HERNDON TOWN COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
Tuesday, July 8, 2025

1. Call to Order

Mayor LeBlanc called the July 8, 2025, Town Council meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Herndon Council Chambers Building, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon, Virginia. In attendance were: Mayor Keven LeBlanc; and Councilmembers Naila Alam (arrived at 5:36 p.m.), Cesar del Aguila, Kelvin Garcia (arrived at 5:43 p.m.), Michael T. Lloyd, and Alex Reyes.

Participating remotely during the closed meeting: Vice Mayor Clark Hedrick (physically present at 6:33 p.m.).

Determination of a Quorum

Mayor LeBlanc stated, for the record, under Section 2.2-3708.3, Subsection D, of the Code of Virginia, and in accordance with Section 2-4 of the Town Code, the Chair received a request from Vice Mayor Hedrick to participate through electronic communication means in that night's closed meeting, due to work commitments. He stated that there was a quorum of the public body physically assembled at the meeting location, with four Councilmembers present in the Herndon Council Chambers Building. With the concurrence of the Council, Vice Mayor Hedrick joined the meeting remotely to participate in the closed meeting that evening.

Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney, asked Vice Mayor Hedrick to confirm that it was in a location where the closed session discussion could not be heard by others. Vice Mayor Hedrick confirmed that was correct, and stated that he was driving from Washington, DC, to Herndon, Virginia.

2. Closed Meeting (5:30 PM)

a. A closed meeting pursuant to the Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711(A)(8), consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, relating to employment issues.

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.

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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)(8), consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, relating to employment issues.

Councilmember Alam seconded the motion, which carried by 6-0 roll call vote. The vote was: Councilmembers Alam, del Aguila, Lloyd, Reyes, Vice Mayor Hedrick (participating remotely) and Mayor LeBlanc voting “Aye.” Councilmember Garcia had not yet arrived.

The Council went into closed meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Councilmember Garcia arrived during the closed meeting at 5:43 p.m.

Vice Mayor Clark physically arrived during the closed meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Councilmember del Aguila moved to come out of the closed meeting. Councilmember Garcia seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous roll call vote. The vote was: Councilmembers Alam, del Aguila, Garcia, Lloyd, Reyes, Vice Mayor Hedrick, and Mayor LeBlanc voting “Aye.”

Aye: 7
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

The Council came out of the closed meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Councilmember Reyes 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. Councilmember del Aguila seconded the motion, which was carried by unanimous roll call vote. The vote was: Councilmembers Alam, del Aguila, Garcia, Lloyd, Reyes, Vice Mayor Hedrick, and Mayor LeBlanc voting “Aye.”

Aye: 7
Nay: 0
Absent: 0

Recess

At 7:04 p.m. Mayor LeBlanc called a brief recess, and at 7:14 p.m., the July 8, 2025, Town Council meeting reconvened in the Herndon Council Chambers, with all Councilmembers present, and Mayor LeBlanc presiding.

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3. Discussion

a. Town Council and Planning Commission Joint Work Session

The Town Council and the Planning Commission of the Town of Herndon, Virginia, held a Special Joint Work Session Meeting on Tuesday, July 8, 2025, at 7:15 p.m. in the Herndon Council Chambers, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon. In attendance were: Mayor LeBlanc, Vice Mayor Clark Hedrick, and Councilmembers Alam, del Aguila, Garcia, Lloyd, Reyes; Planning Commission Chair Michael G. Romeo, Vice Chair Meron Yohannes, and Commissioners Andrew Beatty, Jay Donahue, Yung Kim, and Stephen Mundt.

Commissioner Samuel Richardson II was absent.

Staff present during the meeting: Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich, Interim Town Manager; Scott Robinson, Acting Deputy Town Manager; Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney; Chief Steve Pihonak and Lieutenant Justin Dyer, Herndon Police Department; Brent Heavner, Chief Communications Officer; Lisa Gilleran, Director of Community Development; Marjorie Sloan, Director of Finance; Bob Williams, Director of Parks and Recreation; John Irish, Acting Director of Public Works, Engineering; Bryce Perry, Deputy Director of Community Development; David Stromberg, Zoning Administrator; Ahmad Zaki Sarfaraz, Lead Planner; and Amanda Kertz, Town Clerk.

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

Determination of a Quorum - Town Council and Planning Commission

Mayor LeBlanc determined that there was a quorum of the Town Council and Planning Commission, with all Councilmembers and Commissioners present, except for Commissioner Samuel Richardson II, who was absent.

Mayor LeBlanc welcomed Chair Romeo, members of the Planning Commission, and the Town Council. He stated the purpose of tonight's meeting was to review and discuss the town's 2050 Comprehensive Plan, Transit-Related Growth (TRG) and Herndon Transit-Oriented Core (HTOC) Areas, and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). He stated these topics represent foundational components of the Town’s long-term planning and investment strategy. This session also provides context for how these initiatives interconnect and support the Town’s broader goals for land use, infrastructure, and budget planning.

Mayor LeBlanc recognized Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich, Interim Town Manager, for her opening remarks. She provided an overview of the items that would be covered in the Joint Work Session that evening.

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2050 Comprehensive Plan

Ahmad Sarfaraz, Lead Planner/Long Range, provided the staff report on the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Sarfaraz stated that the Comprehensive Plan is the Town's primary long-range planning document, guiding decisions on growth, development, infrastructure, housing, transportation, and the environment. Mandated by the Code of Virginia, it is prepared by the Planning Commission and adopted by the Town Council. The plan must be general in nature but address the character, location, and extent of future development and conservation. Herndon's current plan, "*Herndon 2030,"* was adopted in 2008, and the update will align the Town's vision and policies with current needs and plans adopted since 2008. He reviewed the update process, stating that it is scheduled to begin this year, will span approximately two years, and will include consultant support, broad public engagement, and participation and guidance by the Planning Commission and Town Council. He emphasized that while planning policies provide direction, spending is not authorized without Council's approval.

There was discussion among the Council, Commission, and staff on this item, including: (1) RFP process and status of the Comprehensive Plan update; (2) alignment of the Comprehensive Plan and the Strategic Plan; (3) Comprehensive Planning update process; includes working with Fairfax and Loudoun Counties; (4) elements included in the Comprehensive Plan; and (5) emphasis on community engagement; including the business community and regional elements.

Transit-Related Growth (TRG) and Herndon Transit-Oriented Core (HTOC) Areas

Mayor LeBlanc recognized Bryce Perry, Deputy Director of Community Development, to provide an overview of planning efforts in the HTOC and TRG areas. Mr. Perry explained that these small area plans, components of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, focus on two key redevelopment zones near the Herndon Metro Station. The plans aim to encourage walkable, mixed-use development that supports transit and enhances the surrounding community. Mr. Perry discussed completed planning efforts and the types of redevelopments envisioned, along with active development projects in the area. While actual redevelopment will depend on private property owners, the Town's planning helps shape expectations and positions the community for future opportunities. Mr. Perry provided an overview of the supporting public improvement project that are under design, completed, and planned.

There was discussion among the Council, Commission, and staff about the HTOC and TRG areas, including: (1) anticipated applications for the small area plan areas; (2) traffic analysis both from the Town and private developers; (3) various impacts expected from the additional density in these areas; (4) workforce and affordable housing options; (5) review of impacts at closer intervals than Comprehensive Plan update; (6) impact on cut through traffic; and (7) encouraging multi-modal transit and pedestrian accessibility.

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Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Mayor LeBlanc recognized John Irish, Acting Director of Public Works, for a status briefing on the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Mr. Irish stated the CIP is the Town's long-term plan for infrastructure investments, including facility upgrades, street and sidewalk improvements, and utility projects. Mr. Irish provided a status update on projects funded in FY 2025 and previewed those proposed for FY 2026, supported by reserve funds. He indicated that these efforts are based on years of assessments and prioritization, including facility evaluations for the Herndon Community Center and Municipal Center, along with studies on transportation safety and connectivity. The CIP is updated annually and guides investment decisions based on identified needs and available resources.

There was discussion among the Council, Commission, and staff on the CIP, including: (1) projects included in the CIP; (2) accuracy of cost estimates; dependent upon the phase of the project; (3) additional sidewalk and traffic points of concern; and (4) water and sewer network capacity in relation to approaching new housing projects.

Responding to Commissioner Mundt, Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney, stated that information about the land related to downtown redevelopment is forthcoming.

Recess

At 8:51 p.m. Mayor LeBlanc called a brief recess, and at 9:03 p.m., the July 8, 2025, Town Council Work Session meeting convened in the Hoover Conference Room of the Herndon Council Chambers Building, with all Councilmembers present, and Mayor LeBlanc presiding.

Town Council Work Session

b. Community Cultural Festivals Donation Policy Revision and Special Events Briefing

Special Events Briefing

Mayor LeBlanc recognized Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich, Interim Town Manager, who provided opening comments about the special events process. She introduced Bob Williams, Director of Parks and Recreation, to begin the presentation.

Mr. Williams provided an overview of the types of special events held in the Town, including those organized by the Town, and those coordinated by outside organizations held on public property. Mr. Williams reviewed the established process for community groups seeking the use of town-owned spaces for public events, stating that the Parks and Recreation Department organizes and supports various special events throughout the year. Private property owners may hold

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events via the Temporary Use Permit (TUP) process overseen by the Town's Zoning Administrator. In response to a question from Mayor LeBlanc, Mr. Williams agreed that the Herndon Day event would be a Town event in 2026. Mr. Williams stated that in his presentation, he had focused on events held in FY 2025 and did not include anticipated events for FY 2026.

There was discussion among the Council and staff on this item, including: (1) common challenges that can affect event execution, such as securing ABC licenses; (2) potential enhancements to the event approval process, including the Town's current funding policy; (3) clarification of the various funding application processes; and (4) an overview of the relevant state code governing donation policies.

Community Cultural Festivals Donation Policy

Mayor LeBlanc recognized Marjorie Sloan, Director of Finance, who continued the presentation with a review of the proposed changes to the Community Cultural Festivals Donation Policy. Ms. Sloan explained that in response to the Council's direction from the April 1, 2025 budget work session, staff prepared revisions to the policy to allow organizations to receive funding beyond the first year of an event.

Ms. Sloan stated that the Town's authority to provide donations, including in-kind support, is derived from state law. The Town's current donation policy, adopted in October 2023 and amended twice since, permits funding of up to 50 percent of an event's budget (up to $15,000) for first-year events only, with funding allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Since mid-FY 2024, $68,007 has been awarded through this program.

Mr. Sloan reviewed the current process and discussed the types of donation requests the Town receives: (1) line-item budget allocations (e.g., groups like NextStop Theatre); (2) cash donations; (3) in-kind services; (4) fee waivers (e.g., for the high school all-night grad party); (5) discounts (e.g., passes to the Herndon Community Center); and (6) ad hoc donations.

There was a discussion between Council and staff about related government funding programs.

Responding to questions from Vice Mayor Hedrick, Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney, stated that she would look into the IRS code for context on the amount of de minimus donations that may be granted by the Town Manager.

Ms. Sloan continued the presentation and emphasized the current policy limitations, including the fact that the ad hoc requests do not have a policy, resulting in inconsistent application. She indicated that the Town has been receiving more ad hoc which has been challenging due to the limitations under the

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current policy. The proposed revisions introduce a tiered funding model to encourage event sustainability. Policy is requested to include more clarification around services. Proposed changes are included in the agenda materials, and the funding changes are summarized as follows:

- First-year events: up to 50 percent of the budget, max $15,000
- Second-year events: up to 25 percent, max $7,500
- Third-year events: up to 12 percent, max $3,750

Ms. Sloan reviewed alternatives the Council could consider and stated that staff is looking for Council's direction on how the policy should be applied going forward. The FY 2026 budget includes $60,000 for the program, but no applications have been received yet. To apply these changes to FY 2026 events, Council adoption of amendments should occur promptly.

Ms. Jovanovich emphasized the need for Council to clarify its donation policy objectives and indicated that the revisions reflected Council's prior requests to support recurring events on a declining basis. She also clarified that continued long-term funding was not the intent of the current structure.

There was discussion among Council and staff on this item, centering on the following: (1) the proposed tiered model and policy alternatives; (2) events receiving ongoing support through line item funding; (3) prior budget process discussions; (4) best practices for categorizing event funding; and (5) phased, multi-year approaches to support nonprofit events.

Following discussion, and with the consensus of the Council, the following actions were supported:

1. Request staff to create a comprehensive plan that includes other types of donations; some de minimus authority to the Town Manager would be given to authorize small donations; and

2. Proceed with revisions to the Community Cultural Festivals Donation Policy as presented that evening, and that the item be added to the next Town Council regular meeting agenda.

4. Roundtable

Councilmember Reyes: no comments.

Councilmember Lloyd: thanked the staff for answering his questions.

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Councilmember del Aguila: asked if staff had reviewed the defense community grant that he had submitted for consideration.

Scott Robinson, Acting Deputy Town Manager, reported that infrastructure money within the Department of Defense is primarily going toward warfare. The grant would apply to infrastructure improvements that also serve military needs, such as airports used by the Air National Guard. He stated that he would review the request further and report back.

Councilmember del Aguila requested a briefing from staff regarding grant opportunities that are available to the Town.

Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich, Interim Town Manager, stated that she would follow up with information for the Town Council.

Councilmember del Aguila thought that annexing the Hutchison neighborhood next to the Town's border was an item worth looking at, considering the potential for additional tax revenue. He indicated that Dranesville District Supervisor Bierman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, may be the representative to speak to about this matter.

Councilmember Alam: shared her emotions and sadness about the recent flash floods and loss of life in Texas.

Councilmember Garcia: recommended the Council hold more work sessions. He also asked staff to explain the unionization process for the police department to match the pay of surrounding police departments.

Mayor LeBlanc said that the police department is in the process of a pay assessment.

Lesa Yeatts, Town Attorney, suggested the Council could hold another closed-session briefing on this matter.

Councilmember Garcia inquired about what the hiring process for the Town is. He indicated that several constituents had asked him this question.

Ms. Jovanovich said that staff can provide a briefing on the recruiting process in a closed session.

Councilmember Garcia wants to hold a back-to-school drive and possibly partner with a non-profit.

Mayor LeBlanc replied that he knows of at least four groups who host school drives. He stated that he can provide information to Councilmember Garcia.

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Vice Mayor Hedrick: shared that he had attended a meeting of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority Planning, Coordinating and Advisory Committee (NVTA-PCAC) where they discussed plans to start adopting a plan for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) - including one that would go through Herndon and potentially stop there. He suggested a discussion and briefing by the town staff on that issue, especially as part of the Comprehensive Planning process.

Ms. Jovanovich said that staff would respond and would schedule a briefing on this topic at a future work session.

Vice Mayor Hedrick shared he had opportunities to attend different community events, including a block party in Madison Forest. He encouraged his colleagues to attend community events where possible.

Mayor LeBlanc: shared he attended three or four community events on the Fourth of July weekend, including the 4th of July celebration at Bready Park. He thanked Parks and Recreation for coordinating the celebrations and fireworks. Additionally, he was happy the good aspects of Elden the Bear visiting the town were capitalized on.

The Mayor noted that the Northern Virginia Regional Commission conducted a study on population migration trends in and out of Northern Virginia. He suggested the findings could be a useful resource for the Planning Commission as it continues work on the Comprehensive Plan, particularly given the study's insights into specific demographic shifts and migration patterns.

Kirstyn Barr Jovanovich, Interim Town Manager: provided an update on the EV charging stations, noting that staff turned off the chargers at the Herndon Municipal Center and marked them out of service. A new vendor has since been identified, and staff is working to bring the stations back online. She also thanked the Parks and Recreation Department and the Herndon Police Department for their efforts in supporting the July 4th events.

5. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor LeBlanc adjourned the July 8, 2025 Town Council Work Session at 10:45 p.m.

Amanda E.M. Kertz
Town Clerk

Minutes approved by Town Council : _____

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