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[00:00:00] Vice Mayor Wolfe? No. Council member Ellis? Here. Council member Smith? Here. Council member Alcina? Here. Council member Vasquez Luna? Here. Council member Hudson? Here. Form is present. Thank you very much.

[00:00:28] And the school board meeting is also called to order. May I have a roll call? Chair Seymour? Here. Vice Chair Spong? Present. Mrs. Steven? Present.

[00:00:43] Mrs. Brackett? Present. Ms. Meyer? Present. Ms. Meyer? Here. Dr. Jones? Here. Thank you. Madam Chair, we have a roll call. Thank you. Thank you. I'm going to start our meeting off. Item number one is approval of participation in the city council meeting by remote electronic communication with council member Vasquez-Lenon, who is joining us by phone, Mr. Osteeman, and staff member.

[00:01:06] Yes, I move the approval of the participation in the city council meeting by remote electronic communication by council member Sonia Vasquez-Lenon. Second. Council Member Ossima was seconded by Council Member Ossima.

[00:01:24] Any discussions? Marion C. Nunn, Mr. Snickley, call roll. Council Member Ossima? Yes. Council Member Ossima? Yes. Vice Mayor Wolfe? Yes. Council Member Ossima? Yes. Council Member Hudson?

[00:01:40] Yes. Motion carries. Thank you. Ms. Luna, can you hear us okay? You there? Thank you, Bob, Mary. Yes. Okay, good. Thank you. We have a motion from the school board to approve the agenda. I move that the school board of the city in Manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented.

[00:02:00] Second. I have a motion by Mrs. Stevens, second by Mrs. Bregia, that the school board of the city in Manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented. Is there any discussion? All in favor? I have any opposed. Motion carries it. Thank you.

[00:02:15] The first item on the agenda, well, the second item is for discussion, item 2.1 is the Manassas Industrial School Cottage Relocation and Manassas Regional High School Locational Building Update. And I've been told by filling in city manager, Mr. King, that we're working on the temperature in the facility here.

[00:02:39] So it's a little warm, but they are working on it. It is remotely there. Thank you, Your Honor. Members of Council, good evening, Madam Chair and members of the school board.

[00:02:56] I'm here this evening with my Parks and Rec team and my Historic Preservation team to give the joint body an update on two very, very exciting projects at our Manassas Industrial School of Historic Site, which is directly adjacent to the Old and New Jenny Dean Elementary School.

[00:03:13] We're going to take you through. This is a two-part presentation. Some of it's tied to our discovery of the cottage, which we'll cover first. The second piece of the project is going to talk about some of our findings in the existing old Jenny Dean Elementary School regarding a specific piece of the building that we have made some really exciting discoveries as we've explored the evolution of that building.

[00:03:36] Ben Walker, our historic preservation planner of the city, is going to take you through that in the second part of the presentation. So first, an update on the MIS Cottage. So for those of you who don't know, this is an original building from the Manassas Industrial School, constructed in 1914, about a year ago, maybe a little more than a year at this point.

[00:03:56] It was brought to our attention by residents and then to the mayor that this structure actually existed. Up to this point, we didn't know that there were any intact structures at the Manassas Industrial School. So we discovered through a lot of research that in 1959, approximately, the cottage actually relocated to its current location on Jefferson Street to make way for additions to the Jenny Dean School that we know today.

[00:04:21] That was lost to history for a while, but we have discovered. And in 2025, the property is actually owned by Dominion. We're working with the mayor. We were actually able to secure a donation of the cottage. The cottage is now in the city of Manassas. We don't own the land underneath, but we own the building as of today.

[00:04:37] We have stabilized the structure, basically keeping it intact with plans to relocate. Just a little bit of historical context. This is it in its original form, top left as it appeared in 1915, and you can see the evolution of the structure. But we have some pretty decent records of what it looked like on the outside.

[00:04:54] Even more exciting, this is really hard to believe, but first, as we have done the research on the history of this structure, we discovered at the Virginia Tech Library is a treasure trove of documentation on the whole MIS site, which included a 1948 site plan, and we've highlighted out here.

[00:05:14] So to orient you, this would be where existing Janine Dean Elementary School is. This is the outline of the Carnegie Building, the existing memorial site. We'll get to that in the next half of the presentation. The service road running along the building is here, and that is the actual location of the cottage.

[00:05:29] We've also done archaeology out there. We have found remnants of the existing foundation. So we've been able to piece all of this information together to come up with a location, site plan to move it and we worked with dr newman dr movement shared some of the school board land is under a school board property so we wanted to identify a location we toyed around with a number of sites with the discovery from virginia tech we were actually able to come up with a site plan that very closely approximates the location of where the cottage would have been it would have been a little further over quite honestly but there's a large water line existing water line running between that and that's a enormous cost to relocate so we can get it the exact same set

[00:06:09] back from the Carnegie building and then we can get it approximately where it was once we move it back so this has been a really incredible discovery and we've been able to get the site planned preliminarily to this point in terms of where we go on the property and that's where we are today so just to give you a little bit of a timeline what the staff is thinking about relocation of the cottage new jenny dean school opens up um staff would proceed at that point we don't want to move the cottage back while there's other decisions to be made at the jenny dean site primarily if there's demolition of parts of the school or the entire school we don't want to have the cottage on the property at that point so our plan would be in 2027 to

[00:06:46] work on building the foundation and relocating the cottage Jenny the MIS is founded in the fall of 74 73 so we will be able to bring it back approximately around the time the plan is at least when it was chartered and move the cottage back to its approximately to its original location anyone's been to Colonial Williamsburg and seen the Bray house has been recently relocated once we relocated back to the property, we would work on restoration, remove the modern finishes, remove some of the windows that are out of the second floor door windows as an example are not original in the structure.

[00:07:23] We would store it to its existing exterior finish and then work on what we would do with the inside of the property, which is more TBD, depending on funding, a lot of fundraising, which Keisha will be spearheading over the next two years. I'm going to pause there for a moment and see if there's any questions on the cottage piece of the property.

[00:07:43] this is information we do have a little bit of time but again we really had some amazing discoveries at the site and we look forward to moving this college forward and down the street what was the use of the space I know the students there's unclear exactly what the specific uses were some of the sources indicate that it was used first for them to have a construction project to practice the building trades and then there's evidence that it was used as a home economics

[00:08:16] building for a bit um so the views have changed over time so you mentioned the interior of the building so i know you say that there's not really solid plan for that but it does have me thinking unlike the other jenny dean memorial where it's an open space and you just walk through like are we we need to be prepared to have a museum open on our property like what is the where are you guys think you're going with that so the city already operates the it's on the mis portion the property

[00:08:55] it's already operated by the city. Quite honestly, when it comes to the interior, if you go inside right now, it's a completely modern home. We can't remove any of the interior finishes because we need to move the cottage. We've been advised, once you start taking sheetrock off the walls, it's going to make it that much harder to move the structure. So our expectation is we need to get it to its new home, the original home, and then we would have to do a lot of interior exploration.

[00:09:20] We expect it will yield a lot of its secrets as to the layout. We don't have more plans of what look like inside so we're gonna have to do some exploration as we remove the modern finishes and see what it'll look like I mean can it be a teaching classroom something that we can operate through the museum system and even make accessible for use with the school absolutely but we're not down to use of this site yet it would certainly be available for that at this point and obviously museum interpretation can you clarify where the cottage would be like

[00:09:51] on on the original and the new location is it where the little parking area is right so they're just so the existing parking lot that serves the memorial site would be removed in this scenario okay um and then the cottage would be approximately you know approximately in line where we're with so the existing access road the secondary access to the school would remain and getting out to so we didn't want to and we talked with dr newman i think he consulted some of the school board members we didn't want to remove that additional circulation on the site at this point so we designed around that but with the discovery of the plans it's actually very close to where it was

[00:10:28] mayor for clarification uh some of the internal discussions we've had for the use is to use that as your showcasing to tell the story of the school so you put some of the historical facts use it as a classroom when they want to put that form but that's some of the just internal conversation.

[00:10:55] First of all, Helen, do we have artifacts? We do from the archaeology. They did find some pretty cool stuff. Bits and pieces obviously is this archaeology. We have some other things that were used in African American schools and around the city of Manassas. Not necessarily this school, but typical of what you would have seen at the time.

[00:11:16] That if we were to use those, we would be transparent about this came out of such and such school, you know, that kind of thing. So we do have some things, yes, and lots of lots of pictures that we can use for big graphics on the wall so there's a lot of opportunity there and uh matt um has parking been contemplated since this would be going on the existing parking lot so to speak here the existing well the existing this is the existing parking lot serving all jenny dina i meant for the historic site to be served by the parking lot for the the existing parking lot is ample parking to serve so no new no new parking at this time

[00:11:54] right so no no addition not not at this time no okay and lastly do we know why and do we have any written information or pictures of the home ec building being moved off site no we don't know why it was moved to make way for you know that actually the second part of the presentation

[00:12:20] I just want to ask from our end, is there sufficient parking at Jenny Dean Elementary School when the new school parking lot goes in and all that stuff, and assuming the old school comes down to still deserve the dual purpose of servicing a diagonal school?

[00:12:44] I know we have enough parking for the school. This, this lot was not included in your parking calculations for new Jenny Dean Elementary School, so it can serve this site, any other uses of the site, but

it's not in your parking tab for new Jenny Dean. There's a lot of parking in the entire complex, especially if you get to the back side of the department.

[00:13:08] Yes. Yeah, but you would have to take a path to go there. It's not like it. Remember, the new Jenny Dean Elementary School is designed to stand on its own in terms of parking. So there's, that's a separate set of parking lots that are serving new Jenny Dean. sort of new JD this is serving the existing building but it was not included in the calculations for new JD so it's available for use is the is it the idea that the site is going to be accessible during school hours when Jenny Dean's parking lot is it's already accessible during school hours the

[00:13:44] Jenny Dean in this scenario would not old Jenny Dean's not an existing point or portion thereof when we get to the next piece of the presentation but again this lot is designed to serve the old building and I know the boards about the conversations about the dispensation of that but it's not yeah I just caution everyone that this is informational and let's not jump to solutions because we don't have the first part this is I think this needs to percolate and frankly both

[00:14:20] bodies and their staffs need to think about this and come together and don't jumping in making assumptions as though just that or the other thing because so madam chair as we went through the process of the use permit for the new janetian elementary school we made a pretty interesting discovery as we

[00:14:59] looked at literally the aerial picture of the site that when you compared it to to the vocational school and ben's going to take you through a little bit of the history that i can when you looked at this school that comes between mis and when we started adding on to the building again to council member osina's question he was moved to get out of the way of some of these wings um we believe um we made a pretty interesting discover when you looked at the school that comes between mis and when we started expanding that it appeared the exact footprint of one of the original buildings of the vocational school was intact and so we wanted to bring you back to an that highlights the portion of the building we're coming from, including the

[00:15:37] use permit language is a requirement of the city studying and determine the significance, the integrity of this piece of the building, and so we've commissioned a what's called a limited scope historic structures report on an outside firm to go through the building from top to bottom this portion of the building, and we're going to give you the results of that in a moment. But again, that's the original location of the cottage, that's the memorial site, and that's the portion we're talking about. Now the portion in yellow is the portion that was studied because we believed and we were proven correct that it is in fact the original vocational building built in circa 1948. Ben, do you want to take a little bit through the history?

[00:16:19] So my name is Benjamin Walker. I'm the resort preservation planner under Matt in the Community Development Department. I'm just going to give you guys some background on the history of the building. The Manassas Industrial School was originally founded and dedicated in 1894 remained that way through about 1930, the 1930s, and when the Prince William County Public School Board took over.

[00:16:43] They voted to establish a regional school there, and in 1937, by that time, it was a regional school for Prince William County and several of the other surrounding counties in Northern Virginia who were busing their African-American students to this school complex that was formerly the Manassas Industrial School, and in 1949 they opened a vocational building as part of the campus that funding I think was set aside originally like 1946 construction started in 1948 and then the building was completed by 1949

so they had several large shop buildings there that had different trades that were taught at the school it continued

[00:17:22] to operate through the 1950s the school was actually instrumental and part of the case that preceded Brown versus Board of Education of Topeka Kansas there's a case that was dealt with with Arlington County where they referred to the vocational school here trying to argue the separate but equal doctrine so it's kind of like a preliminary case leading into Brown v. Board. In 1959 an addition to the vocational wing was completed and it was re-Christian as the Jenny Dean high school and elementary school at that time that's when the cottage was moved to make way for the addition to this facility and even after

[00:18:00] the Brown v. Board of Education ruling Prince William County didn't completely desegregate all of their facilities until 1966. So we do have some historic photographs of the school vocational building once it was completed. These are all kind of taken from a similar vantage point so they're all kind of looking toward the southwest toward the vocational building and in this photograph on the right you can actually see this is it's a little bit blurry but this is actually the end of the cottage building looking toward the vocational building once that addition was put on the facility and 1959 that

[00:18:37] cottage was moved and when it was the addition was completed it was no longer the Manassas Regional School they stopped doing vocational teaching there they made some interior alterations to make a more of a traditional classroom setting in those larger shop spaces and made some additional changes to convert for that to more traditional elementary and high school use so we also have the architectural plans that were located at the Virginia Tech archives and special collections and these are some of the elevations of the vocational building that were prepared by the architectural firm of Smithy and Boynton which was a

[00:19:14] architectural firm that was based out of Roanoke Virginia also the original floor plan a little difficult to see but there were three large shop room facilities which were later, after the 1958 to '59 alterations and expansion of the building, those were subdivided with interior partitions into smaller, more traditional classroom spaces. So we did hire a firm to prepare a limited scope HSR. Limited scope means there's just a little bit. It's not as in-depth in terms

[00:19:46] of the research. They do a more limited scope on that part of the report. Their findings were that the building has a period of significance from 1948 when it was originally constructed, spanning through its use as a vocational building until 1959 when that vocational use stopped and the addition was put on the building and it was converted into the elementary and high school facility. They determined that it did have, because of alterations with the addition and the installation of the interior partitions and other changes like removal of the windows, that it has diminished material integrity, but in their analysis they do

[00:20:26] talk about the significance of the structure, how it's significant under criterion A of the National Register of Historic Places for the themes of education and industry and social and ethnic history and as well as under a criterion C for architecture. It is important to note that while they did determine that it has diminished in material integrity, integrity is not a condition of the building. The building has been relatively well maintained over the years it's not a deteriorated condition or anything like that a property doesn't need to fully retain all aspects of integrity in order to be listed or eligible for the national register

[00:21:03] so that's something that's important to keep in mind um and so kind of next steps right so again as i think council as the vice mayor wolf mentioned we're in the information stage your your options are when you even read the consultant study and internal staff deliberation There's arguments in both ways to where you go with this structure, but it certainly does have, as Ben meant, the bones, yes, the windows have been altered, the interior alterations, but it does have some significance and could be preserved and reused that would go back to the school board as to the determination on the use.

[00:21:38] This is not unlike the cottage, the city doesn't own this piece of it, and this is on school board property. So the next step for staff would be deliberation really on the school board side to identify if there's a use. It will be an extension to restore to its exterior appearance.

[00:21:55] It's going to be a significant expenditure. It's not one of these things that's going to, you can just, you know, take down the walls and move forward. To do a true historic restoration, to be true to the 1948 appearance, there's going to be some cost to that as well. So, and we've not done any of that estimation.

[00:22:11] We, as a staff, we wanted to stop here and leave it to the two bodies to continue their discussions. Your Honor, with that, we have any questions on this piece, and then we'll turn it over to, Any questions? Questions from the school board?

[00:22:30] Just an observation at the second bullet and I'm saying this because the Manassas school system has quite a distinct significance during that period you're talking about and you could rightfully say that the period of significance is 1948 to 1966 because that's when the schools were integrated.

[00:23:00] The whole thing behind the Brown versus Board was the insufficient, inadequate, and very poor education that the African American children were given. The significance of this building, that these kids were being taught vocational trades, which was very significant to their future, their livelihood, because if they had been in the school before Brown, they would not have gotten any of that.

[00:23:29] I'm just re-emphasizing how, first of all, this area was so far ahead. of the rest of the state and moving forward. Just as an aside, 1959 was when my health started.

[00:23:44] My jurisdiction decided to shut them all down. So I completely appreciate the significance that they played between '59 and '66 where they integrated because they filled the gaps of what significant amount of the population not getting.

[00:24:01] And kudos to everybody who's pushing this project. I lean more towards it being a museum. I could support almost anything you do before. I appreciate the time that you took to do this as well. Thank you. Who made the call to Virginia Tech?

[00:24:22] I made the call to Virginia Tech. First, I called the Library of Virginia because that's where a lot of schools. Susan Gray, who was of the SWSG, told me that a lot of school architects' plans are held at the Library of Virginia. I called there. They did not hold these because it was a run-up firm that gave the body of their work to Blacksburg.

[00:24:43] and so they told me that and then we were able to reach out to them and have them pull everything from their all-site facility. We have the entire electronic archive now in the museum's collection. Very cool. Any other comments?

[00:25:00] Question about the resolution that was passed by council. I'm sitting next to the author, so I just turned to ask him. I do recall that there was something in there that required the demolition of the building, but also requested or required our participation in the archaeological process, is there a, how do those, I do not recall how those two clauses interact, is there a fresh resolution needed so that we do not need to demolish this according to the term, black and white letter. The Special Use Department contemplated that if the bodies determined that this is of historical significance, it can be preserved and used, you know, interpreted

[00:25:39] or used in other fashions. It's kind of separated in a way from the overall discussion of demolition of the entire building, this piece, Council included special language essentially to, because we only knew from looking from aerials and it looked like there was something there, so we had to do this study, which is what the use permit at that point, it's a discussion between the two bodies.

[00:26:09] I for one think this is, it's exciting news, and it's exciting news for the city of Manassas and I really appreciate Council Member Smith down on the other end of the table and what he pointed out, and I think that actually raises the value and importance of the original vocational building because it speaks to a period in time that our children today aren't aware of. And if we want to teach them to be stewards of the community and stewards for the city of Manassas, they need to know all of its history. And this is an important piece of Manassas history. And having lived here for 30 years,

[00:26:48] there's no real vestiges of the vocational school other than the outline and the few artifacts that are available but to have this and to have it on a school property where children could learn our history up close and personally and walk through it is something most children don't ever have the opportunity to experience so I for one think this is to me this is exciting and I think it really has the potential to make an educational impact on our students because

[00:27:21] they learn the history of where they live and that there were people here before them so thank you thank you for all the hard work you've done that and piggybacking off um miss stevens it is for me very personal because my mother went there and she's not alive now to see it you know and all of this happening but it it's to have to be mayor at this time to be able to witness this and hear her talk about the history of the Manassas Industrial School, which we dropped for the color, because that's what it was.

[00:28:01] And we don't say that now, but that's what it was. And all the kids that came from all around to the school and the relationships that were formed. And a lot of people don't know the history. And it's so fulfilling for me to sit as mayor to be able to see this happen and be able to preserve our history like this in this city.

[00:28:23] It's amazing, and I just appreciate all the hard work that you all have put into it because, you know, writing a letter to Dominion and saying, my mom went there, please give us some money, you know. I don't mind doing those things because of what the impact it's going to have years gone now after we're all done gone.

[00:28:39] I mean, this is going to be amazing for us. So it is really exciting, and for me, just more of a personal thing because my mom went there, and it was just like I wouldn't be here. You know, she learned her trade, and she was able to work on Grand Avenue and scrub the floors of the kitchens and the people that lived on Grand Avenue having learned that trade.

[00:29:00] So it just comes full circle, so I just had to throw that in and to say thank you for the hard work. And Mary Helen, you rock all the time. All y'all rock, but I know she really rocks. She gets with the rocks. So I really appreciate all the effort and the discussions that will come, and we'll figure it out, and we'll make it work.

[00:29:17] but for me, it is about that history being here beyond us and that the kids realize how fortunate they are to have something like this in the city and that we can all leave that legacy there. So thank you for that. Anyone else?

[00:29:33] Ms. Luna, I'm sorry. Oh, I would just like to get over what you said, and I think it's really important that we preserve history. I came into Manassas after the buildings, the industrial school, had been torn down, and I often ask people, how did they get torn down? they are but now you have something that you can deserve so i think it's something that definitely i know thank you madam mayor uh i would like to say you know it is not only uh important for my class i mean that i have a country we should share isn't uh everybody should be able to uh

[00:30:10] support this um i don't go forward there was you know there was much work that we can to put it you know, the place of what it was, and I do think, you know, that we all know, we're going to enjoy the world if we'll be able to, you know, walk and see and show our children and their children, you know, our history, and we're going to continue to live out, you know, our own motto, which is, you know, history is hard more than this, and I believe this is continuing to show, you know, people are going to embody a way to,

[00:30:48] Like we did in Annaberg and other places, this is closer to home, it hits home and I'm thankful for the work I do believe in.

[00:31:04] Our staff has so much to do, but I'm thankful for that and I can wait to continue to see this until the kids are able to visit and we are able to visit. Thank you everyone for your support and thank you so much for us to see it in the right place and you know all of this hard work that we want to pay off.

[00:31:30] Thank you. All right. Thank you so much. All right. Next on the agenda, item 2.2, the graduation ceremony and participation. That's right.

[00:31:47] You guys. Oh, that's right. That's right. We had a board discussion from, I believe Ms. Vasquez Luna had brought something forward to present to us about this. Did you want to go ahead and go into that, Ms. Luna?

[00:32:03] Sometimes I think here because I think we're discussing, and I know you are a bit of a bar, so it's hard. I know you asked me for something, but I have no idea. No, we moved to item 2.2 on the agenda, the graduation ceremony, participation.

[00:32:24] this was brought up by you so i was asking you to go ahead and elaborate on that what we were looking for okay uh thank you yes you know for my ask is you know why i mean you know i know everybody has a different uh opinion or feelings or requests you know i continue to um bring up a couple of other things that uh let me let me let me go back i believe that as a

[00:32:55] As a local member or a council member, we all have different priorities and for me, the school is one of the priorities, not only allocating the money, but supporting it in any way that I can, and I know that every council member might feel love differently or at different times, you know, who's sitting there,

you know, they may feel differently, but I just feel like if the council members of the council member school board members, one of the participants, I don't think they are able to join the procession.

[00:33:35] So, my ask is why it's not like that and it's like that in every location. And I guess for me, I just need clarification on participation. Like what exactly are you looking for specifically when you say participation?

[00:33:56] I said the procession, I think it's called. walking in okay the processional yes okay and that's it just walking in as a group as everybody walks up on on the stage or just walking in and then going to the side where they normally sit or sitting on stage or what what are your thoughts well i believe that everybody is elected and uh

[00:34:24] And I don't know why, you know, some go through the sky and, you know, I understand that, you know, I'm, you know, I'm asking, you know, I believe all the localities, I don't know if I'm wrong, I don't know if I'm able to make calls to the localities, but I believe all the localities is different, and my ask is why are we not able to do it, I don't know if there's no ruling that says in the camp that I know of, I just think it's always just been that way.

[00:34:58] Historically, it's always been the mayor and the chair, whoever those people are, that greet everyone and sit on stage. But I would ask, if this is a request, is this a request of the whole council?

[00:35:16] Have you guys made this decision? Council guest is the only person that I heard. I mean, I would ask that you guys discuss it and decide what you want, what your request is, and then we consider the request. Ms. Brown?

[00:35:34] Yeah, I do think it's a very good idea. Another locality is doing the same. The state council and anyone else that's in government gets an opportunity to do the profession along with the support. And then, of course, not only the May graduation, but also the summer graduation and any other celebration, it's always a priority given by the entire sovereign body, of course.

[00:36:03] Time is premium, but I think it would be a good idea to prioritize an invite to full graduation. Yes, we definitely send out invitations to everyone, all electives and all school goals.

[00:36:21] Ms. Miles? I know it was quite awkward to sit where we were sitting for graduation, even as school board members. So I know we had talked about even school board members being able to sit on the stage, even if we're not shaking hands, because it's just hard to see the whole, you know, we're like on the side, and I don't know if that's also, and ask for school board members as well, not just the council members.

[00:36:51] I'm not sure the rest of the body, how they feel about it. However, I think it's really important to have that visual, not only for the students, but for the families, because this government body is the one that supports all of the schools, And our decisions are the primary reason as to why we haven't that whole body of graduates in front of us.

[00:37:20] So I think it's just really a good visual to have and a good kind of like graduation closure for us to see children, you know, and all, I don't know, however, if you have served for four years or eight years or even longer, some of you can see the progression of students that have come before you.

[00:37:43] And it's just a great opportunity to grant any government body. And I guess other localities are ready to do this, including supervisors and magic mayors. Yeah, I think we need to discuss this

independently.

[00:38:01] You guys let us know what your request is, and we'll discuss it at the school board. But I've sat in those seats, those side seats, many times, and I've always thought it was a wonderful view. How do you have a question? Yes. It may have one week as a bar to deliver it.

[00:38:17] I don't understand that you have some pretty tight time frames. If, for example, you stay at George Mason, you'd have to still take your premises and so forth. So I would be concerned about anything that extended networked program and to the artistic or where they're going to sit after you watch it.

[00:38:38] Those kind of, I just want to confirm that you do have some time. We do. Any other comments, questions? Ms. Luna do you have anything else to add to this? I think we just... go ahead. Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, and when I refer to that, I refer to, you know, to the electoral officials and of course, you know, it can be an option if anybody, you know, enjoys being on the side and not be able to take pictures or, you know, or see well, you know, like I think it's

[00:39:13] everybody's personal you know decisions. And you know, I think being this is so immediate, you know, I'm not happy that we didn't have the opportunity. You know, I know that summer graduations, you know, they work really hard, you know, and even though sometimes it's, you know, they care, but you know, just being able to have that opportunity to go. If we didn't know ahead of time like we know now. You can all raise it overnight. I know that some of them might

[00:39:46] be a little bit more challenging specifically, but I did that. And by me, I did that. The other events, we get anybody to raise their own council meeting. We came and made them.

[00:40:03] And I'm not trying to say to change it, but I'm just saying, you know, I will think this is a partnership to work together. We all are elected by the residents, and we're all trying to answer to the residents, and it holds our big priorities.

[00:40:19] And we shouldn't just be out for more money and for allocations, but we should also be seen as a partner and be able to also do the same. So, you know, for you might not be that important. For me, it is important.

[00:40:35] Thank you. Thank you. Very good. Thanks. You know, we'll be talking about that among ourselves here. So just two observations. One is I would, having gone to this now for five years, graduation for five years, and I'm on the side here, and I actually get to see the students come across.

[00:41:00] I think I have probably one of the best views of the students actually graduating as opposed to if I were on the second or third or fourth row on the dais, it would be a little more difficult to see. I'd see the back of people and see the podium and stuff like that, so, you know, along the way here.

[00:41:20] And secondly, I want us to remember that my graduation is about students, leave it at that.

[00:41:38] My graduation is about the students going to be for elevating that. And the students that serve see their leaders represented. As the only Hispanic educator, I think they have the right to see that their leadership that looks like them. And as Ms. Sonia Vasquez-Lunas being the first Latina on city council, I think the students have earned a right to see her on the diet as well.

[00:42:01] So it is about representation and it matters. We do have over 70% of Hispanic students that we support. So I think it's only fair to make sure that they understand that they have leaders that look like them. Madam Mayor, I wouldn't disagree with that.

[00:42:22] I will, again, emphasize this is about the students, you know, and if you want to do that, students should be seeing members of the LGBTQ community as well. I think they see me very well from where I sit here.

[00:42:41] I think there's some good ideas on the table, and anything can change at any point in time. I wouldn't necessarily be opposed to it, but my understanding has been that the kids pretty much plan the graduation. They pick their speaker. It's just a different way of doing business. So everybody understands that it's been student-driven, not just the kids being told what's going to happen.

[00:43:08] So the benefits of both, but for some history, it is that kids have made a bunch of choices, and they invite people that they want. and i'll speak also to the scheduling dr human is it three graduations that they have at equal bank in one day three or four three or four but councilman Smith is right because we do have to

[00:43:39] we have we can only go in at a certain time then there's a lot of setup

[00:43:58] I'm going to apologize if I had one last comment. I would know and I have not asked before the speakers. I'm not asking anything different than working, but I just want to make sure that that is clear on the request.

[00:44:20] Thank you. Thank you. I agree point one under NCS and DPS discussion item. I want to update on the rest of the presentation. Tonight we have Dr. Cassata presenting to give council and everyone an update on investments that you have made in us, the city has made in schools, and some of our CIP projects, and an alternative education.

[00:44:46] Dr. Cassata. All right, good evening. Madam Mayor, Mr. Vice Mayor, members of city council, Chair Siebert, Vice Chair Spall, members of the school board, Chief Keene and Dr. Newman, thank you for the opportunity to present to you tonight. We wanted to provide you some updates on the investments the city council has made in recent years in education and how those investments are having an impact already.

[00:45:08] As you know, in recent years, the city council has provided some additional targeted revenue above the annual transfer. And in addition, we're all very aware that the city approved a bond this year to allow for the construction of the new Denny Dean Elementary School. So we're going to walk through those various investments and early returns on those investments.

[00:45:25] And that's going to address some of the other topics that were listed, I feel like. All right. So first, as you're all aware, the city approved a bond that's providing \$50 million for the construction of the new Jenny Dean Elementary School. To date, the project remains on time and within budget. The impact of this investment is a new state-of-the-art elementary school that we're very excited to open for students in August. Just some updates. Mr.

[00:45:49] Gefeller, who is here, does updates to the school board every month with lots of photos and updates. But on Tuesday night, he presented the monthly update on the status of the project through September. During the update, he shared that there was significant progress in site work, particularly with the installation of the underground stormwater retention systems, site grading, and backfilling progressed as planned, and all environmental compliance inspections were completed with no efficiencies. The structure of the building is starting to come along really nicely, and we're on track for enclosure milestones as we get toward winter. Roof joists have been installed at the stair towers and the gym, and

roof decking continues across major areas. We want to talk about the collaboration and positive relationships

[00:46:29] that the contractors had with the Jenny Dean community. Access to the site is safe and controlled, and there have been very minimal disruptions to campus operations. So if you go by, you'll continue to see cranes and lots of things happening, and every day if you go by, something new is happening.

[00:46:46] All right, next topic in terms of investments you've made are related to compensation. So in the past three years, there have been additional investments from the city council, which has helped us try to keep pace with surrounding jurisdictions. So back in January 2024, the city provided MCPS mid-year an additional \$750,000 to support mid-year pay increases for teachers.

[00:47:06] And then in FY25, then the baseline transfer was increased by \$1.5 million to support these increases, as well as allowing us to provide the salary increases and targeted adjustments to our salary scales to increase competitiveness. We did analyses to look at where we were furthest behind and tried to target some of those as well.

[00:47:25] And then for this current year, the city provided us with additional money, which allowed us to provide a total of 6.7% salary increase for eligible employees. The impact of these salary increases is already being shown. Retention rate data for teachers increased from 81.4% in 23-24 to 86.2% in 24-25.

[00:47:46] So that's exciting to see, of course. All right. Next topic is the purchase of 8700 Centerville Road. our central office facility. So in July, the city council approved the use of \$10.75 million in fund balance for us to purchase that property. That process is very much underway with closing set to occur in November, set for November 18th. It was tentatively when we posted this, that date is set. There are many positive impacts of this purchase. One, it provides a new location for the new alternative education pilot program, which I'll discuss on the next slide. There's no cost

[00:48:23] for us to move to a new location, no need to continue paying rent to lease space, but we will have some increased revenue from rental income, which will help us offset the cost of maintaining the building, okay? Also in July, and as I mentioned, the City Council approved the use of fund balance to launch an alternative education pilot.

[00:48:43] This is really exciting. The program administrator for the program started in July 25. Construction's currently underway to convert the space into an instructional one with completion set by December 1st. The program, which has been named Manassas Pathways, which you can see in the logo on the slide, will be opening for students in January of 2026.

[00:49:01] Hiring is underway for teachers and other support positions to be starting in December, and the anticipated starting enrollment for students is between 30 and 40. The impact of this program is that we're going to have an option for students that provides them with the individualized support needed to keep them on track academically, wherever they are in their career, as well as, of course, focus on getting them toward graduation.

[00:49:26] Finally, we wanted to provide you an update on the investment in the Osborne Connector. In FY25, the City Council approved the use of fund balance for this connector project. That construction is also underway, and in fact, it is near finished with substantial completion set for November 10th. Wow, that got really loud.

[00:49:43] It's very exciting, though, it's a really exciting thing, right? The impact of this connector is enhanced safety and security for students as the entire facility will be connected inside. In addition, there's more usable space along the corridor to include some small offices and flexible space these were intentionally added to increase functionality and provide space for student services small meetings and staff collaboration and each design element was chosen to maximize the benefit of the addition while maintaining the project's original focus on safety security and accessibility this project has been a model of collaboration from the start between the city and the schools that partnership between the city council and school board

[00:50:19] demonstrates our shared commitment to creating modern safe secure and efficient learning environments that meets the needs of our students and staff with that i thank you for the opportunity to present you i meant to say mr gefeller is also here and mr kelly our director of finance so we'll take any questions any questions that's right well i have nothing else to do tonight

[00:50:54] Not really. That's right. I've got to mow the grass in time for Halloween night here. Anyway, could you give us an overall breakdown? I'm not looking for super detail, but some idea of the breakdown of how the \$2 million or the alternative school is being spent.

[00:51:15] I would assume a portion is going to some physical changes, upgrades, whatever. Can you discuss it a little bit further than just saying \$2 million? I'll start, and then I will turn it over to Mr. Kelly if I forget anything. So, yes, so one piece that's happening, right, so this converting a space in 8700 from, like, office space to instructional space, so there's construction that needs to happen there, including making sure that it needs to be a space for students, right,

[00:51:48] Which includes kitchen, it includes safety, it includes the right type of equipment and support and all of those things. So that's a big, I don't know, offhand, but I don't have offhand dollar on that one.

[00:52:05] But in addition, there are, it's getting it set up to start being staffed, right? So there's the staffing cost for the administrator and for the support staff for teaching positions and security positions, security equipment, resources, all of those things.

[00:52:23] Now, this is just getting it started for this year. The staffing costs, right, get worked into future operating budgets, right? But the initial part of the pilot was to get it going in terms of the construction. Staff, did you want to add anything else?

[00:52:38] Yeah, sure. Just to point out, obviously, there's going to be staffing costs because we're hiring. So those costs weren't included in the initial operating budget. So we're already going to use some of the funding to support those folks for FI-16. And as Dr. Casada mentioned, we will pull those individuals into our operating budget forward.

[00:52:59] The construction itself wasn't a large portion of the funding simply because we didn't do a ton of major renovations in the building. it was getting more set up for a school. And it wasn't anything that was adding a ton of walls and things of that nature.

[00:53:14] And so we were very conscious of the budget and we wanted to make sure we could carry as much funding forward to next year to help support programming forward to the second year. - Thank you very much. Thank you, Mary.

[00:53:33] - Yes, Dr. Newman would like to present an invitation to all of you. - Yes. - Surprise! - On November 6th, we are all gonna be together for their legislative breakfast. So we called Shockey, who's building the school, to see if they could put a quick tour together.

[00:53:55] Everyone, school board and city council, they will have a representative there at 11 for anyone who wants to tour the new school. There's only two things that you have to follow. They do not allow photography inside.

[00:54:13] They said they could do it themselves and give you a link. they have to do it, and you have to have clothes, clothes, shoes, clothes, clothes, clothes, clothes, clothes, clothes, clothes, clothes, clothes, clothes, clothes, did I not say that right?

[00:54:31] - No, you didn't say that. You just needed that comment right there, clothes. - So you would park in the back there, the park area behind the building, and then they would bring you in into one of the trailers Because you have to go through a state fee.

[00:54:49] Quick last two words. It's basically something to walk on there. And then we'll get the toilet to be about 20 minutes. We'll be active at a level. We have, Ms. Brown would like to make an announcement.

[00:55:08] Yes, so I wanted to take a minute since everyone is here today to send a heartfelt thank you to RISE Ministry and the RISE Foundation and Manassas Park Council member Jesse Amaya for their collaboration and connection in making possible the generous donation of 160 trees, which were planted throughout the city of Manassas, including several of our schools.

[00:55:34] And a special thanks goes out to our very own mayor, Michelle, that is younger, and Kristen Fox, our Park Operations and Maiden Superintendent. She was very swift in her response and her flawless coordination in identifying the planting locations for each one of the trees.

[00:55:54] It was a major undertaking. But this effort was truly a team success, and there's just a couple more people that I'd like to thank. Dr. Newman, the Kuros family, Mr. Goodfeller, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Russ, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Fitzfelder, and Mr. Trees, for the dedication and teamwork.

[00:56:23] So I'm just really excited that we were able to plant 42 trees in our schools, 50 trees in our parks, and 50 trees in public lands. So hashtag Green Influence, pass it on.

[00:56:40] I was wondering if you were going to be able to post that somewhere so that way it's public knowledge or are we just... I will make a post tonight. You can make a post.

[00:56:57] We do have the handouts that indicate each location for the trees and how many. So we can share information with everybody. And then we also wanted to discuss joint meeting dates going into 2026.

[00:57:15] don't have to decide tonight but okay thank you madam mayor i didn't get the opportunity to speak from the on the floor i hope that you know the only day that is available and you know i will reach out directly if that's okay but you know i really i really want to serve the school and I hope there's an opportunity for everybody to know how they only sit and give them date and time.

[00:57:47] Yeah, we'll work on time. Yeah, he's shaking his head, Ms. Vasquez. I'm assuming that Dr. Moon said we'll work on getting another date, so that way nobody will be left out. So dates for future meetings. I know we don't want to hash it out right now.

[00:58:04] I don't want to say we're going through the calendar, but we need to do two things. The budget we do, this is the legislature, the legislature, the legislature, so at the same time frame we try to keep it so that way everybody can plan it, it will be around the same time frame.

[00:58:38] Our organization is when we document it, so any time that we're on the 3rd of January. recollection was when we planned the agenda the one day we did end up changing was that when you presented to to council when the school board presented to council we had you down for a date and you folks i think were either school recess or you had a bsba meeting going on of some sort so i think it would be hopeful for you to know what those dates are okay

[00:59:12] So, sooner rather than later is a good, in my opinion, seeing, hearing from you about the budget in our, when we meet, you know, Mondays and Wednesdays to go over, you know, have our budget work sessions sooner rather than later.

[00:59:31] I think we were looking at the beginning of March, and it ended up being in February of some sort, or, excuse me, it ended up, we had you in early April, and it ended up being the last week of March, so that sort of thing, so knowing when you were, and then likewise in the fall, I think we moved this meeting around a bit, because again, thank you, thank you, yes, we get a conference.

[00:59:56] It may just be me, but if we get that presentation that DeSala had, or if I can see it in my iPad, and I don't know if it's just me, because I didn't see it.

[01:00:15] Okay, because I didn't see it, and I would like her, and she was having to do it. Is now the time to talk about our joint desire to have one agenda when we have these events? with all the attachments we made it was all public what do you mean i just mean you know so everybody's attachments are all on the you have to go to websites yeah i i personally i liked it on the cities where you had your things that you wanted to discuss and we had our right but i feel like i

[01:00:53] I was looking for her presentation, and I didn't see that. So that's my firm. If we're in the document at all, we'll talk about it. All that I want to hear is that we do a link to yours.

[01:01:11] So you get it to Eric and you'll put it on the end before our joint meeting, so that way everybody-- You got it. So that's some good information to be able to do. So anything else? I have a motion from the School Board to adjourn the meeting.

[01:01:44] Okay, sorry. Just checking with you before we adjourn to see if you have anything else to add to the discussion. No, that's fine. Thank you, Madam. Thank you. Chair, I move that the School Board meeting adjourn. Second. I have a motion for Mrs. Brescia, second for Mrs. Stephens, and the school board meeting adjourned.

[01:02:04] Is there any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Any opposed? Motion carries 7-0. We are adjourned. Thank you.

[01:02:42] *Gunshot*

[01:03:13] Well, you know, I got an off-campus department as a freshman, but I got an off-campus department because I needed to like, and now tell me what goal you want for next year, and what roommates you want, and I know this is a lottery, and I am proud, and I want to say it was summer, and you're going to move it to the summer place, and you're going to move it to the summer place, and you're going to move it to the summer place.

[01:03:45] I'm not going to do it.



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