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[00:00:00] I scared y'all didn't I? Hello. Calling the city council meeting of January 27th to order. If you would please stand, if you're able to, and join me in a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance. Please join me in a Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States.

[00:00:28] Thank you so much. Thank you all for coming out tonight. Those that are here in person, we love looking out and seeing a full crowd.

[00:00:47] We'd like to welcome Dr. Newman there in the back to the meeting as well, the school board member Sarah Brescia. thank you for being here i don't think there's any other members of the school board here i think it's just you two so thank you all so much for being here tonight and we would love to see it this crowded every meeting it makes us feel so good when we can look out and see all the wonderful smiles so but again thank you everyone who's joining us also um via social media or tv we welcome you to the meeting as well you won't be disappointed we have a lot of good things tonight and a very full agenda, so we'll get started with our council time, and I will call on Vice Mayor Wolfe first.

[00:01:26] Thank you, ma'am. Nothing terribly exciting to report. We just got back from a retreat. We had three fun-filled days out in the wilderness at Mount Pillar, but it was very helpful and instructive for the council. We worked very hard, and I know there were some people fussed and complained, you know, why do you leave town?

[00:01:47] Well, if anyone's been in the corporate space or any entity at any size, the purpose of retreat is, frankly, to get away, where there's no distractions in your way and you can actually focus on the work. Let

me assure you, at Montpelier, Virginia, in the middle of the winter, there is nothing else to do other than focus on the work of the city of Manassas.

[00:02:08] We were able to do that for three days. A lot of good things accomplished with regard to our budget moving forward, so I look forward to seeing the results of that. And thank you all for being here. I got so excited with the crowd, I forgot to ask for roll calls. Mr. Smith, please call the roll.

[00:02:24] Mayor Davis-Younger. Present. Vice Mayor Wolfe. Yes. Council Member Ellis. Yes. Council Member Smith. Present. Council Member Ocina. Yes. Council Member Vasquez-Luna. Present. Council Member Hudson. Yes. McCormis.

[00:02:39] Present. All right. Thank you for that. Ms. Ellis, you are next. Thank you, Mayor. Yes, it's great to see so many people here. We have a lot of presentations. I hope you can stay a little longer and listen to some of them, really important presentations of what's going on in the city.

[00:03:00] I do want to thank the staff for all the work they did for a successful retreat. It was pretty comprehensive. You can watch it, actually, on the website. If you just want the website and just put watch in the search bar, you'll get it on there.

[00:03:17] If you have a lot of time, like 24 hours, you can see it. And I look forward to the budget work session that's coming up. That's like two months of work. So thank you for that. We do have an event coming up that's really popular.

[00:03:35] It's our Super Bowl, which is sponsored by Historic Manassas. And if you go on the Historic Manassas website, see if there's still tickets. Still tickets? Yeah. And you get to visit some of the stores or restaurants throughout Historic Manassas, and you get to taste all different types of soups from some of our best chefs in the area.

[00:03:59] So please join us. It'll be a lot of fun. Thank you. Thank you. Councilman Smith. I'll pass. Thank you, ma'am. Okay, thank you. Councilman Ocina. Yeah, a few things. Thank you, Mayor. Likewise, I do want to thank my colleagues for the retreat we just came back from On Saturday, we started on Thursday and went all the way through Saturday in Montpelier Station, Virginia.

[00:04:29] You know, I've had the chance both as a resident and a member of council to attend these retreats here. Some of the ones that I've gone to have been, I would call, commuter type, where you meet.

[00:04:46] If they're close enough, you can drive in, and then at the end of the session, people go back. And then there have been the ones that have had everybody stay, council members along with senior staff, to talk along the way and share meals.

[00:05:04] I know from my experience, this started way before I got on council. I believe during Mayor Hal Parrish's time that they were held off-site like this and in a way that brought in some time for team building and getting to know each other.

[00:05:22] I thought this year's was particularly important. We had a new member on council, Councilwoman Hudson. Two years ago, we had Councilwoman Vasquez Luna, and it was helpful to be able to get away and establish some new relationships with new people on that regard.

[00:05:41] You heard Councilwoman Ellis talk about the recording. A recording is made of these meetings, And I just checked with our company that does the recording. It has not been posted as of yet,

but will be probably once the clerk gets to eyeball everything and make sure that things are in order there, that it will be.

[00:06:05] And he'll let us know and let the public know as well. So I invite you to spend your time listening to two and a half days of us talking about a variety of different things in that regard to prepare for our budget discussions later on this spring here.

[00:06:23] I want to remind everybody that the birthday for our Manassas City Library is coming up, and I hope everyone, one, has visited it, and number two has a library card, and number three is checking out books there or participating in various programs.

[00:06:41] Friends of the Manassas City Library will be having a party over there on February the 1st. That's this Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., obviously, at the library. So please stop by if you can and celebrate along the way in that regard.

[00:06:58] Lastly, on a more somber note, I want to note the passing this past Saturday of Jeff Pickard. Jeff was a longtime resident of the city of Manassas and a great supporter of our city.

[00:07:16] He and his husband moved here back when Okra's and Carmela's were the only restaurants in Old Town and before any of the streets were closed along the way here. He volunteered his time at the Visitor Center, and he was very much a larger-than-life kind of person here.

[00:07:39] And he will be missed for his contributions and his involvement in just coming around and supporting many of the businesses and restaurants in Old Town. So my condolences to his husband, Dale. Thank you, Mayor. Thank you. Councilman Vesquez Luna.

[00:07:55] Thank you, Madam Mayor. Good evening, everyone, and welcome. It is great to see a full house and so excited about the big effort that everybody did to win. I sure had a great time.

[00:08:13] It was a little cold, but the cold didn't stop no one. And so happy to see you here to receive your award. So congratulations. I want to go back a little bit about some of the things that have already been mentioned.

[00:08:28] but I attended the appointments committee we also celebrate MLK Martin Luther King Day and one of the things they always highlight about it is that you can that is a day of service I don't know if you got to serve if you got to give give back but you still can do it and one of the things that I can say that you can do is apply for one of our committees, our commissions.

[00:09:00] You can apply and give back. You can help by making decisions and recommendations at that level. And I'm part of the committee to make recommendations for this body.

[00:09:15] So I want to take the time to remind you, if you go to our website, you can apply. We have so many opportunities. Whether it's open or it's not, every January you can apply. You don't have to apply just for one. You can apply for different boards and commissions for you to be considered for an appointment.

[00:09:37] I attended the Transportation Board meeting, the BRA. I believe more workers will be using the Manassas station, so I hope to provide the information as it comes. There's a lot of things going on, exciting things going on in that board.

[00:09:56] The retreat, it was long and at the same time short. It is a great time, not only for team building, to get to know each other. We are elected and we get here thanks to your support and your vote.

[00:10:12] And now we are working and finding the best way to come together and work together. Work together and like I always say, we all love this city. We all want to give to the city. We just have to find common ground and the vision so we can not only plan for this year and for next year, but also for the years ahead and the challenges that we have ahead.

[00:10:37] This week, I will be attending the Community Criminal Justice Board. They have a quarterly meeting. Also, there is an event early next week, I believe, for HMI, who is part of the Virginia Main Street program.

[00:10:54] And that program is celebrating their 40th anniversary. So really happy. Congratulations. And I will try to join them in Richmond. We have our lobby day with the BML this week. So I'm going to plan to be in Richmond this Thursday to make sure that we advocate for the needs for local government and for everything that we need to do.

[00:11:19] and also to oppose some of the bills that are now going to be helpful for us. A few things. If you haven't filed your FASFA for assistance, there was an event back in January 25th, but there is another one coming up on February 22nd from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

[00:11:44] That is in person at the Manasseh City Library. So if you go to their anniversary, So make sure you get information, and you can also get help for your FAFSA form. Sometimes it gets complicated, so it is helpful to have help on that.

[00:12:04] One of our award-winning programs from our police department is the Parents E3 Series. I don't know if you have attended, but they are very good. They also provide free dinner at the beginning of the event, and it is in Osborne High School.

[00:12:22] So please save the date for February the 12th, starting at 5.30. Are you going to hear today the presentation of the Black History Month? There are events related to that, so I hope you join us.

[00:12:39] And the community, I always say diversity is our strength, and we celebrate diversity. You can also see the diversity of our city right here in this elective body. So I hope that you can look at all the events coming up and you can join, whether it's a book talk or any of the happy hours or the other events.

[00:13:00] So we continue to share, celebrate, and work together for the betterment of our city. With that, like I always say, Manassas has something for everyone. I hope you stay safe, and we're here to work for you.

[00:13:16] Thank you. Thank you, Councilwoman Hudson. Hello everybody and thank you. It's so nice to see so many folks here, especially recognizing that so many of you are here in regards to the Christmas parade, which is taking me back to a really awesome morning. So awesome to see you all with us today, as well as all of those involved with our staff presentations today. Thank you all for being here and for all of your hard work and telling us what's going on with the city.

[00:13:42] As you have heard, we had our retreat last week, which I, you know, ECHO was an awesome opportunity for team building and long-range planning. Like I said throughout my campaign for council, Manassas is only 10 square miles and mostly already developed. So this council really needs to be strategic and thoughtful with our plans for any redevelopment and to just assure that Manassas continues to be a great place to live, work, play, and do business.

[00:14:08] At our retreat, hearing from our economic development department and the authority, With their visions and talking about the vision among this group with about the Marcellar property the Manassas Shopping Center And MIFCO was really great and insightful I encourage residents to like everyone said watch the recording to check out the agenda and the attachments and certainly Above all keep an eye out for the community conversations events that will be happening this spring regarding each of those projects there's going to be Awesome opportunity for community feedback as we, you know, truck along towards what the future could look like for this Manassas.

[00:14:45] Thank you to the rest of council for a very productive day. And certainly thank you to all of the staff who worked really hard to put that those few days together. We truly were sitting around a table from nine to five every day just trying to dream up the best for Manassas and working together. So it was a really great experience and thank you to all involved.

[00:15:04] As you heard, we have a lot of exciting events coming up as well. Keep an eye out for the Super Bowl next, for the Super, our Super Bowl next Friday. And then, of course, all of the Black History Month events that will be occurring over the next few weeks as well will be worth checking out.

[00:15:20] So thank you all for your time, and thank you, Mayor. Thank you. For my time, I'm going to start off with a reminder for everyone that the school board meeting is tomorrow, 6 o'clock, right here in Chambers. Please encourage folks to attend, especially those who have school-age children in the Manassas City public school system, so they can get current and correct information directly from our school board, our more than competent school board, and our superintendent.

[00:15:50] And more importantly, remind everyone that they do also have public comment time. Am I right, Ms. Brescia, in that meeting? So you have the opportunity to address directly the school board with any issues that you want to bring to their attention. While we appreciate you also coming to council, but they would love for you to share the love with them as well. So I want to remind everyone of that, and they do meet tomorrow night here at 6 o'clock right at City Hall Chambers. We have the ML Day this week.

[00:16:18] We also have a ribbon-cutting for Training Ed on the 31st at 4 o'clock, and that is a personal trainer studio. So those of you who are interested in that, we have that opening up in the city. I will be attending on the 4th at noon a webinar, the very first of its kind being put on by the Human Services Alliance of Greater Prince William.

[00:16:42] They've created a task force called Eviction Reduction and Creative Housing Task Force. And this is going to be pretty pivotal and help us identify, which everybody knows, the housing crisis. That's the top of everybody's list.

[00:16:59] So this task force is a result of the Virginia General Assembly allocating \$3.3 million to launch the Virginia Eviction Reduction Pilot, the VERP. So this alliance has partnered with Axe and People, Inc. to pursue funding under this grant to reduce evictions in all three jurisdictions here.

[00:17:21] And I've been invited to the kickoff. They're going to include local government, law enforcement, community leaders. So there will be several meetings, but this will be the first of its kind, first one to start us off on the fourth at noon. So it is a webinar that I'll be attending.

[00:17:36] Our next council meeting is on the 10th of February. And I too want to extend my thanks to council members as well as staff for helping us have a successful retreat. It is a lot of work. It is asking you to do a lot of preparation way ahead of time and to spend time with us, sure that we get all the information

that we need to to try and make the very best decisions for this city that we can with what we have and I really appreciate all of your hard work and preparation and doing that and keeping us on track while we were there this is ICM's last meeting with us before he

[00:18:15] goes back over to police and I I simply want to take a few moments to thank you ICM, and then we have incoming city manager, both ICM. So, Steve over there. Steve, wave your hands so everybody knows. That's the incoming city manager. So, I have absolutely benefited professionally and personally from having you in this position, and I am just so appreciative of you taking the time to help me grow as mayor, and you always have had the ability to make me laugh,

[00:18:48] cry all of it and I will miss sharing you know even as a police officer so we've had some joyful times together and I thank you for supporting me especially when I lost my mom and I'm gonna miss our Monday morning conversations about our elderly toddlers because he's in the same boat that I'm in with with having older parents but always being honest with me even when I didn't like it or agree with it you were that and I appreciate that so much and so when you had to bring upsetting and hurtful news you did it and you always took my feelings into consideration and I'm grateful for

[00:19:26] that thank you so much for stepping up when we needed you the most and you got us through some really tumultuous times you saw growth and you helped us get through it in the city and I just appreciate your steady hand I had to keep my notes because I'm going to stay on task so we've accomplished a lot with you in this position and you've seen us, as I said, through some really great, great times. And I'll, like I said, miss meeting you, meeting with you as often. I know you're not leaving us, but I still feel it's necessary to let you know that I appreciate you and thank you so much for everything that you've done personally for me and this council. And I

[00:20:04] know everybody pretty much feels the same way. So I'll leave you all with, as I do, our core values, customer service stewardship honesty integrity respect and teamwork and i'll turn it over to icm king for the last time i guess yeah kind of thank you you may want to rethink that when i take more time than usual to read my message tonight a couple of formalities before i share a few words with you over the past week i have been asked several times about the police department's

[00:20:43] immigration and deportation policy changes. There have been no changes to our policy at this point. There are way too many changes in speculation from President Trump's executive order, and some of them will need to play out in court. Currently, when subjects are arrested for felonies, the adult detention center, not the police department, would be the person that processes them and would contact immigration for additional charges and processing if it's appropriate second this week it was announced on social media that battle street live would not

[00:21:21] continue in 2025 battle street live is not a city event this is a private permitted action that allows the businesses on battle street to close the street for music performance i want to thank miss elise perez the owner of carmelos for clarifying that today on social media i think that has been very very helpful to get the facts out there finally i'm going to go off script a little bit mayor so this is the part you got to bear with me tonight is my last council meeting

[00:21:55] as the interim city manager over the past 15 months i got the opportunity to work with you our staff our community and a broader text i want to thank the mayor council former vice mayor sebesky our staff and our community for supporting me and having the trust in me to oversee the city's day-to-day

action i want to thank my family for putting up with 15 to 18 hour days as well some may ask why i didn't pursue the job and you blame this elected body i want to be clear that

[00:22:28] it was my decision not to follow my heart and my passion getting back to policing i'm a true believer that how we police our community will make or break the city i believe we do an outstanding job and i want to get back to my calling and serving this great city as your chief of police while we have navigated some tough times as the mayor spoke about the past year from changes in policy changes and staff a very tough election period we got through it during tough times i like to read or

[00:23:04] listen to music for inspiration i'd like to share a few lines from two songs that i believe could help all of us move forward the first is from a young man that was trying to edge his way back in the spotlight in 1968 while corporations and management are frequently worried about making money this young man was inspired by this song and because of what was going on in society in the murder of dr king and the kennedy brothers the young man was elvis and the song is if i can dream don't worry i'm not going to sing it and or cite the entire song but just verse one because i think

[00:23:44] those words are important there must be lights burning brighter somewhere got to be birds flying higher in a sky more blue if i can dream of a better land where all of my brothers walk hand in hand, Tell Me Why, Oh Why, Oh Why Can't My Dream Come True. In a very similar circumstance, the next young man wanted to sing what he felt was going on in society, what he was seeing and hearing from his community. Once again, management said, this is a protest song. We can't do that.

[00:24:21] Well, eventually, in 1971, Motown released Marvin Gaye's What's Going On. It is the chorus of this song that inspires me to listen more, even to my and our biggest critics. The chorus is picket lines and picket signs. Don't punish me with brutality. Talk to me so you can see, oh, what's going on?

[00:24:49] Yeah, what's going on? It's that line, talk to me so you can see that I will be focusing on. We need to talk to our community and our staff more so we can see their point. Doesn't always mean we're going to agree in many cases i know we will not agree but we may have a better understanding of what's going on from both sides as leaders we have to make hard choices but we need to explain them as well like we have done with some of our choices we have made specifically some of the land purchases we have been criticized but if you're making the choices

[00:25:27] for what you believe is the best interest we just simply need to do a better job of explaining it but also listening to the other person's view i appreciate you indulging me with a few extra minutes tonight i hope each of you have something you can listen to or read on those days that you need a little bit more inspiration thank you mayor thank you to our community for allowing

[00:25:53] me to serve in this special world appreciate it thank you you can tell i have an eclectic listening list on my phone tom's so choked up he has to leave just okay next on the agenda we have item one we have presentations the good stuff what you're all here for item 1.1 is the 78th greater

[00:26:30] Manassas Christmas Parade awards presentation for 2025. Kristen, Mark, is that Mrs. Claus? Thank you, thank you, thank you. Welcome, Mayor, Council, staff. We had a wonderful, successful 78th Greater Manassas Christmas Parade. 25,000 people had cell phones, so there's kids too that didn't count that number, so we're good. All right, so we're going to present the awards tonight.

[00:27:04] We're going to start off with the Chairman's Award. Manassas Park High School Cougar Marching Band. Mayor, would you like to join us? Oh, sure. So I really want to, you couldn't see a better

group of students, musicians,

[00:27:41] have a happy day at the parade and perform as well as they did. So, all right, next is the, whoops, I gave you the wrong one.

[00:28:15] So next is the Christmas Parade Committee, and I'd like to recognize them while we're here. Anybody who's on the Christmas Committee, stand up. Round of applause for everybody. They're all in the back.

[00:28:35] So the committee award goes to Corporal Alistair St. Simeon, Virginia, USA. And there's nobody here? But they were great. All right. Marching bands.

[00:28:51] First place, Woodbridge High, Mighty Viking Marching Band. Second place, Patriot High School Marching Band. Third place, Pride of Unity Reed Marching Band.

[00:29:13] Dance Company. First place. Stage Door Dance Studio. Second place. Manassas Ballet Theater. I wonder how that happened. We got to get a picture. All right. All right. Third place. Prince William Dance Academy. Cheerleading Majorette Step Team. First place. Unity Reed High School Air Force Junior ROTC. Second place. Mets Middle School Cheer.

[00:30:18] All right. Third place, Osborne Park High School cheer program.

[00:30:52] All right. Floats, other, Mayfield Intermediate School. First place. Come on, get them down here.

[00:31:24] One, two, one more. One, two, eight. Cool. Third place in the float other, Prince William Manassas Regional Adult Detention Center.

[00:32:10] All right. Float, business. First place. K&M Roofing and Contracting. Yeah, over here.

[00:32:39] All right. Second place, American Krav Maga. Third place, Amerikans.

[00:33:02] Turn around. One, two.

[00:33:17] One more. Business Vehicles. First place, Mr. Handyman of Northern Virginia, Arlington Haymarket.

[00:33:40] One more. One, two. Second place, Move for Free Realty.

[00:33:57] Third place, Ashton Family Restaurant.

[00:34:28] All right. Equestrian and Animal Group. First place, Union de Asociación de Cerros del Estado de Virginia. I should get it.

[00:34:47] All right. Second place, Peace of Mind Canine. Third place, Dream and Nova. All right.

[00:35:03] Two more categories. Nonprofit. First place, Historic Manassas. All right.

[00:35:30] Come on over. Hey. Over. Over. I'm trying to help you. Okay. Lisa. All right. One, two, one more. No, I'm good.

[00:35:45] One, two, okay. All right, second place, non-profit organization, Alpha Beta Cooperative Preschool.

[00:36:06] Two more, one, two, okay.

[00:36:29] All right. Third place, Prince William Chamber of Commerce. Wow. All right, last group, vehicle clubs. First place, drunk monkey jeepers.

[00:36:48] Second place, Capital VW Club.

[00:37:30] All right, third place, TKO Jeepers. Thank you, Mayor and Councilor, for your indulgence in the awards.

[00:38:02] And the parade will be the first Saturday in December this year. Thank you, everybody, for coming.

[00:38:36] Thank you, thank you, thank you.

[00:39:00] Time to get out. On the agenda, we have the Black History Proclamation. It's item 1.2 on our agenda. I'll call on Keisha to come down and give us a little bit of background.

[00:39:19] So important, Black History Month is February, so that is, Can y'all believe us next week? Next week is February. So we're always so honored to be able to do this year after year and that we have, as Councilwoman Vasquez-Luna said, so much diversity in this city and how far we've come.

[00:39:39] It is always an honor to be able to recognize Black History Month as well as our other months as well that celebrate our diversity. But this sort of kicks us off for the year. So take it away, Ms. Keisha. Thank you. Thank you, Mayor, members of council. It's a pleasure to be here this evening.

[00:39:54] I would like to welcome our honorees of the Black History Proclamation. I would like to call on Shana Burt, Jahan Robeson, and Andrea and Andre Marshall. Could you please come to the front?

[00:40:11] All right, nice. Love it, love it, love it. That's right. You want me to go ahead? And it's Robeson. Oh, okay. So I'm going to go ahead and do the proclamation now. Okay, all right.

[00:40:26] Thank you all so much for being here, and congratulations again. And thank you for sharing your talents with our community. It's so important, and it is being recognized. So I'll give you one of these proclamations to keep with you. Whereas Black History Month is observed in February of each year, and whereas Black History Month seeks to emphasize black history and its cultural contributions to American life and is designed to recognize and pay tribute to the many contributions of African Americans to the history, society, and culture of the United States of America.

[00:41:02] And whereas Black History Month celebrates the achievements of African Americans in the arts, civil rights, education, entertainment, government, history, law, literature, medicine, military, music, politics, science, sports, and other endeavors to celebrate and honor the achievements, contributions, and rich heritage of African Americans within our community.

[00:41:23] And whereas Shana Burt, a trailblazer who made history as the first African-American woman to chair the Hilton Performing Arts Center board, is recognized as one of Northern Virginia's 50 most influential people.

[00:41:47] Driven by a passion for uplifting young people and strengthening her community, she dedicates her time and energy to numerous causes as a respected attorney in the city. Shana advocates for charitable nonprofits and community associations.

[00:42:04] A talented violinist herself, she actively serves on several boards, including the ACLU of Virginia. Let's give it up for Ms. Shana Burks. Yes, awesome. And whereas Jahan Roberson, Roberson is a

local basketball star, let me get closer, and dynamic city leader, inspiring countless individuals through the power of sports.

[00:42:35] During his time at Osborne High School, go Osborne, he not only showcased his exceptional basketball talents on the court, but also inspired his peers and youth throughout the city to make positive choices. Jahan, as coach, volunteered countless hours to the Martin K. Aloy Manassas Boys and Girls Club, mentoring young athletes, encouraging them to work hard both on and off the court, and guiding them towards academic success.

[00:43:03] Let's give it up for Jahan Robeson. And last but not never least, with that clean suit on down there on the end, cleaner than the Board of Health, Whereas Andre Marshall, a gifted and self-taught musician enriches our community with his profound musical talents, Andre generously shares his musical gifts with the interfaith community and the Manassas Museum, celebrating the significant contributions of African Americans through captivating performances of soulful music.

[00:43:40] His soulful melodies move audiences deeply, fostering understanding, appreciation, and a deeper connection to our shared community. Give it up for Mr. Andre Marsha. And now, therefore, I'm Michelle Davis-Younger, the first African-American woman to become mayor of the city of Manassas.

[00:44:02] And on behalf of the Manassas City Council, hereby proclaim the month of February 2025 as Black History Month in the city of Manassas. and the City Council, City Agencies and Staff hereby acknowledge and celebrate the contributions to the City of Manassas, Commonwealth of Virginia and United States of America made by African Americans as Black History Month in the City of Manassas and the City Council, City Agencies and Staff hereby acknowledge and celebrate the contributions to the City of Manassas, Commonwealth of Virginia and United States of America made by African Americans.

[00:44:37] Thank you for including us in this recognition, it's an honor just being nominated, but it's much better to take home the paper, so thank you.

[00:45:06] Were there trophies left? No, it's fine, we can talk later, so seriously, I think I'll use what we got to empower others and we hope that during Black History Month and every other month that comes thereafter maybe some of you are inspired to do the same so thank you Manassas and thank you to you all who probably

[00:45:29] will be solicited by all of us a little bit later thanks thank you so much for that next on the

[00:46:47] agenda is item 1.3 we have the Manassas City Public Schools presentation from Weems Elementary and I guess Sarah's going to introduce the principal thank you so much for being here to do that and welcome again. Hello. This is my first time in this part of the chamber, so give me a moment here. It gets situated. So good evening, esteemed members of council, Madam Mayor, Vice Mayor, friend of MCPS, ICM Keene, new friend, Mr. Burke. Nice to see you all. You're all looking

[00:47:21] well and rested after your retreat. I hope you stay well and rested. That's the key. So I'm I am a Manasseh City School Board member, and I have the pleasure here today coming before you to introduce Ms. Michelle Hupman, the principal of Weems Elementary School.

[00:47:40] In just a moment, Ms. Hupman is going to tell you about her wonderful school community, but I would like first, as a prelude, to share some of what makes me, as an individual, proud of these Weems

Wildcats. You may not know, even though this data is publicly available on school quality profiles, that back in 22-23, Weems had a chronic absence rate of almost 28%, very high coming out of the pandemic.

[00:48:08] Ladies and gentlemen, I am so happy to share with you that Weems' current chronic absence rate, as reflected in the school quality profile, is half of that number, down to 14%. applause is appropriate this is a school community that rose to the challenge and I want to take this moment to celebrate that success of course it is not mission accomplished at Weems Elementary School or at any school in Manassas City there is always more to do but I did want to take my time up here

[00:48:44] with Miss Huffman to publicly commend her and her staff for their amazing work in that area in particular I am proud of you Miss Huffman as we all should be so with that, she takes the stage. Thank you for allowing me to be here, and thank you, Ms. Brescia. I wasn't expecting that. I appreciate it. Good evening, Mayor Davis-Younger, Vice Mayor Wolfe, council members. I'm Michelle Huttman, the proud principal of Weems Elementary School,

[00:49:22] and I'm here this evening just to highlight some of the happenings at Weems. Do I just use the remote that's up here. Just touch it. Oh, the keyboard. I'm a principal, not a techie.

[00:49:42] This is most of my very highly qualified staff here. This year, based on the work of educator Ken Williams, I challenged my staff to start with the crown, not the kid. This means that teachers will ensure equity, excellence, and achievement for all students. As a school, We are creating belonging, embedding equity, and expecting excellence.

[00:50:09] We hold the crown high for every student in our school and challenge each one to grow tall enough to wear it. There aren't different crowns for different kids. There's just one crown. Our teachers see the potential in every student, and I'm proud to say that our students are beginning to see the potential in themselves.

[00:50:31] We celebrate our students and their achievements. we celebrate our community and its diversity great things are happening at Williams Elementary and I would like to highlight some of our successes as Miss Brescia noted two years ago nearly 28% of our students were chronically absent having missed 18 or more days of school last year less than 14% of our students were chronically absent we hope to see more gains and attendance this year with improved attendance comes improvements in student achievement. Last year, we had a 24% increase

[00:51:10] in literacy pass rates for our students in kindergarten through second grade. For the Virginia Standards of Learning reading test, we had a 6% increase in pass rates for our students in third and fourth grade. Our math pass rates for the SOLs dropped slightly, but the majority of our students in those grades were taught by virtual teachers. This year we are fully staffed in all classrooms and in all instructional support positions without the need for virtual

[00:51:42] instructors. I'm very happy to say. I'm appreciative of the city council's support of our schools which has allowed us to hire and retain a high quality teaching staff by offering salaries that are in line with those of our neighboring school divisions we've also had outstanding support from a wide range of community partners businesses and manassas have conducted school supply drives for our students and we also received a donation of 200 backpacks for our students from a major

[00:52:17] retailer in the area a church in the city has adopted our school and provides snacks for our students every month a group of retired women who live in the city made over 250 stuffed bears for our

students in preschool and kindergarten so that our youngest learners would have reading buddies to read to as they practice their developing skills a benevolent organization conducted a fundraiser to provide dictionaries to every third grade student in manassas city public schools

[00:52:51] over 650 dictionaries were placed in the hands of our students this same organization provided christmas gifts coats and toiletries to 70 of our students through our angel angel tree program the city's department of planning and community development helped us plan and organize a walk to school event which resulted in about a third of our students walking to school many parents and younger siblings joined the walk which culminated in a celebration at weems with manassas

[00:53:23] city police officers the support of our city council and our manassas city community has helped us create a positive school culture enhanced teacher morale and strengthened our bonds as a community all of which can lead to better academic performance and student engagement i'm proud to serve this community along with you all thank you for allowing me to come and talk to to you tonight. Thank you so much. That's awesome. Thank you so much. Councilmembers, any questions or

[00:53:58] comments for Principal? Mr. Osino. Thank you, Mayor. So I've had occasion to visit Weems several times, and this last one I thought you might elaborate a little bit about, because this was one that I attended here. I came, and could you describe what we're actually seeing in this picture? Sure. This picture, we have, since I've been at Weems, we've had a multicultural night.

[00:54:27] And so what we've done, to start it off, we send paper dolls home with all of our students. And the families, you can kind of see them up there, the families decorate them with their native dress. Really well done. So we obviously had hundreds of those decorating our cafeteria, area, which is where we held this event. And then we invited the families to come in and bring artifacts and food from their countries. And it's always a very well attended event.

[00:54:58] And people are so proud to share their community with us. And as you can see, many of our students came to the event and were dressed in their native clothing. And they all came up on stage and introduced themselves and told us what country they were from.

[00:55:15] I think we had 18 countries. I kind of lost count in all the mix, but it was a really wonderful evening, and it's just one of those things. We do it at the beginning of the year in November timeframe just to kind of kick the year off and really get that sense of community going.

[00:55:33] And I know that you've joined us for that, Mr. Ossina, and it was very enjoyable. And I would point out, you know, I grew up in a family where two languages were spoken, and it was, I think, important for my family to be able to share our heritage, our family's heritage here.

[00:55:54] But what I liked about this event was that it brought in food, the dress, but families brought in the food that was native to the country where either the family had come from or that was part of their heritage there to share with everybody.

[00:56:15] And it was, to me, a very great way to bring in parents. Yes. Because one of the challenges, I think, in schools that is, regardless of the grade level, is trying to get parents in. And that place was packed by the time things got going there.

[00:56:32] I got to taste a lot of different food. But I thought, what a great way to bring parents in and begin to see what the school is all about and meet teachers and so forth and so on. So kudos to you, your

staff. I hope you'll continue to do that because this is part of our learning here along the way here is acceptance of different cultures and learning about different things in that regard.

[00:56:58] So thank you for doing that. Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Vasquez-Luno. Thank you, Madam Mayor. Thank you for the presentation. Beautiful pictures and it shows a little bit of everything that goes on in each school. I got to read for some of your students.

[00:57:15] I remember. It was a great time. You never know what they will ask, but I really enjoy it. I hope, I believe council and our mayor has done so many things. I hope if you haven't done it, any of the schools, you can join and read a book.

[00:57:31] It only takes a few minutes, but it really touches your heart and helps you see things differently. So I just want to say thank you. I met a few other people from the city, and I believe that experience, you know, for the students to get to talk to them, it also, you know, helps them get inspired.

[00:57:50] Like our mayor and here, mayor and my mayor. Yes, yes, ma'am. So thank you. I appreciate the report and the pictures. Thank you for sharing. Anyone else? Thank you so much again.

[00:58:07] Oh, Dr. Newman. Uh-oh, you're in trouble. you're good good evening sir i had uh two meetings and a lunch with that young man sitting beside you uh mayor oh this one uh entering interim city manager keem and uh he did not tell me that this was his last meeting so i just wanted to come and give him his flowers um and tell him how much i appreciated the last 15 months and your care that you uh put into our school division i just want you to know that i really appreciate it uh your friendship and your professionalism during this

[00:58:45] 15 months i just wanted to say that and i'm upset with you for not telling me this was the last meeting i would have come and it had prepared comments for you but i do just want to thank you i appreciate the friendship dr newman that we've been able to develop even if you're an eagles fan we got we got past it i listened to your version and uh we were still able to have good lunches thank you sir thank you we'll move forward when tomatoes start flying um next on the agenda we

[00:59:23] have item 1.4 and that's the manassas business council annual report and i guess mr small or oh christy gilligan is here to handle that mr small's name was on the agenda so i apologize for that. He likes to be on all the documents, I think. Okay. Welcome, ma'am. It's been a long time since I've walked up here to talk to him, but good evening. Thank you for having me. I'm Christy Gilligan. I am currently the chair of the Manassas Business Council, and I'd like to

[00:59:58] present what the NBC annual reports, some of the things we've done this year. The Manassas Business Council, hold on, I'm putting my glasses on, I forgot. I was wondering why I was struggling. The Manassas Business Council scheduled a meeting every month, with the exception of July in 2024.

[01:00:18] In January 2024, the NBC held its annual election of officers. Ross Snare was elected as chair and Iowa's vice chair. Throughout the year, the NBC had several presenters at their meetings that led to serious and thoughtful discussions about the NBC role and ideas about additional opportunities for the NBC to meet with businesses in person and better connect with the community.

[01:00:41] Each presenter had a unique perspective to share and enhance the members' conversations about future opportunities to support, educate, and promote the City of Manassas and its local businesses.

Some of the things that we had presented to us, Mr. Patrick Small, who shared a presentation of the 2023 Annual Report for City of Manassas Economic Development and City Council.

[01:01:06] This interaction led the members to, again, a lot of discussion and planning, and we wanted to continue conversations about our supporting roles. Mr. Sean Porter presented on the Facade Improvement Grant and Landscape Improvement Grant that his business, Loveless Porter Architects, has utilized.

[01:01:30] Ben Walker with the City Planning Officer was present and available to answer city protocol questions. The insights Mr. Porter provided on general experiences and the city's matching process were educational and spurred, again, a lot of discussion about future goals for the NBC and how the NBC can connect and support city businesses.

[01:01:53] Miguel Pyres from Great Eats Hospitality presented on his own experiences owning and operating multiple restaurants in the city of Manassas. We were updated on two restaurants opening in the Historic District. They're open and wonderful, both operated by partners who have worked in the Manassas food and beverage industry.

[01:02:13] Mr. Pyers also noted that loyal customer base and the popularity of the historic downtown area contributes to the low turnover rate, which is unusual and impressive in restaurants. The NBC was introduced to City Clerk Eric Smith, who provided an overview of the city's recent updates to policies and procedures for boards and committees, covering topics such as attendance, adherence to bylaws.

[01:02:41] We discussed opportunities for community outreach that might best align with city processes, the City Council Strategic Action Plan, and the Department of Economic Development's annual report. Ms. Tia Nelson also provided the MBA with a City of Economic Development Benchmark Sheet each category or pillar that they are targeting to give the members another guide. NBA planned further discussions at that next meeting. The NBC has had some turnover with membership and in September they had another election of officers. I was elected as chair and Brea Stokes was elected

[01:03:17] as vice chair. The NBC has a new member that will start with us in February and an anticipated vacancy that we are confident will be filled soon so we can start 2025 at full speed. In November, I created talking points based on the benchmark guide provided by Tia Nelson and notes from many of the past discussions. These talking points were used during the November meeting to have a whiteboard discussion. This discussion was lively, thoughtful, and generated several ideas.

[01:03:48] These ideas were organized by benchmark and the first item on the agenda for February 2025 is to finalize an NBC working plan to support the Department of Economic Development and the City Council. Some notable highlights of activities this year, beyond all the people that we had come in and talk to us, were election of new officers a little more often than we would have liked.

[01:04:15] We attended Chamber Annual Business Award events, we attended Manassas City's Annual Business Appreciation Event, and routinely attend the Manassas City events and ribbon cuttings. We look forward to continuing to support the Department of Economic Development with a robust working plan, continue to support new and existing city businesses, and promote programs that enhance the Manassas City community workforce.

[01:04:41] We thank you for allowing us to serve the City of Manassas in 2024, and we look forward to continuing and enhancing that service in 2025. Thank you very much. That's it. i'm not i don't like standing

up here i'd rather just sit and chat it's okay thank you you do great thank you thanks council members any questions or comments for miss gilligan thank you so much for being here appreciate it all right next on the agenda item 1.5 the economic development authority annual report and that's going to be presented by the chair miss denise harover

[01:05:17] thank you for being here ma'am welcome uh good evening and thank you for having us um first of I'm Denise here over with me here is Larry Naylor who I was voted as chair of last year Larry is my vice chair I believe we also have one of our other members Mr. Mark Olson is here first of all we had a very busy year we started last year with the election of the officers quickly moved into February where we updated our bylaws to allow the EDA to follow the same procedures for teleconference

[01:05:52] policies if necessary. To date, we have not used it, but it is a good tool to have in our toolbox moving forward if necessary. In July, we adopted our annual budget and once again voted to approve the MOU contracting with the Mason Small Business Development, which provides counseling services for small businesses at Centerfuse. In August, the authority approved the sale of a 1.41 acre site at the landing at cannon branch this will add an additional

[01:06:28] home two suites to the cannon branch development this is a hundred plus room extended stay hotel that will offer a different type of opportunity for visitors and tourists coming through the area this 20 million dollar investment will provide 50 jobs to the city and i'm sure patrick has better detail in december vita training was provided to several of the eda members and i was also invited to speak at the manassas rotary to give an overview of what the eda's role is for the city

[01:07:03] and of course i think the the largest item that we've had to work on in 2024 was the purchase of the manassas shopping center we have worked with the the economic development department staff reviewing the contracts going through due diligence moving forward with hiring a management company and working with staff to make sure that the the project is in compliance with all of the city ordinances and working with the tenants as we develop a plan in the short term with an eye on

[01:07:39] the future of engaging the community to have discussions as to what we'd like to see on that Mathis Avenue shopping center corridor in the future we look forward to working continuing to work with the City Council and with staff to bring together a vision that I think the city has had for quite some time on revitalizing that area of the city happy to answer any questions and we look forward to working with staff and we would also like to send our appreciation appreciation to all of the EDA staff and council members for all their efforts over the last year. Thank you. Thank you so much.

[01:08:15] What is VIDA Vita? That's actually like a EDA course where some of the executive directors of other EDA departments come in and give overviews of what the EDA's role is, what funding sources are available, and what other cities have actually done.

[01:08:37] Much like revitalizing, purchasing land, planning for the future. That's good. Okay, thank you. Any other questions? Mr. Ossino. Thank you, Mayor. First of all, I want to thank you for joining us at the retreat on Saturday there for coming out and being there when we talked about Mathis Avenue in particular.

[01:09:00] It was good to have you there so you could hear firsthand as well as provide input. And then secondly, did want to extend thanks to the EDA and to Mr. Small for organizing some tours for council members, including myself, so we could actually see behind the scenes what's at the shopping center

there and get a better idea of what's there and what are some of our, you know, ongoing challenges there for the immediate future as well as opportunities for redevelopment as it moves forward there.

[01:09:35] So thank you again for all the cooperation. Anyone else? Did you, Mrs. Moore, you had something? Yes. Okay, go ahead. Thank you. Thank you for the presentation and the indication that despite the cold weather we're having, the EDA is ready to roll up its sleeves and get to work.

[01:09:58] I also just want to acknowledge, as a council representative of EDA, The EDA's propensity to keep council fully informed on matters and up-to-date, alerting us to potentials and so forth.

[01:10:15] And I'll commit on behalf of the council that while you are looking forward to work with us, we also are looking forward on the council to work with EDA on this planning and the implementation of so many plans, particularly the Manassas Chaplin Center.

[01:10:33] But in all areas, I really do thank EDA for its willingness to ensure that we present a manassas that's beneficial and improves the quality of life for our residents. So thank you so much. Thank you for the opportunity.

[01:10:51] And if I may indulge, Interim City Manager Keene, thank you very much. It's been a pleasure working with you over the last year. I am happy to know that you will be staying with us in the city in your role as chief, and I hope I don't run into you in that role as chief.

[01:11:09] Thank you. He's not all driving. His hair over. Okay, that moves us forward to item 1.6, the department annual report for our economic development department. Mr. Small will help us with that. Good evening, Madam Mayor, members of council.

[01:11:31] All right. A lot of content. I'm going to blow through it real fast, stop me, or go back at the end. It's not comprehensive of everything we do, but this will give you a pretty good overview, starting with our mission statement.

[01:11:47] The department is responsible for all aspects of business attraction, retention, and expansion in the city, as well as tourism. We do that with a staff of three. Heidi, our administrative assistant, who's been with us for over five years, and Tia Nelson, our assistant director, who's been here a little bit over a year.

[01:12:06] And those are the same three staff people that have run this department for the past decade. We track economic indicators as a measurement of our success. So as opposed to tracking inputs, the number of trade shows we might go to or business inquiries we might get, we're more focused on the results of our work, so outputs.

[01:12:32] You know, we can meet with all the businesses all day long and bring as many of them to the city. we possibly can but if it's not having a positive impact on our local economy and our residents then it's not worth doing so we track population a growing population is a sign of economic health you're either growing or you're dying our population the city remains relatively constant a little bit up a little bit down each year so insignificant in terms of economic major impact our household incomes rise have been rising pretty rapidly I think they

[01:13:10] were around \$80,000 a year when I got here in 2014 now \$117,000 annually our home values continue to increase this obviously is a measure of individuals worth a lot of people a big chunk of their

net worth is tied up in their home so that's an asset that we want to see appreciate there's a number on your civilian labor force and our unemployment rate, which we have another slide on a little bit later.

[01:13:39] Some other things we track, many people may not be aware, the city of Manassas is a manufacturing community. We're also a high-tech professional services and health care-based community, but Manassas has the third highest manufacturing wage in all of Virginia. We have the 10th highest overall weekly wage. Last year it was six. We've stayed in the top 10 for a while. That's Pretty commendable for a city our size.

[01:14:05] We have the eighth highest professional and technical services wage. We are a net importer of labor. More people come into this city every day for the jobs that we have here in our community than leave to go elsewhere. And again, you can see the annual growth in property values is quite significant, 10.8% last year.

[01:14:25] How do we measure our efforts? Additionally, we use the Citizen Satisfaction Survey as a benchmark. One of those is how our residents feel about our ability to develop vacant commercial and industrial areas. This slide tracks, and we produce this as part of a quarterly market report as well, which we just released at the end of December.

[01:14:47] But vacancy in the city of Manassas for industrial properties, as you can see in the last couple quarters, ticked up. That's due primarily to one large block of space that came available on the market, merchants tire space up on Euclid about 85,000 square feet which likely will not stay vacant for very long and rents hovering in the \$16 a square foot range office vacancy under 4% regionally that numbers over 18% some localities in northern Virginia it's pushing 30% that is both a blessing and a curse it means that we are fully leased up so we don't have distressed office properties in the

[01:15:26] city but it also means we don't really have anywhere for prospective companies to locate now normally no supply might indicate an opportunity for new construction and the building of office space in the city but with 18 to 28% vacancy elsewhere in the region that space is going cheaply enough that the cost to rent is far below the cost of new construction so it may be some time before we see new construction in the office market retail anyone who drives around the city, with the possible exception of Mathis Avenue. We'll note that there's little, if any, vacant retail and commercial space in the city. National named

[01:16:06] tenants, vacancies below 3.5% and rents are quite high at over \$29 a square foot on average. The landing at Cannon Branch, Ms. Harrover spoke briefly to that. We are expecting a new Home 2 Suites by Hilton that is in the planning stages now. They're working with your planning department on some of their preliminary plans that will come to council for subdivision and sale of that lot sometime in the next couple of months because it will carve into the customer service center lot. But over the period that we've been developing that property, we have generated

[01:16:44] more than \$16 million in municipal land sales, almost \$2 million in new real estate taxes, \$500,000 in new lodging taxes. So that project has had and will continue to have a significant economic impact on the city and it was the subject of council discussion this weekend at the retreat about the ability to move forward with some of the multifamily product out there that property is entitled for about 225 multifamily meaning apartment building units right now those are programmed on that corner lot council indicated an openness to looking at possibly putting

[01:17:21] those units somewhere else in this project so for anyone in the development community who may be watching this presentation this evening. If you build apartment buildings, we'd love to talk to you with the stipulation that city council is very interested in attainable housing, and we would be looking for an element of that in this project.

[01:17:43] Data centers. I believe the city is doing them correctly. I know there's a lot of legislation, a lot of conversation. We already require many of the things that are the subject of legislation, like noise studies, height studies. Otherwise, we require them to hold to a high architectural standard.

[01:18:02] We put them in places that are zoned for industrial use, and you can see on this map the four that are four sites that are currently being developed for data center. The first at the corner, Wellington and Dean. That's Amazon Web Services.

[01:18:18] Next to that is two more buildings being developed by the Black Chamber Group. They have knocked down the mini-storage that was constructed off of Dean and Technology Drive, the old brickyard, and then in the fuchsia color there in the lower left is another AWS proposed building that was the subject of the sale of a city-owned piece of property.

[01:18:39] What do those things mean to the city? Well, they're in part a redevelopment tool in addition to generating new revenues. The brickyard had run its useful life. It was the oldest industrial facility in the city. It was unsightly. It was underutilized.

[01:18:54] It was purchased by the largest publicly owned REIT in the world. There is a single tenant in that building, so it's what's called an enterprise center as opposed to having lots of servers for lots of different people in it. So one user is inside of there.

[01:19:09] You can see at the bottom already the impact of that building on the real estate tax base, and we expect significant revenues to be generated from the business personal property that will be in that building, meaning the computer servers. So the other ones I mentioned, AWS on the corner of Dean and Wellington, 250,000 square foot building. The walls are up on that now. I hope everyone will be pleased. I know the planning department and my department spent a lot of time with AWS insisting that that is an entryway to our historic downtown

[01:19:45] and it needs to be one of the nicer looking data centers they've ever built. So the architecture should be more pleasing than some of the just painted buildings you might see elsewhere. And AWS has been a great corporate partner. Obviously, they're concerned about their reputation, as are we.

[01:20:03] So that was an amicable relationship. But the revenues from that will be significant, somewhere between \$4 and \$6 million annually are our expectation. The two buildings next to it, I mentioned the Black Chamber Group. The walls are up on one of those as well. AWS will be the tenant in those buildings.

[01:20:20] Again, \$4 to \$6 million apiece, so another \$8 to \$12 million annually. Those are under construction. So those first two should start showing up on the books next calendar year from a, well, they're already showing up from a construction perspective.

[01:20:36] But as they get equipped, council will be able to utilize those revenues for our community in the near future. And then finally, the piece out by the airport that we sold to AWS for \$27.72 million. And then additionally, we'll generate \$4 to \$6 million annually.

[01:20:55] And unlike a lot of economic development projects people are familiar with or read about, I want to stress, there were no incentives used by city council to attract these facilities. So this is all net new revenue to our community. And how do our residents feel about our ability to develop these vacant commercial and industrial areas?

[01:21:17] Up pretty significantly in 24 from the last survey. uh and about equal with where we were in 2016 as you all know there isn't a lot of vacant commercial and industrial property in the city another area is improving our commercial corridors ms harover also mentioned the manthas avenue shopping center which we bought with the intention of demolishing and redeveloping through a community planning process although the community does have plans for this corridor going back 20 plus years each successive plan built one on the other and we will go through a robust community conversations engagement

[01:21:53] process with EDA council and staff in the community to envision what can be put back on that shopping center site once we knock it down and in order to do that we need to vacate it of all the tenants that are out there some of them have already left some of them are on a month-to-month basis and we'll be working on that over the next few years and then finally the Mathis Avenue streetscape project. Best way to equate it for people's references to what you did on Grand Avenue. So taking a four-lane or a three-lane with a suicide

[01:22:28] strip down the middle road with extensive entrances and slimming that down, putting it on a road diet, adding street furniture, decorative lighting, landscaping, and otherwise. So in conjunction with our acquisition of the center a redevelopment tool to bring up that entire area and I mentioned Grand Avenue streetscape so that's sort of those sort of the model we invested we the city City Council in the John D Connor public safety facility we bought the old Safeway building we knocked it down we improved it we spent a lot of money on the Grand Avenue streetscape and when you make those kind of

[01:23:07] investments in your community then companies like van meter want to be a part of that and you can see the development that Ms. Herover and her company are responsible for there in the middle that is an extension of our downtown and will be a pretty significant addition to our housing stock in our community. Sudley Medical Corridor, similarly a project we work on and, again, as you make those investments, private sector investment follows Wawa which most of you attended the groundbreaking for, the Starbucks across the street. These are international marquee company names that want to be a part of the improvements you're making to your community.

[01:23:46] We use our facade landscape grant program to help do that. These pictures don't do it justice, but the the assisted living facility that UVA Health sold recently is a beneficiary of those. We did six projects last year resulting in almost 14 million dollars in capital investment. That program is designed to have a two-to-one private to public sector ratio. It actually generates about a 10 to 1 investment ratio and over the life of the program, which has been about eight years, we've made \$656,000

[01:24:21] in grants, resulting in \$5.9 million in private sector improvements. And how do our residents feel about that? Again, up significantly in 24 from 22 and back trending along with what we had been prior to that. So that's a seven percentage point increase. We also ask our residents how they feel about our ability to attract and promote retail and restaurants.

[01:24:46] I already talked about the lack of vacancy in the community. We added a number of significant establishments over the last year, some of them in downtown but citywide. We run programs like the

Heartbeat Gift Card, which is a Manassas-only gift card program that we encourage you, our employers, and our residents to utilize, whether it's for teacher appreciation gifts or graduation presents or otherwise, that program is one where the dollars can only be spent in the city.

[01:25:21] So unlike traditional gift cards, it might be a Visa card that you can use anywhere. Heartbeat card can only be used at participating merchants inside the city limits. And then we also track our meals and sales tax revenues as an indicator of how well we do with restaurants and retail and as you can see those are up every year since 19 and quite frankly since even before that so a significant amount of revenue is generated from the meals tax and the sales tax of those sectors of the economy are important to us and how do our residents feel about it pretty happy consistently 50% and again not much vacancy no boarded up

[01:25:59] storefronts in your cities, so very little to be unhappy about. And just a quick plug for how important tourism is to the economy. People frequently don't give tourism the credit that it's due, but the fact that people come into our community for our events, the work that HMI does to attract them, the work that our restaurants and shops and the streetscape and otherwise do to bring people into our community results in a significant number of visitors every year, significant amount of visitor spending with an impact on jobs sales and meals taxes and then last year we released our new tourism video which we did using

[01:26:39] some of those federal ARPA dollars. The historic downtown Old Town Inn which we acquired about 18 months ago now and demolished shortly thereafter which we've talked about on more than one occasion including recently a retreat was pending our ability to provide parking for that site.

[01:27:04] Now that the council has acted on the contract with MIFCO, we believe we have the key that will unlock the development of that site. And if the couple of partners we are working with do not put something in front of city council in fairly short order, to act on, council did direct staff at its retreat this weekend to issue an RFP.

[01:27:22] So again, shout out to any developers that are listening or people who have friends that are in the development community. We would love to see a coordinated project that includes the construction of the parking deck on the City Hall lot, which the City will participate in for our own parking needs, the development of the Old Town Inn site, as well as the residual, the MIFCO site, which could have some residential or commercial applications.

[01:27:48] How do our residents feel? This one we declined in, and if you look at the comments in the study, You'll see a lot of that has to do with the fact that we have not made the progress on the Old Town Inn that our residents felt like we could have made, but again, hampered by our inability to provide parking for that property.

[01:28:10] This is a slide that shares with you your top employers. Micron is back on top. They dipped last year to number two. UVA Health had overtaken them, but they've historically been your number one employer. This is just a slide that shows you specifically where the jobs are and the types of businesses that this community is host to.

[01:28:30] If you look at this slide for most communities, you're going to see companies like Wal-Mart on there because a Wal-Mart in some communities may have two or three stores and they employ several

hundred people each. You'll see Food Lion. You'll see Giant. You do not see this kind of corporate base in a lot of communities as the primary employers.

[01:28:51] So, you know, again, I talked about our role and our status in high income, high wage, high tech, professional health care services, manufacturing, and otherwise. These are companies that most communities would give their IT to have, and you're blessed here in Manassas to have partners like these.

[01:29:10] A new addition this year was Southland Insulators. They bumped American Residential Services out of the number 10 slot, and that's a company that provides regional contracting. services i told you i'd come back to unemployment our goal is to stay below the state and the nation which we have consistently done and here's a snapshot over the past several years of how we compare some of the programs we run to impact things like unemployment and otherwise council made a goal in its last strategic plan that we would bring our high school attainment

[01:29:46] rate up to the regional average one of the things that we do to support that is the graduate program, which helps our residents get GEDs and gives them a reward for doing so. We were the first community to offer that in both English and Spanish, and quite frankly, we were the community that caused the State Department of Education to change its policy to allow for testing in Spanish, which it didn't do previously to us insisting that they do so.

[01:30:16] So Grow Manassas, a program that council provides in order to support credentials and workforce development in our community, I'm pleased to announce that beginning this year, we are going to be able to completely underwrite two-year nursing degrees.

[01:30:34] For anyone that lives in the city of Manassas, the only criteria will be that you get admitted to the nursing program at Northern Virginia Community College, which is a highly competitive program but for anybody that lives in 20110 zip code if you get into that program we will cover your tuition. We're able to do that in part with the Grow Manassas fund but also in part because of an amazing community sponsor in UVA Health. UVA Health has agreed to pick up 50% of the tuition cost and Grow Manassas will pick up the other 50% and that is no strings attached you don't have to take a job at UVA Health but while you're going through the program

[01:31:12] They're happy to take you on in internship roles with the hope that you will come work at UVA Health Systems once you get your nursing degree. No slide would be complete or a presentation without the gift that keeps on giving. Micron continues to invest heavily in your community.

[01:31:31] At the end of last year, the governor and the federal government announced their most recent expansion, another \$2 billion being invested into your community. They're our largest taxpayer and employer, and this is partially on top of the three billion dollar investment that they committed to back in 2018.

[01:31:55] And how do your residents feel about your ability to attract and retain those jobs? Very well. Thirty-eight percent of them expressed satisfaction. Forty-seven percent, the highest number, was the year we announced the three billion dollar micron expansion, which was the largest corporate expansion in the history of the state of Virginia.

[01:32:14] Communication outreach an important part of our program for those of you follow our social media or get our e-newsletters or look at our annual reports online you'll notice that we are the most followed economic development department in all of what Northern Virginia and second only to the

Virginia Economic Developers Association which is a statewide organization and then as we usually do pulling out of your ACFR some of the highlights that you can read here about the increases in our economy over the past year and then finally I know a number of your departments have highlighted the AAA credit rating that

[01:32:51] the city garnered the highest rating in every category and well as Ms. Bergeron noted in her report a lot of departments have a role in that rating as does City Council's policies and procedures always bear in mind please that one-third of your grade for that report is based on your local economy. So when the ratings agencies and the investors see things like low unemployment rates, high per capita incomes and household wages and housing values and successes like expansion of major industries like Micron and the attraction of data

[01:33:25] centers, those things contribute about 30% of the rationale behind giving you that high credit rating. So happy to answer any questions either now or offline at your leisure, whatever your pleasure. And I'm sure I went over ten minutes. Thank you, Mr. Small. Council members, any question? Mr. Wolf, Vice Mayor.

[01:33:48] Actually this is for Jeremy. First off to Mr. Small, thank you for the numbers for graduate and grow Manassas. They are truly impressive and impactful and I would recommend to Jeremy that this is a subject matter for our newsletters and and communication decisions because, as we discussed at retreat, we make significant investments and we're trying to give people the opportunity to improve their lives, but we need to do a better continuing job of communicating these opportunities.

[01:34:21] And now that we've got some numbers of success and, you know, stories we can tell, this is a great opportunity to be able to drive this home and make those programs even bigger. So thank you. And I'll beat your drum a little harder. I believe that program has the ability to be a national model. Fairfax City has copied it. Culpeper County is copying it. And I expect others will as well. Any other comments?

[01:34:46] Thank you, Madam Mayor. Yes, I have an amount of questions. Building in that in Manassas Grove, I think it's page 27.

[01:35:01] I was looking at it and it says, oh no, it was the other one, 27, yep, I wanted to talk about the prior one, I'm sorry. And I believe it says that this is the first program promoted and taught in Spanish and English, which I thought it was, you know.

[01:35:23] That was graduate, councilwoman. Yes, graduate, yes, yes, my apologies. So I wanted to ask, building in that, I know that we have a great and diverse set of businesses. I was wondering if is there any other information or newsletter or anything that is provided for in Spanish and English?

[01:35:46] Because I have seen the newsletter that has great details. I have seen a lot of information. But for those businesses that want to invest, expand, or even apply for the FASAD grant, how do they go about to get that information?

[01:36:05] so the graduate program and the grow Manassas program the flyers for those programs as well as the postcards the marketing that we've done to individual households as well as the paid advertising is done in both English and Spanish to follow our e-newsletter in Spanish you have to use the Google translate feature, and as it regards Gro Manassas, likewise, those publications are produced in English and Spanish.

[01:36:38] Okay. And I don't think you can translate the newsletter, because if you're on the website, I believe there is information for that to translate, but I don't think there is a way to translate the newsletter that you get in the email.

[01:36:56] There may not be. Okay. We produce it in English, we broadcast it in English, and I don't know if individuals' computers can translate it for them. I would hope so. Okay. Thank you.

[01:37:13] I appreciate the willingness to work with all the communities. Going, if somebody wants to expand or invest, do they go to the department, or how do they go about it? They can contact me directly.

[01:37:29] Okay. I'm happy to work with them. And will there be accommodations for them if they need someone to speak Spanish? Absolutely. The city provides accommodations for anybody that needs language translation assistance. Okay. Thank you. And then going back to GROW, I think I heard of some students from, former students from Osborne, they were speaking about how this can be of a great advantage.

[01:37:55] And, you know, for me, you know, it is something unique that the city provides, not only growth, but also the graduate. They are really important. I believe it's something that we need to be proud of and we need to highlight.

[01:38:11] Is there, has there been too many applicants? Is there a way, I believe there is a period of time when the people can apply to use that. Can you give me any specifics? So for Grow Manassas, you have to have been a city resident for one year, and you have to be able to get admitted to the community college.

[01:38:36] Those are the only two criteria to get into the program. There's no need base. There's no other qualification beyond admissions to the community college and living inside the city limits. And for the GED program, you only have to live in the city limits.

[01:38:53] We don't even have the one-year residency requirement. You just have to have been here for a year or be here in 20110. But the 20110 also covers the county. Very little, and the college is aware of those couple of areas that are outside of it.

[01:39:10] The universal rule is if you're in 20110, you're almost assuredly in the city of Manassas. If you are not in 20110, you are assuredly not in the city of Manassas. Great. Thank you. My last question in the survey, where do those numbers come from and is that published or how does that work?

[01:39:35] The results, the satisfaction results. That's the resident satisfaction survey that was presented to city council within the last, was it at the retreat? Did you all do it too? In December. That is available on our website as are, I believe we still have archived all the way back to 2016, if I'm not mistaken.

[01:39:56] All the satisfaction surveys should be available. And the data, for anyone who geeks out on data, is pretty interesting. You can target by neighborhood, target by demographic. Those studies are pretty comprehensive. For my department, we exert the six areas that are economic development related.

[01:40:16] Thank you. I just wanted to make sure our residents knew that in case they wanted to look into it. Thank you so much. Yes, ma'am. I would add one quick addition to the GROW Manassas program. As council may recall, we built that program for our incumbent workforce, the unemployed and underemployed.

[01:40:36] I have to say, Chris Taylor has done an amazing job at the high school with stuffing every student she has that wants to pursue career and technical education into that program. So really, what

you're seeing more so than incumbent workforces, you're actually seeing our matriculating workforce out of your high school going into this program.

[01:40:59] Ms. Ellis. Thank you, Patrick, for that presentation. Yeah, just a couple questions. Yeah, I'm real happy to see the results for Grow Manassas and the graduate program. I am curious, the applicant's screen, do they come directly from the schools?

[01:41:18] Are we working with – is that how we – So our partner in graduate is SkillSource, which is Virginia CareerWorks Northern. So that's our regional workforce development group. They do all the screening. Obviously, some of the information that people might provide is privileged, sensitive.

[01:41:37] SkillSource is used to dealing with that kind of information. SkillSource also is uniquely positioned to move these people through the workforce development chain So they have other offerings that they're able to make available to people who go in to graduate.

[01:41:53] And then Grow Manassas is administered by the community college. So the application form is online on the community college's website. They do the screening. So, again, I don't know the names of the individual. I'm happy to take any phone call from any resident or a parent or otherwise that wants to know more about the program.

[01:42:12] But at the end of the day, it's the college that actually has the admissions process. The money is parked with the community college. The money the council budgets annually for this program is remitted to the college. And they literally, once a student gets enrolled in the class, they just dip into that pot of money and pay the tuition.

[01:42:31] So there is no cost to the student. It's not a reimbursement program. There is no-- I mean, I could talk about this program for days. But there's no requirement or penalty that you finish. So if you sign up for an HVAC class And you drop out of it halfway through.

[01:42:48] There's no requirement that you pay it back. Now, I certainly don't want to encourage people to try things they may not be interested in and drop out. But the success rate of people getting through that is in the high 90 percentage. So if it would ever drop significantly, then we might have to revisit how we pay for it.

[01:43:05] But right now, we pay up front 100 percent, no penalty. And people seem to be taking that in good faith. And then just one other question. The tourism. I don't know if you tracked us at all or how you would, but we had 339,164 visitors in 2024.

[01:43:22] What do you think the top three reasons people come to Manassas City? We're awesome, we're awesome, and we're awesome. Events are the primary draw into the community.

[01:43:39] Your historic downtown would be the secondary draw. The mix of shops, restaurants, the streetscape work that we've done, outdoor dining, the wide sidewalks, the hanging baskets, all the things that the city and HMI have done to really make this feel like an authentic sense of place that you don't get in a town center in some of these larger communities.

[01:44:06] So it's that, you know, that feeling of Americana, the turn of the century with the specialty shops, unique dining. And then, I guess, the third reason that people come into the city is our attractions, places like the museum, Liberia, Annenberg, the Civil War forts, and then some of our private sector attractions like Vertical Rock as well.

[01:44:31] Oh, that's true. That is a big draw. Events, shopping, dining, and attractions. Thank you. Yes, ma'am. That's all I needed. Thanks. Anyone else? Okay. Thank you, Mr. Small. Appreciate it. Next on the agenda is item 1.7, Department Annual Report for Community Development, Parks, Culture, and Rec.

[01:44:51] Thank you. You can keep going with Patrick for a while if you'd like, Mayor. Your Honor, Members of Council, good evening. I'm Matt Arciera, the Director of Planning and Community Development. And with me is Keisha Wilson-Sagunro, my Assistant Director for Parks, Culture, and Recreation.

[01:45:11] And we're here to deliver the annual report for the department. Even though the Engineering Department appears to have photobombed my staff portrait, that's who we are. All the things I'm going to cover in the next few slides aren't accomplished without the work of those folks in that picture just a little bit department overview for those of you who don't know how we're structured community development is a little unique it's divided into two distinct sections planning and development which includes our long-range planning functions development services so that your permitting functions and of course property code enforcement on the fun side of the shops they like to refer to themselves as parks culture and recreation we of course the

[01:45:48] operations and maintenance of the parks, our new and growing recreation services department that also manages the Harris Pavilion, visitor and business services, all the events that rent from the city, and of course this store, and last but not least, certainly not least, the museum in our historic size division. I'm going to cover the planning and development side and then Keisha talk a little bit more about parks and rec, and then I'll come back at the end for questions, although you've asked Patrick most of them, so I suspect you won't have as many for us, but a little bit on our accomplishments for the fiscal year that just concluded. Of course, on the planning and development side, we did successfully move back

[01:46:24] and transition operations from the customer service center out on Godwin Drive back to City Hall. All the planning development functions and the engineering department functions are now on the second floor of City Hall. Some really new synergy between those two departments. You'll hear from Lance in a little bit, but planning and engineering overlap on everything we do. So rather than having us at CSC and the staff for engineering out of public works, it makes a lot of sense to everyone together here even for customer questions but if you need a permit second floor open for business we've moved forward and you'll hear from us again in february we are planning commission with staff support as we continue drafting some updates or a comprehensive plan this is a smaller

[01:47:03] update than the 2020 plan that's been currently adopted but again as well as work on our mobility plan we'll be back in february the council work session to talk a little bit about where we are at that process. We do hope to wrap up this year. Continue to move forward with all of our transportation planning, supporting the Engineering Public Works Department. Again, continuing to build both our bike and pedestrian facilities and securing funding for both road, pedestrian, bike projects this year. Again, another huge number, almost \$10 million in state federal funding.

[01:47:33] I have it in the annual report. I should have put it up here. That's in the last three years, almost \$35 million secured towards new construction to continue to address our number one concern in the citizen survey getting around or number two concern in the citizen survey which is improving mobility so bringing in the dollars it's a large part of what we do to really try to address those very top concerns in the

community on transportation and mobility and of course we continue to promote alternates to the car so we did promote and issue our first bike map for the city and that's all in support of our bronze designation as a bicycle friendly community. Patrick talked about a lot of this so I'll just talk about the

[01:48:12] top one we spent most of the last year on special use permit site plan and building review and approval for Dean Elementary School so this is gonna be a major effort that will as occupied us for the last year and we will continue to focus on it it's now moved over to the building department side of the shop so there'll be a lot of work obviously supporting the school and the construction of Dean Elementary School a lot of work on the Van Meter project and with the data centers and of course code enforcement continues to be very busy. I don't have a lot in here in Code Enforcement. I know we have a request from a council at an upcoming work session to talk a little more about quality of life, but those guys are out there

[01:48:47] working every day, really with the focus in that division on residential violations, again, guided by the Citizen Survey, so tall grass and trash. Those are really the two big efforts that we're focused on every day with the Code Enforcement team. And I think it's Keisha's turn.

[01:49:11] Mayor, members of council, of course, it's a pleasure to be here again this evening. I want to clip a quick fast fact that we were titled the fun department PCR by City Council. So we are so gracious for that title and no hateration to the other departments, but we will take that title as having fun at Parks, Culture, and Recreation.

[01:49:32] So here are some of our highlights. In FY24, we were able to move back into the museum space. We were out for maybe a year and a half or so. And so we have been so happy to move back into our space. This has been our first full year of being in the space.

[01:49:50] And we showcased the special exhibitions. Our exhibitions was the Native Legacy exhibition. And of course, one of our favorite exhibitions was the 50 Years and 50 Objects exhibition that was curated by our community.

[01:50:07] As far as visitor attendance, we have seen our numbers surpass. that's even before the pandemic. So you can quickly see how impactful that renovation has been. Our numbers have doubled. The museum has certainly been a gathering place for people to come, either if you're a history lover, if you love the great outdoors, the museum has been the space for you.

[01:50:30] Of course, the museum is surrounded by a park, so that helps. It's surrounded by Baldwin Park. So we just welcome everyone to come through outdoors and have a good time. If you attended Antibird ribbon cutting, then you would have noticed all of the wonderful interior and exterior renovations that happened at that historic site.

[01:50:49] We have repaired and painted the walls. We did a stabilization project of the first floor of the porch. And also we add an addition of the handicap ramp that's on the left side or right side of the house.

[01:51:06] We also made sure that we just did all those special things. So when you walk into Annenberg, I think you will agree with me that it has become truly a special, special place. We hosted the City of Manassas Art Show during that ribbon cutting.

[01:51:21] That's actually in 2025, but it's such a stunning house that I will encourage people to take a look as we continue to have programs there. We also have been able to highlight another huge accomplishment

in Parks, Culture, and Recreation, of course, by the support of City Council, which was the acquisition of the former Marsteller School.

[01:51:44] Staff continues to work diligently of bringing that space so it's usable. We have been working diligently to renovate the interior as well as the exterior, meaning the ball fields, which will come online March 15th.

[01:52:01] So, we are certainly ready to welcome the community to use those ball fields, and we have appreciated all of the feedback. We know that site is very popular, and everyone has something to share about how the space should be used. So we continue to welcome folks chiming in on how they want that space to be used and how we could better use the exterior spaces as well.

[01:52:26] Okay. Alright. So, as I said, let the fun continue. We've seen significant double our attendance at Stonewall Park Pool, which is super significant. We know that we are the choice location for birthday parties, graduations, or just family outings or if someone just wants to cool down from the hot temperatures, which we do not have today, but I promise you it's coming.

[01:52:54] So we want to encourage you to reach out to us. We will actually be in the schools, Osborne High School, in recruiting. start our seasonal hiring recruiting actually in February where we're in all the lunches at Osborne so if anyone is looking for a seasonal job please look our way as we are hiring I like to say this because I know the lifeguard top competition is is really tough and I think our HR department behind me can vouch for that that lifeguards please hear me or parents we pay for your training we pay for your certifications last year in 2024 you all got to see our

[01:53:32] lifeguards come before you as all of them were certified and ready to go so we take safety seriously and we make sure our guards are certified another highlight is 95% of our staff were bilingual so we look and encourage folks to speak different languages and our priority language that most people speak amongst the pool staff in Spanish. So we can welcome all backgrounds to our pool.

[01:54:03] Of course, here's more fun. How can I forget the Harris Pavilion? This is where we host our concert series. We have everything from Acoustics Tuesday to Sunday or Saturday Sounds to Sunday Fun Day. We get to have a range of great artists that come through our way.

[01:54:24] of the most popular artists is from American Idol. You all know our local celebrity, Mike Parker, who comes through and some of our business community sponsors him and all his bandmates passing out cookies and different trinkets for our community. We also have another popular band, Special Occasions, that will be playing this year. So we look forward to having folks come out this is free we understand that families have different priorities but we want to make sure we bring the fun and we make it free for all people to participate so it's it's a good time and then

[01:55:04] lastly on this slide i want to talk about our programs we've had a host of programs this year 95 that offered at 95 historic sites these programs attract people from all different backgrounds. And I'm so gracious to Patrick to recognize that the museum does pull people to the city of Manassas locally and regionally, especially since we had the Jenny Dean project where Jenny Dean had fundraise from Boston, New York, all the way down to Florida. So

[01:55:38] the Manassas Museum in its history is a big draw from folks from locally and also from the city we also um excuse me from the region we also partner with manassas city schools we help to support them in their curriculum of learning virginia history i'm happy to announce that we have had every fourth

grader in the school system in the building which is fun and busy all at the same time but we love it we've had baldwin and hayden so far and our goal overall

[01:56:15] as we continue with this is to have each fourth grader all fourth graders from each school come to our doors we also hosted sixth grade day which was very interesting we had them on the lawn then it rained then they were inside the museum so we have a lot of busy bodies around but it's nothing more tender and special to have the laughter of children in our building so we certainly appreciate that and I think I want to make sure I hone in on that how important is to have the children in our buildings we received a letter from the

[01:56:50] coordinator of pre-k to 12 social studies coordinator Melissa Neal and she said this she said first of all you all are knocking out the park the students are having fun and are engaging in their learning I have had so much positive feedback. I wanted to share this email with you. Nora loved the field trip and she's not easy to please. She talked a lot about last night about her time at the museum without even a lot of prompting. She wasn't looking forward to it probably because she didn't enjoy the last field trip. Glad Dr. Newman is gone.

[01:57:25] She probably because she didn't enjoy the last field trip which was with GT. So her bar was pretty high. Please share this with the museum staff that they nailed it, at least for my daughter. So that makes it all well worth it for us to come in each and every day, rain, snow, or whatever, that kids are enjoying it and are learning. So we are just so appreciative of that partnership that we have with the schools. And I will encourage folks at home, if you have a pen and paper, to jot down these important dates. We will be kicking off Dean Park

[01:58:03] ribbon-cutting long overdue on March 14th. We also will have more stellar community conversations again on April 20th. The community event will be an egg hunt. So we're going to make sure we have thousands of eggs on that lawn. We are in partnership with Manassas Baptist Church and the Boys and Girls Club. So it really should be a fun day. So everyone cross your fingers that we have no rain because that will be not a good thing and then we'll have our play all day June 20th where Tom Osina participated and was so wonderful at our

[01:58:40] ice cream show show of last year this is where we provide you a free parks and rec passport to go visit all of the different city parks our community of community partners facilities of course the mayor was there and it's just an all-around fun event and then we conclude with an ice cream social so you can't pass that up so it's super fun and then i would like to announce because of the popularity with open gym guess what we're going to do it year-round no i am not shooting a jump shot i tried to try to get my form

[01:59:17] right but i'm leaving it up to all the kids who have come out we have seen a wonderful wonderful uptick in participation and that's from everything from the novice to the advanced player and we are so very thankful for Jahan who's jumped in and helped out with it and so many of other volunteer coaches who are getting the information out for city kids to participate in such a positive recreational activity. Of course we have the Jenny Dean cottage project that's coming up where we're looking to relocate the cottage to its memorial site. So that

[01:59:56] will be a huge project that's underway. I will not be negligent and not acknowledging the associates, the Manassas Associates, Museum Associates, who donated \$25,000 to this project. So we are very thankful for that and if anyone wants to talk about how they could also support that effort with the

donation. I'm always happy to talk about that. And then look here, Liberia turns 200. Wow. So we know we already did another birthday celebration about the city. So we know how to do birthdays

[02:00:31] well. So you can count on a huge celebration at Liberia. The museum staff is already thinking about ideas. We'll be reaching out to our council to find out what you would like to see. So we're open to all ideas are on the table and we're looking forward to a wonderful celebration at Liberia. Then lastly of course I could not leave out Echo's gift shop. So we know the weather is turning nice we all felt it today I haven't even worn a coat today and this is a wonderful little like bag within a bag so if you're thinking about your travels or your spring shopping or if you just want

[02:01:09] to put your recreational stuff in it this is a giant bag inside so you can do this and you can close it up and all and we have colors that you know are like blue green whatever you like but we want to welcome you to our gift shop as we have a host of inventory this is not QVC we make payments directly to the museum so we welcome you to come and check out our inventory and thank you so much and I just can't say enough about our wonderful volunteers which we have over 280 and they do a great job from Parks and Rec Committee it's a historic resources board to a host of subcommittees we thank you for all the hard work and sticking with

[02:01:49] us during this time all right thank you thank you you want you want to buy this i'll take that i like and then back to the planning and development side to wrap this up over the next year we are going to be continue to be with the laser focus on attainable housing and what we can do both with our completing the work to re-establish our housing advisory board and the trust fund that's something i discussed with you all a little bit during the retreat this weekend and also looking at some other housing initiatives, especially what we can do with some of these strategic acquisitions that council has made in public property throughout the city. My department will be heavily involved

[02:02:24] with the Economic Development Authority and Mr. Small's office. We are beginning to plan the community conversations for the shopping center. There's a lot of development going on. Again, of course, the Old Town and MIFCO site's going to require a lot of work from the development staff, both on the planning side, the architectural review board side.

[02:02:42] a lot to be done as we start to decide some of the -- make some decisions on what to do with this property. Industrial, the building department will be very busy working on the data centers and our residential. And last but not least, we intend to bring the comprehensive plan forward for adoption this fall in 2025. I would be remiss if I didn't note that we are taking comments on the work that's been done. So if you scan those QR codes or go go on to the website, manassasva.gov/complan2025.

[02:03:10] You should be able to find, or 2045, excuse me, you should be able to find the opportunity to make input on what's been done so far, and then I will be back before you at our work session in February. Your Honor, members of council, that concludes my presentation. As I always like to say, it's an honor and a pleasure to serve the city on behalf of the department, and I stand ready for any questions.

[02:03:30] - Thank you, Mr. Arcieri. Council members, any questions or comments for Matt? Mr. Osina. first of all, isn't there a mobility – could you explain what's taking place this week on the mobility aspect?

[02:03:45] Right. So in addition to updating the comprehensive plans element on mobility, that element, that chapter of the plan is actually driven by our mobility master plan. That's more of a technical

document, so it has a lot of the traffic study, the city-wide traffic model, a lot of analysis of what goes into how we prioritize future projects.

[02:04:02] The technical work from that gets fed into the comprehensive plan, But the technical work also has a strong community component. This Thursday, if you have an opportunity to sign up for it, we have a bike-ped working group, an opportunity to meet with the bike and ped planner and talk a little bit about some of the work that's been done.

[02:04:21] And we'll continue to take input on that as well. It's more of a technical document. It feeds into not just the comprehensive plan, but your CIP and all of the transportation policies. So it's really a piece of the plan, but it also stands alone in a lot of ways. And then secondly, last year there was a Plan Your Park program at Winterset.

[02:04:44] So after the input there along the way, what happens next and what could residents, particularly in that neighborhood, expect? Well, if you haven't had an opportunity to go out to Winterset Park, you can already see that a lot of improvements have been made, a lot of the pieces of the park.

[02:05:00] So we do this every two years. We pick one or more of the neighborhood parks. We go in and do a wholesale first community input and then redesign. So if you go out to Winterstead Park, you'll see all the furniture has been replaced. You'll see the basketball court has been resurfaced. The biggest piece to that park, actually, pause, we've added new lighting in the park because we heard a lot about safety.

[02:05:18] So if you go out there, you'll see our electric department has replaced the old street pole with some of the park lighting to improve safety and the feeling of safety in that park. The big one will be this spring. The playground will be completely redone with sharks. And the biggest thing there, actually, though, is that we're going to go from a mulch surface to a rubberized surface.

[02:05:39] We don't always have the opportunity to do that, but that's a huge impact on safety in our playground. So that community is going to see a completely brand new park in the next three to four months. We will repeat that process on June 20th, play all day. We'll be out at Nelson this year, we'll be out at Oakenshaw, and we'll be out at Walter Delisle.

[02:05:58] So the process repeats itself every two years. We do the community input, and then we make the improvements. Any other questions, comments from Mr. Arcieri? All right. Thank you, sir. Thank you. Appreciate it. That moves us forward to item 1.8, the Department Annual Report for Engineering.

[02:06:16] Mr. Kilby is here to help with that. Welcome, sir. Hello. Madam Mayor and Council, I appreciate the opportunity to present the engineering presentation for you. So who are we? And what do we do?

[02:06:33] Basically, we have five professional engineers licensed by the state in Virginia. And we have about six engineering technicians, inspectors, and professionals associated in our department. Similar to what Keisha was talking about, the fund, I mean, to get to the fund, we have to get it designed and we have to get it built, you know.

[02:06:54] So come up with an idea, you come up with a plan. Now we've got to get it designed and built, so we're the technical folks behind it, I suppose. So what do we do? We provide design. So we do water system design, sanitary design, storm sewer design.

[02:07:14] We review site plans. We've probably done about 200 site plan reviews this past year. It's first submission, second submission, so forth and so on. Manage projects, construction. We have about \$120 million worth of projects going on at the city.

[02:07:30] So a lot of work, a lot of projects. We inspect construction sites. We did about 1,000 inspections. That counts a new item that we've kind of taken over more recently, which is the excavation permit program, which is all the fiber optic lines that are getting to the data centers and everything like that.

[02:07:50] We've got to make sure that the roads are restored back to the way they originally were designed to. So we've taken over that process. We also implement the stormwater program, the city stormwater program. Amy Billman's here. She's going to talk a little bit about that.

[02:08:08] We've managed a CIP budget. We also manage the 2025 budgets. We have about six million dollars related to that. So what does reviewing a site plan mean? You know, basically one of the things we're looking at is we're looking at the rules, regulations. We're looking to make sure they're in conformance with our city standards as well as state standards, zoning ordinance, design and construction standards manual that we have, and we're going through that process of review. So our department does stormwater review, transportation review, the excavation permit review. We also do erosion sediment

[02:08:47] control permit review and then also looking at utilities, water, sewer, sanitary. We look at all those kind of things. In addition we look at traffic impact analysis, geotechnical studies, floodplain studies, and just general engineering review of projects. So what are some of our accomplishments? There's multiple road, land development, and pedestrian projects that have been constructed. There's also several that have been completed and designed. We've taken over the excavation permit process, as I mentioned before. We've done about four floodplain studies this year

[02:09:24] that have been submitted to FEMA to update some of our studies that have been outdated over the years. We've updated DCSM for Article 4 and Article 8. That conforms back with the state with the DEQ regulations, submitted a lot of, Amy's going to talk a little bit about some of our grants and funding applications that we've submitted to. And then we've also assisted with getting a faster response to drainage complaints, improve pond maintenance. We've increased public outreach with school presentation, farmers markets, and things of that nature. We've also

[02:10:01] renewed our on-call contracts with all our subs. We have about 12 on-call engineers that we use. And we filled staff vacancies. Our last vacancy will be filled February 10th, knock on wood. And so she'll be a stormwater analyst, and she'll be starting on the 10th.

[02:10:20] We also submit all the requirements to DEQ. We submit to the state our annual report showing that we're in compliance. So with that, some of the highlights that you've seen. I don't have a video this year. I did last year, but I've got to keep it simple this year.

[02:10:38] Grand Avenue Phase 1 is complete. with the roundabout it's open and operational dean park phase one and phase two design and construction is complete we're at the final stages of that we have the as built that's under second plan review at the moment and then we can close that out as keisha mentioned march 14th will be a ribbon cutting ceremony so we look forward to that the winter branch pond retrofit project has been completed this year the lucasville pond retrofit is substantially complete

[02:11:10] on March 20 or May 23rd some of it you may remember with the turtles so that's a national turtle day and we're going to return the turtles back to the back to the pond that day so for those that like

to come see that we'll have an event for that construction that's recently started you see it suddenly road third lane is under construction Liberia stream rest reconstruction is in construction the new Britain pond which is also the pond behind the public works facility is under construction around elementary stormwater management pond as well as a stream restoration

[02:11:45] is started and the Euclid Sills pond is also under construction so projects that we're working on some of them were listed in the previous slide but Wellington Road shared use path that project has just mobilized it's getting ready to start construction the traffic signal conversion at Donner and Godwin everything's approved we're just waiting for the final step up from VDOT and then we can get it out to bed. Designer right-of-way. Part of our project is getting all the right-of-way for these parcels and for the development to be able to go forth. Dumfries Trail has about four parcels

[02:12:21] that we acquire. We've gotten three of them. Two of them have been donated and we have one other parcel left to obtain. Centerville Roundabout is that 90% design and we're in the right-of-way acquisition phase. We have seven parcels there. So a lot of commercial development there, so it's going to take a little bit of time there.

[02:12:40] Similar with Mathis, the design is advanced to 90%, 60% to 90% design, and we're in the process of starting right away. We've gotten appraisals done. And then Sudley Road Sidewalk, that's 29 parcels along Sudley Road. That's going to take probably a year to get right away for, so it's going to be a little lengthy process there. Private development, I won't go into that. Everybody's mentioned that, but we review all those plans that that come in and out of there as well as inspect them. One of the other the initiatives that we're that we're looking forward to is the watershed assessments. We were able to get ARPA

[02:13:18] funded for some CCTV work that's been done and as part of that we've initiated a consultant to do their first watershed assessment and that's going to basically look at areas that we have flooding in the streets and once we have that done we'll really know what we have under the ground as well as where we have issues on site but I'm gonna let Amy talk a little bit about that with that well thank you Lance and I'm new here I've been here for about five months so it's been really exciting to come and to work here and I

[02:13:54] appreciate working with Lance and the team here but the city we have managed 11 11 capital improvement projects we performed 352 inspections and maintenance activities this past year we inspected 32 stormwater facilities which are publicly owned we addressed drainage complaints we we screened our our MS4 outfalls 50 every year and we performed illicit discharge investigations and

[02:14:28] sometimes that is just going out and educating the individual sometimes it is following up with a corrective action measure um let me okay Lance and the other group have have talked about a lot of things but I would like to just highlight a couple through like HOA meetings and the farmer market events and just the citizen calling us we are able to outreach with the community and to educate the community this past year we implemented the cartograph asset management system

[02:15:07] which is a management system that um that correlates with our with our GIS and we track our assets and we interact with the other departments then um and then the CCTV we have initiated that to be citywide this year and we are using ARPA funds and so basically we have three different companies coming out and they are collecting all of the data at at at different

[02:15:41] spots over the next year and then with the cockerel branch we this is our pilot study for our watershed hazard assessment and we are wrapping that up and moving forward and one of our grants in which we are moving forward with will be helping to fund that if it's awarded and then in early of 24 we We had an emergency culvert repair, and that was along Shannon Lane.

[02:16:15] And then basically over this past year, there were different design projects. A few of the ones in which I'll mention is the Euclid Seals Warehouse, and that basically increased the capacity of the pond and is going to address water quality measures.

[02:16:34] then with round elementary school that project just started a couple of weeks ago that is increasing the pond capacity it is going to replace the culvert underneath godwin drive with a box culvert and we'll also address water quality there and then and then behind the school along a long cannon branch approximately 1200 linear feet of of stream is going to be restored and then one of the last projects is the public works part public works pond and that is um and

[02:17:12] that has commits two and that is basically retrofitting it so it is um performing better and all three of these projects started in the month of december and then in january time frame then as we move forward the city is continuing to do design efforts to address the capacity of the ponds the maintenance of the ponds and the water quality measures a few of the key projects they

[02:17:42] are kao euclid seals or euclid outfall where we are stabilizing 120 liter feet of channel owens Owens Brook Pond, where we'll be retrofitting the ponds, and then Mets Middle School, we are looking at the existing conditions and looking at different management practices to utilize there.

[02:18:08] So overall, our main initiative is the CCTV data collection of the storm sewer system, which feeds into the cartograph asset management system, which will aid with our watershed studies on a city-wide basis.

[02:18:26] Lance. So with that, I'll end with our mission statement. Our goal is to provide quality engineering design, project management, and construction management. And then not only are we binded by certain equalities and things that we want to do with the city, but we're also binded by the state to protect health and welfare and safety of others as part of the professional engineer licenses.

[02:18:57] So with that, I'm going to end it and then open it up to questions for anybody that wants to speak about that. Thank you both so much, Ms. Hudson. Thank you for that insightful presentation. A lot of the projects that you mentioned had water, stormwater, pond repair.

[02:19:15] And within the presentation, it talked about stormwater and flood control impacts on public health. Can you talk about why we do these projects and what that impact on public health is? And then I have a second question to follow up with as well. Do you want to cover that? You want me to?

[02:19:31] Well, a couple things. One is we're looking at phosphorus and nitrogen and also TSS, which is a pollutant and sediment that gets into our streams that erode the streams that we have in the city. In addition to that, we're looking at flooding and resiliency in terms of if the stream or the culverts or was inadequate, that's going to fail.

[02:19:54] We have culverts that have failed that basically could potentially collapse a road or something like that. But we don't we're not seeing that at the moment, but there's risks associated with that. And as

part of it, we're also looking at flooding and where, you know, you're going to have to potentially shut down a road during a major storm event.

[02:20:11] When you look at like hurricanes and large storm events, which we have had storms that have been greater than the 10 year storm, which is typically what the storm sewer network is designed for. So we have a lot of situations like that. Yeah, that have been acquired.

[02:20:24] Thank you. And I watched the culvert being replaced on Shannon as I drove to work on Hastings every day. That was a very swift replacement. So well done to all involved. My second question stems from comments that I've seen online. I think that whenever construction equipment shows up anywhere near our historic sites, people get scared and upset. So namely the Liberia house stream restoration is going underway.

[02:20:53] and can you talk a little bit about what the public is going to see happening out there and also ensure them that you're not touching the house? So the stream is under restoration now, and it does look like it's an area that is cleared, and I understand a lot of concerns there.

[02:21:13] But the project is going to have approximately about 600 lower or smaller trees and bushes, and they're going to be along the sides of other streams and then also 120 larger trees along the perimeter and the trail is going to be restored. There is going to be I believe it was a Boy Scout bridge which has been relocated which has been temporary removed and it's going to be restored

[02:21:46] there and so it's going to be a complete restoration project of utilizing natural natural channel design measures. The other thing I'd add to that is this project is also in close coordination with park and recs as well as community development and as part of that there's also coordination with DHR, Department of Historic Resources, in terms of making sure that we're not impacting that site any greater than what's absolutely necessary to do that

[02:22:21] improvement. Thank you. Thank you for the info. Any other? Ms. Vasquez-Luna and then Mr. Wolf. Thank you, Madam Mayor. I remember all the work at Lucasville and I understand, you know, What happens sometimes is the sound or the work, you know, it can be worrisome for our residents.

[02:22:48] But I just want to make sure that, you know, that we state again that, you know, how important not only for our locality but also for the region as we have to meet our minimums and we have a period of time to make sure that we do the work.

[02:23:06] Yeah, sometimes, you know, the weather is not in our favor, too. So that creates, you know, a delay, but it's still, you know, I appreciate all the work, and this is necessary, you know, in the best interest for the city and for everybody.

[02:23:22] I know the work that you put, and like you said, you know, you might not be the, you know, the fan team in the department, but all the work, you know, it's greatly appreciated. I don't think all the work that goes behind sometimes is understood, but it's so necessary for us to achieve our COG requirements and much more.

[02:23:47] So thank you for what you do. Can you tell me a little bit about the house, the stability for the house that is by the stream on Liberia? was it the Spring House? Yes. The Spring House. Yes. Yeah I mean so one of the things that we're actually myself and Kristen Fox and and a couple other folks are going to

actually go out there and we're looking at some of the the drainage that goes around that because we basically diverted flow around it to keep the impacts away from it but the the the foundation of it is already

[02:24:26] undermined you know from that perspective so we're going to go out there and do a structural evaluation kind of look at it and see what we can do to preserve it basically water and sewer yeah that's part of the transmission main for the water basically another question and comment

[02:25:01] I'm glad everybody recognized the hard work Lance and his team's been doing they were backlogged and they have worked really really hard to get caught up and a lot of these things aren't the sexy things, so to speak, that everybody else is doing, but it's mandated by federal government, and a lot of it's gone unaddressed for years, and they're working hard to get us up into compliance, so appreciate the hard work they've put in.

[02:25:32] Thank you so much for being here. We also get to work with VDOT, so that's exciting. Thank you. All right. Next on the agenda, item 1.9, Department Annual Report from our Human Resources Department, Ms. Darla Hicks is here and will help us with that.

[02:25:48] Uncle Ma'am. Yes, ma'am. Thank you, Madam Mayor, members of council. I see them keen for the last time. I appreciate the opportunity to just go over briefly some of the work and accomplishments of this wonderful HR team who joins me in the audience this evening.

[02:26:07] Going over some of their things. That's just a testament to their dedication to the city and supporting which is true to us here. We did process 3,195 applications last year, which is a 20 percent increase over the prior year. I tried to highlight a lot of our recruitment efforts to emphasize some of the changes with the backgrounds of some of our candidates. I know that that's been something that's been of interest to many. So this just kind of highlights the

[02:26:44] changes with our applicant ethnicity increases as well as our new higher ethnicity shift i wanted to bring that to your attention through our recruitment efforts we use a multitude of different platforms to advertise our positions and a number of these platforms also then further feed into other areas interestingly enough though when we poll our candidates and look at where they have seen the job or how they came in touch with the city in Manassas, it's actually from our

[02:27:20] own website. They're actually coming to the city of Manassas Virginia website to see what opportunities the city has for them. We posted a total of 87 recruitments and job postings. 12 of those openings were filled by our own internal candidates, thus promoting our work with our employees that we've got we did in 76 new hires conducting over 300 interviews a majority of those Molly Blanchard sits in on so HR has a presence just to help assist with any

[02:27:58] questions on the way and then we also conducted 26 new hire orientations that's done by Deb and Jeff our safety and our benefits for our employee demographic info, the average age is 41. Our average income runs roughly 91.5, and our racial minority demographics continue to increase. We're now up to 31%. It was at 29% last year. So I just wanted

[02:28:32] to bring this to your attention in comparing over the past several years how our workforce has changed ethnically. It is difficult when you're dealing with 600 positions to change that barometer really quick, but I'm pleased with the positive progress that we've had. With our employee tenure, we've had a lot of retirements. Our aging demographics, this kind of captures our average employee tenure is nine years now, and then we broke it down there for you by age group just so that you could see

[02:29:11] where they fall within that. For our turnover we compared 2023 to 2024 you can see a few more retirements throughout 2023 versus 24 the number of those that departed involuntarily remained pretty stagnant there and then a number of resignations.

[02:29:37] We do conduct exit interviews with everyone who leaves the city and also provide them with the opportunity to give feedback through an anonymous survey if they're interested and collect that information and circle back with the department heads to make sure they're made aware of any ways to improve the employee experience.

[02:29:58] Our turnover rate is 11 percent, which is completely in line with the national average. That usually runs anywhere from 10% to 14% is what your normal rate would be. We're pleased with the support of council.

[02:30:13] Last year, we were able to enhance a number of our benefits to include leave payouts for those that are retiring. We're able to increase our deferred compensation contribution to \$75 per paycheck for employees.

[02:30:29] That is not something that you see in this region. So that's really something that we push out to those that are considering us. We adopted the parental leave policy for birth or adoption, as well as started fronting some new hire leave for those newly joined in the city so that they're if they're encountering instances where they need to take a day off, they've got some leave available to them.

[02:30:54] We increased our insurance contributions for those that are retiring and and kind of aligned our annual leave accruals as well as our sick leave accruals for that and also for those of in the different departments that are on call we increased that amount as well for those that are required to report back to the city during emergencies and extreme situations we offered a few more things in our in our little pot of benefits for our employees delta dental We've got a stand-alone policy now for those that may be on someone else's insurance policy

[02:31:33] but does not have a firm dental policy, spot pet insurance for all of our four-legged mothers and fathers, and then we also, through Deb's hard work, were able to get access to the cardinal system, which is a statewide system that administers all of our health insurance. You have to go through a rigorous vetting process to be able to utilize their system to make changes and Deb was able to accomplish that for the city so that's a huge feat for us and that our employees when they need certain changes implemented for their

[02:32:11] health insurance we're not having to go through an entire line of steps to get that done the city can actually do that for them we continue to encourage personal and professional growth through our sponsorships through leadership Prince William. We've also started sponsoring of several employees for their emerging leaders program, which are those that are not necessarily supervisors, but desire to learn a bit more and eventually become a supervisor. Our tuition reimbursement program remains steady. About

[02:32:44] 24 employees reimbursed in a total of almost \$36,000 for fiscal year 2024. And we also had milestone program that enabled 29 of our non-public safety employees to receive milestone increases. For our regional market competitiveness, Lena and POFO benchmarks a certain number of positions. On average it runs about 90 positions each year. She benchmarks those against seven different localities within the region to make sure that we are aligned and competitive with our partners.

[02:33:23] We conducted a number of trainings, both supervisory as well as safety throughout the year, and we'll continue to do that. Most recently, we had Al Durr, who assisted with some of the task force earlier.

[02:33:41] I believe that was in 2022-23. He came and did some training, and we're going to continue doing that. overlook while the majority is HR we do also have risk and safety within the HR realm and so for our risk management this just kind of gives you a picture of our claims this is broken down by fiscal year so the 24-25 is just through December but we're tracking basically in line with where we were for for our

[02:34:15] workers' compensation injuries, we continue to review those to find any trends. And then Jeff jumps in to do any trainings that may help curb some of those or make employees a little more aware of how they're bending, how they're stooping, how they're operating vehicles. And speaking of vehicles, we also have the defensive driver class, which is required of every employee that operates a city vehicle. We also offer other trainings, especially if those follow an accident they have to go through certain remedial training and so we

[02:34:50] ensure that we follow up and make sure those are taken care of all drivers are required to complete a defensive driver class though every two years i mentioned this last year this year we had almost 20 employees achieve their commercial driver's license you'll find that a lot of our competitors want people with cdl's on the spot the city of manassas will train them and support them with their training and attaining the CDL. That has proven very beneficial for us to attract talent

[02:35:22] and Jeff has been able to save the city on almost \$200,000 since we unveiled the program so that we're not having to send them out anywhere to be trained. We're able to train them in-house. We're still an innovator in this field and we continue to help all of our neighboring jurisdictions as they try to build their programs as well and just wanted to bring a few items of interest we do have our national employee appreciation day on march 7th we'll be sending goodies around for all of our city employees the service awards is normally the third week in april

[02:36:02] employees like to be able to be recognized in front of their peers for their numbers of years of service. And then we also have Public Service Recognition Week, the week of May 5th through 9th. We do things periodically throughout that week as well. And with that, I stand ready for any questions you may have. Thank you. ICM King, go ahead. Before you ask questions, just three highlights. You've heard about this before, but three areas that the HR department has worked really hard to make improvements on. The first one is the time that it takes you to get hired. So

[02:36:41] we're working hard on that. They made improvement. We're continuing to do that. The other one is communication with staff. There's been a huge uptick with whether it's your financial planning, your benefits, or other needs you may have. HR has done a huge change there with the amount of communication back and forth with staff and as darla highlighted part of it is training across the board one of the areas we recognized was probably a gap in our leadership training and they've worked hard to

[02:37:17] start making that gap a little smaller so good work on that thank you thank you i just have a question we have a referral bonus we have a referral bonus for public safety yes for any fire and police because those are the two hardest positions for us to fill and there is a 500 dollar referral bonus if the employee is hired and remains for a period of a year yes okay and um you mentioned um in our turnover there's a lot of retirements there are so do we convert people

[02:37:54] when they retire is there an option for them to like consult or anything like that i don't know So the Virginia retirement system has certain rules related to retirement. You have to have at least a 30 day break in employment. You cannot have any pre agreed upon agreements with the locality.

[02:38:13] There are times when we start, if we start seeing a trend where we're not getting a number of applicants and the department needs extra expertise, we do offer that opportunity to some of our retirees. Yes. Okay. Thank you. I want to personally shout out Deb for helping me with the recent benefit issue that I had, and I hope I wasn't too difficult, but, no, she was very helpful and very responsive, so definitely wanted to give her kudos for doing your job and doing it well with a smile, because I had to bug her quite a bit, so I appreciate it.

[02:38:46] Appreciate that. Any other questions or comments for Ms. Hicks on the HR report? All right. Thank you so much for being here. Thank you. I appreciate it. Thank you all for coming and supporting as well. All right, next on the agenda is the consent agenda.

[02:39:03] I'll call on Vice Mayor Wolfe for that motion. Yeah, as much as we'd like to hear from Lieutenant Brooks, I will move the adoption of the consent agenda and move the dispensing 3D of the ordinance. Second. We have the motion by Vice Mayor Wolfe, seconded by Councilwoman Vasquez Luna, to approve our consent agenda.

[02:39:20] Any discussion, hearing, and seeing none? Mr. Smith, please call the roll. Vice Mayor Wolfe? Yes. Council Member Vasquez Luna? Yes. Council Member Ellis? Yes. Council Member Smith. Yes. Council Member Rosina. Yes. Council Member Hudson. Yes. The motion carries. All right. Thank you for that. Next on the agenda is public comment time. I don't know if Mr. Brown, if you can expect to see if anyone has signed up. Nobody has signed up, but Sarah, you can just go ahead to the podium and I'll have your name down. Thank you.

[02:39:54] Hi, I'll be fast because it's been a long meeting and I only have three minutes, but I was hearing today through a lot of the great presentations, some discussion of mobility, that that was on the survey that residents were interested in that. I also wanted to share in my individual capacity.

[02:40:09] Last year, Manassas City Public Schools was working with a vendor, Engage VA. They conducted a survey of our chronically absent students, and I just wanted to share with all of you and all assembled that the number one reason given by our chronically absent students who were surveyed by Engage VA for missing school was a lack of backup transportation options when they missed the bus.

[02:40:30] So, if you could kindly help us out with improving mobility around the city, there will be other benefits, not just economic development, just responding to our citizens express preferences so I wanted to make you aware of that I also have a brief personal announcement which will be a little bit relevant is that I have joined the Prince William County Regional Board of Directors for the Boys and Girls Club and so I am excited to be working with them and excited to be working with Keisha who left to help get their youth development programs up and synergized and serving the kids of the

[02:41:09] city of Manassas. So that's all I wanted to leave you guys with today. Thank you. Anyone else present who wishes to address council or public comment, Tom? Mr. Platniak. Good evening. Good evening, sir. You know my name, so I don't have to tell you because my wife and I have season tickets for this event. So I just have one observation. Well, maybe two. I have one last week or last meeting on the 13th, we had the presentation on the survey, and it was a survey of 404 people.

[02:41:46] We were lucky enough to get one of them, so we're one of them. And I saw today, it was used, the survey was used quite a bit in these presentations. And in 2023, our population was 42,696. A little quick math, it's less than 1% of our population in that survey. It's kind of a small representation of the attitudes of the city.

[02:42:13] Is there a way we can get more involvement or in a different survey, you know, get more people involved in the survey? I think less than 1%, that's not a fair representation. And if we all go on social media, there's a lot of different attitudes.

[02:42:33] I've been able to talk to some of you during the year, and we get some feedback, you get feedback from us, That's good, but it's not a very full room. But you need to get out to the population a little more and get more feedback, less than 1%.

[02:42:50] I don't feel it's enough. These surveys are nice. You use these numbers for your planning, but it's not a fair representation. I think maybe you have to find another way of getting more people involved in that. And one good thing, my wife said it last time, with Steve, we got our stop sign by the Berg Park.

[02:43:12] There's some safety now for the community. I'm very happy about that. I was able to deal with Steve, a little personal conversation, feedback. I got to see what was going on, and it really helped. And I just wanted to say it worked out, and I appreciate what he did.

[02:43:29] Thank you. Thank you, sir. Anyone else? All right. If not, I'll call on. Next item on the agenda is the authorization of closed meeting. I'll call on Mr. Brown to help us with that resolution. Good evening, Mayor, members of the council.

[02:43:45] There are two items you have scheduled tonight for closed session. One, a discussion of the qualification of applicants for appointment to city boards and commissions. And two, the performance of specific individual officers or employees. Resolution number R-2025, and I'm sorry, I don't think I...

[02:44:05] 515. 515, thank you. You're welcome. Resolution authorizing a closed meeting of city council is offered for your consideration. Thank you. Mr. Wolfe. Madam Mayor, move adoption of Resolution R-2025-515. Second.

[02:44:24] We have a motion by Vice Mayor Wolfe, seconded by Councilman Ossina, to approve Resolution R-2025-515, authorizing our closed meeting. Any discussion? Hearing? Actually, Madam Mayor, I do have some questions. Mr. Brown, please. As this board, and as you're I don't take the privilege that the Virginia Code, sections 22, there's 3711A2I, I believe, but you know the code I'm referencing.

[02:45:03] It provides us to be able to conduct a duly, duly convened closed meeting. I don't take that privilege lightly. So I'm concerned about the purity of this resolution, and particularly in the development aspects of the requested meeting.

[02:45:29] Does the resolution contemplate there has been, and well has been at this point, any discussion about the subject matter outside of this council? Does the motion contemplate that there's – I'm not sure if this is responsive to your question, Councillor Smith, but there were several councillors who requested a closed meeting on personnel.

[02:46:01] That motion was drafted. Subsequent to that, the clerk informed me that the chair of the appointments committee would also like to include a discussion of candidate qualifications for

appointment to boards and commissions. That's the only history that I'm aware of in terms of the development of this motion.

[02:46:25] Does the resolution contemplate that there will be no, has been no discussion outside of this council with members of any member of the public about the specifics of this meeting? I don't think the resolution addresses that at all.

[02:46:42] Would it be appropriate, I'm not making the suggestion right now, would it be appropriate in these situations for a council member to request a poll? of those who would be willing to state for the record, on the record, there has been no social media, Facebook, et cetera, postings regarding the subject matter?

[02:47:01] I think that's a question for the presiding officer, your mayor, rather than me, whether that question would be in order. Thank you, sir. Is there a motion that you just want to make? No, no, I wasn't making a motion. I just want to, again, I'm concerned about the purity of this resolution, and there have been Facebook postings by members of this council.

[02:47:24] There have been other public social media interaction with what I clearly believe are non-members of this council. We exclude the public from this meeting, but we pick and choose which members of the public we discuss matters with.

[02:47:44] It bothers me. Thank you. So we're asking, we just asked for a poll to be taken of council members on... Yeah, I guess we can just call the roll and do a poll vote on.

[02:48:01] But I guess I need to understand the poll on what? I'm not requesting it. I'm relying on the integrity of my fellow members to question themselves and hold themselves according.

[02:48:16] If they feel pure, I'll take them at their word. Okay, thank you, sir. Any other discussion from anyone on the motion? Ms. Luna. Thank you, Madam Mayor. For me, it will be, as we discussed, the performance of one or more specific city officers or employees.

[02:48:39] I, you know, I believe that we need legal counseling into the matters that we are discussing. So I'm requesting that this resolution includes that we will have for that we have our legal counsel available at the meeting.

[02:49:01] And then I just want to be specific. There is more than one officer that I would like to discuss. Any other discussion points?

[02:49:18] If not, Mr. Smith, call the roll. Vice Mayor Wolfe? Yes. Council Member Osina? Yes. Yes. Councilmember Ellis? Yes. Councilmember Smith?

[02:49:36] No. Councilmember Vasquez Luna? No. Councilmember Hudson? Yes. The motion carried. All right. Thank you. We'll proceed into closed meeting.

[02:49:52] Thank you, everyone. All right. Mr. Brown, certify the closed meeting.

[02:50:14] Mr. Wolfe.

[02:50:35] Move adoption resolution R-280-25-516. Second. The motion by Vice Mayor Wolfe, seconded by Councilman Osina, certifying our closed meeting resolution number R-2025-516. Any discussion? Hearing and seeing them, Mr. Smith, please call the roll. Vice Mayor Wolfe? Yes. Council Member Ocina? Yes. Council Member Ellis? Yes. Council Member

[02:51:02] Smith? Council Member Vasquez Luna? Yes. The motion carries. Okay, thank you. Did you want to do your call on Council Member Ocina? Thank you, Mayor. I do have two motions, please. First, I have resolution R-2025-525. Whereas Manassas City Code Section 2-301 provides that if any member of a city board, committee, or commission is absent from three consecutive regular meetings or from

[02:51:36] more than 50% of the meetings held during any six-month period, that member's seat may be deemed vacant by resolution of the City Council. And whereas the City Council has been advised that Sandy Day, a member of both the Joint Recreation Center Advisory Board and the Board of Equalization, has not met attendance requirements for city boards, committees, and commissions, therefore resolved by the Council for the City of Manassas, Virginia.

[02:52:05] Those vacancies are declared for the seats on the Joint Recreation Center Advisory Board and the Board of Equalization previously held by Sandy Day. The Appointments Committee is directed to seek applicants for appointment to these seats for their respective unexpired terms.

[02:52:23] Second. Second. For the motion by Councilman Ocina, seconded by Vice Mayor Wolfe to approve the appointments as read. Any discussion? Hearing and seeing them, Mr. Smith, please call the roll. Council Member Ocina?

[02:52:40] Yes. Vice Mayor Wolfe? Yes. Council Member Ellis? Yes. Council Member Smith? Yes. Council Member Hudson? Yes. The motion carries. Okay, thank you. Mayor? I have one second. Resolution? I'd like to move resolution R-2025-526. Resolution making appointments. Whereas the Manassas City Council Appointments Committee interviews and recommends approval of certain applicants to vacant seats in various city boards, committees, and commissions, and whereas the Manassas City Council proves such recommendations, therefore be it resolved the

[02:53:19] City Council of the City of Manassas makes the following appointments. Reappoint Amaral Latouche to the Social Services Advisory Board as a regular member for a full term ending June 30th, 2029. Reappoint Derhaj Jagadev to the Planning Commission as a regular member for a full term ending June 30th, 2029. Reappoint Richard Meyer to the Upper Occoquan Service Authority as a regular member for a full term ending June 30th, 2029.

[02:53:51] Appoint Judith Molinari to the Historic Resources Board as a regular member for a full term ending June 30th, 2029. Appoint Pamela Sebesky to the Joint Recreation Center Advisory Board as a regular member for a partial term ending June 30th, 2026.

[02:54:11] and be it further resolved that the City Council of the City of Manassas hereby provides notice of its intent to appoint Lisa Clymer to the Community Services Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council. Second.

[02:54:32] Second. The motion by Councilman Lucena is seconded by Councilwoman Hudson, approving the appointments as read in the resolution. Any discussion? Hearing and seeing none, Mr. Smith, please call the roll.

[02:54:48] Council Member Osina? Yes. Council Member Hudson? Yes. Vice Mayor Wolfe? Yes. Council Member Ellis? Yes. Council Member Smith? No. The motion carries.

[02:55:05] All right. Thank you. Anything else to come before the council? If not, we are adjourned. Thank you. Thank you.



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