from here and there just to make a budget for the one year so um any other can i move to willard

sherwood questions anything else just straight parks no okay i think we're ready to to move okay can we discuss willard sherwood a little bit please um i mean i can ask

[04:23:18] questions or I can you can give us some information first whatever you're prepared to do maybe maybe maybe questions I will though state staff would appreciate the opportunity to come in and have a work session on Willard Sherwood ideally that would happen before you consider the budget so if there is time for that to occur would like to do that because it's it's a project with a lot of complexities and a long history and and would like to be able to share that and

[04:23:57] kind of step you through the bigger picture and some of the details that we may not be able to do in conjunction with with this type of discussion so I will say that but yes please I'm completely on board with the work session I especially for something as big as this right before budget when it's nine million dollars yes so that's a great segue if you would allow me to one of the questions I was going to ask so you we have the next meeting on the 22nd of April and there are several things that are on the work session in addition

[04:24:37] to budget including Old Town Hall and and that was that was moved and so one of the questions wanted to ask is would council be amenable to starting the work session basically coming in early before seven i would we will start as early as you're willing to start but whatever time that is five o'clock five thirty six o'clock one thirty we don't care but whatever time what we the suggestion would be we would have a work session all of

[04:25:13] these things that have been pushed we could add willard sherwood we can talk about old town hall all of those kinds of things, and we would just get in as much as we can get in prior to 7 o'clock. Then you would then have your normal meeting. You have multiple public hearings, and then we would then have the work.

[04:25:33] Then we'd go back, and whatever work sessions we did not finish ahead of time, we would then continue with the work session. So keep in mind that on the 22nd, again, the way our schedule is set, What we would really like to have happen is that by the end of the meeting on the 22nd is that we basically have the framework of the budget that you want with the tax rates that you want to adopt.

[04:26:00] So then we, that gives us time to prepare all of the necessary resolutions and ordinances, et cetera, for adoption on May 6th. and then so that's that's that is the preferred mechanics if you will process because what we don't what we want would like to avoid is coming up with all these scenarios on May the 6th when we're trying to adopt a budget and trying to make in making sure that all the numbers balance so well I don't know how much more discussion we'll have this evening and maybe we'll start getting

[04:26:37] there but if you're willing to start a work session early on the 22nd we can certainly add this as well Councilmember Amos yes but I will also reiterate that that's something we should reevaluate in general moving forward especially for work sessions or actions that don't require decision just starting earlier and I know I proposed that earlier on in January context is different now and we've had a couple meetings under our belt but yes so

[04:27:12] So we stand ready and we have time to show that we would be, in essence, the work session, I guess, would be maybe considered a special meeting from 5 or 4 or 3 or 6.30, whenever we start.

[04:27:31] Okay, yeah, yeah. So that would be the suggestion we'd start a work session at whatever time you all can get there and whatever time you set. So think about, and you don't have to necessarily tell us

right this second, but we can poll you. But we really, if you can give us as much as, I would even say, two to three hours, we'll feed you.

[04:27:53] And so you don't have to worry about dinner. And we can get through some of these things if you would like. I'll make cookies. How about that? I was about to say, do we have a budget for dinner? But anyway, Council Member Hardy Chandler. Absolutely.

[04:28:10] And especially for cookies. No, I would definitely want to do that on the 22nd. and as early as people can accommodate. Council Member Hall. I'm also on board with that.

[04:28:26] So maybe I feel like some of my questions are important to have now in preparation for the 22nd, so I can at least do some digging on my own. So some of my primary concerns with Willard-Sherwood is that people that will be coming into the Willard portion of this may have infectious diseases, measles, mumps, rubella, COVID, right?

[04:28:50] I mean, that would have been a big thing a while ago. So I have a lot of concerns about the fact that there's no direct access from the parking garage, to my understanding, please correct me if I'm wrong. We don't really have the ability to separate people. We're going to have senior citizens there.

[04:29:07] We're going to have multiple child care centers there. And we may have a population of people that don't speak English or are too sick to recognize signs around them to recognize where they need to be going. And I think that, yes, we're going to have apparently a ton of staff to the tune of \$2.1 million annually and only going up, but there's a lot of problems with the current design of this building for me.

[04:29:39] And I am also concerned that if, and again, correct me if I'm wrong, because I'm only going upon previous things that I've read and heard, but if we have another COVID or another outbreak of some sort, does the county have the ability to shut down this building because it's a health center, and not let us access our spaces. That being said, I don't know that we would want to access our spaces for senior citizens or for child care if we are in the middle of another pandemic of some sort. My other questions are, how much square footage are we

[04:30:19] actually occupying there? Total building square footage is 103,500 square feet. The breakdown, as you've probably seen, is 58 percent county, 42 percent city. So that works out to roughly 43,500 square feet city, 60,000 square feet county. Does that include the gym? Yes. And what is our square footage at Green Acres? It's about 40,000 square feet there now? The entire building

[04:30:58] is about 40. It's not all used for community center purposes necessarily, but yes. Well, no, But, I mean, the one side is used for child care. The other side is largely used for green acres. And then there's, like, the cafeteria, the gym, and all that stuff in the fields, right?

[04:31:16] Yes. We use most of the building except for what's below. There's a stairway about halfway through the building, kind of just dropping down about four stairs, which does limit our ability to use that section of the building due to ADA. So we utilize just the room down there for the preschool and then rental space.

[04:31:35] What's rental space? Just some various like HOA groups will use it, but it's definitely less desirable and less used because it's down those stairs and there is no ramp. And there's no way to put a ramp in. No, the only way to get in would be to go around the outside and come in the side of the building there.

[04:31:50] Yes. Which is at ground level or green level. If you need to use the restroom, you have to go back outside, go around and come back in the primary door. That's convenient. Yes. Okay, so ramp. Okay. And does that include our parking at all?

[04:32:08] That square footage does not include the parking. Okay, and roughly how much parking is there, and is it dedicated 4258 as well, or do we have X number of spots? It is not. There would be 235 spaces in the garage.

[04:32:26] There will be additional spaces surfaced parked on the overall site, but 235 in the garage. Parking would be shared. among all of the uses but the way that the parking was allocated per the agreement it would be the number of spaces that are required to support the use as opposed to the 52 42 58 it it worked out to

[04:33:01] 64 percent county 36 city so if you wanted to assign those spaces it would be 150 in the garage county 85 city but again they wouldn't be marked or dedicated these are all going to be shared the 64 36 was just a way to apply cost share to that that portion of the building okay and our employees that would be working in the building each and every day would be included in those 85

[04:33:33] or 150 spots shared as well they would they would and you know patrons visitors to the building as well okay um and how big is the the gym that's being planned do you know offhand i know you said it's included in the 43 500 so it's a it's a full-size gym large enough for us to accommodate four pickleball courts volleyball um and um it is i gotta look up the dimensions the full-size basketball where it can split into two halves and play a small game sideways so okay so it's like

[04:34:13] the equivalent of like one half of the size roughly of like Katherine Johnson like when they put the divider down yes because you have a full yeah I think it would be yes because you've got a full court I'm not going to hold you to the exact yes but I just tried to understand okay it's a full court and it does have a divider plan so that we can drop it down and potentially you could have open gym with basketball on one side and then still play two pickleball games on the other okay thank you and then JC I think you and I had discussed a little bit last time was that it was

[04:34:45] 2.1 in annual operating to start in fiscal year 2028, I believe, right? And then the operations, I think based on the presentation I read, was looking like the non-personnel cost would start in 2029? That's correct. Okay. And those were expected to be? Non-personnel in 2029, 1.2.

[04:35:24] I thought I read 2.9 somewhere or 2.7. I think collectively it's 2.7. Yeah, 2.7 total. Yep, 2.7 total operating costs.

[04:35:41] Annual maintenance starting in FY29. Capital repairs is set aside starting in FY34. Security, \$75,000 starting in FY29. Custodial, \$105,000 starting in FY29.

[04:35:58] Utilities, \$84,000 starting in FY29. That amount equaled \$2.7, and then you also had a one-time cost of building FF&E of about \$1.3 in FY27.

[04:36:16] And then to your point, Council Member Hall, staff about \$2.1 starting in FY28-29. Again, I think it was previously communicated to you full-time and about \$35 to \$42 part-time.

[04:36:33] Some benefited, some not. Okay, so rough math, we're looking at about 4.8 million operating costs every year starting whenever they start, which would be roughly about 5-ish, 0.5 or 0.6 cents on the tax rate.

[04:37:00] Is that, am I doing that number right? 825, 822, 825? 4.8 or so and about 5.7 cents is what I would calculate. Okay. at the current penny value of \$835,000.

[04:37:18] Okay, okay. And roughly what are we anticipating generating in revenue? So the building does have less potential for revenue because a lot of it will be programmed with city programming space.

[04:37:43] I think the two biggest potential revenue spaces are the upstairs patio, which can be rented out in the evening for different events. And can see, well, the fire capacity is right around 300, so that's a big venue for the city.

[04:38:01] It is outdoors. There's the two upstairs classrooms as potential rental revenue. Given the demand currently in the city for indoor gym space, it is unlikely to be a large revenue driver rental-wise, simply because currently, and this could change, our arrangement with FPYC is free space.

[04:38:21] So we do not charge for space with our partner organizations of FPYC or Little League. And so that does greatly diminish our revenue possibility in that space. Okay. We're looking at a lot of senior programming in the gymnasium during the day.

[04:38:39] I mean, right now, we've just got a request to buy bollards because the amount of pickleball players at Green Acres is becoming so great that we are becoming a fire hazard in the hall. So, I mean, that could slow down. anything could change in the next few years, but the demand for gym space for programming is quite high. And now we do generate some revenue with programming, but it is not the same rate as rental revenue. Okay. So do we have a rough dollar amount for annual revenue generation or not really?

[04:39:10] We do not at this point, but I can start to work up very loose numbers just based on, we haven't set pricing for anything. There's of course no rates and levies. We can look at some comparable spaces. But for instance, the two classroom upstairs, so currently the footprint of the upstairs senior center is pretty comparable to the senior center at Green Acres. And that space overflows into a number of classrooms in the building. And so we would utilize those two classrooms through most of the day with senior programming and then have them open in the evening for rental. And the 300 people patio space sounds great until it rains, right? Yes. Yeah,

[04:39:50] it is very weather dependent. Okay. So committing someone to rent that could be a little bit difficult. Yes. Okay. And roughly, I might not have this prepared, but what are our rough operating costs at Green Acres right now as far as staffing goes, just as a comparison?

[04:40:11] It is, I can pull them for you. It's fairly low. We do have a single entrance, so we just have one desk and we typically have one to two people at that desk during the day and then we have staffing within the senior center which would be the same so some of those employees would move over and i can identify those but there are more desks to staff and more facilities to manage yeah okay and for example right now the fitness center at green acres is really just available to our seniors in the community so if you're senior you can pay a price we do offer a community rate which is

[04:40:46] actually quite a deal but and so you can come over after five o'clock and work out but it is an older space it does not have great air conditioning so we don't have a ton of people we would have a new fitness center would require someone to be in there managing that space so there is some membership revenue potential so those are numbers that we can work out as well so the biggest probably the biggest revenue potential that we're looking at is memberships

[04:41:15] Okay. And actually, I'm glad you brought that up. I think I sent this to you in my questions, but I actually was on board initially for an opportunity to consider charging our seniors, as we talked about before, but I want to withdraw my support for charging our seniors for the senior center.

[04:41:37] I think they get a lot of benefit, and I think that they've done a lot for our city. They continue to pay real estate taxes in most cases, and I do not support a cost recovery model for seniors specifically. So I think that's all my questions, unless there's something else you think we should know about this for me.

[04:41:57] Council Member Amos. I don't know if this was the last CIP portion. I just wanted to bring back up that I know Council Member Bates had mentioned earlier about a proposal that he wanted to discuss regarding the tax rate, so I just wanted to remind us.

[04:42:15] So I know it's getting a little late, so bringing that out. Okay, are we done with the one thing I wanted, since we're talking about charging the seniors a membership fee, can we just go over one more time about the reciprocity with the county and what the county charges their seniors and the fact and how that works right now?

[04:42:44] Yes, so if you join the county senior center right now, I believe the current rate is, oh, it's been a long day, 65, and they're going up to 78 this upcoming year. So if you are a city resident and you join one of the county senior centers, that is the same price as a county resident.

[04:43:04] So we offer the same reciprocity at Green Acres. Currently, we do charge just a one-time \$10 fee to join the Senior Center and participate in as many of the activities, drink free coffee, get free food, and enjoy the perks of the Senior Center.

[04:43:22] And so we do have, we're probably, last time I checked, and I can look at our numbers again, it is hard because we don't charge a resident, non-resident rate. We're usually around 45% county residents, 55% city residents. Just to look at how many people are in our current makeup of the senior center.

[04:43:43] Sorry, I was saying, could we just charge county residents since we have to pay to go there, or do they honor our zero? I'm sorry, I should have said, is it okay to talk? So it's similar reciprocity. So if you're a county resident, you go to the senior center, it's \$65.

[04:43:59] If you're a city resident, you go to the senior center, it's \$65. And because we don't charge a membership fee, if you're a county resident, you come to our senior center, it's a \$10 one-time fee. If you're a city resident and come to our senior center, it's a \$10 one-time fee. So it's reciprocal. Yes.

[04:44:15] Sorry. Questions, Council. Yeah, Council Member Hurray. Yeah, that's what I'm bringing in. So I think the question, correct me if I'm wrong, Council Member Hall, is can we charge a different fee for non-residents that's aligned with the county fee but not impacting our residents, keep our residents at the \$10?

[04:44:42] But the county people would have to pay \$70 if they went to a county facility anyway, right? Could they be the ones paying the \$70 coming to a city facility? So Brian Lubkerman is investigating whether or not this is a formal arrangement or has just always been an informal reciprocity arrangement.

[04:45:04] The only possibility would be that our city residents maybe then charge the non-resident rate for senior centers in the county, some of which have pools and services they access, And that non-resident rate would go up to, I believe, around \$150. Okay.

[04:45:24] Yeah. Yeah. We need to figure this out. We need to figure this out. But, Ben, I understand that we want to provide this benefit to our residents and all of that. But there is this reciprocity where they can use the county facilities.

[04:45:41] And we have 45% of the people from the county using ours. So we need to figure that out to make it somewhat, I don't know, if equitable is even the right word. It just needs to make sense. It just needs to make sense, yes. Just one more piece in there is that if you are a city resident, you go to a county senior center, you're not eligible for financial assistance, and that would be the same.

[04:46:04] We don't offer the same as summer camp, for example. We take county residents at summer camp, but we don't offer financial assistance for county residents, only city residents because it is supported by the city. So if you were to implement the senior center membership fee, we would offer financial assistance to our city residents.

[04:46:25] So that just needs probably a little more consideration anyway, regardless of, it's probably not a huge financial impact. It's just at some point you need to institute systems that make sense or things that make sense. We just haven't up to this point done that.

[04:46:41] I think there's also some ways that it could be rolled out, too. I mean, I certainly, I don't want to charge our seniors anymore. I think, you know, we want to offer any sort of financial assistance we can if we need to do some cost recovery in that space. But I think there's also ways of, you know, rolling it out over a year time and giving people some lead time into the fee being implemented, giving current members maybe an additional six months before the fee kicks in, different things like that, so that there's time to adjust to that rate change.

[04:47:13] And quite frankly, the Willard Sherwood Senior Center is going to be an upgrade to the facility itself. Yes. I think a big draw for the city center is we offer great services. We have great staff.

[04:47:29] they're always there. We're very responsive. Our downside is definitely that Green Acres is a very, we have very limited parking. We're often out of parking. It's a very challenging building ADA wise. We share bathroom facilities with the preschool. So there's a number of downsides to the current facility. Council Member Hardy Chandler and then Council Member Hall. So when you do the contextual presentation, some of those scenarios would be presented as well. And I guess I think I just want to emphasize that I would want to see some proportional benefit for our city seniors who are

[04:48:05] using city facilities, even though there's an exchange of costs. Of course, we're part of a larger region, but if that's a possible scenario to present, that would be great. And what we do currently, because we don't charge a resident non-resident rate for any of our programming youth or senior, is we offer a lot of early registration to our city residents for programs that will sell out quickly summer camp senior bus trips senior parties all of those are available to city residents to register earlier than non-residents so we try to make up

[04:48:40] some you know offer some additional incentives for our city residents council member hall um you may not know this but do you know how many parking spots are roughly at green acres i think i i think it's a i will find out okay i want to say the number and be wildly off um the challenge being that of course we share with uh main street child care program um they do a lot of drop i mean i understand they have employees mostly drop off and whatnot drop those same people would be coming and going from willard sherwood as well correct yes okay i think the one group we'll lose is the

[04:49:19] gmU students trying to avoid paying for gmU parking so thankfully parking enforcement is very good to us and come over and ticket a lot of students for us I understand the desire to sneak through the woods onto campus and pay no parking fee yeah I totally support parking enforcement yes and just to touch on parking if I may I shared there was 235 in the parking garage 347 spaces overall I don't know if I mentioned the overall figure so if you if you bring in the existing spaces at the Sherwood Center and some spaces that would be created on site that's the

[04:49:54] overall there will sorry there will still be programming and things like that going on at Sherwood in those same places in which they exist now though, right? Correct. Okay. So those parking spaces, if they're all being fully utilized now, will still likely need to be utilized even after this. They would. And the properties are tied together already. The city has an agreement with the county already to utilize the Willard Center. And in fact, you can't fully operate the Sherwood Center without the Willard property currently the way that that Sherwood was um was constructed and

[04:50:32] approved and so that that happens now you know because the size of the spaces will change a little bit you know what that mix is will change a little bit but the properties are tied together I'm sorry you mean they're tied together as far as parking goes correct oh okay not physically not physically but for parking thank you so we're really so are we done here we're done with these two are we done okay are we done are we done are we done okay so long farewell we hate

[04:51:09] to say goodbye we bid you a fond adieu all right and so is all right are we ready to just talk right okay council member McQuilla do you have a question this is more for you um have we ever done efficiency audits for any departments does anybody know for our departments you know I think the

[04:51:46] answer is no Melanie probably has the longest history with the city here and she's shaking her head saying no okay I would be interested in learning more about how that works um for city governments you know for since we are new here and it sounds like there's been a lot of time going through the budget line by line and it seems like a lot of work for staff so I'm curious as to how that would work having um if it would be a contract or having an independent audit done on the different departments to kind of give us recommendations and things not necessarily for

[04:52:21] this year just something to consider um in the future since this has never been done and it does seem like there's some opportunities to make some areas more efficient especially since coming under scrutiny and going through the line items it does appear that different departments have been able to provide different options and scenarios we've been given some scenarios so I'd like to learn more about how that would work or how that would be introduced or discussed thank you okay anything else before we start talking tax rate council member Bates well this is kind of tax rate related

[04:52:59] so uh well for um knowing that there is not sufficient support on the diets it sounds like to increase the meals tax at all. That kind of simplifies my tweaks to Scenario 4.

[04:53:16] But my, you know, again, there are a lot of things on here that I would have grave concerns about, but my idea would be to take Scenario 4 and just take that \$1.2 million from the school's projects and use that in place of, as Mr. Martinez suggested, in place of the school bond project, but just do the \$1.2 million instead of the \$3 million,

[04:53:52] and then just zero out the meals tax increase, and then take whatever that delta is there between that \$1.2 million and then the 0.5% meals tax revenue plus the further reduction to the CIP

transfer that would be possible and put that toward, you know, while still keeping the in compliance with the 5% policy and then put that toward the nonprofit grant program

[04:54:28] and then maybe raise either the real estate tax rate or the property tax rate, whatever additional little amount is needed to bring us back up to \$300,000 for the nonprofit grant program because, again, I strongly do not believe this is the time to cut that.

[04:54:46] I still have grave concerns about zeroing out the EDA Real Estate Resource Fund and the Renaissance Housing Fund and deferring the school bond project, but that's my idea for kind of a compromise.

[04:55:07] Thoughts? Council Member Amos, do you have thoughts on this? give me some time to think about it uh if we could get this maybe jotted down or or emailed out that'd be helpful okay i don't hate it though okay well we'll call this scenario the councilmember bates scenario um because now it'll help us understand where it came from um since it's so uh councilmember hardy chandler you had said you were kind of a little bit between scenario three and four is councilmember bates edging closer to your your yeah i think that's a

[04:55:41] good starting point I am not leaving off the Mills tax at this point for me at least some component of it that the the point five for scenario four is attractive and then the three only goes up to one percent which is within the range that was previously discussed so I am still in some combination of the 3-4 range considering those factors but I think that gives us maybe a starting

[04:56:15] point and maybe a place of common ground and compromise again I just go back to our priorities discussion which it was not an exercise I think it is a frame for discussing what we are comfortable with leaving off or putting on and for me again it goes the the minimal impact on staff or positions because positions are people is a higher priority for me but I think that's in that area and it sounds like we're inching toward common ground which makes me optimistic

[04:56:52] councilmember Amos I was just going to say that regarding the meals tax in comparison with like the wastewater and dorm water tax it goes directly for example from stormwater to stormwater related projects and I know a lot of our meals tax money is used by EDA but if if we do consider any increase in the meals tax I would be more supportive of being willing to do that if it goes directly into at least a portion of it goes to the lift to the lift and fig programs that way there's direct tangible benefits directly to the to

[04:57:29] the businesses and it could be sunset it which could be which So I know I brought up the sunset thing earlier. It was probably because I was comparing it to Vienna. But so I guess the question is, if we were to try to sunset it, would this be during the duration of the school bond?

[04:57:52] Or, again, if we get the 1% sales tax, I don't want to double tax people either because I was brought up tonight, and that's a very good point. Council Member Hall and then Council Member Peterson. Sorry, mine's just a direct response to you, to Anthony.

[04:58:08] Sorry, Council Member Amos. I know. Yeah, I'm just a little confused by your conception of putting the sunset on the meals tax then to go when the school 1% comes in.

[04:58:24] One, you're suggesting goes to the EDA, and then when that ends, then you're suggesting that 1% that would be used for the school. So you're not suggesting the meals tax goes to the schools until the

1% kicks in. You're saying whatever portion of meals tax goes to EDA?

[04:58:43] When I say that, it's more focused on the debt service aspect, less directly to the school bond, but more for the, for example, with the \$3 million this year, next year, it's a little bit higher. That's all I was referencing. Okay. Thank you. Council Member Peterson.

[04:58:59] I need to see these numbers settle down a little bit to understand more clearly where we are, and I'm not able to commit right now to a tax rate. A lot of updates have occurred this evening and prior to it, and we need to see this.

[04:59:17] and it may well fall below this level. So just want to be clear on that and look forward to being able to see things a little bit more clearly after we do a lot of these updates, the updates that have occurred, and then understand where they're emerged from this options that are decision points for us in terms of where we may make some financial moves that make certain things possible.

[04:59:43] One thing to call out, the real estate acquisition fund, whatever it's called, an EDA, Just a note, that is one approach that can be used for this catalyst function for EDA, where you literally have a fund.

[05:00:02] There are other approaches. There are other ways to go about that sort of catalyst function that don't require capitalization with a fund, at least not at that size. So I certainly, we didn't have time with Director Bruno tonight, certainly would want us to have a longer and thoughtful conversation about the concept of options that could happen at EDA before assuming that we should be trying to replenish that fund through a budget move that we make here.

[05:00:37] And I'd be, you know, I think that's probably a post, my own view is that's a post-budget discussion we should have, but it's an important one that we would want to do as we look to the future for EDA. Okay, other comments?

[05:00:54] Oh, Mr. Martinez. If I could just ask for clarity, and I know it's late, but for Council Member Peterson, let me get out of this. So on making an assumption, and if the assumption is not right, then I need guidance from the body.

[05:01:17] The assumption here would be we save \$1.2 million on making the assumption to assign it here. So I would reduce the \$3 million transfer from the general fund to the CIP to start the initial process for the school renovation.

[05:01:43] I'm also making an assumption, the 1.6 that Stacy would reappropriate from Stafford Park, I cleared out six or seven projects. If that assumption is not correct, and I thought I heard, and what I need clarity is, don't do that, apply it to the tax rate.

[05:02:09] Those are my words. But I need clarity of how to build these scenarios. Council Member Bates gave me very clear guidance of how to build the scenario. If someone else wants a different scenario and say, add this, subtract this, multiply this, the sun and the moon on the 4th of July match, then I will make that happen.

[05:02:31] I just need clarity. If not, I'm going to make an assumption based on what I think would satisfy everyone's needs, but I don't know if those are truly your needs. If you could help me, if the body can help me and the manager have clarity.

[05:02:52] Well, I think I said at the very beginning, and we didn't, we, I think, don't have time to go through an examination of this, but all these updates, I'd really like to see where that leaves us with

scenario five. And again, sir, you say updates. I don't know.

[05:03:08] Half a million dollars. Half a million dollars is not going to significantly reduce things. Okay, but there were a series of things. There was a half a million dollars that, from DPW, there's... A million dollars floating around also for DPW for a couple of consulting projects and the loading associated with them, right?

[05:03:28] Then there's the 1.6 and whether there is some portion of that that's possible and available. I mean, those are the kinds of things that would be nice to sort of clear up. So those projects you're talking about, the only way to impact it is to not do them if you don't want to spend the money.

[05:03:51] So I think to J.C.'s point, the two biggest, you know, is, and we're not asking you to commit to a tax rate, but I think for, in order to really be able to show you what I think are additional options is what goes back somewhat to what Council Member Amos is asking is, is there a ceiling, is there a ceiling of tax rate

[05:04:23] that you are unwilling to go beyond? Is it you want us to get to zero tax rate impact that I mean, because so like, for example, the two, the two things that JC just mentioned, the 1.2 from, from schools, the 1.6 from parks, that's 2.8. You can support, you could, if you wanted to, You could supplant the cash transfer.

[05:04:50] We keep talking about the cash transfer to CIP. If you want to impact the tax rate, then just take that 2.8 or some portion of it and offset the cash transfer. Then you would gain so many pennies of reduction in real estate tax.

[05:05:06] But what J.C. is saying, but then you earn all of those projects that he said we wouldn't have to fund, you still have to fund or not do them. So you can't count it twice. So I understand what you're asking is how these things shake out.

[05:05:27] Well, we'll give you that information, but then we're no closer to trying to come up with whatever scenarios that you want. So if you can, rather than us trying to come up with a multitude of scenarios, if you say my ceiling is this, whatever this is, then that gives us the opportunity to give you, just like we did here, various options to incorporate all the things that you heard this evening.

[05:06:02] But absent that, we can give you the answers to how these shake out if you want to see what that, but then it doesn't get us any closer to getting you the options that you might ultimately wish to consider. Mayor Reed?

[05:06:19] Yes. I think it's all the things that were discussed tonight, also in conjunction with all of the things that came out of public works in the last meeting, plus the school. I mean, there was \$7 million, I think, roughly, if I had to ballpark, between \$1.55, \$1.2, \$1.6, \$560,000.

[05:06:43] I mean, if you add all these numbers up, I might be overestimating, but all those things were not included in these five scenarios because they weren't known at the time. So I think what Councilmember Peterson is trying to say or what I'm trying to ask is I sent you the hall scenario, which started at five, scenario number five, added in a couple of things, gave some priorities that were important to me.

[05:07:07] But now there's additional things CIP related that need to be added in there. So I'm not saying I want to bare bones fund the cash transfer to the CIP, but I kind of feel like we need to look at, let's say,

scenario four, scenario five, maybe even scenario three, because that's counsel for Hardy Chandler wanted that one.

[05:07:30] But see those with these new changes before I feel like we can have a more educated conversation. That being said, I like scenario five. For me, this covers a lot of the things. There might be some things I'm willing to add or subtract, and I think I gave those in my email.

[05:07:51] That's for me. One thing I will say I am not willing to move on is delaying the schools, especially because the schools just gave us back \$1.2 million. And that is almost a third-ish of what we need.

[05:08:07] That was a 70% supported bond, and I'm not willing to negotiate on that one from my perspective. Mr. Martinez so it shows here all the collections which were previously incorporated everything except for what Mr. Hall presented tonight is 4.5 million dollars reduction from FY26 now a part of that almost 2.8 million of that is a reappropriation from a previous year 1.2 from

[05:08:46] schools 1.6 from parks i can and this is where i need clarity i can move all that money and apply to the cip cash transfer that frees it up i can put it all to the school bond and then that frees up the different scenario adding another 500 000 of what paul mr hall said today is not going to really do anything because it's just a reduction of a existing project or replacement so it's not it's not cash it doesn't have as much impact so I guess that's what I'm asking the clarity is

[05:09:24] how do you want me to apply the 1.2 and the 1.6 personally I think the way you did it is is good with me I'm a little on the 1.6 but to me it's a starting point of a conversation but I 100% think that the 1.2 needs to reduce the three million okay okay council member Bates on that note i wasn't aware the 1.6 could be used in that way as well um i'd like to propose further

[05:10:02] modifying mine to put that 1.6 toward the schools as well um so that would bring us up to almost three million i think oh council member hardy chandler so as a starting point because that's where we're trying to get is just to identify some common ground can we use the base scenario and the hall scenario, which I think kind of echoes some of the sentiments expressed

[05:10:41] earlier, just the starting points for our subsequent conversation. So that brings five different scenarios down to at least two that we're not locked into, but become starting points for conversation. Can we maybe, is that helpful?

[05:11:00] Definitely. Okay. I just wanted to say thank you. Sorry. I just want to say thank you because that's exactly where I'm at. between the two i'm leaning more towards scenario five but i really like the options that council member bates has presented here so i think that's a great starting point and it i'm sorry just to follow up and it folds in what we've learned as things have evolved and modified and

[05:11:33] that's i think the next evolution from the excellent scenarios that were initially presented I feel like that feels like progress. So in the scenarios that you say you like, is it the tax rate implication that you like, or is it all the cuts that you like?

[05:11:57] Because I heard, like in Mr. Bates' example, there was a couple of cuts that he didn't like, and he was suggesting alternatives, which makes me believe that it's really the tax rate is what you're after and not necessarily the cuts.

[05:12:16] but we can certainly work with um and we can we can absolutely incorporate uh these additional items and uh on scenarios four and five and and and show you what those could look like and uh and and sort of like you know a 4a 4b 5a 5b kind of scenario we can certainly do that council member mcquillan to answer your question for me it's both i like the options that uh council member

[05:12:49] Bates presented for cuts and actually after going to the open house and really exploring more stuff and understanding a little bit more background as to what would what the cuts entail as well but yes the real estate rate is very attractive as is no meals tax increase as I've stated previously so for me it was a combination of both. Thank you. Councilmember Hardy Chandler. I agree this isn't an or this is a complex situation and there may be things that eat you know some of us

[05:13:28] prefer more or like as you put it in you know any of these scenarios ultimately why can vary so long as we come up with some common ground where we can entertain some compromise and present something that we can all stand behind so I don't think it's an or I think it's an and and that's really good for something as complex as this. Okay, Councilmember Peterson. It's quarter after 12

[05:14:03] and we, in my own view, is that I'm happy to start specifying assumptions or changes in assumptions to scenarios, certainly five, maybe four, something in that territory, but I don't think now is the time to do that. Two things. One, I think I would like to see some of these updates made and have a chance to stare at them the other is that i am reluctant to make these kinds of decisions at this hour of the day under these circumstances and would like to reserve the

[05:14:43] right to do this in the light of day when we've had a chance to collect information and look at it more carefully council member hardy channel yeah none of us want to do that i think we're trying to provide mr. Martinez some clarity for him to devise these new scenarios in the meantime we have an opportunity to go and reread documents reread our emails put together our information so we can go give some coherent feedback the idea is not to make a decision tonight the idea is to provide clarity so that they

[05:15:18] can come back with some narrower options for us okay so that do you feel like you have some clarity, Mr. Martinez? I do. Okay, this is so good. Okay, Councilmember Hall. I just do reserve the right to ask for another scenario next week. I also, just real quick, can we do council comments? Oh, we're going to do that. Okay, we're just going to make sure. I have to. Oh, yeah, okay, I'm good, thank you. You have to reconvene the regular meeting. If we're, are we, Councilmember

[05:15:55] Bates. We never really came to an agreement on a start time for the 22nd. If I were to wear my suit to quantum mechanics and assume that we're going to have a working dinner, then I think I could be here at around 430 if we want to aim for that. Okay. I think we can all do that. I don't think I have it yet. Yeah, we'll set it up. We'll set it up. Will you? So, no, well, if you can tell me right now we're good yeah I think 4:30 okay I'll be a few minutes late I have

[05:16:34] a meeting that wraps up at 4:30 so just if I if I may there are we have seven items currently for the work session and I just want to make sure because if there's something you want to push off you certainly can do that but I'd rather ask you very quickly so we have the fire station 3 update which I think you wanted sort of separate but in conjunction with that is the PPEA RFI that we did on that project

[05:17:11] with the old town hall update or I say update go over that I think Andrew will be able to share what the bids are I know there's concerns about the paint scheme and scope and so forth so we'll have all of that available with Willard Sherwood which was just at this evening that's the first for. The fifth thing

that we wanted to have is we have done our procurement for the community survey, and we wanted to have the vendor come in and talk with you on the front end so you

[05:17:49] could get a feel for how the process works, what they're going to be doing, allow you to ask them some questions. We were proposing that on the 22nd just because I know you're wanting to get that done this is not to determine what the questions are or anything like that you all we will you will all get to weigh in on that as well this is really just the high level this is who we are this is what we're going to do for you etc so you all can be comfortable with what they're going to do is that acceptable for them to is that as part of the work session yeah

[05:18:23] yeah okay sounds good yes councilmember Amos only thing I might add is that and And I'm not sure how we want to go about this, just trying our best to hit everything in those two-and-a-half hours before, I guess, 7 o'clock.

[05:18:39] Well, we'll be lucky to get through those five. Yeah, I figured. But then we would reserve the budget and the quarterly financial review for it. I mean, if we get through all of that, it can rock and roll to that. We will absolutely do that. But what I would suggest is we do the sort of what I'm going to call sort of non-budget or budget-adjacent on the front end as much as we can.

[05:19:03] And then the budget and then finance will do their third quarter financial update. That would be in the regular part. They kind of go hand-in-hand, and then we would be having our hopefully final budget discussions where we can hopefully develop a framework.

[05:19:22] And so remember, there is no meeting next week, so our next meeting will be on the 22nd, but we will get you these revised scenarios well in advance of that, so you have time to look at them prior to the 22nd.

[05:19:39] Right, okay. So it sounds like that we all agree. So 4.30, seven items, front load, the non-budget things at the beginning, which I think makes sense.

[05:19:59] um close yeah we can have a closed session if a closed session is required we'll put it on the budget i mean on the budget on the agenda on the we'll put it on the agenda okay now are we ready for me to reconvene the regular meeting one one more thing yes are we still going to have the trails work session on 22nd eight yeah trails sorry you're right that just got added this evening so yes okay okay all right anything thank you all right anything else okay i'm now really reconvening

[05:20:36] the regular meeting i'm reconvening the regular meeting uh managers report out do we have anything to add was just to schedule the work session which we've already done okay council member mcquillan i just want to congratulate our winner of the women of influence award anita light council member stacy hall and i were sworn in yesterday to the women's club of fairfax we look forward to serving this incredible group their signature project this year is domestic and sexual violence awareness and prevention, which I think is really a huge topic to bring awareness

[05:21:12] to. I'd like to take a moment to highlight that this week is both National and DMV Food Waste Prevention Week. It began yesterday or Monday. There's a great lineup of educational and fun events happening virtually and in person, and I encourage everyone to check out the details at foodwastepreventionweek.com and dmvfoodrecoveryweek.org. It's a wonderful opportunity to learn more and get involved in the efforts to reduce food waste in our community. I'm looking forward to this Friday, April 11th, Commission on the Arts. The John Mason Arts Awards will be at

[05:21:48] Stacey Sherwood Center at 8 p.m., and I'm wishing everyone a safe spring break, Passover, and Easter holiday. Thank you. Councilmember Bates. Big congratulations to Anita Light and thank you to her for all her work for the city. Councilmember Peterson. I wanted to thank the Virginia Department of Transportation for being so willing to work with us and the city and all of our community

[05:22:28] on the George Snyder Trail, but it's clear from the meetings we've had that they are a sincere partner to the city, and I think that they've demonstrated their desire to be not only a resource but really an enabler for us to try to bring people together and achieve good outcomes here.

[05:22:54] So I think it's been great to be able to work directly with them on this particular issue and also to know that they are there so we can continue to work with them when necessary at high levels on other issues, and I'm sure those times will come.

[05:23:11] The only other thing I would say is just the sympathy and concern that I have and I know others do for people here in the city of Fairfax who are suffering right now because of changes we're having in federal actions and the broader changes that we're seeing in our economy that are unstable.

[05:23:43] And we're at the stage now where this is translating into people we know losing their jobs, people we know losing their ability to have monthly rental and mortgage payments on their homes, people who are having to make very difficult decisions and looking down the pike and seeing that that could continue for a long period of time.

[05:24:06] So this is real. And I'd certainly like everybody to know that I am aware of this and trying to do everything I can to be helpful around it. But I really would love folks to do their best to hang in there and let us know where we can be helpful to you. Thank you. Council Member Hardy-Chandler.

[05:24:25] I'd like to thank everyone who came out to the budget open house, ALL OF THE WONDERFUL STAFF WHO EXPERTLY PUT THAT ON ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE. BUT ALL OF THE RESIDENTS WHO CAME AND ASKED QUESTIONS, ALL OF THE FEEDBACK THAT I GOT ANECDOTALLY WAS THAT IT WAS SOMETHING THAT PEOPLE WANTED TO DO AGAIN.

[05:24:46] I HOPE WE GET AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO IT OUTSIDE OF BUDGET SEASON. THE SECOND MAJOR EVENT I WANT TO HIGHLIGHT IS OUR HOME FOR LIFE EVENT HOSTED BY VILLAGE in the city and again all of the staff and volunteers who put that together the sponsors all of the sponsors i spoke to said that it was a very worthy use of their time they wished other cities did that really focusing on an array of resources to allow people to live in their homes

[05:25:19] as long as they possibly can it's those kinds of things that make our city so welcoming and inclusive to everyone I do also just want to acknowledge all of the people who came to the hearing tonight particularly a young lady who talked about her experience in the theater and how it contributed to her ability to speak in front of city council that really touched me recognizing that some of the things that people may think are extra our icing on the cake are actually core

[05:25:55] to the cake, so to speak, and I know that that is something that really enriches the resident experience here in Fairfax, but really excited about all of the things that we're doing while working on budget season, and, you know, certainly recognizing the experiences of our residents, we're residents too, and living this while we're trying to serve, so thank you, everybody.

[05:26:25] Thank you. Councilmember Hall. I won't belabor what everybody else has already said except to say how excited I am to now be a part of the Women's Club of Fairfax. That was very exciting last night, so looking forward to that. And yes, Riley Brixis was amazing tonight. Yes, great job.

[05:26:48] I was able to attend the school board meeting last night, and I just wanted to give you some stats from that last night. We had principal Dr. Georgina A. presented kind of her state of the schools, and she's always so entertaining and fun. If you ever want a high school principal, it is her. So just to give you some ideas, for some of the AP classes between the school year 2023 to 2024, we had 1,912 kids in AP classes. For 25 to 26, we have 3,047 students in AP classes,

[05:27:24] Dual enrollment, same time frame, 417 students previously, now 752. In honors classes, we had 2,317 students. We now have 3,456 students. I point this out simply because I know schools are a hot topic, and I know we're talking about elementary school as far as bond goes, but these are some of the great things that these elementary school students become when they get to high school.

[05:27:50] And the fact that we have all these great opportunities for them here with the academy, with the other opportunities, it's priceless. Regards to total AP students in 2020, we had 793. In 2024, we now have 891.

[05:28:08] The number of students that took exams, the number of exams that were taken, sorry, 1,865 in 2020, now we're at 2,132. And our AP students with scores of 3+, which is what you're looking for for college, went from 618 to 690.

[05:28:25] Our percent of total AP students with scores of three pluses stayed right around the same. It was 77.93, and now it's 77.44. Some exciting things that are hopefully coming soon is called Electrical Pathway, which is going to be talking about the electrical program that they're going to be bringing, so another sort of trade that is able to be offered at our great academy.

[05:28:53] Funds that are covered by the school board also pay for the Learning Lounge and Saturday support. The Learning Lounge allows time, excuse me, and space for students to remain after school each Wednesday and Thursday, so they can have tutoring services, study hall model, reteaching and intervention opportunities.

[05:29:09] They also focus clubs and activities during that time to allow for kids to be able to stay late for one thing and also stay for another, but then still have a ride home. And total support of the students, 620 students. So about 30-ish percent, I think, of the kids that are at the school.

[05:29:29] I would highly recommend that you check out the, I won't go through anything else, but highly recommend that you check out the presentation that was on the school board meeting agenda from last night. But just a huge shout out to our kids at Fairfax High School and the administration there for all that they're doing. And I look forward to continuing to support you and all of our students.

[05:29:48] Thank you. Council Member Amos. No. Well, I'm going to keep it brief, too. We do not have a meeting next Tuesday. It's our bye week on April 15th, but it is tax day.

[05:30:05] And for all those who owe taxes, I just want you to know that I feel your pain because of all the times to have to dip into any stock-based accounts to pay your taxes, you're just really in a bad, bad situation. And following along to what Council Member Peterson said, we understand that the pain is real, that things are going on every day, that we can hardly imagine what people are going through. It is a

wonderful city. We do our best. This whole budget exercise has been about doing the best we can to deliver the great services that people moved here for,

[05:30:39] stay here for, and trying to minimize the economic burden. It is hard times right now, but as a community, we are going to get through this, and we are working very diligently up here, and we understand that there's a lot going on out there that we don't see.

[05:30:55] But we know that there's a lot of pain and suffering going on right now. So stay strong, and we will see you on the 22nd. I now adjourn this meeting at 12.31 a.m. on Wednesday.



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