



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Manassas City Council Worksession 4/8/2026

Date Wednesday, April 8, 2026
Place Manassas City Council, Virginia
Length 0h 51m (video)

- Official meeting video (Wistia / RegionalWebTV): <https://fast.wistia.net/embed/iframe/wmh2k6jxmn>

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

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.

[00:04:53] are you you okay with the four empty that mr. vice mayor is suggesting you go to i am yes okay all right thank you okay okay do you want to go to the next one and this is the the draft ordinance uh page because i keep that on the side that's very quick

[00:05:30] yeah it's because i'm zooming in and out which one do you want to hold a lot of words see the one currently indicates no he sorry he indicates the 415 we will

[00:06:07] modify that to 450 for when you have your public hearing maybe it's just it

[00:06:19] likes me okay that works it's not up and down okay um so if If there's no other questions regarding any of the rates, basically what we've drafted is the personal property

[00:06:57] that corresponds with what's been previously discussed. Can I interject? Yes, please. Thank you. Last year at this exact same time, we talked about the fact that Prince William and Loudon were going above their car rate, which they're allowed to do now.

[00:07:19] And I was cautious about that because I wasn't sure if there would be blowback on that and the General Assembly would try and change it back to the way it was, where you can't have a higher rate. I don't know of any legislation that came forward for that, but I would still be wary of watching for that for next year if they decided to come forward with something to where they change the levels of our tax rate to where we're allowed to have a higher tax rate than the car rate.

[00:07:51] But they did not come forward with anything that I saw this year, and we were watching for that. Just FYI, the next item, Anna and her staff tried to find information regarding water and electric rates.

[00:08:11] And this is the best available information that she and her staff were able to locate. We are, again, competitive with localities as far as rates for utilities.

[00:08:34] This is with the 25% water and 10.5% electric. three percent more and what I did is I went ahead and I used Manassas Park because they've got their water system and then they've got Novek as their electric provider and then Prince William County they got Prince William Water and Dominion as their electric provider so we've got different kinds of entities intertwined in those and we're still taking all our neighboring jurisdictions so it's still very competitive even after the rate increase so go through those increases that

[00:09:14] what this is showing it shows watering 25 25 percent electric at ten and a half and soar at three three percent I would just suggest I think this is great information and I would urge us to be very uh aggressive in publicizing it just this format it's simple it's direct very clear

[00:09:50] Thank you, Madam Mayor. I think I would like to, because this is showing the new or the proposed rate, I still would like to highlight, I think in all the cases, we're still going to be under than everybody else's rate.

[00:10:05] And I appreciate what vice mayor said that it is important that we advertise because even as a customer myself, you know, I will think about the hike and the percentage and everybody is different based on the consumption.

[00:10:24] So I do will like this to be forefront, not to be part of a presentation of what we do. Yes, ma'am, we will definitely make that and we'll get it out on social media. Just for council's awareness, we've had probably a handful, eight utility customers called in specifically about electric rates.

[00:10:48] And when Anna and her staff were able to compare what their billing was this year versus a year or two in the past, typically they're fairly consistent. It appears that the folks that are experiencing higher electric bills have homes that are 30 to 40 years old, were not connected to gas.

[00:11:09] so they were solely reliant on a heat pump for their homes and with the extended freezing temperatures that we experienced this winter heat pump efficiency is not effective when it gets down below 35 degrees and it goes into an emergency heat that is very electric intensive so we've been talking with those customers and basically just letting them know that you know looking at their history. Unfortunately, they typically are experiencing higher electric bills, and then

[00:11:42] just due to the strong coldness that we had, it was exacerbated. But we will definitely work to communicate the rates when we're recording for future weeks. One more comment. Even though we don't have gas, but it was the same for the gas customers. They saw a big hike, especially in those call days. So it is, I guess, a little bit more economic, but I just want to make

[00:12:11] sure that those customers know that everybody experiences that. Yes, ma'am. There's been a request to talk about any of the general fund departments, and we've provided counsel in your packets basically the summary for each of our general fund departments, if there's Any questions about any specific items?

[00:12:56] Well, I did, what I would like to do is, you know, and I think I was the one that mentioned this, but for these departments that for several of them, I think it'd be hopeful. I had a series of questions.

[00:13:11] One is what the percentage increase is, what is the increased cover, what are the drivers, if it's not stated at the bottom. Some of them are, like, you know, the one for city council here. Let's see. Let's take that one, you know, answer some of this here.

[00:13:27] And then just so that not only I and council, but our residents and businesses understand, you know, what steps have been taken over to keep the increase as low as possible.

[00:13:43] So what belt tightening, if that's another way of putting it here. So, for instance, the city council one would be what percentage increase is that?

[00:14:01] About a half percent. And if it's easier, because I don't want to spend time doing the math here, for that just to be provided, if that's an easier way to do it, I'm cool with that. Well, if it helps, the majority of our departments, the increase is associated with the salary and benefit increase.

[00:14:25] For the most part, most all of the departments held to their previous budgets fairly tightly as far as all the different expenses. There were some police department where we added another position, but that position is actually funded through the red light camera program.

[00:14:50] So while their budget did increase, there is no net impact to the general fund budget. I understand that to councilman's in this point, though, and the council one, for example, the other charges happen to be the largest increase.

[00:15:13] so we can at least find other charges broadly i'd have to go spit spit by spit but we're looking at a 31 000 increase which is almost half the whole increase typically when you have something like other or miscellaneous your mindset thinks this must be something fairly minor since this is such a large amount can you just maybe give us an overview of that other charges in the since it's 31 000 the 31 thousand city council increase if if if we go down to the the

[00:15:49] bottom changes include 16 000 for meeting business expenses that's just the the costs for conducting our meetings meals and things of that nature and then advertising costs what we've been hit with is that that's for advertising all the public hearings the budget um yes ma'am okay so they're and reading that at least mentally an asterisk by other charges would be what's explained in budget and that's the only thing i was asking is just okay yes sir and again if there's anything specific

[00:16:28] that i know that diane and her staff worked very hard to identify where the major items increased in each of the departments so that if there is questions we can definitely if we'd like we can go through each of them or just looking at it cold just seems like okay you're hiding things on the other charges it's explaining right yeah um maybe this is for chief keen looking at the police page there's a million dollar decrease in patrol services a million dollar decrease

[00:17:06] in patrol services what does that mean if you remember we reorganized and created a fourth division so that money needed to come out of patrol and then go to the special operations division thank you yes ma'am I'm sorry I was whispering if yeah if she has to do a lot of numbers maybe she can join but I don't know how you guys do it I just was saying my my ask when it comes to this

[00:17:42] you know no I I know they meet with you and it's a long process and they do ask have an opportunity there is some stuff that makes it here there's other stuff that we don't even hear about and I

understand because you know it is no part of the i like i miss there's no gonna be budget for it uh but when uh when you have a position and i'm talking about the funding positions that once we have allocated money uh where does that money go if it is not used for 12 months so i can remember

[00:18:16] the name of the missing position it might be the one in the budget in the budget department but if that position is not used what happens to that money well any position that's vacant for a time the there would just be no no expense to that um for that that salary what happens at the end of the year there is a reconciliation of the department if the department exceeded their budget in some some expenses and there is savings in the salaries that would offset those overages

[00:18:54] most specifically in our social services department this year, we encountered a significant override. So there have been a few positions that Nicole has been able to, not necessarily not fill, but slow the process so that there would be, they can realize some savings so that it's not as significant associated with the CSA expenses. So departments typically will be looking

[00:19:26] at where their expenses are going and try and where there is opportunity to delay filling positions. If there is a need, they will use that as an opportunity to buffer some of the expenses that were not anticipated.

[00:19:45] And I appreciate it. And sometimes the questions is, you know, we don't fully know. It's just I want to make sure that the questions that we are going to ask are, you know, are fully explain and I don't believe that we have any positions that are actually funded positions that are vacant for a full year we have some positions in the budget specifically two of the firefighter positions in the 26 budget were included

[00:20:19] but not funded so simply while they're on the books as positions there was no effort to fill them because there was no specific funding available to them but to my knowledge I don't believe we have any positions that are vacant 12 months out of the year if there is that that's when we talk with that department to see if that position is truly necessary to go into the next budget my last one is because I think it has been a little bit back and forth other than when they when they have their

[00:20:51] The department has the budget meeting with you and then them showing what the needs are, you know, not the ones, but the needs and those you can fulfill and you pick up that is presented to us.

[00:21:07] Is any department at any given time that is assured provided a 3% like we do for the school? No, no ma'am. Every department, the expectation at least for the past two or three budgets has been present a flat budget other than the salary increase or come in and justify the additional positions or the additional expenses.

[00:21:37] And that's where the highlights that Diane incorporates, if we're able to justify and incorporate those additional requests into the budgets, that's where we would be providing the the the major uh increases in in any department's budget i i would just ask diane if you don't mind after this meeting give us the percentage increases for the various departments that are shown in this yeah sure you know just in an email

[00:22:11] thank you um next next time was a request for the school's fund balance and i believe this was provided by the schools to you guys so effectively what they're they're showing

[00:22:42] is that at the end of 25 they had a total remaining of about nine point nine million dollars but Diane explain what what we're looking at here so that the total of all funds is nine point eight million but

there's an operating there's There's a school food service and a school capital projects.

[00:23:18] What are those? Yeah. So I'm going to point because it's so far. So as of June 30th, these are the different categories of fund types that they have on the books of their fund balances. So a total of \$72 million.

[00:23:36] Operating is the one that they have money available to take out to do things with. School food service is all committed specifically to their food service program, and it's an in and out and a timing issue.

[00:23:53] And then capital projects, it's so big because we sold bonds for them. They sit in this fund and they'll get spent. But everything in a capital projects fund gets spent on the capital projects that they were planned for. So then all of these things that you see down here as negatives, they're deducting for what they think their real fund balance number is.

[00:24:20] So in the operating fund, I mean, obviously the school capital projects fund, all that bond is going to get spent on that project, leaving them with an uncommitted, unplanned for budget of only \$1.6 million in capital projects. And then so this is where they're showing that when it says carryovers, those are purchase orders that roll over to the next year.

[00:24:44] We know about the when they came back to ask for the 10.7 to purchase the building, the two million for the alt ed. And then I believe I believe this says transfer to support ongoing projects.

[00:25:00] I believe the finance director has to move some of this money to cover the projects going on in here that are committed. for um he's he's cleaning up the fund balances of putting these in the proper places and then um at some point they will come back in the process their plan is this is these are future plans for um textbooks and bus purchases for the future so they're planning out what they're going to do with it and showing you some of these things have already happened but fund balance doesn't

[00:25:32] actually exist until it's a point in time at next June 30th so um but these are their estimation their plans of what they're going to do so what they're saying is truly we have uncommitted this um 6.4 million this really is not uncommitted it is committed to school food services there's not much they can do with that and then that is for capital projects over here this 1.6 right so 9 million is what their but if you added all those together that's what that nine that equals that nine so it doesn't mean that it was all budgeted or spent yet these are their plans for it gotcha

[00:26:12] and so when you say those are their plans let's take the school operating so i see all their plans meaning that the numbers in parentheses meaning this is money they plan to spend and then that would leave 6.4 million that's unplanned at this, at this point in time, June 30th, 2025, correct?

[00:26:37] No, at this point in time that they gave this to us. So that's the June 30th point. This is what they realistically know about. So sort of like, think about it when we talked about at the retreat, when I said capital reserves, we know in the next five years, we're going to need, we have this project going on, this project going on. Those were the plans we're talking about.

[00:26:56] They're doing similar to this. That doesn't mean that there's not going to be another need coming up. It's just at this point in time, this was what they know that is coming up and they're planning for it. And for instance, the expense for the Alt-Ed program, as you understand it, the \$2 million, that's for the FY26 year?

[00:27:21] That was for the \$2 million they asked for to start up the program. Yeah, FY26, they came back in July, I think, to ask for that. So I'm sure that, I mean, this is just their plan that they know about now.

[00:27:41] Just like when I said, here's our capital reserve plan, here's our bond issue plan. We think we have these projects coming up in the next five years, and these are our funding sources. They're doing something similar to that. But these two funds, realistically, are not, they're not uncommitted.

[00:27:58] These are committed to capital projects, and this is pretty restricted to that use. There's not much they can do outside of that with those. Excuse me. Thank you. Tanya. Well, no, I appreciate the explanation.

[00:28:15] I think for me, I was looking at, you know, the plans they already have, which we know is about math, textbooks adoption, and then the transfer of the bus purchases. But what was left after that is I was really looking for the last five years, the uncommitted last five years.

[00:28:33] But I believe we have it from the last year anyway, so I might already have it. But I'm glad the number has come down because I worry when it is too high. But I really appreciate it that they gave us an update on how they plan to use it.

[00:28:51] And you'll keep seeing these. I mean, you'll probably see this number. Some of these numbers continue to be high because that's coming up in a few months. And that's, I mean, I don't know, like right now speaking, what the status of the final construction costs of the school.

[00:29:09] But, I mean, that's likely to still be there on June 30th of 2026 as well. A lot of these are timing issues that you'll keep seeing still be in the respect.

[00:29:26] But you will see, I mean, they did actually buy the building. So you'll see a chunk draw that down. as when those come off that that will draw down big time too can we just have this going forward and not be a special thing like i think during our budget if we make this one more quiet or you somebody make this part of what we're doing to see this detail because we we asked for this and got it but i think it should be we shouldn't have to they shouldn't have that's just me i don't

[00:30:03] TO ME, YOU NEED TO SEE THE DETAIL TO BE INCLUDED IN THE DECISION. IN THEIR PRESENTATION. WE CAN MAKE THAT REQUEST.

[00:30:19] THE LAST ASK IS FOR THE SCHOOLS. IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE DEEP DIED, BUT I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW, IS THIS COMMENT FOR THE SCHOOLS AND LOCALITIES, FOR THEM TO CARRY AN ALLOCATED BALANCE, OR IS IT NECESSARY?

[00:30:38] AND I'M JUST ASKING FOR -- It is important The city and the school well the city primarily We have to have our rainy day funded and we have to have the ability to Maintain our our bond rating which requires us to have money in the bank And like Dan was saying while it's it's uncommitted right now It does fluctuate throughout the year and what they'll be reporting What they reported now and what they'll be reporting in the future is basically just a snapshot of

[00:31:13] right at that moment, but it is important to make sure that they're not going into the red each year, and so that this does speak well for how they are operating financially.

[00:31:35] - Ellis, do you have any questions? - No, I'm fine right now, thank you. - There was a request to talk about the request that the county had not, county school had not included in-- - Oh, God.

[00:31:53] - Sorry. - Please. sorry too much too much shared services discussions earlier the request that the schools had my question is knowing and I understand that is one-time money instead of ongoing funding but knowing that they have that at least for the

[00:32:29] information technology that is the services I'm just asking if these will be part of what they could take care of it of all part of the needs because it doesn't seem you know it's 1.373 it uh it's you know staffing I know in the when I I see them you know it is they are so important but at the same time we we are responsible for all the departments and now we do say you know or know right now to some of the staffing needs in other departments.

[00:33:07] So my claim to ask, and I'm sorry for asking, but wouldn't part of that be something that they could take care of with the allocated money that they already have uncommitted? I'm meeting with the superintendent next week, and I can have that discussion with him if there is an interest of them utilizing some of the uncommitted funds specifically for the IT work.

[00:33:31] They can do that, right? I mean, I'm just saying, that is their decision to, I mean, decide if they want to take the uncommitted. I mean, you're looking kind of like, ugh. It was my impression that those expenditures were ongoing, all ongoing.

[00:33:49] It's not one time. Not one time. Yeah, because it's IT. We can have the discussion. I don't know, but that's what I thought. Thank you for that. One more comment maybe about that to clarify is, I do understand, But they did last year, I mean this year, when we did the \$2 million for the pilot program.

[00:34:16] So I do understand, and they are a priority. But I'm just trying to say, because also for me, it's a priority to reduce the tax and also to do other enhancements. And asking them to look at that for this year, I just feel like it wouldn't have heard because it is, you know, good finances, and it's based on what it has been already allocated to them.

[00:34:46] Mr. City Manager, could you refresh my memory? You know, when we had our day-long budget meeting, we talked about how we might use these suggested potential enhancements that you had listed.

[00:35:06] And then there was an understanding, which my recollection is, that the majority were in support of the elimination of the vehicle decal fee at almost a million dollars. But there was also a million, this is where I need the help, a million dollar contingency fund, am I using the right term, of which you had asked.

[00:35:33] It was a million and a half, and we had requested \$300,000 to be allocated towards the cities, towards the city health care increase. And how much for the \$300,000, leaving a \$1.2 million contingency?

[00:35:53] That left, as you said, \$1.2 million in the contingency at this point. Further ask was hold on to that in case the appeal of the property tax valuation at the data center would go south.

[00:36:24] At the time, it was primarily for potential impact to social services and schools from either the General Assembly or from at the federal level.

[00:36:41] Subsequent to that, yes, we did receive an appeal from one of the larger tax payers. Properties. Properties. And we believe that what was assessed will go forward, but we don't, it's always open to potential and and one of their options is to to to litigate if they don't feel that they are adequately addressed by the Board of Equalization so that is that is out there as well so there's there is a number of contingent

[00:37:21] number of potential issues that we would hope to maintain that contingency to 1.2 you're talking about yes the appeal is 750 to a million something like that and the commissioner of revenue will tell us that we're and i hope and i'm confident that we've done right and we believe

[00:37:58] we will be successful in defense of that but anything can happen correct that's a large but and remember that the um i didn't mean that as a joke um that the uh you can go to the circuit court for up to three years so if we prevail which i think i don't know i you know we haven't had one of these we let's assume we prevail um if it goes to the boe they have not

[00:38:33] filed that yet they've only filed it with us and if they go to the boe and the uh assessment is upheld they still have three years to go to the circuit court uh so they don't have to do that right away. So I kind of hope they do so that we are done. But otherwise it's hanging over our head if they choose to do so. The other one we had in the issues, it was a potential estate elimination

[00:39:13] of the car tax, which I think we can tell that. Or at least, you know, feel a little more comfortable. I don't know. Yes, ma'am. With the reduction in the real estate tax and the elimination of the \$25 i believe that we will be able to sustain that for the foreseeable future just one more for uh to make sure they said when you were talking about the um the money it's for the um insurance

[00:39:46] for all city uh workers based on the increase of their premium not the full amount but they left them out well it was the increase to the city's premium we had budgeted eight percent and it came in at about 11 11 and a half and so that that that difference was 300 000 if we if the city was not able to make up that difference we would have to distribute that to all of our employees that are on the that are that are insured near the city and then last item for that we have for discussion

[00:40:25] tonight is presentation of the non-profits we reviewed the applications and this is what they came forward with there were it was one outside organization it was a new request that just due to a lack of history with the city they were not included in in the fund award for for fy27 there was also one other group that had previously received a thousand dollars that we believe

[00:41:00] will be able to work with our parks and rec group to find funding for for the event that they were planning to do so uh we did incorporate two new organizations uh both food food pantry related items and that was the the majority of the outside requests to the city was for food security services all right uh thank you madam mayor um my ass will be on it talks about the website but it's not

[00:41:38] actually written so if i was arrested and reading that i wouldn't be able to just click on because this is for more information that's the one i emailed about um the grant application yeah so i was wondering if in the future the uh website can be placed so people know for their information i couldn't um i couldn't find it i did when it comes to this i feel like there is non-profits that are from here rooted here and they still don't know about this process i do understand

[00:42:14] that makes it more competitive because the funds are limited um but i would like to make sure that like we did in 2022 2023 the information is provided and we shouldn't be you know i don't know i feel like we're no we we're not up front and uh and uh making sure that the those non-profit maybe it's a one-to-one it has been um advertised i don't know but i just feel like we are we are going backwards for some reason and it could just be my perception um but i'm no you know i'm no

[00:42:52] asking for more i'm not you know i understand i'm not part of that process and i'm not looking for it but i just want to make sure that uh other nonprofits they can now put in because they are serving

manassas and i want to make sure they able to also submit the request absolutely and uh in addition to the social media and talking with our social services department the organizations that work with them they also let them know if they already are not part of of the city's funded groups they let them know that come January to get in

[00:43:27] their application so we do try and get broadcast as wide as we can that the city does offer this this not-for-profit funding opportunity so and we will continue to try and get the word out again for those watching it opens up in january of each year and then goes live we notify all of the folks that have been awarded uh involved previously as well as we put it on social media that it is available and we'll we'll look for any opportunity to to let groups know because as i said we had two new um food related

[00:44:06] questions come in and i suspect that that will continue to be a need within the community i think you answered my question but i guess i have a second question just being still relatively new this process is where did the 200 000 come from for this like why or like why did we land on that as a total historically uh that's simply been the increases i'm sorry no yeah it's simply been the number that council has has identified if there is a desire for us to augment that we can definitely

[00:44:45] try to build that into the 28 budget uh there's no rhyme or reason it's just simply been a a fund amount that the city has provided that is not the only funding that we provide to outside organizations there are a few um that are specifically funded either through social services or through parks and rec that have been long standing with the the city demonstrated that they're they they do provide a necessary service to the city and we've simply identified a special

[00:45:23] an amount that uh either nicole or matt's departments will will dedicate or will fund through and i guess does anybody around the table know how long this has been 200 000. you just did it forever it's all essentially well it used to be 175. it was 175. yeah but it's not in the last couple of years this kind of number for it was 150 when i joined it was honestly i make them i was new and made them spend a lot of time on there yeah i mean i could probably dive real deep into

[00:45:55] wondering how this works but yeah so it just came up okay to the manager's point some of the items have been moved to department budgets so the candy the art factory now is is a department budget as opposed to being in partially in donations uh the hilton is the city's contribution field and has always been a separate item um serve is the other sort of serve yeah comes out of social services okay yeah so the 200 000 again but they're the city's commitment to the non-profits

[00:46:35] is is in an order of six to 650. okay thank you just a comment and and this is a board a team i don't know how to call it but it has nothing to do with us because we allocated 200 but they review the applications and they have a very intense process uh and um you know i i hope there's no seeing as we only do 200 but i i have to say a lot of of them right there like he said the social services or the police they are referring people and because we do that we also get extra support

[00:47:14] from them and and i can say it's a direct service uh which you know to me you know i feel great because you're not only making an investment on the non-profit and around, but our residents are getting forced to put on that line.

[00:47:33] I see this as an investment. Ms. Ellis, do you have anything? No, I don't. Thank you.

[00:47:55] If I could just be clarified for a moment. So the city manager is meeting with the superintendent of schools next week, And the objective of that meeting, for our purposes of tonight's

discussion, is to... Well, the superintendent and I meet every month, and part of what the discussion that I will have with him is to see if any of the items that were not funded through the city's 3% allocation could be funded through any of the reserves and then bring that back to y'all if he feels that there is something

[00:48:33] that we could continue discussing thank you in another subject uh it has been over a year and we were told that they will come back with designs and i have not heard anything uh and uh you know like i i just want to bring it because this is march 2025 and i know that might not be ready but i will appreciate an update we will definitely make that happen i know that they are continuing

[00:49:08] to work with with vents i think they've got at least some permit application i couldn't see it yeah on my end we're still at the site plan phase i don't think we've seen architecture at the staff level at this point i'm sure the airport staff has but the planning department is not but we can definitely get uh ask them to come in and it probably isn't We've had time for everyone to come in and just do an update, so we'll see if we can make that happen.

[00:49:44] Anything else? Ms. Ellis, do you have anything else to add? Any questions? No, I do not. No, thank you. When will we meet again? Monday. Sorry. You set yourself up for that.

[00:50:02] Assured. All right. We can come back to one. Good thing I didn't limit myself to one question. We can come back and have a meeting of one. Okay, okay. When will we, are we having any? let's do it this way are we having any more budget meetings that would be up to Council I believe that what we have scheduled next is the public hearing and then there's a work session after the 27th when based on any input that you might receive so the next dedicated meeting would be in May I think that is

[00:50:41] it the 30th or 20 30 no April 27th is the public hearing and then followed by April 29th the Wednesday is the work session and from there we would move forward with first reading second reading first reading is May 11th

[00:51:04] Wednesday after the 29th yes oh yeah I just look forward to



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com