



MIDDLEBURG TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 22, 2024



PENDING APPROVAL

PRESENT: Mayor Trowbridge M. Littleton
Vice Mayor Chris W. Bernard
Councilmember Pamela Curran
Councilmember J. Kevin Daly
Councilmember Morris E. “Bud” Jacobs
Councilmember C. Darlene Kirk
Councilmember Peter A. Leonard-Morgan
Councilmember Cindy C. Pearson

STAFF: Danny Davis, Town Manager
Martin Crim, Town Attorney
Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk
Ali MacIntyre, Business Development & Community Partnership Director
Police Chief Shaun Jones

The Town Council of the Town of Middleburg, Virginia held their regular monthly meeting on Thursday, February 22, 2024 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

Lori Olivieri, 412 Lincoln Road, thanked the Council for the Septic Conversion Program, which allowed her home to be connected to the public sewer system. She noted that the Town staff did a good job of communicating with the residents during the project.

Staff Reports

January Utilities Report

Stuart Will, of IES, advised that he was happy to answer any questions related to his monthly report. No questions were raised.

Public Presentations

Report – 2023 Christmas in Middleburg

Doug Myers, one of the Co-Organizers of Christmas in Middleburg, thanked the Council for their assistance with the biggest event in town. He reported that they parked approximately one thousand one hundred cars – five hundred fifty at Mickie Gordon Park, one hundred fifty at Lost Barrel and three hundred at the Middleburg Barn. Mr. Myers noted that they gave away one hundred in-town parking spaces to residents for free. He advised that there was a demand for resident parking; therefore, they would like to expand that next year.

Mr. Myers reported that the Christmas Parade lasted for seventy-one minutes. He noted that the larger police presence was helpful this year. Mr. Myers advised that they heard feedback from participants, volunteers, and guests that the town was friendly, and everyone was helpful. He opined that closing Chestnut Street to traffic was a big win.

Mr. Myers reported that they launched their sale of Christmas ornaments this year, with a sizable donation from the proceeds being made to Middleburg Humane. He advised that their sponsorship sales were great. Mr. Myers acknowledged the Porsche North American sponsorship and advised that they would be mindful of branding in the future, as they wanted it to be town reflective. He reported that the VIP tables at the King Street Oyster Bar sold out, as did the free parking for local residents. Mr. Myers advised that in the future, they would limit the number of car clubs in the Christmas Parade, as they were a little large for the confined space. He noted that they would be looking at better communication with the parade elements in the future and explained that cell phone service was a challenge. Mr. Myers advised that they were open to anything that could be done to boost service.

Mr. Myers thanked Chief Jones for his assistance in heading off issues on Foxcroft Road that were affecting the buses and parade elements ability to get to the event. He noted the need for a better game plan next year. Mr. Myers reported that there were a couple of accidents that day, which were resolved between the private parties. He suggested the need to limit the size of the parade elements next year. Mr. Myers advised that a lot of people liked to congregate at the corner of The Plains Road and Washington Street, where the parade elements were attempting to enter the street. He suggested the need to extend the barricades further down The Plains Road for safety purposes and noted that they had issues with kids running out into the road. Mr. Myers reported that in the future, they would assign a volunteer to the handicapped parking lot at the Methodist Church in order to help disabled individuals get to a close spot.

Mr. Myers reported that they had people contact them at the last minute who wanted to sell food and drinks from tables on the street and noted that this could be a Health Department issue. He suggested it be discussed before next year's event.

Mr. Myers reminded Council that they wanted everyone to be safe and reported that they had some issues with dog fights. He further reported that they planned to limit the number of people that could be placed on a parade element, as they had a few that appeared to be unsafe.

Mr. Myers reported on the need for better communication with the barricade vendor. He noted that this was their first year working the event and opined that the issues had been ironed out.

Mr. Myers reported that they were working on a signage package to direct people to the bus pickup areas, restrooms, and food vendors. He suggested consideration be given to allowing the buses to double stack on Jay Street at the end of the parade and noted that one of the complaints they received was that it took too long to load the buses.

Mr. Myers advised that they wanted to grow the VIP sections and parking and possibly provide a concierge service. He noted that they had heard from the retailers that people did not shop because they did not want to carry packages around with them all day and suggested it would be nice if a place could be offered to them to store their packages until the end of the day.

Mr. Myers noted the need for clear messaging as to when the last bus would leave and advised that this had always been an issue for a few people. He noted that it was difficult for people to hear the emcee along the entire parade route and suggested they may add a second one at the top of Washington Street. Mr. Myers reported that they were investigating using a street sweeper after the parades for faster clean-up. He announced that dogs would only be allowed on the buses going to/from Mickie Gordon Park. Mr. Myers advised that they were thinking about adding a kids zone to give them something to do between the Hunt and Christmas Parades. He noted that they were going to provide more detailed maps. Mr. Myers reported that they would like to add bleacher seating, including handicapped accessible seating on South Pendleton Street.

Mr. Myers reported that they were working with the MBPA and Town staff to update the MOU. He noted that he and the Police Chief had already been in discussions about the adoption of an active shooter and bomb threat policy, which was being required by Christmas in Middleburg's insurance carrier. Mr. Myers noted that he would meet with Vickie Bendure soon to discuss better messaging. He advised that he planned to submit a grant request for \$10,000 to offset the provision of prime seating for local residents and for the additional police staff required as a result of the active shooter/bomb threat policy. Mr. Myers thanked the Council again for their support.

Councilmember Jacobs suggested the need to exercise the active shooter/bomb threat policy once it was in place so the volunteers would understand their role in it. He noted that having a policy that was not exercised was useless. Mr. Myers agreed.

Council noted that they liked the idea of improving access for the disabled.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Mr. Myers reported that he deferred to the Police Chief's estimate with regard to attendance and opined that there were between 9,000-10,000 people.

In response to concerns expressed by the Council about dogs fighting during the event, Mr. Myers advised that they tried to make it as clear as possible in their messaging that dogs needed to be on a leash and well behaved. He acknowledged that not every dog was well behaved.

Mayor Littleton noted that the grant was intended to offset the cost of certain things. He suggested the Town may wish to purchase a certain number of parking spaces, which it would give to local residents on a need or a first-come-first-serve basis. Mr. Littleton noted that he was not saying the Town should do this; however, he had gotten a lot of feedback from residents who felt they could not attend their own parade.

Council noted that if the buses double parked on Jay Street, they would not be able to turn around to get back onto Route 50 due to the turn radius. It was suggested that other options be considered.

Mr. Myers noted that the bus vendor dealt with situations like this and suggested they look at the turn to determine what needed to be done.

Mayor Littleton noted the comments that have been made by people about the cost of parking. He advised that "free" just meant free to one person and noted that it still had to be paid for. Mr. Littleton advised that he had been looking at the cost of various ticketed events recently and reported that for public events, the cost was between \$40-60. He suggested Christmas in Middleburg provide information explaining how they developed their pricing and compare it to similar public events. Mr. Littleton opined that the cost being charged was within the market average and was not unreasonable.

Vice Mayor Bernard opined that some of the concern related to messaging and suggested that Ms. Bendure could be helpful in that regard. He further suggested it be explained that the revenues from the parking were used to cover the costs of the buses that safely transported people to/from the parking lots to the event. Mr. Bernard suggested the need to get in front of the complaints and advised that he would not compare the cost to other events.

Mr. Myers advised that they would try to get the message out without being confrontational. He noted that they have tried to be transparent about things and advised that the revenues just paid the costs of putting on Christmas in Middleburg.

Annual Report – Streetscape Committee

Punkin Lee, Chair of the Streetscape Committee, reminded Council that the Committee consisted of herself, Bob Dornin, Pat McIlvaine, Bonnie Burns, Linda Wright, Michael Calley and Councilmember Pearson. She reported that they held the 22nd annual Arbor Day celebration at the Middleburg Charter School in 2023, during which they planted a Red Maple in honor of Joe Embry. She further reported that they planted other trees around town, including a Dogwood in honor of Mary Kay Garwood and a Redbud in honor of Eura Lewis. Ms. Lee advised that they planted a London Plane tree in front of Tully Rector and a Yellow Wood in front of the Community Center. She reported that their largest project was to create a plan for the planting beds and, through the support of the Town and the Middleburg Beautification Committee, hired a landscaper to plant and maintain them. Ms. Lee advised that the Committee also worked on the flexi-pave pilot program and on the South Madison Street Project; worked with the American Legion on Veterans Day banners; and, authored some articles reminding people of the need to cut ivy off their trees so it would not kill them.

Ms. Lee reported that moving into 2024, plans were underway for the 23rd Annual Arbor Day celebration, which would be held on April 27th, and advised that they planned to plant a tree at the Community Center in honor of Joanne Cole. She reported that they were also working to develop a planting plan for the Town's entrance signs and update the tree inventory for Washington, Madison, and Federal Streets.

Ms. Lee thanked the volunteers who looked at the existing plantings and developed ideas for new ones. She noted that they always strived to do a good job, think into the future, and make the town even more special than it was. In response to an inquiry from the Council, she reported that the feedback on the flexi-pave pilot program was good. She opined that people did not even know they transitioned onto it as they walked down the street. Ms. Lee reported that the Red Fox Inn approached Deputy Town Manager Moore about doing a similar replacement around a tree in front of their property.

Councilmember Pearson thanked the members of the Committee for the time they committed to researching and preparing the planting drawings.

Mayor Littleton thanked the Committee for their hard work.

Staff Reports (continued)

Special Projects Report

Town Manager Davis reported that the Septic Conversion Project was complete and expressed appreciation for the work of the contractor and engineers, as well as the support of the homeowners. He noted that the walk-through inspection occurred and advised that everything looked good and was running well. Mr. Davis reported that repairs continued to be made to the Well 4 water plant and that the clearwell project was underway. He advised that the RFP for community outreach services to gain input from the community on the desired uses and future rehabilitation of the Asbury Church was issued earlier in the day. Mr. Davis thanked Councilmembers Jacobs and Pearson for their review of the draft RFP. He noted that Town Clerk North made outreach to some firms to alert them to the issuance of the RFP.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

General Assembly Legislation Update

Town Manager Davis reported that HB 1071, which would give the Council the authority to limit the speed limits in town by a simple vote, was passed by the Senate. He advised that he looked forward to discussion as to how it could be effectively implemented within the town limits once the bill became effective. Mr. Davis reported that SB 304, which would limit a locality's ability to restrict accessory dwelling units, was currently before the House. He noted that it was similar to HB 900, which had already been set aside for the year, and expressed hope that the same would occur with the Senate Bill. Mr. Davis reported that SB 544, which would limit a locality's ability to put conditional use permit requirements on short-term rentals that were owner occupied as their legal residence, was passed by the Senate, and was currently sitting in the House Committee on Cities, Counties and Towns. He noted that the Town continued to oppose the bill and expressed hope that it would be set aside in the committee. Mr. Davis reported that the budget bill was released over the weekend and noted that there was a \$1 billion difference between the Senate and House versions. He advised that there was a lot of speculation that there would be a trading of votes so the Governor could get the arena bill passed. Mr. Davis reported that the staff was watching the bill related to the retail sales of cannabis and opined that the Governor may see that as an opportunity to get votes for the arena bill. He advised Council that the retail sales of cannabis bill allowed localities to hold a referendum to limit retail sales in the locality. Mr. Davis noted that this would have to be done in November. He reiterated that the staff would continue to watch that bill and would inform Council as more information became available. In response to an inquiry from the Council, Mr. Davis advised that he had not read the bill; therefore, he did not have the specific details. He noted that he would get the information and pass it along to the members.

Councilmember Jacobs noted that the Council discussed giving the Mayor the opportunity to meet with Senator Perry and suggested the cannabis bill should be on the list of discussion items.

Mayor Littleton noted that Senator Perry had voted for or against everything the Town had encouraged her to support or oppose. He advised that he would reach out to her on the cannabis bill.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis reported that SB 304 and SB 544 were both zoning-related bills. He advised that SB 304 would mandate a locality to allow accessory dwelling units and SB 544 was related to short-term rentals.

In response to Council's inquiry regarding the cannabis bill, Town Attorney Crim reported that it did not contain a population limit for holding a referendum. He further reported that the Town could vote independently of the County on whether to allow retail sales.

Mayor Littleton reported that there was a hearing earlier in the day on the bill related to the accessory dwelling units and noted that he and several other Mayors from the area attended. He reported that nine organizations, mostly representing realtors, builders groups and affordable housing for teachers groups, spoke in favor of the bill. Mr. Littleton reminded Council that the bill would allow someone to build an accessory dwelling unit on their property by-right and the locality would not have the authority to prohibit it. He advised that thirty localities and associates spoke against it. Mr. Littleton reported that three of the nine people on the committee raised concerns about how it would work. He advised that they would hold another hearing in the morning. Mr. Littleton reported that the bill's sponsor brought amendments to the Committee five minutes before they were to vote on it; therefore, the Chair pushed it for a day. He noted that the Chair expressed a preference to push the bill to a study for a year and expressed hope that this would prevail. Mr. Littleton advised that the patron of the bill said that he was trying to provide affordable housing; however, a lot of people who spoke against it noted that there were plenty of 1,500 square foot homes that cost \$500,000-750,000. He noted that during the question-and-answer session with the bill's patron, he admitted that the bill was not really going to provide affordable housing. Mr. Littleton advised that he was scheduled to speak again tomorrow, as were the other mayors. He encouraged the members of Council to sign up to speak and noted that he would send them the link.

Mayor Littleton advised that as to the short-term rental bill, a committee hearing would be held on that one in the morning. He noted that Michelle Gowdy, of the Virginia Municipal League (VML), felt comfortable that bill would not pass due to the exceptions, which created issues.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis advised that HB 1328, which would require the centralized collection of transient occupancy taxes for short-term rentals, was recently left in the House Finance Committee; therefore, it was dead.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Mayor Littleton confirmed there was not a lot size limit on the accessory dwelling unit bill. He advised that under the bill, a property owner would not have to conform to side or back yard setbacks and could basically do whatever they wanted. In response to a comment from the Council, he advised that the bill only said the accessory dwelling unit could not be any further than five hundred feet away from the principal dwelling unit. He advised that it allowed for a minimum side yard; however, it would not allow localities to impose maximums. Mr. Littleton explained that maximums would be imposed on the main house; however, under the bill, a property owner could do whatever they wanted with the accessory dwelling unit. He noted that the VML and Coalition of Loudoun Towns (COLT) were working hard to oppose that bill.

Special Recognition by Mayor & Council

Council Approval – Resolution of Appreciation – Middleburg Deli

Mayor Littleton noted that after thirty years in business, Maria and Pedro Fuentes were retiring and closing the Middleburg Deli. He read the resolution of appreciation aloud and, following its adoption, presented a framed copy to Mrs. Fuentes. Mr. Littleton wished her the best in a well-deserved retirement.

Councilmember Kirk moved, seconded by Councilmember Daly, that Council adopt a resolution expressing its appreciation to the Middleburg Deli, Maria and Pedro Fuentes, and their employees for their service to the Middleburg community from 1994 through February 29, 2024.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Bernard, Curran, Daly, Jacobs, Kirk, Leonard-Morgan, and Pearson

No – N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: N/A

(Mayor Littleton only votes in the case of a tie.)

Maria Fuentes noted that she and her husband worked for Richard Danker for a long time before he called them and asked them to come to Middleburg to run the deli. She advised that after a couple of years, he asked them to buy it and noted that they worked hard to learn the business so they could do their best for the community. Mrs. Fuentes advised that it had been great to be in Middleburg to provide for the people and noted that they were very nice to her and her husband. On behalf of herself and her husband, she thanked the community for their support over the years. She noted that she was going to display the resolution in her home in El Salvador.

DISCUSSION ITEMS (continued)

Strategic Planning Retreat

Town Manager Davis noted that due to scheduling conflicts, the Strategic Planning Retreat needed to be rescheduled. He further noted that the staff was having difficulty identifying a date that was good for everyone and asked that the members discuss when they were available. After some discussion, the Council agreed to reschedule the retreat to April 2-3, assuming the facilitator and hotel were available.

Town Manager Davis reminded Council that they would begin the retreat on the evening of April 2nd and would continue for the entire day on April 3rd. He noted that he would check to make sure the facilitator was available for those dates.

Town Clerk North noted that she would be on vacation that week and would be unable to attend.

Rescheduling of October Meeting

Town Clerk North reported that the 1000 Miglia was scheduled for the week of October 22nd. She further reported that a welcome reception would be held on October 24th, which would conflict with the date of a Council meeting. Ms. North questioned whether the Council would like to reschedule their meeting so they could attend the reception.

The Council agreed they did and asked that the meeting be rescheduled to October 30th.

Presentation of FY '25 Budget

Town Manager Davis reviewed the current fiscal year's highlights and accomplishments, as well as the proposed revenues and expenditures in both the General Fund and the Utilities Fund. He noted that the Council continued to implement its strategic initiatives, including focusing on protecting Middleburg's quality of life and established neighborhoods by working on the R-2 zoning regulations. Mr. Davis reminded Council of the appointment of Shaun Jones as the new Police Chief. He further reminded them of their approval of two new community events – Wellness Day and Middleburg Day – which would pair with the Independence Day Celebration. Mr. Davis noted that the Council celebrated its long-term businesses and volunteers over the past year, as well as the opening of new businesses. He reminded Council of the numerous public outreach and community engagement efforts related to protecting the community, including the public outreach regarding the Mickie Gordon Memorial Park. Mr. Davis noted the opening of the new Town Hall, for which Town Clerk North was recognized by the Middleburg Business & Professional

Association. He reported that from a utilities perspective, the Marshall Street Water Tower Renovation Project and the Septic Conversion Project were complete. Mr. Davis noted that work had begun on the Well 4 Clearwell Project. He reminded Council that all of those projects were designed to maintain the safety and longevity of the utility system.

Town Manager Davis reported that in looking forward to FY '25, the staff was aware that the Council wished to continue its efforts related to its strategic initiatives, including ongoing review of protecting the existing communities, focusing on resident centric events, supporting local businesses, and developing a solid, effective staff to continue to provide leadership to the community. He noted the Council's upcoming strategic planning retreat, which could result in the addition of new strategic initiatives.

Town Manager Davis reported that he anticipated a modest increase in revenues in FY '25 of 1.8% and explained that this figure was driven by flat or decreased meals and transient occupancy taxes (TOT). He noted that he would continue to watch the economy and advised that most economists did not believe the national economy would see a recession, but rather would experience a soft landing. Mr. Davis further noted that worldwide events could still affect both the national and global economies. He reported that the Town saw an increase in real property assessed values of \$18 million due to new construction. Mr. Davis further reported that other major changes in the revenue expectations involved additional interest earnings on the Town's investments and noted that they were continuing to earn 5-5.5%. He reviewed the real property assessed values for the Town for the current year and previous four years and noted that the average value increased by 62.5% from 2020 to 2024. Mr. Davis reminded Council that this did not mean the value of a home increased by this amount and explained that it included new construction and the replacement of older homes. He opined that the changes in real property values demonstrated some of the challenges the Council was trying to address related to affordable housing, protecting the existing communities and, what the proper regulations should be related to the size of new construction or replacement housing. Mr. Davis reviewed the history of the Town's real property tax rate. He reported that he was proposing a real property tax rate of \$.1236 per \$100 assessed value, which was a decrease from the current rate. Mr. Davis reviewed the effect of this tax rate on the various housing types, compared with the equalized tax rate. He noted that \$.1236 equated to the equalized tax rate plus 3% for inflation. Mr. Davis reported that the average tax bill would increase by \$21-\$66 as proposed.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the other major tax revenues, including the meals taxes, TOT taxes and interest earnings for FY '25, as well as the previous five fiscal years. He noted that this provided the history of revenues coming out of the COVID pandemic, which showed the explosion of growth. Mr. Davis reiterated that the staff and Strategic Finance Committee would continue to watch the current trends on a quarterly basis.

Town Manager Davis reported that on the expenditure side, the proposed FY '25 Budget represented an increase of 4% over the FY '24 Amended Budget and a 10.5% increase over the adopted budget. He reminded Council of the large charitable donation they made to the Middleburg Charitable Foundation, which required an increase in expenditures. Mr. Davis reported that the majority of the increase in FY '25 was due to the increased debt service payments for the Town Hall Project and reminded Council that the first few years of those payments were for interest only. He advised that this was the first year it included principal repayment and noted that the payments would remain relatively flat through the maturity of the bonds. Mr. Davis advised that the remainder of the increase in expenditures was related to continued inflation, ongoing operational costs and, enhancements of major and community events. He noted that the proposed budget also included ongoing investment in the Town staff. Mr. Davis advised that health insurance premiums were increasing by 8%; however, the Town's contributions to the retirement benefit were decreasing, as the retirement liability was fully funded at this time. He reminded Council that the retirement payments were recalculated every two years and noted that the Town would see a change in the percentage again in two years. Mr. Davis advised that in terms of salaries, he was proposing a 4% market adjustment for the general workforce and a 7% market adjustment for sworn officers. He further advised that he was proposing a 2% merit increase that would be dependent upon performance evaluations. Mr. Davis noted that police departments across the region and Commonwealth were continuing to see significant investments in salaries, with some agencies providing double digit increases in a single year, to be followed by further large increases. He reported that Loudoun County was proposing a 12.7% salary increase for law enforcement officers and advised that while Middleburg did not need to match them, it wanted to make sure it was staying competitive in the market. Mr. Davis expressed hope that his proposed budget demonstrated the Town's intent of trying to retain its officers and recruit effectively for vacancies.

Town Manager Davis reported that the proposed FY '25 Budget contained unallocated revenues of \$431,000, which could be used for the Council's strategic initiatives, as a contingency, and for other needs as required. He reviewed a chart depicting the history of the General Fund expenditures over the past few years. Mr. Davis reminded Council that they set aside \$1 million from the unassigned fund balance for the Asbury Church Restoration Project and noted that because those were capital funds, they would be held until the Town was ready to go to construction. He reported that the Town staff was continuing to review options related to the South Madison Street Project, which was also one of Council's strategic initiatives, and advised that he set aside \$750,000 from the prior year's unassigned fund balance for this project. Mr. Davis acknowledged that there were other ongoing streetscape and infrastructure needs and enhancements that would provide an opportunity for investment in other improvements, which would be discussed during the retreat.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed FY '25 Budget with regard to the Utilities Fund. He reported that the Town was continuing to see positivity in its revenues and fund balance and noted the growth in revenues from the new homes that have been built. Mr. Davis reminded Council that in order to avoid a significant one-time increase, he was proposing to continue the 3% utility rate increases, which was in keeping with the utility rate model completed a couple of years ago. He reported that the staff would continue to seek grant funding for various utility projects. Mr. Davis reviewed the proposed revenues and noted that most would come from user fees. He reported that the Town may exceed revenues in the current fiscal year; however, he was hesitant to make the formal projection at this time. Mr. Davis advised that he based the proposed FY '25 Budget on the revenues in the adopted FY '24 Budget and did not make further assumptions. He noted that the Utilities Fund also experienced some interest earnings.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed expenditures and noted that the systems were continuing to experience ongoing maintenance and repair needs. He reviewed the recent system failures and advised that the Town was putting efforts into enhancing the longevity of those items and investing to make sure the system continued to operate safely and effectively. Mr. Davis noted that the Utilities Fund budget was tight and reviewed the proposed expenditures, which included capital and debt service costs. He advised that it was his goal to begin planning for significant water line replacement projects, as the Town was continuing to see water main breaks in some repetitive areas, in particular along Stonewall Avenue and Chestnut Street. Mr. Davis reminded Council that the current line-of-credit for capital projects must be termed out before the end of FY '25, which would give the Town the opportunity to look at additional debt in the Utilities Fund to both restructure the current debt and take on additional debt for key capital projects.

Town Manager Davis reviewed the proposed budget calendar. He advised that the public hearing to set the real property tax rates would be held on March 14th and explained that even though the proposed rate was lower than the existing one, because it was more than 1% above the equalized rate, a public hearing was required. Mr. Davis advised that he anticipated discussion of the proposed General Fund budget during that same meeting. He further advised that unless it was already adopted, he anticipated the Council would set the real property tax rate during their March 28th meeting and noted that it must be set before April 1st. Mr. Davis reported that additional meetings would be held to discuss the budget, with the public hearing being held and the adoption of the budget occurring in May. He reminded Council that they had until June 30th to adopt it. Mr. Davis advised that he was happy to meet with individual members of Council to answer any questions they may have and would like to meet with members to talk about the portions of the budget that affected any operations they may be assigned to represent. He noted that the public could offer input on the proposed budget by emailing it to Town Clerk North, leaving a phone message or filing comments online through the Town's website.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis confirmed the TOT revenues were projected to be \$35,000 less than FY '24 and noted that his 2024 projections were aggressive. He explained that while the Town was continuing to see an increase, it was leveling off. Mr. Davis advised that he spoke with a representative from the Salamander Resort, who offered him a broad picture of the overall hospitality industry, specifically the luxury market, and noted that his suggestion was that the Town use the figures from 2023 as a baseline. He reported that he used that figure and included a 5% inflation growth factor to project the TOT revenues for FY '25. Mr. Davis opined that the Town would not see the significant increase in revenues it saw in the past; however, he did not see the need for the lowering of revenues beyond the projected level.

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan noted that the utility pumps that were recently replaced were more energy efficient; therefore, the Town would see a return on that investment.

Town Manager Davis confirmed it would at the Stonewall Water Plant and advised that it was anticipated to be an 18 to 24 month return just in the electric cost savings alone.

In response to an inquiry of the Council as to a negative value due to accounting, Town Manager Davis explained that when FY '22 was closed out, there was a negative amount that had to be charged to that year. He opined that it was not a depreciation item, but rather was related to some accounting effort.

Mayor Littleton suggested that as to the TOT revenues, the Town should be more diligent than to just add 5% to the 2023 numbers. He further suggested the staff look at the market reports to determine expected outcomes. Mr. Littleton noted that Salamander's nightly rates were down significantly and opined that this was driven by demand. He noted that the nightly rates could increase later in the year. Mr. Littleton reiterated his suggestion that the staff look at the industry reports.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Town Manager Davis confirmed he off-set the 2023 numbers to reflect a fiscal year calendar. He reminded Council that he was projecting revenues fifteen months out and advised that at the end of the day, it was an educated guess that used the data that was available.

Mayor Littleton reiterated his suggestion that the staff look at the industry reports.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Route 50 Public Information Meeting

Mayor Littleton reported that approximately sixty people attended the County's public information meeting, all being from west of Gilbert's Corner. He advised that the County explained that this was part of a safety study that was initiated by the Board of Supervisors in 2017, that they were just now getting to Route 50, and that there were no projects or funding for projects. Mr. Littleton further advised that the County did a mapping exercise, which allowed people to identify where there were safety issues and where cultural or historic assets were located that needed to be protected. He opined that from a County perspective, the meeting was all about safety. Mr. Littleton reported that he made the point that the starting position should be that nothing new was needed unless the data analysis said otherwise. He opined that there was a lot of good input from the community. Mr. Littleton asked Police Chief Jones to reach out to the Sheriff's Department to get an analysis regarding enforcement, which had a direct impact on safety and noted that part of the solution could be additional enforcement, as opposed to changing the road. He advised that while they wrote it down, the County staff noted that that was not something they controlled. Mr. Littleton reiterated his request that the Police Chief discuss this with his point of contact at the Sheriff's Department to ask that it be an element of the study. He advised that from a project perspective, the Town of Middleburg would not be included; however, the study would go to Upperville, minus the portion of Route 50 that was in Fauquier County. Mr. Littleton reported that the County would hold another information session in a couple of months. He noted that they have a task force assigned to the study and reported that Childs Burden was representing the town, as he served on the Route 50 Task Force many years ago. Mr. Littleton noted that Supervisor TeKrony invited him to attend a pre-briefing meeting and advised that there were people present who were not aware of the Route 50 Task Force Project and the associated memorandum of understanding (MOU). In response to an inquiry from the Council, he advised that the MOU covered the area between Mount Zion and Upperville. He opined that the agreements in the MOU needed to be respected, such as the agreement that there would be no turn lanes added to Route 50. Mr. Littleton noted that he reminded the County that they need to respect what was important.

Town Manager Davis noted that the MOU included width of the pavement, which was a big issue. He suggested that widening the road for safety purposes was contrary to the point of the MOU, which was to keep the road narrow and to have grass up to the shoulder.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Mayor Littleton reported that representatives from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) were not present for the public information meeting. In response to a comment from the audience, he asked that the County's survey be posted on the Town's website. Mr. Littleton noted that the survey closed on March 1st. In response to a comment from the Council, he explained that Loudoun County could not look at the portion of Route 50 that was located in Fauquier County because each county was responsible for maintenance of their own roads.

Fire on Washington Street

Town Manager Davis expressed gratitude to the first responders who responded to the fire in the Historic District, including those from Middleburg, Aldie, South Riding, Fairfax, Prince William, and Fauquier Counties, and advised that all responded very quickly. He noted that the County Fire Marshall's Office also responded and determined the fire to be an accidental one that resulted from an unspecified electrical event originating from a commercial power strip located in what used to be a kitchen. Mr. Davis reported that he reached out to the Fire Marshall's Office to ask that they begin proactive conversations with property and business owners on good life safety practices and efforts. He advised that the Business Development & Community Partnerships Director and the Middleburg Business & Professional Association would work with them to make sure they went about that in the proper way to ensure people and visitors were kept safe. Mr. Davis noted that it was reported that a member of the Middleburg Police Department was struck by a vehicle during the emergency response and advised that a privately owned/operated school bus hit a member of the department in the leg. He further advised that this member was transported to the hospital, was released quickly, and was recovering just fine. Mr. Davis noted that the bus also backed into one of the Town's police vehicles and advised that it was being repaired. He thanked Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Cole for directing traffic during the emergency response. Mr. Davis noted that he also performed traffic control during that time and advised that it was amazing the number of motorists who did not listen to directions during an emergency situation. He acknowledged Stuart Will, of IES, who ensured the water was flowing properly. Mr. Davis noted that the use of water to fight the fire created some disruption in water service for the Town's customers in the form of discoloration; however, this cleared up quickly. He thanked everyone for their quick response.

Mayor Littleton noted the older buildings in town and suggested the need for a mandatory fire/electrical inspection program. He acknowledged that this would be a County responsibility. Mr. Littleton reiterated that this was needed, especially for the older buildings.

Councilmember Kirk noted that a fire could easily jump from one building to the next in Middleburg and take out an entire block. She agreed with the need to conduct fire inspections.

Town Manager Davis noted the value of having a tall ladder truck that could tackle a fire if it came through the roof. He further noted that this was a concern with the older buildings, in particular those in the tight downtown corridor. Mr. Davis advised that Loudoun County had a lot of resources that could respond quickly.

In response to an inquiry from the Council, Mayor Littleton suggested that letters of appreciation be sent to the first responders.

Special Olympics Polar Plunge

Vice Mayor Bernard thanked everyone who participated in the Special Olympics Polar Plunge and noted that two hundred eighty people took part in the event. He invited the members of Council to participate in next year's event.

Closed Session

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan moved, seconded by Councilmember Kirk, that Council go into closed session as authorized under Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia for (1) consultation with legal employed by the public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the legal advice of such counsel related to the Town Hall Project contract, as allowed under Subsection (A)(8); and, (2) an appointment to the Middleburg Sustainability Committee as allowed under

Subsection (A)(1). Councilmember Leonard-Morgan further moved, seconded by Councilmember Kirk, that the Council thereafter reconvene in open session for action as appropriate.

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

Mayor Littleton asked that Council certify that, in the closed session just concluded, to the best of each member’s knowledge nothing was discussed except the matter or matters (1) specifically identified in the motion to convene in closed session and (2) lawfully permitted to be discussed in a closed session under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as cited in the motion, which each member so did. He reminded those present for the closed session that any discussion that occurred within it should be treated as confidential.

Appointment to Middleburg Sustainability Committee

Councilmember Leonard-Morgan moved, seconded by Councilmember Daly, that the Council appoint Erin M. Leonard to the Middleburg Sustainability Committee to fill an unexpired term, said term to expire May 12, 2025.

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

There being no further business, Mayor Littleton declared the meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

APPROVED:

Trowbridge M. Littleton, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk

February 22, 2024 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'll call the meeting to order. First item is Pledge of Allegiance.

All: 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. Next item is Rhonda.

Rhonda North: Forgot to put a roll call in there.

Bridge Littleton: Wow. You're slipping. Roll call.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Peter Leonard-Morgan.

Bud Jacobs: Bud Jacobs.

Darlene Kirk: Darlene Kirk.

Bridge Littleton: Bridge Littleton.

Chris Bernard: Chris Bernard.

Cindy Pearson: Cindy Pearson.

John 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: All right. Next item is public comment. If anybody would like to address Town Council on any matter, they may do so and have three minutes.

Lori Olivieri: My name is Laurie Olivieri and I live at 412 Lincoln Road with my husband Jim. We bought our house on 6/01/2015. It's been a wonderful several years. It's going to be nine, I guess, this summer. I just wanted to say thank you to everyone for the project of connecting to the public sewer system from the individual septic systems. The houses built in 20, 1950. So, the septic system, it was old, and it would have been, you know, a big project if we're to do it on our own. And certainly, if we would want to expand, that would have to be the first thing that we did. So, it was I know it was for the purpose of clean water and conservation and really important things, but I just wanted to say thank you because it really helped us too. The town was so helpful in communication. They were always, you know, [inaudible] for meeting. We've got emails all the time. It gave us a chance to get a big PowerPoint presentation and emails with kind of

the plan. The [inaudible] was wonderful. The various vendors, they were so friendly, and they were always so responsive when we had this old what's it call it? Am I too close too far?

Bridge Littleton: You're good.

Lori Olivieri: Okay. Just little, little goofs would happen. And we would ask questions like, oh, my gosh, sorry. You know and they'd be like, fix it in two seconds. So, it was they were just wonderful. And they had more than just our place to worry about, obviously. Reverend Swan across the street and probably eight other places in town. We just always knew what the next step was going to be, what we could expect. And out of nowhere, the very last step was rolling sod out. I'm like, oh my Gosh, this is so nice. I always thought like grass seed and some straw, all right. But it has just been I feel like a bajillionaire. It's just been such a wonderful process and really felt like it mattered how we were doing and everything. So, thank you and can't imagine the town how much work went into it with your staff. And several years from what Bridge just said, from the concept, the applying for grants and doing all the steps along the way. So, I just want to say thank you. My husband is up in Pennsylvania visiting his mom, 85 years old. So, I just came by myself tonight to say thanks. Okay.

Bridge Littleton: Thank you.

Pam Curran: Thank you for coming.

Bridge Littleton: Would anybody else wish to address Town Council? Okay, we will close the public comment. Real quickly, I'm going to go to Stuart on the phone, so you don't have to wait for his report. Stuart, are you there?

Stuart Will: I am, sir.

Bridge Littleton: Awesome. Take it away.

Stuart Will: Yes, sir. Do you have any questions?

Bridge Littleton: Anyone have any questions for Stuart on his report? Okay, Stuart. We're good. Thank you so much.

Darlene Kirk: We miss ya.

Stuart Will: Awesome. Have a good evening.

Darlene Kirk: You too.

Bridge Littleton: Bye bye. All right. Next item we have here is public presentations. The first one is from Mr. Meyers on Christmas in Middleburg.

Doug Myers: Good evening. First of all, I'd like to say thank you. I think it's a word that doesn't get or two words that don't get spread around enough. Our event's the biggest event in this town and it's nice to get a lot of pats on the back. But we could not do this without each and every one of you sitting at the table in front of me. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We had some big wins. I know Michelle is unable to be here tonight. She's traveling at a business meeting, but she asked me to pass some of these statistics along. So, 2023, the Town of Middleburg requested limited parking to control the crowd for safety. No in-town parking was assumed, but at the last moment, there was some in-town parking available. So certainly, something that we want to address for next year, but our parking totals as you can see, ended up right at 1100 cars. We had 550 at Mickie Gordon Park, 150 at Lost Barrel, 300 at the Middleburg Barn. And then we did give away 100 parking spots for in town. We call that local love. And that although free, we call it sold out in 36 hours. So clearly the demand was there. And we were happy to be able to do that and want to possibly look at expanding that even more for next year.

Doug Myers: So, the wins for last year. The time of the parade, 71 minutes. We can go back a few years. And remember, there were some parades that lasted.

Bridge Littleton: Add a zero. [laughter]

Doug Myers: Yeah, I maybe not quite that long, but it did feel like that. Just for safety sake, for everyone's enjoyment please know it is top of our agenda to get this done as quickly and as efficiently as possible that everyone can enjoy their time but spend more time in town. So always a goal for us. Thanks to the town. Shaun, the messaging that went out Federal Street. And what we call Santa's exit, went very smoothly this year. We had trouble with some of the parking down on Federal Street. Once the parade's over, people are leaving. It caused a great deal of congestion getting Santa, the horses, the carriage all back to the Hill School safely. So, we work through that this year. And that was a big win, more and better police presence. Thank you. It really, really did pay off. We heard incredible feedback from not only participants, volunteers, guest visiting the town how kind, how friendly how helpful everyone was. And again, what a great representation of our town. Closing of Chestnut Street was a big win. We started the ornament launch this year. Great success plan on increasing that and doing it again. Wonderful coordination with Em Sharp's family, the Hill School. Again, it takes a village, and the whole village showed up. And I think this is an incredible win. We were also able to donate to the Sharp Families request to Middleburg Humane and give a sizable charitable donation from that. So, win win for everybody there. Sponsorship was great. Porsche North America came in and really added a lot to it. But we will be mindful in the future of branding. We always want the town to be included. We don't want just rogue branding out there with individual companies. We want it to be town reflective. So, we'll keep that in mind. We have a VIP section tables at the Oyster Bar. We had VIP seating. All of that sold out. And again, the free parking for the locals sold out very quickly. So great wins there. Some feedback that we had our car clubs were very happy. Although we're likely going to limit the size of those clubs next year. They got a little bit big. It's a lot of people to try and fit in a confined space. So, something that we will be thinking about better communication with the elements. We have an office in town that everyone can use as what we call ground zero. Our MC's one here with us tonight did a fantastic job. We are still getting great comments on that, so thank you very much for that. As you all know, I mean, cell service on a good day in July is a challenge. First Saturday in December is always going to be even a bigger challenge. So, if there's ever any opportunities to look at something that can boost that, we're open. We don't have all of the answers. So, I think that's something publicly on the plate that we could all maybe sit down and sharpen our pencils on. So, some of the feedback that we got there. Some issues thanks to our trusty Chief over here. Good Stone Inn at the last minute. Wanted to shuttle some guests in town. And if you know Foxcroft Road at that time. On that day nearly impossible. So, thanks to Chief for heading that off the in-town parking, like we said, that came up at the last minute, caused some our busses where we were trying to park and some of our elements could not get in. So that's certainly something that we'll have a better game plan next year. Did have a couple accidents. But those were between private parties that will be all taken care of. But again, if we can limit the size of how many elements we call them elements, right? How many people are actually participating in each group? We may be able to have a better handle on that size. Barricades, one of the issues that we're seeing continually is that at the corner of the Plains Road and Washington, where the elements come off the Plains Road onto Main Street a lot of people like to congregate in that corner. National Sporting Library on one side, the Cidery on the other. We're talking with Shaun about extending barricades back even further, the Plains Road, just for safety purposes. We had a few situations with kids running out into the road and things like that. So again, safety is always our number one priority. Volunteers, we plan to put a volunteer at the handicap parking spot or parking lot which is at the Methodist Church in town. I think that can again go to better just public relations helping people get a spot right there close if they are handicapped. So, let's see here one request, one issue that we did run into that could I'm not sure who to bring this to. There were a few last-minute folks that wanted to sell food, drinks, set up a table and have some things in it gets a little hairy with permitting food department, health department, things like that. So, I think that's a discussion that we should probably have for next year. Again, more just inexperience with kids. And we want to make sure everyone's safe. We even have some dog fights. So, we have to think about everything. Not just the two-legged people, but the four-legged friends as well. We do plan on asking our elements to limit the number of people that they do put on either a wagon, a truck, a cart, whatever it may be. We had a few that seemed to be a little on the unsafe side. So again, we want to err on having a great day for everybody and no accidents. So that's something that we're going to look at there as well. And then better communication with our barricade vendor. It was the first year for them. There was a little miscommunication on, should they leave town, pick up? And it was just a lost in communication kind of thing. So, we have that all ironed out and ready to go for next year. So, some new ideas quickly. We are planning some better having a permanent sign

package. Something that directs people clear to where bus pickups are, to where restrooms are. It's where food vendors and things like that are. So, something next level up. Possible idea, I'll ask while he's not paying attention, double staffing busses on Jay Street for exiting after the end of the parade. As you know, we had people lined up halfway to the light to get on the bus, so the quicker we can get busses lined up, filled up and out of town, the better off I think we can be. That was one of the negative feedbacks that we got. It took a long time to load onto the bus. VIP sections and parking wanted to grow that. I think that was a great response. Possibly a package concierge service. We're hearing from the retailers that a lot of people don't shop, don't buy, because they don't want to carry packages around with them all day. So possibly somewhere that could store a package or a gift that's bought, and then they could pick it up at the end of the day, sort of like a coat service. Let's see here I'll go real quick. Clear messaging with bus scheduling that's always a when's the last bus leave? That's always an issue with a few people. So, we want to make that clear. We actually plan on it's hard to pump sound all the way from top end to bottom end. What's being said in the middle? Where the MCs are is not what's being seen on either end. So, we may actually look at adding an MC at the top of Washington when the parade starts as an introduction. So, it's an idea there. Better communication. We're going to look at adding the street sweeper for cleanup. So faster cleanup. Perry Robinson has done a fantastic job years and years and years, but we want to give him some support as well. So, Let's see. Dog Busses. That's always an issue. Dogs are only going to be allowed at Mickie Gordon. Our MCs will actually help with the housekeeping the rules and the bus schedule. We're thinking about a kid's zone. There's a lot of parents that are struggling between parades. The Hunt Parade ends at about 11:30 and the Element Parade at 2:00. What do we do for that much time? You can only eat for so long. So, a kid zone. We're bouncing some ideas around right now. Looking at potential spots, what to have, what we can do safely. Things like that. So, it's an idea that's out there. Better detailed maps. That's one of the things that we're hearing from our volunteer police force that come in. They're out of town. They don't know where to direct people to. So that's something that we want to increase. One other idea was to add some bleacher seating possibly handicap accessible right at South Pendleton. So right beside the Methodist Church between the Methodist Church and Northwest Federal Credit Union, their parking lot is right behind there. Let's give them a place that they can come, be front of the line and not have to fight through so many people. So that was one of the other ideas that came up. And then our action items, we have an MOU in board documents that are coming for Christmas in Middleburg that we're working with the town we're working with MBPA on. Shaun and I have already been in discussions. Our insurance policy is going to ask for an active shooter and bomb threat policy, unfortunately. But these are the times that we're in. So, we're in coordination with that. Pardon? We have a PR meeting with Vicky Bender. Coming up quickly. So better messaging. The quicker the better message we can get out, the sooner I think, the better off we are. And then after some clarification, we had a meeting with Danny and Chris last week. Christmas in Middleburg will be asking for a \$10,000 grant to offset some of the prime seating for the locals. Really being able to get the locals here and enjoyable again and the additional police staff that will take for that active bomb threat policy they will require more staffing. So, we need to be able to get that taken care of because again, that's safety is number one. So that's all we have. Again, I want to just end by saying thank you to each and every one of you. We are grateful. We are here. If anyone has any ideas, let us know. Thank you very much.

Pam Curran: Thank you very much.

Bridge Littleton: Don't go anywhere.

Darlene Kirk: Darn, he thought he got out.

Bridge Littleton: This is a discussion. [multiple speakers] Anybody. What's that? Bud.

Bud Jacobs: First question, is the trap door set up?

Doug Myers: I've been waiting for it to go off the whole time.

Bridge Littleton: The buttons broken.

Bud Jacobs: Very happy that you are.

Bridge Littleton: Hey Bud.

Bud Jacobs: Very happy that you're going to put a active shooter and a bomb threat policy in place, however I think you and Chief need once you have articulated your policy, you need to figure out a way to exercise it so that the folks, particularly the volunteers that you'll have working during the parade, know what their role is, if any. It's not enough to have a piece of paper that says this is our policy in fact, that without having exercised it is utterly useless. So, I urge you to follow through on that. And I, I know Chief will help you a great deal with that.

Doug Myers: Agreed.

Bridge Littleton: Any other questions? Kevin?

John Kevin Daly: No, just a statement. I really like the ideas you have to improve disabled parking and disable city. We have a large community, and we have community of a lot of folks with disabilities coming in to view the parade. And I think it's important that we include them as good neighbors as they are.

Doug Myers: Absolutely. Thank you.

Bridge Littleton: Pam.

Pam Curran: Do we know how the attendance compared to last year?

Doug Myers: I'm going to defer to do you our estimates were between 9 and 10,000 people is what we estimated. It's hard to tell. You don't know how many people come in a car, you can usually. I know in years past; Chief AJ would base it on. There's a formula that police departments use. I don't know how incredibly accurate, that is, but it can get us close. And from what we gather, it's somewhere between 9 and 10,000, which is the number that I think we all agree on is pretty comfortable.

Bud Jacobs: For the record the formula that Chief AJ used is called the Jacobs method. Wildly accurate. Okay. [laughter]

Bridge Littleton: In government contracting they call it a WAG, Wild something, Guess. Yeah, yeah. [laughter]

Darlene Kirk: What can we do about the, I know the dog fighting. Because that can be really dangerous. I mean, can we put warnings out that people should you know that we've had this problem and people need to be able to curb their dog. I don't know. [multiple speakers]

Bridge Littleton: I think it's either you ban dogs, or you don't. Well, you can, but I mean, I mean, if you don't ban dogs, I don't know how you police people to be smart.

Doug Myers: In our messaging to folks that ask about bringing dogs, we try to make it as clear as possible that your dog needs to be on a leash. They need to be well behaved. But it's really a gentlemen's agreement at some point, and unfortunately, not every dog is well behaved, and every owner thinks that theirs are perfect angels and they're not always. And maybe sometimes getting in those bigger groups contributes to that. So that's where we want to look at limiting those sizes to maybe not have that happen.

Darlene Kirk: I just don't want like some child to get caught in a dog fight because that's easy to have happen.

Doug Myers: Agreed.

Bridge Littleton: The only comment I was going to make was your you were mentioning the grant, which, you know absolutely. I'm actually thinking a step beyond that as well. So, there's the grant, which is to help offset certain things, whatever. There certainly was a lot of feedback from the local community that, you know, by the time things went up and, you know, spaces were gone or whatever. So, and, Danny, I'm just throwing this out as an idea aside from the grant.

Maybe we might want to consider, like the town government buying 75 spaces. And, you know, giving those out to locals or whatever. And especially if, you know, people are of because it is expensive and I'm not complaining that it's too high. It is what it is. You got to pay for the cost. But and it might be a need-based thing, or it might be a first come, first serve, but you got to live within five miles of Middleburg or something like that, you know? And I'm not saying we should do this, but I got a lot of feedback from folks. Oh, I went, I can't come to my own parade. And it's like, oh yeah, I'm, you know. So again, it's just a thought. The other thing was it's really the parking. I've already forgotten it. [off mic] What's that? [off mic] No, no, I'll remember it. But yeah. Darlene.

Darlene Kirk: I was just going to say about parking. A lot of people park up through Ridgeview, and I don't know, I mean, it doesn't bother me, but you might say that to some locals that, you know, at least.

Bridge Littleton: Well, it's a public road.

Darlene Kirk: Yeah, I know, but I mean, a lot of people do come up and just park on the property. That's fine.

Bridge Littleton: Sure. [off mic] Go ahead. Yeah, yeah.

Cindy Pearson: With the busses and having them double there the only as you know, the problem will be them turning and going back down 50. That's not going to happen there because they take up a lot of room because unfortunately, I couldn't get on Hamilton. So, I went down and tried to get. And I was just in that little golf cart. You could barely I mean, by the skin of your teeth get through there. So maybe some other options. I'm sure Chief has got some ideas.

Doug Myers: I deal with a year of trying to get, you know, ten gallons of, you know what in a five-gallon bucket. Right? But we'll look at it. Thankfully, our parking, our bus vendor. Deals with a lot of situations like this. So maybe it's something we can look at logistically on how to make that turn, whether it's adding another officer to stop traffic or how we can do it, but we want to make it the best experience without it being detrimental or hurtful to any equipment.

John Kevin Daly: Absolutely. Get with the Chief. He has a lot of experience with moving busses.

Bridge Littleton: Okay, I remember what it was. So, the other thing is all of the public comment about the price of parking, right? So, it's I mean, I get it right, it's Christmas and whatever. And everybody always thinks everything's free. Well free just means free to one person. It's still got to be paid for.

Doug Myers: Yeah.

Bridge Littleton: I was looking at a bunch of different things about a month ago, and it's amazing when it's a ticketed event of some form, whether it's parking or it's free parking, but you have to have a ticket to come. Public events like this, they're all like \$40, \$50, \$60. Yeah. So, I don't I mean you don't want to get confrontational about it, but you know providing people that information, you know, hey we've done our pricing based on what we see for events like this as an example. You know, this is this this is it. And it I don't know if it'll deflate some of the commentary, but it's certainly like this isn't new and you guys aren't unreasonable. It's sort of you're like in the market average. So anyway, just a thought.

Chris Bernard: So, we talked about that a little bit a week or two ago. And I think part of that goes into the messaging and Vicky will be helpful with that. And it's getting ahead of the stuff. And you don't even have to change the message. Like, I mean, you could just say, hey, look, this is, you know, the parking is this. And all the proceeds of that go to pay for the busses that get you safely from here to there. Say, I think if you [multiple speakers] stay in front of it, it's fine. I wouldn't even compare it to other events.

Doug Myers: Thank you. And we do we, we try and get that out without being confrontational. But as you know, through social media and the keyboard warriors out there we don't want to make it bigger than it needs to be. We've been very transparent about it. We're not raking in [multiple speakers] truckloads of money for this. It just pays for itself. Exactly. It pays for itself, right? And it's just the cost of doing business is how we see it. So, we will try and increase that message tactfully and gracefully. But it is where it needs to be.

Bridge Littleton: Awesome. Anybody else? All right, Doug, thank you.

Doug Myers: Thank you.

Darlene Kirk: Thank you very much.

Doug Myers: You're welcome.

Punkin Lee: Next is Streetscape. Good evening and thank you. First of all, I'd like to thank you all for having us and also let you know who the Streetscape Committee Members are, because I'm sure some of you don't have any idea. Bob Dornin, Pat McIlvaine, Bonnie Burns, who's here this evening, Linda Wright and Michael Calley, and of course, our Trustee Council Rep, Cindy. So, I thank everyone for all their time to just recap the 2023. We held our 22nd Arbor Day celebration at the Middleburg Charter School, and we planted a red maple in memory of Joe Embry, who many of you all remember put the lights up on the Christmas tree. So, we honored him. Other trees we planted, due to a lack of inventory from 22 we planted last year trees in front of the Safeway, a dogwood for Mary Kay Garwood, and a redbud for Eura Lewis. In addition, we got rid of the roots and the brick mound in front of Tully's and put in a London plane and installed a yellowwood at the community center. The biggest project we've been working on for well over a year came to fruition, as Bonnie and Bob went bed by bed from the sporting library down to the Exxon, the triangle, and in front of the Safeway created a plant plan, and through town support and beautification, we were able to hire Oscar and his staff to plant and maintain the bump outs, the triangle, and the street area in front of the Safeway. Oscar is so thrilled to have this job. He also does all the maintenance at the Red Fox, so now he has the whole town. He comes to the Red Fox three days a week. So, I think our plantings will be deadheaded watered, pruned throughout. And I think it'll be such a nice presentation. Streetscape Committee also worked on the South Madison Project regarding the trees. We worked with Will on vetting the material, picking the location and overseeing the installation of the Flexi-Pave Pilot program in front of Lulu's. We also worked with Gary at the American Legion for the banners for Veterans Day. Also, Estee wrote, helped us write some articles and we put them in periodically with the town newsletter and the water bill to remind people to cut the ivy off their trees. It kills the trees or if they had any need for someone to come with a tree suggestion or with their shrubbery. Going forward for the 23rd Arbor Day Celebration, it'll be Saturday, April 27th. We plan to install a tree at the Community Center playground in memory of Joanne Cole, Tim's mother, who spent nearly a lifetime as the face of the community center. We're also working on a planting plan at the new end of town entrance, big signs, and we'll be doing an updated tree inventory for Washington, Madison, and Federal streets. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank the small committee for all the many hours spent on walking and looking at everything plans, ideas and suggestions. What we do is seen by everyone who passes through, and we strive to always do a good job, think into the future, and just make our town even more special than it already is. So, anybody have any questions?

Bridge Littleton: Any questions for Punkin? Yes, sir.

Chris Bernard: How do you guys feel about the sidewalk in front of Lulu, too, now that it's been there for a little while?

Punkin Lee: I think the committee people and the feedback we've heard has been very positive. I mean, you come off the bricks and hit it, and you don't even realize you transitioned from. It looks like it's going to be so slippery. And then you hit it. It's like beautiful to walk on.

Punkin Lee: And I know Matilda has approached Will to that tree that's right and the other hump. And to work with that with people that she does her brick work with. So hopefully that might be something that'll happen in the spring. And you don't need a mini baby carriage to get down the sidewalk. So.

Bridge Littleton: Any other questions? Yes, Cindy.

Cindy Pearson: I just have a comment. Would like to thank Punkin and Bonnie and all the members, because they do give a lot of extra time that you really don't see, you know, from these drawings and reports to walking and knowing how to pronounce the plants that a plants a plant, a tree is a tree. [laughter] But they can do it. And thank you much.

Punkin Lee: Oh, thank you.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. Just on my end, you know, Punkin thank you and everybody on the committee for all the hard work. And, I mean, it's a labor of love, and we really appreciate it.

Punkin Lee: Thank you. [applause] Thank you all.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. Going to the next item, which is Stuart's done his. So, Danny, update on special projects.

Danny Davis: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Apologize for not having a full report to you on this. As Miss Olivieri mentioned we are completed with the septic conversion project, which is a significant step and appreciate our contractors and engineers on that and really do appreciate the partnership and support of the homeowners, because we did have to disturb a fair amount of land over a number of months. And I know it wasn't ideal during the winter, but we are glad to get it in and get the sod laid before springtime. All of the grinder pumps are installed. There was a walk-through inspection on Tuesday at 1 p.m.. If you recall, something kind of important happened at Tuesday. Tuesday? Right at 1 p.m.. So, I did not get to walk the project with our engineers, but thankfully everything looks good and running well, so we are excited about that. We are continuing to make repairs to the Well 4 plant after the most recent failure of equipment that we had in there. We're also underway on-site work for the tank site there at the plant for the Clearwell project. And then the other item that we're tracking and keeping on top of is Asbury Church project. Just today, thanks to her hard work, Miss North released an RFP for community outreach services for a firm to run the community outreach portion of that effort to get information and input from the community and stakeholders on desired uses and future rehabilitation of Asbury Church. Thanks to Council Members Jacobs and Pearson. Yeah. Sorry. My mind went blank for a second there. Make sure it was the two of you. I thought it was well on their review of that RFP and so that's out the door. And Miss North made outreach to some firms that had recently submitted similar type responses to the National Historic Trust. Close enough. Okay, I'm getting a look. So anyway, we have provided that information to a lot of firms and look forward to getting some response back. So that's where we are on those projects, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Bridge Littleton: Any questions for Danny? Anyone, please. No. All right. Thank you, I appreciate it. Okay. Next item up is where are we? I think it's legislative update.

Danny Davis: Legislative.

Bridge Littleton: Or no, wait any Councilman reports. Peter? No. Okay, good. All right discussion items, legislative update by Mr. Davis.

Danny Davis: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Just a few updates. And thanks to the hard work of the Mayor as well as partners in law enforcement and Mr. [inaudible] the bill HB 1071 to give us the authority to limit speed limits within the town limits just simply by a vote of the Town Council was passed by the Senate. It had originally it had originally failed 2020 with the lieutenant governor voting against the bill. They reconsidered it, put it aside for the day, and were able to flip three votes. So, we're very grateful for that authority and look forward to further discussion once that becomes effective, about how we effectively implement that within the town limits. So, we have some discussions ongoing there. SB 304, which is related to accessory dwelling units and limiting our ability to restrict accessory dwelling units, is currently at the house now it is nearly similar to HB 900, which was already set aside for a year at the house, meaning our goal and our hope is that committee will do the same with the Senate bill, set it aside for a year. They intend to study it. And so, it's again tracking along the same pathway. And then the other major bill we're watching is SB 544, which was passed by the Senate and is now sitting in also House Committee on Cities, Counties and Towns. And SB 544 is the bill that would limit a localities ability to put conditional use permit requirements on short term rentals for homes that are occupied by the property owner as their legal residence which [inaudible] in its own way. So, we continue to oppose that as well and hope that the House will set that aside in their committee. And that's the way these work, right? It passes one house, and then you have to make the same push on the other side. So those are the major bills. The budget bill was released over the weekend. If you've read there was about \$1 billion difference between the Senate and the House side. There's a lot of speculation that there will be some negotiations and trading of votes or trading of positions for the governor to try to get

the arena bill passed for the sports arena in Alexandria. Things that he would probably typically veto may get approved even without signature if they pass the House and Senate in order for him to try to attract votes for that bill. Primarily one of those of interest to us, and one that we will watch closely, is the retail sales of cannabis. And the thinking is it will likely pass the General Assembly because there is Republican support for that along with the Democrats and that if the governor sees this as an opportunity to gain a few favorable votes for the arena bill in his budget then he may let that pass. Now, my understanding is that still contains the opportunity for a locality to hold a referendum to limit retail sales of cannabis in the locality. But that would have to be done this November. And this November is a presidential election. And so, there's a lot of, again politicking going on to the details of these bills. So, we will watch that and keep you informed as we get more information, particularly on anything that would have direct impact to the town. As far as I recall, those are the primary ones we're tracking right now. And if there are others, we'll keep you updated by email or at the next meeting. Yeah.

Bud Jacobs: With respect to the cannabis legislation what you talk about is the ability of a local jurisdiction to hold a referendum and formally, the bill, not this bill, but the I guess the previous bill had the definitions or of populations of jurisdictions. Is that still in the bill?

Danny Davis: I will confess I've not read the legislation this year, so I don't know all the specific details, but I'll get that information and can pass it on to you.

Bud Jacobs: Seems to me.

Danny Davis: Mr. Crim may have more info.

Bud Jacobs: Well, Martin may know. We talked last time about giving the Mayor an opportunity to sit down with Senator Perry. I don't know where we stand on that, but should you have that opportunity it seems to me the cannabis legislation, specifically with regard to Middleburg's ability to control its fate with commercial cannabis sales, should be a high on your list of discussion items with her.

Bridge Littleton: She's so everything that we've encouraged her to vote against or vote for, she has. And it's been very good, so I will I did not reach out or we did not reach out to her on that specific one, but I will with Martin. Peter.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Danny did I miss it, or did you mention about the potential for removing local zoning oversight bill?

Bridge Littleton: There. Yeah, that was two of them. That was both of those you did mention.

Danny Davis: Yeah, yes, sir.

Danny Davis: So [multiple speakers] 304 is the zoning bill related to that would.

Bridge Littleton: They're both zoning bills.

Danny Davis: They are both zoning, but it would mandate a locality to allow accessory dwelling units, which is the one that we were concerned about from that perspective. 544 with short term rentals. Yeah. And Mr. Mayor, I think Mr. Crim may have info on.

Bridge Littleton: Go ahead, Martin.

Martin Crim: Thank you, Mayor. The bill does not have a population limit on referendum. It's just counties, cities and towns. And the town can vote independently from the county.

Bridge Littleton: Excellent. [inaudible] General question. Okay. Anybody? All right. So, the feedback I'll give you guys real quickly on the two zoning ones. So, there's a public hearing this morning that Mayor Burke and myself and Mayor

Hornbaker from God Lovettsville went to and that was the one on accessory dwelling units. There were 8 or 9 groups or. Yeah, organizations that spoke in favor of it. And so, what this bill basically allows somebody to do is you can build an accessory dwelling unit on your property by right. So, the locality does not have the ability to stop it within some, you know, there are certain things like safety or whatever. But basically, you can build up to a 1500 square foot dwelling unit on your property by right. And the local authority cannot prohibit it. And there's a bunch of other provisions in there. The 7 or 8 proponents of it were you know Realtors groups, builder's groups, affordable housing for teachers' group was, you know, spoke in favor of it. But it was mostly a bunch of real estate and or builder type associations. After that there was probably 25 or 30 cities, towns and counties and associations who spoke against it. And we each only had 45 seconds. Yeah. It was I mean, this the one poor woman who got up there she was with the Affordable Housing for Teachers Association. It took her 45 seconds to say her name and her association name. But the conversation on the dais afterward. I'm not going to say I'm optimistic, but there's nobody on the dais was I'm all for this. The three people of the nine on the committee who spoke had concerns, you know. Well, how would this work? And well, what about this? And you referenced building code standards, and we don't even know what the building code standards are. So, they are having a hearing again tomorrow. The chair pushed it for a day, you know, avoided the vote because the bill sponsor literally brought in amendments to five minutes before they were going to vote on it. The chair said that she would prefer to push this to a study for a year, so hopefully that will prevail. Michelle Gowdy was working really hard all day long to try to get something. Apparently, it is a pet project or is a pet bill of the Speaker of the House. So, for some reason he's all for it and actually pushing people to be for it. [off mic] Yeah, he's in a condo, so it doesn't matter. No, I don't know. And then the one other thing that was brought up about it was that the patron said was very interesting at the beginning of it, he said, this is all about trying to provide affordable housing. And everybody said, you know, a lot of people who were speaking against it said, well, just because you build a 1500 square foot house behind a main house does not define it's going to be affordable. There are plenty of 1500 square foot homes that are half a million or three quarters of \$1 million. And then literally, after all the public comment, the sponsor gets to come back and answer questions. And he said, yeah, this actually really isn't going to provide any affordable housing.

Darlene Kirk: Yeah.

Bridge Littleton: And I told Michelle, I said, you need to take a clip of the first thing where you said affordable, and then you paste them together and send it to everybody. So, I'm scheduled to speak tomorrow again. So is Kelly. So is Chris and a bunch of others. You all are more than welcome to sign up as well. I'll forward you the link. It's at 9 a.m. is the hearing. And then on the other bill, which is the short-term rentals there is a hearing on that one tomorrow in the same committee at 9:00. So that's another key one where you basically they there and I don't think this one is as precarious as the ADU one. I think this one is I think Michelle felt comfortable that this one wouldn't pass because of again, these things are written with all these exceptions and little holes trying to plug issues. But every time you do it, three more issues pop up, you know? So, but that one is it's basically you can't require a special use permit. Yeah. Now the person has to be the owner of the home it has to be their defined primary residence, not just use as a residential home, but it has to be their primary residence. Well, how do you define that? You know. Okay, fine. We'll start doing inspections every day. But again, it's just filled with all these problems. So anyway.

Bud Jacobs: Quick question.

Bridge Littleton: Yes, sir.

Bud Jacobs: Did the Airbnb centralized collection of occupancy taxes bill go away?

Danny Davis: I believe it did. That was HB 1328. I believe I'll look real quickly. Getting my numbers mixed up. Yes. The, yes that was the one that was left in finance in the house just recently. So that has died, thankfully.

Bridge Littleton: So that's the status. And those two will be voted on tomorrow. So. [off mic] Yes, sir.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: I was just curious, and I should probably know this, but with this ADU proposed bill, is there a limit on I mean, is there are a minimum size lot?

Bridge Littleton: No. So, the only and it's actually kind of ridiculous because it also you don't have to conform with side lot or back lot setbacks. You can basically do whatever you want to do.

Chris Bernard: I think the town can stipulate that it has to be at least four feet away from the main house.

Bridge Littleton: No, no, it says you cannot be any further than 500ft.

Chris Bernard: Yeah, but there's another one that says they can say that it has to be a minimum. [multiple speakers]

Bridge Littleton: Oh yeah. No. So there is a minimum side lot, but you can't impose maximums. Yeah. It's so you can impose maximums on the on the main house. But on the accessory dwelling unit it's basically do whatever you want. It's crazy. Anyway, so and I will give a lot of credit to Michelle and COLT. Everybody's been working really hard to try to get these to go away. All right. Next is. We did all that. What do we got?

Rhonda North: Mr. Mayor.

Bridge Littleton: Yes.

Rhonda North: Maria has arrived for the meeting.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. Yep. Sorry about that. Hello, Maria. How are you?

Maria Fuentes: I'm good. Thank you, sir.

Bridge Littleton: All right, so we now have. This is the fun part of the job. As everybody knows or if you don't know, you've been living under a rock. Middleburg Deli will be retiring after many, many years of providing a great service to the town decades. And as I understand you, you all are moving back to El Salvador?

Maria Fuentes: Back and forth.

Bridge Littleton: Back and forth. Right? Well, we wish you all the best in a well-deserved, well-earned retirement. So, we have a resolution of appreciation. And what I'd like to do is read that. Let's see where we go. Okay. Resolution of appreciation. Whereas in 1994, Middleburg Deli, formerly known as Danks Deli, opened its doors on Liberty Street. And Whereas the Deli was acquired in 1998 by Maria and Pedro Fuentes, and in 2012 the business name was changed to Middleburg Deli. Whereas since its opening, Middleburg Deli has provided delicious subs, soups and sandwiches to the greater Middleburg community, including both residents and visitors, creating and serving more than 1 million sandwiches. And whereas, in addition to serving customers in the restaurant, the Middleburg Deli provided lunches for The Hill School and the Middleburg Community Charter School once a week, as well as to the Town of Middleburg Committees when they held working lunch meetings. And whereas, after 30 years of serving the community, Maria and Pedro have decided to retire and will close the Middleburg Deli on February 29th, 2024. And Whereas, the Mayor and Town Council recognize that the closing of the Middleburg Deli is the end of a long tenured and well respected business in the Town of Middleburg and would like to formally recognize the Middleburg Deli and honor Maria and Pedro, as well as their employees for their values of serving as a customer oriented restaurant, which not only provided exceptional food and customer service, but exemplified the charm and friendliness that draw visitors to Middleburg's Historic Village. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Mayor and Members of the Town Council hereby recognize and express our sincere appreciation to the Middleburg Deli. Maria and Pedro and their employees for their exemplary service to the Middleburg community from 1994 through February 29, 2024. Be it further resolved, the Mayor and Members of the Town Council wish Maria and Pedro a long and happy retirement. [applause] That's true. You can always come back.

Maria Fuentes: Thank you.

Bridge Littleton: Would somebody like to make a motion?

Darlene Kirk: I move that Council adopt a resolution expressing its appreciation to the Middleburg Deli, Maria and Pedro Fuentes and their employees for their service to the Middleburg community from 1994 through February 29, 2024.

John Kevin Daly: Second.

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

All of Council: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Opposed? Abstentions? Okay. Maria, congratulations again. Thank you for all you've done for the community. And wishing you all the best on a like I said a well well-deserved retirement. And if you'd like to say anything you're more than welcome.

Maria Fuentes: I was just going to say it has been. Whew I don't know. [laughter] Has been great to be in Middleburg. At the first time we came to Middleburg, and we started working for Richard Danker. We known him for a long time before we come from DC, working for him many, many years. And then after a while, he started calling my husband. You have to come to Middleburg it's a great special, you know, village to you know, your kids grow up in a school that is very, very nice, schools and everything and people's nice and which has been, you know, the truth. And so, after a while, we think about it and came here and start working for him. You know, we're supposed to have a full time, but we never had because it wasn't enough to do. But after two years back and forth, we hit the side too and asked us if we wanted to go. And we think about a lot because it wasn't. We used to work but we didn't know what to do to manage business or, you know. But with his heart and his sister called we decide we want to take over and we start little by little, learning everything. And tried to do our best for the community. And so we here and has been great to being in Middleburg all these years been working for, you know, to provide for the people. People being very nice to us, to being coming every day. Everybody to come in and, you know, eat there or taken home or you know, so. I don't know what to do, but I just want to say thank you to everyone here and to the community for all this time to support us. And so, thanks so much. Thank you.

Bridge Littleton: Thank you. [applause] Thank you. Turn around.

Audience Member: Turn around so we can see [off mic] You and the Mayor. [off mic]

Bridge Littleton: So that's why we need all the data centers.

Maria Fuentes: Thank you. And. Well, thank you, I guess thank you. And I want to, on behalf of my husband, too. I forgot about him. He's there.

Bridge Littleton: Nothing personal. [laughter]

Maria Fuentes: I know. Right. But he's the one who's inside the kitchen doing everything. But he said thank you too. And so, thanks so much.

Darlene Kirk: Well, you're always welcome here.

Maria Fuentes: I'm sorry, but I have to leave.

Bridge Littleton: Oh. No worries.

Maria Fuentes: I have someone in my country is in the hospital right now. My husband's nephew is in very poor condition. Thank you. Motorcycle. And so, I said to Pedro, I gotta go and say thank you to the families. Thanks so much.

Chris Bernard: Give them are best. Yeah.

Cindy Pearson: Bridge, [off mic] box.

Bridge Littleton: You want the box to put it in and keep it?

Maria Fuentes: Oh, yeah.

Bridge Littleton: That'd be perfect. Shaun thank you.

Maria Fuentes: I'm going to take it to my country and put it in my living room. Thank you.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. The next item is the Strategic Planning Retreat update. Danny.

Danny Davis: Well, thank you, Mr. Mayor and Council Members. [off mic] And due to scheduling conflicts, we need to reschedule the strategic planning retreat. And due to the inability to find some dates, we thought maybe if it's okay with Council, we would just have this all pull out our calendars at the same time right now, since we're all together. Because it's hard to all meet together without calling an improper public meeting. So, we attempted to look at the weekend of March 20th through the 23rd, but that's not come to fruition. We've not been able to find a good date that weekend. The following weekend Thursday, we have a Council meeting. Friday is Good Friday, and that's Easter weekend. And I don't know how that impacts people, but that's typically not good. The following weekend is the first weekend of April.

Bridge Littleton: Hey, Danny let me ask a quick question. So, we were planning to do Thursday, Friday.

Danny Davis: That's what we were seeking.

Bridge Littleton: So why let's not restrict ourselves to just Thursday, Friday let's look at Monday through Friday. [multiple speakers] Yeah. Yeah. Well yeah. No, I know, but let's put Monday on I mean, you know, if the week of the 22nd or whatever it is, everyone's good Monday, Tuesday, you know.

Danny Davis: Sure thing. So, March 25th is a Planning Commission meeting. So that becomes challenging.

Bridge Littleton: Think of the 18th.

Danny Davis: So, our facilitator is not available until the 20th. So that's why we did not [multiple speakers]

Darlene Kirk: The 23rd is the [off mic]

Danny Davis: So, to that end, if there's interest in the 26th, 27th or 27th, 28th of March.

Darlene Kirk: That's fine.

Danny Davis: That's a Tuesday, Wednesday or Wednesday, Thursday.

Darlene Kirk: Okay. How about the 1st of April?

Danny Davis: So.

Bridge Littleton: Week of the first.

Danny Davis: Easter is the 31st, so we could do, if you wish, Monday, Tuesday of that following week. First and second.

Darlene Kirk: Wait a minute. I thought Easter's later, isn't it?

Bridge Littleton: No, it moves it's the 30th.

Darlene Kirk: [multiple speakers] calendar says it's the 21st.

Danny Davis: Are you in orthodox?

Darlene Kirk: Oh.

Bridge Littleton: She's got the right one. [off mic]

Darlene Kirk: That's weird. Oh. Well, I guess I don't care. Yeah.

Bridge Littleton: No, no, I have it. It says Easter. That's what it could be. That's what it could be.

Darlene Kirk: That's fine.

Bridge Littleton: So is everybody. Would you say the first and second.

Speaker9: April Fool's Day.

Danny Davis: I know it's just hard for those who have full time positions, but you're okay.

Bridge Littleton: Is one and two good? How about the second and third?

Darlene Kirk: Yeah, I'm making a face.

Bridge Littleton: Well and remember the first day is only a half day.

Chris Bernard: Yes, it's the afternoon.

Cindy Pearson: Oh, really?

Bridge Littleton: Yeah.

Chris Bernard: It's important [off mic] 4 o'clock [off mic].

Bridge Littleton: Whenever.

Chris Bernard: Second day is.

Bridge Littleton: So, how's everybody on the second and the third?

Bud Jacobs: Good.

Darlene Kirk: I'm okay.

John Kevin Daly: Seven Loaves. [off mic]

Darlene Kirk: Does that work for you, Cindy?

Danny Davis: Can you?

Cindy Pearson: I just have [off mic] Yeah.

Bridge Littleton: Well, again, I apologize to everybody. Unavoidable. Damn Brits. [laughter]

Danny Davis: So, what I'm hearing, just to make sure fully clear, we'll begin the evening of the second. Check in somewhere around three or so in Culpeper. We'll check with the hotel, make sure it's still we can find alternate means, if necessary. And then all day Wednesday the third. I will double check. He generally said he was available any time after the 20th or 19th. So, I'll do a double check with him.

Rhonda North: And Mr. Mayor, just so you know, not that you need me there, but I will be on vacation that week, so I will not be at the retreat.

Bridge Littleton: All right new assignments for Rhonda. [laughter] Okay. No, we got it.

Chris Bernard: [off mic]

Bridge Littleton: Yeah, exactly. Okay.

Danny Davis: We'll do a circle around on all the details and confirm back with everybody.

Bridge Littleton: Perfect. Okay, great. Thank you very much.

Danny Davis: And by we, I mean Rhonda. [laughter]

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. All right. Well, everybody thank you again I really do appreciate it. All right. Next item here is rescheduling of the October 24th meeting.

Rhonda North: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. So Mille Miglia will be held that week. And there is an event specifically the night of Thursday, October the 24th that we think Council may wish to attend. So, the question is, would you be interested in rescheduling the council meeting so you can participate in the welcoming reception? Earlier that week, there will be other activities that the staff will need to participate in, so earlier in the week is kind of difficult. What we were?

Bridge Littleton: So, Rhonda I'm gonna recommend October 31st.

Rhonda North: We were going to recommend October 30th.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. Okay. Yep. That's fine. Everybody good with the 30th.

John Kevin Daly: Yeah. [off mic] figured out.

Bridge Littleton: Awesome, 30th it is. All right, next item is Danny's Budget Review. Strap in.

Danny Davis: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. We're going to attempt to present from my computer while she keeps Martin on. If Martin gets cut off, that'll be the way it goes. There we go. Technology. Well. Thank you, Mr. Mayor and Council Members, for the opportunity to present to you and to the Middleburg citizens the fiscal Year 2025 proposed budget. As part of this presentation, I'd like to briefly review our current year highlights and accomplishments, look forward to the next fiscal year, and then highlight revenues and expenditures in the general fund and the utility fund. And at the end, I'll go over some next steps and key dates on the calendar as part of this process. The current year. In this current year, the Town Council has continued to implement its key strategic initiatives. These include a focus on protecting our quality of life and established neighborhoods. This has been evidenced by the work on the R-2 zoning regulations and the community meeting that we held in October. That report is pending final review, and we hope to release that to the Council, the Planning Commission, and to the public shortly. With the support of the Council and the community, I appointed Chief Jones as the next Police Chief in May. And we're already seeing his great leadership among the team and in the community. The Town Council approved two new events to focus on the community the Wellness Day, which is

actually an event that did occur pre-COVID but is being brought back, as well as Middleburg Day, which will be held on May 31st, which these paired along with Independence Day, are really meant to be citizen focused events and then also building upon our major events that are drawing visitors to the town. The Council is celebrated also its long-term businesses and volunteers, recognizing their tireless efforts in serving our community. And at the same time, we celebrated the opening of many new businesses over the last year with over ten ribbon cuttings, which was exciting and wonderful for the community. As noted, we had numerous public outreach efforts and engagement in protecting our community, including the amazing outpouring of community engagement on the Mickie Gordon Park plans. The town, especially through the Mayor's leadership, remains involved with county matters around the issues of zoning, planning and rural land protection. And of course, the town staff were happy to move into the new town Hall and welcome the public on October 30th. We've seen a great response to the town hall and the ability to work more effectively and to serve the public, and it's shown in the top right photo on this slide. Rhonda was recognized by the MBPA for her efforts not only as Town Clerk and all the work she does behind the scenes, but also for her key role as the project lead on the Town Hall project. On the utility side in terms of key highlights for this year, we finally saw completion of the Water Tower Renovation project. We just completed, as noted, the septic conversion project, and we have begun work on the well for Clearwell project. And these all go to maintain the safety and longevity of our utility system. Now, as we look towards fiscal 2025, we know that the Town Council will continue its efforts in all of these strategic areas, including ongoing review of protecting our existing communities, focusing on resident centric events, supporting our businesses, and developing a solid, effective staff that continue to provide leadership in the community. And we look forward to the retreat coming up soon to solidify these goals and look at additional items to be added to the list. So, I'd like to move into the general fund for in my proposed budget for you. On the revenue side, we briefly reviewed this at the last Council meeting. Overall, I'm projecting a modest 1.8% increase in revenues year over year. That's primarily driven by either flat or even slightly decreased meals taxes and transient occupancy taxes. As noted, we're continuing to watch the economy we believe and most economists believe that we will not see a recession, which is good news, but instead we'll have a soft landing as the terminology being used. However, there's still sensitivity to worldwide events that could affect both the national and global economies. Right now, the forecasters are showing modest growth in GDP in the coming two years. And so, we'll continue to track that and provide updates as we get that information as well. On the following slides, we'll talk a little bit more about real property assessments and also the tax rate. But as noted here in previously at the last meeting, the town did see \$18 million in new construction for the real property assessments which is reflected in our fiscal 2025 revenue lines. The other major changes in our revenue expectations involve accounting for additional interest earnings on our investments, which are at this time still earning between 5 and 5.5%. On this slide, I'm providing to you a five year or four-year lookback and current year of average residential assessed values in the town limits, including new construction. What you'll see is this jump from calendar year 2020 to calendar year 2024 is 62.5% in the average value of a home or residential unit in the town. Now, it's important to note that doesn't mean that an existing home in 2020 has grown in value 62.5%. But what it is indicative of are the new homes being built in the community that are higher value, larger size, whether on vacant lots or replacing older homes? I think this slide demonstrates some of the challenges that the Town Council is trying to address related to affordable housing, protecting our existing communities, and even looking at what are the proper regulations around the right size of new construction or rebuilding on lots in our established communities? In terms of the line on this chart is showing the history of the real property tax rate, which the Town Council decreased in fiscal year 2023 again in the current year, and it is proposed again to decrease down from its current rate. The advertised and proposed rate at this time is 12.36 cents per \$100 of assessed value. This is a different way of showing the same information but broken down by unit type. So single family homes, you'll see the large jump in value here. Again, much of this accounting due to new construction of single family detached. And then you'll see the increase in both townhomes and condos. Condos continue to be an interesting title for some of the housing units in town. Those are primarily Stonewall Court. If you look at those even though they might be considered townhomes, they're in some ways stacked over each other. And so, they are actually categorized as condos. And you'll see the large increase in value for those condo units. This chart here was provided in last meeting's memo showing the year over year potential tax bill change for the average valued. I'm sorry for an equalized value. So, this would be for homes that were existing last year based on their rate or assessed value increase at two different rates. The first rate is the 12.36 cents per \$100 of assessed value. That's in green. That's the equalized rate plus 3%. You'll see the year over year tax bill change ranges from \$21 to \$66 year over year change. At the equalized rate, you'll see that for single family detached and townhomes, they'd actually see a tax decrease in condos would still see a fairly sizable. And again, that's all based upon the assessed value changes of those properties. And then stepping back and looking at the totality of general fund revenues. The major drivers, as we all know again, are the meals, tax and TOT. Those are in blue and green on these charts. All the others. I'm

sorry. In the other category in beige at the top includes the growth in interest earnings. So, you'll see that jump year over year. So, this is essentially the totality of general fund revenues expected in fiscal year 2025. And oftentimes I would take out the kind of fifth year back, which in this case is fiscal 2021. But I thought it was important really to show kind of the history coming out of Covid. As we recovered out, that was a partial revenue year, if you will. But then the explosion of growth over the years afterwards we continue to watch current fiscal year trends and will keep you updated as well as the finance committee, updated as we review current or existing quarters of revenue. On the expenditure side, the proposed fiscal 2025 budget is a 4% increase over the fiscal current year amended budget. The amended budget includes primarily the large donation to the charitable foundation, so that had a bump in expenditures. So, if we compare it to the adopted 2024 budget, then the proposed fiscal 25 budget is a 10.5% increase. The majority of this increase falls under a few categories, one being debt service payments. As you know, when we issued the bonds for the town hall, there were a few years of interest only payments and then a stepping up of principal. And then this is the first year where full principal payments are required. Maybe the good news of that is at this point, once we hit this level, these payments will remain relatively flat through the maturity of those bonds. So, we won't see any further large increases in the debt service over the remainder of the debt on the town hall. The other increases in the fiscal 2025 budget include continued inflation, ongoing operational costs, and also enhancements for our major events and community events as we continue to invest in our community in that way. The proposed fiscal 2025 budget includes also an ongoing investment in our great staff. We will see an 8% increase in our health insurance premiums. On the positive side, though, we have seen a sizable decrease in our actuarially defined retirement contributions. So, in essence, our retirement liability is fully funded. And so, we're seeing a decrease in our required payments towards that. Those are recalculated every two years. And so again we'll see after two years of change in that percentage.

Bridge Littleton: Inflation.

Danny Davis: That we think a lot of things. So, but that helps offset some of those other increases. In terms of investing in our staff related to salaries, I'm proposing a 4% market adjustment for the general workforce and a 7% market adjustment for our sworn officers. In addition, similar to prior years, I'm proposing an average 2% merit increase that will be dependent upon performance evaluations. On the police department side, we're continuing to see departments all across the region and the Commonwealth make significant investments in salaries. Around us we've seen some agencies provide double digit increases in a single year, to be followed by further large increases afterwards. For fiscal 2025, for example, Loudoun County is proposing a 12.7% increase for law enforcement. So, while we don't match or have to match those salaries, we do want to ensure that we're staying aware of these increases and staying competitive in the market. And we're seeing even agencies to our south and our rural west that are providing double digit increases in this year or in the most recent year. So, we're very well aware of what's happening in the public safety sector. And my proposed budget is demonstrating hopefully our intention of trying to retain our officers, but also to recruit effectively for any vacancies that we have. Also, of note at the bottom of this slide is that there are unallocated revenues in the fiscal 2025 budget of the amount, approximately \$431,000 that can be used for Council strategic initiatives can be just set aside as contingency and held for other needs as required. This is a chart showing the history of general fund expenditures over the past few years. The top beige area represents the contingency or for closed out years, the excess revenues essentially that goes into our unassigned fund balance in our fiscal policy fiscal reserve. You'll see the various categories here. On the fiscal 2025 on the far right, the \$777,000 number is the debt service for the town hall. And then finally in the general funds, the other category relates to our capital projects. As you recall, in current fiscal year, the Town Council set aside \$1 million dollars in from unassigned fund balance towards the Asbury Church restoration project. Those funds, being capital funds, are appropriated and will be held until the time that either design is ready, or construction is ready to go. And as noted, the RFP was released earlier today. We're continuing to review options for South Madison Street, one of council's strategic initiatives. At this time, I've tentatively shown in the fiscal 2025 CIP \$750,000 of prior year unassigned fund balance set aside for this [inaudible] streetscape and economic development project. But that remains to be finalized through the review of those plans. And then additionally, we know that there are ongoing streetscape and infrastructure needs and enhancements and whether discussed at the retreat or at a future meeting, there are opportunities there for investing in other improvements, for the safety of our residents and visitors and enhancements to our streetscapes. Now moving on to the utility fund our consumption trends on the utility fund side continue to increase. While we do run a very lean and efficient system, we are seeing positivity in our revenues and in our fund balance. We do see growth in revenues from the new homes that have been built and that's continuing to support the fund. But as in years past, and to avoid a significant one time increase in the future, we are still proposing a 3% rate increase which is in

keeping with the rate model study that was done just a couple of years ago. We also continue to seek grant funding that can offset various projects and capital efforts in the utility fund. This slide demonstrates utility fund revenues. The large number is, again, most of our revenues come from user fees. We may exceed our revenue projections in current year. We're on track to have some slightly higher than expected revenues, but I'm hesitant to make that a formal projection at this time, just based again, on we had a very strong summer in terms of utility, but then kind of trending back to where we thought we would be for the last couple of billing cycles. So, I'm basing the fiscal 2025 budget over my 2024 adopted budget and not making any other further assumptions. The only other, again, change here is at the top. The other category is also we have some interest accruals in the utility fund as well. So that goes to enhance the other category at the top. In terms of expenditures on the utility fund, we are seeing ongoing maintenance and repair needs. Recently we've had a number of pumps fail. We've had equipment issues, line repairs, and even the SCADA system at the wastewater plant went on the fritz two different times. And so, we are putting efforts into enhancing the longevity of these items and investing to make sure that our system continues to operate safely and effectively. And I am appreciative of the Council's investment in the utility fund, because we have the dollars that allow us to go make those repairs and fixes right away. As one example, the wastewater plant has two pumps that run kind of either side of the plant. We had one of those pumps fail, and so thankfully we had a spare on the shelf that we were able to replace that pump. And then just a few days later, the other pump failed. And so, we've been running the wastewater plant on the one spare that we had on the shelf. We've been running that for a number of weeks now as we're ordering that second pump to come in. Our goal then would be in fiscal 2025. We purchase another spare to keep on that shelf so that we can again have quick action if this were to happen again, it's kind of the life we lead in utilities. You don't know when something is going to fail, and you don't know when something's going to break. We're also, as mentioned earlier, underway on the Well 4 Clearwell project. My understanding is the site for the tank has been cleared and they're preparing for the tank as well as for the piping to go out to it. We're also working with IES to do cleanup of the issue that we had a couple of weeks ago, and just today they were in there replacing piping valves and other components with stainless steel so that we can avoid a repeat of the situation that we had a few weeks ago. These are proposed expenditures on the utility funds side. It's a tight budget with resources going towards our operating contract with IES, that's the very bottom section of the chart. Regular equipment and line system needs, some of those are in operations; some of those are in capital and then debt service and then finally cash that goes towards large scale capital projects. It is my goal that we can begin planning for and looking towards significant water line replacement projects. We continue to see breaks in our water lines in some repetitive areas. So, Stonewall Avenue being one, Chestnut Avenue being another area. Also in the utility fund, our current line of credit for capital projects will need to be termed out at the end of fiscal 2025, so that gives us an opportunity when we term that out, to potentially look towards additional debt for the utility fund that would both be able to restructure that existing debt and then look at additional debt for these key projects. And happy to have further discussions on that. So that's an overview of General Fund and Utility Fund. Now just to highlight a few key dates in this budget process. At the next meeting, March 14th, we will hold the public hearing on the real property tax rate. As a reminder, even though Council will be decreasing the tax rate, the advertised rate is more than 1% above the equalized rate. So, it requires a public hearing. I would also anticipate at that meeting we could begin some general discussions on the general fund budget. On March 28th, if not already we would ask the Town Council to adopt the real property tax rate that must be adopted by April 1st, because Loudoun County collects real property taxes on our behalf. After this, we will have additional public meetings as well as we will be required to hold a public hearing on the budget. And then it's my goal or expectation that we would have asked the Town Council to adopt the budget in May. But again, you have until June 30th to adopt the budget. Throughout this process. If you have particular questions outside of the meeting, more than happy to meet with you individually. Also, to have questions if we can't answer them at a meeting, we'll take those and then respond back to you, either by email or at the following meeting. As we've done in the past, I also and was not able excuse me to accomplish this prior to tonight's meeting, but I'd like to meet with each of you and your respective areas to talk through the budget for your particular department. But we can also walk through the rest of the budget with you as you have it in front of you. So, we'd meet with Council Member Daly related to public safety. Council Member Jacobs related to Planning, etc., etc. so I'll make that available to each of you as well. And for the public, if you're interested in providing input on this, you can reach out to us a number of ways. You can always email us. You can email the Town Clerk and she can forward that onto the Town Council. You can leave a message for us, call us at our number, and we'll take that down and pass it along. Or we have an online form at MiddleburgVa.gov/input. [MiddleburgVA.gov/input. And with that, thank you, Mr. Mayor and Council for your time and happy to answer any initial questions you might have.

Bridge Littleton: Any questions for Danny? Peter.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Actually, I've got three questions. So, the TOT is projected to be \$35,000 less for 2024. Is that based on what we've seen lately in terms of not achieving what we expected?

Danny Davis: It is. Yes, sir. And so, I believe my current fiscal year 2024 revenue projections for TOT were aggressive. At the time, we were seeing a pretty continued climb in the TOT, and I think we saw that kind of level off, if you will. I did have a chance to speak with Mr. David Ross from Salamander, and he was able to give me kind of a broad picture of overall hospitality and specifically the luxury market. And his suggestion from a planning perspective is to consider 2023 kind of as a baseline. That's kind of like a new baseline, if you will, and to look at that as building inflationary, you know, factors in off of that figure. So, if you look at our fiscal 2023 at \$1.268 million, what I did is I built a 5% inflationary factor or growth factor off of that amount for fiscal 25. I think our fiscal 24 number will probably, I shouldn't say definitely, but likely come in below the figure that you see here, the 1.366. But again, we always knew there's volatility in some of these. And so, I based the fiscal 25 number a little bit more off of actually 23 than I did 24.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Thanks for that. So that potentially is a little concerning, I think, for next year.

Danny Davis: Only concerning from the standpoint of we won't see the significant jumps in revenue that we had seen in the past. I don't see it as concerning in terms of any kind of lowering of revenues, perhaps beyond this level, but we've probably hit what's a good kind of baseline and then we'll see just, you know, each year is going to have its own trends based on you know, two group trips could change revenues by, you know, this amount we're talking about here. So, but I think all in all, they feel confident in the tourism industry, the hospitality industry, particularly in the market that they're attracting.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Thank you. And I'd just like to mention something about the pumps that were replaced. I think also, it's important to mention that I think I'm right in saying some of them are much more efficient, so they're going to use less electricity over the long term and actually have a return on investment.

Danny Davis: That is correct. That's actually not at the wastewater plant, but at the Water, Stonewall Water Plant. We're replacing two of our pumps there, and we have a I think it was about an 18 to 24 month return on investment on those pumps just in the electricity to be saved. And that's huge. It's also one of those pumps has failed. So, we're kind of running the Stonewall plant off of one pump at this time for serving primarily to the north. So, you're right, we are seeing some very good or will see some good efficiencies in that.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: And sorry to hog the dais. One more quick question. [off mic] Three actually negative value due to accounting you mentioned there. What is that? I'm sure it's obvious, but.

Danny Davis: It's actually not obvious. And frankly, I'm going to have to I'll get back with you on that. What I do recall is that when we closed out fiscal 2022 there was a negative that had to be charged to that year due to, I don't know if it was a use of dollars or something else. This isn't a utility fund, so I think it's I don't think it's depreciation, but it has to do more with some accounting effort. And I just wanted to show it, so all the numbers matched up. I apologize for any confusion.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: No problem. Thanks. Maybe you can just get back to us on that. That'd be great.

Danny Davis: Sure, absolutely.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Thank you very much.

Bridge Littleton: Anybody else? Can you go back to slide 12? So, can you update this to put the budgeted next to the actuals going back to 2022?

Danny Davis: I can.

Bridge Littleton: Thank you. The other thing I was going to say, too, was I think we want to be a little more thoughtful, not thoughtful. Well, yeah, I think we want to be a little more diligent about just saying 2023 is bad and let's just add 5%. I think we want to actually look at what market reports are saying on what the expected outcome is and all that kind of stuff, because interestingly and the general manager just left. Yeah. And I know it's February, but Salamanders nightly rates are down significantly. So, you know, it's all driven by demand. So, in April it could be back up to \$1,200 a night or whatever. So, I just, I, you know, I think we want to be, and Prem and those guys probably buy all those reports so they don't they wouldn't mind us looking at them to, you know, again, I just I don't think just picking 5% and adding it to 2023 is. You know, it could be fine, but it'd be good to have a little more. [off mic] A little. Yeah. Just let's see what the industry reports say. [off mic] Yeah, yeah.

Chris Bernard: And then the 2023 number. I'm assuming that's he's saying that their year calendar year 2023. And then you offset that to six months for our fiscal year.

Danny Davis: Yeah. And that is the challenge in these is we work on an offset six-month fiscal year calendar. So. Yes.

Danny Davis: Well, in any time we're projecting these revenues, you know, we're projecting. We talk about this often. We're projecting 15 months out. So, you know, it is at the end of the day an educated guess. And we'll use all the data we can. And I'm happy to follow up with more data on what they're seeing. In terms.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. But you're going to see I mean; your revenues are going to start July 1st. So, what the hotel industry is expecting for July, August, September. That's out. That's five months out. Yeah.

Danny Davis: No, absolutely.

Bridge Littleton: That's real I mean that, and I think those industry reports or whatever it is. Right. Whoever the smart person is in Hoteling what they're thinking about the end of summer is going to look like probably is I mean, that's what they're all planning on right now, you know, in terms of staff, logistics, all that kind of stuff. So, I get it. The end of the fiscal year is 15 months away, but I think that could be it. I would just it would be good to see what if there's anything in there that goes, hey, that 5% is right on or it's wow, they're, expecting the back end of summer to be very soft or whatever. So okay. Thanks. Anybody have any other questions? No. Okay. Danny. Thank you. All right, next up is information items. Any info items for anyone?

Cindy Pearson: May I ask if you have some info to share on the meeting, Route 50 meeting the other night?

Chris Bernard: Now you opened Pandora's box.

Cindy Pearson: Sorry.

Bridge Littleton: No, no. You mean the one we have with VDOT?

Cindy Pearson: Yes.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. Yeah. Oh. Last week in what you call it. Yeah, yeah, yeah. At the middle school. Yes, it was a good meeting. I'd say there was probably 60 people there, and everybody was from west of Gilberts Corner, which was great. Overall, they were thoughtful about the information. They were point blank in that this is a safety study that was initiated by the board back in 2017, and they're just now getting to route 50. There's no projects or funding for any projects. And they want to look at the whole corridor from basically Lenah all the way out to Upperville. They did a mapping exercise where people could go and say, you know, they had a cat. They had like six categories of stickers. You know, red, people think it was a safety area, green, we want to protect cultural or historical assets and stuff like that. So, they had people do the mapping exercise. The way I would characterize it is. And I don't want to be disingenuous or disrespectful to the county, but it was absolutely all about safety. It was we want to make sure that they're, you know, they had crash numbers and they had rear end numbers and things like that. And it's we want to look for, you know, where we can make improvements. And that was the thing the tone of the conversation that just gave me pause. Right. It

was sort of a let's do a safety study to find some projects. Not saying that they want to just find and make a project, but it was the let's look at where these things are and see what improvements can be made. And the point I made was the starting position should be we need nothing new. Unless the data analysis tells we need to do something. That's a subtle difference. But it's attitudinal. Right.

Chris Bernard: [off mic] Do anything they want.

Bridge Littleton: Well, and you know, again I'm not trying to say that they're trying to create projects, but it's just the way they kind of think. Right. So, a lot of input from folks was very good input I thought from the community, the only input I made. And Shaun, this is something that you I think you should talk to the sheriff's office and reach out. You know, with Danny, there is absolutely zero analysis on enforcement. That does not factor into their analysis at all which I think is wrong because enforcement has a direct impact on safety. You know, if you see officers around, people will drive slower. I get it. It's the sheriff's budget. It's his deputies. But for DTCI to say all we're going to analyze is crashes. And so ergo if it's x y z we need to do something. Well part of the solution could be don't change the road. Have some extra officers. So, and I mean they wrote it down and said well that's actually a good point. But we don't control that. I'm like, well then, you're not actually having a data driven, a full data driven discussion. So, I think it would be good, Shaun, if you, whoever you and Danny, whoever your POC is at the sheriff's office, connect up with the guys at DTCI and say, hey, can we please have enforcement be an element of this of this study? Because that is important. Middleburg is off limits. One other area was off limits, I can't remember what it was. Oh, the part of 50 that goes down to the Fauquier. So, 50 west of here goes down to the Fauquier and then it comes back into Loudoun by Upperville. So clearly not going to touch the part that's in Fauquier. So that's pretty much it. They will have another info session in a couple of months after they do their initial deep dive. They have a task force. Childs Burden is representing us. And also, because he was on the route 50 task force from 20 years ago. So, they didn't when I, Laura TeKrony invited me to a pre-brief meeting that she had the week before, and a couple of people weren't even aware of the task force nor the MOU. So, they have all that now. So, I think we just have to keep a watch of it, but yeah.

Bud Jacobs: The MOU encompasses Route 50 from Gilberts Corner to Upperville?

Bridge Littleton: No from Mount Zion. Those 3 all around the roundabouts, west. Yeah.

Bud Jacobs: From Mount Zion to Upperville. So, shouldn't that all be off limits?

Bridge Littleton: Well, it's not that it's all. The agreements in the MOU need to be respected. Right. So as an example, no turn lanes, right? That's a great example. One of the people in the meeting said, you know, we'll examine having turn lanes and it's like, okay, wait a minute. Hold on. Now, there may be a different safety, you know, a rumble strip right. Maybe there's a different thing that's in alignment with the route 50 task force. But that MOU is pretty clear as to what should be what is allowable. So, reminding the county they got to respect that is important.

Danny Davis: And it included even width of pavement which is a big issue. Right. Because if a proposed solution is we'll just widen the road for safety. Well wait a second. The whole point was keep it narrow, have grass all the way up to the shoulder.

Bridge Littleton: Exactly, exactly.

Bud Jacobs: Was VDOT there?

Bridge Littleton: VDOT was not there. What's that?

Megan Gallagher: There's a survey [off mi].

Bridge Littleton: Oh, right. Yeah. Did we put that on the town website?

Danny Davis: I'm not sure we have. We can do that tomorrow.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah, yeah. Let's get it out as a public notice. There is a survey. You've got you all have a link, right?

Danny Davis: Yes.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. No, that's a good point. But it closes March 1st. If you don't do it by then, it's out. Peter.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: Just a question. How can they say we'll we have all the bits in Loudoun County and then this portion in 4K we don't even look at because in reality, it's all linked. Well, I understand it's another county but.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. Each county is responsible for the maintenance of their own roads. So, when I-66 goes into West Virginia?

Peter Leonard-Morgan: No.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: It just joined.

Bridge Littleton: Yeah. No, I get it. It's funky. So. But, you know, it's Fauquier response. Well, it's like little River Turnpike and John Mosby Highway. That bit that goes into Fauquier [inaudible] John Mosby. So yeah. Not perfect, but it is like it is what it is. So. Anything else? Anybody before we go to closed session? Danny.

Danny Davis: Could I just briefly talk about Tuesday's events, the fire in town and the emergency?

Bridge Littleton: Oh, sure. Yeah, yeah.

Danny Davis: And just, you know, for the public and for Council and for the record want to express our gratefulness to the first responders who came to this incident. Anytime you get a page about smoke or fire your heart drops for a quick second, especially in a historic building, because you don't know what that could turn into. Middleburg was here very quickly. Tackled it from the front. Aldie responded very quickly. They tackled it from the rear. And that's actually where the fire was. So, they were attacking the fire while Middleburg was going through the kind of topside, the street side. We had a tower ladder from South Riding. We had units from Fairfax Prince William, Fauquier County. And it was just a great response. And, you know, it goes to show the great efforts of our fire and rescue personnel, especially in light of the tragedy that occurred in Stirling on Friday evening. And so just being able to express them, our appreciation for their quick response at the same time, the fire marshal's office also came on site and were very quickly working and looking into the investigation of the situation and the cause and for the public's notice the fire marshal's office did release their determination of this incident late last evening, determining it to be an accidental fire resulting from what they call an unspecified electrical event originating from a commercial style power strip located in what used to be a kitchen. And so, we all know these are older buildings and things can happen. And so, I've already made outreach to the fire marshal's office to begin some proactive conversations about working with our property owners and working with our business owners on good life safety practices and efforts. And so, I'll work with Ms. MacIntyre and with our Business Association to make sure that we go about that in a proper way, but in a way that that ensures that we are keeping our businesses the persons and the visitors safe, because ultimately, it's about life safety. Also, of note and it was noted in, in their report. So publicly, it's noted that a member of the Middleburg Police Department was struck by a vehicle during response to this incident. In short, it was a privately run and owned school bus that hit a bollard at Pendleton and Washington when instructed to stay still and park and not move the bus actually started to reverse backwards and a piece pulled off and hit one of our members of the police department in the leg that member was transported to the hospital, checked out, thankfully released fairly quickly and is recovering just fine. However, that incident with the bus also while backing up, backed into one of our police vehicles. And so now we're going through the process of having that repaired. And so, it was one of those days where you don't, you know, everything kind of cascades. Thanks to Tim Cole, who directed traffic at Pickering for at least two hours, if not more he told me that his knee he could barely walk afterwards because he was standing for so long. But I joined him up there for a little bit. And it's amazing how people do not listen to direction

especially when you're trying to, you know, deal with emergency situations. But all in all, everyone stepped up. And Stuart from IES was Johnny on the spot and ensured that water was flowing fine. And it was. And we all know that that can create some disruption in our water service. Not in flow, but in some discoloration. But things cleared up pretty quickly. So, I just want to thank everyone for their great response and for the efforts. The police were right on there, and we'll learn lessons from it and move forward.

John Kevin Daly: And one other point I think we should all be thankful we had the foresight to order a new vehicle. [laughter]

Bridge Littleton: One thing I was going to mention. So, I think it's great to work with the fire department, the fire marshal, all that kind of stuff. I think we also should be thinking about we have a lot of older buildings in town, a program where we start doing mandatory fire inspections, electrical inspections. I know that's not us, but that's the county. Again, especially on the older buildings. You know, those that needs to be you figure out, however that works, right? So. Okay.

Darlene Kirk: I know one thing. Well, when my mom owned the shop around the corner is that one of the fire marshals from way back, you know, this is like 2000 said that it could easily a fire at Middleburg could easily jump from building to building and just literally take out the whole block. So, we do need to check that out.

Danny Davis: And that was the value of having the tower ladder there which was waiting up high. So, if it were to come out through the roof, it could start tackling it from above and avoid that very situation. So, you're absolutely right. It's a concern on these older buildings and in the downtown tight corridor. Thankfully, Loudoun County has a lot of great resources that are fairly close by to respond quickly.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. Anybody have anything else?

Bud Jacobs: I'm sure you've thought of this, but are you going to do some letters of appreciation to the extra jurisdictional fire outfits?

Danny Davis: I was going to bring that up as a potential, whether we do letters or resolutions or however you wish to. So, I'll talk to the Mayor.

Bridge Littleton: Letters are good.

Danny Davis: Yeah. Good.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. Chris.

Chris Bernard: Yeah. I just wanted to thank everyone who participated in the Special Olympics Polar Plunge. Everyone who contributed supported. Some of us went and jumped in. But it was a really cool event. Lots of first responders and law enforcement. There were probably.

Bridge Littleton: Literally cool.

Chris Bernard: Five [laughter] there were probably like 5 or 600 people there. I think 280 people jumped in. And the good news is, it's no big deal. So, you guys can all come next year. Yeah.

Bridge Littleton: Okay. Unless there's nothing else. If someone wants to read the motion for the closed session.

Peter Leonard-Morgan: I move that Council go into closed session as authorized under section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, for one consultation with legal counsel employed by the public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the legal advice of such counsel related to the Town Hall project contract as allowed under subsection A 8. And two an

appointment to the Middleburg Sustainability Committee as allowed under subsection A1. I further move that the Council thereafter reconvene in open session for action as appropriate.

Darlene Kirk: Second.

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

All of Council: Aye.

Bridge Littleton: Opposed? Abstentions? Okay. We're in closed session.