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[00:00:30] Calling the council meeting to order. We good, Eric? Oh, it's on. The red light's on. You're off. Mr. Smith, please call the roll. Mayor Davis-Younger.

[00:00:46] Present. I'm going to take her up on that one night. Vice Mayor Wolves. Here. Council Member Ellis. Here. Council Member Smith. Here. Council Member Alcina. Here. Council Member Vasquez-Luna. Presente. Council Member Hudson. Here. The quorum is present. Thank you very much.

[00:01:02] if you are able to please stand with me for the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance. Thank you for another opportunity for us to gather together to provide service to the residents of our city. We are most thankful for the residents in our community and for those who continue to work so hard for our success.

[00:01:21] Please continue to protect our staff, our men and women in uniform, and especially our residents who choose to Manassas as their home. Help us to be kind to one another as we never know what someone is privately going through and words do have an effect. Thank you for a dedicated staff and council who always show up to provide service and put the needs of the community first.

[00:01:42] We remain thankful for all things. Amen. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance. To the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[00:02:03] I want to welcome everyone again to the council meeting. Thank you all for being here, those that are here in person. always good to look out and see so many smiling faces and for those joining us via social media for TV online at home we welcome you to the meeting as well we are glad to be joined by members some members of our school board I know we'll hear from his miles and a little bit to introduce miss gold zone but Diana Brown is also here this evening from the school board thank you for being here with us and I don't see anybody else from any other elected so with that we will move along this is proclamation night it's a great night here for council

[00:02:43] meeting. Um, we have several proclamations and we thank you for your patience, but it's just so important for us to recognize all of the various, um, diverse events that we want to recognize in the city. Um, so that's the bulk of the agenda tonight, thankfully. And then we have a couple of other budget items, no closed session and public comment time, and we will be on the way.

[00:03:03] So I will now call on vice mayor Wolf. We'll move forward to council time. Thank you, madam mayor. In the interest of good order, I will defer my remarks. Let us move forward all right Councilwoman Ellis. Thank you mayor. I wanted to Congratulate our local UVA health system for the honors that they receive for their performance and safety With leapfrog, which is an accreditation. That's national and very reputable So thank you for all their hard work to keep our community safe and on the fun side I

[00:03:41] I want to let everyone be aware that Saturday, June 7th, we will be showing the Bee Movie on Main Street. And this is with HMI, Historic Manassas.

[00:03:57] And it is a great, fun movie, family-friendly, that will teach kids and everyone a little bit about our pollinator friends. And this is also, we're a Bee City USA, so it's just a little awareness piece that we're adding. It's fun.

[00:04:13] It's free, and it's fun. And it's over by Sinistro and Main Street. That's all I have. Thank you. Okay, thank you. Councilman Smith. You don't have anything? Oh, okay. I'm sorry.

[00:04:28] I didn't hear you. Councilman Messina. No such luck over here. I do have a one, two, three, four, five, six items here. First of all, I want to thank the... You have a fan. Right on.

[00:04:47] That's how I feel sometimes. Don't encourage him. That's right. That's how I feel sometimes sitting up here. Time to go. I want to thank the Heavy Construction Contractors Association for their work improving access to the fishing pond at Cannon Branch Fort.

[00:05:04] The labor and the money that was donated to make a much nicer facility is greatly appreciated and something for which all of our residents benefit. It's over by the fishing pond, and so if you didn't know you could fish in Manassas, you now do. The Business Appreciation Breakfast that was held at the beginning of the month was an excellent event.

[00:05:24] It was a great time to see and visit with all those businesses that have brick-and-mortar locations in the city. Thanks to our Economic Development Department for putting this together. We had bingo in Manassas again. On the first Thursday of May, we had bingo night at Manassas Library.

[00:05:45] It was a fundraiser put on by the Friends of Manassas City Library. It was definitely well attended, and the prize baskets were something to behold. So thanks to all the businesses that contributed to that and to the volunteers that put it together.

[00:06:04] The Friends raised money so that there can be extra programs at our library in our city that add value. And so this is just another way that they're able to raise the funds to help us. On this Thursday, Delegate Michelle Maldonado and I are hosting an affordable housing summit.

[00:06:26] It takes place at 6 p.m. at the Manassas Community Center, which is at 8750 Sudley Road, and starts at 6 p.m. The featured speaker is Monica Johnson from Virginia Housing. Now, many residents have commented about the dearth of affordable housing in this area, So this is an excellent opportunity to attend and learn more about the opportunities and challenges as well as what's happening in the city and surrounding jurisdictions.

[00:06:56] So I look forward to seeing many of you there where you can not only learn some stuff, but more importantly, participate and share your concerns and ideas. Equality Prince William is holding its pride event. It takes place 12 noon to 4 p.m. this Saturday at Harris Pavilion.

[00:07:15] It is free, and all are welcome to attend. And then lastly, I will be joining Utility Commission members and staff to attend the Municipal Electric Power Association of Virginia Annual Conference next week. And then I will also be participating in the quarterly meeting of COGS Climate, Energy, and Environmental Policy Committee that takes place near the end of the month.

[00:07:39] That is it. Thank you, Mayor. Thank you. Councilwoman Vasquez-Luna. Thank you, Madam Mayor. I might have more than six, but I'll try to keep it short. Well, good evening, everyone, and thank you for being here. We have a lot of proclamations tonight, and I think it's a great example of how beautiful and diverse Manassas is.

[00:08:01] So I'm looking forward in hearing all those proclamations, even though we already have been reading and doing our work on that. First I want to, outside or in the website, sometimes in our social media, you're going to find the information.

[00:08:19] There is two nights, it's called One Vision, and there are Manassas Community Center at the Mostella Building. There will be two different meetings, opportunities, where you can provide information about what you see the planning for the shopping center.

[00:08:35] This is the Manasseh Shopping Center. So sometimes I hear residents that they don't feel like we have enough opportunities to provide your vision of what would you like to see. And this will be two great opportunities. It will be Tuesday, June the 3rd, and Tuesday, June the 10th.

[00:08:53] I know it's early, but since we have a holiday coming up, we won't have another city council meeting. I just wanted to make sure that I bring it up. And the information, like always, is in English and Spanish for everyone. And moving forward, also out there is information in regards to the 200th anniversary of Liberia.

[00:09:14] I believe we all are very proud of our history, and we need to celebrate that. So there will be a lot of different events starting in June, from June to August. So please make sure you look into the information. There will be also a gallery talk at the museum.

[00:09:31] Even down in August, you're going to have a history happy hour. I'm looking forward to see that, and I hope you save that information for later. In the transportation, we have the comprehensive plan update. I've been talking about it for a while, but this is my reminder to please get feedback or look into it,

and it's coming down to one end, so I want to make sure that you have a chance to tell Manasa City what you think about the Comprehensive Plan Update.

[00:10:09] Again, all this is in the website. You can find it as 2045 COMP Plan, Comprehensive Plan. This month, we celebrate the Bike Month. There is a virtual annual bike pedestrian meeting, improvement meeting on May 22nd at 7 p.m.

[00:10:31] If you need the information, you can go to the website to Bike Month. There is so many activities still left off. May 15, you're going to have the Bike to Work Day. May 16, Bike Rodale for Kids. May 17, Manassas Family Bike Ride.

[00:10:48] And May 24 is a Community Bike Ride. So I hope you get out there and enjoy these different events coming up this month. There is also, I know it sounds a little far, but as part of the transportation, I want to make sure that I bring it up.

[00:11:06] If you do use the I-495 Southside, they are doing a study for the express lane, and they have public hearings. There's still three public hearings available. One will be in Alexandria at the Thomas Edison High School in the cafeteria on June 2.

[00:11:27] There's another one on June 4, but this one is in Maryland. And there's a few more available in Alexandria, so I just want to make sure that you know there are studies going on. You can look on their website. They're planning to build the south side of the express line and the information and the study is important.

[00:11:48] And your feedback is important if you use that area as a new way to work. There's so many activities going on. I want to bring to your attention, and we're going to hear today, the Equality Prince William Pride Festival is going to happen on May 17 from noon to 4 p.m. I hope to see you there and I'm looking forward to hearing the proclamation. It is so important for us not only to celebrate our diversity, who we are, but also to make sure that we protect everyone and everyone

[00:12:26] feel safe right here in Manassas in our community. On May 17 at 8 p.m., there will be an Armed So I'm going to see you on the show. And we're going to see you on the show. So I'm going to see you on the show. We're going to see you on the show.

[00:13:02] chair if you if you come a little late because they they do get busy but I believe is a beautiful way of coming together as a community or just having a relaxed Tuesday night I will later on I wanted our biggest part of the night it will be in regards to the budget I have been thinking and hearing and receiving a lot of communications talking to the the residents I just want to make sure sure that you feel heard, that you know that the information has been received, and tonight

[00:13:41] we're going to make a decision on that. Madam Mayor, if I may, a couple of words I would like to say, bienvenidos a todos los que estamos aquí, especialmente los que vienen de la Red Expo. Esta noche vamos a celebrar diferentes nueve proclamaciones. Una de esas This is the celebration of the artists, so for me it's an honor to welcome you to our city and feel that it's a place where we can share.

[00:14:10] I hope you can see you on July 12th, the day of the Art Expo, although it's a little late, but it's a special moment. también estamos a proclamando no is el el mes de um el prime month y para mí es importante que comunidad todos se sientan bienvenidos todos se sientan que no solo lo respetamos pero

también los valoramos and madam mayor I just want to say you know I welcome everybody in July 12th maria lina is here she's

[00:14:48] been preparing the LAR Expo and it's for the artisans, Latin American artisans. It's a continued festival and I want to invite everybody that is up here. I hope you can join us and it will be a great event. Thank you. Councilwoman Hudson. Thank you Madam Mayor and thank you for mentioning LAR Expo, Councilwoman Vasquez Luna. I attended it last year and it was awesome to see so many great items and crafty people and talent throughout the community.

[00:15:21] So definitely looking forward to that on July 12th. Good evening, everybody, and thank you for joining us this evening. I would like to bring your attention to the fact that it is National Police Week. And in doing so, I would like to give a shout out to the Manassas City Police Department. The community services and the community accessibility provided by our police department is absolutely fantastic.

[00:15:42] Just last week, they held coffee with a cop and participated in the elder care resource fair. And this Friday, they will hold a bike rodeo for children at Dean's Park on Friday. So thank you to the police department for the variety of services and the dedication that you bring to our community.

[00:15:57] And also, as Councilman Osina and Councilwoman Vasquez Luna mentioned, the Manassas Pride Festival is this Saturday from 12 to 4 at the Harris Pavilion. So please do stop by, support your friends and family, and visit the many vendors who will be present. And while you are there, please also consider shopping around town as this is also small business month the month of May and then lastly I just want to acknowledge and thank all of the residents who and teachers who have reached out during the budget process while I have not been able to respond to every email I can assure you that I am reading them and keeping your concerns and comments in mind as we complete the process I think all of you for being here tonight and thank all of you for

[00:16:37] participating in your local government and madam here that is all I have thank you. Thank you for my time. I certainly hope that everyone, all the moms, had a good Mother's Day yesterday. Mine was a little different, my first without my mom, and I got through it pretty well, but those firsts always tug at the heart.

[00:16:55] It's a little difficult, but, and my dad's health is not the best, and so I'm just asking all of you to please keep positive vibes coming his way. It's been tough without her and now his health is failing as well so just give him all the positivity that you can if you still have your mom with you please cherish and love on her very much because i certainly miss mine there is no one like mom so just had to get that part out this is our only meeting during may and so i want to cram in most of the stuff that we can for the month i want to say happy memorial day to everyone and make sure that you're safe out there

[00:17:35] with all the it's the unofficial start of summer but we want to make sure that everyone is safe and taking care of one another during their summer activities want to extend congratulations to our osborne high school graduates who will be graduating on the 29th out there at george mason university i think that's at two in the afternoon on the 29th as council members have said acoustic Tuesdays, the Farmers Market, our Friday concerts, Sunday Funday, all of that is starting up now and we're so excited for all of those activities that we're able

[00:18:10] to offer here in the city. I want to quickly thank and commend and mention Terri Martin, the Deputy Commissioner, retired. Friday was her a little going away ceremony. She's very quiet and didn't

want a whole big production. I came to her and read a proclamation for her 29 years of service with the city as deputy commissioner she's the only um deputy commissioner that has served under every single commissioner that the city has had so that's that's an accomplishment in itself and she will be missed and um we do thank her for her service um for that and and i was able to attend the elder resource

[00:18:47] fair um put on by our police department thank you so much for for doing that um i actually got the life alert from my mom from that fair last year so it is helpful and with a lot of good information So I really look forward to that continuing, and I love that it was at the museum.

[00:19:04] So that's great. That was an awesome thing. So we have OTBA this week. We have the Equality Prince William, which you all heard about, the ribbon cutting at 1215. The Valor Awards is coming up on the 21st at the Hilton Performing Arts Center.

[00:19:20] And then we have a Veterans Day celebration actually on the 26th at the Harris Pavilion. So lots going on in the city. Can't say you didn't hear about it here. So with that, I will turn it over to City Manager Steve Burke for your comments, sir. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Mayor. City Council will be considering the first reading and vote on our real estate and personal property taxes this evening.

[00:19:42] Following the April 28th public hearing, we became aware of the need for an additional newspaper advertisement for the public hearings for our utility and non-tax rates for the budget. We will be advertising and conducting the public hearings for these rates and the budget at a special meeting on June 2nd, with the second reading and adoption at the June 9th meeting.

[00:20:06] The Manassas Police Department is seeking comments related to their compliance with the CALEA Law Enforcement Accreditation Program requirements. If you'll visit our website or their social media, there's a link that will guide you to it. Our engineering department will be returning turtles that were temporarily relocated from the Lucasville Pond to the pond on February, Friday, Friday, May 23rd.

[00:20:34] They will be introduced to the pond at 1030, 1130, and 12 noon. City offices will be closed in observance of Memorial Day on Monday, May 26th. June 7th, you can visit both Annenberg and the Liberia House to take tours of those spaces.

[00:20:56] That'll be available from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m. And then finally, also on the 7th, there is a Stonewall Park litter pickup that's being sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the American Hiking Society that will occur on Saturday, June 7th from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m.

[00:21:15] And that's all I have, Madam Mayor. Thank you. Any questions for City Manager Burke this time? Okay, Ms. Backman is parking. She is not here yet. Oh, hey, you sent me a text and said you were parking. You ready to go? Okay, all right.

[00:21:31] So Ms. Backman is going to do a presentation for us. She is the CEO of the NVTa, and this is actually her first time presenting to the council, us hearing from the NVTa, and I thought it was pretty important that we hear what NVTa is.

[00:21:49] A lot of people don't know. They don't know the importance of us being represented as a city on the NVTa. So thank you so much for agreeing to be here and rushing to get here. Oh, no, thank you. Thank you, Madam Mayor and City Council and everyone here this evening. I'm Monica Backman, the CEO of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, and it's great to be with you this evening.

[00:22:11] I will be brief. I've already been warned to keep it short and simple and just hit the highlights, so I will do that. The authority is a 17-member body and we are responsible for the long-range transportation planning for Northern Virginia and funding regionally significant projects through our six-year program.

[00:22:32] Now we haven't always done that because although we were created in 2002, we did not get funding until the Virginia General Assembly passed HB 2313 in calendar year 13. So we do the long-range transportation plan.

[00:22:49] We do a funding program that we adopt every two years. As a matter of fact, we have a call for projects open right now to do our next funding program. It's an ongoing cycle. And that funding program, it says FY 2026 to 2031, that it will cover those years.

[00:23:08] But it's actually the last two years that are the new years that we will be picking up. So I wanted to speak a little bit about the investments we've made in the city of Manassas. Manassas has done very well, and I want to say that is due to your leadership that is represented on the authority.

[00:23:28] The authority, we have three standing committees. We have the Planning and Programming Committee. We have the Finance Committee, and we have the Governance and Personnel Committee. Your mayor has served on all three at some point in time during her tenure on the authority, right now she is the chair of the planning and programming committee some would say that it's the most important committee now i'm not a part of that i'm indifferent we i love all the committees the same but some would say the planning and programming committee is the most important because that is the committee that makes the funding recommendation to the authority on which

[00:24:06] projects we should fund next but looking at some of the city's projects that we funded and again Again, that comes from our 70% regional revenues. We have funded 21 projects in the City of Manassas. And what we always like to say, we are truly, truly, truly multimodal.

[00:24:24] So we have an intersection, interchange projects, transportation technology, roadway, bike, pedestrian projects, and other. Because other could be we're looking at things that are supplemental projects And things that go ahead to enhance the city's quality of life, but directly involve transportation.

[00:24:45] Of that, 21 projects that result to \$34.9 million. Now, I'm not going to read it because I said I would be brief, but if anyone cared to get an understanding of what those 21 projects are, their bike pad, again, roadway transportation technologies, but some of them you can see when you're driving past.

[00:25:08] One that we are particularly proud of is the Grand Avenue pedestrian improvements at Center Street, and of course, the Wellington Road shared use path. Why? Because the authority, we get a lot of comments, I will say, "Oh, you're just roadway, roadway, roadway."

[00:25:26] No, we are multimodal, and that is evidenced by the investments that we have made. and the city has benefited from those investments. Now, not only are we investing directly in the city of Manassas, but we're funding projects in Prince William County that also impact the city.

[00:25:44] About 13 projects totaling \$368 million, but you can see those four projects: Route 28 Centerville Road, Route 28 Widening from the 234 Bypass to Linton Hall, Route 234 at Sudley Manor Interchange.

[00:26:01] Why does that impact you? because I personally take that to try to get to the city at times, and then the construction of the interchange at Route 234 in Brentsville Road. So again, we are funding projects directly in the city and projects in Prince William County and the surrounding areas to help the commute for residents of the city.

[00:26:21] And we're trying to make sure that we're making an impact. So every time we adopt a funding program, every two years we contract out with an economic impact analysis firm to show us the economic impact oftentimes people will say well transportation is separate transportation involves all of us because we are all commuters whether you walk run bike take the train take the bus we are all commuting in some shape form or fashion but not only that transportation has a direct impact to the economy when we invest in our

[00:26:57] transportation network we see direct impacts and you will see and I will just highlight this one. 43,000 new jobs are created by the investments of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, and that's by 2040. And celebrating progress. Again, we've been in the city a lot. We do ground breakings, ribbon cuttings. Why? Because oftentimes people really don't see the project until we are at the point of a ribbon cutting and groundbreaking but these projects can take years some decades unfortunately but some take a long

[00:27:35] time to come to fruition but when we get to the point where we're celebrating a groundbreaking or ribbon cutting that lets everyone know that change is on the way and a better commute is on the way and lastly I'll just touch on our bus rapid transit action plan last or about two years ago the authority approved a study for a bus rapid transit action plan.

[00:28:01] Why? Everyone says, oh, we can't build our way out of congestion. And that is true. We are always looking at other modes that we can try to implement to incentivize people to get out of their single occupied vehicle. So we have a draft BRT action plan.

[00:28:18] Currently, we're investing in five different BRT systems. And we wanted to piggyback off of that to try to create a seamless BRT network. Right now, we're out for public comment for BRT in this draft action plan.

[00:28:35] Last week, we were at your farmer's market. And I got to say, I love that market. I was there doing a little shopping and working, trying to combine the two. But we are going out to the people and where people are to try to get input. Please remember if you have any feedback give it to us through May 18th and then the feedback form closes Lastly I want to thank Councilmember Smith because while I know that we have three standing committees We have two statutory committees one is the Planning Coordination Advisory Committee Which Councilmember Smith serves on that is a committee of elected officials who also provide

[00:29:12] some guidance and insight and input into our long-range plan into our six-year program and and I know I tried to be quick and I tried to go through that relatively quickly but I am available if you have any questions. Thank you Ms. Backman. Any questions Councilman? Ms. Hudson. Thank you for that informative presentation and hello. You mentioned 34 almost 35 million spent in Manassas is that since 2013 or in what timeline is that? Yeah that's since the money started coming that's since 2013. Now again, that's what we have today, but we're always adding to it with our

[00:29:51] two-year programs that we do every year. And also I should know, and that's why I showed the slides in Prince William County, often the county and the city is partnering for projects, but the county will take the lead. So for our purposes in logging the projects, we will put it under the county, even though it's a joint effort between the city and the County. Anyone else? Any other question? Mr. Osina. Thank you. Good evening. Thank you for joining us

[00:30:21] here. Could you share where you get your funding to do all these wonderful projects? Sure. So in 28, well, let me go back. In 2013, when the legislation was passed, at that time, we had three funding sources. We got a percentage of sales tax, a percentage of transient occupancy tax when you rent a hotel room and a percentage of grand tourist tax that's born on the seller of a home some people call it a recordation tax then in 2018 we had tot transient occupancy tax

[00:30:57] and grand tourist tax was diverted to metro to help with their state of good repair needs since that time we received some other revenue sources to try to make us whole for that diversion so now we have, I think it's four funding streams. We still have sales tax. We get a portion of grant towards tax. We get a portion of what the Commonwealth calls the Interstate Enhancement and Operations Program, long name, but formerly known as I-81. And then we get \$20 million from the state. And again, that was an attempt to make us whole for the diversion that was given to

[00:31:36] Metro in 2018. So we get our funds from those four sources. Very good. Mr. Smith, our clerk, could you go to back one slide to the bus rapid transit is the future slide? Are you able to do that? Yeah. So I was looking at that. I enlarged it a bit. So these are proposed routes. Is that correct? So we're calling them corridors because we haven't gotten into the level of engineering detail where we can say the route will run right on this street so we're calling them 28 proposed

[00:32:15] corridors for brt all right and and i was intrigued for me this is the first time i saw what is numbered 22 it's i guess a dark blue it starts in manassas and goes up 28 all the way to dallas airport. What can you share about that corridor and what it's, you know, what is expected to do and is maybe a timeline for fruition? Oh, I love that question. So the short of it is,

[00:32:52] is to help get people to and from not only around the city, but to the airport without having to drive the 28 corridor and it's trying and the purpose is to really provide an alternative mode now timeline that's a little tricky because what I will say and I didn't say earlier we at MBTA we can fund capital investments only we cannot fund operational needs for anything whether it's roadway or transit so what we've been doing we have a BRT working group all of the transit providers in Northern Virginia and Maryland and the district we have WMATA

[00:33:32] included as well we have a working group because we don't operate so now we're talking to the transit providers on who could possibly operate the system will it be one provider two three I will not even get up here and tell you oh we're envisioning one provider because I don't think that that will be feasible but we are talking to the transit providers to see who could operate the system and we have identified primarily some operating revenues as well now with timing it really is based on who says i can operate this and how much will it cost and then it's incumbent upon us as the

[00:34:11] region to identify the operational cost like i said on the authority side on the capital we can cover that any other questions or comments thank you miss batman thank you and i just want want to thank you again for having me this evening and thank you to Mr. Arcieri, who I work with in another life and we're still around, but thank you very much. Thank you so much. All right. And next on the agenda,

item 1.2 is a presentation from Hayden Elementary. We have school board member Dana Miles, who will introduce Dr. Goldson, the principal of Hayden. Come on down, ma'am. Welcome.

[00:34:51] Good evening. Madam Mayor, Davis Younger, Vice Mayor Wolf, and esteemed council members. My name is Dana Miles. I'm a newly elected school board member, so I'm excited to be here. I'm excited to introduce Hayden Elementary and Dr. Laura Goldson, who is here tonight, to you all tonight. But before I do that, just a little background. According to Virginia School Quality website, Hayden Elementary is accredited and increased its reading performance for English language learners by 12 points in one year, which I thought was phenomenal. Only 18% of its students were chronically absent last year,

[00:35:26] which is more than a 10% improvement from the previous year, which is also very great. Hayden Elementary School is led by Dr. Laura Goldson, who is an experienced educator with over 25 years in public education. She began her career working in literacy intervention and special education.

[00:35:44] And Dr. Goldson started here in MCPS in 2013 as an assistant principal and worked her way up to becoming a principal in 2016. Some of her accolades include being named Project Lead the Way National Administrator of the Year in 2021. And last year, she actually was named the MCPS Washington Post Principal of the Year.

[00:36:05] She holds a doctorate in education and curriculum and instruction from the University of South Carolina. And she's been married for over 30 years and has two children, one who's also an educator. When she's not leading Hayden, she enjoys photography, gardening, reading, and singing. And one of her beliefs is, our legacy as educators is to ready the leaders of tomorrow.

[00:36:25] And her motto is, working for all students with energy and optimism. Now, without further delay, I'm proud to introduce Dr. Laura Goldson and Hayden Elementary School. Thank you. Good afternoon, Mayor Davis Younger, Vice Mayor Wolfe, esteemed members of the City Council, Mr. Burke, Chief Keene.

[00:36:53] Thank you for this opportunity to share the highlights of our year at Hayden Elementary. I plan to this afternoon just showcase some of the activities that are going to illustrate how we are engaging with and contributing to this great community. At Hayden Elementary, our mission is to apply energy, optimism, and professional knowledge to meet the needs of all students. We aim to equip students with the skills they need to seize every

[00:37:29] opportunity and build the life they dream of. Our goal is to position our students to create opportunities for others. The success of our community depends on those who come after us. And so while we are building and living and leading and growing together, we are also preparing our community for future generations. And literacy is the key to a successful and meaningful future for our students. It is the gateway to full participation in the process of living and contributing to this

[00:38:04] community. Our legacy as educators is to ready the leaders of tomorrow. So this afternoon, I'm proud to highlight some of the key activities that have fostered leadership and literacy development at Hayden this year. In spring of 2025, the Hayden community proudly presented a production of Finding Nemo Kids. With the support and guidance and dedication of 13 staff members, 60 Hayden students produced a 45-minute musical. These students

[00:38:40] experienced all aspects of performing arts production, including set and costume creation, performance, the technical crew roles, and then arts management, which was something new that we introduced our students to, which What does it really take to produce a performance?

[00:39:02] The process not only showcased their talents, but also developed their leadership and applied literacy skills through the arts performance process. On the evening of April 10th, we hosted approximately 400 community members for a flawless production of this musical.

[00:39:22] And then the next day, the following day, April the 11th, our Hayden School community attended an assembly, an encore performance. And there's a picture on the slide there of our Hayden kids getting to enjoy that performance by their peers.

[00:39:38] The energy, the pride, the dedication these students demonstrated throughout this process, it was truly inspirational. Hayden Elementary students are actively learning from our community partners.

[00:39:54] From visits to the newly renovated Manassas Museum, to partnerships and field trips to the Hilton Performing Arts Center. Our students are thrilled to be a part of a community classroom. The photos here we show our fourth grade students learning about Native American culture and traditions that that supports our Virginia Studies curriculum right there at our Manassas Museum.

[00:40:19] We also benefit our third grade students here at the top. They have the opportunity to work with Elena Moon Park and Friends through the Hilton Visiting Artists Program where she actually came to school and worked four days with our third grade students to create some performance art and write and create and produce art that was then shown at the Hilton Center during one of her performances. And then, of course, field trips. Our second grade students are pictured here.

[00:40:50] They were delighted by the steam-inspired antics of Mario the Magician at the Hilton Center, and that was this past fall. Our kids love to go over and feel grown up and part of our community by visiting that beautiful art center just down the street.

[00:41:14] At the Hayden Innovation Fair, that's a celebration of applied science and research completed by students across various content areas during the 24-25 school year. So in partnership with the Osborne High School robotics team, they brought all of their robots, they had just finished up their competition season, so they bring their robotics over to work with our kids.

[00:41:40] Our Lego League team, and they were just at Osborne Park competing last weekend, they were there and then our community partners of Micron were at our innovation fair. And then grade level teachers, they showcased how our students are collaborating to create and innovate in our classrooms.

[00:42:00] So from pre-K students, you can see their bugs there on the top. They were learning about insects and spring and nature. To our fourth grade students who created monuments to famous Virginians, they designed that in a CAD software and then 3D printed those monuments.

[00:42:20] The Innovation Fair was a wonderful opportunity to welcome community members into our school and to celebrate our learning. At Hayden, we have a lot of work to do. But we are facing this challenge together.

[00:42:37] We are determined to provide our students with the skills they need to create the future they dream about. We are committed to building a vibrant community where we live and learn and work and

grow together. And let me just say thank you so much for the opportunity to come and talk a little bit about the great things that are happening at Hayden.

[00:42:57] And we look forward to a really bright future. Thank you. Thank you so much for being here. Council members, any comments or questions from Ms. Goldzone? Okay. Keep doing a great job. Thank you for all you do. Thank you. Oh, Mr. Ossina. I didn't want you to get away without, first of all, at Hayden, is there not a, I'm going to probably use the wrong term here, but a dual language program?

[00:43:26] Dual immersion. Yes. Would you tell us a little bit about that? Well, more importantly, talk about the accomplishments this year. So our dual language students started in kindergarten, and they have, we are a 50-50 model program, and so 50%, so it's really 50-50 in two ways.

[00:43:46] 50% of their day, they receive instruction in Spanish, and that would be their science and mathematics. 50% of the day, they receive instruction in English, and that is English language arts and social studies. Ideally, we should have 50% students who are native speakers of a target language, in this case it is Spanish, and 50% native speakers of English.

[00:44:10] And the idea, the research behind that shows that those two cohorts of children can support each other in acquiring that language. The goal of the program is for students to leave our school, go on to Mayfield and Metz, to be biliterate.

[00:44:27] So to be able to speak, read, and write in both languages or be well on the way to being biliterate. We have seen, and again, it's a little early in the process yet because we're just now collecting our data. But what we do see is that students in our program are doing quite well on meeting those academic goals.

[00:44:47] all right great i thought that was an important thing to to share about our schools here and what's going on at hayden and so lastly i've been asking all of the uh principals who have come before you this year to present and talk about what's going on i didn't want to leave you out so what's keeping you awake at night concerning education literacy in my remarks i said that i that literacy is really the it's the it is the key to the kingdom right literacy is the entry ticket

[00:45:24] into being able to be a fully informed participating citizen of any community it is the way that we advocate for each other it is the way that we advocate for ourselves it is the way that we can communicate effectively and so literacy is really the foundation it's a human right and so we that is that is what keeps me up at night it is what as a principal and as an educator and as someone who looks to data to guide my decision making I look to the literacy data to make sure that we're doing

[00:46:03] everything we can and as 25 plus years here as an educator I can tell you that's what's kept me awake for at night for 25 plus years we can always do better and it's just that's why we're here awesome awesome thank you Ms. Vasquez Luna thank you I think I attended the the job fair no job fair but when the kids got to yeah the innovation fair yeah it was great It was great.

[00:46:36] I wanted to say, is there anything specific when it comes to the over 10% improvement that was mentioned before? Is there anything specific that has helped to get there? And also in the attendance, since you have seen a positive improvement, is there a combination of something specific that has made a difference, if you could share?

[00:46:59] I absolutely, I'm excited to share. I do think that any time you see a shift in the data, you have to look. It's a complex issue, right? There's multiple variables. I think when we're talking about that academic improvement that we saw last year, and we're hoping really to optimize that again this year, that comes from alignment with the state curriculum, making sure that what we're teaching in the classroom is aligned to our state standards and to make sure that our kids are getting high quality instruction.

[00:47:34] So it's not, it's understanding that standard. It's understanding what do we really mean when we say we want children to be able to do X. How do we do that? We do that through what we call a CLT process, but it's a professional learning community.

[00:47:50] It is where we bring, so for example, all of our third grade teachers, they come together two or three times a week during their planning time and we look at, We have two days that are set aside for English language arts. We have one day set aside for math. And we ask each other, what do the kids need to be able to know and need to be able to do?

[00:48:11] And then what steps are we going to take to make sure that we deliver a lesson that has an activity that brings them to understanding fully that standard? And then what do we have to do for those kids that aren't quite getting it yet? Or who need additional language support?

[00:48:27] Or who need to be provided that information in a different way? And when we have, let's say, six or seven teachers around a table, the great, the real benefit of that collaborative learning space is that I can have a 25-year veteran teacher at a table with a brand new teacher who is learning.

[00:48:50] And we can bring innovation and experience together to come up with a plan that is really better than the sum of its parts, if that makes sense. We are better together. So that's really my answer to academic success and how we believe that that has the most impact on student learning.

[00:49:10] I'm going to say that I think student learning and students feeling belonging and students feeling successful is what has impacted student attendance. because people want to be there. I am very optimistic about making continued growth in reducing our chronic absenteeism this year as well.

[00:49:32] Any other comments or questions? Ms. Goldblum, thank you so much. Thank you so much for the time. I appreciate it. Okay, next up is the beginning of the proclamation night.

[00:49:48] First on the agenda, we have the LGBTQIA plus Pride Month proclamation. Mr. Osina is going to go down front, and I'll join you.

[00:50:15] Well, thank you. Thank you, Mayor, very much. You know, this is an annual proclamation that the city has done since 2017.

[00:50:35] This city has become a very welcoming city to our LGBTQ+ community. And for that, I want to thank the council, I want to thank our residents and our businesses so much here. As I like to say here, I had to write it down, so I said it correctly.

[00:50:54] Being gay is a blessing and it's something that I'm thankful for every day here. Those of us in this community are very thankful that we can be our true selves here in the city. With your permission, Mayor, may I read the proclamation? But first, let me invite the President of Equality, Prince William, to come on down, Dave Dooley.

[00:51:15] David? All right, right here in the middle. Here. Okay. Whereas the city of Manassas reaffirms that every individual deserves to live with dignity, respect, and equality, regardless of sexual orientation,

gender identity, or gender expression.

[00:51:49] And whereas our nation was founded on the principles that all people are created equal, endowed with their rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and entitled to full recognition and protection under the law. And whereas the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning, intersect asexual and broader LGBTQ+ community in the City of Manassas are vital contributors to every sector and profession, enriching the social, cultural, and economic fabric of our city.

[00:52:22] And whereas LGBTQ+ individuals have long faced discrimination, persecution, and violence for living authentically, and the City of Manassas remains committed to promoting inclusion, protecting human rights, and working to prevent discrimination and bullying based on sexual orientation or gender identity. And whereas Manassas draws strength from the diversity of its residents, including the wide spectrum of ethnic, cultural, racial, gender, and sexual identities that shape the vibrant character of our community. And whereas it's essential that

[00:52:58] all members of our community, regardless of how they identify, feel seen, safe, respected, and supported by their neighbors, their educators, leaders, and institutions. And whereas Pride Month offers a meaningful opportunity to celebrate the progress achieved in advancing LGBTQ+ rights, while also recognizing the continued challenges that LGBTQ+ individuals face locally, nationally, and globally.

[00:53:28] Now, therefore, Mayor Michelle Davis Younger, and on behalf of the Manassas City Council, hereby proclaims and recognizes June 2025 as LGBTQIA+ Pride Month in the City of Manassas, and we encourage all residents to celebrate the rich diversity of our community and stand in support of the rights, dignity, and freedoms of LGBTQ+ individuals. Together, let us continue striving toward a more inclusive and equitable society where every person is free to live authentically and thrive without fear or prejudice.

[00:54:09] So, President Dooley, any comments? I just want to thank the City of Manassas, the Council, everyone here that no matter what, you all are part of the community.

[00:54:26] Thank you for welcoming us to your community, and it's just, we're all stronger together than we are apart, and it's one Manassas, so thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you so much.

[00:54:56] okay next up is latin american artisan day the councilman vasquez luna is going to come down i am going to read the english version and she asked me to do that and she is going to read the proclamation in spanish and then we want to have oh you're all already coming down so thank you thank you for being here everybody have the chance hi how are you doing i see i see room for all

[00:55:27] that's everybody okay i'll read the proclamation now whereas continued immigration and population growth have resulted in 18,345 latin americans living in the city of manassas constituting more than 42 percent of the city of manassas's population and whereas astoundingly diverse within its own ranks latin american artisans contribute to the great diversity of this

[00:56:01] nation of nations that is America, and to the diverse and inclusive community of the city of Manassas, preserving the rich legacy of their native cultures while embracing the best values and traditions of the United States of America.

[00:56:18] And whereas through their multifaceted skills, traditions of hard work, creative entrepreneurship, and artisan crafts, this vital segment of our community has contributed to the art, prosperity and economic well-being of the city of Manassas and whereas the Latin American artisan

community has brought with them marvelous traditions which strengthen the very fabric of the city of Manassas in our society and whereas through their unquenchable respect and honor for the arts high quality craftsmanship and persistent drive for excellence

[00:56:55] Latin American artisans have demonstrated outstanding individual and group achievements as entrepreneurs, businesses, and community leaders. And whereas this community has hosted the Latin American Expo, where Latin American artisans from the city of Manassas and abroad have gathered to share, teach, and promote their artwork, culture, and community on the third Sunday of May each year with great success, participation, and attendance.

[00:57:24] Now, therefore, I, Michelle Davis Younger, mayor of the city of Manassas, Virginia, do hereby proclaim the third Sunday in May of 2025 as Latin American Artisan Day in the city of Manassas and call upon all the residents in the city to observe this occasion by recognizing the contributions of Latin American artisans to our society in general and to the city of Manassas in particular.

[00:57:53] Thank you, Madam Mayor. I'm going to read it in Spanish. and I think it's my third year in having the honor to be able to give the welcome and also to the proclamation.

[00:58:08] So, proclamation, considering that the emigration continues and the growth of the population has given as a result that 18,345 people latino-americanas live in the city of Manassas, what constitutes more than 42% of the population of the city of Manassas.

[00:58:27] Considerando que los artesanos y artesanas latinoamericanos, extraordinariamente diversos dentro de su propia población, contribuyen a la gran diversidad de esta nación de naciones, que es el país de los Estados Unidos y a la comunidad diversa e inclusiva de la ciudad de Manassas.

[00:58:45] Conservando la herencia rica de sus culturas natales, mientras que reciban con los brazos abiertos los mejores valores y costumbres de los Estados Unidos de América. Y considerando que a través de sus habilidades polifacéticas, tradiciones de trabajo duro, espíritu emprendedor, creativo y artesanías, este segmento vital de nuestra comunidad contribuye a las artes, la prosperidad y el bienestar económico de la ciudad de Manassas.

[00:59:15] Y considerando que la comunidad de artesanos y artesanas latinoamericanos traen costumbres maravillosas que fortalecen el corazón de la ciudad de Manassas y de nuestra sociedad. Considerando que a través de su respeto y honor inextinguibles por las artes, su destreza de alta calidad y su deseo persistente de la excelencia, los artesanos y artesanas latinoamericanos han demostrado logros excepcionales, individuales y grupales como emprendedores, dueños y dueñas de negocio y líderes comunitarios.

[00:59:52] Y considerando que esta comunidad ha organizado la Latin American Expo, la exposición latinoamericana, en donde los artesanos y las artesanas latinoamericanos de la ciudad de Manassas y del extranjero se han reunido para compartir y enseñar, promover su obra de arte, cultura y comunidad.

[01:00:13] El tercer domingo de mayo de cada año con mucho éxito, participación, asistencia. Por lo tanto, yo, nuestra alcaldesa Michelle Davis-Jonger, alcaldesa de la ciudad de Manassas, Virginia, en nombre del Consejo Municipal de la ciudad de Manassas, por la presente proclamo el tercer domingo de mayo del 2025, el Día del Artesano Latinoamericano en la ciudad de Manassas y les llamo a los residentes de la ciudad para celebrar esta ocasión, reconociendo las contribuciones de los artesanos y artesanas latinoamericanos

[01:00:50] a nuestra sociedad en general y la ciudad de Manassas en particular. Felicidades. Muchas gracias, Sonia. Mrs. Mayer, thank you. Thank you, council members.

[01:01:13] Good afternoon, everyone. With deep respect and emotion, I received this proclamation today from the city of Manassas. And I want to begin by expressing my heartfelt thanks to the city leadership for this gesture that honors not only my work, but the soul of an entire community of creators, women, trainers, and cultural guardians, Latin American artisans.

[01:01:37] I also want to thank this vibrant community that support us year by year, especially through the realization of LAR Expo, a space born from love for our roots and nurtured by trust, committed, and shaped hope.

[01:01:54] Every handcrafted piece is an act of resilience, a poem made at hand and living heritage. At Expo, it's not just only an exhibition, it's a bridge between generations, between cultures, between who we were, who we are, and what we can become when we work all together.

[01:02:17] I receive the recognition in the name of every artisan who through their hands keep the identity of our people alive. Thank you for believing in us. Thank you for allowing us to keep showing beauty with purpose.

[01:02:35] Long life art, long life memory, and long life's dignity held in our Latin American hands. Thank you.

[01:02:44] Next up is the

[01:03:49] information for National Police Week and Ashley, Councilwoman Hudson is going to come down and do that one for us. Thank you for doing that. Thank you all. Thank you for being here. Hello.

[01:04:18] Great. Whereas National Police Week was established in 1962 by President John F. Kennedy along with a joint resolution of Congress to pay special tribute to those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others And whereas there are more than 800,000 law enforcement officers serving in communities across the United States, including 103 sworn members of the city of Manassas Police Department, who work devotedly and selflessly on behalf of the citizens of the city of Manassas, regardless of the peril or hazard to themselves.

[01:04:56] And whereas, since the first recorded death in 1786, more than 24,000 law enforcement officers in the United States have made the ultimate sacrifice and been killed in the line of duty, including Sergeant John D. Conner III, July 24, 1988, of the Manassas City Police Department.

[01:05:14] And whereas the names of 24,412 of these dedicated public servants are engraved on the walls of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial and was dedicated in 1991 in Washington, D.C. And whereas 345 new names of fallen heroes were added to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, including 148 officers killed in 2024 and 197 officers who died in previous years, whose stories of sacrifice had been lost to history until now.

[01:05:48] And whereas the service and sacrifice of all officers killed in the line of duty will be honored and the names of the officers newly engraved on the memorial will be formally dedicated during National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund 37th Annual Candlelit Vigil to be held on the evening of Tuesday, May 13th, 2005.

[01:06:09] And whereas May 15th, 2025 is designated as Peace Officers Memorial Day in honor of all fallen officers and their family. Now, therefore, I, she, Michelle Davis Younger, Mayor of the City of Manassas, Virginia, and on behalf of the Manassas City Council, do hereby recognize the week of May 11th to the 17th, 2025, as National Police Week 2025 in the City of Manassas, and publicly salute the service of law enforcement officers in our community and in communities across the nation. Thank you all.

[01:06:53] Next up, we have item 1.7 on the agenda. We're going to, I don't believe the folks are here for National Prevention Week.

[01:07:45] I don't think so. So we're going to skip and go to item 1.7, the Proclamation for Foster Care Awareness Month, Mr. Smith. You want to come down and do that one for us? Foster Care Awareness. That's you and our wonderful social services folks.

[01:08:08] Hello. Thank you, Madam.

[01:08:23] The proclamation, whereas Virginia's children and youth are our hope for the future, and we assert that all children deserve a safe, loving, stable, and nurturing home, and whereas families serving as the primary providers of love, identity, self-esteem, and support are the very foundations of our communities and our commonwealth, and whereas a child's

[01:09:02] is best supported in a child welfare system that is family-focused, child-centered, and community-based. And preserving families is the primary goal of the child welfare system.

[01:09:19] And whereas while the city of Manassas has 22 children and youth aged 18 and younger in foster care, There are 20 placed and approved kinship, foster, and adoptive families.

[01:09:36] And whereas kinship families and foster families play a critical role in serving as a support, not a substitute, for the parents of children in foster care to make family reunification possible.

[01:09:52] And whereas, through the partnerships among kinship, foster, and adoptive families, child welfare staff, and public and private child-serving organizations, efforts are made to ensure that voices are heard and support offered for youth at every step of their foster care journey, including helping young adults successfully transition to independence.

[01:10:23] And, whereas, we honor and celebrate the enduring contributions of kinship, foster, and adoptive families during National Foster Care Awareness Month and recognize the outstanding service and commitment kinship, foster, and adoptive families provide to Virginia's children and youth while recognizing that foster care supports entire families.

[01:10:54] Now, therefore, Michelle Davis Younger, mayor of the city of Manassas, Virginia, and on behalf of the Manassas City Council, hereby proclaims the month of May 2025 as Foster Care Awareness Month in the city of Manassas and call upon all citizens to call this observance to the attention of all our residents.

[01:11:22] Thank you. It's always a pleasure to come and speak. Today, actually last month, we talked a little bit about family. Today we're talking about commitment. And the best person to talk about that is Ms. Carly Vaughn, Program Manager for foster care.

[01:11:48] Thank you. Thank you very much. It's not just me. It's definitely a team effort. So again, Madam Manor, thank you so much for having us at the evening council. Thank you so much. I just wanted to give you guys some additional statistics. We talked about CPS statistics, child abuse statistics last month. And so I wanted to kind of roll that into our foster care.

[01:12:05] So 60% of children who are in foster care are in foster care because of neglect. That's closely, not closely, but the next in line is actually 25%, which is emotional or physical abuse. So there's a huge need for understanding the neglect aspect of children in our community.

[01:12:22] So we actually, we have 23 children in foster care in the last couple of weeks we've added. But I wanted to bring to your attention that seven children in the past 12 months have been returned to their families in the city of Manassas. And that's a huge accomplishment. And then the last plug I will put in, shamelessly or not shamelessly, is that you can always help foster care.

[01:12:48] And that doesn't always mean that you have to be a foster parent. so if you have any interest in finding out what that means please feel free to contact any of us at the city so that we can share with you how you can continue to support our community thank you

[01:13:04] next on the agenda proclamation 1.8 ems week miss coates ellis is going to help us with that one

[01:13:47] this is the proclamation for emergency medical services week whereas emergency medical services are a vital public service, and the dedicated members of the City of Manassas Fire and Rescue

[01:14:25] System stand ready to provide life-saving care to those in need 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And whereas, access to quality emergency care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury.

[01:14:48] And whereas the emergency medical service system responded to 5,182 calls for service last year, equaling over 71% of the total call volume.

[01:15:03] And whereas the emergency medical services supervisors were tasked with tracking sensitive key performance indicators for the first time. And whereas the emergency medical services supervisors were tasked with creating a pharmacy for the system from the ground up with little guidance.

[01:15:23] And whereas the emergency medical service providers, whether career or volunteer, engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their life-saving skills.

[01:15:39] And whereas it is appropriate to recognize the value and accomplishments of emergency medical services providers by designating the Emergency Medical Services Week. Now, therefore, Michelle Davis Younger, mayor of the city of Manassas, Virginia, on behalf of the city council, do hereby proclaim the week of May 18th to the 24th, 2025, as Emergency Medical Services Week in the city of Manassas, and call upon the residents of our city to recognize the 51st anniversary of EMS Week

[01:16:19] under the theme EMS Week. We care for everyone and to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities in honor of the EMS profession and the vital services they provide.

[01:16:36] Thank you. Chief Mills, would you like to say something? - So EMS Week was proclaimed in 1974 by president gerald ford in his efforts to recognize the contributions that the ems providers provide nationwide each and every day as call volume continues to rise the dedication commitment from these men and women nationwide continues to rise the things that our paramedics and emts can

[01:17:15] do ultrasound in the field delivering whole blood things that used to be unheard of and only accomplished in emergency rooms we're actually doing in the field now and the amount of life-saving that has taken place as a result of technology innovation and continued growth what we do is only getting enhanced so they never ask for it but if you come across them thank them for what they do each and

[01:17:49] every day all right next on the agenda item 1.9 is a proclamation for Jewish American Heritage Month. Mr. Vice Mayor Wolfe is going to come and help us do that.

[01:18:29] Thank you. Before I read this, I want to talk real quickly about the fact that across our country, the scourge of anti-Semitism has continued to grow. And akin to that is discrimination against gay or anyone else. And it's all together. And remembering that we are all equal before the law.

[01:18:58] and i want to just go back to pastor nye muller's famous poem and at the end he says then they came for the jews and i did not speak out because i was not a jew then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me i'm not jewish but my family is and when i go to synagogue i have to be guarded that's not america should not be america with that a proclamation

[01:19:37] Whereas the United States has many Heritage Months that celebrate the various communities that form the mosaic of our country. By celebrating Heritage Months, we learn from one another and we honor the richness of our diverse nation and we strengthen the fabric of American society.

[01:19:55] Whereas in 1980, Congress requested the President to issue a proclamation designating April 21st through the 28th, a little late, as Jewish Heritage Week. Since then, Presidents Bush, Obama, Trump, and Biden have all issued proclamations for Jewish American Heritage Month, which celebrates Jewish Americans and encourages all Americans to learn more about Jewish heritage and contributions to the United States.

[01:20:21] Whereas the American Jewish community dates back to 1654, when a group of 23 Jews fleeing persecution at the hands of the Portuguese Inquisition, fled Brazil and found refuge in New Amsterdam, now New York City.

[01:20:38] From that TAMI group, the American Jewish community has grown to over 6 million, representing approximately 2% of the American population today. Whereas Jewish Americans have strengthened and inspired their communities and this nation as loyal and patriotic citizens or as grateful for the safe harbor that America has provided them, Jewish Americans have served in government and the military.

[01:21:04] They have run open offices, headed universities and corporations, advanced medicine, created and performed and enduring works of performing and visual arts, written great American novels, and become emblems of justice as members of the Supreme Court, and so much more.

[01:21:20] American Jews have always pushed America to live up for its promise as a nation that upholds freedom and justice for all. Therefore, Michelle Davis Younger, the mayor of Manassas, on behalf of the Manassas City Council, does proclaim May 2025 as Jewish American Heritage Month in the city of Manassas and calls upon all citizens of our city to learn more about their heritage and contribution of american jews and observe this month with appropriate programs activities

[01:21:49] and ceremonies thank you okay and to round it out we have a proclamation for world hunger day which i'm going to read and then we have two commendations to go with along with um world hunger day i thought it was so important we've never recognized world hunger day here in the city we do

[01:22:25] recognize food insecurity with different proclamations during the year but i thought it was important that we shed a little bit more light in light of everything that's going on in the country and so many more people are now food insecure we really want to recognize those people that do it not only

during this month and world hunger day but each and every day taking care of the needs of the residents of our great city so the proclamation for world hunger day whereas world hunger day observed annually on may 28 raises awareness of the global crisis of chronic

[01:23:01] hunger and the urgent need for sustainable solutions that address its root causes and whereas over 800 million people worldwide face hunger and food insecurity every day with many more at risk due to economic instability conflict and the effects of climate change and And whereas hunger is not only a global issue, but a local one as well, affecting families and individuals right here in the city of Manassas and the greater Northern Virginia region.

[01:23:32] And whereas addressing hunger requires coordinated efforts from governments, non-profit organizations, faith communities, businesses, and individuals, all working together to ensure access to nutritious food and to support long-term solutions that promote food justice and self-sufficiency.

[01:23:51] And whereas the city of Manassas acknowledges and supports the tireless efforts of local food pantries, community partners, volunteers, and advocates who work every day to ensure that no one in our community goes hungry. And whereas World Hunger Day serves as a call to action for all residents to reflect on the impact of hunger, support efforts to combat food insecurity, and commit to building a more equitable and nourished community for all.

[01:24:20] Now, therefore, I'm Michelle Davis Younger, mayor of the city of Manassas, Virginia, and on behalf of the Manassas City Council, do hereby proclaim May 28, 2025 as World Hunger Day in the city of Manassas and encourage all residents to raise awareness, support local and global hunger relief efforts, and work together toward a future where everyone has access to the food they need to thrive.

[01:24:45] Tonight, I want to recognize, we'll have the first group come down, is the East End Food Pantry and Creating Foundations of Hope, which I believe they kind of all work together. And it's a commendation for them and the work that they've done in the city of Manassas.

[01:25:05] Hello. Hi, George. How are you doing? I have a commendation here. I read, and then you can have remarks after I'm done. The commendation reads, whereas food insecurity continues to affect families across the nation and within the city of Manassas, creating urgent needs that require community-based responses and sustainable solutions, and whereas World Hunger Day, observed annually on May 28, seeks to raise awareness of chronic hunger and highlight the importance of coordinated action to address its root causes,

[01:25:41] And whereas during the COVID-19 pandemic, Helen Zerida established the East End Food Pantry and launched Stomp Out Hunger, serving up to 1,000 families daily through volunteer efforts and partnerships with local organizations and donors.

[01:25:58] And whereas in May 2021, Creating Foundations of Hope, a nonprofit focused on community support, adopted the Stomp Out Hunger initiative and expanded its impact by hiring a community liaison to strengthen outreach and collaboration.

[01:26:15] And whereas in 2024, Creating Foundations of Hope received a grant from the Potomac Health Foundation to purchase a delivery van, now central to the mobile food pantry efforts, which brings food directly to residents who are unable to travel to the East End food pantry site.

[01:26:35] And whereas though bi-weekly food distributions and ongoing mobile delivery, the East End Food Pantry and Creating Foundations of Hope currently serve approximately 800 families each month, offering not only food but also referrals and support for rental and utility assistance.

[01:26:54] And whereas the organizations maintain close collaboration with school liaisons, social workers, and community agencies to identify households facing urgent food insecurity and respond promptly with needed resources. And whereas the commitment of the East End Food Pantry and creating foundations of hope reflects the core principles of World Hunger Day by addressing local food insecurity with sustainable, compassionate, and community-driven solutions.

[01:27:23] Now, therefore, I, Michelle Davis Younger, Mayor of the City of Manassas, Virginia, and on behalf of the City Council, hereby commend the East End Food Pantry and Creating Foundations of Hope for their exceptional service to the community, and in honor of World Hunger Day on May 28, 2025, their tireless work to reduce hunger and support families in need continues to strengthen the health, stability, and well-being of the City of Manassas.

[01:27:50] Thank you so much for what you do. Thank you. want to thank everyone. Thank you, Madam Mayor, City Council, for recognizing. I'm a little bit shaken up. I didn't think this would bother me that much. But I also want to thank Creating Foundations for Hope, because without them, I would have not been able to continue my work to stomp out Hunker. Now I'm doing that every day. Just this month alone, Madam Mayor, we served 1,036

[01:28:26] six families. I just had to give my report to my boss here, George Davies, and I was astonished in how many families had actually walked through our doors. So I want to thank all of you for supporting us and for supporting me. I know a lot of you get phone calls from me and you're like, oh no, not Miss Helen again. But I'm here to stay and to do the work that I started with along with creating foundations for hope and um thank you i also want to thank everyone because helen is the

[01:29:02] is been able to run this program as a volunteer and then we brought her on as an employee and she's done a heck of a great job implementing our food and security programs but i also want to recognize diane real quick diane anderson is also providing the support that helen needs and that's what's important and she's ensuring that i continue to support and i wanted to make mention that Our board president, Louise Castillo, and Jerome Jones are also in the building.

[01:29:31] They came out here to support us because they make sure that we remain viable in the Northern Virginia community, and that's what's really important. And then I will get up with Mr. Tom about the Affordable Housing Day because I need to be there. Appreciate it. Thank you for everything that you do.

[01:29:48] Okay, now we'll call down Manassas Baptist Church for their commendation for the work they do for world hunger.

[01:30:22] thank y'all for being here tonight okay and your accommodation reads whereas food insecurity and material hardship remain persistent challenges for families and individuals across the nation and within the city of manassas calling for compassionate and community-based responses and whereas world hunger day observed annually on may 28 brings global attention to the urgent need to eliminate hunger and support sustainable long-term solutions for food

[01:30:57] justice and human dignity and whereas for over 135 years Manassas Baptist Church has been a committed and active presence in the city of Manassas currently located at 8800 Sudley Road serving as both a place of worship and a center for outreach and service and whereas since 2008 Manassas Baptist Church has operated a bi-weekly food and clothing distribution program to support individuals and families experiencing food insecurity and basic needs with an

[01:31:32] average of 38 families and 152 individuals served each week the ministry is open and whereas in partnership with the capital area food bank and Manassas food rescue Manassas Baptist Church ensures that food is distributed in a safe welcoming and secure environment to the community's most vulnerable residents and whereas the church's ministry also seeks to meet spiritual needs by offering a listening ear and prayer for those who request it providing a holistic and compassionate response to those facing hardship and whereas manassas baptist church's long-standing commitment

[01:32:10] to feeding clothing and supporting those in need reflects the core mission of world hunger day through sustained, volunteer-driven, and community-centered action. Now, therefore, I'm Michelle Davis-Younger, Mayor of the City of Manassas, Virginia, and on behalf of the Manassas City Council, hereby commend Manassas Baptist Church for over 17 years of faithful service through its food and clothing ministries and in honor of World Hunger Day on May 28, 2025.

[01:32:40] Their ongoing dedication continues to uplift and nourish the City of Manassas, demonstrating the power of faith in action and the strength of a community united in service. Congratulations. Thank you so much. Pass the mic over to me.

[01:33:02] Madam Mayor, council members, thank you so much. To be here this evening, it's really nice. I mean, but for us, I think the bigger thing is Manassas Baptist Church being able to put actions, you know, put them out there and to be the hands and feet of God.

[01:33:19] And that's, I think for us, that's the biggest part of what we do and why we do it. These things are great, but the ability to be able to impact our community, to feed them, to clothe them. But the part that I love the most is to be able to talk with them and to be able to witness to them and to be able to hear and give feedback.

[01:33:42] And just that's the blessing of it all. It truly is. And thank you guys so much. Thank you. Next on the agenda is the consent agenda.

[01:34:16] I'll call my Vice Mayor Wolfe for that motion. Madam Mayor, I move the adoption of the consent agenda and the dispensing of the reading of the ordinances. Second. I have the motion by Vice Mayor Wolfe, seconded by Councilwoman Vasquez-Luna, to approve our consent agenda.

[01:34:35] 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. Councilmember Smith? Yes. Councilmember Osina?

[01:34:50] Yes. Councilmember Hudson? Yes. Motion carried. Thank you so much for that. Feels like my mic is not on. That moves us forward to item three on the agenda, ordinances and resolution. Item 3.1 is the uncodified ordinance number 0-2025-798, setting the tax year 2026 real estate tax rate to support the fiscal year 2026 budget first reading.

[01:35:14] So Diane is coming to the podium. Thank you, ma'am, for being here. Thank you, Madam Mayor, members of Council. I do not have anything else to present on this topic, but this is the first reading of the real estate tax rates for the next fiscal year, which begins on July 1st and ends next June 30th.

[01:35:35] The total tax rate, including the levy, is \$1.26, which is flat from the current year, and I stand ready to answer any questions. Thank you, Ms. Bergeron. Any questions for Ms. Bergeron? Okay. Madam Mayor, move adoption of Ordinance 0-20-25-798.

[01:35:56] Second. We have the motion by Vice Mayor Wolf, seconded by Councilman Smith, to approve Ordinance No. 0-20-25-798. Bless you. Bless you. Any discussion, Ms. Ellis? Yes.

[01:36:13] Before we take the vote, I do want to explain my vote. We had many work sessions, budget meetings to discuss how we were going to proceed with the real estate tax rate. I do want to thank everyone that has come forth with their voice by email, by public meetings, our public hearings.

[01:36:44] What I had heard and what I observed is the need for a flat tax bill. The tax rate of 126 is a flat tax rate. To have a flat tax bill, we would have to be at 1.187, which takes 7 cents off of that rate.

[01:37:09] In the last work session, I did propose that we shave off about 4 million from the budget and also take the unassigned revenue of 2.15 million, which is 3 cents, give it back to our residents the four million dollars you know if you look at our reserves we are at 20 percent 15% is what we recommend we also have and that's our general fund reserve we also have capital reserves of 23 million we can

[01:37:45] definitely take a look at our reserves and also our non-hired staff we could ask the departments to also do some expense cuts where we are in very difficult times right now you know if you heard the proclamation on our needs for feeding people it's known that people are struggling and I think they would really appreciate having a break when this tax bill the schools they definitely could in my opinion from what I was reported could review their salary

[01:38:20] formulas they have 1500 on payroll and only 40% are actually licensed teachers they want an increase for everyone I think that we need to focus on on on the classrooms we can't control that as a council what the schools do with their budget but we can certainly recommend that they focus heavily on getting their salary formulas in order and focus on our teachers and our classrooms so we're still the second highest tax rate in the state I just looked that

[01:38:57] up today again, we're significantly higher than the national median tax rate. So, you know, this vote, I will vote no. I really was hoping the council would come together to give our residents a break. But thank you for all your comments.

[01:39:19] Thank you, Ms. Ellis. Any other discussion? Ms. Vasquez-Law? Thank you, Madam Mayor. Well, I, as well, I've been advocating for at least two pennies to be decreased through several sessions that we had.

[01:39:39] It is a difficult time to hear our residents. I have also heard our schools, our teachers, and the needs that they have. I believe since last year, since we approved last budget, there has been an increase on making sure that we take care of the schools, whether it's from the school staff, residents, and different people seeking for support on that.

[01:40:10] I want to thank Councilwoman Hudson. She was the only one that was willing to at least entertain one penny, and of course, Councilwoman Ellis, you know, she was looking for more, but you know, both of them, they were willing to see a decrease.

[01:40:31] I believe that within the budget, we were able to still take care of the schools, give the extra money to the schools, but also to be able to listen the tax burden to the residents and the business.

[01:40:49] So I want to, I have a long statement, my apologies, but I would like to go through it. As we consider the adoption of the fiscal year 2026, I want to speak directly to the heart of the conversation many of us have had with residents the desire for a lower bill without compromising services.

[01:41:10] I want to make sure that you know that I heard you. We all want to reduce the financial burden on families. As a single mother, I truly understand the expenses coming at us from different angles. But we must also recognize the fundamental truth.

[01:41:26] The high-quality services come at a cost. and this budget totaling \$327.9 million is about maintaining the safety, quality, and opportunities that make Manassas a place that we are proud to call home.

[01:41:42] We are increasing our investments in our schools. No different than last year, we have done 3%. I believe in prior years it used to be 2.5 or at least less than three. In the last few years we had a commitment of 3% plus.

[01:41:58] There has been discussions for these vote to a higher allocation. Last year we did a 1.5. As I hear, the Prince William County, they ratified their collective bargaining agreement for the schools, and they are getting a 7%.

[01:42:15] So I believe this is, it was something good to do, but now it's imperative that we get it done. Ensuring that our children receive the education they deserve. We strengthen the public safety by allocating the necessary money and the staffing matters we have heard to make sure that the staff is located as necessary.

[01:42:42] I believe in the highlights, we talked about the replacement of the medic unit 501B, and there's many improvements and modernization of the infrastructure, like we have seen improvements and roads sidewalks trails that keep us moving and connected this budget also has the pavement replacement so that is important that we might don't see the road needs the replacement but it does i understand the concerns about the projected 406 increase in the average tax bill i believe

[01:43:17] none of us take it lightly we have worked really hard to get here but the increase comes not from raising the tax rate. I believe since I've been sitting here the rate has remained the same, but the values in each property has increased and that's the one that has brought on the increase on the expense. Some have asked why don't we cut services, but it's hard to find ways to cut it because I'm not willing to compromise our safety, our schools, emergency response times, the

[01:43:52] road safety or other power, the railability, they can, you know, the time is different. It can hurt people. It can mean matter of life and safety. This budget avoids making changes like that.

[01:44:14] I'm committed to continue in the future to find, you know, ways to save and to cut. I want to, I believe they are after we approve this budget, the new budget starts right after that. We can now ask for a world-class services while shrinking the resources to make them possible.

[01:44:33] Tonight I will be supporting, even though I wasn't able to get the support to at least get one penny reduction. I will be supporting this because as a mother of two kids in the schools, I see firsthand the needs, not only for the wage increases, But I know how difficult it's going to be as we're still waiting on changes coming from the federal government that will affect our city as a whole if it does happen.

[01:45:01] So thank you, Madam Mayor. Thank you. Thank you. Any other comments? Mr. Osina. Thank you, Mayor. You know, we hear it sometimes that we have the second highest real estate tax rate in the state here, or at least in northern Virginia here.

[01:45:30] But when you take places like Vienna, when you take their tax rate, which is \$1.3175, or you take the town of Herndon, which is \$1.3925, it puts us above us here, along the way here.

[01:45:51] And so I think it's important that the narrative be at least corrected, that we're that high when there are other jurisdictions, especially in Northern Virginia that have a higher residential tax rate.

[01:46:10] I plan on voting for this resolution to set the real estate tax rate for FY 2026 at a total of \$1.26. I have the responsibility of making local government work regardless of what comes out of Washington DC or Richmond, Virginia or what economic impacts from global affairs may occur.

[01:46:32] But that's like any other year that I have been on city council. have to make sure that local government works, works so that we have trained police protection and fire service, that we have vetted and motivated school personnel to teach our children, that we have code enforcement to handle quality of life issues, that we maintain our water treatment facilities, electrical operations, including substation upkeep and sewer maintenance and stormwater management, that we make sure our roads and highways are safe for traffic,

[01:47:08] That we keep in good condition all the parks, playing fields, and stonewall pool. And that we look after and invest in our information technology that keeps us all connected. This tax rate supports a budget that adds five full-time positions for public safety, three firefighters, three part-time positions at the Manassas Community Center, 3% merit increase in cost-of-living adjustment increases for city government employees, and an additional \$1.5 million for school compensation.

[01:47:43] Our residents want our city to work because this is where they make their home, where they work and shop, and where they live and raise families. They deserve a city that works as hard for them as they do for it. And that is why I'm supporting this resolution.

[01:48:02] Thank you, Mayor. Thank you. Anyone else? Well, Mr. Smith had it. Go ahead, Ralph. Thank you, Madam Mayor. I, too, will support the ordinance in setting the rate at 126.

[01:48:18] I know that some will argue that we should never raise taxes to fund new projects, but that perspective really oversimplifies what our city's challenges are and actually risk stalling the progress that our residents rightly expect.

[01:48:43] I think that it makes no sense to say no to everything. A good budget is about making smart, deliberate choices that serve our city's long-term interests.

[01:48:58] In Manassas, that means funding infrastructure, repairs before problems worse, and investing in public services that sustain a high quality of life. Growth here in Manassas is undeniable.

[01:49:17] New businesses, new families, and developments are shaping manassas for the future. But our age and infrastructure, the rising housing costs, and increased demand for services are straining our

existing systems.

[01:49:37] And I think that by ignoring these issues in the name of budget restraint simply defers costs to tomorrow, often at a higher price. I believe that a modest, transparent tax adjustment today can prevent emergency spending and deteriorating conditions later.

[01:50:01] The idea that some projects are unwanted just simply misses the point. Residents want better roads. They want safer neighborhoods. They want more access to housing.

[01:50:20] They just want to be heard. That's where transparency and communication comes in. We must work with the community, not above it, to clearly explain where the dollars are going and why.

[01:50:39] We recognize that fiscal responsibility includes accountability, not avoidance. And let's be clear, raising taxes is never proper. But then, these nine years I've served the city, and all the years that I've worked with local governments, I came to understand governing is just not about chasing popularity.

[01:51:08] It's about making choices that reflect wisdom and courage. And in the case of Manassas, that means using a budget foundation that's thoughtful and not an excuse for inaction.

[01:51:25] I think our city deserves a future that's shaped by our intention, not inertia. Let's continue to budget smartly.

[01:51:41] Let's invest wisely. And let's continue to move Manassas forward together. Thank you, Madam Mayor. Thank you. Vice Mayor. Yeah, a couple of facts and then an observation. um fact number one we have the lowest water and utility rates and bills in northern virginia fact number two we have the lowest property tax personal property tax rates in northern virginia and that's the second largest part of our budget fact number three is we have the second lowest average residential tax bill anywhere in northern virginia our is the only place that's lower than

[01:52:20] us is prince william county last fiscal year prince william county had 280 million dollars in revenue from data centers, we have one. That accounts for it right there. You look at Loudoun County, their average residential tax bill is a little over \$6,000. Arlington, Alexandria is over \$8,000 and Fairfax is over \$9,000. Where that's germane is that we are all competing for the same talent pool. Policemen, firemen, administrators, they make the same in Fairfax essentially as they

[01:52:58] do here. We have to make sure that we can hire and maintain the staffing that we need. That's where the budget goes. That's the reality. That's 85, 90% of the budget is people. So here's the observation. We had a thing called an election, gee, six months ago. And the people of the city of Manassas made a very clear and conscious choice. They wanted and voted to maintain a level of services and quality of life of our community. I and other members of this board were elected

[01:53:37] with that. And then we campaigned on that. Voters were very clear. And they were clear four years ago, and they were clear eight years ago. Voters haven't changed. And I understand there are those that disagree, and they are heard and respected, but at the end of the day, we up here have to do what is best for, in our judgment, for the community.

[01:54:01] But let's be very clear. The people, the people of Manassas, the majority vote, have spoken. With that, Madam Mayor, I think it's time for a vote. Any other comments? Ms. Ellis? I just wanted to comment on Councilman Ocino's a rate for Herndon and also for Vienna.

[01:54:28] So they both pay Fairfax County tax, which is 1.125. I don't know if they voted on it, but that might be the advertised rate. But what brings it up to the levels that he is quoting, they also pay a town tax on top of the Fairfax County tax.

[01:54:50] So the real estate tax is the Fairfax County tax. So we are higher than that. Thank you. Anyone else before we, Mr. Smith, Mr. Ossina, I'm sorry. And I will clarify, an additional clarity.

[01:55:09] The town of Vienna and the town of Herndon also charge a real estate tax along the way here. So, yes, Fairfax County does, but they also on top of that, and that combined tax is what makes the total tax.

[01:55:27] You go to any citizen in Herndon and Vienna and want to say that they are paying less than we are, they can show you their bill and say that's not true. We're ready to call Ms. Ellis.

[01:55:49] But we are a city, they are a town, so it is different. I'm going to round it out. Thank you all. I had said from the beginning when we started the discussions that I was in after talking with Diane, and I would, if y'all know I don't vote on the budget, thank God, And the rate, I was in favor and said from the beginning that I was in favor of cutting it by two cents because now is the time to do it, in my opinion, if you're going to do it and still meet all of the needs that we have, that they have in front of them.

[01:56:27] I agreed with Ms. Vasquez Luna about everything that we wanted to fund and all of that. So I just want to commend all of you for doing the homework, for doing the research, for talking and listening to the residents of this city and hearing the needs and understanding how to come to the decision you have to make.

[01:56:50] I don't envy you at all in having to do it. I've had to vote the two years that I was counsel, and Vice Mayor Wolf had told me when I first got on counsel, it'll be probably the hardest thing you ever have to do is the budget. And that has proven true. And then when I got to be mayor, I didn't have to worry about voting.

[01:57:07] But it's still on the minds of all of us because they don't sit up here and they pay it just like the residents. So thank you, council members, for your hard work in the work sessions, participating, listening to each other, being respectful of one another when you didn't disagree.

[01:57:25] It's not easy work. It's not easy to sit and do this year after year. but again like vice mayor will said the people spoke and they have the folks up here that they feel best represent what this community needs and what it wants um and so with that i will call on mr smith to call the roll please for the vote vice mayor wolf yes council member smith yes

[01:57:56] council member ellis no council member osina yes council member vasquez luna yes council member Hudson. Yes. The motion carries. Okay. Thank you for that. Next on the agenda is item 3.2, the uncodified ordinance number 0-2025-799, setting the tax year 2025 personal property tax rate to support the fiscal year 2026 budget first reading. Nothing to add, but if you want

[01:58:32] to say. Madam Mayor, move adoption of ordinance 0-2025-799. Second. Clear the motion by Vice Mayor Rowe, seconded by Councilman Smith to approve ordinance number 02025-799. Any discussion?

[01:58:49] Ms. Vasquez-Luna. Thank you, Madam Mayor. Here, too, through the meetings that we had, I continue to try to eliminate the \$25 fee for everybody that owns a car. I also try to decrease the rate by one

cent.

[01:59:10] And, you know, I just hope that in the future, you know, I will support this, but I hope in the future we do make a difference. I remember that, you know, somebody at the meeting said we're not trying to meet Manassas Park, and we are not trying to meet Manassas Park.

[01:59:32] But now the Prince William County also has the same rate. So, you know, I hope in the future we look and it does make an impact, you know, overall to the residents. So I will be supporting this, you know, but I wish we had made a concession, whether it was here or on the other side.

[01:59:50] Because at the end, everything comes from the same, when it comes to residents, you know, the same fee. Thank you. Thank you. Any other discussion points? Ms. Ellis. I just wanted to mention the computer equipment and peripherals used in data centers, the rate at 3.60 we set, which is the same as I caught the car tax.

[02:00:18] Isn't that correct? And we could not go past that rate. And I think we actually, you know, we can go higher, but we are going to try to be, stay where we are because it might change. I mean, a lot of people have asked about that rate.

[02:00:34] You know, why can't we go much higher? We're trying to do our due diligence and be, you know, keep it where we think it probably is going to end up again. So that particular tax, we definitely cannot count on that all the time, you know, as what we found out when the Commissioner of Revenue gave the report about the data center with the bank equipment.

[02:01:02] And now that we have an exemption, they have an exemption for that equipment and their business, their BPAL tax. You can't control who leases in a data center. The owner of the data center controls that.

[02:01:19] So even if we have three being built right now on Dean Drive, and we don't know actually where they could go. I mean, we think we know who's going to be in there, but once they're built and they own it, we don't know. So we just have to be very careful about the revenue that does, if it does come in.

[02:01:39] This was a wake-up call. The data centers are not the golden, you know, rule now, in my opinion. I don't think we should be giving up land for the data centers. I'm definitely, it was a wake-up call, and I hope this council remembers this for a long time.

[02:01:57] Can't control what happens to that once it's built. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Ellis. any other comments or mr. Smith yeah just for the record this ordinance and the rate set there it's not impacted by recent factors that we found out and learned it does set the tone for our policies and our deliberations going forward but this council did not budget this year on that area be in a data center. So it has no impact. I just want that on the record.

[02:02:37] Ms. Vasquez. Thank you. Just a reminder, this will increase the data centers to the same rate as the personal property tax, but it will now increase it to the small business. I just want to make sure that when we vote, that's what we're voting on.

[02:02:59] Yeah, we've raised it to 360, is it? The business, 3.6. The business computers are 215, and then the data centers for their computers will be 360. Right, okay.

[02:03:15] Okay, Mr. Smith, please call the roll. I'll be glad to. No, call the roll. You can do it if you want. Take Eric's job. Vice Mayor Wolfe? Yes. Council Member Smith? Yes.

[02:03:31] Council Member Ellis? Yes. Council Member Osina? Yes. Council member Vasquez Luna? Yes. Council member Hudson? Yes. Motion carries. All right. Thank you so much council members for that. That moves us forward to public comment time. Item four on the agenda. Thank you Ms. Bergeron. At this time we welcome residents and community members who wish to speak about services, policies, and affairs of the city of Manassas government. Residents who have not requested additional time four days prior to this meeting from the city manager. We have a timer

[02:04:08] and your comments will be limited to three minutes. We appreciate the time you've taken to be here. We treat public comment time as a public hearing and we do not engage in conversation with speakers. The lack of an immediate response to your comments should not be taken as a lack of interest or concern as we have staff present taking notes and will respond to your concern in a timely manner.

[02:04:29] So please, when approaching the podium, give us your name and address so that we may follow up with you appropriately. We ask that you please be respectful when presenting your comments to not only council members but to those residents and community members who are also present. With that, I don't have anyone signed up, but if there's anyone present who wishes to address council, now is the time to come forward, please. Hello, my name is Helen Zarita, and thank you for the recognition this evening. I'm here to say thank you to each

[02:05:06] and every one of you for your time, your effort, your thoughtfulness, and listening to all your constituents, no matter what side they're on. I know that your budgeting is not easy. If I'm having a hard time budgeting my household, imagine budgeting a city. But I do want to say a few things that may ruffle some feathers this evening. I don't know where or who or what got approved with the data centers where Manassas City is not going to be getting some revenue or

[02:05:43] whatever it should be. I know we're getting something, but we're not getting what we were looking at. I'm going to ask the city manager to please look diligently and hold your employees accountable for not doing their due diligence into bringing what this council needs to be able to make a decision on what comes and what leaves the city. Because I am almost certain that there are some employees of the city of Manassas that have reported incorrect information, and they have

[02:06:23] done some damage to the city because of that. So I know that you're new, and I don't like to bark up people's trees, but this is kind of upsetting to understand that there are city employees that have done this. But I know the council only votes on what is given to them, and I understand that this council is only paid part-time. Even though they have to do the work, it is also due

[02:06:57] diligence that the staff of the city of Manassas do their due diligence and bring back what is correct to this council to vote. Because the mistakes that are being made now and have been made in the last couple of months have affecting the residents and this council to the fact that this council is being beat up for things that they had no clue on because it was not brought to their attention until it was too late.

[02:07:30] So I'm asking you, please, and I'm not trying to beat up on anyone here this evening, but if I can do the homework and I can find the flaws, I know that Mr. Burke sitting at that seat can do the same thing. Have a great night. Thank you.

[02:07:46] Anyone else? Good evening. My name is Janet Plevniak. I live at 8605 Weems Road.

[02:08:03] Once again, I'm going to go to the higher power. Heavenly Father, I'm here once again to ask you to touch the hearts of our mayor and each council member. Please give them the guidance they need

to make decisions for the good of the community and not self-serving decisions.

[02:08:20] Please help them with the ability to know what they need to know about things going on in the city in a timely manner. Present accurate information to citizens in a timely manner, which will reduce misunderstandings among us. I know you are working through them, as I heard from a citizen on my way here tonight, that she reached out with an issue and was blessed in a very short time.

[02:08:58] I ask that you continue to work through them, to continue to serve the city of Manassah's citizens with humility and grace. And I ask this through your son, Jesus Christ. Amen. thank you anyone else who wishes to address hello Lynn Farkel-Greem and as a city resident and yes somebody who has run for office several times and not one but I will let you know that that doesn't indicate that people voted for you for higher taxes if that makes you sleep better at night

[02:09:36] congratulations but when I ask people why they vote for you they say because you said you're going to fight for affordable housing that you're going to make sure that our parks and our sports teams stay here, that you promise to be supporters of GMBL, that you promise to be supporters of their communities, that you promise to be supporters of our schools, that you promise to hold people accountable. So if you want to sit there and think that this is what you did tonight, great. But that's not what you did tonight. Ms. Vazquez Luna, you made such a powerful statement on the work session call. And Ms. Hudson, you were trying to say that you wanted a one cent reduction. And Ms. Ellis,

[02:10:15] you were also talking about a larger reduction the reality is you could have at least gotten to the three females here that we're fighting for that you could have gotten to a one cent reduction probably if you had been able to get to that conversation together maybe time did not allow for that but the residents would have appreciated even a one cent because it meant you heard them that's what it means it might not be able to get everything but we could get closer to something where we're all heard and so we're a great community when we work together with George Mason we're a great community when we work with Micron we're a great community when we serve a thousand families who need food do we

[02:10:54] ask if those 1,000 families are all Manassah City families or do we just serve them because that's the right thing to do so I am perplexed I have never in the time that I've been paying attention seen a line item budget you haven't seen it you haven't seen it you haven't seen it you haven't seen it I i don't know if you've seen it and i don't know if you've seen it i don't think you've seen it we get an overview we get categories it's very hard to feel good about cutting something when

[02:11:29] it just says police when it just says radios when it just says teachers and it just says schools that's harder but to miss ellis's point it's not your job as the the board to cut from the department who when you don't see the line item that is the city manager's job to work together with his executive leadership team and there are several people up here who understand that role much better than some others and so i'm going to ask you to please answer my foia regarding that issue and i look forward to hearing more about that budget for next year thank you thank you

[02:12:06] anyone else wish to address council at this time if not then we are adjourned thank you



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