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Manassas City School Board Work Session - October 23, 2025

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- Official meeting video (YouTube): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Tw5zPWXjO8>

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[00:00:11] I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Mrs. Garza, would you please call the roll?

[00:00:30] Yes, ma'am. Chair Sieber. Here. Vice Chair Spock. Present. Mrs. Stephen. Present. Sebastian. Present. Ms. Brown. Ms. Miles. Present. Dr. Jones.

[00:00:46] Madam Chair, we have. Thank you very much. Okay, Dr. Neumano, do we have any additions to the agenda? Okay, can I get a motion to approve the public meeting agenda? Chair, I move that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented.

[00:01:03] Second. I have a motion by Mrs. Stevens, seconded by Mrs. Brescia, that the school board of the city of Manassas approve the public meeting agenda as presented. Any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Any opposed?

[00:01:18] The motion carries by... Okay, announcements. We have a few announcements. dr newman do you have any now no um we do need to set the january date for the mini retreat alba you have heard from air all but one is there a comment january 12 would probably be the best okay we'll do january 12 and what time did we want to do how long do you guys think we're

[00:01:56] going to need this this is i was still going to meet on the 5th also instead of all right so january 12th at are you working that day dana um yes so i'm not sure like i might not be able to be there so i have to i thought yeah i thought that january 5th was when we were doing that that's the organizational meeting so it's okay i know we did it like in the past we did it on a

[00:02:35] day that we were all okay I think you're waiting there from two I think it's Brown yeah and I know both of us work on that day so we could do 5:00 p.m. yeah yeah that would work yeah I mean I could probably do earlier than that if you wanted to do like a four it's gonna be a longer they're usually probably four would be better if everybody I can do four I mean I think Diana is the one with the work that the 5 p.m. starts at 5 p.m.

[00:03:09] That's true. But for her, I think she said Tuesdays and Thursdays were the toughest. Yeah. And it's a Monday. Is it possible to do a Wednesday or is that? Well, these are the dates right here, the people that have responded. Okay. So we can only pick. 14th?

[00:03:24] Would the 14th work? I have for some reason. They say the 14th isn't available for me and I don't remember why. I think it's only fair that we pick one of the ones that have five in it. So if it's the 12th, is there any other date?

[00:03:41] So it's going to have to be the 12th. Dana, you pick the time. Yeah, we'll just do it at 4. I'll just figure it out. It gives me time to figure it out. What time does your school dismiss? Oh, it's at 3.30, but my daughter goes to D.C. every other, every Monday.

[00:04:00] So that's where I'm thinking. Yeah. Okay, so it'll be the 12th at 4 p.m.? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Okay, the next thing on is we all received an email from the Osborne Counseling Department requesting two members for advisory I have heard from two members is it's Mrs. Ball and myself well I would like to do if I could can you be there at nine o'clock in the morning oh yeah okay and I was thinking it was in the evening

[00:04:38] nevermind we both have kids have got three kids that have gone through the counseling department we're familiar with right right some of the programming and things like that so i think it makes sense um i just wanted to make sure they're okay all right i will let mr kaiser know she's on seaburg you know i didn't know what did i promise i don't remember october something december or something it's a tuesday and december i don't know why i looked at that i thought it was in the evening i'm not sure why i don't know the other thing i

[00:05:13] wanted to bring up is we did have a call regarding our calendar and that we were discriminating against christians because we didn't have christmas and christmas eve on the specified on it on the calendar is this something we want to bring forward to anything or i just want to be able to call this gentleman back and say what a break because it's i mean in relation to that like we do do we put ramadan on there we put you know rosh hashanah i feel like he has a point but it depends on what you guys think as a whole it is a point i mean because we do have the jewish and

[00:05:50] and the Muslim community yes I would support everything on the calendar well it's a teacher day off to but whatever student day off student school holiday I don't want to call it a holiday division closed or student day off I don't think it matters what we do somebody's not going to be happy with whatever it is I agree but there is an imbalance we're also trying to be inclusive right I mean like our community I agree and 90% it puts out

[00:06:28] information we say we celebrate Ramadan those who celebrate Ramadan we just say closed I think mess is putting something out about celebrating those who are but I think we usually just say the division is closed for whatever do we not wish people a Merry Christmas though I mean okay We say Happy Holidays, we should have a safe break or something.

[00:06:56] Do we ever mention Happy Hanukkah, though, on the day of Hanukkah? Oh, okay. I didn't know, because I know Prince William does. I wasn't sure if we did that. Okay. Whatever we do, it should be fair to... Yeah. Because right now, if we are saying, you know, closed in observance of Diwali, then on the 24th and the 25th, we are closed in observance of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, we're closed the 20th and the 21st, 22nd, because that's winter break, you know what I mean?

[00:07:23] Like, winter break is around it, but it's closed in observance of New Year's Day, closed in observance of New Year's Eve. Like, I don't have a problem having that if that's what we do for the other one-off holidays for other faith traditions.

[00:07:40] I mean, there are American holidays. 90% of Americans celebrate these holidays, even if they're not religiously based. You know what I mean? In America, that's just so. I mean, on the actual calendar, we just have winter break.

[00:07:56] It encompasses a large period of time. Right. Should we just put at the bottom, by the way, Christmas? No, just saying. I mean, when you see it on a calendar, it's like written at the top or at the bottom. I mean, if we're recognizing other faith-based holidays, then I don't see how it wouldn't be a good thing.

[00:08:22] I agree with Jill. I'm looking at her. I feel like if we do it, like you said, all or nothing. Yeah. And then people can celebrate however they want. You know, I'm guilty of it. I think on some days I do celebrate a day on my Facebook page.

[00:08:39] And, you know, it's probably, if it's not for everyone, you know, probably it should be avoided. I mean, we do have on here Rosh Hashanah Yom Kippur. So we should just say, Mrs. Bresha? You can send it to the, it's the academic community that does the calendar.

[00:08:56] Send it to them. Of course. Just send it to net it. That's fine. I mean, because it has to vote on the calendar anyway, right? At least we're not stopping it. It's not a full stop. Right. No, send it to them, and if it's worth amending prior to winter break this year, maybe the decision out of that committee will be it's not worth doing for this calendar cycle, but we'll do it next time, right?

[00:09:20] All right. That was my last announcement. So now we get to go into a work session agenda. A little bit different this time because we have some solid things. proposed business it's very good business and do we have anybody calling all right uh mrs stevens yes um if you can pull up the legislative priorities so dr newman did any of your cabinet

[00:09:55] members add to this yes did they you just made it um i can tell you what was updated from school board input um so on the legislative priorities based on the feedback that i got of course 2026 was updated because it did say 2025 then if we scroll down to culture of caring and then in

[00:10:32] culture of caring if we look at the first bullet point it says support additional state funding to increase resources devoted to serving the mental and physical health and wellness needs of students and staff we added the and staff portion so that we're working with everybody then additionally under that if

we go to the second bullet point the end of it which says allow for equitable access to educational opportunities for all students that was an addition and then if we go further

[00:11:06] down to quality workforce the last bullet point support funding to provide enhanced opportunities for family and community engagement that is a new bullet point and then sorry under strong family and community partnerships so I looked at this a bunch of times over my brain it's like let's go through this and then under align foundational supports we have provide strong and equitable funding to counteract losses due to cuts federal programs and those were the additions the only things that were changed other than the additions was of course updating the school board

[00:11:45] members updating the year so if you go all the way down to the second page you'll see everyone's names are on there in alphabetical order after vice chairs fall so those were the updates that were based on the feedback from the graphic organizer we did have just under student academic success the first bullet added and time after resources to support legislation that provides provisions of resources and time to achieve success yeah and then under a culture of caring we just changed breakfast and lunch to meet to free meal programs to be inclusive right so yep right and I don't know if there was a

[00:12:24] question on dinner dinner is supported through a grant so that's what we just took it we took the labeling of the house off and just yeah some people might point out that it's not really free some people have yeah is it extra taxpayer money or is it just taxpayer money that's allocated to school yeah so yeah it's not so technically right it's from your it's from your federal taxes so no local right what i'm asking is extra in addition to what is already being taken out of

[00:13:03] our fund funding you know for schools because that's the question because we can allocate the money where we think it's best right is this extra money that i the taxpayer is paying for So what it is, there's not an additional fee charged to taxpayers, and I think Dr. Newman can probably explain it better than I can, but it's through CIP, and we pay, CEP, sorry, because I was thinking of CIP for something different, CEP, and then we're reimbursed for it, and then dinners are paid for through a grant.

[00:13:37] Because that's important to notice, that it's not extra. Right, right. There's no extra additional tax. It's out of the regular. We are not allowed, actually, to take money out or in of that food fund. Right. It has to sustain itself.

[00:13:53] Yes, yes. So it's in its own little container. Yeah. And a lot of times people understand that, but it's in its own little piggy bank. Right. Okay. And so, yes, Mr. Spong. Sorry. Just bringing home a couple things that came up in the, I've been assigned to go to the Committee of the Whole meetings.

[00:14:14] So there was a question on the city side if the terminology, percentage of English learners, or should it be English under inclusive and collaborative learning environment? Okay. Bullet one, percentages of English learners, should it be ELL, English language learners?

[00:14:36] Oh, we call them ELs, English learners. They changed it. And I'm not sure if they changed theirs, but there was a question about that. I know that they're going to push hard for Alt-Ed, so under Culture of Caring, we do mention alternative and non-traditional education problems.

[00:14:58] I mean, does anyone, programs, that's why we're trying to avoid it. Students need to allow for equitable access. Does anyone want to push harder specifically for our Alt-Ed? You know, I mean, do you think it needs to symbol it? So this is, so you're talking about committee of the whole with city council.

[00:15:17] Yep. This is really focused, not just to city council, but to our legislators in Richmond. So understood, but Danica was going to carry it forward. I mean, she did try.

[00:15:33] They recognized that she tried. They recognized that, you know, it's probably going to work and that it's going to need funding. They are going to put it forward, I think, as its own bullet for funding at the state. this is speaking directly to their legislative priorities so I'm I'm just doing what any people want that's more specific to our program yeah I like it how it is and it says what we need to say I mean yeah and this we were what we did last time was specific we needed to pass a resolution it was like a whole thing like that ship has

[00:16:09] sailed we found alternative ways to fund the pilot without Richmond and now if the pilot continues it's an operating question so I think we're I think any kind of I'm just trying to keep one hand washing the other I was gonna ask I know this is like and I thought to just even talk about but are we not gonna put anything about collective bargaining that we want them to be on one side or

[00:16:45] the other on that for legislative priorities we haven't put collective bargaining on for a number of years i can't remember how many we last had it i think back when tim demario was on the board um and i'm not even sure how many years ago that was but we've already put out our stance on it with the resolution that was passed um so we don't know that right i didn't know if it comes up do we want them to fight for one way or the other funding or that's why i mentioned that

[00:17:23] yeah since it's something that we're giving as legislative priorities i know that is right yeah um you know i mean at the end of the day it's the will of the board whether to add it as a legislative priority or not it didn't when i got the graphical organizers it wasn't listed on them right so I went what I did was based on what was on those graphic organizers so that's what we've got yes I mean I can tell you that VSBA and I believe that well is has in their platform that they want to maintain control over collective bargaining that's one of the elements of the new bill that we

[00:18:02] previously discussed that the control over whether to whether or not to do it and what you're bargaining over is gonna that power is going to transfer to five random people in Richmond if the new legislation goes through so the SBA in vast because it's kind of a very part of the reason I did not offer it on the graphic organizers it's a very big question about what is it maintain local control is it yeah the funding right it's not a simple one-liner it's it's there's lots like we would have to put out a whole separate addition to that

[00:18:37] okay there's many LPO things the way they break up the bargaining units I don't like the way they break up the bargaining units and then a lot like there's new draft law okay I was just wondering because yeah yeah it's it's like um miss Fred just said there's a lot of different factors and components that you support it you know would we put out can we support it a full do we not support it what aspects of either way so it would be the tone right that's fine I just wondered no okay so the timing on this as usual it's kind of

[00:19:12] coming very quick we need to have this final and voted on before our joint meeting with City Council on October 30th right so we only have one meeting before then and that's the 28th so we do need this to it'll be under discussion but then we will likely need to waive second reading and there aren't any for lack of a better term, earth-shattering changes on it. It's very similar to what it was before.

[00:19:43] And I know that Dr. Newman's cabinet, other than those few tweaks in wording, left it very similar. And we also try to have ours, I think Dr. Newman has said it before, have our legislative priorities a little bit similar to our surrounding school divisions because they're more likely to be supported. Whereas if ours are very different than like Prince William County, Manassas Park, you know it becomes so we have a greater chance of these things going through but also because we support a lot of the same things okay that was the

[00:20:20] only question yeah okay all right so we're all good on legislative priorities for now all right our next item is the joint meeting preparation and dr. Newman got a list from mr. Burke and you want me to read it off or do you want to read about it okay so uh they want an alt ed update 8700 purchase updates a new dean update the manassas industrial school cottage slash current dean updates uh they're going to provide that um

[00:20:59] the rc area rc area we'll give that one uh ohs connector update and then last one uh graduation participation of things they would have discussion about uh council members also walking do we have any information from dr chapman about could we i would or we could say we need to check

[00:21:36] with the not our not our decision i mean we can make all right and then mrs spall did you have something from educational support that you wanted to add to that joint isn't that here oh sorry yes yes I do um DAF was going to bring tonight uh something that came out of educational support which was some level of a ROI is that right is that what this document we want

[00:22:12] to be have the correct terminology well so we just because our ROI has some specific meetings at that at the educational support committee meeting there were discussions about um providing updates on how the investments the city has made in in the schools the impact of those right and so but listening to what you just said in terms of the topics four of those are included that's what i thought right and so it could align and if you wanted to add so what's on the slides isn't all that would be said right more could be said for um the rest of it so this

[00:22:49] was an attempt to kind of address the original request and then as Dr. Newman was saying it's like several of the things we revamped we changed it slightly today to um perhaps capture that so if you want to go to the next you want me to just go through this okay um so um our point here is that because we were trying to um continue that relationship with the city in advance of budget time right to say okay we recognize what the city has done and here's what we've done with these these monies and here's some impact so we're just saying right they we've gotten some additional

[00:23:23] targeted revenue in the past few years um and then we um got the bond to allow us to build jenny dean the new jenny dean and then tonight we're just going to talk about how we've used those funds as well as what we're seeing in terms of to date and what we anticipate so on each slide you'll see um discussion of the infusion of money as well as potential a current or potential impact so you can go ahead. So first for Jenny Dean right we've got that they approved this the bond series right which allowed which provides 50 million dollars for us to build the new Jenny Dean school and to

[00:24:00] date this fall the project remains on time and within budget as you know from all of your updates and then when asked Mr. Gefeller could provide them with more details about any of it if they have questions the impact clearly right this is allowing us to to build the state of the art elementary school that's going to open in august 2026 so this one's a very tangible impact of this infusion of money that we would not have been able to build the school without that right so in the city we needed the city to do it so

okay okay so we put we tried to group these things in categories so this one is not on their list of topics but it's an important one and this just highlights

[00:24:39] over the past three fiscal years the additional funding that they've given us to support compensation increases right in fy 24 in the middle of the year they gave us extra money to support the additional pay increase for teachers and then that continued into fy 25 which allowed to continue to continue those pay increases as well as allowed supported us um in our ability to do a six percent increase for eligible employees and targeted remember in fy 25 we did some targeted adjustments in salary scale to try and have those scales be more competitive. And then in FY26, they provided

[00:25:13] us an additional \$1.5 million again, which allowed us to move from five and a half to 6.7% salary increase. And so clearly the impact, as you saw in your meeting in September, we have some tangible information, right? That we had an increase in teacher retention. Can't draw a causal relationship, but there is an increase in retention from 24 to 25. So you don't have to add that part.

[00:25:39] i'm just saying it to you um but we can say look we have more salaries so they um the impact is retention rate so that's exciting because that's a tangible thing um and that's just of teachers right so okay go ahead alba and then the next one is about the purchase of 8700 right the city approved us using fund balance to purchase the building that's happening rapidly the closing is going to occur in november tentatively scheduled for the 18th impact right it gives us a location for the alt ed program which will be on the next slide there's no cost for us moving to a new location and we won't have to continue paying rent to lease space in this building so those

[00:26:15] are all big impacts for us um yes ma'am don't we also have the impact of revenue we we do um we do we'll have some revenue from existing tenants which will allow us to like pay to maintain the building basically so we could add that as a bullet if that's something that you all want so um that's good to add okay yeah all right that's making that note okay okay i was gonna say november 18th is that our first day of the sba or the day before the day before before yeah we

[00:26:51] have a meeting on the 18th no we don't we don't no meeting on the 18th trust me yeah wait a minute well something was so we only have one meeting in november and it's what it's the wednesday after election yes yeah it's a weird day it's a wednesday yeah well anyway we were gonna we go down on the 18th at night okay there's no school coordinating okay so you can everybody good for that we can ask we can add about the um rental income okay next page okay so um this top their

[00:27:28] other topic right so the city approved us to use money from the fund balance to launch our alternative education pilot program. We started with a program administrator in July 2025. You all had the update last week. Construction is currently underway to convert the space into an instructional one and that's due to be completed by December 1st which is exciting. The program will open for students in January and hiring is underway for the teaching and support positions. And then again to continue the what's the impact, right? It's an alternative option for our students. It allows individual support and keeps them on track academically and towards graduation. That's a very high level impact but yes so for independence we have to pay for spaces will this reduce

[00:28:07] the number of spaces we have to pay for or will it provide additional this okay this gives us additional capacity was nodding up and down behind that's a good question right right I'm not saying we're not but the question was just you know would we do we need the same number of slots because we pay for

each one so and doctor is there any slots and there's no yeah makes sense the other thing is could we add that though how many slots open you know this open

[00:28:44] for us like additional slots open yeah you know because that would be great information for them to kind of like quantify it you know like this is why we fit this because of this instead of just having that sentence on it it is fluid but at the same time we can quantify how many spots we can open up and that's 40 to 60 but I don't know that's what I mean yeah yeah just how many we can open up open up gives us our center right at our center right we can take from the by the numbers part of the presentation from last week and add something on yeah that's it yeah because

[00:29:23] would be good for city council to see that yeah and i've got those slides for last week okay all right and then the last piece is um we had had it as additional capital improvement updates but it could be just relabeled as the Osborne connector because that's what it is these are photos um from your presentation for next week um so it's the construction's underway substantial completion by november 10th so as you can see like and as they can see right there's several things that are all happening very quickly right so the purchase of this building the construction for the alt ed program the launch of the Alt-Ed program and the Osborne connector are all

[00:29:56] happening in the next few months and the impact right it's enhanced safety and security and then there's additional usable space so it is connecting everything so those were the updates we had in terms of infusions of and this was not an additional infusion of money other than they approved us using fund balance before for the Osborne connector that was approved earlier as part of our CIP. I like using our logo for pathways, but do you think that the next school board meeting you

[00:30:31] could show us some pictures of what it's looking like in there? Or the alt-tech? Or I mean maybe like in our November or December work session you can get a tour? That too. I mean December 1, whatever works. It'd be nice to have those pictures as a slide for the council. I hate to take away from the work of the I mean you know well let's stole it out and small in it you know maybe we see it and then if we do like a ribbon cutting or something then other people can see like all finish I don't know but Dana and I pointed out I'm sure we have we are allowed to stop on the third floor it's

[00:31:08] not like we're not around that but don't be done I haven't been out to see it yet have you seen it you don't have to say out to see you say down to see that over below right it's close you have to go out anywhere just something exciting I think City Council will like that I do yeah and I like the photographs of the of the updates on the connector because the visual is very helpful so maybe the visual of all Ted would be nice as well yeah okay so we're good on the joint meeting agenda I think it's good okay all right with that we have somebody on the line that would like to join the

[00:31:47] meeting so can I what wait a minute sorry do you want to add to this about the graduation rate request or are you just gonna verbally say are you giving this most likely with support based on questions yeah was it graduation rate dr. Newman it was just yeah oh okay I'm sorry all right you don't have to proceed okay please all right share I'm at the school board approved Ms. Diana

[00:32:18] Brown to participate in the meeting remotely. Second. Okay. Um, I have a motion by Mrs. Stephens, seconded by Ms. Miles, that the school board of City of Manassas approve Ms. Diana Brown to participate in the meeting remotely. Is there any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Any opposed?

[00:32:39] Motion carries 5-0. And do we need to get any other information from Ms. Brown's location? You can. Hello, Ms. Brown. Thank you for joining us. Uh, we've been through the first two items on the agenda and uh we just need to know where you're calling in from i'm in new orleans new orleans what about favorite cities never been um sorry it's 4 33 over here oh yeah it's an hour

[00:33:16] earlier all right we're moving on to our next uh topic which uh is our school board professional development and i will go to miss diana brown to lead us in a discussion on this i'm right of thank you team thank you so much for your flexibility today I don't know how I lost that one hour because I had it on my calendar but so we had agreed to read the speed of trust and there was an assignment for this week and I I

[00:33:50] prepare a PowerPoint that hopefully all of you have seen and so basically we're going to read chapters and then we're just going to simplify it to make just it to give us one word of impact or one phrase so if you guys are okay with it I can go with my phrase and can you get the page number when before when you say it yes and by the way I cannot see any of you but hopefully you all can see me yeah at the moment we're looking at the presentation now so okay perfect so I

[00:34:25] will be on page five under getting a handle on trust and my phrase is on the second paragraph it indicates that simply put trust means confidence and then if you keep reading the opposite of trust it's not just distrust but it's suspicion so I think that's pretty impactful that's it so there's somebody

[00:34:57] else can go in their phrase or their word or their sentence this is fall okay mine's page 26 and I didn't bring my book with me but I have not trusting people as a greater risk and I can't quote exactly from the book what that meant but you know it's kind of not trusting people as the opposite of assuming best intentions and I can go next okay um so what I saw was kind of

[00:35:34] 27 28 29 and it talked about stewardship as a job with a trust and I I like how it makes you think about relationships you have in the workplace with the different levels at like here with the different levels between Dr. Newman, his cabinet, the board, building staff, that we have to have a relationship with trust.

[00:35:57] We have to have a stewardship relationship and assume that others are doing things with good intent. And so that one I liked a lot. It was like it's kind of started on 27 because and I think this is chapter two.

[00:36:13] say it's chapter i know i know not everybody i know i know and i also have one for chapter one which was just the myths versus reality i thought that was really interesting but yeah i mean because he talks about um on 27 28 and 29 about how his first job was like at home taking care of the yard and it was a stewardship of trust and so i was sitting in a doctor's office i didn't have anything else to do so i read we want to do next or should i go i can do it okay page 21

[00:36:47] um showed out to me when he said um he had talked to a consultant robert shaw he said above all success in business requires two things a winning competitive strategy a superb organizational execution distrust is the enemy of both and i just thought that spoke volumes that you can have strategy you could be organized but if both sides don't trust each other mine was page 10 which was just the phrase

[00:37:26] we have a crisis of trust on our hands what page 10 do you believe that do you think we do all right and mine is and again i wasn't sure on the chapter one thing because they weren't really numbered and i know i was like yeah yeah but mine's on page 29 and 30. trust is a function of two things character and competence

[00:37:58] and i'll read one part that stood out all right okay competence so that's basically the format that we can follow if you guys like it um and of course depending on the work session and if we want to go even deeper and have discussions of this um quotes or words or phrases uh we can a lot of time for that the next round if you guys like this and underneath each of those slides that

[00:38:37] have a page to write the notes there's a summary of the chapters so you can go through the different one so that's it that's as simple as it can be i have a question about page numbers like can we say where we're going to stop we're going to start so that we yeah that's a good idea because Because I was confused, and so I started reading extra.

[00:38:58] Because I was like, this is a big book. I need to read it faster. No, it's not numbered, though. The chapters aren't numbered, but the pages are. Because it says, yeah, because it's separated. Like, the one thing that changes everything seems like it's like a chapter. Forward. Right. I think the slides are divided that way.

[00:39:19] The first chapter is the one thing that changes everything. And then the second chapter is the first wave. Okay. So that would be your second assignment. That's my favorite. And I think that's a little bit longer. It goes to page 112, but there's summaries. So don't feel like obligated if you don't have the time.

[00:39:37] I know you're busy, but self-trust is kind of like a self-study for yourself as you relate to the whole board. So it's one of the most important chapters, but it is also kind of like one that you can take personally and study deeper on your own.

[00:39:54] The only thing I, because I see that, but the first wave, that's like almost 50 pages. So that's why I'm wondering if we can pair that up into three or two, like split it up. Or just have a longer time. Okay, or a longer time.

[00:40:09] That's fine, because it's actually more than 50. From what I've made it, it's up to you guys. This is for us, so we can split it to maybe the four cores and the integrity. That'll take you to about Phase 75.

[00:40:26] Okay, so maybe the four scores of credibility and the care, one integrity, are you congruent? And we can stop there, Phase 75, I think. So, 27 to 75, is it? Yeah.

[00:40:41] Okay. Because we should start at Phase 43. You should have said, yeah, Phase 27, but it's okay. It's all good. I'll write it down. so ending at page 75 in the page 75 and what is the time 43 to 75 so the time frame is up to us so if we want to do it by the next work session or the following after that it's up to us other ones our next work session

[00:41:18] the ceiling when we have because then we have yeah we have the next one is oh Oh, yeah, and we start at 12 noon, so, I mean, that's fine with me. One thing I will say that I've noticed, I see lots of parallels with Fierce.

[00:41:38] Oh. Lots of parallels. Well, that's not a bad thing. So November 6th, right? November 6th? Yeah. Okay. All right. On November 6th, we will read up to page, actually, I think it's 75.

[00:41:56] 75, yeah. Okay, our next item on the agenda, item D, is school board compensation, and I'll go to Mrs. Breja, who has summarized some things that they discovered through their committee.

[00:42:16] So I'm speaking as the committee chair. This is not my individual opinion. This is just speaking as the committee chair who has this topic. So on the summary document that you have in front of you,

there's a brief timeline giving some of the history of school board member compensation here in the city of Minnesota.

[00:42:37] The last time the stipends were adjusted for school board members was in October 2017, we were supposed to increase it then, and that's the stipend we have now and have had since, which is \$12,000 a year for members and \$1,100 additional per chair, \$13,100 per chair no eligibility for health insurance or other benefits and then some of the other compensatory factors you know there's no office space we don't have access to office space we don't have dedicated staff members there are some other things that are compensatory that we do not have access to but in terms of numeric dollars no eligibility for health insurance other

[00:43:16] benefits thirteen thousand one hundred per chair twelve thousand for members October 2017 the adjustment the that was an adjustment that was made for the first time since 2009 so we're looking at 2009 2017 and now 2027 yes 2025 we're talking about it if any adjustment is made it goes into effect in 2027 there is a statutory restriction on when we are allowed to make these adjustments we are not able to do it when anybody is a candidate for office so because we are

[00:43:52] on this kind of every 10 year ish kind of clock in February 2025 the board Development Committee did some market research looked around at what other jurisdictions were doing what the what our jurisdiction was doing in terms of other elected officials in the city and the committee generated a set of recommendations out of that recommended continuing no eligibility for health insurance or other benefits recommended increasing this chair stipend to the regional market rate of \$2,000 over the regular member stipend \$2,000 over does seemed to be a pretty common adjustment that people make in the region and the

[00:44:29] mayor has a \$3,000 differential over the City Council so \$2,000 seemed to be a standard market rate adjustment and then the committee recommended further discussion of the regular members stipend with the full board which we did get a chance to do in June of 2025 at our retreat we did discuss it briefly there the summary out of that which is not anything that we're held to now we can change it now or we can stop it now if we want to but the conclusion that came out of that discussion was to continue no eligibility for health insurance or

[00:45:06] other benefit maintaining the recommendation of \$2,000 as a bonus for chair serving as chair and then increasing the regular mentor stipend to \$20,000 a year however in the analysis of how school board compensation is determined there was wide variability regionally you know there are some school board members who make ninety thousand there are some who make three thousand but what was congruent was within the jurisdiction city council you know the city council board of supervisors county board whatever it is makes more than

[00:45:45] school boards on a single jurisdiction for that's flip-flopped and there is a proportionality there you know if you are a forty thousand dollar school board you have a \$60,000 or so county board, or if you're a \$100,000 board of supervisors, you are an \$80,000 school board.

[00:46:03] Yeah, there's a proportionality within the jurisdiction in terms of how this compensation is determined. So in June 2025, we had this preliminary discussion, but we are not the market leaders for elected officials in the city of Manassas.

[00:46:21] The market leaders for elected officials in the city of Manassas are mayor and council, and they were in the middle of doing their thing. So the conclusion out of that was maybe this, but wait and see. So we do now have the results of what they determined for themselves.

[00:46:37] The city council members approved a stipend increase for \$34,000 a year for their council members and \$37,000 a year for mayor. City council members and mayor are eligible for health insurance. That has been that way for a long time. I do want to spend some time to make sure everybody understands what that differential is.

[00:46:58] The reason why the board development committee did not recommend pursuing that is that the liability, the compensation liability to the division would have been \$100,000 or more if everybody of all seven members decided to go for the most expensive.

[00:47:15] And so we're talking about this dollar amount, and we should still talk, the dollar amount is important, but in terms of total compensation, the school board of the city of Manassas makes magnitude less in total compensation when you factor in that health insurance via the lack of health insurance.

[00:47:34] And there is no interest, unless someone wants to make that case today, in adding the \$100,000 of liability that health insurance would bring. We're talking about it now. We can help anyone can put any idea out there. But I do want to emphasize that this is a significant saving.

[00:47:52] Foregoing health insurance is a significant saving and is unusual regionally. And most other school divisions make their school board members eligible for health insurance. So I did want to spend some time on that to make sure everybody understood.

[00:48:08] So our job here today is to come to a discussion and a decision whether this goes on to our regular meeting agenda. If it goes on to our regular meeting agenda, we have to decide on what compensation package is going on.

[00:48:24] There would be a first reading where we would discuss it on the dais and public comment would obviously, there's no public comment at work section, but if you wanted to come for public comment at the regular meetings, then that would be the opportunity to do it.

[00:48:39] And then there would be, at the next meeting in December, we would have our second reading in vote and obviously public comment available at that meeting as well. So there are two more opportunities, if we decide to take this forward, for us to consider it.

[00:48:58] So do we want to move forward with \$20,000 a year, \$2,000 bonus for chair, and no eligibility for health insurance or other benefit? Would anybody else like to make any alternative proposal, or would we like to stop the discussion now and take this up?

[00:49:21] The next opportunity we would have to do this would be 2027. I just want to add to your list that, unlike council, we do not take a recess. We definitely have more meetings.

[00:49:36] How long is there recess? A month. And I have a historical data sheet that I'll be happy to pass around, but the last time that council made \$12,000 was 2002. That's when their salary jumped.

[00:49:54] So they've all but doubled their salary. I don't want to be seen as any kind of a money grubber. I'd love to hear from the new people about, you know, what the job is versus what they thought it was going to be. I really would like to hear that.

[00:50:11] I'll pass that along. But, you know, I think that we're really cutting off our nose to spite our face if we think that anyone who's not an existing candidate for one of these positions is going to look at the city of Manassas and say, I want to run for something, but I'll pick the \$12,000 job and not the \$34,000 job.

[00:50:34] I mean, I just don't see it. So maybe I'm very, very misled, but I think that we've kind of been backed into a corner and it's been a while since we've had an adjustment. Sarah, I haven't done the math, but percentage-wise, before where school board and council was at before, what is the equivalent of that?

[00:50:58] before \$6,000 different differential right 12 to 18 no what are you I'm talking about city councils they went from from 18 yeah because that was the last it was in 2022 that was almost double yeah people would I was asking okay so City Council very recently was at 18,000 and they went to 34 we are at

[00:51:38] 12 what is like the difference the correlation be like it if we were the same as them they went up by the same person they went up 47% yeah they almost they almost doubled so if we were talking about inflation what would be our salary if we were to just do the inflation I don't think that can be counted because all the years between 10 years ago you know and now it's you can't account for all of that every year you know no I understand I was just

[00:52:14] looking at here with the data that she had was that inflation since October 2017 was 30 increased by 32% so I just wondered so yes the CPI the consumer price product index has increased by 32% since the last time it was adjusted and I think so 32% would bring us to 16 but if you are using an inflate you know if inflation is guiding you the it's not just historic every 10 this is only

[00:52:53] talked about every 10 years on average and so I think the point that is trying to be made is that if you shoot for straight inflation, you're underachieving the next 10 years in front of that, because even by the time it goes into effect, like this has to wait a year before it goes into effect, it only goes into effect January of 27, that 16,000 number would already lag, because you're going to have another year of inflation, right?

[00:53:22] So inflation is just kind of difficult, because we don't know what it's going to be 10 years Right. Yes. Can I have that sheet back, Dana? Oh, yes. I'm sorry. Are you done looking at it? Yes. You're good. Quick question. Is city council bound by that same legislation that they have to wait until 2027?

[00:53:37] Theirs is a little different, yeah. And also theirs has to go to a hearing, ours goes straight to a vote. Oh. But theirs is past. There's some. Right. Yeah. I think it's worth talking about because as a new person like you were asking, there are more meetings than you think and there's also more commitment than you would imagine like just because if you want to be a part of the community and you want to go you're consistently trying to go to different events and it's a time commitment um outside of that preparing for meetings um you

[00:54:13] know and making sure that you are prepared you know you have to do that due diligence so I feel as though um it's been 10 years I mean when it would go into effect right go into effect and i think that it's reasonable to get something maybe not all the way to 20 but something of an increase so i'd be a i would be um i i agree with increasing is what i mean now as far as how much that might be something that i would want to discuss something to keep in mind too is i mean

[00:54:47] the amount of stipend does not guarantee you a quality school board member and all the extra things that we do and we all do them that is not a requirement of a school board member your requirement is to attend the meeting um now of course we want people like that we want people to be

involved in our um and supporting our students supporting our staff but it doesn't guarantee anything that's true is diana still on diana do you do would you like to say anything

[00:55:21] well yes we regardless of which way we go here uh we're going to make the news because city council did experience and handle a lot of criticism when they went through with their changes but I think these are necessary changes um and you're right Suzanne chair you're right um sorry chair you're you're correct in saying that a lot of the stuff is what we bring um in the value that we add to the role and but I think that in itself needs to be highlighted because um I don't think

[00:55:57] any of us here um it's bringing less than um our very best in regards to putting out ourselves and our gifts and talents with the community um and that's what we want we want to attract and retain like really good people that understand that the basics is not good enough if we really want to make an impact on this community um but we also need to recognize um that what used to be good enough 10 years ago even five years ago is not now because the demands of this

[00:56:35] role have changed and continue to shift the policymaking is becoming more difficult and more complex so it requires a little bit more time if you don't already have the type of expertise that are needed for that and then of course the workload if we wanted to do it right I mean we added this work sessions case in point where we it's necessary for us to meet like this and put in um two three four hours just to um reconvene and talk and align um on different issues um beyond just the

[00:57:13] meetings that are already in the book and then you know i i just have this thing that when we it's a symbol right and i know that this is good or bad whichever way you want to take it But when we don't add with inflation and we're still very low, for example, and I'm not speaking anything bad about Manassas Park, but their city council is one of the lowest paid in the city.

[00:57:45] So a lot of people don't think that that's a good career to pursue because of the pay and you will be spending more to fulfill the role than the stipend that you get. And so it promotes this equity and balance where there's a symbolic, like a low-paced symbolism that it also can exclude people who want to do it, but it's going to cost them more to pay for daycare.

[00:58:12] I always think about Sarah when she has to pay for that extra daycare to come to our meeting. So it excludes working parents or any person making a livable wage as a resident in our city but may have a specific intent for a gift that they want to share or view that we may value from.

[00:58:36] I just think that overall we just need to, you know, adopt it and kind of grunt the criticism because it's going to come either way, but in my opinion, it's necessary. Mrs. Bridges, is there anything you wanted to say personally outside your role as a committee chair?

[00:58:56] Well, so the decision that we are making today is just whether or not this goes on to the regular community agenda. I'm going to ask for a show of hands. I just wanted to make sure that everybody has their say. Right. And so it is, yeah. Is that somewhere?

[00:59:12] Well, yeah, well, not right now. You can. Not yet. But just so everyone and anybody watching is clear on what is being decided now, the vote is not until December. So I think that.

[00:59:30] If it moves forward from tonight. If it moves forward from tonight, the vote is not until. Now, I think \$20,000 is a little, as it turns out, too much, because the 47% raise that council gave itself would be

about \$18,000. Some people are suggesting \$40,000, so, I mean, we would be the only jurisdiction I'm aware of to out-earn the city council, if that were the case.

[00:59:57] I would not recommend that person. It was not me. I know, I know. You're not speaking as yourself. So, and to go by the inflation number, that's \$16,000. I mean, there are costs associated with this for sure, but it is also public service and not any of us, there's not any of us who have to do it, right?

[01:00:19] And in my experience, speaking to people who have been interested over the years in running for school board, how much does the job pay is like question number 22, right? Like question number one is usually how many meetings, what's the time commitment, what's it like running for office?

[01:00:39] things like that. And they don't even, a lot of times people are surprised to find out it pays anything at all. So in my experience, the money is less impactful for a candidate recruitment. If recruitment is the goal, I don't think that it impacts recruitment. Does it serve to offset the costs associated? In my own personal case, a lot of babysitting. I won the OAA, the raffle, and people ask me, where is that money? Oh, what are you going to do with the raffle money that

[01:01:11] one this is like oh there's a babysitter at home it's gone so I don't I don't know that I would agree to move \$20,000 forward but I am amenable to further discussion about any other this is even so I I have some philosophical beliefs that are deeply entrenched that serving in an elected position is a civic duty

[01:01:47] And for as long as I've known, I have found it problematic when elected folks to give themselves large raises, but they're still making cuts to programs or they still have unfunded need in the budget.

[01:02:05] And for me, that's a very difficult pill to swallow, because this is not a job to me. This is a duty. I was elected to perform a service. I was not elected. I did not run to get paid. I didn't know that there was any pay associated with this till like September, the year I ran.

[01:02:27] So for me, philosophically, I really can't vote in favor of a race because of my philosophical beliefs that at higher levels, I believe personally, it's morally wrong to be giving yourself more money when you're potentially taking away from others who are needier than you are.

[01:02:54] And that's our student. And I believe very firmly that they always need to come first. And like Ms. Brescia said, I've never had anybody say, well, how much does it make? Their question is, well, how many meetings? Or, oh, I've seen what goes on. I don't want to have anything to do with that.

[01:03:09] And I don't think, I've never had someone ask about compensation. And people do ask a lot of questions about school board. So that's where I stand. I would be in favor of adding \$1,000 to the additional stipend for chair. But beyond that, I'm really not interested.

[01:03:27] \$900 for? \$900, I'm sorry. \$900 increase in stipend for chair, but beyond that, for me, I... Let me also add, there are some jurisdictions who pay the vice chair a bonus, which is not on the table here. Right. So there's a lot of things that are not on the table.

[01:03:44] Right, right. Like the \$100,000 and more of health insurance is not on the table. Paying the vice chair, sorry, a bonus is not on the table. And in terms of a final vote, that's not really the...

[01:04:00] Right. You don't have to decide that tonight. No, I know. That's not what the discussion is, is the discussion. And I'll say I called each of you or texted each of you individually to see whether we should

have this discussion tonight.

[01:04:17] And there is a member who's not here who wanted to hear more, just wanted to hear more information from everybody. And so just to be fair and represent that perspective, she also wanted to see it continue.

[01:04:33] it's not a formal vote and it's the will of the board to choose to move it forward or not Diana did you have something else I just see you the picture came in now I can see you I wasn't able to see anybody until now sorry all right I will call for may I have a show of hands who would like to continue discuss this discussion and move it forward to a regular school board meeting we have to we need a number oh we need a number yes oh not a number between one and ten oh my

[01:05:10] goodness guys. 20,000? Is that what you said, Diana? Yeah, 20,000. And I think we arrive at that number, Sarah, you didn't include it in your notes, but we arrive at that number based on a 7. I think it was a 5%. If we went with a 5% stipend that we gave the teachers, increase that we gave the teachers, raise the 5% raise. I think that's how we arrive at that number.

[01:05:43] if we were to add 5%, I think. About a year since 2017. Maybe 7% would take us at 18,000, because we talked about that. If we did the same race that we gave everybody that was at 7%, I think, it was going to come up to about 18,000.

[01:06:03] But then somebody said 24, and then we landed at 20,000. I think previous boards said that we should do, like, half. Wasn't that, I think someone had mentioned that, that. I was on the board when it was 6,000 and it was doubled.

[01:06:21] Doubled, right. So that, that number was at that for how many years? Yeah. 12 years. And then it doubled and we've been at, it will be 10 years if this moves forward for a change. So.

[01:06:37] I don't know about the number. I'm kind of on the fence about the number. I feel like I know as, even as a teacher, you know, yes, we, we give them raises, but it's definitely. It's not late tonight. just deciding what we put forward and right there could be more discussion if it voted to go forward there could be more discussion then okay can i add one more thing i i just think we're pretending to that the budget for uh for us for governance is a teeny teeny tiny fraction so i do uh i do value

[01:07:11] and respect your um your views lisa but when we're talking about i think it's in somebody out there can correct me but i think it's less than one percent maybe one percent um so that's what we're talking about our budget is is a very tiny fraction of the overall budget so maybe if we look at that and get the exact number um maybe that that that will get perspective as well it's not like we take it's not like we taking 20 of our whole budget to get this um adjustment to the

[01:07:49] stipend and it's still a stipend it's not paid it is a stipend and and in my case for example i've donated most of it anyway so i invested right back into the schools anyways but it is a stipend not they all right so diana do you do you want it at 20 000 do you want to see 20 000 in that okay and dana would you feel comfortable making a decision tonight if to move it forward

[01:08:21] I don't feel comfortable with \$20,000, but I do understand what Diana said about the 7% because I just did the math, and that's where we came to that. I feel more comfortable with the cost of living every year.

[01:08:39] You can't do it every year? No, from the 10 years. That's what I mean. So instead of doing, because it would be 7% times 10, it would really be like 70% a raise if we do the \$20,000. But if we were to do the cost of living, which would be more of like 32%, I would feel more comfortable with that because that would be giving us a COLA every single year of that 10 years.

[01:09:03] So that's what I would feel more comfortable with. But I am definitely wanting to go forward. I'm just, I don't know if I'm comfortable with that \$20,000. So what is your number? I think it's the \$16,000. So inflation is \$16,000, the 47% market rate adjustment for local elected officials in the city of Manassas of 47% is at \$18,000, and \$20,000 is the compounded number.

[01:09:33] Well, it would be like a \$3,800 raise as opposed to the 70%, because to me, I think that's just a huge jump. And a lot of people are struggling financially. we have a shutdown a government shutdown where a lot of you know people we don't know were affected and i think that we have to be fiscal fiscally responsible and i think that would be more fiscally responsible than doing such a big job but you're saying 16 000 is your um i think that would be yeah because i would not your vote because we're not right it would be yeah it would be close

[01:10:09] around it up to 16 000. um but if i'm the only one who's saying that you know of course i i will We'll concede and say that because I do want it to go forward, but that's just my two cents. It's only for further discussion. Yeah, but I think that we can't push it forward until we actually have a number is what shares.

[01:10:30] Yes, we have to have something to put on place. Right, right, right. But I just think in lieu of what a lot of people are struggling, you know, our demographic that we serve also is struggling in other ways. um and so i just think we need to be mindful of that um you know and just be compassionate and to me that's showing compassion showing yes in 10 years we haven't had a raise we're going to do compassion then why raise it at all because it's just the cola and most most teachers at least get the cola even if we don't give them that six percent they're going to get that cola raise um that at least that two that three percent so i was thinking that just doing a cola raise

[01:11:09] which is the average raise that most people get um would be more i mean we could also just i know what raises we've given over the years right which is a lot more and i yeah but we could also just let the 2027 board do this that's true which is i would be fine to let 2027 school board all right so let me ask this one thing without putting a number on it a show of hands who would to see this conversation move forward i see two hands i see three hands we have six members so

[01:11:45] it wouldn't move forward it's 20 27's problem happy 20 27 yep all right uh we will be moving into closed session can i get a motion please chair i move the school board of the city of manassas enter closed section uh closed sessions pursuant to exemptions from open meetings allowed by section 2.2-3711 part a paragraph one of the code of virginia 1950 is amended for the following purpose

[01:12:23] discussion of superintendents polls for 2025-2026 school year i have a motion by mrs stevens second by mrs breccia that the school board the city of manassas enter a closed session pursuant to exemptions from open meetings allowed by section 2.2-3711 part a paragraph one of the code of of Virginia 1950 as amended for the following purpose: discussion of superintendent's goals for 2025-2026 school year. Is there any discussion? All in favor? Aye. Any opposed? Motion carries 6-0.



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