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Manassas City Council Meeting, Monday, September 14, 2026

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- Official meeting video (Wistia / RegionalWebTV): <https://fast.wistia.net/embed/iframe/0loo6fhg89>

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[00:00:05] Welcome to the council meeting of Monday, September 14, 2026. Mr. Smith, please call the roll. Mayor Davis. Present. Vice Mayor Wolfe. Here. Council Member Ellis. Here. Council Member Smith. Council Member Osina.

[00:00:22] Here. Council Member Vasquez Luna. Presente. Council Member Hudson. Here. McCormish, present. Thank you very much. If you're able to please stand with me for the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. Dear God, we thank you for another opportunity to gather together to provide governance for our city of Manassas. We come to you asking for comfort for the families who are grieving the tremendous loss of a precious life we have experienced here in our city. Please watch over our children, their parents, and all those who are affected by this senseless act of violence

[00:00:58] as they try and find peace and understanding. Please help this council as they move forward in their actions and decisions, help them listen and respond in the way that helps move this city forward in peace. We ask that you continue to protect our staff, our men and women in uniform, this council, and most especially every single resident in the city of Manassas.

[00:01:22] We remain thankful for all things. Amen. Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, your God.

[00:01:41] You may be seated. Thank you. It's good to see a full house out tonight. I want to welcome everyone here for the council meeting. Before we begin tonight, I want to take a moment to let you all know that Councilman Ralph Smith is not here with us tonight.

[00:02:04] His son, Chris, just 54 years old, he passed away last night. he had cancer and it had been coming for a while so that is the only reason that he is not here I asked him if I could share the information with you all and he said absolutely and he said thanks for all the thoughts and prayers they're currently making arrangements there will be a memorial service in the next few weeks but I went by and spent some time with them today and they're they're doing okay as well as can be expected the loss of a child is something he said it kind of hit him in a different way and it's a different kind of club that you ever want to belong to but

[00:02:41] he understands people that have gone through that now and so he's just asking that you all pray for him they're doing as well as can be expected of course he said to make sure to apologize to all of you for not being here tonight so please keep him in your thoughts before we get into the actual meeting there was a press release of sorts that was released about quarter to five today that I want to go ahead and read in case some of you did not see it online or hear about it it is um the city pauses october's second friday event we were going to have first friday on the second friday

[00:03:17] but we decided to pause that following september's first friday tragedy and the statement reads as the city continues to mourn the tragic loss of life during september's first friday we extend our thoughts and prayers to the victim's family and friends. To the Manassas community, we remain resolute that violence has absolutely no place in our city. Any future events will require careful reflection and evaluation in light of this tragedy. For years, First Friday has brought neighbors and

[00:03:50] visitors together to celebrate our community and support our local businesses. As we consider the future of these events, Historic Manassas, Inc., also known as HMI, Downtown Restaurants and Merchants, and the City of Manassas will pause October 2nd Friday event. During this hiatus, the City and HMI will review the events and explore opportunities to ensure future gatherings reflect and serve our community. We will also seek input from our community during this process.

[00:04:23] The first public discussion will take place during the City Council work session this coming Monday, September 21st, with conversations continuing as potential solutions are considered. We thank the residents, community members, and businesses who have shared their perspectives.

[00:04:43] Together, we can create positive change for everyone who lives and visits our city. We invite the community to continue to participate by attending work sessions, town halls, which we also have on the 21st of September, and city council meetings to listen, engage, and help develop solutions.

[00:05:05] Additional information regarding the transition will be shared with the public as soon as it becomes available. Thank you all for your time with that, and please make sure to share that with folks online as you see it so that people know we have made this statement and we have taken a stand at least pausing first fridays for october and discussions will continue on the 21st about going forward okay um we have several presentations tonight and several proclamations as well as a closed session so with that um we will move forward with our council time and i'll start

[00:05:42] with vice mayor wolf i i don't have a prepared statement um he goes without saying that our thoughts and prayers go with those who are actually her family her loved ones and with ralph and his

family i know what it's like to lose a son and i will tell you and i've had this conversation with the people it's a fraternity you never ever want to be a part of so anything

[00:06:17] we can ever do to help those people you need to do it as for you know as the mayor said we will continue to have conversations with regarding first friday and our events they are important they are impactful in one person's opinion we cannot let the evil the bad people win out we're a great community we will continue to be a great community and we will honor those that we've lost but i also want to honor the police officers that responded less on the board

[00:06:58] I was there 10 feet 20 feet from where the event took place about an hour before talking to one of the police officers. It was being a presence and trying to ensure everyone's safety and security. And when the shooting started our police officers ran to the sound of the pinfire regardless of their safety. We are blessed as a community that we have such wonderful public servants and they are undying gratitude for what they have done and continue to do for our community.

[00:07:34] but this is a time to mourn and come together everyone will have their opinions and that's appreciated and i will be hearing the meeting on the 21st we will listen to everyone in the room the other thing i will share though is please make no mistake first fridays are the part of a process of ongoing conversations that the police the merchants the city has after every first friday event that will continue we adapt we adjust we move forward we persevere thank you Councilwoman Ellis.

[00:08:11] Thank you, Mayor. I also want to extend my deepest sympathies to the family and loved ones of the young, innocent woman who is no longer with us. As a mom to six daughters, I cannot even imagine what the family is going through. I do want to thank the heroes that day.

[00:08:32] We not only had our first responders going into action very quickly, we had people that are visiting, jumping in and doing their part to try to calm people. save people. And it was a very challenging time for our city. I want to also thank HMI and the businesses that rallied around to try to get everyone in a safe place. And the volunteers for

[00:09:11] the event that got caught up in something that we did not foresee. Also, our residents, our residents throughout the city who have been so supportive as well, and especially the residents of Old Town Manassas who really keep us updated on what's happening down there.

[00:09:30] So going into this next meeting, we've had a lot of people contact us on what they think and what they feel and really appreciate everyone that has contributed to that. We need that. We do have some busy times ahead, and there are going to be some joyous times, and it's going to be a good time for us to try to heal, like the Fall Jubilee, a big family event that's been here for many many years on october 3rd as well as even the christmas parade

[00:10:05] which is right around the corner at the first saturday in um december so we have to remember our roots here in manassas you know we're a family friendly community and you know we have to do our best to keep you safe because safety is absolutely the most important thing for our city so that's all i have thank you thank you councilman osino thank you mayor as a father i cannot imagine the pain of having to bury your child there are no words that can adequately describe that kind

[00:10:41] of loss and when that loss occurs through no fault of their own the heartbreak is even harder to comprehend my condolences to loretta and ralph smith the loss of their son and this is also the tragedy that Ashley's family is living with following September's first Friday.

[00:11:02] I too want to offer my thanks to our city's EMTs and police officers along with the residents who were on the scene who stepped forward in an incredibly difficult situation and then the work continued until those responsible were arrested. Last week HMI in coordination with downtown restaurants and merchants recommended the pausing of First Friday. As you've heard, City Council has agreed with that, and the First Friday for October will not be held.

[00:11:39] As we decide what comes next, we have a responsibility to be prudent, fact-based, and focused on safety. City Council will take a deeper look at this during our work session next week and when we will have more information and a fuller understanding of what occurred.

[00:11:58] But postponing an event cannot be the end of the conversation. We need to learn from what happened and rethink how we approach large public events. We should not make these decisions based on fear or emotion, but rather we should make them based on facts, experience, and a commitment to doing better. And that's how we'll move Manassas forward. Thank you, Mayor.

[00:12:23] Thank you, Miss Vazquez-Luna. Thank you, Madam Mayor. Good evening, everyone, and welcome. It's great to see Full House. This is the first meeting since our summer break and also the last first Friday.

[00:12:43] As a mother of the Wellington Dolphins team, you know, I want to say, you know, I can't speak for the team, but as a team and as a mother, you know, I do not only send my thoughts and prayers for the family, but I'm looking forward and working with this body and making sure that not only that we invest, so our first responders who were there continue to have the training and be ready to do what they need to do, but also to continue to unite our city.

[00:13:19] I can talk about great things that we have seen in leadership. had you know as a city and as a greater manassas we're going to continue uh to mourn what happened and now we're going to continue to uh share with each other our um our different moments um that we had with the family so as a mom i want to echo uh the sentiment and uh you know i want to i believe uh you know later on we're going to hear more about it and want to understand

[00:13:52] all i want to say is do not forget this is an open investigation and what you do and what you say can also you know uh take an effect so thank you to everybody who has helped manasa city police as they did the job i was really thankful that uh everybody not only followed the instructions but they went home when they were asked to and uh you know my ask is that we come together the only group that I think it hasn't been said they've been doing a great job and one of our leaders is

[00:14:26] here Pastor Savage and all the leaders in the faith community who has been praying not only for this party for our mayor and for every council member but also for the staff the first responders and also our military so I believe this moment not only it is difficult but bring back all the memories of things that have happened in manassas and we continue to have uh discussions about how we can make manassas better how we can uh you know work together and come together make sure

[00:15:02] that you're checking on your neighbor and they were doing uh everything we can to support uh each other uh with that you know i want to say thanks to the staff and uh and everybody they uh everyday works, whether taking trainings, taking classes, or becoming a better staff member, a better first responder to take care of our city, and these include our leadership, so I'm really thankful for the professionalism, the information that was provided as early as possible, but

[00:15:39] also with no forgetting that we want to make sure that, you know, this is an active investigation that they need to mark all their T's and making sure they have everything they need. So I do have other couple of things that I want to talk about.

[00:15:59] So everybody that is here to celebrate the Hispanic Heritage Month, Manassas City is a minority-majority. There are different countries of origin. From one we celebrated before the summer break, el salvador we also have mexico and today we're going to honor the salvadorian american descendants thank you for everybody who showed up for that and also for all other um proclamations that we have today and uh you know my ask is that we continue to uh make our diversity our strength

[00:16:37] and see what's best of everybody so we can, you know, become stronger through all these things. I remember that, you know, through COVID-19, not only our businesses, but our communities went through a lot.

[00:16:54] And I remember everybody following up and supporting each other. So my ask is we continue to do that. The last couple of things, as I remember, this month we have the car-free date. I don't want to go without mentioning it. uh the cycling class that we have on september 19th the car free day on september 22nd the free family bus uh the walk to school day uh all these uh are things that you know will make our city better as well so with that thank you madam mayor those are my remarks thank you councilman

[00:17:30] hudson thank you madam mayor um good evening and thank you all for being here tonight um i joined my colleagues in offering condolences to the family and everyone in our community who is grieving. What we have faced here is certainly a tragedy, but what we're seeing now is a lot of resilience and a lot of community coming together to improve the situation and move forward together. So I want to also thank our police and first responders, everyone that was on site and continued to work through the weekend to get our city in a good place. What I did was I made a

[00:18:08] Facebook post and I offered to the community to email me any thoughts or good ideas of what we can do to move forward and what their opinions were. I want to thank the handful of people that sent me really genuine, thoughtful feedback. There were several people that really either came up with their own security plan that I'm working to get in front of the police and just a lot of really thoughtful feedback. So I think it just shows that there are a lot of people here that are really dedicated to this community. And I thank everyone that reached out. I want to also just take a moment to thank our school counselors who are, I'm sure, helping the students navigate

[00:18:48] these hard times and offer our community, you know, social services is here. There are a lot of resources out if you need someone to talk to um while this is a hard time there are a lot of a lot of people that want to help so thank you madam mayor thank you all um for my time absolutely echo uh everything that all the council members have said following that tragedy for the the loss of ashley's life um and to the family sincerest condolences um what i absolutely love seeing is what they've all talked about is the community coming together and everyone with the different

[00:19:24] ideas of how to fix how to fix it is not a time for pointing fingers and placing blame it is about time to for us to come together and work together about how to do it better and that's what we all want we do not want to stop having gatherings we do not want that because that brings us all together as neighbors and friends and first Fridays when we first started it it was a very exciting time for us and we knew that we would be able to attract people to our city and not just about making money which is great but it also helps those waiters waitresses those people that

[00:20:02] have to put food on their tables as well they rely on that but that can't always be the center and focus but that is something to consider and that's why you don't make knee-jerk reactions to when things happened, it was a tragedy. It was awful. But now is the time to regroup, meet, talk, share, work it out. HMI has been wonderful. Thank you all. Some of y'all in the back there. Thank you, Lisa. Thank you, Mark, Miguel, all you guys for having the meetings, having the conversations, working with the council, and getting the message out today that we're pausing. That is the right

[00:20:39] thing to do. We need to do that and regroup as a city and come together and get it right. because we can do it. If anybody can do it, we can. Nobody was doing it like we were, and we can do it. We have to learn from this tragedy. Unfortunately, they have lost their only child, and that is something that you just, I don't know that they'll ever get over that, but we can certainly keep them in our thoughts moving forward. We do not want to be here again, and I thank our police force. I thank everyone, as the council has said, for running to the danger

[00:21:13] and not away from it and how we're all going to now come together as the family that Manassas is. This is the community of love and hope. We have not lost that. We will continue to work together and make this entire region proud of who we are and what we are. It will not change us. It will only make us stronger. So we are here. We are here. We are listening. We want to hear your ideas. Keep them coming because it is important you need to be a part of the process but it doesn't just start with let me send an idea to ashley or to sonia it is showing up for the meetings we have people that

[00:21:51] that dedicate themselves to come into these council meetings they made promises when they didn't see something they didn't like they started showing up to council meetings that's what you have to do and you have to keep coming it's not just a one-time action oh this happened let me show up say what I got to say. What are you doing for our young people? They're hurting. They need people to talk to. Are you volunteering at the schools? Are you giving your time? Are you showing up to, hey, I can assist with counseling or whatever. Reach out to our social services. Ask how you can help this community recover because there's kids being at those vigils. There are young people

[00:22:31] that are absolutely devastated by this and they need us. Be the men and women that I know you all are, stand up and take care of our community because it's going to take that. It's going to take that and not just one time. Keep showing up. Keep being there for the police. Help them because when you help them, that helps all of us. So enough about that. Simon, thank you so much for the time. We'll go ahead and move forward in the agenda. Thank you all so much again for being out here. Mr. Burke, City Manager Tom, thank you. Thank you, Madam Mayor. Norfolk and Southern has notified the city that they are closing the crossing on Wellington Road near Jenny Dean

[00:23:10] Elementary for repairs. The work is anticipated to be completed this Thursday. City water customers may experience an earthy taste in our water as Lake Manassas is experiencing the seasonal lake turnover when the water levels in the lake shift from top to bottom, stirring up harmless, naturally occurring organic compounds. We hope that this process will be completed quickly so that we'll get back to the normal taste of our water. Residents are invited to the museum at 8 a.m.

[00:23:42] on Tuesday, September 15th for coffee with the curator to learn more about the Manassas Museum. On Saturday, September 26th, the city is hosting the Manassas Latino Festival at the Pavilion and the Hispanic Heritage Craft Hour at the museum at 11 a.m. Public design meetings for the Sudley Road Sidewalk Project and the Mathis Avenue Road Project are scheduled for 6 p.m.

[00:24:06] on Wednesday, November 18th at the Manassas Community Center. Information about both projects is available on our website. And then as a follow-up to the discussion of battery energy storage systems that the Virginia Municipal Electric Association had sought to locate in the city, VIMA has confirmed that they are locating those facilities in Harrisonburg and Culpeper.

[00:24:29] And then as we begin Hispanic Heritage Month, I'm happy to share that the city is relaunching our Spanish-language WhatsApp channel. to connect with our Spanish-speaking residents and make city information, resources, and events more accessible. And I'd like to invite our Public Affairs Coordinator, Sarah Jimenez Roca, to share more information.

[00:24:52] Good evening, Mayor, Vice Mayor, and members of the City Council and everyone joining us today. I'm excited to share that we welcome our Spanish-speaking community back to the City of Manassas WhatsApp channel. The channel will give residents another way to stay connected with city news, resources, services, and upcoming events.

[00:25:09] And I'll now share this message in Spanish. Buenas tardes, señora alcaldesa y miembros del Consejo Municipal. Mi nombre es Sara Jiménez Rocha y soy la Coordinadora de Asuntos Públicos de la Ciudad de Manassas. En celebración de la Mes de Herencia Hispana, es un placer anunciar el lanzamiento del canal de WhatsApp en español y de la Ciudad de Manassas.

[00:25:28] A través de este canal, nuestra comunidad hispanohablante podrá mantenerse informada sobre servicios, recursos, eventos y noticias importantes de la ciudad. Los invitamos a unirse a compartir el canal y a hacer parte de este esfuerzo para fortalecer la comunicación de nuestra comunidad hispanohablante.

[00:25:44] Muchas gracias. Thank you. Oh, okay. Any questions for City Manager? Thank you, Sarah. Any questions? Yes, Madam Mayor. Ms. Vasquez. Thank you, Madam Mayor. The first, well, I would like to, oh, no, I mean, especially now with the Hispanic Heritage Month, When can we see again La Conexion, which is the Spanish version of the NASA's newsletter?

[00:26:13] Hopefully, we'll be working on that in the upcoming months. I don't have a date for you now. We are trying to roll back in. Sarah is getting into the role again, so we're hoping to bring that back soon. All right. Thank you. I'll appreciate that. And thank you for the channel, of course.

[00:26:30] That would be a great channel for communication. And my last one will be, when can we see an explanation of the bill? We've been hearing, I've been hearing a lot of comments in regards to the increases on the utility bills.

[00:26:49] And I do know, I used to be paying a lot of attention to that, and a lot of times it was from USO, because it's one of the most expensive parts of the bill. And I know some of them are pass-through expenses. i would like to request maybe at the next meeting or when so i wanted to make sure that it is whether if it's uh shared on uh social media or there's a deep explanation because we wanted to make sure that um the customers you know understand and they know where the apptick came from

[00:27:23] that is no uh specific to one item yes ma'am we are working to have that presentation at the september 21st town hall meeting and we hope to be able to provide greater basically a breakdown of an example bill of you know three years of what's what's changed and why so yes ma'am we are working to have that at the town hall and my last guess will be when uh uh the invite goes out or the agenda goes out for the town hall if that can be uh an item so people know that that will be part

[00:27:57] of it and they will have a detailed explanation whether they come here to express their sentiment all so they can watch it later or watch online so thank you madam mayor thank you any other questions or comments for city manager burke okay hearing and seeing them we'll move forward in the agenda under our presentation section item 1.1 is a presentation from the metropolitan washington Council of Governments, COG, and we have Conti Srikant, I'm not sure if I'm saying that right, the Deputy Executive Director to help us with that. Welcome, sir.

[00:28:32] Thank you, Mr. Smith. Okay. Thank you, Mayor Davis. And before I begin, on behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, I offer our deepest condolences to the Smith's family and to Ashley's family as well. So sorry, the Executive Director of the Council of Governments was unable to be here, so you are, for good or bad, stuck with me. I try to do the best

[00:29:10] I can. I know that each of you recognize the importance of regionalism, since most of you have been working on this for many decades. You all created the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments back in 1957, knowing that every day in this region, we all, all of our residents, we live, work, and play crossing jurisdictional boundaries every day. So in this way, while all jurisdictions are independent, they are also interdependent and interconnected.

[00:29:50] Transportation, water, wastewater, public health, public safety, housing, child welfare. With six million residents in this region, we are the sixth largest region in the country. If this region was a state, we would be this 14th state in the country. 36 other states would have less GDP and less productivity than us. That is this region, and that is why regionalism is important. And this

[00:30:25] organization that you created in 57 has now grown to include 24 local governments, counties and cities across Virginia, North Virginia, the entire District of Columbia, and parts of Maryland. Not to mention the city and county managers, Mr. Burke, I see him every first Wednesday of the month meeting with the other CIOs in the region. Your police and fire chiefs, they meet every month with all the other police and fire chiefs in the region. Transportation, your transportation

[00:31:01] directors meet every month, housing and planning directors. So this is the strength of the regional organization. It's an organization with a staff of about 130 people. Now, if I were to say what is the primary task of COG, I would say it is to serve its members in creating a connected region, a safer region. The incident here in the city last Friday is the latest example of how there continues to be a need for focus and collaboration on improving safety. A thriving region and

[00:31:40] certainly a healthier region. Now, many of you on the board serve on many committees at Council of Government. Vice Mayor Wolf sits on the Council of Government's board. Council Member Vasquez Luna and Council Member Ashley Hudson sit on the Transportation Planning Board. So, all of you who serve on our boards are very aware of individual aspects of work activities. What I hope to do today is bring, try to paint the bigger picture. What are all the different things at COG

[00:32:17] that is happening on a monthly basis that you as members of Council of Governments are both making happen and benefiting from those things happening? I will start with transportation because that's a very important element. The Transportation Planning Board is a federally created organization.

[00:32:37] For any federal funds to come to the city of Manassas, its transportation projects, if it is using federal funds, has to be approved by this Transportation Planning Board. It doesn't matter whether it's for transit, highway, bike, ped, anything. And the amount of money doesn't matter.

[00:32:57] And that is why the city of Manassas participation in these meetings on a monthly basis is very critical. Similarly, there are federal standards for the air that we breathe. Our region is currently not in compliance with one of those air quality standards and the Transportation Planning Board is left with the responsibility of demonstrating that we have a plan to attain and maintain standards with that federal standards. That is one of the things Transportation Planning Board does and the city of Manassas participates in it on a monthly basis.

[00:33:38] Now, within the transportation sector, the city's projects that are using federal funds I mentioned earlier should be with the Transportation Planning Board. If I were to look at the most recent transportation improvement program, I see a bunch of projects that's very important and that affects the city of Manassas.

[00:34:00] The Virginia Broad Run Expansion Project, It's about \$105 million that was reviewed and approved by the Transportation Planning Board. The third lane on Liberia Avenue, that's about \$8 million that's in the plan. The VRE property acquisition for both the Broad Run property and for the easement of Manassas line, together they are worth about \$89 million.

[00:34:26] Those are in our plans. And the PRTC bus shelter with the City of Manassas Park joint project, that's about almost \$1 million. So, in addition to these, facilitating these projects and the flow of federal funds for projects that are critical to the city, the TPB also issues its own grants, funding grants and technical assistance grants.

[00:34:51] And the city has benefited or has received some of those grants. Most recently, the city received about \$74,000 for improving access to its VRE transit station. And then there is the FTS enhanced mobility grant.

[00:35:07] That is a federal grant that is provided to organizations that provide free transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. And the Ark of Prince William, which also serves this city, is a regular recipient. In its most recent grant, it got about \$132,000 in grants.

[00:35:28] COG also implements bicycle and pedestrian projects, commuter connections. It helps. The most recent data shows about 530 city commuters are registered in the program. One of the programs offered here is if you are a city resident and if you're traveling by train, by bus or carpooling and you have to return back home to attend to an emergency or some unplanned event and you don't have a bus or a train or your carpool partner, This program provides you with free transportation back.

[00:36:09] If it means they give you a rental car, they'll give you a rental car. If it means calling an Uber, getting you home on time, they do that. That's part of the program. Continuing on transportation, recently the Council of Governments undertook an initiative called DMV Moves.

[00:36:27] This is an initiative where the region and the city of Manassas was part of those discussions, recognized that transit is a critical component of mobility in our region, yet our transportation system, particularly the transit system, experienced significant disruption during COVID.

[00:36:49] And it's been taking a while to get back that ridership. Part of it is the change in where we work, how we work, how many days we have to go to work, but there are other forces at play as well. So what this has done is it has challenged our transit agencies with funding issues to provide these services that they believe that they can provide, that they know that our residents need, but they are faced with a funding crisis.

[00:37:17] So the DMV MOVES initiative worked for 18 months, and they have identified, they have inventoried what exactly are the needs of our transit agencies, and they have identified what opportunities there are for other transit agencies to work collaboratively.

[00:37:36] OmniRide was part of these discussions. VRE was part of these discussions. So two things came out of this initiative. One was identifying specific amounts of funding that is needed by our local bus systems, including OmniRide, and by our transit systems, including VRE.

[00:37:56] So we have identified, for example, to provide the operations that we believe our residents need and we can provide. We will need about \$118 million per year just for our bus systems and about \$10 million for OmniRide and about \$20 million for VRE.

[00:38:16] They would also need about \$11 million for capital programs each year for the next five years. So this is currently being worked in Richmond with our legislation.

[00:38:32] We are hoping to secure this funding in the next year or so. So now moving on from transportation to public safety, COG engages groups of regional leaders, first responders, emergency planners and other subject matter experts to build and sustain critical homeland security capabilities.

[00:38:54] The city of Manassas is part of the primary regional service. There is a service called NCRnet. What it is, is it's a fast, secure fiber optic network that allows first responders and government officials to communicate without relying on public network because safety and cybersecurity is critical.

[00:39:17] The city of Manassas is also part of the federal funding program called UASI, U-A-S-I, that helps fund purchase of NCR radios, the establishment of the Northern Virginia Regional Intelligence Center. And also the city is now a member of Rapid Leads Online. It's a contract for police reporting and investigative intelligence systems.

[00:39:42] So turning to community and economic services, the city recently received about \$65,000 in a housing affordability planning program grant. Our staff has been working closely to support the new City of Manassas Housing and Neighborhood Coordinator, Ms. Trinity Waldron.

[00:40:04] Then there are benefits to the city that comes with its partnership with Prince William County. For example, there was recently a federal HUD grant that COG secured, and there's a \$100,000 project for the Prince William County program that also includes the city of Manassas.

[00:40:26] And then moving on to environmental programs, COG is engaged in and with the city, and the city participates in monitoring regional air quality. This is the program that issues code red, code orange alerts when the air quality is bad for people of different age groups or people with different health issues.

[00:40:50] Specifically, the city has also endorsed and adopted the regional goals for reducing greenhouse gases. These greenhouse gases is one of the primary reasons why we are seeing so many days of excessive heat and such frequent storms with heavy intensity and severity.

[00:41:14] All of this affects our transportation infrastructure. It affects our roadways. It affects our housing. It affects people's mobility and accessibility. So at the Council of Governments, we monitor what is happening to the greenhouse gases, which is what we need to reduce. And the good news is the most recent data shows the city of Manassas reduced its greenhouse gases by 12% between 2005 and 2023, even as the population grew by 20%. So that is one of the significant ways. There is still more to be done, but this

[00:41:53] is one of the benefits that the Council of Governments provides. A few additional benefits, I'll be very brief now. Ensuring that the best use in the other benefits that come from being a member of the Council of Governments is cooperative agreement. For example, we all, all of the jurisdictions buy diesel or they buy heating oil, biodiesel. Each city or each jurisdiction can buy on their own or they can collaborate and you can get the benefit of lower prices because you are

[00:42:27] scaling it up. The Council of City of Manassas participates in that. For example, City of Manassas uses this regional contract to buy salt to clear snow and about 2,000 tons and that saves the city about \$4,000 every year just on purchasing salts to clear our roads of snow. Again, the well-informed, all of this depends on data, gathering data both at the regional level, gathering data at the individual jurisdiction level, conducting our benefit analysis, and therefore being able to

[00:43:03] provide the decision makers such as you with some information that you can use to make your decisions. One of the most recent things we all remember, the current federal government's posture about federal employment has significantly changed. The region has lost a significant number of jobs within the past two years. So one of the things that the Council of Government did working at a regional level was create a website called Talent Capital AI. This uses artificial intelligence.

[00:43:39] One of the key things that your residents can do, they can go into this freely available website. Not only can they look for jobs, they can define what exactly are they looking for in a job. This is my speciality. I can work 30 hours a week. I cannot travel more than 30 miles per hour.

[00:44:00] They can identify, and the artificial intelligence system will look at all the jobs posted in this region, and it will map them to the requirements you gave, and it will send that back to you. Say, here are the advertisements, here are the due dates, here is the application.

[00:44:16] Would you be willing to apply? So that is one of the most recent things that we have created. About 713 residents of Greater Manassas have already used Talent Capital AI, And we look forward to working with more of them.

[00:44:31] And there are 169 in the city of Manassas itself who have used Talent Capital AI already. Additionally, we also track, I mentioned earlier, the loss of jobs in the region that is creating extreme hardship for our residents.

[00:44:48] Just between January of 2025 and June of 2026, we lost 375,000 jobs, federal jobs in this region. Now, to boil it down to what does that mean to the city of Manassas, within the city of Manassas, 10% of the city workers are federal workers, and the median income of federal workers in the city is \$124,000 per year.

[00:45:20] So 10% of your federal workers have lost jobs, and each one had an annual income of \$124,000. That translates into affecting the local economy and the local livability and other issues.

[00:45:38] So those are some of the benefits and some of the work that goes on. And very quickly, talking about money, Council of Governments, I said, has 130 staff members. Its total budget is \$52.5 million. But the key thing here is only 7% of that money comes from its members.

[00:46:00] So all 24 jurisdictions contribute 7% of \$52.5 million, which is about \$4 million. The rest of the money is leveraging that 7%. We are able to bring in federal dollars into our region. So if you are looking for a return on investment, that is a fantastic investment return.

[00:46:21] So here is what the City of Manassas paid Council of Governments in its membership dues for the fiscal year that we are currently in. It's about \$48,000. Earlier, I noted a few grants that the City of Manassas has received through various grants, technical and financial grants.

[00:46:40] If you were adding those citations, it adds up to about \$420,000 this year. And that is not to speak about all the other intangible networking, coordination, peer-to-peer facilitations and the monthly meetings and intelligence sharing.

[00:47:00] So that's in a quick overview of what Council of Governments is. And we appreciate the city being a member. I also want to offer, we have given you a very high-level overview. In any of these topics, if any of you or your citizen communities are interested in taking a deep dive, please let us know.

[00:47:23] We will bring our staff. We'll come here. We will hold a session. Evening, weekends, it doesn't matter. We'll come and we'll work with your citizens, and we'll take their input, and we will share what's happening at the region with them. Thank you, Mayor, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

[00:47:40] Thank you. Thank you so much for your time and for being here. Vice Mayor Wolf. Sure, thank you. I don't have a question. Thank you, Conti. No one showed up tonight knowing they were going to get a primer in the minutia of how local government works. But this is an important part of what we do, and I'm going to give two concrete examples.

[00:48:01] Both the attack at the Pentagon on 9-11 and the helicopter plane crash at National Airport last year were things that were responded to by the regent and that is an ongoing planning process that our first responders for example work go through and they they they war plan the game plan scenario these scenarios all the time uh so that when something happens they are able to respond together as a regent because no entity no city or county has the resources to deal with that kind

[00:48:38] event by themselves. And I will be honest, when I first joined the council, I was very skeptical of the investment in COG, and it has been proven many, many times over to be the right thing for us to do. As a part of that, and the feedback for Conti, COG has evolved and become much more of an implementation tool, force multiplier for the local governments, and that has been to the benefit of our community. So thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you for pushing us in the direction to evolve from a planning entity to also assist in implementation.

[00:49:17] Thank you, Madam Mayor. And thank you for coming here. Sometimes we hear feedback in regards to COG, but like we are too far outside to see the difference or to see a change. And at the end, you know, when we do regionalism, when we work together, we do see the benefits.

[00:49:37] So I'm really thankful for the report and for you speaking about the benefits directly to Manassas. And congratulations on your new office. It's beautiful and it's welcoming. I know that we have a couple of city residents that are very involved in different committees and they represent the city as well.

[00:49:56] So to me, it has been an honor to say about TPV and this is my fourth year for the Air Commission. So thank you. Any other comments, questions? Mr. Osima. Thank you. Thanks for coming out, seeing us.

[00:50:13] So one of your first slides showed the area that COG covers. Of course, it has very large jurisdictions in terms of population, revenue, and then smaller ones like us.

[00:50:33] So how does COG tailor its policy recommendations, committee recommendations, as well as its services to both large and small members?

[00:50:50] Good question. I think Mr. Wolf can chime in. He's been on the board for a number of years now. A couple different ways. Let me start with the membership dues. The membership dues is based on population. So right off the bat, the smaller jurisdictions are charged less to be a member, but there is no limitations on their participation in the board or any of the activities.

[00:51:18] In fact, about four years ago, Consul Member Pamela Sebesky was the chair of the Transportation Planning Board. Ashley Hudson was the chair of the Community Advisory Committee back then.

[00:51:35] And she now, she and Council Member Luna sits on the board. So the amount of dues that they pay has nothing to do with the voice or the authority they have in engaging the other elected officials of the region in a collaborative, cooperative, coordinated approach to handling issues.

[00:51:56] So that is one. Second, we have programs where we provide grants which are focused on smaller jurisdictions. For example, there is a grant that the Transportation Planning Board provides called Transportation and Land Use Connections.

[00:52:16] Oftentimes, there is an idea that in outer jurisdictions, such as the city of Manassas, it is difficult to achieve walking and biking. It's the perception of people living in large urban centers. But if you have lived here, if you have been here, if you are familiar here, you know that that's not the case.

[00:52:36] People here would love to walk and bike and do those things as well. We need to provide those connections between a biking and walking trail and the community where they live or where they work. So the Transportation Planning Board acknowledged this and created a program.

[00:52:54] Those are generally for smaller jurisdictions where they have the ideas, they have the needs, they have the opportunity, but they may not have the technical capacity to do it. So the Transportation Planning Board gives them the money and they say, here is a consultant.

[00:53:11] You use the consultant, you design the project, you get the consultant, do the project for you. The TPP doesn't get involved. The larger jurisdictions typically are not selected for those because they are a better resource. So there are ways.

[00:53:26] And the last thing I would say, and I'll be honest, sometimes we get criticized when we come up with recommendations that says, oh, this is too comprehensive, this is like motherhood and apple pie. We say, yeah, that is by design.

[00:53:44] Our region covers more or less 4,000 square miles. And we have large urban centers like the District of Columbia. And then you have distinct suburban jurisdictions. Although we want the same outcome, the strategies will be different.

[00:54:04] For example, we want to increase transit ridership. It works great if you are close to D.C., where you can hop on metro, you can have multiple buses. But mass transit doesn't work well when the distances are large. But how can the city of Manassas residents contribute to reducing congestion to carpooling and vanpooling?

[00:54:27] They can carpool and vanpool. So you can build a park and ride lot, you build a chovy lanes, and you help facilitate that. Or you provide commuter rail. You saw one of the things we are saying is VRE

needs more money. And the Commonwealth of Virginia has been listening. And now they have invested about \$4 billion.

[00:54:45] They purchased the right-of-way from CSX. And they are building a brand-new bridge across the Potomac River. So it's going to take time. So these are the ways in which our recommendations try to acknowledge the diverse land use and the diverse needs of our region when we make our recommendations.

[00:55:07] Thank you. no other questions comments thank you for being here again thank you so much thanks next on the agenda is item 1.2 the presentation from voter registration susan reed and company are here good evening ma'am good evening madam mayor and city council members um and city manager burke i'm excited to be here this evening to announce the launch of the very first um design and i voted sticker for the presidential year 2028. And I'm going to turn this over to my Deputy

[00:55:47] Registrar, Kelly Koch, who's been working very hard on this project, put her heart and soul in it, and Sarah Weaver, who's with the Manassas City Public Schools. Thank you so much, Ms. Reed, and good evening, Madam Mayor, Mr. Vice Mayor, other council members, Mr. Burke, and Manassas City residents, y bienvenidos a todos los invitados esta noche.

[00:56:12] Like Susan said, my name is Kelly Koch, and I have the pleasure of serving as the English-Spanish Bilingual Deputy Registrar for the Manassas City Voter Registration and Elections Office. And we are so proud to present this contest to our community. We've been working on this for several months now, and we're really excited to finally announce it to the public.

[00:56:33] In partnership with Manassas City Schools and with the support of Manassas City Library as well, our department recently launched the contest on September 1st, and this is in preparation for the 2028 presidential election. Now, I know it might feel like we're way ahead of time for this, but I promise you with everything it takes to get our department ready and the city ready for a presidential election, we are right on time.

[00:56:59] So with this contest, our goal is to encourage civic pride and community engagement in a positive way at a really early age by introducing our city and the students in our city to the democratic process through creativity, through expression, meaningful connection with the Manassas community at large, and of course, fun.

[00:57:24] It's going to be a really great way for youth to be a part of the spirit of election day long before they ever cast their first ballot. So let's talk overview. There's going to be two phases of this contest. Phase one will give students plenty of time to brainstorm, create, design, and submit their designs. And it will also allow MCPS time to select the nominees of each of the nine MCPS schools. Phase two will put those nine school nominees to a three-week community-wide public

[00:57:58] vote in March of 2027, this upcoming year, and then we'll also announce the winner in April of 2027. So who is eligible to participate? All currently enrolled MCPS students, grades pre-K through 12 can design and enter. Notably, although registered voters must be U.S. citizens, participants in this contest do not have to be U.S. citizens. We encourage all students to celebrate this city, our country, and its citizens' right to vote. Keep in mind that participants will

[00:58:37] need to turn in a completed entry form with their design, but that entry form will stay with the school district, and only MCPS will see it, and only MCPS will verify student enrollment status. And now

let's talk about what student designs should look like. Designs should be circular, of course, for our I Voted stickers, and we ask that they include City of Manassas and the phrase I Voted or something sufficiently similar, and we ask that they reflect themes of civic or local pride. We can accept designs that include languages other than English because our department

[00:59:16] is language mandated by law for the Spanish language. Designs should be nonpartisan, nonpolitical, and original, and should not advocate for any party, candidate, or issue, should not contain anything obscene or inappropriate for general audiences, include the year or any date restrictive language, be drawn with crayon or created with artificial intelligence or AI, contain any copywritten images or trademarks, nor infringe upon the privacy or rights of others.

[00:59:53] Don't worry, it sounds like a lot of rules, but this is all written in the participant packet for you so that you can remember. Now, what's the participant packet? Well, now I'm going to introduce you to Sarah Weaver, who is the MCPS coordinator of elective instruction, and she is our liaison to the schools for this contest. And she's going to explain to you exactly what the participant packet is and how you can enter the contest. So big round of applause for Sarah, please. Okay, thank you. So they have done so much work behind this, but they have dropped

[01:00:31] the participant packets off at all of the schools. And they will also be available at the Manassas City Library or the Voter Registration Office. The packet contains details about the contest.

[01:00:46] The entry form is also on the second page. It just needs the student's full name and student and parent signature. And then the beautiful design template, and it is in English and in Spanish, so we have a packet for both.

[01:01:06] So this is where the students will create the design, the circles provided for you. Um, if your student chooses to do it by computer, they can submit it to my email address, which is also on the form and then, um, or they can do it by hand on this paper template.

[01:01:26] There is one note I would just like to share. If you do submit it, um, through a digital program, we ask that you take a screenshot of your layers. And if you work in a digital format, that will make complete sense to you. But the layers in the program will allow us to check artistic integrity, which is something that we teach in the school division.

[01:01:49] So there's lots of options for entering, and these design entry forms are due on January 15th of 2027. And I will form a committee at the central office level where I work, and we will choose the nominees for the nine schools.

[01:02:09] And then now I would like to recognize the Manassas City Librarian, Jennifer Hendricks, who will share more about how the library is supporting this initiative. Good evening. I'm Jennifer Hendricks. I'm the senior library at Manassas City Library.

[01:02:29] And the library is thrilled to be a part of this initiative. we are currently advertising the contest and as Sarah mentioned we are also a pickup location for the entry forms and a drop-off location for completed forms. In November we'll feature a large display at the library's entrance devoted to the contest and all things voting and elections.

[01:02:52] We'll have colored pencils markers and other craft materials available for anyone who would like to come in and work on their entry or create an entry just for fun if they're not an MCPB P.S. students.

Over the winter break, we'll be encouraging students to come in from the cold with their parents or their caregivers and work on their design. And then as Callie mentioned, we will be an alternate location for voting to ensure that online voting is accessible to all residents. Finally, if you haven't been in the library lately, you may not know that we have

[01:03:26] expanded our art wall capabilities. So we hope in the late spring to display some of the designs that were entered thank you all righty so once uh we have all of the designs submitted in January and MCPS selects the nine school nominees those nine designs will be put to a community vote like we mentioned before this is going to be open to all of the Manassas City public for three weeks you can see the dates up there so make sure to visit our contest web page in March of 2027 to

[01:04:02] access our online voting form so that you can help pick Manassas City's next "I Voted" sticker. Our website is up there as well, manassasva.gov/ivotedstickercontest. Visit us there, we've got all of our information that you could possibly need. And although we strongly prefer and encourage you to use the online voting form, like she said, if you don't have an email address or can't access it for any reason, you can visit the Manassas City Library or our office at voter registration to vote in person with a paper ballot. All right, so we invite friends, family,

[01:04:41] and members of the public to come and show your support for the nine school nominees who will be recognized and receive some prizes at the Manassas City Council meeting on Monday, April 26, 2027. We'll also be announcing the first place winner at this ceremony. So make sure you don't miss out. And then of course, if you want your very own copy of the new Manassas City, I voted sticker, you'll just have to come out and vote in the 2028 presidential election. So before we go really quick, I just wanted to take a moment to express our deep gratitude to the Manassas City

[01:05:19] Public Schools and Prince William Public Library, specifically Manassas City Library in our very own locality because they both jumped in to offer participation and support and encouragement without hesitation when we approached them about this idea so please give a big big round of applause to Sarah and Jennifer these ladies and their teams already provide really incredible resources and services to the residents of our city as it is and also to our students of course and we're

[01:05:55] really, really thankful for their support here as well. And now without further ado, we'd like to let our students get designing and we really look forward to the Manassas City public's participation in choosing our next Manassas City I Voted sticker. If you're interested in participating or if you're here tonight and you're a parent of a student of MCPS, we do have a few participant packets up front if you'd like to pick one up. You're more than welcome to. And other than that, we stand ready for any questions thank you very much um we've got it going to have it connected

[01:06:32] in the city connection somehow website yeah so that way the links and all that can be there thank you thank you for that council members any questions or comments all right thank you so much for having us I did actually learn about this a while back and I was so excited because it was on the in the website no thank you for including my ask in the future I know we do have some homeschool students and other students that maybe they can be at it, especially that you have the public library that I know they enjoy as well.

[01:07:09] So that'll be it. Thank you and congratulations. And for the future, thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you so much for having us. The next few items on the agenda, we have several proclamations.

[01:07:24] We're going to switch them around a little bit because after we do the last two, which will be the Guatemala Day and Hispanic Heritage Month. We will take a 10-minute recess after that. So we're going to start with the Native American Month, Constitution Week, Recovery Month, Direct

[01:07:41] Support Professional Recognition Week, Guatemala Day, and Hispanic Heritage Month. Hello, hello, can you hear me? Okay. Native American Heritage Month, we have Krista Miller from the Daughters

[01:08:18] of American Revolution, and whoever else you have in your group can come on down. Thank you so much for being here. Good to see you all. Thank you. All right. And the proclamation reads, whereas all citizens are encouraged to reflect upon the ideals of liberty, justice, self-government, and the rule of law, and to remember the responsibility each generation bears to preserve

[01:08:53] the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution. Whereas the first peoples of this land have shaped the history, character, and strength of our nation through their stewardship, leadership, military service, artistry, innovation, civic engagement, and commitment to community.

[01:09:12] And whereas November was first designated as National American Indian Heritage Month in 1990, and annual observances continue to provide an important opportunity to celebrate Native peoples while deepening public understanding of their histories, sovereignty, resilience, and contemporary contributions.

[01:09:35] And whereas Native communities have preserved and revitalized languages, cultural practices, traditional knowledge, and intergenerational teachings that enrich the shared heritage of our communities, and inspire future generations and whereas native american heritage month also calls upon all residents to acknowledge the challenges native communities have faced and continue to face to support efforts that advance equity and opportunity and to foster respectful partnerships

[01:10:08] rooted in learning inclusion and mutual understanding and now therefore i'm michelle davis mayor of the city of manassas virginia and on behalf of the manassas city council hereby proclaim november 2026 as native american heritage month in the city of manassas and encourage all residents community organizations schools faith groups and businesses to observe this month through programs and activities that honor and celebrate the history culture and contributions of native americans to our city the commonwealth of virginia and the united states congratulations

[01:10:45] Thank you very much, Madam. I love to be with you.

[01:11:01] I mean, she's been a true right arm to our chapter, and we do try to reach out to the Native American community and inclusiveness with them as well.

[01:11:17] Thank you again.

[01:11:27] Remix here. All right. The Proclamation for Constitution Week, Whereas the Constitution of the United States of America, signed on September 17, 1787, established the framework of our federal government and remains the foundation of the rights, liberties, and responsibilities enjoyed by the American people.

[01:11:58] And whereas Constitution Week is observed annually from September 17th through September 23rd to commemorate the signing of this enduring document and to encourage all citizens to study, understand, and uphold its principles.

[01:12:14] And whereas the observance of Constitution Week was established after the Daughters of the American Revolution petitioned Congress and President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the designation into law in 1956. And whereas it is fitting and proper to accord official recognition to this historic document and to the civic celebrations, educational programs, and patriotic activities that honor its importance.

[01:12:42] And whereas all citizens are encouraged to reflect upon the ideals of liberty, justice, self-government, and the rule of law, and to remember the responsibility each generation bears to preserve the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution. Now, therefore, I'm Michelle Davis, Mayor of the City of Manassas, and on behalf of the Manassas City Council, hereby proclaim the week of September 17 to 23, 2026 as Constitution Week in the City of Manassas and urge all residents to reflect upon the importance of the Constitution in safeguarding our liberties and to participate in activities that honor this foundational document.

[01:13:21] thank you we are 190,000 strong worldwide in DAR and growing and our main purpose out here is coming from the original founders of this country we are out to promote our historical

[01:13:52] background for this country, to preserve historical sites and monuments, and to educate our children and those new to our country of our government. We are here to work with the community in anything that we can help lend a hand. I do want to say thank you personally to the first responders and the police department uh just over 60 years ago it happened to have happened with a shooting here

[01:14:31] in the town of manassas and i was a newcomer and that was uh just down the street from my house and our husbands and wives got in my kitchen and other kitchens around and we brainstormed and now you have a beautiful working rescue squad that you can depend on that's been well trained and it's now celebrating its 60th year so that we have worked with as well so thank you very much

[01:15:09] we work on donations we're a non-profit organization anytime you feel that you can help in any way we can put it to use thank you so much one more challenge I have a challenge for you.

[01:15:31] On Thursday at 4 o'clock, if you could ring the bell for a minute. That's an activity that we have for the Constitution, just in remembrance. So I'd love for you guys to ring the bell and post it on Facebook.

[01:15:48] Next we have Recovery Month.

[01:16:22] We have Lanelle Moselle, Behavioral Health Program Manager for Prince William County. Oh, okay, and a few other people. and I'll read this one hello welcome welcome get your passports to come to the city from the county thanks for being here okay proclamation for recovery month reads

[01:16:56] whereas mental health and substance use disorders affect every community nationwide as well as here in the city of Manassas and whereas I'll say SAMHSA is that kind of okay whereas SAMHSA reports that in 2025, 56% or 162.8 million people used tobacco, vaped nicotine, used alcohol, or used an illicit drug within the past month. And whereas with commitment and support, those impacted by

[01:17:33] mental health or substance use disorders can embark on a journey of resilience, improved health, and overall wellness and whereas recovery month is observed each september to celebrate all people that make the journey of recovery possible by embracing recovery is real restoring every aspect of life to spread the message that people can and do restore their lives every day and whereas the goal of recovery month is to improve the lives of those affected by mental health and substance

[01:18:08] use disorders by raising awareness and educating communities about the effective services that are available and whereas residents are encouraged to be aware of and able to recognize the signs of mental health and substance use disorders and assist family friends and co-workers when possible and people in need of recovery services are encouraged to seek help and whereas community Services believes change is possible, the agency and its community partners are hosting a Recovery

[01:18:42] Is Real event on September 16th at the AJ Frolazzo building and invite the community, allies, and people in recovery to share their stories of resilience and recovery. Now, therefore, I'm Michelle Davis, Mayor of the City of Manassas, Virginia, and on behalf of the Manassas City council do hereby recognize september 2026 as recovery month congratulations hi sorry my name is lynelle mozell i'm behavior i'm health program manager with prince william county community

[01:19:22] services we serve the county of prince william as well as the cities of vanassas and vanassas park we have some of our amazing staff here today as well as mayor davis younger mentioned we have our event on Wednesday, our logo shirt, Recovery is Real. This is our third annual Recovery Month event and we are inviting the community to attend, not just individuals that we serve, but also members of our community to come and celebrate with us. It begins at 10 a.m. on Wednesday and ends at 3.

[01:19:51] We have a dynamic speaker from Virginia who is a spoken word artist who speaks about his path to recovery. We also have the Cannabis Control Authority coming to talk about driving while under the influence of cannabis, which will be interesting. We're providing free lunch for everyone that attends as well as having some wellness activities.

[01:20:09] So we hope that you all can come and join us in that day. Thank you. It's funny, it's funny.

[01:20:24] Direct Support Professional Recognition Week, Jennifer Cooper, Director of Communications for Did Lake, and I think there's some folks with her as well.

[01:21:11] Thank you for being here. All right. direct support professional recognition week proclamation. Whereas direct support professionals, DSPs, are compassionate, skilled, and dedicated professionals who provide essential services and supports to individuals with disabilities, empowering them to live, work, and participate fully in community life. And whereas DSPs play a vital role in advancing independence, dignity, self-determination, and inclusion by helping individuals achieve personal goals, build

[01:21:49] relationships, engage in their communities, and enjoy meaningful and fulfilling lives. And whereas DSPs support person-centered practices that honor the strengths, choices, rights, and aspirations of the individuals they serve, fostering opportunities for success in all aspects of life, and whereas DSPs assist individuals in pursuing employment, education, volunteerism, and community engagement, helping to create pathways to economic independence and greater participation in the workforce and civic life, and whereas community organizations

[01:22:26] such as Dead Lake, headquartered in the city of Manassas, have long demonstrated their commitment to empowering individuals with disabilities through employment, rehabilitation, and support services made possible through the dedication and professionalism of direct support professionals.

[01:22:44] And whereas direct support professionals serve as advocates, mentors, caregivers, and community connectors, often working behind the scenes to ensure individuals with disabilities have

access to opportunities, resources, and the support needed to thrive. And whereas there continues to be a critical need to recruit, retain, and recognize a strong direct support professional workforce whose contributions are essential to the well-being of individuals with disabilities, their families, and the broader community.

[01:23:16] And whereas Direct Support Professional Recognition Week provides an opportunity to celebrate the invaluable contributions of DSPs, raise public awareness of their work, and reaffirm the City of Manassas' commitment to fostering an inclusive community where all residents are valued and supported.

[01:23:36] Now therefore, I'm Michelle Davis, Mayor of the City of Manassas, Virginia, and on behalf of the Manassas City Council, hereby proclaim September 13-19, 2026, as Direct Support Professional Recognition Week. Congratulations. On behalf of Didlake, we extend our sincere thanks to the City of Manassas for recognizing Direct Support Professionals Week and honoring the extraordinary work of our direct support professionals.

[01:24:05] Every day, DSPs make a meaningful difference by supporting individuals with disabilities as they live, work, participate, and thrive in their communities. They help people make choices, set and achieve goals, and ensure their voices are heard. Through their dedication, DSPs create opportunities for greater independence, meaningful relationships, and full participation in community life.

[01:24:28] This proclamation is a wonderful recognition of their compassion, commitment, and lasting impact. We are grateful to the City of Manassas for celebrating DSPs and recognizing the people and communities they support. Thank you for standing with Didlake and joining us in celebrating our DSPs.

[01:24:50] As Luna is going to come down, we're first going to do Guatemala Day proclamation.

[01:25:17] If you're here for the Guatemala and American Day, whether you were born, raised, or your parents, or you're a second, third generation Guatemala, We're happy that you're here, tu hogar, tu ciudad, muy bienvenidos a todos.

[01:25:47] Our mayor will read the proclamation in English, and I have the proclamation in Spanish, thanks to Translay app, so, bienvenidos, okay, listos, nadie más, del otro lado.

[01:26:08] Okay, ready, everybody here, yay, okay, I don't want to block anybody, all right, proclamation for Guatemala day reads oh okay this is good it's good I might have put my glasses whereas the city of Manassas is strengthened by the diversity resilience and cultural richness of its residents including a vibrant Hispanic community that represents approximately 43 percent of the city's population and whereas Guatemalan families workers entrepreneurs faith leaders

[01:26:48] artists and community advocates have made meaningful contributions to the social cultural and economic life of manassas and whereas guatemalans across manassas contribute daily through their labor family values business leadership cultural traditions civic participation and commitment to building a stronger and more prosperous community for all and whereas the guatemalan community continues to enrich manassas through its heritage language food music traditions and deep spirit of service while strengthening the bonds of friendship between

[01:27:23] the United States and Guatemala. And whereas Glendi Velasquez Castillo, hope I got that right, a community leader, mother and small business owner exemplifies the tenacity, hard work and spirit of

service that strengthened the immigrant community and the city of Manassas. And whereas the Guatemala Chamber of Commerce in the United States under the leadership of its president, Anna Prince, together with Chairwoman Brenda Castellanos, Vice President George Soka, and Board Member Rosemary Flores, has contributed meaningfully to the promotion of economic

[01:28:01] development, business collaboration, cultural visibility, and community engagement for Guatemalans and Hispanic entrepreneurs throughout the region. And whereas the Guatemala Chamber of Commerce in the United States has demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing representation, integration, entrepreneurship, and binational cooperation, helping build bridges among business, civic, and community stakeholders in support of the Guatemalan diaspora. And whereas it is fitting to recognize the lasting impact of Guatemalan residents, families, workers, and business leaders whose dedication, perseverance, and cultural pride

[01:28:41] helped shape the identity and future of our city and whereas the city of manassas honors the contribution of the guatemalan community and reaffirms its commitment to inclusion opportunity mutual respect and shared prosperity now therefore i'm michelle davis mayor of the city of manassas virginia on behalf of the manassas city council do hereby proclaim september 14 2026 as guatemala day in the city of Manassas and encourage all residents to join in honoring the labor culture,

[01:29:20] heritage entrepreneurship and daily contributions of Guatemalans across our community. Now you can clap.

[01:29:45] So proclamación, considerando que la ciudad de Manassas se ve fortalecida por la diversidad, la resiliencia y la riqueza cultural de sus residentes, incluida la vibrante comunidad hispana que representa aproximadamente el 43% de la población de la ciudad.

[01:30:04] Y considerando que familias trabajadoras, empresarios, líderes religiosos, artistas y los defensores de la comunidad han hecho contribuciones significativas a la vida social, cultural y económica de Manazas.

[01:30:20] Considerando que los guatemaltecos de Manazas contribuyen diariamente a través de su trabajo, sus valores familiares, su liderazgo empresarial, tradiciones culturales, participación cívica y compromiso para construir una más fuerte y comunidad más próspera para todos. Considerando que la comunidad guatemalteca continúa enriqueciendo manazas a través de su herencia, su idioma, su comida, su música, sus tradiciones y profundo espíritu de servicio al tiempo que fortalece los lazos de amistad entre los Estados Unidos

[01:31:00] y Guatemala, considerando que Leslie Juarez es reconocida por su liderazgo importante para la comunidad por empoderar a las empresas, considerando que Evelyn Rodríguez, artista y emprendedora que crea obras de artes únicas usando materiales reciclados, reutilizados, demostrando creatividad, ingenio y un compromiso dando nueva vida a los artículos cotidianos a través de su trabajo artístico, comparte su creatividad con la comunidad mientras construye un negocio en torno a su pasión.

[01:31:35] También Sergio Rodríguez, ingeniero eléctrico de Micron, cuyo trabajo, profesionalismo y dedicación reflejan las contribuciones y los logros de los guatemaltecos americanos. Considerando que la Honorable María Andrea Furlón es reconocida por su servicio como cónsul general de Guatemala, que participa activamente y sirve a la comunidad, considerando que la Cámara de Comercio de Guatemala en

los Estados Unidos, bajo el liderazgo de su presidenta, Anna Prince, junto con la presidenta Brenda Castellanos y el vicepresidente Jorge Soca,

[01:32:14] y la miembro de la Junta Rose Mary Flores, ha contribuido significativamente a la promoción de la economía, desarrollo, colaboración empresarial, visibilidad cultural y participación comunitaria para todos los guatemaltecos y empresarios hispanos en toda la región, considerando que la Cámara de Comercio de Guatemala en los Estados Unidos ha demostrado un fuerte compromiso con el avance de la representación, la integración, el espíritu empresarial y la cooperación binacional,

[01:32:50] Ayudar a construir puentes entre las partes interesadas empresariales, cívicas y comunitarias en apoyo de los guatemaltecos y la diáspora. Considerando que es apropiado reconocer el impacto duradero de los residentes, familias, trabajadores de Guatemala y líderes empresariales cuya dedicación, perseverancia y orgullo cultural ayudan a dar forma a la identidad y el futuro de nuestra ciudad.

[01:33:17] considerando que la ciudad de Manassas honra las contribuciones de la comunidad guatemalteca y reafirma su compromiso con la inclusión, la oportunidad, el respeto mutuo y la prosperidad compartida. Ahora, por lo tanto, nuestra alcaldesa Michelle Davis de la ciudad de Manassas en Virginia, en nombre de los concejales de Manassas, por la presente proclama el 15 de septiembre del 2026 It's like the American Day of the Guatemalteans in the city of Manassas and animating all the residents to join us, to honor the work, the culture,

[01:33:57] the patrimony, the entrepreneurship and daily contributions of the Guatemalteans in all our city. Thank you very much. Now we have three minutes, some small words.

[01:34:17] How many people can say it in English or in Spanish? Very good afternoon, Manazas. How are you? Viva Guatemala! My name is Anna Prince. I'm the president of the Commerce Chamber of Guatemala.

[01:34:34] I feel very honored to be here. I thank God for being here with you. Madam Mayor, thank you so much for everything, for your help. Consejer Luna, thank you very much for all your help. Today I present to you with a heart full of pride, gratitude and responsibility.

[01:34:52] Orgullo por mis raíces, gratitud por esta ciudad, que nos ha abierto oportunidades, responsabilidad por representar dignamente a la comunidad guatemalteca. Nosotros, los guatemaltecos migrantes, vivimos entre dos mundos. El primero nos dio raíces, Guatemala, nuestra tierra, nuestra cultura, nuestros valores y nuestra historia.

[01:35:12] El segundo nos dio alas, Manassas, Virginia, una ciudad que nos retó, nos formó y nos enseñó a soñar en grande. I want to say it with clarity and with the effect in high school, we did not come to this city to steal anything to anyone, we came to work, to provide, to build and to serve, to contribute to the growth of this great city.

[01:35:32] We came to add with our honest work, with our hands and with our daily effort. We came to create our families with values, to raise businesses and to support the economy, to enrich the cultural diversity, which makes that Menaces be a unique city.

[01:35:47] As a community guatemalteca, we are putting a Guatemala on the map. We do it with dignity, with pride and pride. We show the world who we are, really. A noble people, a worker, a solid and full of talent. We are deeply proud of our culture, our traditions and our language.

[01:36:06] Our people, but above all, our roots. A people who doesn't give up, who works hard and who, even far from home, never forget where they come. And today I also want to make a very special recognition to George Soka. Gracias por tus gestiones. Fue posible realidad el Día de Guatemala en Manassas, Virginia.

[01:36:28] Este logro representa mucho más que una celebración. Representa el reconocimiento de una comunidad, de nuestra cultura y lo que los guatemaltecos aportamos a este país. Gracias, George, por creer en nuestra comunidad, por ayudarnos y abrir este espacio para Guatemala. Como presidenta de la Guatemala Chamber of Commerce, Inc., reafirmo hoy nuestro compromiso de seguir construyendo puentes entre Guatemala y Estados Unidos, to open opportunities to strengthen our community and to leave a positive effect for future generations.

[01:36:58] Today we celebrate our roots, our hearts, and our purpose. We celebrate that being guatemalteco in Manases is not a disadvantage, it is a strength. Thank you very much. Good evening.

[01:37:15] My name is Evelyn Rodriguez, and I am proud to be a Guatemalan artisan. Today, I am deeply honored to represent the Guatemalan community, its culture, traditions, heritage, and the Guatemalan community contributions to the great city of Manassas. On behalf of the Guatemalan community and myself, our sincere thank you to the city council and the entire government body for passing and issuing the Guatemala Day proclamation.

[01:37:52] Your support enriches our sense of belonging here in the great city of Manassas. Thank you.

[01:38:27] very strong, not only for the of Guatemala, but for all our Latin community, because all together we are going to be great in this nation. And my name is Leslie Juarez, CEO of Empoderando Negocios por Leslie Juarez, and also CEO of Leslie Juarez Studio. We are also making a gala empresarial on December 12th, in which our mission and vision is resaltar the negocios y los emprendimientos de nuestra comunidad latina. Así que esperamos contar con todo el apoyo de todos ustedes. Estoy un poco nerviosa. La verdad que no me lo esperaba.

[01:39:03] Siento una alegría inmensa y los felicito a todos también. Los insto que nos unamos siempre a trabajar de la mano porque la unión hace la fuerza. Gracias a Dios y bienvenidos a todos los que están acá presentes. Gracias. Thank you very much. Good evening and thank you for being here. I'm a sentimental person so excuse me. My name is Sergio Rodriguez. I'm a Guatemalan board that has been in this country for 40 plus years but with all that

[01:39:37] time Guatemala is in my heart. I work with an engineering firm in one of the biggest and strongest think companies here in the city of Manassas. The great city that does always do diversity, equality, and inclusion. That's why our community in this in this city feels like they are home. It's that simple. Everybody feels welcome and Guatemalans have always been welcome in this

[01:40:12] Thank you so much to the body, to the very body of the content, thank you so very much.

[01:43:04] Okay, si desean pasar para la recepcion pueden pasar a lo que están aquí para his funny heritage month the proclamation si se pueden parar pasar adelante por favor vamos a hacerlo rapidito para poder continuar

[01:43:39] Thank you.

[01:44:12] okay okay the proclamation for hispanic heritage month whereas on september 17 1968 the 90th

[01:45:12] united states congress authorized president lyndon b johnson to issue annually a proclamation designating the week including september 15 and 16th as national hispanic heritage week to honor the contributions of americans who trace their roots to spain mexico the countries of central and south america and the caribbean and whereas on august 17 1988 congress amended the former resolution authorizing the president to extend this recognition recognition into an annual month-long celebration from september 15th through october 15th as hispanic heritage month

[01:45:46] And whereas Hispanic Heritage Month celebrates the achievements of Hispanic Americans in the arts, education, entertainment, government, history, law, literature, medicine, the military, music, politics, science, sports, and other endeavors. And whereas the city of Manassas recognizes the contributions that local residents make in our community to promote Latino culture and heritage.

[01:46:10] and whereas Erith Garcia serves the community as an active member of the Don Bosco Center and whereas Stephen Osorio and Luis Delgado seniors at Osborne High School operate a five-week soccer clinic for local youth and are currently studying ways to make city parks parks more walkable and whereas Alonzo Alonzo Vilchez Nunez an Osborne High School graduate and currently a student at the College of William and Mary, centered his high school capstone project on

[01:46:43] urban development and city morale in an effort to show how to fully reach all members of our community. And whereas Oscar and Cesar Medrano, owners of Dogwood Landscaping and Construction, worked diligently to give back to Manassas by supporting community spaces such as the city skate park. Whereas Maria Elena Guzman, president of LaRexpo, and Melina Gouro, HMI board member, have spent more than a decade supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses while promoting Latin American heritage, art, and culture. And whereas Juan Carlos Cadima,

[01:47:22] president of the Manassas Latino Festival, has uplifted Hispanic heritage through community celebrations and manassas latino beauty highlighting emily garcia abu for nino katherine ortiz ashley cruz victoria fuez constanza ferofino and jaylene ferofino as representatives of a new latino generation and whereas el imparcial newspaper and la mejor 98.1 strengthen the community by providing spanish language news information and entertainment to hispanic and

[01:47:57] latino residents and whereas enid rivera an old town immigration attorney has provided guidance education and valuable information to the immigrant community during challenging times and whereas diana brown the first latina elected to the manassas city public school school board represents an important voice in the school community where approximately 70 percent of students are of Hispanic descent, and whereas Hispanic and Latino residents, volunteers, staff, and community leaders strengthen Manassas through their service and contributions, demonstrating

[01:48:34] that our rich diversity is one of our greatest strengths in helping Manassas remain a community with a historic heart and a modern beat. Now, therefore, I, Michelle Davis, Mayor of the City of Manassas, Virginia, and on behalf of the Manassas City Council, recognize Sonia Vesquez Luna, the first hispanic person elected to the council to hereby proclaim september 15th through october 15th as hispanic heritage month the city of manassas takes great pride and pleasure in drawing special public attention to the contributions of hispanic residents that improve the quality

[01:49:10] of life in our community and in communities across the nation congratulations thank you Madam Mayor and Council, I'm going to read it in Spanish.

[01:49:53] Considerando que el 17 de agosto de 1988, el Congreso enmendó la resolución anterior, autorizó al presidente extender este reconocimiento a una celebración anual de un mes, del 15 de septiembre al 15 de octubre como mes de la herencia hispana.

[01:50:17] Considerando que el mes de la herencia hispana celebra los logros de los hispanoamericanos en las artes, la educación, el entretenimiento, el gobierno, la historia, el derecho, la literatura, la medicina, el ejército, la música, la política, la ciencia, los deportes y otros esfuerzos.

[01:50:37] Considerando que la ciudad de Manassas reconoce las contribuciones que los residentes locales hacen en nuestra comunidad para promover la cultura y el patrimonio de latinos. Considerando que Eric García sirve a la comunidad como miembro activo del Centro Don Bosco.

[01:50:54] Considerando que Steven Osorio y Luis Delgado, estudiantes de último año de la Escuela Secundaria Osborne, operan una clínica de fútbol de cinco semanas para jóvenes locales. Y actualmente están estudiando formas de hacer que los parques de la ciudad sean más transitables.

[01:51:14] Considerando que Alonso Vilches Núñez, graduado de la escuela secundaria de Osborne y que actualmente estudia en el colegio de William & Mary, centró su proyecto final de la escuela secundaria en un desarrollo urbano y moral de la ciudad en un esfuerzo por mostrar cómo llegar plenamente a todos los miembros de nuestra comunidad, considerando que Oscar y César Medrano, propietarios de Dogwood Landscaping and Construction, trabajan directamente para devolver amenazas apoyando espacios comunitarios como el Parque de Patinaje de la Ciudad,

[01:51:52] considerando que Marielena Guzmán, presidenta de la AREXpo, y Milena Guró, miembro de la Junta de HMI, ha pasado más de una década apoyando a los empresarios y pequeñas empresas mientras promueve la herencia del arte y la cultura latinoamericana.

[01:52:10] Y considerando que Juan Carlos Carlos Cadima, presidente del Festival Latino de Manazas, ha elevado la herencia hispana a través de celebraciones comunitarias y manazas latino beauty. Destacando a Emily García, Abby Fornino, Katherine Ortiz, Ashley Cruz, Victoria Fuss, Constanza Ferrufino y Jailena Ferrufino como representantes de una nueva generación de latinas.

[01:52:42] Y considerando que el imparcial newspaper, la mejor 98.1, fortalece la comunidad al proporcionar noticias, información, entretenimiento en español a los residentes hispanos y latinos. Considerando que Enid Rivera, abogada de migración del casco antiguo, ha proporcionado orientación, educación e información valiosa a la comunidad de inmigrantes durante tiempos difíciles.

[01:53:09] Considerando que Diana Brown, la primera latina elegida para la Junta Escolar de la Escuela Pública de la Ciudad de Manassas, representa una voz importante como una comunidad escolar donde aproximadamente 70% de estudiantes son de descendencia hispana.

[01:53:26] considerando que los residentes hispanos y los latinos voluntarios, personal y líderes comunitarios fortalecen Amanazas a través de su servicio y contribuciones, demostrando que nuestra rica diversidad es una de nuestras mayores fortalezas y ayudando a Amanazas a seguir siendo una comunidad con un corazón histórico y un ritmo moderno.

[01:53:52] Ahora, por lo tanto, nuestra alcaldesa Michelle Davis, la alcaldesa de la ciudad de Manassas, Virginia, y en nombre de todos los concejales, reconoce a Sonia Vázquez Luna como la primera persona hispana elegida en el consejo para proclamar por la presente del 15 de septiembre al 15 de octubre como el mes de la herencia hispana.

[01:54:14] La ciudad de Manassas se enorgullece y complace en llamar la atención pública especial Sobre las contribuciones de los residentes hispanos que mejoran la calidad de vida de nuestra comunidad y en comunidades de todo nuestro país.

[01:54:30] Muchas gracias. Es un honor de tenerle. Would you like to say a couple of words? Okay, thank you. Bienvenido. I wanted to say a few words. I am very honored with the Don Bosco Center to have had some of these young men with us throughout the years.

[01:54:52] Eric there is working at the airport, making a difference. He's going to be landing big jets pretty soon. And then these are the seniors who are graduating. And then one of them is at William & Mary. So that was really a great thing that he did. And of course, Cesar and Oscar at Dogwoods Landscaping, they were doing some work at my neighbor's house. And I saw their truck and I was like, oh, I won't say I know them yet.

[01:55:16] And then the neighbor came to us and said, these people did such a fabulous job. They did so great. I was like, oh, well, yeah, I know them. And so I'm really proud that they have been working so diligently in the community as well as giving to the community because they do a number of things sort of under the radar.

[01:55:34] So thank you all very much. Yo lo voy a decir en español. Muy buenas tardes a todos. Es Mrs. Mayor, concejales, muchísimas gracias, muchísimas gracias Ciudad de Mananzas por este honor que nos da a todos los representantes de la comunidad a poder decir, sí, se celebra el mes de la herencia hispana en una ciudad tan diversa como es la ciudad de Manassas.

[01:56:07] Yo de corazón me siento muy agradecida y muy orgullosa de estar este día recibiendo esta proclama y estoy segura que todas las personas que estamos aquí presentes nos sentimos con esa gratitud y con ese corazón tan lleno de emoción de poder decir que nuestra cultura Latina está siendo presente y está siendo reconocida por todo el trabajo que nosotros vamos realizando. Muchísimas gracias, gracias por esa oportunidad, gracias por esa apertura de puertas, por esta diversidad, gracias por este valioso momento que nos brindan a nosotros como comunidad para poder estar

[01:56:46] ahora enfrente de ustedes y mostrar que todos los latinos unidos sí podemos hacer patria y que juntos podemos hacer más. Muchísimas gracias.

[01:57:07] Good evening. Good evening, Mayor. Good evening, Council members. Good evening, Manasar City. Thank you for having us today here. Well, everybody says everything. All what I have to say is I invite to Manasar City, to the Manasar Latino Festival, going to be Saturday 26, two Saturdays from today, from this Saturday.

[01:57:35] So thank you very much. Thank you. Well, just a couple of words. It has been my honor. This is my last year serving council, and I will ask for future council members who are somewhere here and our current council members.

[01:57:54] I hope that you continue as, you know, we are minority in the city. And this, as you've seen, this has been well accepted. And, you know, all I want is for the people to see the government as an open government, welcoming.

[01:58:15] We do want everybody to follow the rules, but also we want them to know nobody is being persecuted. This is your home. This is our home. And, you know, for me, with having two parts of the cemetery is my also forever home. So I'm really happy that you're here. And Feliz Mese Lerencia Hispana.

[01:58:32] we're going to go ahead and move forward and not do the recess per miss vasquez luna she said we

[01:59:27] can just keep on moving we can get through the meeting so i went to the restroom theresa mark

[01:59:50] mark went to get so much for okay so much for no recess and sent it to this next right oh no public comment i missed that oh there we go okay wait for theresa we'll wait for miss

[02:00:21] miss ellis to return i'm gonna read all this she can come back okay we'll move ahead in the agenda our item two is our public comment time at this time we welcome residents and community members who wish to speak about services policies and affairs of the city of manassas anyone who has not requested additional time four days prior to this meeting from the city manager we have a timer and your comments will be limited to three minutes we appreciate the time you have taken to be here a reminder that council does not engage in back and forth conversation with speakers during this

[02:01:01] time the lack of an immediate response to your comments should not be taken as a lack of interest or concern as we have staff present taking notes and we will respond to your concern in a timely manner when you approach the podium please give us your name and we would appreciate it if you would state if you are a city resident and you may provide your address if you so desire it is not required we ask that you please be respectful when presenting your comments to not only council members but to those residents and community members who are also present with that i have a sign-up sheet here um and i'll call out the names and but if you have not signed up we won't

[02:01:36] miss anyone so we can um call on you after i do the sign we have one person that has signed up and it's Mr. Ahmed Arazi. I'm sorry. Peace be upon you all, Mayor, respected members of council, and the members of this community. My name is Ahmed Arazi, and I live here. I've moved from Michigan about a month ago to Virginia, and even though I've only been here for a month,

[02:02:11] it doesn't stop me from talking up against violence wherever I see it. I come to you as two things. I am a poet because I believe in the power of words, and I'm also a lawyer with a law degree from the University of Sterling, Scotland, the United Kingdom. I say that because I believe in the power of the law of evidence, and tonight I would like to use both for my advantage and for the betterment of this society. And without further ado, I'm going to be reciting the poem that I wrote, What We Do With The Sound. This town has heard the sound before. We fenced the field

[02:02:48] and named the hill we gave the gunfire a front door a date a plaque we made it still not every sound stays where it's laid some slip the stone and then repeat some will not answer to the spade there is no fence around the street a friday is a small thing light a band a stroller a folding chair it takes one argument at night to make a monument of there we have grown fluent in our morning. We know the candle and the stone. Teach us the colder art of warning. Teach us to leave

[02:03:22] the candle alone. I am young. What I hold is small. No deed, no ledger, and no seat. A voice is all, and voice is all, that ever made a quiet street. Peace is not weather. Peace is not weather. It is not scent. It is a tree, and trees go in by hand, tended through every season we are lent. For shade we will not sit in because it is here we stand those were the words now i present the evidence virginia code 15.2-915 preempts almost everything this council can do on firearms but subsection e

[02:04:00] added in 2020 lets you prohibit firearms on a public street used by a permitted event a public street a pub a permitted event manassas has not adopted it but we do have a special event ordinance section 14-46 it bans a pocket knife with a blade of over 30 of over uh three inches and it says in subsection c except for lawfully carried firearms no one present at a special event may carry any weapon that ordinance was adopted in november 2019 and that city and that time at

[02:04:34] that time sorry this city had no power to do otherwise state law preempted you seven months later the general assembly gave you that power and nobody has ever been back to it ever since and let me be honest this would have never prevented the 4th of september the man was a charge was charged as as a convicted felon possessing that firearm was already a felony in virginia punishable in some cases by a mandatory minimum prison term he carried it anyway what i have to offer you guys is a floor and not a plan i'm asking for one thing tonight to refer my proposal to the city attorney and hopefully see it implemented within 60 days it will cost

[02:05:12] city nothing thank you very much god bless america and the people of manassas and virginia have a have a good night thank you thank you sir i don't have anyone else signed up but if there's anyone that wants to address council at this time please come forward just give us your name please uh good evening my name is ian mcintosh and uh i am a resident here uh before i begin before my time

[02:05:40] begins i have a handout may i approach and and to the clerk here and additionally would you accept four-year records a digital send we can send that later tonight is that acceptable you can send that to the city clerk okay well good evening my name is Ian McIntosh as mentioned I'm a Manassas resident

[02:06:19] I'm also Canadian I'm a recent I was recently naturalized I'm also a car crash survivor and And that's germane to the following points that me and my wife hope to make.

[02:06:34] Our household is an interesting household. We're both disability rights executives. Madam Mayor, I want to thank you certainly for all of your hard work and contribution in uplifting and amplifying the rights of marginalized communities. As such, I think what we're interested here in tonight is to establish a record that, respect to the easement for the CIP project to nine four we we strenuously object to the proposed permanent right-of-way acquisition and temporary

[02:07:09] construction easement we so you have in your hand a form that my my wife has compiled in our objections in green read the crosswalk is unsafe unnecessary is Is ADA non-compliant, unjustified, relies upon an incomplete, non-compliant engineering study, and unwanted?

[02:07:30] One of the troubles we've had in trying to access clear information from the city staff, city engineers, city planners, has been curious to us. we've asked simple questions. Who is in charge? What studies were used in justifying the apparent addendum to the larger plan? And as of yet, we have yet to receive anything conclusive. What we have received are sort of othering comments that say, don't worry, at the public design meeting

[02:08:06] that we're going to have in November, we'll get to your concerns then. But nothing is ever addressed in a good faith quid pro quo fashion and I'll give you an example that we remain hopeful knowing that the city of Manassas like the good counsel when Luna expressed can remain an open government in the interest of people that are most impacted. So on that note I want to first publicly thank Public Works Director Mike Morgan who when he received the complaint of my wife that the signal at, I believe it's Portner and Sudley, was too loud, meaning we could hear it 800 feet away.

[02:08:44] The city staff engineer said, well, in his experience, which we believe is largely in Warrington and not in Manassas, said that that wasn't the case. Mike Morgan took my wife seriously, actually went out to the crosswalk and learned that the decibel level was in fact too high.

[02:09:00] What did he do? With new information, he arrived at a new conclusion, and he corrected the error. Now, as it speaks to points one and three, so it's unsafe, this proposal, which we understand is based on a couple of requests, some of which we don't, by residents, we don't know who still live here.

[02:09:21] Let me just read this one point. In a recent comprehensive field study by the University of Massachusetts Amherst, researchers found nearly a quarter of drivers completely ran through the solid red light and 65% of drivers completely failed to handle the flashing red face correctly, driving through without observing pedestrian locations. Let's be clear, anybody who has lived, we live at the corner of Sudley and you'll excuse me, anybody who's there knows that 20 people a day don't cross that area. People aren't using that area to walk to for their commuting interests. People drive

[02:10:00] there. Anyone that walks there walks on the other side. When you empty into Yule, barely two cars fit. Barely two cars fit, which means for people's disabilities, remember this has been called the mobility master plan. Any master plan that empties people with disabilities onto Yule, which has a slope with no sidewalks, then to battle with one sidewalk and another slope, and west with an even greater slope, shows a profound lack of basic information with which any standard of objectivity

[02:10:35] can reasonably be understood to be taken in the course of the plan. With that, I'm going to introduce my wife, Anne McIntosh. Thank you so much for your time and consideration. We look further to an ongoing dialogue. Thank you. Thank you, sir. Good evening. I'm Anne McIntosh, and you've heard from us, so I really do hope you take the time to look at what we provided in writing today and that it can be made part of the official record. We're blessed to have a circle of friends who include people like land use attorneys, city planners in Philadelphia, civil engineers, and

[02:11:15] we've talked to them extensively since we got this surprise letter in the mail on July 30th that said a giant hawk beacon pedestrian infrastructure is going to be put in your front yard. You have 20 days to tell us what you think. And so we have. We have taken you up on that. We've met with the city engineer. We've met with the city planner. We're giving you our thoughts, and that's why we're here. We want you to know that we are completely opposed to this on the grounds that we've outlined in the information we gave you today. I don't have time to do any of that justice, so I hope you will read it we took a lot of time to write it up and um to research it um but what

[02:11:51] I want to emphasize to you um and my daughter wants to make a comment too um they're probably tired and they've been very patient waiting so um uh the planned crosswalk is unsafe um if you look at the materials that we provided to you vdot and federal highway administration safe system principles, highly discourage putting a mid-block crosswalk across undivided lanes, four undivided lanes

of traffic. It's dangerous. And if you look at the last page in the handout, it has a picture of what a hawk pedestrian crosswalk beacon looks like. I have never seen anything like it, and I

[02:12:28] have traveled 48 of the 50 states and extensively internationally in my car, and I have never seen anything like that before. I don't know what I would do if I came up to that pedestrian crosswalk signal. And I'm betting that the highly distracted drivers on Sudley won't know what to do with it either. And I think that's going to lead to a lot of rear-end collisions. I think it's going to lead to pedestrian deaths and injuries. And we're also worried as homeowners. We have done our research.

[02:12:56] We've been advised it's going to tank our property value up to 15%. And it's all unnecessary. That's kind of the premise of our objection here. And finally, I wanted to touch briefly on the fact that this crosswalk does violate the Americans with Disabilities Act, and it offends common sense. What I mean by that is the ADA and VDOT design guidelines stipulate that accessibility has to be continuous, meaning you can have an accessible crosswalk, but it has to provide a continuous path to a continued accessible pathway. The way this crosswalk

[02:13:30] is envisioned between Yule and Weems, it would dump people from one road that has no sidewalks, no pedestrian infrastructure to another road that has no pedestrian infrastructure. So you're asking people to basically play Frogger on a 21,000 a day vehicle, four lane undivided highway with no pedestrian infrastructure for a refuge. And then you're dumping them into a street to walk. That's this plan is. We think that's a really silly plan and it does violate the ADA. So please take the

[02:14:07] time to look at the rest of the materials we've provided you and we look forward to an ongoing dialogue with the city in the future. Thank you so much. Appreciate it. Thank you, Ms. McIntosh. Daughter? Good evening, everybody. I can't see her. Hi. All right. I love it. I love it.

[02:14:37] future mayor yes good evening everybody my name is eleanor mcintosh and i'm 70 years old i live on suddenly road with my mom my dad and my little brother arthur and it is sometimes loud at night because because some of the cars go really fast and there are fire trucks that go by and and make a lot of noise there's also a lot of loud music from the cars and it can be hard to fall asleep i'm really worried about the crosswalk in front of our house because it will make even more noise with cars stopping and the crosswalk beeping. I don't even understand why we need a crosswalk because only five or six people cross the street a day. Do you really think this

[02:15:16] is the right decision for us? All right thank you. Thank you. Thank you Eleanor. Anyone else wish to come forward at this time? Who's going to follow Eleanor right? Who should dare? Good evening my name is Janet Plovniak, and I'm a citizen in Manassas. I only have a prayer tonight. Heavenly Father, our hearts break over this horrific, senseless tragedy in our community. We lift up

[02:15:56] our deepest prayers for Ashley, the 16-year-old Patriot High School student whose life was so brutally cut short, and for her family, friends, and the entire city of Manassas community reeling from this devastating loss. Lord, we carry the heavy weight of grief and anger over the tragic death of Ashley, an innocent bystander caught in the crossfire of a senseless dispute in Old Town Manassas. We pray with urgency for her parents and family. Hold them close in a way that only you can.

[02:16:29] Wrap them in your boundless comfort as they endure a pain that no parent should ever have to face. Give them strength for the minutes, hours, and days ahead. Comfort her classmates, teachers, and friends across the city and Prince William County, be near to every heart that is shaken, confused, and

mourning the loss of her bright smile and presence. We pray for a profound peace for the Old Town area where our community gathers. Let your light pierce this darkness and let accountability, justice, and lasting change prevail to prevent such violence from

[02:17:06] shattering another innocent life. Keep Ashley at the center of the decisions made for change In our heartbroken city We ask this in your mercy and love Through your son Jesus Christ Amen and amen And I'd also like to Extend my gratitude for our police department To have to handle something like this Is unbelievable So thank you Thank you Ms. Gladney Anyone else?

[02:17:44] J. Jones, resident of Manassas Good evening everyone I think we saw two forces at work Tonight, right? You saw a great hope, great talent, amazing. And then you heard great sorrow.

[02:18:03] And a question that filled my mind was, what are we going to do? Because there's so much talent and such a loss. And I told the school board that I drove past the train station.

[02:18:19] And the thing I observed in the back is there's not enough light, very little light. It's very dark. And I've always known as a school teacher that darkness attracts bad acts, that you can't see someplace like that and not think that there's going to be people that will gather there and they will have not good ideas.

[02:18:43] So that's one area you can think of for safety just going forward. I'm proud to say that after 35 years of teaching that I never, ever had to fill in an accident report at all. And I'm the queen of field trips.

[02:19:01] That meant I had to walk every field trip before I went on it. I had to plan every little minute. Everybody had a chaperone. It was planned to the minute, and I'm sure our historic Manassas Inc. does too. Everybody works really hard, and they're, again, talent.

[02:19:17] And I again suggested at the school board meeting, what about our students being more involved? What I heard tonight was they're very talented, and they're very smart and very clever. So I'd just like to leave you with that thought. This town is amazing.

[02:19:34] always thought that. Everybody that wants to be elected is amazing. It takes a lot of work. So I leave that in your hands. Think about the lighting because light drives away dark. I've always known that. That's always something I've taught. It's always something I've worked at. So please think we've got a lot ahead of us. So much to do. So many festivals. I'm excited. And I'm going to have a new little dog to bring walking around you're going to be meeting poppy pretty soon so you

[02:20:08] better get some light out there okay all right have a good evening everyone thank you anyone else who should come forward and address council good evening my name is kim i'm vertically challenged but i'm here um i just want to say this um as we gather here today we've seen some beautiful things, but I want to address depressing issues that affect our entire community. The

[02:20:48] growing atmosphere of incivility, bullying, disrespect, and ignorance that has permeated our interactions. This issue is not just a matter of personal grievances. It impacts the very fabric of our society. In recent times, we have seen an increase in hostile exchanges, both in public forums and online. This incivily breeds a culture where bullying can take fruit, often targeting those who are most vulnerable. It is disheartening to witness individuals being silenced, their voices being diminished by loudness of disrespect and ignorance. We must ask ourselves, what kind of

[02:21:24] community do we aspire to be? We could talk about our children all day long, but our children look at us. We are the model for our children. We have some older people that are bullies, that are trolls, and spew ignorance on a day-to-day basis. Positivity, togetherness, compassion, and respect are not mere ideals. They are the cornerstone of our thriving community. When we prioritize civility, we create an environment where everyone feels valued and heard. Civility encourages open dialogue,

[02:22:02] fostering understanding, and collaboration. It allows us to engage in constructive conversations even when we disagree. As we move forward, I urge every member of this community to reflect on their behavior and its impacts. Let us commit to fostering an atmosphere of kindness and understanding. Together we can dismantle the walls of incivility and build bridges of respect and compassion. Let us stand united in our mission to cultivate a community that thrives on civility and positivity together we have power to transform our interactions and create a brighter more

[02:22:42] inclusive future for all thank you thank you ms stewart anyone else need to come forward hi my name is omara vasquez luna and i'm resident of this beautiful city i just want to say thank you to all of you for your service and a special thank you to you mayor i don't know when it's gonna be your last meeting but i just i'm here today i want to express thank you for everything what you have done.

[02:23:12] I know it's no easy job being a politician and had to deal with many things, but I want to say thank you and good luck in your new chapter. And I know we will miss you. And I know, I just want to say that to all of you and also to the police.

[02:23:27] Thank you for everything what you do to protect us. That day on Friday, what happened is very sad. And all, all, all feel sorry for the parents. I know the parents because they are part the same swimming team on my kids and I know personally heard that so I know it touched my heart and like every night when I go to sleep I'm thinking about them I pray for them but also for all of you who leave the police the first responders I really appreciate because I was coming on that day and I didn't was able to come because we have our other assignments on that night but I was in

[02:24:06] the town so because we have our office now I can probably say we office there and I was there and I can hear you know everything and people trying to find a place but a safe place or running away and I know they were following instructions so I just want to say that to you thank you for everything and I know you put a lot of time and effort to all of you I really really you know thank you. I know my sister, but I want to say to all of you, thank you.

[02:24:35] It's not an easy job, and sometimes you get a lot from the people that think that it's not even your fault, but you have to deal with that. So with that being said, thank you. Again, to all of you, to all who protect us, and first responders, and for all the people who maybe are behind all these events that probably we even have not mentioned them, I want to say thank you to protect our cities, our schools, and everything while you have done.

[02:25:01] And I will pray for all of us to continue, you know, safe and protected. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much. Anyone else come forward? Okay. If not, we'll move on in the agenda to item three.

[02:25:19] Thank you all for your comments. The consent agenda, Mr. Vice Mayor Wolfe. Yes, ma'am. I move adoption of the consent agenda and dispensing with the reading of the ordinances. Second. Okay, the motion by Vice Mayor Wolfe, seconded by Council Member Vasquez-Luna to approve our consent agenda as listed.

[02:25:37] Any discussion? Herring and seeing none, Mr. Smith, please call the roll. Vice Mayor Wolfe? Yes. Council Member Vasquez-Luna? Yes. Council Member Ellis? Yes. Council Member Osina? Yes. Council Member Hudson? Yes. Motion carried. All right, thank you so much for that.

[02:25:53] Moving forward, item four, authorize the closed meeting. I'll call on Mr. Dawson for that motion. Good evening, Madam Mayor and members of Council. The next item on your agenda this evening is a closed meeting of the Council.

[02:26:13] There are four items for discussion. The first item is a discussion involving the potential sale of city-owned property that is located within the Gateway Landing at Cannon Branch Development, where such discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the city's bargaining position or negotiating strategy.

[02:26:31] The second item is a discussion involving a prospective business with an interest in locating in a city where no previous announcement has been made of the business's interest in locating in the city. The third discussion is related to certain legal matters, specifically the city's legal role in the development of the Manassas Shopping Center and the legal requirements for the mayoral transition where such matters require the provision of legal advice by your city attorney. And number four is a discussion of specific city officers appointees or employees for the purpose of considering such person's assignment appointment

[02:27:08] promotion performance demotion salary discipline or resignation pursuant to virginia code sections 2.2-3711 a 1 3 5 and 8 respectively these discussions may take place in a duly convened closed meeting of the city council to convene the closed meeting i would recommend for your adoption of resolution R 2026-1247 resolution authorizing a closed meeting of the city council thank you mr. Johnson the motion madam mayor I so moved second hear the motion by councilman

[02:27:45] Ocina seconded by councilman Vasquez-Luna to approve resolution number R 2026-1247 authorizing our closed meeting any discussion hearing and seeing none mr. Smith please call the roll vice mayor wolf yes apologize council member osina councilman osina hi there mr clerk yes council member vasquez luna yes council member ellis council member hudson the motion carries

[02:28:20] all right thank you so much approved resolution number r 2026-1248 certifying a closed meeting

[02:29:08] any discussion hearing and seeing none mr smith please call the roll council member vasquez luna Yes, Councilmember Hudson. Yes. Vice Mayor Wolf. Yes. Councilmember Ellis. Yes. Councilmember Alcina. Yes. Motion carries. All right. Thank you so much. Thank you, Mr. Dawson. Anything else to come before the council? If not, we are adjourned. Thank y'all.

