HERNDON TOWN COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
Tuesday, March 18, 2025

1. Call to Order

Mayor LeBlanc called the March 18, 2025, Town Council work session meeting to order at 5:30 pm. in the Herndon Council Chambers Building, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia. In attendance were: Mayor Keven LeBlanc; Vice Mayor Clark Hedrick; and Councilmembers Naila Alam (arrived at 5:52 p.m.), Cesar del Aguila, Kelvin Garcia, Michael T. Lloyd, and Alex Reyes.

Determination of a Quorum

Mayor LeBlanc determined there was a quorum of six members present. Councilmember Alam had not yet arrived.

2. Closed Meeting (5:30 PM)

a. A closed meeting pursuant to the Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), a personnel matter involving discussion of prospective candidates for the position of Town Manager

Mayor LeBlanc stated that the Council needed to go into a closed meeting and that the appropriate meeting notices were provided in accordance with state law. The closed meeting was held in the Hoover Conference Room in the Herndon Council Chambers Building, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia.

Councilmember Reyes moved that the Council convene in a closed meeting to discuss the following as permitted by Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), a personnel matter involving a discussion of prospective candidates for the position of Town Manager. Vice Mayor Hedrick seconded the motion, which carried by a 6-0 roll call vote. The vote was: Councilmembers del Aguila, Garcia, Lloyd, Reyes, Vice Mayor Hedrick, and Mayor LeBlanc voting “Aye.” Councilmember Alam had not yet arrived.

The Council went into closed meeting at 5:30 p.m.

[Note: Councilmember Alam arrived during the closed meeting at 5:52 p.m.]

Councilmember Garcia moved to come out of the closed meeting. Motion seconded by Vice Mayor Hedrick and carried by unanimous roll call vote. The vote

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was: Councilmember Alam, Councilmember del Aguila, Councilmember Garcia, Councilmember Lloyd, Councilmember Reyes, Vice Mayor Hedrick, and Mayor LeBlanc voting “Aye.”

The Council came out of closed meeting at 9:13 p.m.

Councilmember del Aguila moved to certify that, to the best of each member's knowledge, in the closed meeting just concluded, nothing was discussed except the matter or matters (1) specifically identified in the motion to convene in closed meeting and (2) lawfully permitted to be discussed in a closed meeting under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act as cited in that motion. Motion seconded by Councilmember Reyes and carried by unanimous roll call vote. The vote was: Councilmember Alam, Councilmember del Aguila, Councilmember Garcia, Councilmember Lloyd, Councilmember Reyes, Vice Mayor Hedrick, and Mayor LeBlanc voting “Aye.”

Aye: 7
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

Recess

At 9:13 p.m. Mayor LeBlanc called a brief recess, and at 9:16 p.m., the March 18, 2025 Town Council meeting reconvened in the Herndon Council Chambers Building, with all Councilmembers present, and Mayor LeBlanc presiding.

Work Session

Staff present during the meeting: Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager; Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney; Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich and Scott Robinson, Acting Deputy Town Managers; Chief Steve Pihonak, Herndon Police Department; Marjorie Sloan, Director of Finance; Maria Lee, Budget Manager; Mike Farr, Utility Manager; and Amanda Kertz, Acting Town Clerk.

Comments and Disclosures for the Record

Mayor LeBlanc asked Amanda Kertz, Acting Town Clerk, if she had received comments for the record or signed disclosure declarations from the Council.

Ms. Kertz stated that comments were entered into the record on Discussion Item 3(a), FY 2026 Proposed Budget. She stated that the Town Clerk did not receive additional public comments or disclosures on any other items listed on that meeting's agenda.

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Mayor Announcements

Mayor LeBlanc announced that the Council had previously met in a closed meeting, with all members present, pursuant to state code requirements.

3. Discussion

a. FY 2026 Proposed Budget

Mayor LeBlanc recognized Marjorie Sloan, Director of Finance, for the discussion on the FY 2026 proposed budget, focusing on the Enterprise Funds: (1) Herndon Centennial Golf Course Fund; (2) Chestnut Grove Cemetery Fund; and (3) Water and Sewer Fund.

Herndon Centennial Golf Course Fund

Ms. Sloan started her presentation with an overview of the Golf Course Fund, stating that the golf course remains popular and recognized regionally, with consistent operating revenue in recent years. She noted that personnel will remain unchanged at 11 employees, but that the fund will incur additional expenses for projects aimed at maintaining and improving the facilities, equipment, and services. She reviewed the operating revenues, anticipated revenues, and stated that an increase in expenditures is sourced from three capital outlay projects: (1) tee box renovation project; (2) cart barn replacement project; and (3) equipment and vehicle replacements.

There was discussion among the Council and staff about the Golf Course Fund, which included: (1) capital outlay funding sources; (2) market strategy and budget; and (3) suggestions for additional events at the golf course.

Responding to Vice Mayor Hedrick, Ms. Sloan stated the amount for the net position of the golf course would not be available until the end of the fiscal year, but she would report back when it was available.

Chestnut Grove Cemetery Fund

Ms. Sloan continued her presentation by providing an overview of the Cemetery Fund, stating that Chestnut Grove Cemetery remains self-supporting, with no personnel changes. She reviewed anticipated revenues and expenditures, and stated that the cemetery's expansion project is slated for completion during the spring of FY 2026.

There was discussion among the Council and staff about the Cemetery Fund.

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Water and Sewer Fund

Ms. Sloan continued her presentation with a discussion on the Water and Sewer Fund. She provided an overview of the fund's performance, stating that the Water and Sewer Fund remains in a strong financial position, noting its role in supporting the Town's AAA bond rating. She provided a brief overview of the key takeaways from the Davenport & Company presentation to Council in February, where the water and sewer rate model was discussed. Ms. Sloan discussed the FY 2026 anticipated revenues and expenditures, and stated that debt service may be utilized to offset a difference between revenues and expenditures.

Ms. Sloan reviewed the proposed capital outlay expenditures in the Water and Sewer Fund, which include utility master plan, maintenance, equipment, and relining projects. Funding will be needed to support a sewer project at the Blue Plains treatment facility. Ms. Sloan also provided an overview of the proposed water and sewer rates for FY 2026, which are increasing from prior years.

There was discussion among the Council and staff about the Water and Sewer Fund, focused on: (1) proposed rate adjustments; (2) long-term capital planning; and (3) bonding considerations for major infrastructure investments.

Follow Up from March 11 Meeting

Ms. Sloan and Interim Town Manager Christopher Martino provided follow up information from the March 11 work session, which included: (1) confirmation that donation checks are typically issued in September; (2) clarification of the application and disbursement process for Community Cultural Events; and (3) clarification of the process around earmarked funds.

There was discussion among Council and staff on the following, which related to a chart presented by Mr. Martino: (1) estimated costs for the deputy town manager position; (2) analysis of leased versus purchased equipment; (3) road paving estimates per lane-mile; (4) surveillance options for trails and Flock Safety cameras; (5) IT staffing needs; some costs are still pending; (6) tree trimming; (7) debt service; (8) bulk waste pickup service; (9) real estate and meals tax scenarios; and (10) staff planning for an incoming town manager.

There was discussion among the Council and staff about a real estate and meals tax rate comparison table presented by Ms. Sloan: (1) budget reduction if rates remain unchanged; (2) increasing meals tax rates if real estate tax rates are reduced; and (3) shifting consumer habits and possible diminishing returns on meals tax growth.

Following the discussion, the Council requested additional information and clarification from staff at the next budget discussion, including:

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1. More information on a marketing budget for the Golf Course;

2. Request for clarification on the out-years for Water and Sewer fees;

3. Question around availability fees for FY 2027 - referenced large jump in 2026;

4. Impact that the water and sewer rates will have on the average household;

5. Question about average volumetric rates - clarify how staff arrived at the numbers;

6. Consider looking at the number of employees per capita as compared to other localities; and

7. Please provide the latest Fairfax County proposed tax rates.

4. Roundtable

Councilmember Garcia: suggested increasing the FY 2026 meals tax rate to 4.25% or 4.5% as a means to bring in additional revenue.

Councilmember Alam: thanked the staff for providing dinner for the meeting.

Councilmember del Aguila: thanked Ms. Sloan and staff for all of their hard work on the proposed budget.

Councilmember Lloyd: echoed Councilmember del Aguila's comments about staff's work on the proposed budget, and commended Mayor LeBlanc for comments he made during the Councilmember Comments portion at the last regular meeting.

Councilmember Lloyd shared his reflections on the public comments regarding Arts Herndon that were provided during the Comments from the Audience portion of the previous regular meeting.

Councilmember Reyes: stated that he would prefer the meals tax rate for FY 2026 to be lower than what Fairfax County is proposing.

Vice Mayor Hedrick: stated that he continues to be concerned over increasing rates across the board in the Town, and how that would impact the cost of living for residents.

Mayor LeBlanc: no comments.

Christopher Martino, Interim Town Manager: no comments.

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5. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor LeBlanc adjourned the March 18, 2025 Town Council work session at 10:38 p.m.

Amanda E.M. Kertz
Town Clerk

Minutes approved by Town Council:

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