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Manassas City Council Town Hall 3/25/2026

Date Wednesday, March 25, 2026
Place Manassas City Council, Virginia
Length 2h 6m (video)

- Official meeting video (Wistia / RegionalWebTV): <https://fast.wistia.net/embed/iframe/vr8pbfj1ln>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-17. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:04] 2026 calling the meeting to order mr smith please call the roll mayor davis younger present vice mayor wolf here council member ellis here council member smith here council member alicino i am here council member vasquez luna council member hudson here the quorum is present okay thank you so much and thank you to everyone who's come out tonight to join us for the town hall um the subject for tonight is our proposed FY 2027 proposed budget overview. We have Diane Bergeron is going

[00:00:38] to come forward and lead us off with that, and she's got her water handy. We're going to do a lot of talking, so thank you for being here. Yes, ma'am. Oh, I said thank everybody. I said thank everybody for coming. Is there somebody in specific? Okay, sorry. Thank you. Okay, go ahead.

[00:01:05] Okay, good. Thank you and good evening, Madam Mayor, members of council. I grabbed my water because I have a 45-slide presentation for you. I apologize, but I was instructed to give a detailed overview of the budget, which I'm going to do. I will try to move it along as efficiently as possible. The presentation includes six different sections, real estate taxes, the budget, major budget drivers, capital projects, utility rates, and just a general wrap-up.

[00:01:40] I've also put into the presentation, which we can kind of go through quickly, some slides that are titled Key Concepts. They're weaved in throughout the presentation to help provide explanations of terms that you frequently hear throughout the budget process. Our largest revenue sources are real estate taxes and utility rates, so we'll go into some pretty good detail on that, starting with the real estate taxes.

[00:02:04] Here's one of the first slides that we've created of key concepts. Assessed value is the dollar value that the Commissioner of Revenue assigns to property. When existing property value increases, it's called appreciation.

[00:02:21] And when existing property is improved or new property is constructed, it's referred to as new construction. The 2027 value prior to the assessment appeals process of real estate in the city is \$8.85 billion.

[00:02:40] That's growth of almost a billion dollars. And that \$1 billion, as you can see from the corner of the slide, is split pretty evenly between appreciation and new construction. So about half of the billion-dollar growth is from appreciation.

[00:02:59] What does that look like? residential property values grew by 6.7 percent commercial by four and a half percent and industrial by 13.4 percent that is existing value growth called appreciation the other half of the billion dollar growth is from new construction 461 million dollars of new construction that is extremely significant and most of that significant growth is that 428 million dollar value in the the industrial category, which is from the construction of data centers. In the residential

[00:03:38] area, that was mostly the Ashbury development across from the public safety facility, and the commercial was a shopping center on Liberia Avenue. So what we are seeing with this significant value from the data centers is the composition of assessed values has shifted 3% from residential to industrial. Meaning the overall burden of real estate taxes is declining for residents and being

[00:04:08] taken on by data centers. With such significant new construction, the recommended total tax rate is \$1.24, which is a two cent reduction in the general fund rate while keeping the fire and rescue levy flat at 19 cents. Because existing property appreciated, tax bills even at the reduced tax rate will still increase an average of 5%. Residential property existing values we saw

[00:04:43] on the other slide increased by 6.7%, and as you can see, the average residential tax bill at the lowered rate of \$1.24 increases by roughly 5%. Now, on to the budget, revenues, and expenditures.

[00:05:03] Council is required to adopt a balanced budget. A budget's balanced when revenues equal expenditures. The budget includes several different funds and you can see the definition up there of a fund It's a separate self balancing set of accounts with its own revenues Expenditures and everything that comes along with it including reserves. We talk a lot about reserves Reserves are important and I want to stress the importance of them It's important to have them and it's important to manage their use appropriately This was evidenced by our credit rating upgrade to AAA when we were applauded for our ability to maintain

[00:05:39] balance between healthy reserves and using reserves for one-time projects in lieu of issuing debt the total fy 2027 budget is proposed at 423 million dollars please note that this number will increase once the full school's budget is incorporated which was presenting presented about an hour ago this evening to city council so that will get incorporated throughout the process the full budget meaning the city support as well as their other revenue sources from the state and in federal governments.

[00:06:13] You can see in the chart on the left that the largest revenue sources are, as I stated earlier, real estate taxes and sales and connections, which are utility rates. On the right-hand side chart, you can see the largest expenditures are enterprise activities, which are utilities, and support of Manasseh City Public Schools.

[00:06:36] This is what the \$425 million budget looks like broken down by fund. Some of the changes from the prior year might grab your attention. Some of them are large. Some of them are a decline, and you might also take note that there's a new fund called the Housing Investment Fund created for FY2027 of \$8 million.

[00:06:55] I'll get into that in just a couple slides. Most often, these changes, these fluctuations that you see increases and decreases year over year are due to the appropriation of one-time projects in one year, and since they're one time, they're subsequently taken out in the next fiscal year.

[00:07:13] So in the next few slides, I want to walk you through an example of this up and down concept using the general fund as an example. Expenditures that are one time happen once, like construction of a parking garage. And expenditures that are recurring happen annually, like salaries for staff.

[00:07:34] Obviously, we don't build a parking garage every year, but we do pay employees every year. Here is a five-year history of general fund expenditures. We created two different charts. one on the left includes all the all the one-time funds that were budgeted in each year and you can see that you see ups and downs and it's not a smooth trending line on the right side we took out the one-time expenditures and you can see that there's a steady level of growth throughout the years if you look at the purple bar on the left that is capital projects and that's where you see the

[00:08:12] changes and see this different sizes of the bars every year indicating that that there's one-time capital projects in certain years. So how are these expenditures funded?

[00:08:27] Well, recurring costs are funded with recurring revenue and one-time costs are funded with one-time revenue. Examples of recurring revenue would be ongoing, stable annual sources like taxes or utility rates. And examples of one-time revenue sources are things that are not coming into the city on a regular basis like sale of land or use of reserves.

[00:08:53] These charts are the revenue counterparts to the general fund expenditure charts that we just saw. The same concept of fluctuations on the left when you include one time, and steady increases on the right when you don't. This time, the left shows the orange bar, and that is the use of reserves as a one-time source to fund the one-time projects that were in purple on the expenditure chart.

[00:09:19] I just thought that was a good illustration of how you see up and downs in budgets and that's what it's primarily due to is the use of one-time funds. More key concepts.

[00:09:34] So what reserves are we using from the general fund? We're using two types, capital reserves and housing reserves. And there's some detail on the slide about where that comes from.

[00:09:50] The use of those reserves total \$17 million for a parking garage and a housing investment fund with a workforce housing project, and that's broken out in some detail up there as well. The total of \$17 million from two different types of reserves for two different things.

[00:10:10] The proposed budget establishes a new fund, the Housing Investment Fund. The highlights are, and Mr. Arcieri can go into more detail if it's needed, but the highlights are the city is planning to sell the old DMV site for \$3 million, then use the \$3 million, that \$3 million, plus three million dollars from capital reserves to loan to good housing for the construction of a workforce housing apartment complex the loan payments will be repaid over 30 years and will deposit into this fund to be used for future housing initiatives also the two million dollars

[00:10:46] of housing reserves that we saw in the other fund will move to this fund out of the general fund to this new fund budget drivers the biggest budget drivers this year were increases to schools social services and fire and rescue employee recruitment and retention efforts capital projects as always and utilities city council has made it a priority over the last five years to increase the support of school operations by three percent annually and as you can see in this chart sometimes more than

[00:11:23] three percent in fy 25 and 26 additional funding of 1.5 million dollars in each of those years was provided for salaries in 2024 council transferred one time 750 000 to the school so that they could begin implementation of the salary increases they had planned for the subsequent fiscal year in addition there are 6.6 million dollars included in the budget for school debt service an additional 2 million dollars in local support was needed for social services this is primarily due to the information

[00:12:03] we provided in several other work sessions so i'm sorry if it's redundant but the reduced federal funding passing through the state to the city and extremely expensive out-of-state csa placements that the city is mandated to provide we will also no longer be receiving federal funding for our emergency management efforts including our planner position and other critical regional projects so the proposed budget includes city funding to pick up those things from the federal government

[00:12:36] lack of funding also included is funding to fully staff engine 501 which requires two additional firefighters those positions without funding were added in a previous budget in this year where we are funding them so that ash so that engine will be fully staffed they're also per the um the equipment replacement plan purchasing two replacing two large pieces of apparatus the proposed budget includes a 2% cost of living and a 3% merit increase for employees our health

[00:13:14] insurance rates have increased by 11.3% and retirement costs continue to shift as we bring on newer folks into the retirement system from state funding to city funding and that trend will continue until everybody is basically in the new retirement plan for a while in addition to picking up the funding for three fire and rescue positions six new positions were added to the budget they're at the airport as they prepare for commercial service at the water plant and an in-house city attorney that

[00:13:49] will reduce the use of outside counsel i'm sorry assistant city attorney the challenge of increasing costs is increasing and impacts to the city it has impacts to the city as it does to everyone we worked really hard to absorb increases into existing budgets these examples up here are just to show how in some cases costs have doubled or tripled the proposed budget also includes a 1.2 million dollar contingency for unknowns some versions of the above risks listed on this slide

[00:14:27] have been accounted for in the budget because we had to like the social services and fire rescue issues that were reduced federal impacts i mean federal funding additional risks are still out there we obviously all see what's happening with gas prices right now and the contingency is there to help mitigate any of these additional risks the cip our infrastructure is always an important part of the budget maintaining our infrastructure completing new infrastructure was gonna do some quick highlights and if you have detailed questions or

[00:15:06] anything mr. Arcieri or miss Davis will be able to answer those questions specifically important is the use of reserves and pay-as-you-go funds reserves are not an ongoing revenue stream and therefore are used for one-time projects and the city does have some funding built into their operating budget that it uses for recurrent that where it uses recurring revenue for ongoing recurring maintenance

to existing structure infrastructure the budget includes 75 million dollars for infrastructure maintenance and

[00:15:43] improvements planned for next year a large amount of reserves as you can see in the red is being used that's for the parking garage airport improvements and stormwater improvements and we'll see some more of that on the next slide we also have a small amount of pay go paid you go money going to our ongoing upkeep of infrastructure here are some of the major capital projects planned the largest program area is the airport and that's primarily the runway rehab and in the area of general government which is about 19% of that the biggest project is

[00:16:18] the parking garage we're also continuing our are maintenance efforts of existing infrastructure. These maintenance needs are recurring and we plan for them annually with recurring revenue sources.

[00:16:36] As you can see in the purplish, bluish, I think it's supposed to be purple, but that big pie over there, the majority is for maintenance of our utility infrastructure. We also do prioritize upkeep of our playgrounds, parks, pools, historic sites, airport, sidewalks, and traffic signals as well, but a significant amount goes into utility infrastructure maintenance.

[00:17:05] Utility rates are the other large revenue source that we have. I'm gonna cover quickly the first two slides and then lucky you because Anna Davis will give you a break from me and we'll take over for a few minutes. So key concepts, utilities are enterprise funds, meaning they operate like a business and are designed to be self-supporting with customers paying based on what they consume.

[00:17:33] We also want to point out that data centers pay their own utilities, so there's no rate increase to customers because of data centers. Data centers also pay an electric surcharge and TAP fees.

[00:17:59] This is an example like the charts of the general fund showing the fluctuations for the utility funds. Instead of by cost center, this is by funds. So, each fund is water, sewer, and electric colors.

[00:18:14] So, this is a little bit different of an example because you notice the big green bar, which is the electric fund, in both sides, including one time and not including one time, has a significant increase. That's due to the data centers passing through our books.

[00:18:31] Remember, they pay their own, but because they're our customers, the transactions do have to take place on our books, and that is starting to enter in FY 2027, and that will be ongoing and that's why that bar stays large okay i will take one quick break for anna to come up madam mayor city of council um okay um so utility rate increased drivers basically

[00:19:08] increased costs for equipment transformers and cables have increased about 300 percent um water on the water side we have an increase in purchase water and chemical costs chemical costs have doubled um over this past year alone um sewer is just a standard increase all we need for sewer is just a cpi because we're good in sewer we were that is the fund that i don't have any issues with this is just an historical reminder of historical rate increases

[00:19:42] and as you can see electric had five years of no increases at all not even regular cpi increases so That is one of the reasons it's driving a 10.5% increase that we're requesting. On the water side, we're asking for a 25% increase to cover costs, cover large expenditures that we're going to have in the future for a capital improvement project.

[00:20:09] We have an aging water plan that needs some TLC, along with all the other infrastructure in the ground. Our pipes need replacement. They need lining. So we've got some major things going on in water, which is the drivers in that.

[00:20:27] And as you can see, sewer is just a 3% just to keep up with costs. What does that mean? In electric, we're asking again for 10.5 water consultants at 25%, and we're supporting the 25%, and the sewer is a 3%.

[00:20:50] The overall bill for a residential customer for electric, water, and sewer is an 11% increase. So the overall bill for a regular single-family home, one to three people, will increase by \$35, 11%, 11.4%.

[00:21:13] So even though 25 sounds like a big number, it's really not that big of a number if you're looking at per 1,000 gallons. The units are much smaller on the water than what they would be on the electric.

[00:21:34] And here's a rate comparison. Where are we standing in our electric? We are still lower than neighboring jurisdictions, even with a 10.5% increase. And these are water and sewer comparisons to our neighboring jurisdictions as well.

[00:21:55] Again, even with the 25%, we're still in the middle of the pack. So we're not the lowest. We're not the highest. we're holding our own there what's next that would be miss bourgeois so where oops so where are we and where are we going council had an all-day work session dedicated to budget discussion on march 6th the direction provided from that meeting was to advertise the dollar 24 tax rate with the two

[00:22:30] cent reduction which has been done the proposed budget included one million dollars for council direction and at that meeting they proposed for discussion eliminating the annual \$25 vehicle tax fee there are still more meetings in this process so that is still under discussion but that was a key point that came out of that meeting council has proposed also raising the data center computer tax rate to at least 415 which would match the county and we are still following what the county decides to see where we will go with that rate as well but it

[00:23:07] will be at least 415 which is their current rate the next upcoming important date for the public is the public hearing on mark on April 27 adoption of all items related to the budget begins on May 11th with items that need second readings on June 8th the budget and all things related to it are on the website right up there and the presentation will this presentation will be up there shortly as well um included on the budget website is a place for the public to provide feedback

[00:23:47] our intent is to compile the feedback received up in that portal and provide that to council in advance of the public hearing i stand ready to answer questions or to step aside for the voices in the room to be heard thank you for your attention thank you miss bergeron council members any questions for diane before we open up the town hall okay seeing none i want to take a moment and thank you miss vasquez luna for reminding me um we are joined this evening by school board member diana brown back there and we have councilwoman yesi amaya from monastas park here as well i

[00:24:24] wanted to take a moment and dana miles from the school board as well did i miss anybody else i don't think so thank you oh oh tim commissioner of revenue is in the back you were standing back there so thank you so much for taking the time to be here tonight and we also have um is it avril avril okay chapman she is our spanish interpreter um we have you available for anyone if you want to come up and

say what i'm saying in spanish so that way people know um if we need if you need an interpreter um just please let us know so she's gonna say what i just said and that way anybody

[00:25:03] that's here that needs interpretation has that. Si alguien necesita servicios de interpretación de ingles, espanol, espanol, ingles, para eso estoy. Mi nombre es Abrel Chapman y cualquier comentario pueden decirme. Gracias. Thank you.

[00:25:18] I'm getting good. Okay, thank you so much. So now we will open up the town hall for our residents to speak. I don't know if anyone, Steve, is going to see if they signed up. No one signed up, but we definitely invite anyone who wants to make a comment at this time to please come forward.

[00:25:50] - Mr. Plovniak. - Timothy Plovniak, resident. - Soy residente de la ciudad. - I am here, I wanna talk about the airport, but first I got a couple questions. I see in a budget there's capital spending for the parking lot for the hotel.

[00:26:13] Is that true? Are we going to be starting that this year? We are in the process of working through an agreement through the public-private partnership that would do development of the Old Town Inn lot, the MIFCO, and then our parking lot would be upgraded into a parking garage.

[00:26:31] Okay, and where are we in that? Is it making progress? What I'm asking is we don't hear this progress, and maybe there should be more for the public. Right now, the process is we have to arrive at a development agreement to have the contractor that's proposing this go forward.

[00:26:53] So their attorney is working with our attorney, and like any agreement that does take a while, we are hoping to return in April to present that agreement to counsel. Okay, and when their proposal came out and you had a 45-day window, I'm taking it no one else came forward?

[00:27:12] You're correct. Okay. Another question I have is last year we bought the... Ms. Vasquez, I want to have a comment to your last... Oh, I'm sorry. If you don't mind... I'm sorry, I didn't see you. You're fine. I would love to comment on it and to let you know, you know, we don't have any updates either because they are working on it, but I want you to know, at least for me, the priority is the parking because that's important before we can get the hotel because there's no enough room at the site for the hotel, and there has been in the books a need of parking in this side of the tracks for a long time.

[00:27:52] So I just wanted to give you at least my feedback. Okay, thank you. I'm asking because we've already allocated a lot of money to this project, and it's still a parking lot, and there's money proposed for the new parking lot, and there's really nothing for the public residents to know where it's at, so that's what I'm asking.

[00:28:14] And unfortunately it does take a while to get the agreement and as soon as we have something to bring forward We definitely will well see when the 45 minute day window closed there was no well I didn't see anything any announcement or anything that okay. No one else has stepped forward Actually actually after the 45 day we did come back to council and they did Authorize an agreement to continue working with MLG towards this project. Okay, all right but do we I'm sorry if you can allow me one second the we provide updates in the

[00:28:51] brick by brick report that is put out every every month once a month so that have you seen that it's called brick by brick on our website on the website yes sir okay and that updates and all the

development that we have going on downtown all over the city all the latest updates are put there so I just So search brick by brick and the whole thing will come up?

[00:29:13] Yes, yes, sir. And there's one out. I didn't know they were out there. Oh, okay. I'm here once a week. I guess I can take that out. All right. Ms. Ellis has another comment. You started something here.

[00:29:29] It's all right. I really got you going. You can be sitting up here. You can sign up for e-mails. They'll send it brick by brick as well as other updates going on with economic development. I think it's on Choose Manassas, actually. Because I know that's how I get into my email, my private email.

[00:29:48] So you can sign up for that. I'll send you the link. I'll put it on Facebook. Okay. Thank you. My main thing is, it just came up, the naming of the airport and commercial flight. I worked at Dulles Airport, IAD, for 35 years with United Airlines.

[00:30:07] I've watched the industry expand and contract. And what I'm seeing now, the biggest driver for it right now is the war in the Middle East and oil prices. United Airlines just announced they're cutting their schedule by 5%. American Airlines is reducing their growth prospects.

[00:30:27] Southwest just pulled out of IAD because they have a major hub, BWI. And the FAA, because of the arguments on Capitol Hill about funding TSA and Homeland Security, FAA asks the airlines to reduce their schedules by 10% here on the East Coast.

[00:30:49] And we just had a terrible accident at LaGuardia. So there's a lot of factors going on. And what I'm getting at is I've watched the industry contract and expand. And I think right now it's contracting. And I, you know, I understand. I did a search.

[00:31:05] I saw there's a couple airlines that are looking at our airport. And it's exciting to know we're going to have commercial flight there. But I don't know if it's going to happen the way we're hoping or you're hoping. These airlines are all fighting, you know, Allegiant is one.

[00:31:25] They just merged with Sun Country. Usually when there's a merger, there's usually the redundancies are cut out. So we don't know what's going on. Now, I'm sure there are some negotiations that we're not privy to. But I'm just thinking that maybe we're spending the money to rename the airport is a little premature.

[00:31:49] Maybe we should wait until we get a contract deal with an airline first and put it together and then do that. I just feel like that maybe we should wait on that. I mean, this report, she's saying costs have gone up 200 to 300 percent.

[00:32:11] Now, I do agree that we should pay for our emergency services, our fire and rescue. I think our social services needs funding. The schools need funding. But there are things like naming the airport that maybe we could save that for another time right now, I think.

[00:32:27] I mean, it's nice that you're going to reduce our tax rate by two cents. It's still going up. So a lot of people, and we talk to a lot of people around the neighborhood, just, you know, what are we doing now? Why are we doing this?

[00:32:42] So maybe it's time, you know, like everyone else, maybe the city needs to tighten their belt for right now and just focus on the important things, like I said, fire and rescue, social services, and the infrastructure, things that keep us going.

[00:33:00] And, you know, yeah, my prices are going up, but my income isn't going up as fast as what my costs are. So maybe we need to just have a little fiscal, you know, just tighten our belts.

[00:33:22] Think about this. Maybe save the naming for somewhere else. I did see that, what, the airport's the busiest private airport in the state. Everyone knows where HEF is if it's got 300 flights a day. They know where they're going.

[00:33:40] They know they're by Washington. So I don't think we need to name Washington right away. And I think, Mark, you made a statement that some of these air pilots, they refer to, they're going to Washington. You know, Manassas, you know, they know where they're at. You go to an airline website, you want to go to Washington.

[00:33:59] If they have a commercial flight here, it's going to come up. Manassas Regional will come up. But, you know, like I said, I'm excited about this, you know, commercial flight here too. But I think we need to just wait and, you know, spend that money once we know we've got a commercial airline coming in here.

[00:34:24] Yeah, let me work backwards. First off, the money for the signs is not coming from the taxpayers. That comes from the airport, is an enterprise fund by itself. So the airport does not subsist on tax revenue in any way, shape, or form from the city.

[00:34:43] It's usage fees and things at the airport. So this is going to come out of their reserves. They have \$50 million of reserves, plus or minus, if I remember correctly. So it's not, there's not a financial impact. The why behind it, and I appreciate your point, none of us can predict or stuff happens.

[00:35:06] Things go up and they go down. But the driver on this was actually two things that happened pretty much at the same time. First off, two of the largest FBOs at the airport who draw their business nationally and internationally. They're not flying Cessnas out of there.

[00:35:23] They're flying Gulf Streams and stuff. I understand that. They came to us and were very clear that their business and how people search for a place to land and use their services is predicated on Washington, not Manassas. People search, you know, I'm flying to Washington.

[00:35:40] I'm flying to D.C. Do I fly to Manassas? Do I fly to Leesburg? Do I fly to National Airport, wherever? So there was that. To me, more important, though, was in conversations with Avcorts, frankly, two of their senior executives, they were extremely clear that the airlines they are finalizing negotiations with were very much, we need to change the name to help their search engines.

[00:36:08] So when you go to Google Flights and you're flying to Washington, D.C., that Washington Manassas will populate right there with Dulles and National Airport. I'm the first one, and I fussed and screamed about putting Washington first.

[00:36:27] But to me, it is much more important to enable the success of our partners in this venture. And if the airlines know this a heck of a lot better than I do. And if they come to me and say this is what we need to be successful and it doesn't cost us really anything, then I'm in favor of doing it.

[00:36:49] As much as it pains me not to have Manassas Airport or some other name, I would much rather them be successful because I think that's better, larger benefits to Manassas and the larger regional community. Well, the airport doesn't work on federal money, which is my tax money, too.

[00:37:11] So it is coming out of my pocket one way or the other. Some of their money does, but actually the vast bulk of their, they get federal money for grants for projects, you know, a runway renovation, stuff like that.

[00:37:27] They get federal and state money. The vast bulk of their money actually comes from user fees, landing fees, fuel fees, things like that. Well, that's the other thing, you know, to entice an airline to come in, you're probably going to have to give them a nice deal to start out. So their user fees might not be what they would hope.

[00:37:45] And generally, airlines, you know, before they have to have a good six-month head start before the flights just to sell the tickets. So I'm saying you can save that all.

[00:38:01] And that's why this is important to do this now because they're planning to hopefully have flights plus or minus a year from now. So that's why there's a degree of urgency in making this change and getting it going so that they can have their systems ready. Okay, so it's happening anyway, so...

[00:38:19] Well, the council has not made a formal decision. Okay, but we know how council works. Yeah, all right. All right, thank you for your time. Thank you, Mr. Plavniak. Anyone else wish to address council? The floor is yours.

[00:38:38] Good evening, sir. Just give us your name, please. Yes, Rick Levinson, City of Manassas, lives right next to the airport. So I'd like to echo some of the comments from the last gentleman. But first, I want to recognize to you, Madam Mayor and the council, thank you very much.

[00:38:57] I did want to give a shout out to some of your staff. Gentlemen back there, Tim and Ashley, both greeted me. I felt welcomed. It's my first time here. I've been a resident for about 12 years. I bought my first house here, got married here, right across the street, in the area.

[00:39:17] And I didn't think that would ever happen. So I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. I've got an extensive resume in aviation. I'm very passionate about it.

[00:39:32] I just came from working on a job in aviation. I work up in D.C. I work for the government. I support the world's largest acquisition system, defense system, the F-35. I've got about 37 years in aviation.

[00:39:51] I would like to echo to the gentleman in the rear that came up before me um I believe that now is probably not the right time to make the name change uh the only reason and I do echo and hear your concerns Mr. Wolf that that money may not come from us however I feel that at some point there will be costs that do come from us uh I feel that right now that airport needs to be honored by the gentleman that it was founded by Mr. Harris I believe he was a

[00:40:25] Mayor quite some years ago is that correct I was a former mayor the field is the name of the field isn't changing right call letters it's just the overlaying name you know it you know it's Manassas Regional Airport now it's not right I believe the history behind it I mean he was instrumental and I think we should give him some honor to that if it does take off and we do get commercial flights. I think that would be an honor to him from the legacy of bringing that airport up. I live right across the street from it. I love it. I go every day. I take that VRE. I look at the

[00:41:01] runway and I'm excited to see if we do get traffic in here. I believe we will. I don't think it at the expense of rebranding the airport. I think that may be a political motivation and I wanted to echo that. I didn't know about this meeting today. I researched it all on my own on the train.

[00:41:20] I just research here's what happened this morning 5 a.m research Manassas Airport commercial flights I've been looking at it for some time, but I decided to do it today for just out of the blue Here I am. I just came off the BRE. I got off I supposed to get a broad run, but I said to my wife I'll be at the Manassas City Hall meeting and it said today you were having I was very excited to be here So I wanted to just thank you for the opportunity and also that echo that

[00:41:47] It's probably time that we give it a little bit of time before we do this rename because I do feel we could potentially, there could be some legal battles between Washington Dulles and Washington National Reagan.

[00:42:04] When that airport does take off, it will take off. That wouldn't be the time that we potentially see that come back at the city of Manassas, and then the cost will go up. Let's give credit, in my opinion, to the people, to Mr. Davis, who founded the naming brand behind it.

[00:42:23] I just feel that at this time, it's probably important that the council recognizes that. And also hearing from the residents, which myself and the gentleman behind me, you're looking at probably close to well over 80 years of experience and two people that came up before you to tell you that that's probably not the right time.

[00:42:43] It will probably eventually maybe go that way, but I don't think now is the time. I think you'll get your commercial traffic in here. I don't think you need a rebranding. I think you need a marketing program, but I just wanted to ask you, has there been any discussion legal that you've had to determine if that would come back at the residents?

[00:43:04] Would we increase costs? Could there be potentially some issues with the name that you wanna go with? - I'll answer, I don't think The Washington Metropolitan Airport Authority, and I know actually some of those people there, and I know there's discussion.

[00:43:20] They're aware of what is going on here, obviously. They don't have a trademark in the name Washington. Have you researched any of the prior airports that maybe potentially went through that type of battle? I have not. I will defer to our partners at airports on that.

[00:43:37] Okay. I think that might be something we should probably do. There has been things like that that have happened in the past, and it hasn't gone well, and I've done the research on it, but I do think that you're potentially asked the resident to be increased in cost, but potentially going through a legal battle is something I would not want to see that airport go through, because I think that would destroy other carriers coming in here.

[00:44:01] Plus, not only that, it's the safety concern that the gentleman behind me potentially is very aware at. She alluded to in his opening session there. If Washington gets into confusing nature, I know pilots very well. They're not going to get too confused, but it does happen, and it could be a factor in where you land, especially when the weather goes down, especially when they're communicated via their comms.

[00:44:27] So I wanted to make that well clear that that could potentially be a disaster. I'd hate for it to go that way and experience it. But I just want to let you know I'm not trying to come here and derail anything. I'm just here to voice myself to let you know it's not the time to do that at this point.

[00:44:45] I feel it might be a political driver. And I just want to really thank you very much for the time and everything that you're doing. And please keep doing what you're doing to that airport. That place is going to take off. I guarantee you probably wouldn't need it with the names change we should leave it as it is as history I think that would be very a good thing for us to do so thank you very much I think our city manager wanted to yeah mr. Levin and then miss Ellis yes mr. Levinson What council is considering is not the final action on it It's basically a recommendation to the FAA for reconsiderate or for for changing the name

[00:45:22] So if there would be any legal or other implication about the name change that would probably be vetted through the FAA at the time that they grant if the name is changed.

[00:45:38] So the consideration by the city isn't the final step. It does have to be presented to the FAA, and they have to ultimately approve the name change. Yeah. Thank you very much. Yes, I appreciate the feedback.

[00:45:58] And for me, it's important. Manassas is all about historic heart and modern beat, and I want to make sure that we see that not only as beautiful as it is right now, but with expansion, and I have been pressing over that. And then when it comes to the name, you know, it will continue to be the same code.

[00:46:17] It will continue to be the same name. But what they're changing is the overall name, and even the code is not going to be able to change. So, and I believe before we talked about how the financial part for the name changing, but I just wanted to make sure, you know, for me it's important that they are doing everything they can to keep that as low as possible, but it's not coming from the general fund.

[00:46:44] It's coming from the airport fund, and they have presented, and all these has already been approved and recommended by the airport board, and I believe some of the commissioners are also here. I just want to say I appreciate the work they're doing as well.

[00:47:01] Thank you. I understand it's going to be a nice facility once it does get built, so I'm looking forward to seeing that. Thank you, Mr. Levinson. I wanted to also tell you I don't know the exact date, but our airport commission meetings are open to the public, so I would suggest that you try to make those so you can get some information firsthand in here and have some conversations with those commissioners.

[00:47:22] It probably would be really good for you to come to those as well. Thank you. April 18th at 7 or 16th at 7 p.m. at the airport. He's the liaison, so you'll get to see him again. Thank you very much for everyone's time. Thank you for being here. Thank you. Anyone else?

[00:47:44] Ray Brady. Hi, good evening. My name is Ray Brady. I am also a citizen of Manassas, actually a very proud citizen of Manassas for over 40 years.

[00:48:02] And I'm going to go straight to it. Because this is budget also, I would like to find anybody who can give me a full explanation of how the personal property tax slash real estate tax, the elderly, where they afford people who have a limited income that they could reduce, if not eliminate, what we pay.

[00:48:37] I have tried to go down that path already with this, and the criteria, for lack of a better term, that they use blows me out of the water before I can even sit down.

[00:48:54] My income is not higher than what they require. That's fine. But some of the things they use to check income totals, they use, if I have an IRA, I do.

[00:49:14] but it was an inherited IRA. I didn't go out and make it myself. I shouldn't be penalized for having something that I can't dip into every five minutes, even if I wanted to. My insurance, life insurance, things like that, that is counted against me to the point where, I mean, it's very frustrating. I'm not asking for full taking off of my real estate tax. I'm perfectly happy paying what I have to pay but if you have a system where I can pay less if need be because of

[00:49:52] the high cost of everything in this area now um it's it's a useless I mean nobody could hardly qualify for it unless you are maybe making you know only your social security payments which at that point you probably can't afford your house anyway um so please could someone direct me to who I need to talk to, because I know that the state and personal property tax, it's state-funded, plus it's locally.

[00:50:25] I mean, I know that the state and the city both contribute, as it were. I can't get an answer. I don't know who to check. And if so, I'm going to want to sit down and talk with them about if that could be at all changed.

[00:50:42] Is it set in stone by the state, or is it set in stone by you, or can you play with it some? I just think it's very unfair that we've stayed here this long and aged out as much as we have, and we feel, you know, I don't want to leave.

[00:51:00] I have no interest in that. But, you know, it gets to that point where my taxes keep going up, all of them. I mean, I paid over \$700 one year this last year for a used vehicle, which the determination evidently comes from a whole thing that I've looked it up myself through all of the three, you know, places, and, yeah, it's high,

[00:51:33] even though it's a used car, and it's a 2021, and my car was totaled, so I had to buy a new car, not to mention I'm paying higher insurance and everything else that goes along with that. So I don't know why it's got to be quite the criteria to qualify.

[00:51:56] It needs to be reset, I think, if it's at all in your command to do so. I, too, have a problem with the name change for the airport very quickly. I could be totally wrong, but I thought I read in a report, whether it was a newspaper report or something, that it would cost over \$500,000 for this change.

[00:52:22] But it said somewhere, because that's what got me excited about this in a non-good way, that the \$500,000 was going to be partly taxpayer money. Now, maybe that's a misstatement of words, but if one cent I end up paying toward this, when nobody asked us in advance, when we started talking about having this airport improve, nowhere did we talk about one of the potentials would be we would have to change the name and now

[00:52:57] all of a sudden it's starting to come up and back to what i said earlier i am extremely proud of the nasus i don't and i think we should start having some good stuff written about us i mean you know we're technically the home of the bobbits and things like that right and when they say the nasus they're not thinking just of the city that just happens to be where the airport is located But Prince William County is represented, too.

[00:53:26] What is Prince William County saying about that? You know, it just doesn't seem right. Did you change the name when Richmond has their airport? Did we change it? No, it's still Richmond. As far as I can remember, unless somebody changed it most recently, BWI.

[00:53:44] It's a big airport, but it's also Baltimore, Washington Airport. And then you're going to be sending out a survey. Does it even bother for me to fill out that survey? Because it really sounds like most of you are on the side of we're going to change it, whether you like it or not.

[00:54:06] And my very last thing is the Bennett School situation. I know that's very much still in process. However, is that going to end up costing us some money if we can even get far enough?

[00:54:25] If so, how much? I really don't have any problem paying for some of that. I really, really don't. But if it's going to end up becoming a three-story parking lot, then I really have a problem with that because we're already building another parking garage.

[00:54:45] We already have a parking garage where, you know, it's not needed. I know Prince William has the full say in that. But I hope we can work forward into protecting the history and the look.

[00:55:03] It's also the look. I mean, a three-, four-story building, whether it's a courthouse or whatever it is, just is not appropriate for that area. So that's all I have. Thank you very much. Yes, ma'am, if I could.

[00:55:21] Ms. Brady, probably the best thing to do would be talk with our Commissioner of Revenues Office regarding personal property and real estate tax exemption you are correct there is an established that there is information that's required and some of that is set by the state the Commissioner who's actually getting ready to hand you a card has actually been has has requested and I believe Council did actually increase the threshold for the real estate tax and so we have a little bit of flexibility with that but the Commissioner would be the

[00:55:57] best person for that. Specific to the airports, the cost was associated with the signage and what was presented by the airport director was that majority of the cost would be borne by the airport through the enterprise fund, but a portion of the cost would actually be absorbed by AFPorts because they are going to have to replace some of the signage specific to when some of the improvements that they're making are made. So the half million dollars is basically a placeholder

[00:56:34] and an estimate, but a portion of that is anticipated to be covered through the apports, the private company that is pursuing the commercial flights from the place. And then to the Bennett School, unfortunately, the city has very limited influence over that. But to your point, if there was the potential for relocation to another location within the city, depending on how

[00:57:10] negotiations would go with the county, I'm sure that there would be a request from the county for the city to absorb a good portion of those costs. Well, for those of us who aren't, I don't have a lot of ideas about how we ended up even having still a piece of Prince William County seriously stuck in the middle, almost exactly in the middle of our city.

[00:57:37] I don't know how any of that would have come across, but it would seem to me that, you know, because we have our own ways of doing architecture, and we, I mean, look how many times we've deemed people for windows in an historic area, and yet we don't have anything to say.

[00:57:57] It just, I don't know how it got that far. I don't know why it wasn't addressed earlier at some point. Well, in the evolution of the town of Manassas into the city of Manassas, the town had been the county seat for Prince William County.

[00:58:13] The court complex for the county was located in the town. In 75, when the town was transitioning to a city, the county made that as part of the allowance to the state for the Manassas to

become a city.

[00:58:32] We literally had to carve out that portion of the complex that the city would not have any influence of, and the county would retain that. So it's very frustrating for citizens. It really is.

[00:58:48] Ms. Ellis. Thank you for coming forward with your questions and concerns. I actually had a couple questions to add to what she was saying. When you're talking about the senior reduction, the discount, Tim, maybe you can help with this.

[00:59:07] What's the percentage of residents that benefit from that reduction for our seniors? Do you have any idea? For the seniors, it's not that high. We have until July 1 for them to still apply, so I don't know what it will be this year, and I don't have a percentage of residents that are qualified for it.

[00:59:28] Well, I think that kind of says something. If there's not a high percentage, and hopefully you'll let us know and we can get the word out, then it sounds like it's very difficult to qualify. Well, that's what I brought forward last year. Yeah, and that did help. We had been at \$55,000 or something like that for 10 years, and last year you raised that to \$60,000.

[00:59:51] we didn't mess with the net worth what your net worth is we left that alone but every sort of income that this lady was talking about has to be counted that's per ordinance and per code so does that come from the state yeah yeah maybe we can look at that maybe and say that was my plan and what I expressed to you last year that you know once we get to July 1 and we're done taking application we

[01:00:27] can say see how the raise from 56,000 to 60,000 made a difference if it did at all and then you can make a decision if you'd like to raise it any higher than that okay so we would have what I'm understanding is we'd have to raise the threshold your income income but you're still it's the criteria is what you have

[01:00:52] the problem with but we but the criteria and I'm sorry miss Brady if I'm speaking the criteria is the problem is what you're saying which we don't set the criteria well that's why I'm saying am I You're speaking of the amount of money you're allowed to make and allowed to have your net worth.

[01:01:27] It's the net worth amount that... Based on what you're using to determine net worth. The criteria. To me, I don't think, for instance... But if they're net worth, we can't mess with that. You can mess with the \$340,000. But I think it's code, and it gets blurred there, whether it's code or ordinance, but I think it's code that those things have to be counted.

[01:01:48] What your IRA is, all of those things are part of your net worth. Okay, so you can change the total figure, you just can't change what is part of that figure. But when you say that's code, are you saying Virginia code or are you saying the city code?

[01:02:05] Virginia code, their ordinance. Because of their code, right. I don't mean to take over. No, it's okay, because I understand your point. If you have an IRA, you can't withdraw all that. That's not, and also, right. Insurance, are you talking about whole life insurance?

[01:02:23] Well, types of insurance, because that was part, I mean, all but how much I spend in cat food, seriously. And I'm not trying to be facetious, but literally some of the things that had to be considered were out of my control to begin with.

[01:02:42] And I just, I was very, very, very frustrated. So they look at the value of the IRA, not the amount of funds they're taking out of their IRA for the... If you're taking it out, that's your income. they don't look

at income they have a network yeah that is kind of right so yeah okay I have another comment other past that no actually for the city manager because we talked about this the expansion and construction of the the

[01:03:20] courts and the jails and the and our little donut have we heard from the shared service agreement if we are going to have to contribute to the funding of the construction or just the operating class after it's built we have not the county is to set up a meeting with the the two cities in discussion with the chief the the city did have to pay for a portion of the the jail facilities but that was because the city is actually an owner of it.

[01:03:56] I would contest any effort by the county to have the city pay for a portion of their building if the city would not realize a long-term benefit from it.

[01:04:14] So that is a discussion that has not been brought forward, but most likely will be made in the upcoming months. Yeah, that's going to be interesting because I think the expansion from what i heard is like 12 additional courtrooms and then uh office space for the um commonwealth attorney and also the clerk who are elected officials that we elect so i can see them asking us for for money for that but i'll be it'll be interested to see how that goes um as for the old bennett school you know this is something that has become a big topic in the prince william county

[01:04:53] as well as the city it's not just city people saying we aren't happy it's a lot of county people as well you might want to get involved in that if you haven't talked to Colin Turner back there there's going to be like a community meeting more driven by the community April 16th and I think the website that he has oldbennettschool.com I think that's that we'll have more on that you know because what your voices do matter I know the county does control that they're the bulk of this this shared service agreement and these decisions

[01:05:30] but I think it's something that's been laying low for probably 40 years and now you know if they can just maybe even preserve in place and build around it if they have to build just you know try to keep the integrity of the building there's a lot of even national organizations now looking at this so as for the cost I think that Prince William County should pay for it you know even if we do have to pick it up and move it to the city to preserve it because apparently we know what we're doing let them fund it they're they're saying that they have to it's a it's a possible 50 million dollar

[01:06:07] renovation that's what we spent on our dean elementary school that we just built so I don't I don't really believe those numbers so stay engaged I encourage everybody well maybe if we stop putting places like the school board in a building and then not being able to have the school we tried and spending all that money that it would help brady i think miss vasquez luna had something else too sorry it's fine uh thank you madam mayor and thank you for your comments i only have a couple of them uh one in the school i mean i want to thank mr turner who's here that

[01:06:44] he's been leading uh you know i really appreciate that and please join him if you can i believe council has shown up and everybody in different ways is trying to you know support help and guide the conversation when we were madam mayor was there at the meeting with with the county and for me was about not only try to find all the money there is available federal money grant and anything possible to fund that or whatever that cost hopefully is less but also to find all

[01:07:19] the ways for them to use this page so I believe part of the things they were they were using they might be a little bit old and I'm hopeful that as we pressure you know we will be able to come to some resolution that it works for all of us you know and and I I wasn't born here Manassas I have been here since 2010 but for me I've been waiting for that place to be fixed and for that place to be drive so it is a special for all of us I believe but we need to come together so we can support the first question that I was asked is how much is the city

[01:07:56] gonna put you know in and to the preservation and that is no a question that I can answer as you know council has to you know make priorities so I just want to make sure that at least you know what you know where I stand and as we go back to the jurisdictional meetings i will continue to use my voice uh to uh to raise that but it comes to the point like how much are we able or willing to uh to put as well not only uh the pressure and then when it comes to the shared services we have been uh able to keep it as a

[01:08:31] city as as low as possible and i hope that continues but at least we had our first ever meeting and we're moving forward when it comes to the the conversation with our with our with the staff our elected I believe that you know for me it's something that we have to look every year and if we able to raise that amount as necessary and carefully too but I do want to see you know more more people be

[01:09:05] eligible and able to uh to get those uh credits so i hope the information is helpful and i'm you know looking forward for uh future conversations but those are the two things that i had for you our our next miss brady our next inter jurisdictional meeting with the county and the park is on may 13th at 6 p.m and that is at that james mccourt building um in the county and that is open to the public so that is basically the topic of discussion but we will also be probably touching on shared services as a part of that too so we invite you to

[01:09:43] come out if you can for that too so you can hear it firsthand because it's always good to just be there in the room and show the support so thank you so much for your comments appreciate it oh miss Ellis I'm sorry I didn't see one more comment it's also very important that people email the chair and board of supervisors Tom Gordy is the supervisor for that district as well as mayor and council up here and the Manassas Park mayor and council we're all included in that so but really you know voice your concerns I'm waiting for a phone call

[01:10:20] from mr. Gordy so let you know about that sorry about that we got a text I think any other comments from miss Brady I think we're good okay thank you miss ready for your comments. Anyone else? Good evening. My name is Nina Griboff. I'm a resident of City of Manasseh from 2009. I live in a house on McKinley Avenue, and my last year bill,

[01:10:59] utility bill, was winter bill, about \$300 a month. This year bill, going through the roof, it's like 550, 525. And I also heard that rate again going up. A whole house is electricity.

[01:11:24] There is no gas. So my guess is electricity rate is very high. And because of that, everybody complain about the utility bill, and I'm wondering what council is doing about it, because to make life of residents more affordable, and especially people who retired, I'm retired, I don't have any significant race, like a little bit, my social security going a little bit up

[01:12:01] every year. But considering that utility going up, and we have high property bill for the car, also, I would like to be able to negotiate rate with multiple company and choose the electricity company

who can provide better rate. But I heard that it's impossible in Manassas City. I know it's possible in other areas of Virginia? Why it's not possible in Manassas?

[01:12:36] We just don't do that. Negotiating. Other places allow you to negotiate more with other places, but we just never have.

[01:12:53] Not in Virginia. I'm sorry, I apologize for missing it. Is the question negotiating with Dominion? No, the residents don't have choice of provider. Of company. Choose a provider. Like I know Fairfax can do, other places can do.

[01:13:11] Why we can't do it? Well, the city is the opinion that establishes areas of service. Customer, customer, city of an access customer.

[01:13:33] They don't allow you to cross, they don't allow you to neglect the areas. Because of that, we have all high bills.

[01:13:51] A lot of residents complain about it. It's not just me. I know my neighbors have the same problem. So we need to do something about it. Council needs to help somehow to make it more affordable. Because if you have only one provider, there is no competition.

[01:14:11] Whatever they want to get, they get it. Oh, but what? You've got to speak in the mic, Anna, because everyone needs to hear it.

[01:14:30] Thank you. In the city of Manassas, we have one utility company. It's the city of Manassas Utilities. Our neighboring jurisdictions are being served by Dominion. and also by Novak. So that's our competitors, if you may want to say so. Between the three of those companies, we're the lowest. Personally, I live in Novak territory, and when I run my bill through the city system, it's a 35% difference. So we, City of Manassas, utility bills are the lowest in

[01:15:06] the area. As far as KWH, when you're considering your winter consumption, this has been the coldest winter in decades so I've seen usage across the board being up however now with the warmer temperatures those usages come back down I can't talk about your personal account what we can do is you can give me your address and I can definitely look at it and contact you and we can talk one-on-one I don't have it with me um write down your information and just give it to her yeah um

[01:15:45] and we have the budget plan for electric we do we have a budget we have a budget plan that is available which will levelize your bill over the year so it's the same amount every month yeah they have you you've not done that you've not looked at doing that yeah so Anna will help

[01:16:07] you um look at getting possibly on the budget plan and um work with her right just brief right It's your shoulder month that are going to be low, and then you've got high consumption in the winter and high consumption in the summer.

[01:16:42] Yes, because the temperatures were much higher the winter before. This has been the coldest winter in a decade, where the temperatures were prolonged in the single digits. When that happens, your heat pump will take more electricity, will run longer, and will use emergency heat in order to heat your place.

[01:17:11] Yes, yes. What is your address? Thank you. I didn't get her last name, so make sure you get her last name, too, Anna, please. Madam Mayor, if I can, I'll make a brief comment.

[01:17:28] But I think part of the previous session that we had in regards to that, actually our city manager was speaking in regards to the difference on having gas, electricity, and just all electricity for your heating system. So when those, the bill gets really high because those very cold temperatures, it becomes more expensive.

[01:17:51] So I just want to make sure that I get to express that. and you know hopefully we don't have this uh this weather anymore and it gets uh better but it does make a difference if you have electricity uh for all and i know sometimes you don't get a choice but it makes it difficult for some customers but i do hope that as the weather gets better that will come down thank you any other comments or questions anyone else that

[01:18:18] wishes to um good evening good evening sir um city council and school board members and fellow residents. My name is Amalfi Arias. I live on Prescott Avenue. I want to talk about something that impacts both our city and our schools and that is the zoning, zoning, safety enforcement and coordination. That impacts both our city and our schools and that's what I want to talk about

[01:18:52] tonight. We separate city issues from school issues and we focus only on funding. That's what the conversation centers around every year but the but the reality is what happens in our neighborhoods our zoning overcrowding safety and stability directly impacts what happens in our classrooms when enforcement is as consistent and overcrowding and misused properties goes unchecked it creates a more transient environment and while we welcome people into our city we also have to be honest high turnover instability make it harder for us to build strong school communities consistent

[01:19:29] parent involvement and student success i've raised these concerns directly one-on-one with many of with junior staff at the time now senior staff I'm talking to Mr. Arcieri with Steve Burke um senior staff and many others and who are in this room today um and every time I get you redirected to a new process or lately a new app respectfully that's not enough I'm a citizen I can walk through these neighborhoods and see clear egregious violations the question is if I can see

[01:20:08] it why isn't our city addressing it directly residents should not be not have to act as a primary enforcement mechanism for basic zoning and safety standards. That is the core function of our city government. This is not about pointing fingers. It's about responsibility and alignment. Because these conditions don't stay contained in our neighborhoods. They show up in our schools, in attendance, in performance, and in behavior. And right now, the results reflect that. Our schools are significantly below the state average. In some cases, 15, 20 points behind the core subjects

[01:20:48] while we sit in one of the most affluent areas in Northern Virginia and in the United States. That gap should not exist. At this point, it's not a slow-moving issue. It's an emergency. It's urgent. It's been urgent for 10 years I've been raising this.

[01:21:06] When the fundamentals of community stability break down, everything downstream is affected, including our schools. We have the resources. We know the problems. What's missing is consistent enforcement and coordination action.

[01:21:22] I'm asking that city council treat this like what it is, a serious community-wide issue that requires leadership and not redirection because if we don't address it as a city level we will continue to have the same results in our school so again i'm here to ask what we're going to do next i've been communicating directly with you guys mark steve matt rosary for many years i've taken you guys on tours

you guys have seen these egregious violations and yet something happens in old town it gets addressed immediately something happens on

[01:21:59] stonewall it gets overlooked there was just recently a fire i understand that a house was one of those issues how many of those happen on a yearly basis so again i'm just here to see what's next because every one of you individually acknowledge these issues we've taken you on rides but yet i see no action but yet if somebody in old town parks a car in the front yard i guarantee you mr carlos is going to be knocking on his door within five minutes but yet there are

[01:22:36] cars on blocks flat tires on front of individual homes cases for years and yet we look the other way so that's my question that you should want to use oh i'm sorry thank you for coming forward and i know you did a really detailed report to us of your own assessment of some violations in the city um i do appreciate the time you took to do that where are in that that list were they all

[01:23:13] resolved i'm just curious where were you what happened there i would love this pair steve or matt arcer answer that question well i know that when we did the tour um we did react and and do some of the enforcement and immediately by the way and and i know that our police department and code enforcement are actually working to be more proactive together we're actually getting more officer input more uh the folks that are on the street um each day to either take corrective action or to report it to Matt's folks to to take corrective action I do believe

[01:23:50] we are being as proactive as we can and there's probably always more we can do but I know that by linking those two two departments together has made a difference in the city and I know that Matt's group annually does report a number of code enforcement efforts that some there they can take they get addressed quickly and yes sir there are some that have to work their way through a court system and so it's it's many months to to get resolution but we are trying no I understand that you took action immediately after we had that and

[01:24:30] some of them were addressed but they come right back and but I know if I make a violation in Old Town it gets addressed immediately and there is no getting around it okay so there's differences in the way we're enforcing Same thing with safety.

[01:24:47] Same thing with a lot of other violations that I see. And what I mean by safety is just cars being abandoned, wrecked on Liberia. You know, they sat there for months. You saw yourself when we were driving by. It's like, hey, that car's been there for two weeks. It was gone in two days after we had that conversation.

[01:25:04] But yet there's another car out there towards Loman right now, right? These are the issues that you guys are aware of. And all I'm asking you is that if we work together with a school, right, which you guys don't do that, my opinion from my observation right we just talk about funding if we talk about the truancy issue the safety issues right those things directly impact our school performance right kids need a proper environment to study lighting etc right a shed or a uh garage apartment may not be it

[01:25:42] right i'm not looking to displace people i'm not looking to kick people out i'm not looking to you know get people uh kick people on the streets what i am making sure is that we have standards for safety and coordination among the departments, which, by the way, the parking enforcement, right, they see these violations, but yet if something happens with a code, they'll enforce it.

[01:26:05] But now I understand they're working together, which I really do appreciate. But those are the things that I would love to see some action, not just like, hey, send me to an app. I want to see an action plan that can be accountable, can be, say, hey, these are metrics, et cetera. That's what I would love to see, and not just me, myself, reporting it.

[01:26:22] Last time we had interaction with Mr. Wolfe, I was directed, go submit all those same violations via the app. I'm a citizen. Well, if I could, Mayor, two points.

[01:26:40] One, I do know that our police department through the SROs are in pretty much continual contact about any issues that are ongoing at schools that the city can influence or address. So there is, I can assure you that there is communication between the city and the schools, both from a law enforcement perspective, but also from our public works.

[01:27:04] I know that we are integral in doing some of the grounds maintenance and playground replacement. So there is good communication between the cities and the schools. - Truancy would be a great place to start. - And again, that's something that our SROs work with and help to identify as they go forward.

[01:27:26] And I apologize, I'm under the weather and I forgot the second point that you had made that I was gonna try to respond to. - I made several points. The one point I do wanna get across is just that the schools are impacted directly by the decisions that you make.

[01:27:43] And the conversation cannot be had, hey, here's your funding, go away, right? The conversations go further. What are you being impacted? What are your social situations? What are your welfare permits? What are we doing with the housing situation that maybe is causing that overcrowding, right?

[01:28:02] Those are the discussions that really need to be had. And I don't see any of that in an agenda. right so that's that's what i mean i bring up these issues over and over again and i don't i keep communicating it via email via one-on-one and it's not working i don't know what else to do but if you ask around what is the number one thing that we can improve in the city our schools right it's no secret why do families not move into the city because there are schools and if they do they have the money to send their kids to private school what are we building here

[01:28:41] manassas all right thank you madam mayor as a mom of graduating uh eagle i'm really uh really proud of what what the schools and their achievement uh we can always work and be better but i know they are proud of their uh achievement and graduating uh soon in may and uh and and there is more so we cannot forget that i believe uh you know uh our city has uh i would i want to say organically come together and the group that is working together is going to I believe not only

[01:29:19] speed up but follow up on some of the things court enforcement takes a long time and they have to make sure that they follow everything that they do and actually you know some of this stuff it's not like we can come back and you know and publish what happens but they are they are taking steps so I do I just want to make sure that they you know at least even though I cannot come back and say you know that was fixed so this happened to uh to uh um uh to these individuals you know uh things are it might not be as fast as you wish to see it but things do happen and it takes time i believe

[01:29:58] now the process is a little bit better uh because they are working together but i i do appreciate the comments and i i do look forward in how we can make it better as a council member i had asked this

staff and this budget for an extra person uh for court enforcement uh i'm more interested you know on uh bringing down the uh the uh missing nothing but it's first image before i'll be quick i'm i'm interested in bringing it down so if if it costs me not to that person to you know keep another penny just to fund that you know to me well you know i have to make that

[01:30:35] decision but I have been asking and I have been trying to make changes but it takes our four of this council and we still also have other decisions to make before we have to have a budget miss Luna it's not about it's not about money additional resources right that's every time that some just comes up we need additional resources we do it's about focus plain focus why how quickly would my violation be addressed if i cut into a public sidewalk to get another driveway into my house

[01:31:12] how quickly would that be addressed right and it's happened over there for years and we look the other way how quickly would it take for my single family home to make into 20 different apartments right before somebody would knock on my door this is what i'm talking it's focus it's not additional funds or money mr. Smith much has been covered except I will say that your comments are not falling on deaf ears thank you and I appreciate you

[01:31:52] bring it bring it to the front now I do I do know that the staff is the Steve is trying to increase code enforcement staff hopefully we can accommodate in the budget but there are issues that the city needs to address and we are here I I am hearing you, and I think the rest of us are, with an emphasis on underscore hearing.

[01:32:15] We hear you. And I appreciate you guys. You guys do take the time to listen, and I appreciate that. But I just want to see some action on this. It's an ongoing issue. It doesn't get addressed. Thank you. And one more comment, if I can. Part of what, for me, it was important, the community center, because I want to make sure, when it comes to the kids, I wanted to make sure that they also have other options and doing other things.

[01:32:40] And, you know, I know it doesn't cover everything, but, you know, as a mom with two kids in the school, schools are very important, and I want them to drive. And I believe, back in El Salvador, we believed that we all keepers of all the kids and make sure that they drive.

[01:32:58] And, you know, here I'm trying to make sure that not only I encourage my kids, but all the kids around, you know, to make sure. For me, first, for them to show up to school, and I think we all have tried to do that. And we all can do that within our own, but also how else we can.

[01:33:16] Because like you said, if it's not all about the money, how else we can support our system so it can get better. You bring up a lot of good points, right? But it's very difficult to build a community with a transient population. People that come in for six months, three months, six months, a year.

[01:33:33] And that's what we have with these built-in apartments. That's what's happening to our city. Point blank. Thank you, Mr. Arias. Anyone else to come forward? Hello, I'm Mayor and Counsel, Lynn Forkow Green.

[01:34:01] I think what Mr. Amalfi Arias was saying was neighborhood inequity. And I think you guys are hearing that, Mr. Smith. Thank you for acknowledging that it's not falling on deaf ears. I'm going to speak on a different topic, but just because that was so passionate, I just want to remind you that the neighborhood inequity is a real thing.

[01:34:20] When Weems had to get together to talk to you guys about the issues that they were facing with overcrowding and rats, I don't even know where that stands now, but that was a big deal. When Bristow Station had a band together about the inequity with the car wash and that finally was dealt with, that's inequity.

[01:34:39] When you have the historic downtown area that has such a heavy amount of policing with regards to standards in your community and you don't have the violations like that in a property code enforcement in other areas, then our neighborhoods that don't have an HOA can fall to the wayside.

[01:35:02] And I think that's what Amalfi is trying to say, that it is neighborhood inequity. And maybe if we start thinking about it that way, we can start to have some KPIs put into place. And one person who's done an amazing job is our fire chief, who came in here with a long list of things that weren't working, and he incorporated KPIs.

[01:35:20] So maybe the city could start doing that in the property code enforcement department. It's not too much to ask, and if everyone's salaries keep going up, but our neighborhoods keep looking like crap, I think maybe it's not about the money. I think it's about where the priorities are and how we're working smarter, not harder.

[01:35:37] So I'd ask you all to really have that real, very, very real conversation in your budget discussions this month. I'm here about the naming of the airport, and I am a little bit disappointed to hear that several of you are very strongly pushing for Washington to come first.

[01:35:56] Manassas should come first, period, heart, stop, the end. I don't know where you are receiving information that there is another Manassas, Washington airport in the United States of America, but I've done a Google search. So is it just copyright written somewhere?

[01:36:12] Like, where is that coming from? Is it Manassas, Washington state? Okay, I Googled it, doesn't come up. I watched other posts talk about it, doesn't come up. So Manassas airport is a gem to our city.

[01:36:28] It has been protected by many people before all of you are sitting there. And I have heard many of you support in the past the importance of keeping Manassas first. So I'm quite confused why this is becoming a Washington rebranding situation versus a Manassas Washington, which aligns with Baltimore, Washington.

[01:36:51] It aligns with the naming in our area. So I'm confused. And if I have lived in many different places, I've lived overseas. I've lived in many states along the way. And I can tell you, people who come to Washington, D.C. get confused with just Baltimore, Washington, National, and Dulles already.

[01:37:13] So trying to hide Washington in there first to be like, they're going to know where they're going is just not even realistic. Because people flying into Baltimore, Washington, thinking that they're going to be right down the street like Dulles, and they're not. And then they're like, wow, I didn't realize that, right? So some of traveling comes with the risk of not knowing the area you're going to, and we do the best we can with that.

[01:37:34] But I think Manassas is on the map. I think people know who we are. I think they know we're near D.C. I think Manassas Regional Airport's done a good job, as far as I can tell. That's why we're increasing this to commercial service. And I'd like to know why we are really changing the name to Washington Manassas.

[01:37:55] Sure. The name change has come about from two parties. Number one is the two large FBOs at the airport because, again, their traffic is generated, if not nationwide, worldwide.

[01:38:13] They come in. They're not flying to Manassas. They're flying to Washington. The other thing is the airlines that AFWARTS is dealing with have been very clear, again, the same thing. Their consumers are coming to Washington, whether it's Dulles National, BWI, Manassas and that from their search engine perspectives their ability to drive business drive customers They feel it is important to them to have men Washington Manassas. I agree with you I didn't like it either, but at the end of the day

[01:38:49] I know you won't speak for the council. I will bow to their expertise in this area They're the ones putting up millions of dollars to enable this and have the success that I think will benefit the community If it's the name if they're the ones to come back and say Washington Manassas as opposed to just Manassas regional Okay, fine. We can reasonable people can disagree. That's the rationale Well, I appreciate that explanation and the admittance that you were a supporter of Manassas first because I know that you were

[01:39:23] So I appreciate you acknowledging that and I would just support like having more information on this to be honest I just I am a smart person too and I'm a traveler and this does not make sense especially when your call letters are not going to change they're going to say hef and no one knows what that is like no none of us you know come on like we i've been here my whole life and that hef has always confused me it never made sense so it's not like boston is bos you know i mean it's purely it's purely a google search thing to drive tickets and passengers looking to come to

[01:39:59] washington right but yeah baltimore washington seems to work out for everybody so and then i I will just also bring to your attention that I would like to have an update, if you could, about the landings and what's happening with good housing. Has there been any movement on that contract and that negotiation that can be shared with the community since we're here this evening?

[01:40:23] Yes. I'm sorry, I'm also under the weather, so I feel terrible for you. Yes, we are making progress. Our attorney has taken receipt of a draft of the loan document that would be part of the ultimate transfer process for the good housing.

[01:40:45] That is under review. Once we have finished that review, that will be presented to council for consideration, and we're hoping that we can get that a month by May-ish. I'm looking.

[01:41:02] She's looking at Matt. Yeah. She's supposed to be the attorney. I have not seen it yet, but I understand that it's 100 pages, and so it is a work in progress, but we are making progress, if that's all I can offer to you, and that we are hoping to get that back because we are hoping to be able to go to closing by the end of the year with good housing on that project.

[01:41:31] Is that something we would put in the brick by brick or not? Is that not – I mean, we could just say where we are. Yeah, we can say that we're in general terms. So, you know, the brick-by-brick report that comes out. So, that's where we would update and put that. So, that's where you would find it. I think also they're in their 30-day due diligence for the site.

[01:41:50] That is correct. They are evaluating the site to see if there's any issues that would preclude them from proceeding. That's part of the reason that the folks aren't supposed to be parking there. But what we can say, we should be saying in the brick-by-brick report that you can get online.

[01:42:05] Okay, great. And just we're still going to continue to work closely with those neighbors over there along the way, even in the HOA, even if they're not looking at that report online on your website. Oh, I'm sorry, Ms. Ellis, thank you. Back to the airport name, I would be interested, I think Jolene Berry, our assistant airport director, she's in our meeting is the one that said there is already a Manassas, Washington airport.

[01:42:31] I've been looking, too. I mean, maybe it's a retired name or something from an airport that was renamed, and they won't release it to reuse or something like that. But I think it would be interesting to find out the history of that and where we are. Yeah, the Google search comes up with nothing and basically talks about our recent meetings about renaming.

[01:42:52] So that's what comes up right now. So maybe it is in the way back time machine. I'm not sure, but it would be nice to know, and I appreciate all of you talking to me about that. Finally, I'll just let you know that, you know, we do have a great community, and you know that. And our community pulled together to help Mets find a head baseball coach recently.

[01:43:11] We are here to help how we can. But it would be nice if some of the things that should be working on a business level with our city and our schools were working. I think recruitment has constantly been an area for improvement in certain areas.

[01:43:33] And so as someone, you know, I know the mayor has her own background, and I appreciate that very much as someone who has a similar background in HR. It's just always amazing to me that sometimes we have these little hiccups. And so I would love if those of you who are in these seats could help sort some of that out so it's not so clunky, not only for our students, but for those who are trying to apply for jobs with us.

[01:44:01] And I'm just really excited that we're still going to have baseball at Mets. So if you can follow through with whatever field maintenance they need or anything else that's going on that I'm not paying as much attention to right now, I would really appreciate the support for that because I want to make sure we have a great baseball season.

[01:44:18] Thank you, guys. Thank you. Anyone else to come forward? Good evening. My name is Janet Plegniak, and I'm a citizen of the city of Manassas.

[01:44:38] Wow, lots of subjects tonight. I agree with the airport thing. With these two gentlemen with all their years with the airport, it needs to wait a while. If people can't find Manassas, you know, that doesn't make a lot of sense.

[01:44:57] To change the name, because that reminds me of the data center that we didn't know was run by a banker, leased by a banker, whatever. Oops, we found that out, but we're not going to make that mistake again.

[01:45:13] The same with the Apple Federal Credit Union building that was pushed for the alternative ed program that, whoops, last minute, they can't go in there. And now those students are in the community center with the drop-off daycare children.

[01:45:32] I don't know if you all pay attention to the news, but children are high risk. And when you have, and these children in the alternative ed, they deserve an education. They deserve a good place to be in and to learn and to now go, wow, you guys got to go into the community center.

[01:45:51] Has any resolution come in on any of that? Is that where they're going to stay for this year, is in the community center? They are going to stay for at least the next year or two, yes. And I do know that Manassas City Public Schools has actually put in place some very good security measures.

[01:46:11] They have a security guard there. We have to be, there isn't just free access into the facility. They also have equipment to make sure that there are no weapons that would be brought into their portion of the campus. So, yes, ma'am, they have actually done a very good job of securing the site for both, for their children.

[01:46:33] Okay, well, if I was making an \$11 million purchase of a building, Who let it slip by that that final fire department report was that they couldn't do it there? Somebody along the way, you're always saying how great the city staff is, and for the most part they are.

[01:46:55] Somebody let that slip by. The building actually was purchased because the school administration and school board had been operating there, And it was an opportunity for them to purchase the building and to make better use of it.

[01:47:13] After the building was purchased was when they started to discuss putting in the Alt-Ed there. I heard, I was at meetings, I heard they wanted Alt-Ed there. And that's why they wanted to purchase it. Well, the discussion to purchase it preceded any discussion about the Alt-Ed being placed there.

[01:47:31] And I'm actually getting the thumbs up from a couple of the school board members. Well, it still is another big, oops, that's a lot of money. You know, go to the grocery store and spend too much money.

[01:47:47] It's an oops. But that's a lot of money. And still, whatever things you have in place there, those alternative ed students need better care. So to be put in the community center, I don't know what it's like over there for them.

[01:48:04] I don't know. I wouldn't put my little children there. I don't feel community center and all that. And then kids that are supposed to be taking an education serious, they need help. They don't get as much help at home, possibly. Honestly, the school board did allow us to tour the facility and view some of what the children that are there are being surrounded by, and it is an amazing facility.

[01:48:33] The teachers there are very well-intentioned. They have a very good curriculum to keep the kids involved, and from what I was able to observe, I think that the schools have actually done an outstanding job of taking kids that need additional attention and are actually receiving it at the facility.

[01:48:51] So as a citizen, can I go to it? Okay. May I? Well, hang on one second. Okay. When I can, may I just... Yeah, okay. Were you done?

[01:49:07] I'm sorry. Okay, go ahead, Mr. Smith and then Ms. Veskis. Did she finish? Oh, I'm sorry. Okay. Okay, thank you, Dave. Okay. Now, I just want to add to a scene. is a very very nice school that's not a temporary the program itself that that's there it's temporary the school board is developing their program but in this case is a very very great outcome for the development of what they did it's a school that happens to be at a community center to say that it's at the

[01:49:45] community center is really a disservice to what they've done and the setup is completely separate in terms of access first of all the the day cares or the people that come to the community center in the middle of the morning have absolutely no opportunity or even ability to get near those students the

students there and the concept they're following would very much impress you I believe the approach they have to educating those kids and I know that the The response from the students, they let us do some one-on-one.

[01:50:21] The responses from the students tells the story of the success of that so far. And that's wonderful because that's what it's for. I just want to put it in perspective. Okay, thank you. But again, there's no transparency. We don't hear any of this.

[01:50:38] We hear, oops, they can't go in over to the Apple Federal Credit Union building and they're over to the community center. But that's it. I don't have kids in school anymore. We can't control what goes on social media. That building. I'm not saying on social media. But there are plans for that building. That building is not going to go unused.

[01:50:54] It just won't be used for classrooms. They have plans in place. They are planning for full use of that building. Well, the commercial things that are there, that's different. But in terms of space that they purchased it for, there's full intent.

[01:51:11] I've been told by the school board there's full intent to make full use of it. So, again, let's keep it in proper perspective. I understand that. What I'm saying is once the decisions have been made and then we hear, oh, it didn't turn out that way, there's no more further.

[01:51:27] We don't have a journal messenger anymore. We used to have a journal messenger. You could find some news. Now it's like all social media. Okay, I don't get all my information from social media. I get my information from people in the community, people who have kids in the schools. Well, I understand, and I appreciate you bringing it up.

[01:51:45] It's just that we're here now for those reasons. Our meetings are very open, and you do attend almost all of the meetings, so I think you would say that we are forthcoming. I just get a little bothered because I know all of our efforts, individually and collectively, are to be very transparent with the public, and that's become a buzzword locally, and it's unfair in some instances, but I think the staff, and I know we do, take it very personally.

[01:52:13] We're not trying to hide a thing from any resident in the city or from the county. We're very open about our plans, and I don't know if they could get out the door fast enough to say oops, as you put it, but they weren't trying to hide when they found out that that building wouldn't meet the specifications for a school.

[01:52:34] They immediately started planning. The city started working with them, and now they're planning at the same time is to make sure that we use that building before we start having to address wasting money on unused space. So I just want the public to understand that we are hearing input, and we're trying to provide input.

[01:52:57] There's been significant changes to our website. There's information coming out of our information office. I think they reached out just now and said you could have you in the public. They're going to check, and that's great, and I will follow up with that. I'm here at all the meetings. I'm not discouraging you from talking.

[01:53:14] And I just wanted to address the fact that we were hiding the building. I've been here at every meeting for the past two years. The focus of that building is to address a need that the school board

identified a few years ago of the need for some of our students.

[01:53:34] I'm very proud of how they've approached that problem and their approaches to addressing it under the circumstances. And it's been a very successful program. Is it because I don't have kids in the school that I don't have the information? Or I have to sit down in front of my computer and constantly search for it?

[01:53:51] I'm here at the meetings all the time. I think it would help if you went to the school board meetings, too. I mean, I know. I know it's a lot. I have a life. I know. I know. Well, watch them. And I'm very interested in the community. I haven't had kids in the school for 22 years. Right. But these are my kids in my community because they're the ones that walk through my neighborhood.

[01:54:12] They're the ones who, you know, I want to have contact with, and I want them to know they're part of the community. So that's my concern. Are the kids getting what they were promised to get? For when I saw they are. So Ms. Vasquez-Luna wanted to address.

[01:54:28] Okay, and so I will check with the school board people and go. But I want to be retired. You know, I don't want to be this involved constantly every day to know what is going on, but I have to be.

[01:54:44] How about the old police station building? I'm sorry, Ms. Vasquez Luna wanted to address your last. I don't want to cut you off, but I do want to hear your concerns. But I do, you know, at least for me, I can explain how it came about. The schools have a hefty rent for their, when they were renting at the building.

[01:55:06] The main office never had a, sometimes they call it a forever home, but it's their headquarters. And they might need more space and expanding. So for me, it wasn't about having a school there. For me, it was about giving a home building that they did as we requested for a while.

[01:55:27] They went looking for the buildings. They tried to look at the old police building. They tried to accommodate and look at different options. And these, when you look at it, to me, it was about the economics. When you look at the economics and everything that was involved with that, renewing their contract and purchasing with the money, the one-time money they already had in their capital, it was easier to invest that money for that. So even though the school conversation was there, to me, my body was about giving it a home to the main office who have been residing there

[01:56:06] for a while. When it comes to the schools, I am really, really proud that we were able to have something for them and they do have a school their entrance is independent we got to tour they are coming they are showing up the students are really happy students for the school for me are a school-age residents and we have to care for them and and what a proud moment to see how two of them are on track to graduate we got that information tonight and also the spirit that they have they all come together and they are getting something that they didn't have online or they

[01:56:44] didn't have before so I if you are if you are able and if they allow I think you're going to find a sense of pride that I have and since you haven't heard I understand because I didn't feel like that before I went so and there is there is kids coming in a different door then our door is not even in that side this side is looking at the wawa my daughter went to preschool there so I you know I already was aware of how it was working before but it's an eye-opening and no you know nobody is like going under everybody is independent and doing their thing so I'm not only for the safety

[01:57:22] but everything the the the city staff and the school board have come together to make sure that these kids drive and then the school is going and strong so i just want to make sure that you know that you knew that when it comes to uh those points and i do have two kids in school and i'm you know really proud what they're doing i know everybody has a different experience but like i said earlier you know all of us what can we do because i do see kids you know in my neighborhood and and other places and and and they are growing and you know it's i have a sense of pride i know

[01:57:58] on May 28th when they graduate, many of them, they know my kids, but it feels like, you know, it's my community. It's part of me, because I'll be very proud of them getting there. Well, my youngest one graduated 22 years ago from here. The schools now are rated one and two.

[01:58:16] That's bad. That's not anything to be proud of. Now, we're down at one and two, and it's going to work its way back up, but I have watched our school system plummet, so that's where my concerns come from. I have watched it take a nosedive. I understand and I appreciate it but you know when they are applying for their college and they get getting all these you know offers you know it doesn't talk about the rating it talks about the work that they did and they did it right here

[01:58:49] and you know I do believe that you know it's difficult to you know buy a home and even the the house we saw the increase that's going so I cannot tell the school board how to do policy I can only you know ask for questions and ask you know to work together and then set the budget and see their priorities but to me you know it is important that when they get their certificate they're not looking at one when they are getting accepted in the colleges or they're looking at

[01:59:24] different options that they have it's based on the results that they have and and we have a lot of kids that are driving okay I hear and understand all of that but to have people come and when I bought house I looked at the school system so that ask any realtor the school system matters and I agree with Amalfi when he was up here speaking those kids are our future the most attention should be put on the kids and their education they don't need all the

[02:00:04] money spent on this and money spent on that they just need people there I have people come to me and they ask me about the school you know the schools are so low what's going on I said I don't know can I go on a tour over there just because I don't have kids in the school it was said by a school board member I don't know why she shows up she doesn't have any kids in the school so that was a rude comment I won't say who said it but that was what was said about me showing up to school board meetings so and I haven't gone to many and that's not why but I do have a vested interest in these kids in our community if you want them to stay here and you

[02:00:43] want them to live here and be a part of here they need to be educated and I'm glad to hear it's coming back up now the other night when they had about round school I would they said there's 18 languages spoken in the school and that's great but Spanish is the highest spoken language I'm a little too old to start learning Spanish now. English should be something that it's the language of our country. So that is a little disappointing to me that English isn't being pushed through as

[02:01:18] the language so that all 18 languages are joining in on one. Do the other 17 languages need to learn Spanish? I don't know. I don't know where that's going, but I was really shocked to hear that that's what that was there. And this is not anything against anyone. I wish I spoke all the languages.

[02:01:37] I don't. But I think, you know, there's, you're being inclusive in one area, but then it's excluding in another area. So it needs to be rounded out so that people, you know, this is an English-speaking country. When I go to another country, I don't expect them to accommodate my language. So it's, that is a problem. It's not only here. And, you know, the eye contact now is kind of like uh-oh yep she went there but it is it's a concern it's a concern with a lot of people

[02:02:10] and I think we need to help our kids also learn English um police department you were asking about the police department that was your next thing was the police department thank you it's the police department keep it up the old police department Mr. Burkhead well we are still marketing it um there's unfortunately been uh no no actual progress on it but we are continuing to market it um and again you know my information i do see things on social media i post things

[02:02:50] on social media but that doesn't mean that that's where a lot of people get their information when people come to me and ask me that doesn't mean that everything they see there but where else are they going to see it they know i attend the meetings and i'm like i don't know we haven't talked about that when tim was up here and he asked about the the hotel deal it was back in october that there was an unsolicited deal for the hotel parking lot and then we didn't hear anything else i you know maybe i need to be on the computer more but to tell people go on the website and do all that i don't spend all my time on a computer younger people do that and that's

[02:03:28] great and that's the new generation coming up and when all these old people die then you know the the technology will be there for the young people but in the meantime i'm still a citizen here i still pay lots of taxes here now and it's getting to be lots more taxes here I know Ray Brady was asking about the assessment and I like what you know what you all were saying about looking at that number the criteria which you said mayor can't you know criteria can't be changed but but possibly a number because to find out your life insurance is counted crazy I'm gonna get my life

[02:04:06] You might get it, but it's not my money, so that's kind of, you know, if that can be raised or whatever. I have a lot of elderly clients that say, I'm getting worked out. Well, they can't afford to live here. Ralph said I'm right there with you.

[02:04:23] That's sad. It's sad when they can't afford to live. You get your house paid for and you think, oh, this is nice. Oh, no. I'm making as much in my monthly tax payment as I am on my house payment. So that's not fun. And we don't want to become New York.

[02:04:39] When they told their citizens to leave, and now they're begging for their citizens to come back, we don't want to leave. As I said, you know, we don't want to leave, but I've heard a lot of people saying they need to leave because they can't afford to stay here in their house.

[02:04:58] And we're already seeing it. The governor up there is begging people from Florida, bring your money back. They don't want them. Just bring your money back. We have to make a balance for everybody to live. I agree with Amalfi, with the neighborhoods, with the housing in the back.

[02:05:16] When we had the snow, you could tell there was lots of housing in the back. That is not a good place, like you said, for kids to learn to live in places like that. I know we questioned about the armored vehicle, and the response that came back was, well, two of those, it was used in your neighborhood twice.

[02:05:36] Okay, it's for the city. Just because it was used in my neighborhood, that answer back was, oh, but it got used in your neighborhood. I want my neighborhood safe. I don't need an armored vehicle there.

I'd like to be able to go out, have the kids shovel my wall, talk to my neighbors.

[02:05:52] But it's, like we said, we don't have an HOA, so the city is our HOA. Other areas that have an HOA, they can call their HOA and get problems taken care of. The city is my HOA, and I've heard that from many Old Town residents.

[02:06:09] they do something a little bit off and they're right there on them my neighborhood i had to fight for years about the chickens and as it's getting to be warm weather hopefully i'm not going to hear chickens again but it's we all want to live in this community it's a community for all of us so thank you thank you miss five man anyone else anyone at all going once going twice

[02:06:44] we are adjourned thank you all for coming out



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