MIDDLEBURG TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 26, 2026

PENDING APPROVAL

PRESENT: Mayor Trowbridge M. Littleton
Vice Mayor Chris W. Bernard
Councilmember Pamela Curran
Councilmember J. Kevin Daly
Councilmember Deborah Scott Gallagher
Councilmember Chris Hersh
Councilmember C. Darlene Kirk
Councilmember Cindy C. Pearson

STAFF: Danny Davis, Town Manager
Martin Crim, Town Attorney
Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk
William M. Moore, Deputy Town Manager
Ali MacIntyre, Director of Business Development & Community Partnerships
Angela Fletcher, Finance Director/Town Treasurer
Shaun Jones, Chief of Police

The Town Council of the Town of Middleburg, Virginia held their regular monthly meeting on Thursday, March 26, 2026 in the Town Hall Council Chambers, located at 10 West Marshall Street. Mayor Littleton led Council and those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. The roll was called at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment

Megan Gallagher, 214 W. Marshall Street, opined that Town Manager Davis offered an excellent budget presentation during the last meeting. She advised that she supported the increased funding for the Police Department to add a staff member and for other increases. Ms. Gallagher noted the recent bank robbery and suggested the need for a communications protocol to alert residents of the need to shelter in place. She acknowledged that she received an email from the Town's alert system; however, she did not read it, as she thought it was spam.

Darlene Weeks, 204 Chestnut Street, questioned whether there was a communications protocol and noted that she had "little old ladies" calling her and she did not know what to tell them. She acknowledged that she was aware of the bank robbery; however, she did not know whether the individual had been caught or not. Ms. Weeks advised that the Town had her email address and telephone number on file and reiterated that she received no information. She opined that things were not the same as they used to be and suggested the need to be more prepared.

Town Manager Davis thanked Chief Jones and Deputy Town Manager Moore for handling this in his absence. He noted the partnership between the Middleburg Police Department and the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office and advised that they did a very good job of responding to the incident. Mr. Davis agreed the Town could always improve in terms of communication and noted that it always learned from incidents as they occurred, as the Town performed an after-action review both internally and with the Sheriff's Office. He encouraged members of the public to sign up for the Town's emergency alerts, through the Town's website, which were sent during any kind of incident. Mr. Davis also encouraged the public to sign up for the Sheriff's Office's emergency alerts at www.loudoun.gov/alerts. He noted that during major incidents such as the bank robbery, the Town relied on the Sheriff's Office for communications, as they were the ones who responded to situations like this on a regular basis. Mr. Davis reiterated his suggestion that people sign up for both alert systems and noted that the Town staff would be happy to assist them in doing so.

Vice Mayor Bernard noted that the Town could not sign people up for the alerts and explained that the individuals must proactively do so themselves. He advised that just because the Town had someone's email address, it did not get loaded into the system.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Clerk North advised that the Town no longer used the DialMyCalls robo alert system but instead used the alert system through the website.

Town Manager Davis explained that this system allowed people to get alerts either via text message or email, or both.

Mayor Littleton suggested the need to look at how the systems could be used once the staff went through the lessons learned exercise. He noted that the public must sign up for the alerts and advised that the Town could not do that for them. Mr. Littleton noted the need to help people understand how to sign up.

Councilmember Curran advised that she received calls as well. She agreed the Town responded well to the incident; however, she opined that there was a difference between what the Sheriff's Office did and community-facing communications. Ms. Curran advised that since The Hill School incident, people have been asking for community-facing communication. She acknowledged that details could not be given; however, she opined that shelter in place alerts needed to be issued. Ms. Curran suggested the need to be transparent without providing details and opined that this was what people were looking for. She noted that some communities had reverse 911 systems. Ms. Curran acknowledged that there was a difference between what the Sheriff's Office did and what a community-faced communications plan looked like. She asked that the staff look at this.

Town Manager Davis confirmed the staff would; however, he explained that there was no statement to shelter in place during this incident because there was no need for people to shelter in place. He advised that what was said in the alert was purposeful, which was that there was an incident at this particular location, there was heavy law enforcement presence and that people should avoid that area. Mr. Davis stressed that there was no threat to the public. He noted that the Sheriff's Office and Police Chief conferred on site during the event and agreed there was no threat to the public. He advised that to issue a shelter in place alert would have been contrary to the situation at hand.

Councilmember Curran advised that everyone heard there was a robber, with or without a gun, who ran through Ridgeview toward the Salamander Resort. She questioned the statement that a shelter in place alert was not necessary and noted that there were armed police officers running down Stonewall Avenue. Ms. Curran acknowledged that she was not an expert; however, she suggested the need to look at something that was more community-faced than no-to-little communication.

Councilmember Gallagher agreed and advised that she was surprised that she did not receive an emergency alert. She noted that the Council had addressed the need to communicate with the community and opined that the ideal way was to have a Middleburg focused communication that was used only when it was necessary and carefully worded. Ms. Gallagher advised that it was her impression from her neighbors that they wanted some type of direction, as they were frightened. She further advised that she would like to see some attention focused on this.

Mayor Littleton noted the need to provide information that was accurate. He further noted the need to not get people worried unnecessarily if there was not an actual threat. Mr. Littleton agreed that people wanted to be informed and noted that there was a balance. He advised that the Town would work on it.

Public Hearing & Action Item

Real Property Tax Rate

Town Manager Davis reported that a real property tax rate of $.1180 per $100 assessed value had been advertised, which was a decrease from the current rate of $.12. He noted that this rate was programmed into the proposed FY '27 Budget. Mr. Davis reminded Council that the tax rate needed to be adopted by March 31st and asked that they do so during this meeting; otherwise, they would need to call a special meeting.

Megan Gallagher, 214 W. Marshall Street, spoke in support of the proposed tax rate.

No one else spoke and the public hearing was closed.

Vice Mayor Bernard moved, seconded by Councilmember Daly, that the Town Council adopt a real property tax rate for Calendar Year 2026 of $0.1180 per $100 of assessed value.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Bernard, Curran, Daly, Gallagher, Hersh, Kirk, and Pearson
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: N/A
(Mayor Littleton only votes in the case of a tie.) (by roll call vote)

Public Presentation

Annual Report – Middleburg Business & Professional Association (MBPA)

Punkin Lee, President of the MBPA, reminded Council that it began in the 1960's and currently had over one hundred members, including eighteen new businesses. She noted that the membership renewals were underway and advised that they normally ended up with around one hundred forty members. Ms. Lee reported that they averaged between 65-86 people at their monthly Biz Buzz events. She noted that businesses signed up to host the events and advised that by December, they were already booked for the following year. Ms. Lee reported that the MBPA continued to promote the town and stage its own events, as well as assist the Town and Police Department with theirs. She advised that their Board of Directors met on the first Tuesday of the month, with the Biz Buzz being held the second Tuesday, with the exception of January.

Katie Carter reported that the MBPA's social media feeds had been quite good and noted that the Council had the details in their written report. She advised that new people followed their social media feeds each year, which helped drive traffic to their website. Ms. Carter reported that they had 9,400 followers on Facebook and reached nearly 400,000 people last year. She advised that their posting volume content performance was consistent with 2024, with the general audience being from Middleburg, Leesburg, Winchester, Arlington, and Alexandria. Ms. Carter reported that they had over 1,300 new Instagram followers this year and had an increase in impressions and comments. She noted that Facebook no longer provided stats on audiences; however, Instagram did. Ms. Carter reported that their biggest audience was women between the ages of 35 and 54, with seasonal and local events driving the most traffic. She advised that they were reaching people who had never been to Middleburg, as well as maintaining an online relationship with locals. Ms. Carter opined that their content improved within the last year and showed more variation. She reported that their plan was to continue to do different things to draw people in and keep them engaged.

Ms. Carter reported that people who were looking for things to do came to their website. She advised that they found it through a Google search and noted that people who came directly to their website were the second biggest source. Ms. Carter reported that their most viewed pages were their homepage, followed by attractions and things to do, then local events. She advised that the Salamander Family Reunion event received the most traffic. Ms. Carter opined that people who went to their website wanted to explore activities, things to do, where to stay, and general visitor information. She questioned how they could drive more traffic to different parts of their website and how they could get people to return more than a few times. Ms. Carter suggested they could do paid ads; however, they have had success in not paying for anything extra in the last four years. She reiterated her suggestion that they consider paid Google, Instagram, and Facebook ads. Ms. Carter noted, however, that in her experience, they did not produce much bang for the buck.

Ms. Lee thanked Ms. Carter for everything she did for their organization, including working with Business Development & Community Partnerships Director MacIntyre on the events calendar. She reviewed the MBPA's activities for 2025, which included eleven Biz Buzz events, the Fourth of July and Halloween Kids Parades, the Winter and Summer Sidewalk Sales,

Pink Friday Shopping, Small Business Saturday, the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, the December Carriage Rides, the Menorah Lighting, Jingle in the Burg and Jingle Paws. Ms. Lee noted that they issued their monthly newsletter and Biz Buzz recaps, which were sent to the members after each event. She reported that they also organized the Community Christmas Day Brunch, which was appreciated by the residents. She thanked Ms. Carter, Ali MacIntyre, and Camden Littleton for cooking that day. Ms. Lee reported that they also partnered with the Middleburg Police Department for National Night Out, Juneteenth and two Stuff the Cruiser events, the second of which brought in over a ton of food. She reported that they sent out a survey in February, which resulted in good, thoughtful responses from the businesses, which she shared with the Town's Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) earlier in the week. Ms. Lee noted that the items that headed the businesses' list of concerns were affordable housing for the workforce and staffing. She advised that they also wanted more social media information and town visibility. Ms. Lee noted that they also expressed an interest in nonprofit organizations in town and announced that the MBPA would begin featuring one every month during the Biz Buzz starting next month. She expressed hope that this would result in businesses and nonprofits partnering whenever possible.

Ms. Lee reported that the MBPA would continue to do their monthly events programming and noted the Postmaster had agreed to let them display their events cards again in the Post Office. She advised that they also created a larger major events card for 2026, which she distributed to the members of Council. Ms. Lee opined that these cards allowed the businesses to plan for when larger crowds would be in town. She reported that they continued to promote mid-week visitation and reported that they had great response to their Black History Month posts. Ms. Lee advised that they would try to include more of that in their social media presentations, which were warm and fuzzy, and opined that they set the tone of the town. She reported that the MBPA would help EDAC with some of their ideas, the first of which was a lunch card that identified what was available in the area. Ms. Lee advised that EDAC also wanted help with social media and noted that the MBPA would provide them with a list of local businesses, so they could contact them to address their needs. She opined that the biggest thing at the moment was AI and reported that the MBPA just had a new member join who specialized in AI For small businesses. Ms. Lee noted that they were trying to help the businesses. She advised that the MBPA's Board of Directors brought a great deal of experience to the table. Ms. Lee opined that they would have more to share as the year progressed.

Ms. Lee thanked the Council for their past financial support and promotion of their events. She asked that they continue to provide the same amount of financial support in FY '27. Ms. Lee advised that visitors who attended their Biz Buzz events were constantly amazed at the turnout and asked how that happened, to which she responded that the members of the community liked and wanted to help each other. She noted that Middleburg was a great place to live and do business. Ms. Lee advised that the MBPA helped promote it and kept the good vibes going.

Councilmember Pearson noted that she did not check Facebook daily and advised that once a post was missed, it was gone. She noted that ads would bring those posts back and opined that they would help. Ms. Pearson suggested the need to find a way to communicate with the residents and advised that the older generation did not look at their phones all day.

Ms. Carter reminded Council of how the algorithm's worked with regard to social media. She noted that Visit Middleburg's feeds contained a lot of information on horses, breweries, wineries, restaurants, hotels, and regional publications. Ms. Carter suggested that if the MBPA paid a little for ads, the posts would be projected more. She agreed this was something their board needed to discuss and opined that they had already experienced all the organic growth that they would.

Mayor Littleton thanked Ms. Lee, Ms. Carter, and the members of the MBPA for all they did for the community. He noted the effort that was required not only to keep people informed, but to put on the events themselves. Mr. Littleton acknowledged the camaraderie that was generated between the Town, the community and the businesses through the Biz Buzz events and likened them to mini town meetings.

Ms. Lee thanked the Mayor and Council. She also thanked Business Development & Community Partnerships Director MacIntyre for everything she had done for the town. Ms. Lee advised that the teamwork had been amazing and noted that she would leave some big shoes to fill. She advised that Ms. MacIntyre was a good friend, partner, and team member.

Staff Reports

February Utilities Report

Vince Gugliotta, of Inboden Environmental Services, reported that the wastewater treatment plant discharged 132,000 gallons per day on average, for a total discharge volume of 3.7 million gallons for February. He further reported a water system demand of 108,000 gallons per day, for total water produced of a little over 3 million gallons for the month. Mr. Gugliotta reviewed the operational highlights for the wastewater system, which included maintaining compliance with all sampling, replacement of a bad belt on an air compressor, the identification of some heaters that needed to be repaired or replaced, continued progress on sourcing a new ultraviolet disinfection system, and considerable progress on the EQ basin. He displayed photographs of some of those items. Mr. Gugliotta reviewed the operational highlights for the water system, which included maintaining compliance with all sampling requirements, repairs to the Well 4 generator, calibration of the new Well 4 transducer, addressing some frozen water meters, repairs to a broken belt on the Well 4 Air-wash blower, coordinating repairs to a considerable leak at a water meter on Stagecoach Ridge Drive, coordinating repairs to the clay valves at the Stonewall Water Treatment Plant, the identification of heaters at the Stonewall Plant that were in need of repair or replacement, and the installation of a new controller at the Stonewall Treatment Plant. He noted that this was a critical component. Mr. Gugliotta displayed some photos of some of those items.

Mr. Gugliotta displayed a graph from the DEQ Drought Monitoring Task Force, which identified the drought areas of concern in Virginia. He noted that the Middleburg area was currently in an emergency state. Mr. Gugliotta opined that the data for this area came from wells in Harpers Ferry and Chantilly. He noted that Middleburg's wells were currently not looking too bad. Mr. Gugliotta displayed graphs depicting Middleburg's well levels. He advised that based on the report, Wells L and P did not appear to be counteracting one another. Mr. Gugliotta noted that as Well L was pumped, Well 4 gained level. He advised that they may or may not be in the same aquifer.

Town Manager Davis reported that the Utilities Committee noted that as Well 3 was being used more, Well 4's water levels increased. He advised that the only challenge was that the Town was not sure whether there was heavy use of water at some point or whether someone opened a fire hydrant, as there was discolored water one day in late February or early March. Mr. Davis noted that this was the risk of running Well 4 too much. He explained that it was a balancing act to run Well 3 enough to allow Well 4 to recover, while not introducing too much iron and manganese into the system.

Mr. Gugliotta continued to review the graphs of the well levels. He noted that the water level for Well 4 was currently 158 feet, which had improved slightly, and was now looking very healthy. Mr. Gugliotta reported that Well L's water level continued to decrease slightly; however, this was not much of a concern at the moment. He noted that he was keeping an eye on it. Mr. Gugliotta reported that Well P's level was increasing slightly. He advised that Well 3's level was currently 250 feet below grade and noted that he had been pumping it nonstop for most of the week.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Mr. Gugliotta advised that they caught things like belts that were ready to break during their weekly inspections. He noted that they tried to put eyes on most of the equipment at least twice a week; however, some of it still broke during the middle of the night.

Vice Mayor Bernard reported that the Utilities Committee had a comprehensive asset list of everything that cost more than $100. He noted that this list included a date for how long each item was supposed to last. Mr. Bernard confirmed this was being looked at.

Special Projects Report

Town Manager Davis reminded Council that they discussed the South Madison Street Improvements Project during their strategic planning retreat and noted that the staff were still waiting on potential next steps with regard to funding. He reported that the Asbury Church Project Committee held the next design meeting with the architect and was working to refine some of the cost details, specifically related to items that were necessary for the structural stability versus the rest of the project, in particular those associated with the interior restoration. Mr. Davis advised that the staff would continue to update the Council as that project proceeded. He noted that the next design meeting would be held on May 22nd. Mr. Davis

reported that an Invitation For Bids was issued for sewer main repairs in three areas – two on West Washington Street and one on South Pendleton Street. He reminded Council that the two on West Washington Street were critical, as they needed to be completed before VDOT repaved Route 50 this summer. Mr. Davis noted that he and Deputy Town Manager Moore met with VDOT's contractor for the repaving project about the constraints of that project, the granite curbing, and the crosswalks, which were a major concern. He advised that they would work with him as the project date drew closer to discuss the pavement markings. Mr. Davis reported that Deputy Town Manager Moore added a project to the Special Project Report related to the East Washington Street Sidewalk Repairs and noted that it included a timeline. He advised that the goal was to have this work completed by May.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Clerk North reported that the Request For Proposals for Capital/Fundraising Services for the Asbury Church Restoration Project was issued on March 23rd and noted that she had already begun to receive calls from interested parties.

Town Manager Davis announced that thanks to Planner Rogers, who alerted the staff to the opportunity, Town Clerk North was putting together a grant application for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' Black, Indigenous and People of Color Grant for historic properties.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Clerk North reported that the maximum amount of the grant that the Town could apply for was $1 million. She noted that she was on the second step in the process and was just waiting for VDHR to give her authorization to submit a complete grant application.

Consent Agenda

A. Council Approval – March 6, 2026 Strategic Retreat Minutes; March 7, 2026 Strategic Retreat Minutes

Vice Mayor Bernard moved, seconded by Councilmember Hersh, that Council approve the consent agenda as proposed.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Bernard, Curran, Daly, Gallagher, Hersh, Kirk, and Pearson
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: N/A
(Mayor Littleton only votes in the case of a tie.)

Action Items

Council Approval – 2026-2027 Strategic Plan

Town Manager Davis noted that the Council held a Strategic Planning Retreat on March 6-7, which included a lot of productive discussions. He advised that the staff appreciated the Council's thoughtfulness and insight during the discussions. Mr. Davis reported that he took the Council's input to develop the top nine specific goals/strategic initiatives for the next two years and noted that the initiatives page listed each one, including the Council liaisons and staff leads. He advised that the plan was ready for Council's approval if they were comfortable with it. Mr. Davis noted that subsequent to its adoption, he would work with the staff and Council liaisons to develop action plans for each item, which would include a draft schedule, resources needed, threats, risks, and opportunities. He advised that the actions plans would be brought to the Council during the second meeting in April.

Mayor Littleton thanked the Town staff and facilitators, as well as the members of Council, for participating in the retreat. He opined that there were two great days of discussion that resulted in the identification of the Town's main areas of focus.

Vice Mayor Bernard moved, seconded by Councilmember Kirk, that Council adopt the Strategic Plan for 2026-2027, to include the nine strategic initiatives outlined for priority effort.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Bernard, Curran, Daly, Gallagher, Hersh, Kirk, and Pearson
No – N/A
Abstain: N/A
Absent: N/A
(Mayor Littleton only votes in the case of a tie.)

Discussion Items

Proposed FY '27 General Fund Budget

Town Manager Davis advised that he would review the responses to the questions that were raised during the last meeting and then review the revenues and each budget in the General Fund. He noted that the first question was related to the average transient occupancy tax (TOT) rates. Mr. Davis reported that the average was 5.5% in the State, 6.75% in the region and 8+% in high traffic areas. In response to an inquiry from the Council, he advised that Middleburg's rate was 8%, with 5% going to the Town and 3% being the regional tax.

Town Manager Davis advised that the next question was related to how much a 1% increase in meal or TOT taxes would generate and reported that it was $386,000 and $288,000 respectively. In response to inquiries from the Council, he advised that the regional TOT tax rate was set by the General Assembly. He noted that they tried to give the authority to set the rate to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority; however, Loudoun County sued because they were not an elected body and won at the Virginia Supreme Court level. Mr. Davis reported that the regional tax rate started at 2% and eventually was increased to 3%. He advised that he had not heard anything about increasing it again. Mr. Davis opined that the NVTA was generating a fair amount of revenue currently.

Town Manager Davis advised that the third question was related to the projected surplus for FY '26 and opined that it would be $577,000. He noted that the meals and lodging revenues for February were 4-4.25% more than this same period during the prior year.

Town Manager Davis advised that the next question was related to the real property assessments and the new homes in the Salamander Residences. He reported that the nineteen homes that have been constructed or were under construction represented almost 18% of the total value of all the homes in town. Mr. Davis further reported that the average home value, including those homes, was just over $1 million; however, it was only $885,000 if they were excluded. He summarized that 4% of the town's houses represented 18% of the value.

Town Manager Davis noted that the next question was related to the utility rate tiers. He advised that a response was provided; however, he would not go over the Utilities Fund until the next meeting, at which point, they would also have a rate discussion.

Town Manager Davis advised that the only change between the proposed FY '27 General Fund Budget before the Council and the one he presented during his budget presentation was a reduction in the business license revenues. He explained that one high paying business had some changes in their operation, which would result in reduced revenues. Mr. Davis reported that overall, he anticipated the BPOL revenues would increase year-over-year by 3.4%. He reminded Council that the primary revenue sources were the meals and TOT taxes. Mr. Davis noted that the year-over-year change in the General Fund revenues looked higher and explained that this was because revenues were projected to remain flat in FY '26. He noted that the proposed FY '27 Budget reflected two years of growth. In response to an inquiry from the Council, he advised that the meals taxes were at 4.8% over actuals and were now around 4.3%. He reported that TOT revenues were at 2.1% over actuals and were now at 4%. Mr. Davis noted that the numbers would be reviewed again with the Strategic Finance Committee during their April 6th meeting so they could provide insight into whether they thought the staff was over projecting the anticipated revenues.

Town Manager Davis reported that he was proposing a 2.5% cost-of-living adjustment for the general staff, which included everyone but the police officers. He noted that they were also eligible for an average of a 2% merit increase based on performance reviews. Mr. Davis advised that this was in keeping with Loudoun County and much of the other towns in the county. He reminded Council that with the exception of the Police Department, all of the health insurance expenditures for the staff were included in the Admin budget in order to prevent someone from identifying a particular employee's coverage election. Mr. Davis reported that health insurance costs have increased a bit this year. He reminded Council that every two years, the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) performed an actuarial review of the Town's required contributions to make sure the Town's portion was as fully funded as possible. Mr. Davis reported that as a result, the Town's required contribution increased a bit this year. He advised that the contributions toward life insurance decreased slightly.

Town Manager Davis advised that in general, Council expenditures were not proposed to change significantly. He noted that funds were included for citizen engagement and the Coalition of Loudoun Towns (COLT) activities. Mr. Davis reported that $2,500 was included in the proposed budget to fund the Town's share of a legislative liaison that the Towns Association of Northern Virginia (TANV) was proposing to hire to represent the interests of the towns in Northern Virginia. He noted that the interests of those towns were different than those of elsewhere. Mr. Davis advised that this was a topic that was still under discussion by the members of TANV; however, he wanted to make sure funding was included in the budget should it be recommended.

Mayor Littleton noted that the VML did a great job; however, it was always on the defensive. He suggested that if all the towns in Northern Virginia put in a little bit of money, they could get a lobbyist to go on the offensive for things that were needed. Mr. Littleton noted that it would not be for this legislative session but rather would be for the next one.

Town Manager Davis reported that the Town Attorney's rate would experience the normal rate increase. He noted that a bit of a buffer was included in the budget in the event of unexpected litigation. Mr. Davis reported that the Town received twenty hours of Mr. Crim's service per month. He opined that most of the remainder of the line items in the Admin budget were generally straightforward. Mr. Davis noted the equipment & software purchases line item. He reminded Council that Town Clerk North had reported on the new requirements that would be imposed on the Town related to the Americans with Disabilities Act and advised that the staff was working with the Town's meeting streaming provider to add closed captioning to the meetings that were broadcast. Mr. Davis advised that this would require the purchase of a new encoder, as well as increased monthly software costs. He noted that this was included in the 20% increase, which covered a variety of different software programs.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis explained that the Town did not necessarily engage its financial advisor each year. He advised that they were brought in this year to provide a full review of the Town's current portfolio and recommend some financing. Mr. Davis explained that sometimes those costs were rolled into a bond issuance; otherwise, the Town was billed on an hourly basis. He advised that because the Town did not do a bond issuance this time, it paid them directly.

Town Manager Davis noted that, as discussed during the Council's retreat, funding was included in the budget as a placeholder for charitable contributions, depending on the recommendation from the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors. He reported that the debt service payments were primarily related to the Town Hall building.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed Building & Grounds Budget and noted that it was primarily related to the maintenance of the Town Hall, including the associated maintenance contracts for things such as the HVAC system, janitorial services, keycard system, and fire/sprinkler system. He reported that the landscape maintenance had been reduced a bit and the electrical costs continued to be questionable, as the HVAC system was still being finalized. Mr. Davis reported that the staff had implemented some energy efficiency measures at the beginning of winter; however, it paused them when it was realized it was taking too long for the building to warm up. He opined that the staff would have a better idea of the power costs in the coming months.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis advised that snow removal costs were included in the Maintenance Budget, which was where all other maintenance activities were shown, including refuse/recycling costs. He reported that $20,000 was budgeted for snow removal every year and explained that for those years when the costs were

higher due to heavy snows, money was pulled from contingency reserve or other line items that were not used as significantly. Mr. Davis advised that there were no major changes in this budget. He noted that he did make some adjustments in the insurance line items based on how they were broken down in the invoices from the insurer.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed Planning & Zoning Budget. He noted that the Planner was hired right as he was developing the budget; therefore, her salary was incorporated into it. Mr. Davis reminded Council that $75,000 was included in the FY '26 budget for engineering consulting services and explained that the thought was that the Town may need to engage the services of The Berkley Group to assist with the Comprehensive Plan update. He noted that Deputy Town Manager Moore was working on a contract with them. Mr. Davis reported that he reduced this line item in the proposed FY '27 Budget to $30,000, which would be used for on-call or consulting services as needed. He advised that otherwise, there were no significant changes in this budget.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed Economic Development Budget. He noted that he changed the breakdown between the social media contract and the advertising/marketing line items; although, the total was actually slightly less than in the current fiscal year. Mr. Davis explained that he was reallocating the dollars where he thought they were most appropriate. He reviewed the contracts that were involved. Mr. Davis reported that the collateral line item was for any branded items or giveaways that the Town created, such as the ones for the Americas 250 events. He advised Council that he proposed a $5,000 increase in the contribution to Visit Loudoun and noted that the Town had been contributing $40,000 to them for the last two years. Mr. Davis opined that the Town received a lot of value from their activities, including a lot of promotion.

Mayor Littleton noted that Visit Loudoun's budget was approximately $4 million. He opined that $5,000 would not make a difference to them; however, it could make the MBPA's social media more successful. Mr. Littleton advised that he would rather give the MBPA the $5,000 and ask them to spend it on their social media.

Councilmember Pearson suggested the Town give both organizations a $5,000 increase. She noted that the small amounts did add up for Visit Loudoun and suggested it was more of a recognition of what they did for the Town.

Vice Mayor Bernard opined that the MBPA's mission was more aligned with Middleburg's than was Visit Loudoun's.

Councilmember Pearson noted that the Town did not receive budget reports from the MBPA when they presented their annual reports like it did from Christmas in Middleburg.

In response to comments from the Council, Town Manager Davis opined that the MBPA raised $25,000 in revenue from membership dues. He noted that the Town contributed $30,000 to them - $15,000 of which was for the carriage rides and $15,000 of which was a sponsorship. Mr. Davis confirmed the $15,000 for the carriage rides was essentially a pass-through grant.

Business Development & Community Partnerships Director MacIntyre reported that since the Town allocated $15,000 to the MBPA, they have taken over the events calendar, transformed their social media presence, and increased their number of events. She opined that they had done an amazing job with $15,000 and opined that an additional $5,000 would make an impact.

Vice Mayor Bernard suggested they be asked to develop a budget/plan for the year, so the Town would know how much they needed.

Councilmember Pearson suggested they be asked to provide a financial report with their yearly report since the Town was providing them with some funding.

Mayor Littleton agreed with the need for a budget plan. He suggested they provide a financial report with their budget.

Town Manager Davis noted that the line item related to Consulting Services was for the Placer AI Program that provided the Town with visitor data and trends. He noted that this contract was just renewed for another year. Mr. Davis opined that the Town could improve upon how it gathered data from it. He suggested that if the Town realized it was not giving all the data that was needed, the contract could not be renewed for another year, which would leave these funds unexpended.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed Economic Development Budget that was related to tourism specific events. He reminded Council that a couple of years ago, the Finance Committee suggested these be split out from community events and noted that this budget funded the larger events, such as Oktoberfest. Mr. Davis advised that it included the Town's $10,000 contribution to Christmas in Middleburg, as well as an additional $2,000 for ancillary expenses, such as feeding the police officers. He advised that other items in this budget included the Town's donation to the Middleburg Film Festival, sponsorships, and the Town's events agency contract. Mr. Davis noted that the Town had not been able to use the VCA grant for the last few years, which was a matching grant, as there were requirements as to who qualified. He advised that if the Town did not apply for the grant, it would not spend the funds and explained that this would mean that the revenue would not come in and the expenditures would not be spent. Mr. Davis noted that Ms. MacIntyre had done a great job of organizing the events, including identifying the costs, and staying within budget. He opined that there was a good plan in place for them.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed Community Engagement & Community Events Budget. He reminded Council that these were town resident specific and community specific events. Mr. Davis reviewed the list of events that fell under this category, which included Independence Day, Wellness Day, Middleburg Day, Art in the Burg, Juneteenth, and Burns Day. He reminded Council that the last event was discussed recently and noted that the Town may organize it for one more year and then hand it off. Mr. Davis advised that the funding for that event had been increased slightly now that the Town knew the actual costs of running it. He advised that the "Other Event Expenses" line item covered things such as the America's 250 events expenditures. Mr. Davis reminded Council that one of the main expenditures for this in FY '26 was for the enhanced fireworks display on Independence Day, which cost an additional $17,000. He noted that this would be absorbed in the current fiscal year budget. Mr. Davis advised that funding was included in the budget for infrastructure grants. He reminded Council that funding was no longer needed for the farmer's market.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed budget for the Police Department. He noted that it was based on the assumption that it would include one additional police officer, as discussed during the retreat, and explained that this was the reason it had increased by 19%. Mr. Davis noted that there were some slight decreases proposed for overtime and the other wages line items, as the Town would depend less on part-time employees and overtime. He reminded Council that the number one responsibility would be to make sure the Town had someone on duty twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In response to an inquiry from the Council, he confirmed the "salaries" line item was strictly for the salaries. He reminded Council that this increased not just because of the additional person, but also because of the changes in salaries for the police officers.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis reported that the assumption was that the net impact of the additional position was $125,000, with the salary being around $81,000. He explained that this was where the patrol officer salary was for someone with experience. Mr. Davis advised that as to benefits, he estimated someone choosing the middle benefit for health insurance, which would cost the Town $22,000 a year for dual coverage. He noted that the remainder of the cost was for VRS and FICA. Mr. Davis reiterated that the $123,000 increase in the salaries line item was also for the 5% pay increase for the sworn officers. He noted that this also included a 2.5% increase for the Chief, as he fell under the general employee's pay scale, not the police officers' pay scale. Mr. Davis reported that in terms of operational expenditures, there were some adjustments made to the O&M for insurance to reflect how the Town was billed by its insurer. He advised that as to the professional development line item, this was used for conferences and training that the staff and officers went to, as well as internal training. Mr. Davis noted that the general equipment expenditures were for office supplies, firearms, and cell phones. He advised that the line item for fuel & maintenance increased due to the additional vehicle that would be purchased for the additional officer and for the increase in gas prices. Mr. Davis noted the vehicle take-home program and reported that the actual costs had not exceeded the anticipated costs. He further noted that the maintenance costs had not reached the anticipated costs; although, he acknowledged that the vehicles were newer at this time. Mr. Davis reminded Council that money was built into the budget annually to make sure the vehicles were taken care of and issues addressed before they became a major one.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Chief Jones advised that the Department had a strict maintenance program. He further advised that the vehicles were inspected by Lieutenant Putnam on a monthly basis. Chief Jones reported that the oil was changed at a set mileage. He noted that they found a way to save money when purchasing new tires.

Town Manager Davis advised that the Town was purchasing tires off the State Contract. He noted that he was happy to provide more details on the Police Budget if needed. Mr. Davis advised that the Chief gave him a detailed O&M budget annually. He expressed appreciation for his efforts.

Mayor Littleton reminded Council that the additional police officer was contingent upon the Town having a conversation with the Sheriff. He inquired as to the status of organizing a walk through.

Town Manager Davis reported that the staff met before he went on vacation, now had the information, and was ready to sit down with the Mayor to review it. He advised that they could then reach out to the Sheriff to schedule a meeting.

Mayor Littleton suggested this be done early in the week.

In response to inquiries from the Council, Chief Jones reported that he applied for the equipment grant that was approved by the Council and was just awaiting word as to whether it would be received. He noted that it was a competitive grant. Chief Jones advised that some of the equipment was handheld breaching shields that would be placed in every vehicle so the officers would have protection if they needed to gain access somewhere. He explained that it would be utilized in the case of an active shooter.

Councilmember Pearson advised that it was important to note that when the Town experienced an incident recently, the County Deputies were able to get to Middleburg in under ten minutes. She noted that they would not be able to do so all the time; however, they could do it.

Town Manager Davis reminded Council that the next step in the budget was to discuss the Utilities Fund during the next meeting, as well as the utility rates. He noted that the Strategic Finance Committee would have met by that time and advised that he would provide any final input from them on the rate structure proposal.

In response to an inquiry regarding the microphones at the Council dais, Town Manager Davis explained that the system was designed to only allow five microphones to be active at any given time. He noted that the cost to allow all of them to be active at once was an additional $10,000.

Mayor Littleton noted that there was no need to have even five microphones on at the same time.

In response to an inquiry from Council as to whether it was possible to add four additional monitors to the Council dais, Town Manager Davis advised that it would take an overhaul of the system.

Mayor Littleton noted that to change IT systems would cost $30,000-40,000.

<u>2026 General Assembly Legislative Session</u>

Town Attorney Crim reported that the thousands of bills that passed the General Assembly were on the Governor's desk. He noted that the only thing he had heard was that she may request modification to or veto the collective bargaining bill. Mr. Crim reported that it appeared the cannabis market would not be ready to have product to sell by January 1st; therefore, there may be a delay with that.

Information Items

Vice Mayor Bernard noted that Ms. Lee alluded to the fact that Business Development & Community Partnerships Director MacIntyre was leaving the Town's employ. He advised that following her interview, he said "I don't really know if she knows about economic development, but that kind of enthusiasm and energy is what we need here in a big way". Mr. Bernard noted that connecting the businesses and residents was a priority and advised that Ms. MacIntyre hit that out of the park. He recognized her dedication and noted that she had been a joy to work with.

It was noted that Ms. MacIntyre would no longer be with the Town during Council's next meeting on April 9th. Town Manager Davis advised that Ms. MacIntyre would return during a future Council meeting to accept her resolution of appreciation.

There being no further business, Mayor Littleton declared the meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

APPROVED:

_____

ATTEST: Trowbridge M. Littleton, MAYOR

_____

Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk

March 26, 2026 Middleburg Town Council Meeting

(Note: This is a transcript prepared by a Town contractor based on the video of the meeting. It may not be entirely accurate. For greater accuracy, we encourage you to review the video of the meeting that is on the Town's website – www.middleburgva.gov)

Bridge Littleton: All right. We will call the meeting to order. First item is Pledge of Allegiance.

All of Council: 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.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. The next item is the roll call.

Deborah Gallagher: Deborah Gallagher.

Chris Hersh: Chris Hersh.

Darlene Kirk: Darlene Kirk.

Bridge Littleton: Bridge Littleton.

Chris Bernard: Chris Bernard.

Cindy Pearson: Cindy Pearson.

J. Kevin Daly: John Kevin Daly.

Pam Curran: Pam Curran.

Rhonda North: Rhonda North, Town Clerk.

Danny Davis: Danny Davis, Town Manager.

Martin Crim: Martin Crim, Town Attorney.

Bridge Littleton: Okay, next item is public comment. Anybody wish to address the Council on any matter they may approach the podium and have three minutes.

Rhonda North: Mr. Mayor, we do have a sign-up sheet.

Bridge Littleton: Oh, okay.

Rhonda North: Megan Gallagher.

Megan Gallagher: Surprise. [multiple speakers] My name is Megan Gallagher, don't start the time. What? [laughter] Sorry. My name is Megan Gallagher. I live at 214 East Marshall Street. I want to start by saying Town Manager Danny Davis, excellent budget presentation slideshow. This English major actually understood

it. I was living it up out of town and missed the meeting where you presented it, but it was really great. I wanted to follow up on Punkin Lee's comments from the last Council meeting I missed in support of the increase in funding, to add a staff member to the police department and to have the step ups and some of the other increases you've given for the staff that work for the town. I think they make a lot of sense. That said, I also wanted to ask, after the events of Tuesday night, that you develop a protocol that Chief can call on when he and the new officers are really swamped with an event. There is a communication system that just either says to people, we're responding to an incident shelter in your store or home or something like that. And when it's over, I have to admit, I got an email that I didn't recognize. I walked up to the sporting library for a 5:00 talk. The shopkeeper network had let me know as I walked by every open door what was going on. I saw it all from the other side of the street, and when I walked back at 7:30, I did. I think that's when I got the email and it looked like spam. It was a number I didn't recognize. It started with initials and acronyms. I didn't get right away. MPD obviously is the police department, but I put it in the spam folder. Never read it. I think it said things are fine. Don't worry. I have heard that when armed officers were responding on the other side of town, not mine, it was alarming. And so, if there's some way that doesn't burden the police department that has that, you can use a Middleburg alert and pick from a number. He can pick from protocol A, B, C, or D, just simple messages. I think that might calm people down. I never felt threatened myself, but I could understand by somebody sitting in their house all day, looks out the window and goes, what's that? Thank you. But the new officer will be great. I really appreciate it.

Bridge Littleton: Thank you. Anybody else?

Darlene Weeks: Darlene Weeks, 204 Chestnut Street. I would love to know if there's a protocol. I had little old ladies call me. Of course, I was in the shop watching the thing go through town, and I was in alarm. I mean, I knew something was going down, but I got in the house. I wasn't concerned, but I had people call me, and I did not know what to tell them. We did hear that it was a bank robbery, and we didn't know whether they were caught or on the loose or whatever, but I had nothing to tell anyone and I didn't get an email. Nothing. Never have from the town and 50 some years of living in this town, I have nothing. So, I was just wondering, is there something that, without bothering the police or people that are actually trying to deal with the problem, something that we could look up? You know, there must be something going down for you all. So, if you ever want to know, I mean, you've got my email on file with everything else, I'm sure, I hope. And my phone number. So, because, you know, I had nothing to tell those little ladies and I'm in that bracket too now, unfortunately. But that's okay. We're still ticking on. Okay. Thanks. And, you know, that was very alarming, but things have changed. As a retail worker, the people that walk through this town now is not the same as when we were little here. And, you know, we've got to be a little more prepared. Unfortunately, the bubble is slowly breaking and I think it has. So, thank you.

Bridge Littleton: Thanks. Anyone else? Okay, we will close public comment. Danny, did you want to take a couple of minutes to. I mean, that was part of both comments.

Danny Davis: Yeah. Sure.

Bridge Littleton: The incident earlier this week.

Danny Davis: Absolutely. And I'm going to keep this high level. First of all, I want to thank Chief and Mr. Moore for handling this situation in my absence. And I think overall our town and our partnership with the sheriff's office we did a very good job responding to the situation at hand. Regarding communication, we can always improve and we can always learn from incidents as they occur. So, what I'll say at the beginning is I'd like to and as we do with any major event like this, we conduct an after action of what we did how we responded, how we can improve upon that. And then we would do that both internally with our staff but also

partnering with the communications team and the responding team from the sheriff's office. So, we did something similar with the Hill School incident about 18 months ago. So, we'll do something similar with this as well. I think for the benefit of the public. And for the comments stated here I encourage you and we can help you with this if you want to reach out to any of us here on the town staff. But the town has emergency alerts that we send through our website channels, and we send those in any kind of instance. And we did send one. I think that's the one that Miss Gallagher mentioned. We can always, again, improve communication, how we state certain things just to make sure it's clear that this is a Middleburg emergency alert. But also really, really encourage the public to sign up for the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office emergency alerts on loudoun.gov/alert. And there, there we go. There's one right there. Sorry. But their alert system is fantastic. And in major incidents like this, we actually rely predominantly upon the sheriff's office for communications because they are the ones who respond to situations like this on a regular basis. So, I encourage you to sign up for both our town alerts, but also Loudoun County Sheriff's Office alerts. We're happy to help you through that. But they will send out incident or information about incidents. And then as I said, we'll, do an internal brief and with the sheriff's office and we can give you updates at the next Council meeting.

Chris Bernard: Sure. Just maybe to add a clarification to that is we can't sign people up for the note that you have. You have to proactively like legally, we can't put your email in that system. So, anyone out there like you have to go and do it yourself or ask for help, but it's not something that because the town has your contact information, it gets loaded into the thing. We just can't do that legally. Yeah.

Darlene Kirk: What happened to. I'm sorry. Thank you. Rhonda, what happened to the alert system that we used to do over the phone. And is that not usable anymore? Because you remember. Remember we would get phone calls.

Rhonda North: Yeah. It's called the Dial My Calls or robo alert system.

Darlene Kirk: Yeah.

Rhonda North: When we switched over to the new website that has the alert system, we switched over to that.

Darlene Kirk: Okay.

Danny Davis: And it allows text messages. So, if you can receive a text message, you get it that way and or emails as well. So, you can get them simultaneously or one or the other.

Bridge Littleton: So yeah, so I think when you guys go through your, you know, lessons learned and whatnot let's look at how we might use those systems. And even if it's you know, Loudoun County Sheriff's Office has taken the lead. They have more information at this place. That's something we can do. But I mean, to Chris's point, the public has to sign up for it. We can't sign you up. You have to sign up. So, but we. And probably the other part of communication is helping people understand how to sign up, because you got to dig on a website to find it. And people don't know. A lot of people don't know, a lot of folks don't know they need to do that. All right. Pam.

Pam Curran: Chris and I spoke earlier. And, you know, the good news is nobody was injured, right? And we have time to take a look at it. And I think to Darlene's point, I mean, I got plenty of calls too, you know, kids getting off school buses, people running down the street with arms, you know, one block away from each other. And I agree too, we responded really well to the incident, but I think there's a difference between what the sheriff's department does for us and community face communication. And I think that's what even since the whole school incident, I've been hearing people have been asking for. You know, without the details, you can't

give. I understand that, but it's shelter in place or there's an incident because what got put out by the sheriff's office. An incident in Middleburg, avoid the area. So, then our residents are seeing it. So if there's some way that we can be more community, you know, faced in terms of what we say without giving details, we can't give, then give a detail, you know, clear and then a complete, you know, transparent what you can say. That's what people are looking for in town. And I hear everybody, you can't make people do this and that. But I talked to a person in charge of communication for another small town, and they do reverse 911 SMS. I mean, they're able to do geo whatever called geo fencing, things like that. I mean, I'm not, you know, I'm not a communications expert, but I do think there's a difference between what the sheriff's department does and what a community-faced communication plan looks like. So that's what I would ask that we look at during this time.

Danny Davis: We'll look at that. I just do want to clarify one thing. No, there was no statement made to shelter in place because there was no need to shelter in place. So, I want to be very clear that what was said was said purposely, which is that the incident was occurring at a particular location. There was heavy law enforcement presence, avoid that area. There was no threat to the public. There was, if I may, there was no threat to the public. The sheriff's office and the Chief together conferred on site during the event that there was no threat to the public. So, for us to issue a shelter in place would have been contrary to the situation at hand.

Pam Curran: May I ask a question? But you know, Danny, I think what we all heard was the robber ran through Ridgeview towards the Salamander with or without the gun. So, for us to say that there's no reason to shelter in place, I think that's a bridge too far from something we even have the right to say or not say. I mean, shelter in place just means, you know, stay at home. I mean, that's all it means. I mean, you know, that's it. So, I don't know if I agree with that. I mean, we had armed officers running down Stonewall with guns. So, they must have thought something was going on. So, you know, I'm not asking I'm not an expert. I'm just saying that I do think we should take this time to look at something a little bit more community faced than just, you know, no communication or little communication.

Deborah Gallagher: Oh. Thank you. I would agree. I was surprised, frankly, that I didn't receive an accustomed to receiving the emergency calls regarding tornadoes and such. And I was surprised that I received no notice. And we have on several occasions in regard to many issues addressed the need to communicate with the members of our community, and this is an ideal way to have Middleburg focused communication when and only when it's necessary and carefully worded. But my impression from my neighbors Tuesday was that people wanted some type of direction and were very frightened and it would have been extremely helpful. So, I would like to see some attention paid. Thank you.

Danny Davis: We'll take all this into consideration as we come back to you.

Bridge Littleton: Thanks. Okay. Touched my screen. What is up next? Well, and I think, you know, Deborah, you, and Pam, you know, the input is very important, right? So, you want to make sure you provide information that's accurate. You don't want to get people unnecessarily worried if there's not an actual threat, but people want to be informed as well. So, there's a balance there, right? Find the right balance.

Deborah Gallagher: Yes.

Bridge Littleton: So that's what we work on. That's what we need to think about. Okay. The next item up is the public hearing for the proposed real property tax rate. Danny, if you want to give us a quick overview. Then we can go to the public hearing.

Danny Davis: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I won't go over the full staff report. We've talked about pretty much all of this information, both at the last meeting and even prior meetings before that. But I have advertised a real

property tax rate of 11.80 cents per hundred dollars of assessed value. That's a decrease from the current rate of $0.12. And this is programed into the proposed budget that was presented to you at the last meeting. By code, you have to hold a public hearing. And then, just as noted in the memo, this does need to be adopted by March 31st. So, barring your desire to call a special meeting, I would ask Council to vote on a tax rate this evening. I'm happy to answer any questions either now or after the public hearing. Thank you.

Bridge Littleton: We'll do the public hearing first that way, if anybody brings in a comment and we can talk about it, but. So, I will open the public hearing now for the proposed reduction in the tax rate.

Rhonda North: Yes, sir. We do have a list. Megan Gallagher.

Megan Gallagher: Before I get there, I just signed up for the county alerts the way they want. They wanted me to know all these things I want.

Bridge Littleton: Well, they need to find you in case there's a crime. [laughter]

Megan Gallagher: And my credit card number? My name is Megan Gallagher. I live at 214 East Marshall Street. You needed at least one public comment on, you know, the tax rate. This English major appreciates the use of the equalization rate. It generated a red number for my category of house townhouse, but modest increases for the others, and I think is a fair way to balance as if I really understand what it is, I support the tax rate you're setting. Thank you very much for your hard work.

Bridge Littleton: Thank you. Anybody else signed up? I'm sure the list is extensive. Oh, anybody else wish to address Council for the public hearing? Okay, we will close the public hearing. Any comments, questions, concerns, or input for Danny? I know we've gone over it a couple times at prior meetings, and we basically just stuck with the process we've used in the last couple of years. So, if there's no feedback, if anybody wants to make a motion.

Chris Bernard: Yeah. I move that the Town Council adopt a real property tax rate for calendar year 2026 of 11.80 cents per $100 of assessed value.

J. Kevin Daly: Second.

Bridge Littleton: Any further discussion? Rhonda, will you call the roll?

Rhonda North: Vice Mayor Bernard.

Chris Bernard: Aye.

Rhonda North: Council Member Curran.

Pam Curran: Aye.

Rhonda North: Council Member Daly.

J. Kevin Daly: Aye.

Rhonda North: Council Member Gallagher.

Deborah Gallagher: Aye.

Rhonda North: Council Member Hersh.

Chris Hersh: Aye.

Rhonda North: Council Member Kirk.

Darlene Kirk: Aye.

Rhonda North: Council Member Pearson.

Cindy Pearson: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. We've adopted the tax rate, which is great. Next item up is public presentation, Ms. Punkin Lee for the MBPA. And Katie.

Punkin Lee: Good evening, and thank you, Mayor and Councilmembers. Katie and I are pleased to give you our report of what the Middleburg Business and Professional Association did in 2025, as well as our plans for 2026. The MBPA was started back in the 60s and really has grown to have a life of its own. We currently have 100 renewals so far, including 16 new businesses.

Katie Carter: Actually 18.

Punkin Lee: Oh, she got two more today. So, we're waiting for the playroom. We still have Members renewals and new businesses still joining every week. So very exciting. Hopefully we will end up with our normal 140 ish members for the year.

Bridge Littleton: Four more.

Punkin Lee: Four more, or more, or more, they keep coming. And we probably average 65 to 85 per Biz Buzz with lots of folks who just come to check it out. Plus, businesses we're very lucky come to us to sign up for the month they would like to host for the next year. So usually, we're booked by December of one year for the following year. A nice problem to have. People are very generous. We continue to promote our town, our community, stage our own events, as well as help with town events and partner with our police department. The board meets the first Tuesday of the month and the Biz Buzz is always the second Tuesday except for January because all the businesses need a break and so only the board meets that month. And we usually get together at least three meetings to review the previous year and plan for the next year. I know this group likes facts and figures way above my low level of techno skills. So, Katie Carter is going to review all of this with you, and you have a printed version in your packet.

Katie Carter: Hello. Overall, our social media feeds have been quite good. We are up in some portions down in some others. Some are the same. Every, all the details are in the report. But honestly, that shows consistency. We get new people following our social media feeds every year. Which also helps drive traffic to the website, which is great. We have 9,400 followers on Facebook. We had 718 and change 1,000 views and nearly 400,000 in reach last year on Facebook. The posting volume content performance was quite consistent with 2024 our general audience pulls from the same places we've always pulled from Middleburg, Leesburg, Winchester, Arlington, Alexandria. Instagram had quite a jump in followers. We had just over 1300 new followers this year, as well as an increase in impressions and comments, which was great. And our. What's interesting, Facebook is

no longer offering stats on your audience, gender and age anymore. However, Instagram still does. And our biggest audience are women aged 35 to 54. Our seasonal and local events posts really drive the most traffic, which is great. So, like holidays, the Halloween parade is always a hit. Christmas of course. Our Black History Month posts do very, very well as do the local race meets. So, we're not only reaching people who have never been here before, but we're still maintaining that online relationship with folks who live locally, which is wonderful. We don't want to forget about them. So even with a little less engagement, we feel like our content quality improved this year and showed more or last year, excuse me, and showed more variation. So, part of the plan for this year is to continue on doing different things. It's not the same every day, blah blah blah blah. Just to draw people in and keep those who are already engaged with our presence engaged and then keep growing the new folks. And as far as our website, that is the place people go to look for things to do, which is great. We had very strong that most people find VisitMiddleburgVA.com via Google search. Direct traffic, meaning people who go directly to our website, is the second biggest source. And we have smaller contributions from different, smaller search engines that are listed. The home page people love to hit the home page, followed by attractions and things to do, local events. Last year, the Salamander Family Reunion Event post received the most traffic and then shopping places to stay and where to eat and drink. So basically, people who go to our website want to explore activities, things to do, where to stay, general visitor information and the events page performs very, very well, which is great. And my only thing. And I have to think about this. I don't really have an answer for you tonight, but how do we drive more traffic to different parts of the website? And how do we get people to come back to the website more than just a handful of times? It's just, it's a very, the traffic relies upon people discovering it via Google search essentially. And we could do things like pay for ads. We haven't, we've had a lot of success not paying for anything extra for the last four years, which is fantastic. So, we might consider whether this year or next, maybe we start buying Google ads or put an ad on Instagram or Facebook just to see what happens. In my experience dealing with this sort of thing for other organizations in the area, they haven't it really hasn't been much bang for the buck. But this is also very different. It's not such a niche organization such as I do work for the Upperville Horse Show, that's a very, very niche kind of thing where this is more appealing to a broader range of people. So, we could have better results. But that's something that the board will have to explore. That's all.

Punkin Lee: Thank you. Thank you Katie and I would like to go on record to thank Katie for all that she does for the MBPA, as well as working with Ali to keep the calendars current and correct, in addition to promoting town events, takes teamwork. And so much happens here all the time, which was a perfect segue to some of what MBPA did in 2025. We had 11 Biz Buzz gatherings, and I would urge Councilmembers to attend some when you can get you around town to good things. We had the July 4th and the Halloween kid's parades, the Winter and Summer Sidewalk sales, the Pink Friday Shop participation, Small Business Saturday, Christmas Tree Lighting, Carriage Rides, and Free Hot Chocolate. The Menorah Lighting, Jingle in the Burg, and Jingle Paws. We do the monthly newsletter, and the Biz Buzz recap was sent to the members right after each Biz Buzz. Also, the Community Christmas Day Brunch. A little sidebar on that. It is gaining momentum and much appreciated by residents but thank you to Katie for her cooking and to Ali and Bridge's sister Camden because we had that kitchen rocking at the parish house. It was quite a day. We also partnered with the police department for National Night Out, Juneteenth and two Stuff the Cruiser events at Safeway. The second event in December brought in over a ton of food. Yes, so that set the bar high. I hope we will at least get halfway more than that this December. It's pretty good. We also sent out a survey in February, which resulted in good, thoughtful responses from the businesses, many of which I shared at the EDAC meeting this past Monday. Heading their list was affordable housing, staffing. They wanted more social media information, town visibility, which I think reflects the sandwich board issue that is hard to get through. But one interesting thread throughout was their interest in nonprofit organizations in town. So, for that one, we will be featuring a nonprofit every other Biz Buzz when we're going to start next month, April at the Community Center with the Middleburg Community Fund. Seems appropriate. Community Center, Community fund. And so hopefully some of that will result in businesses and the nonprofits partnering for whatever they can come up with. We will continue to do

the monthly events program, and the postmaster has relented, and we now have the event cards available in the rack at the post office. So yes, that was like pushing the egg uphill. We were having trouble getting the residents to have access to all the stuff that's going on in town. So having it when they pick up their mail, hopefully. I've been watching the cards, and they have been picking it up so. We also did the larger major events card this year, which you have at your place, because I just got them from the printers. Those are the recurring events which helps the businesses plan for what's coming their way with larger crowds. And we still promote for coming to town mid-week. We had a great response to social media done on Black History Month as Katie said, people love to know more just about the people here and what they do. So, we're going to try to include more of that in our social media presentations as well as the events. We are warm and fuzzy, so we want people to please come. It sets the tone of the town. So, I think that will be a nice addition for kind of a subconscious promotion. We're going to be helping EDAC with some of their ideas. First one we're going to put together a where to eat lunch card, which for those of you in retail is probably the most reoccurring question that people ask. So, they'll have what's available in town, what's available like GoodStone, Boxwood, Cana, they all have lunch, which most of us are not aware of, so hopefully we'll have that out soon, which should help the mid-week business as well. Let's see. They were also very interested in social media. They want help. So, we're going to provide them a list of local businesses that they can contact to specifically address their needs. And the big thing right now is AI. We just had a new member join from the Plains, and they specialize in AI for small businesses. So, we're trying to help them people what they want, service them. The MBPA Board is a great group. Each person brings more than you can imagine to the table. So, I have no doubt that we will have more to share and happen along with town and businesses as the year goes along. We have nothing written in stone and that's all, you know we keep going. New idea, we'll try it. On behalf of the MBPA we would like to thank Council for your financial support for promotion as well as the Christmas festivities and if possible, I would like to ask for that same amount of support as we had had leading into 2026. In closing, when we have visitors to the Biz Buzz, they are always amazed at the turnout and ask how that happens. To which I reply, they come because we like each other in our town and are always willing and want to help each other. It's a great place to live and do business, and I know the MBPA helps to promote as well as to keep the good vibe going. So, anybody got a question for us?

Bridge Littleton: Thank you, Punkin. Any questions? Yes, Cindy.

Cindy Pearson: So, to Katie, when you were talking about Facebook and maybe advertising and such.

Katie Carter: Yes.

Cindy Pearson: I think I don't know enough about it either. So let me just start right there. But I don't check Facebook six times a day or every hour on the hour or go through it all times. So, if you miss a post, you've missed it.

Katie Carter: Yes.

Cindy Pearson: That post is gone. You don't see it again if you do, do the ads. I do know it brings it back up again. So, and I think that too would help. Is something we, as the town, need to think of on other things.

Katie Carter: Okay.

Cindy Pearson: It's the communication. Like, you know, you're putting these in the post office. Somehow there's got to be a way to communicate to people throughout town now, because they don't sit and look at their phone all day long.

Katie Carter: No.

Cindy Pearson: Yeah.

Katie Carter: Well not everyone does.

Cindy Pearson: No. Some people do. So, I got you. [laughter]

Bridge Littleton: Which generation are you talking about?

Cindy Pearson: The old one, me. But anyway. So yeah.

Katie Carter: Part of the hard thing is with the social media platforms, the more you use it, the more the algorithm keeps track of your habits, right? Like if you look at mine, my personal page, whether it's Facebook or Instagram, it's full of horse stuff. Like clearly. Yeah. Horses making social media posts, somebody falling off. You know that sort of thing. Or try this great new supplement that's going to change your world. And in the Visit Middleburg feed, we got a lot of horses, breweries, wineries, restaurants, hotels, a lot of regional publications, that sort of thing. Even tourism boards from towns our size or a little bit bigger, that sort of thing. And it all depends on how you use it. But perhaps if we pay a little bit. [off mic] No, no, I mean, you can spend as much or as little as you want. And clearly, they want you to spend more because the more you spend, the more they're going to project it all over the universe. But yeah, that's something the board definitely needs to talk about because I think we're at that place. Where we've experienced a ton of growth organically, just being who we are. And this might be a little bit of the push that we need.

Bridge Littleton: Any other questions for Punkin or Katie? Well, I just wanted to say thank you guys very much and thank everybody on MBPA. I mean. [applause] I know, I know like all of us on Council you do it for the money. [laughter] And but no, we really appreciate all the hard work, all the volunteerism and all the effort that goes into pulling off, you know, not only keeping everybody informed, but keeping all these events rolling and successful. And also, you know, for the camaraderie that's generated between the town, the community, the businesses and like you said, when you go to Biz Buzz, you can feel it.

Katie Carter: It's fun.

Bridge Littleton: And it's almost like a mini town meeting. It's a little. Yeah, exactly. So again, thank you guys very much.

Punkin Lee: Thank you. I do have one more item that cannot be overlooked, and that is to thank Ali for all that she has done and worked with us on town happenings. The teamwork has been amazing, and she leaves big shoes to fill. A good friend, a good partner and a good team member. Can't thank you enough. And now we'll be seeing you around the Burg. So, thank you. Thank you all.

Bridge Littleton: She'll definitely be back for every Biz Buzz because.

Punkin Lee: She better be.

Bridge Littleton: There's free wine.

Katie Carter: Yeah, because you're a member organization.

Punkin Lee: Thank you all.

Bridge Littleton: Thanks. Okay. Next up is utility report from Vince.

Vince Gugliotta: Good evening. Oh, Danny [off mic] thanks. I'm going to start off with the flow volumes. Wastewater treatment plant discharged about 132,000 gallons per day on average. And we totaled nearly 3.7 million gallons for the month. Water system at the town's demand of about 108,000 gallons per day. And we produced a little over 3 million gallons in total. Some operational highlights for the wastewater system. I'd like to mention wastewater treatment plant operated well. Maintain compliance with all required sampling. A bad belt on one of the air compressors was found early. We replaced it during routine maintenance. We didn't have any upsets from it going out of service. We found and then notified the town about a couple of heaters that went bad at the wastewater treatment plant. Those are currently getting looked at to get repaired or replace. We've made considerable progress on sourcing new ultraviolet disinfection system. And there was also a considerable progress made on the EQ basin, one pump cabinet. Unfortunately, there was a few more issues found that had to get addressed. It's since been made operational now. I was a couple pictures from our wastewater plant. That's one of the bad heaters up above. That's the belt. It was hanging on by just a fingernail. I don't know how, but yeah, we caught it. And that's our current UV system that's slated to get a complete replacement. Next one. Any questions about the wastewater system before I move on? Okay. Let me turn it over to the water system and focus on that. Some operational highlights worth mentioning are water treatment facilities and distribution system-maintained compliance with all required sampling. The Well 4 generator had an issue back when it was severely cold outside mostly due to the block heater went out and it was unable to start. That was pretty quickly fixed by our generator contractor. I think just a couple days later. We finally got the Well 4, the new transducer calibrated and it's working properly, dealt with a few frozen water meters earlier in the month during that severe cold spell, another broken belt was found on the Well 4 Air-Wash Blower that was replaced. Considerable leak was found on a Stagecoach Ridge at one of the water meters. We notified the construction crew over there turned the water off for them. They got it fixed. The quote to have for clay valves at the Stonewall water plant rebuilt was approved. And we're currently waiting on Cla-Val to come out and repair those for us. We also found a couple more damaged heaters at Stonewall Plant. And those have since been looked at and getting worked on. The number one highlight I'd really like to point out is the Stonewall Water Treatment Plant Controller in the basement. We made our final, I guess, quote and got that approved and an installation date figured out. That was installed earlier this month in March. And it's working fine. That was a super critical component of that plant that had to get addressed. Actually, the upper left corner, that's the controller that was just replaced at Stonewall. Some of the clay, that's that green and blue pipe. What those do is actually regulate the flow of the raw water coming from Well L&P moving through the filter system at Stonewall and two of the other valves are kind of like emergency pressure relief. Next slide. I'm not sure if I've ever included this in the reports yet visually but if you recall, sometimes I refer to the DEQ drought monitoring task force. This is the map they put together and actually keep updated almost on a daily basis. It's kind of a representation of the current, you know, ground water concerns for the state. You can see our region’s groundwater is actually in an emergency state currently. Kind of need to take that with a grain of salt. I think the two wells they use to come up with that value are located in Harpers Ferry and ones all the way in Chantilly. It's kind of a widespread for us in the middle. Currently our well levels are looking not too bad. No concerns noted for there. This is actually a combined graph of all the well transducers water levels. I know it's really tiny because it's a big graph, but there is a legend down there at the bottom. [laughter] Yes. Yeah.

Danny Davis: Read that, Bridge.

Vince Gugliotta: I know the uppermost line. I think it's dark blue that's Well 3. Going next down the graph, the orange is Well 4. What's pretty interesting you can see both of them are kind of dipping down at a similar level in the ground. So that's something we're keeping an eye on. And Well's L&P are the bottom two lines underneath the orange. Green is Well L and the lighter blue is Well P. They do not seem to be counteracting one

another as you see we continue to pump Well L&P actually gains level. Might be in the same aquifer may not be. Something else we're keeping an eye on, but it is kind of interesting. Well 4 is the orange kind of the second line graph down.

Danny Davis: And one of the items we noted in our Utility Committee is that, as you see, Well, 3 being used a bit more, that's the top line, the dark blue line and gave Well 4 the orange line a chance to increase in its well levels. So, we saw some positive response to using Well 3. The only challenge is not sure if there was a heavy use of water, or maybe someone cracked a hydrant or what, but we did have a day of some discolored water, I think early in March, or maybe it was late February. And that's kind of that risk we run by running Well 3 too much. So, we're kind of in this balancing act of giving well for enough time to recover when it can, but not introducing too much of the iron and manganese into the system. So, we'll continue working on that with IES as best we can.

Vince Gugliotta: I just want to click through the last just blown-up pictures of the well graphs individually. Well 4 our current water levels 158ft depth to water. So that's below grade. It's actually slightly improved since the end of this graph, you can see and that current level that's from today. Acquired this today. So Well 4 is looking very, very healthy right now. Well L it's very slightly still continuing to decrease in level. Not too much concern with it yet, but. Worth keeping an eye on. Well P is very slightly increasing, which is a good sign. And Well 3 I just pulled a level today. It's currently 250ft below grade. And I've been pumping it nonstop for most of this week. That's I think that's the last thought. Any questions about the water system?

Bridge Littleton: Any questions for Vince? Pam.

Vince Gugliotta: Sure.

Pam Curran: The belts that we find that are breaking and the heaters that are down, is that done with preventative maintenance or is it done when there's a fail to this system? Both.

Vince Gugliotta: Both. Honestly. Yeah. Hopefully we catch them on a weekly basis. Most of the equipment I try to put eyes on at least twice a week. Fortunately, some stuff does kind of just break middle of the night or so we'll, you know, we'll find it and repair it.

Pam Curran: Thank you, Vince.

Vince Gugliotta: Sure.

Bridge Littleton: Any other questions for Vince on utilities?

Chris Bernard: Something maybe to help answer Pam's question is the Utility Committee meetings are very interesting. I think I've made it to one so far, and it was like going to ten other meetings. But they do have like a very comprehensive asset list of like everything down to like 100 bucks or something that they have track of the date they put it in, how long it's supposed to last. It's pretty impressive. So, they're looking at it.

Bridge Littleton: Vince, thank you appreciate it.

Vince Gugliotta: You're welcome.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. Next up is project status update from Danny.

Danny Davis: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Just to run through this quickly, you have some updates here on South Madison Street. We discussed that at the retreat on March 7th and continuing to wait on potential next steps with funding for that project. Similarly with Asbury Church, we did hold our next project design meeting subsequent to our strategic planning retreat. Got some additional information and we're refining some of the details of the costs, specifically related to items that are necessary for the structural stability components of it, and to give some better insight into the core needs of that project versus the rest of the project, which would be for other aspects, particularly on the inside. So, we'll continue to update you on that project as it proceeds, and you'll see the timeline there for that next meeting that we have. And that's on May 22nd. As in terms of the sewer line video inspections, last week, we issued an invitation for bids for contractors to do sanitary sewer main repairs in three particular areas. Two are on West Washington Street, generally between Windy Hill and Chestnut Street, and one is on South Pendleton Street. The two on West Washington are the critical ones because we want to get that work completed before VDOT repaves Route 50 this summer. Currently, their timeline is to repave beginning probably the very last week of July or the first week of August, and it would be about a 1 to 2 week, I think, effort based on their current expectations. So, our goal is to get bids out in April or received in April for the sewer main repairs. I will note that Mr. Moore and I did meet with the contractor doing the VDOT contracted paving along Washington Street, which will be from I think, Windy Hill Road all the way to Melmore, if that's correct. And so, we've met with them, talked about some of the constraints in town, the granite curbing, the specifically the crosswalks being of major concern. And then we'll be working with them further as we get closer to the date related to the current pavement markings where we have, you know, some extra marking areas that we want to make sure get put back as they currently are today. And then finally, Mr. Moore added an additional item on the project report related to the East Washington Street sidewalk repairs. This is specifically to the Flexi-Pave project that you all approved at the last meeting. And you see here the timeline as he's working with the contractor on this particular site. So, the goal is to have this completed sometime in May or by May. Happy to answer any questions on these items.

Bridge Littleton: Any questions for Danny on the special projects? I only had one. What was the kind of side related, but what's the status on the RFP for the charitable groups to help fundraising?

Rhonda North: The RFP was issued on Monday, and I've already begun to receive calls from interested parties.

Bridge Littleton: Awesome. Okay. Thanks.

Danny Davis: And I think it's also worth noting, since we're talking, Asbury, to Ms. North. Thanks to Miss Rogers, our Planner informed us of potential Virginia Department of Historic Resources Grants specific to African American and indigenous historical properties. And so, Miss North is putting together a grant application to the state for that particular grant cycle. And we'll see how that goes.

Bridge Littleton: Great. How big can the grants be?

Rhonda North: Up to $1 million.

Bridge Littleton: Awesome. Okay.

Rhonda North: I'm on the second step of the process. I'm just waiting for them to give me authorization to submit a complete grant package.

Bridge Littleton: Gotcha. Okay. That's great. Thank you. All right. Next item is Council approval of the strategic planning retreat minutes on the consent agenda, which we can just go ahead and approve. Would anybody like anything removed from the consent agenda? Would anybody like to make a motion?

Chris Bernard: I move that we adopt the consent agenda as proposed.

Chris Hersh: Second.

Bridge Littleton: Any discussion? All those in favor say aye.

All of Council: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Opposed? Abstentions? Okay. Next up is Council approval. I was one step ahead of the strategic. Hold on. Let me get back up here. Of the strategic of our 2026 2027 strategic plan.

Danny Davis: Mr. Mayor and Council, for your sake and for the members of the public as a reminder, you held your Strategic Planning Retreat on March 6th and 7th. I think we all agree it was a great, great event. Good discussions, very productive. And I will say from town staff side, we always appreciate the Council's thoughtfulness and insight during those discussions. We took the Council's input from that and developed out as best we could. The language around the top nine specific goals or strategic initiatives for the next two years. I will note the first page. We really didn't change at all that I recall. But the primary changes are on the second page, the top nine goals. And reflecting in this, both Council member liaisons as well as who the staff lead is on each of these. We're happy to tweak any language, if necessary, but I think I heard from a few Councilmembers that were comfortable with the language as drafted. So, it's prepared and ready for your approval if Council is ready and will continue working forward through this. Just for Council's benefit, our intention would be then subsequent to adoption of this, I'll work with town staff and each of the Council liaisons and the staff liaisons and we will develop action plans for each of these items. We've done this in the past where we put together a draft schedule as well as various potential resource needs, threats, risks and opportunities. And then any, whether it's staffing or funding resource needs. And then bring that back to you in a month at your second meeting in April.

Bridge Littleton: Danny, thanks. And thanks to you, Will the facilitators, the whole staff, everybody, you know, pulled it together. I thought it was a great two days great discussion. I think we came out with, you know, the main areas of focus. And also, thanks to everybody on Council for taking the time out of your personal lives to spend two days and nights and one night together. And it was really good. So, does anybody have any questions for Danny or any member of staff on the strategic priorities before we adopt them? And then Danny, just do them. [laughter] Yeah. [off mic] Okay. Chris.

Chris Bernard: I move that the Town Council adopt the Strategic Plan for 2026 and 2027 to include the nine strategic initiatives outlined for priority effort.

Darlene Kirk: Second.

Bridge Littleton: Any discussion? All those in favor, say aye.

All of Council: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Opposed? Abstentions? Okay. Next item up is the FY 27 general fund discussion. Back to Mr. Davis.

Danny Davis: All right, Mr. Mayor. Thank you. So, what I'm going to propose is that we'll walk through the memo very briefly. I have a few answers to some of the questions that were raised at the last meeting during my presentation, and then I'll bring the budget up on the screens. And we can just start with general fund revenues and then we can go department by department and administration. As noted in the memo, my recommendation would be for our expenditure side, we go through each of the departments and leave the police department to the end. If we have time for it, I think it'd be great to go ahead and have some of that discussion tonight. But if Council decides we can always push that to the next meeting. So, in your packet after the memo, I do have a set of questions and responses to some of the questions raised in the last meeting. I hope you have had a chance to review this, and this was helpful. First question was on average TOT rates across the region. You'll see that in our immediate area; it's somewhere about 5.5%. And then it grows. As you or I'm sorry, that's Commonwealth wide in our region is six and three quarters of a percent. Of note, what was interesting is those who have rates higher than 8% are typically those in high traffic areas. You're looking at right on interstates where you're typically going to have transients coming through. But it really does vary. So, there's, no kind of rhyme or reason, if you will, to any particular rates around us or throughout the Commonwealth. The next.

Bridge Littleton: Danny remind me real quickly, what's our current rate?

Danny Davis: Our current rate is a total of 8%. It's five of us and three regional. Yep. And the next, the next question was if we raised either meals tax or the TOT by 1%, how much would that generate? So, you'll see in the chart under question number two, each percent, if you will, of the meals tax is over $386,000. So, if we raise that from 4 to 5%, that would be a significant increase. TOT is just $288,000 per 1%. And you'll see the impact of that on our potential revenues.

Chris Bernard: How do the regional rates get set? Is that like the?

Danny Davis: General Assembly.

Chris Bernard: The State Tourism Board probably recommends it or something and then they adopt it.

Danny Davis: So 22nd history, the General Assembly did not want to raise taxes. So, they tried to give the authority to impose taxes to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, which is not an elected body, it's an appointed body. And Loudoun County filed suit. And actually, won at the Virginia Supreme Court, because they don't have the authority to impose taxes. So, following up in 20, I believe it was 2013. The General Assembly decided to actually bite the bullet and adopt the NVTA with taxing authority and imposed a variety of taxes from deeds, additional taxes on deeds, maybe gas tax. I'm blanking on all the others, but one in particular was the 3% additional TOT. So, it is a General Assembly adopted rate.

Chris Bernard: Has their since they've adopted that and I guess what 13 years ago was it at three then?

Danny Davis: It was actually two. It started at two and they went to three.

Chris Bernard: And was that a gradual or was it just 1% one year.

Danny Davis: It just went up, I think in 2020. I want to say I could be.

Chris Bernard: So, has there been any talk about moving that number?

Danny Davis: I have not heard. I have not heard any rumblings. I don't stay in touch with the NVTA discussions very deeply, but I think they're generating a fair amount of revenue right now as it is. The next question, I believe the Mayor raised was, what do we think our surplus for current fiscal year is going to look like in our budget, we had projected initially around a $270,000 surplus for the year that's unallocated revenue based on looking at revenues coming in about three or so percent higher than budgeted and expenditures probably being about a 4% savings. Our total projected surplus for the year is over $577,000. So, kind of in that range that I thought. I will note, I just looked at meals tax and TOT for the month of February, which we received the end of last week. And we're still right at that 4 to 4.25% of meals tax and TOT being above prior year. So, we're still trending in pretty good direction with those receipts. Any questions on this at the time? Okay. There was a question about real property assessments and what the new homes in Salamander have done. They represent almost 18% of the total value of all the homes in town, that's of the 19 properties currently either built or under construction. That's pretty significant. And you'll see the difference with including those homes, the average home value is just over $1 million. But if you exclude the value of those homes, the average home value is $885,000. So. Yeah. Sounds right. Yes. Yes, that sounds about right. So, 4% represents 18% of the value. And then on utility tiers, you'll see the information here. We're not going to discuss utilities at this time at this meeting particularly, but we can come back to this at the next meeting when we look to get into the rate discussion. So, with that, Mr. Mayor, if it's acceptable to Council, I'll bring up the proposed budget in just a second. Oh, if it says revised it should be if it's in the packet, that should be.

Cindy Pearson: Yeah.

Chris Bernard: So, there's two in there.

Bridge Littleton: One scheduled.

Danny Davis: Oh, sorry. One is the presentation? Yeah. If there's a budget in there, it should be the final one. My bad. So, in your packet or on the screen, this is the revenue chart. We've looked at this again about a month ago. So don't have any. The only change that I noted this in my presentation is that for fiscal 27, I have reduced the business license revenue line item as because we have one particular high paying taxpayer who has had some just structural and other changes in their operations. And we think we might see some reduced revenues from that particular taxpayer, but don't want to try to assume too much, but also don't want to ignore that we think there are some just changes happening around with one particular taxpayer. But regardless of that, we still see the overall revenues are increasing about 3.4% year over year. I'm happy to answer any questions about any specific line items for the real property revenue or, I'm sorry, the general fund revenues. Again, our primary sources, as you know, are the meals tax and the TOT. I know that the change year over year looks a lot higher, that's because we budgeted fiscal 26 at a flat amount compared to 25. So, we're in 27 we're essentially seeing two years of growth in one year, if you will.

Bridge Littleton: If you compare that to actual, what's it going to be?

Danny Davis: Compared to actual? Yeah. And that should be off to the side there. The actual. Oh, I'm sorry, let me get my [inaudible]. We were at the time of this; we were at 4.8% over actuals. Now it's around 4.3. I mean it's still in the same range. And TOT I had 2.1% over actuals. We're now at 4% over actuals.

Bridge Littleton: Thanks.

Danny Davis: And again, we'll review this with the Finance Committee on April 6th. So, we also look to the Finance Committee to give us insight into whether there's we're overshooting any of our anticipated revenues or if we are you know, right on track and we look to them for guidance. Okay. I'll go ahead and jump into

expenditures if that's agreeable with Council. Again, it may not be easy for me to run this on the screen or if it works for you, I'm happy to continue doing this. As a reminder, I have proposed a 2.5% market adjustment or cost of living adjustment for general staff, that's everyone but the patrol officers. And then staff is eligible for up to, I'm sorry, an average of 2% of merit increase based on performance reviews. Some may receive higher; some may receive nothing depending on performance reviews. But so, on average, we consider that 4.5%, which is again keeping with Loudoun County Town of Leesburg, pretty much all the other towns in Loudoun County. So that is specific to salaries. For those who are new on the Council, as a reminder we put all health expenditures for staff in administration with the exception of the police department. We didn't want to call out individual departmental health expenditures because in departments of one, you could kind of decipher what people have chosen. And we don't want to make that information public. What we have seen is that even though our health costs did increase a bit this year, just based on general elections of what people have chosen to use or not use, our costs for health insurance really have stayed relatively flat year over year. We also, every two years VRS that's our retirement system that we pay into as the town. They do an actuarial review of our required contributions to make sure that our portion of VRS is as close to fully funded as possible. So, our amounts of required contribution did increase a bit this year. So, you'll see that reflected in each department. A slight decrease in our contribution towards life insurance which is a portion of VRS. But you'll see across the board some variety of changes in the VRS line item. Again, that's essentially actuarially determined.

Bridge Littleton: It's the only bad thing about interest rates going down.

Danny Davis: Yes. Yes, it is. And yes. Anyway, I won't touch that. [laughter] In general, you see for Council expenditures here, not really any significant changes. You do have dollars in your citizen engagement line, which covers Coalition of Loudoun Towns for any of their activities, that's COLT that the Mayor is part of. One item that we are talking about with COLT is potentially engaging with a legislative liaison that would represent the interests. And I'm sorry, that's not COLT, that's TANV, that's the Town's Association of Northern Virginia. So, it's like a mega COLT. It's Fairfax County, Prince William County, and Loudoun County.

Bridge Littleton: Towns of those counties.

Danny Davis: The towns of those counties. So, we're talking about Vienna, Haymarket, Herndon and then the seven here in Loudoun and then Dumfries. And so that would be a contribution of around $2,500 to support that effort. But they would represent the issues that are specifically of interest to towns of Northern Virginia, because we know that our interests are quite different than those of even towns in just south of us or in the valley or of course, in southwest or south side. So, we have not adopted that, that's still under review and discussion, but we wanted to make sure the dollars were in place in the budget should that be recommended by the Town's Association of Northern Virginia.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. And I think the idea here is like VML does a great job. I mean, but it's always on the defensive. And it's, you know, if because there's a lot of towns in Northern Virginia, if we can all put a little bit of money in and actually get a lobbyist to go on the offense for the things we need. It might be good dollars spent to pool them all together. So that's kind of the idea around it. Now, obviously not this legislative session because it's already over, but for the upcoming one.

Danny Davis: Looking at administrative expenses. I'll speak kindly of the attorney who's sitting next to me. But they have normal rate increases. And we continue to build in a little bit of buffer there in case we have any unexpected needs for litigation services. But essentially, we, have 20 hours that we plan on a month for Mr. Crim's services. And depending on the number of different items or activities going on, we might go over that a little bit month by month. The rest of the expenses are generally straightforward. You will see a jump in the line of credit fees and interest that's just a small amount, even though the percentage looks quite high. I wanted to

bring that back into line with our normal costs. You'll see the rest of administration here. One item to bring up in discussion of equipment and software purchase. One is Miss North, I believe has brought up in one of her reports in the past that we will be required under the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide live closed captioning during our meetings. So, we have worked with our current web streaming provider. They have we will be required to buy a new encoder, which is what your video flows through. And so that's reflected here in the equipment software purchase costs. And then a little bit of additional costs in our ongoing software contract with them. You'll also see here under software maintenance, it's a 20% increase that covers a variety of different software programs. We have anything from the Swagit Closed Captioning System our current IT contract, and just the regular ongoing costs that are with our Laserfiche online record system, website host all those different things. Yes, sir. [off mic] Yeah.

Chris Hersh: Administrative Financial Advisor.

Danny Davis: Yes, yes.

Chris Hersh: What's the discrepancy?

Danny Davis: Yes. So, we don't necessarily engage with them every single year. And so, what we had done is brought them in this current fiscal year to do a full review of our, current portfolio and potentially recommend some financing, if you might recall that from discussions. And then sometimes those funds get, or those costs get rolled into an issuance. And if not, then we end up getting billed essentially on an hourly basis. So. [off mic] That's right. Yeah. It ended up being a bit more time. And because we didn't do a bond issuance, we ended up just paying it directly. That's correct. Thank you. And then for the rest of administration I will note, as discussed at the retreat as well as in my presentation under charitable contributions, I have a placeholder amount for if that project is to proceed and receive recommendation from Loudoun County Board of Supervisors. So that is just set aside at this time. And then our normal debt service, which is for primarily the town hall building here. So that's administration in a nutshell. I'm happy to answer any other questions or again, if you come up with questions over the next few weeks, we're happy to provide more detail as needed.

Bridge Littleton: Any questions so far on the budget as it relates to the admin side? Okay. All right.

Danny Davis: The rest may not be quite as laborious hopefully. Building and grounds that relates primarily to this building here as well as the grounds around this building. You'll see that we have repairs and maintenance has increased a bit. That's just with the various contracts that we have in place to maintain this building, that's everything from our HVAC system, the electronic keycard system, janitorial services, and other contracts needed to make sure that we have our fire and sprinkler inspections, things of that nature. We have reduced a little bit of our landscape maintenance around this building. Electrical services continues to be a little bit up in the air just with getting our HVAC system finalized. We had implemented some energy efficient decisions at the beginning of the winter and then realized that every morning we were coming in and it was 64 degrees and it was taking about eight hours to warm up. So, we paused those energy efficient measures, and I think we'll reinstate those as the summer comes along. We also know that power costs are going up over the coming weeks or I'm sorry, months. And then just normal costs here for our building here. That's all I have on buildings and grounds.

Bridge Littleton: Pam.

Pam Curran: Danny, where is snow removal?

Danny Davis: Snow removal is in maintenance. We'll jump to that shortly. Actually, that's probably the next one to come to. We're going to skip police for a quick second, so if you want to swipe through that. So, we will go to maintenance. This is currently where we primarily have all of our other maintenance activities which cover the rest of town. So, you'll see refuse disposal. That's our waste trash and recycling pickup costs. What we have here snow removal Pam; we budget essentially $20,000 every year. Some years we use very little of that. For when I first started, I think that number was budgeted at $50,000 because we'd had a really big winter. And so, there was this fear we need to put the money. And then we didn't use it for four years. So, I said, how about we drop it to 20? That gives us flexibility. And then for those particular years where we have a heavy snow, we can pull from, contingency or otherwise, or other line items that aren't used as significantly. No other major changes here in the maintenance line item, I did do some readjusting of our various insurance line items just based on how they're broken out in the invoices from them. So if you see some wacky numbers, some go up, some go down, whether they're attributed specifically to maintenance or police or general administration, just trying to get those as close as possible to what is kind of reality from our insurer related to either property insurance, personal liability insurance, auto insurance, things like that. Any other questions on maintenance?

Bridge Littleton: Any questions for Danny on this one? Okay.

Danny Davis: All right. Rocking and rolling. Planning and Zoning. This is Will and Amy in the Department of Planning and Zoning you'll see this was developed right as Amy began. So, we were able to incorporate her salary into this as well as then you'll see some just other changes related to benefits or FICA and VRS. Of note the engineering consulting line we had built in a little bit of a placeholder in fiscal 26 of $75,000. Thinking if we needed to engage with any consultant specifically, potentially the Berkley Group in the update to the Comp Plan. I know that Mr. Moore is currently working on a proposal from them for current fiscal year to use some of those dollars to help us update various components of it, but then once we get the final files, we can actually make any final kind of textual tweaks if there's anything after the fact. So, we've dropped that back to what is more of our normal budgeted line item of $30,000 a year that's for on call as needed engineering or consulting services. If we need to bring someone in to run a community engagement effort about a particular topic, or we just need to contract out for a small analysis or other engineering study. This gives us flexibility for Mr. Moore to direct those activities, and other than that, no other real significant changes in Planning and Zoning.

Bridge Littleton: All right. Any questions? All right next.

Danny Davis: Now, I think we need to have Ms. MacIntyre come up and explain every line item of her budget, line by line. But no, she is here ready to answer.

Bridge Littleton: We're good for that. [laughter]

Danny Davis: Yeah. She's here, ready to answer any specific questions you might have. You'll see on the first slide here focus on just general expenditures. And then getting into the marketing side, I will note that I have changed the breakdown between the social media contract and advertising and marketing line items. The total cost is essentially the same. It's actually a little bit less than what we had budgeted in current year. So again, you might see one go up and one go down. That's really just reallocating those dollars where I think they're most appropriately set. But that's our social media contract with Red Thinking. They continue to do a great job. And then the media and content creation is when we bring them in to do additional photoshoots or videos or other content that might be outside the normal scope of our marketing efforts. And then collateral is if we might create either additional pieces. This might be for branded items or giveaway items or promotional things related. And what yeah, like the Americas 250th event where we've done a number of different items that we give away at various events. I have proposed an increase of $5,000 in our contribution to Visit Loudoun. Currently we are contributing $40,000 to them on an annual basis that was revised two years ago. And so, at that time, we had, I

had actually proposed a higher increase and Council said, no, let's, you know, kind of step it little by little over time. So, my recommendation based on the current. Again, a lot of value that we receive out of their activities. A lot of promotion of Middleburg, a lot of as Miss Erickson mentioned at the meeting in February a significant amount of hits and engagement on pieces related to Middleburg that they are directly involved in as well as a lot of direct groups that they have booking at Salamander because of their specific efforts in recruiting them. So, we think they do valuable service. And again, this $5,000 increase from what was approved essentially two years ago.

Bridge Littleton: So, I've got a question about that one.

Danny Davis: Yes.

Bridge Littleton: So, I mean, there are budget is millions.

Danny Davis: It's like three and a half, four.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. Millions. $5,000 to them will not be, it will not make a difference. But with MBPA them wanting to see how they could be successful or more successful in amplifying posts and buying extra social media whatever, $5,000, because they have a budget of tens of thousands could go a long way. I would be much more on board with giving the $5,000 to MBPA and ask they spend it on the social media stuff that they want to try and do, than giving it to Visit Loudoun where it won't make an appreciable difference. I think we get much bigger bang out of the buck, given that money to MBPA.

Danny Davis: And that's a fully a Council. I would just simply note it's not necessarily an either or. It could be a both and.

Cindy Pearson: And I was just going to say that.

Danny Davis: That's up to Council.

Cindy Pearson: I think it should be both.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah.

Cindy Pearson: Because Visit Loudoun, I mean, you know, those $5,000 do add up and it more is. Thank you for what you're doing for us. Keep doing it too more than just a dollar amount. I think, but yes, MBPA could use it.

Bridge Littleton: And I mean, I think if we give it to MBPA or whatever we tell them, you know, use this for the social media experiment not experiments, you know. But the amplifying of the posts and the impressions and stuff like that, that they were actually talking about wanting to get, you know, and talk about two church mice and squeezed knuckles together and make it go as far as possible. I think that's I don't know if anybody else feels that way.

Chris Bernard: Their mission, I think, is probably much more closely aligned with ours than Visit Loudoun.

Cindy Pearson: And we don't ever receive anything of their budget, you know, like Christmas and Middleburg we asked them to give us a rundown of their the budget for the year. They didn't do that in their report. The business association didn't.

Bridge Littleton: Do they get a majority of their funding from us? I don't think. [multiple speakers]

Danny Davis: They get dues.

Bridge Littleton: But that's $200 bucks.

Danny Davis: Oh, but with 100 Members, that's $25 grand. So, and now remember, of the $30,000 that we contribute to them, 15 of that is like a sponsorship. And then 15 of that is specific to the carriage rides or other Christmas activities. Ali if you want to come up. Yeah. So, some of those designated particularly for just an activity while others is a general.

Bridge Littleton: And that's so the stuff with the carriage ride is basically a pass through.

Danny Davis: It is.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah.

Ali MacIntyre: Yes. So, the carriage ride so the breakdown is $15,000 to go directly towards MBPA. And then the other $15,000 is towards Christmas activities. And I have helped facilitate the contracts just to get everything set up with any volunteers, things like that. And the majority of the funds do go to the carriage rides, that's how they're able to keep the price down. So, it's accessible at $40 per ride. So yeah, I will say so it's really only the $15,000 that they're working with for the organization because everything else is already allocated. And so, this year they've already allocated the funds to the December activities.

Danny Davis: But to answer Miss Pearson's comment, we have not received a budget or an accounting of their budget in the past.

Bridge Littleton: So, it seems like they get about $30,000 from dues, give or take, and they get 15,000 from us as a sponsorship. And the other $15,000 I get it that's for Christmas. So that's its own little thing. Okay. So yeah, I mean, I think $5,000 for social media stuff would be very meaningful for them. And again, I'm not saying we don't have to do visit Loudoun, but I think if everyone's comfortable, I think, you know, definitely increasing MBPA by five grand would be of benefit, especially since they want to try this new program.

Ali MacIntyre: Oh, absolutely. I mean, when we allocated the $15,000 initially, at least in my time here, they've taken on the events calendar. I mean, what Katie has done to transform their social media presence and the amount of events they've taken on in just the four and a half years, it's I mean, quadrupled. I mean, I don't have all the data on it, but I mean, you guys have the report. They've done a really amazing job. So, I'm sure the $5,000 would make an impact.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah.

Chris Bernard: Just maybe a suggestion. Maybe we should tell Katie and Punkin to come up with a plan for the year, and instead of just giving them five and say, what do you need? Is it seven? Is it six? You know, come up with like a budget plan a campaign [multiple speakers].

Bridge Littleton: For the social media plan.

Chris Bernard: A year campaign, and then we just fund it.

Bridge Littleton: That's true. We don't have to solve it tonight because we got until the end of June. Okay. So.

Cindy Pearson: And.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah.

Cindy Pearson: Sorry, shouldn't we suggest that they do give us a report with their yearly report because we are giving them funds?

Bridge Littleton: With their budget, sure.

Cindy Pearson: Yeah.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. I mean, it's we're entitled to it. We just haven't asked for it. Okay.

Danny Davis: The other line item here is consulting services. That's a fancy word, but that is for our Placer program, which gives us the visitor data on who's showing up when, where our trends over time. So, we just renewed it in current fiscal year for another year because I think we can continue to improve upon how we gather data from that. So, I have it built in for the next year, but if we get to the end of this term and realize it's not giving us all the data we need, we can decide to not renew it. And then those funds would go unexpended in 27. The next page for economic development is our tourism specific events. If for Council if you recall, a couple of years ago, we, the Finance Committee suggested we specifically split out community events. So that'll be on the next page. But on this page are the tourism events, which are the bigger kinds of attracting events, Oktoberfest, currently no funding in here for Mille Miglia. We have not heard any further from them. Christmas in Middleburg. This is the continued annual $10,000 contribution. The remaining $2,000 is really because we have some ancillary funds that we expend here at the town hall, like feeding the police officers or maybe a small expenditure here or there. So, we just wanted to properly put it in that line item, but that's not going to their organization. Film festival, sponsorship, event agency that's our BWF who runs our events for us and coordinates all that. They're a great contractor and a great partner in working closely with Ali and whomever is on the town side, running and managing our events. And then we haven't been able to use the VCA grant program in the last few years. There are some requirements about who qualifies and doesn't qualify, that's a state matching program of $4,500. So, if we don't apply for the grant, then we don't spend the funds essentially. So that would be both a revenue we don't bring in, but also an expenditure we don't spend. Happy to answer any questions you might have here, but I will say, I think Ms. MacIntyre has done a fantastic job in getting our events in a very consistent manner so that we know our costs going into time. We pretty much stay right on it. She comes in and says, I think I blew my budget and she went out over by like $400. So, I'm okay with things like that. Better than going over by $40,000. So, I think we really have a good plan in place for all of our events but these in particular.

Bridge Littleton: Any questions for Danny or Ali?

Danny Davis: Okay, we're going to go to our other events. This is community engagement and community events. So, these are the more town resident specific and community specific events. So, we have Independence Day, Wellness Day, Middleburg Day, Art in the Burg, of course, Juneteenth. And then the Burns Day, which we talked about at the last meeting or the meeting before again, looking at maybe doing that one more year and then looking to hand that off. And so, we increased that slightly now that we know kind of what the actual cost of running that event would be and then other event expenses. [off mic] What's that? [off mic]. Slightly.

Ali MacIntyre: We did have an amended budget. I will say.

Danny Davis: She did have an amended budget. [multiple speakers]

Ali MacIntyre: Yes. So, then I just asked for a skosh more.

Danny Davis: Going into it. Yes.

Ali MacIntyre: Just a tad.

Danny Davis: Yes. This was based on the original budget, not the amended discussion that we had had. Other events.

Bridge Littleton: Funny how that worked.

Danny Davis: Yeah. Other event expenses cover some of the latter in the year. America's 250 expenditures just for a variety of events. I will say, I think I noted this in our discussion about current year fiscal 26. The main, one of the main expenditures for America's 250 is the enhanced fireworks display that we're going to have on Independence Day. It's an additional $17,000 or so. It's going to be absolutely fantastic. I can't wait. But that we're absorbing that in current fiscal year. And that's not getting charged to fiscal 27, just so you know. And then we have the dollars here for infrastructure grants and of course, Farmer's Market. We don't have any expenditures for the upcoming year, and we won't spend any more dollars, of course, on that in current year. So those are community events.

Bridge Littleton: Any questions?

Danny Davis: Okay.

Bridge Littleton: Okay.

Danny Davis: All right. Well, if you're okay, I'll jump right into police. And we can talk about as much or as little as you'd like. This budget that you see drafted here is built on the assumption of one additional officer as we had discussed at the retreat. So, all the numbers that you've seen for the total budget have that additional position already built in, both in salary benefits as well as equipment and O&M. And so that's why the percentage change is at 19% because that's an addition of a person there. But I did make some slight decreases in both our overtime and other wages line items, because we will depend less on part time employees and also depend less on our overtime. These again, we make our best assumptions on how those go, but various factors play when it comes into overtime, because our core number one responsibility is making sure that we have someone on duty 24 over seven. Again, you'll see the benefits increasing similarly with VRS particularly going up high.

Bridge Littleton: Hang on one second.

Danny Davis: Yeah.

Bridge Littleton: Sorry. So, I just want to make sure I get this right. So, on the first line, which is police salaries, that is strictly just the salary.

Danny Davis: That is just the salary. But that's not for that, just that one person, that amount changed is all salaries and police that have increased for the year. [off mic]

Chris Bernard: Do we know the net impact?

Danny Davis: Yeah, the net impact we assumed for that position, I think at about $125,000. Yeah. So, we average a salary or we assume a salary of somewhere around $81,000. That's kind of where our patrol officer salary is these days for someone coming in with experience and then benefits, we budget someone choosing the middle of the line benefit for health insurance, which to us is a cost of around, I want to say 20, 22,000 a year for that's dual coverage of employee plus one and then of course adding VRS and FICA to that. So yes, that all in it's around 125 give or take. But Mr. Mayor, to your point, the $123,000 that's changed year over year. That is all salaries increase in police department that's 5% for sworn officers. And that includes 2.5% for Chief because he falls under our scale, not the step scale. And then it might also reflect other changes that happened. Actually, no, because they're all in the step scale. So, they were all built into the prior budget as it was. In terms of operational expenditures again readjusting some of the O&M for insurance just to make sure it reflects how we're billed by our insurer on that professional development continues to stay right at $15,000. The Chief has a lot of different uses of those dollars, everything from specific conferences and trainings that our staff go to, as well as some internal well, I shouldn't say internal, some programs that Chief has found that work for all of his staff so they can do computer based training as well. Keep themselves up to date on their certifications and do a great job keeping them in line with all their requirements. You'll see the other kind of just general equipment expenditure here, pretty straightforward in terms of office supplies, firearms, cell phones. We did increase the cost of fuel and maintenance slightly just for, again, if Council continues with the new officer, that would be one additional vehicle. Right now, we're, watching our fuel expenditures. Of course, we know gas prices are going up, but honestly, the gas and maintenance costs of the vehicle take home program have not exceeded our anticipated costs. In fact, on maintenance have definitely not even reached what we anticipated that cost could be. Again, there are newer vehicles right now, so as we go along those costs, you know, we'll see how long it lasts. Yeah. But we have an appropriate amount of money, I think, built in each year to make sure that we're taking care of those vehicles and try to tackle the issues before they become a major issue.

Chris Bernard: With the take home program and the vehicle maintenance, right? And saving money on that because of the nature of the vehicles coming and going. Are they on a strict maintenance program?

Danny Davis: Yeah, Chief can answer that, but.

Shaun Jones: Yes, sir. We have a strict maintenance program. Vehicles are expected by Lieutenant Putnam Monthly. And also, they have a set mileage where they need to go get an oil change and so forth. We also found ways to save money by purchasing tires this year for the vehicles as well.

Danny Davis: Using state contracts is a helpful thing. That's right. Absolutely. That's right.

Cindy Pearson: We're going back around the circles on that because we used to do it. There were so many tires in the old building behind the health center that that wasn't a good thing to do. [laughter]

Danny Davis: So that's police in a nutshell. Happy to answer any questions or if you need more specifics on any of this in particular, I'm happy to break this down. I will say, you know, Chief, every year gives me a very detailed O&M budget for his expenditures where the dollars are going for uniforms, ammo, supplies, I mean, broken down sometimes by a $30 expenditure. And so, I appreciate his effort and just kind of creating that in a very detailed way. And then I roll that up into the presented budget to you.

Bridge Littleton: Any questions? So, my question and we spoke about this two weeks ago. This is all contingent on having that conversation with the sheriff's office, you guys were going to get together and put together a, you know, a walkthrough. Where are we on that?

Danny Davis: Yeah, we met before I went out of town and talked through that with Mr. Moore as well. And we have information together that we're now ready to sit down with you and look that over with you and then reach out to the sheriff to hold a meeting together.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. Let's do it early next week. Great. All right. Thanks. Any other? Yeah, Pam.

Pam Curran: I think last meeting the Chief talked about a grant we had gotten for a, one was shields and what was the other thing?

Shaun Jones: I applied for that grant. I seek permission to apply for the grant, so we got in on the deadline. So, I'm just waiting for approval whether or not we got accepted or not. It's a competitive grant, though.

Pam Curran: And it was shields and what else?

Shaun Jones: It was shields breaching tools that will be placed in every vehicle if we need to gain access somewhere else here in protection. And I believe that was it for that grant.

Pam Curran: And is the shield the badge or is the shield something else?

Shaun Jones: No, it's actually a handheld shield that will provide cover for us if we have a high-risk situation that we need to enter to provide extra protection for officers.

Danny Davis: If they have to respond to a school situation or any kind of, you know.

Shaun Jones: Active shooter.

Danny Davis: Yeah, active shooter, threat. It's a safety device.

Cindy Pearson: I just have to say this, and I'm not trying to be light about hiring a new officer because I think that's very important. But we did find out the other day with the incident here in town, that the county can get here in under ten minutes because there were so many cars flying into town under ten minutes. So, they can do it? No, they can't do it all the time. But they can.

Bridge Littleton: Any other questions or feedback on the police budget? Okay. Thank you.

Danny Davis: Well, that's general fund, so I'll leave it at that for now. Our next step in the budget is at our next meeting. We'll start talking through utility funds. So, our intention would be to talk about utility rates. I know we talked about it at the retreat. We've talked about a little before, but happy to discuss that further and see if Council has any additional questions about that proposal. At that time, we will have also again already met with the Strategic Finance Committee. So, we'll provide any final input from them on that particular issue as well. And then we can start getting into utility fund expenditures if you'd like. So, and now for budget presentation, we'll turn it over to Mr. Jacobs. [laughter]

Chris Bernard: Public Comment is over.

Darlene Kirk: Okay. I was looking at him, though. Can we get new microphones that are easier to work with? Because half the time these buttons don't work and you'll see all of us go up in here going. [multiple speakers]

Danny Davis: Yeah, I think part of the challenge is the way our system is designed. Yeah. Mr. Bernard's correct. The way our system is designed. Only five can be active at any one time, and that's for processing purposes. We actually did ask the question if we could enhance the capabilities of that system. And I want to say it was in the $10,000 range, give or take, to allow us to be able to have all eight mics on at the same time.

Bridge Littleton: There should be no need to have eight mics or five mics on at the same time.

Darlene Kirk: No, and we usually don't. It's usually when we're trying to do.

Bridge Littleton: So just be thoughtful, be careful. Do it slow.

Darlene Kirk: It would be nice it doesn't come on. And the other thing is, could we get one of these at each desk because he's like, it's not easy to see this, these screens.

Danny Davis: If that's something Council would like me to look into, I would ask for your guidance on that. I will say to add four more screens. Again, it's going to take an overhaul of our current system.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. I mean it's you've got it right here.

Darlene Kirk: Yeah. Yeah.

Bridge Littleton: That's the tough part with when you start changing IT systems, you're talking 30, $40,000 bucks.

Darlene Kirk: It would just been nice. I was just wishing.

Bridge Littleton: All right, well never mind. [laughter] I was going to say something and it's a saying I use often and I'm not going to use it. Anyway, it's to do with your hands. Okay. Any other questions for Danny on the budget. Okay, Martin, real quick other than your tracker.

Martin Crim: Yeah. There's really no update this week. You'll notice the date on that tracker is from last week. We're kind of in a lull right now where the governor is looking at the thousands of bills that landed on her desk. And you know, about the only thing that I'm hearing besides some requests for modifications or veto of the collective bargaining bill, which would be grand, but I'm not holding my breath. Is that it appears that the cannabis market won't be ready to have product to sell by January 1st, so there may be a delay in that as well. That's all I have.

Bridge Littleton: Oh, excitement. Any questions for Martin? And I don't think we have any other. Anybody have any information items?

Chris Bernard: Oh, I have a little one.

Bridge Littleton: Oh, boy.

Chris Bernard: Well, Since Punkin kind of let it out of the bag. Miss MacIntyre, I just wanted to say, and I can probably speak for most people up here.

Bridge Littleton: Not me. [laughter]

Chris Bernard: God, I remember when I guess it was five years ago when Punkin and I interviewed you, and we walked out of our little town office, and I think I said, I don't really know if she knows about economic development, but that kind of enthusiasm and energy is what we needed here in a big way. So, connecting the businesses and the residents and everyone together in the community was a super priority. And you hit that out of the park. So, for all the events, Middleburg Day, Art in the Burg, all that stuff, just and your dedication you've been a joy to work with. So, thank you. [applause]

Bridge Littleton: Thank you. Ali, is this your last meeting?

Danny Davis: I think she's going to stay through April 7th or eighth.

Bridge Littleton: Our next meeting is not till the 9th.

Danny Davis: Correct.

Bridge Littleton: So.

Chris Bernard: That's why I got it in.

Bridge Littleton: Yes. Well, yeah. You know what? You need to come back. Just, I mean, I get it. You won't be an employee. [multiple speakers]

Chris Bernard: We've already rescinded her Middleburg Day invitation.

Danny Davis: We'll make sure she gets to a future meeting. She may not be able to be at that one, but she'll be at a future meeting.

Bridge Littleton: Well, she still has one final paycheck, right? [laughter]

Bridge Littleton: I'm just saying there are points of leverage. That's all I'm saying.

Danny Davis: I'm just saying there might be conflicting situations.

Bridge Littleton: All right. All right, well we'll appropriately butter you up and make you cry when you come and give you lots of nice things to remember us by now that you're leaving us in the dust and going off to other pastures.

Chris Bernard: Bigger and better things.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. All right. Any other input? Any other information items? All right. Meeting adjourned.