



## City of Buena Vista City Council Regular Council Meeting

May 16, 2024, 6:00 PM  
Council Chambers – 2039 Sycamore Avenue

The City Council for the City of Buena Vista met for a Regular Council Meeting on Thursday, May 16, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Mayor Tyson Cooper  
Vice-Mayor Danny Staton Steve Webb  
Michelle Poluikis Todd Jones  
Ronald Cash

**Members Absent:** Melvin Henson

### **ADG #1: CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND PRAYER**

Mayor Cooper called the meeting to order, and Councilwoman Poluikis delivered the opening prayer.

### **ADG #2: APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Vice-Mayor Staton moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilman Cash, and carried by Council.

### **ADG #3: APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MAY 2, 2024, REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING**

Motion to approve the minutes was made by Vice-Mayor Staton, seconded by Councilwoman Poluikis, and carried by Council with Councilmen Jones and Webb abstaining.

### **ADG #4: RECOGNITION/COMMUNICATION FROM VISITORS**

- Dr. Tony Francis, Superintendent of Buena Vista City Public Schools, extended his thanks for the increase to the school's budget noting that this is the first time since he has been here that they have seen an increase. He stated that they are still waiting on the State to release the "calc tool" to see exactly how much each division is going to get. He is hoping to give their teachers a 5% raise (all other staff will be receiving 3%), and they are hoping to make this work without coming back to Council to request more funding. He said that since Rockbridge is giving teachers 4% and other areas around us are giving between 4 and 5%, he doesn't want to lose ground. As it currently stands, BVCPS is about \$4,000 behind Rockbridge on teacher's salaries, which hurt them last year because they weren't able to recruit or retain some teachers due to that.
- Tim Petrie, 160 Larch Avenue, spoke on behalf of the Paxton House Historical Society to thank Council for their budget allocation. He also noted that they are in the process of doing maintenance at the House and are trying to schedule that. He asked if there would be communication from City staff regarding when those budgeted funds would be distributed so that

they can get their maintenance needs scheduled. Mayor Cooper asked our Finance Director, Charles Clemmer, to get that information for Mr. Petrie.

## **ADG #5: REPORTS**

### **1. Mayor**

Mayor Cooper informed everyone that he had excused Mr. Tyree from the meeting this evening to attend a scholarship ceremony for his son.

### **2. City Manager**

Due to Mr. Tyree being absent, Ms. Burch provided his report to Council.

The new roof is going on City Hall now. The crews started yesterday and should be finished by early next week, depending on the weather.

Monday, May 20th, the General District Courtroom/Council Chambers remodel is scheduled to begin. We may have to move the June 6th meeting to the Circuit Courtroom if they aren't finished by then. We have had to do that before for HVAC issues, so it shouldn't be a problem, but hopefully the remodel will be completed by then.

She stated that she had heard back from a couple of Council members, but if any of them want to attend the dedication ceremony at Greenwood Cemetery, to let her know after the meeting so that she can RSVP for them. The ceremony is at 11:00 am on Monday, May 20th. Parking is limited, so carpooling is appreciated.

Also on Monday, May 20th, the Chamber is hosting a Monday Mingle at Straws from 4:30 – 6:00 pm. They are providing light snacks and 50% off drinks.

She reminded Council members that if they haven't already, to please send Kristina Ramsey their bio for the new website as soon as possible.

In honor of National Police Week this week and Public Works Appreciation Week next week, we'd like to thank everyone in the Police Department, Sheriff's Office, and Public Works Department for all their hard work and dedication to the City.

As a reminder, City offices will be closed on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27th.

2023-2024 real estate and 2024 property tax bills are due June 5th.

### **3. City Attorney**

Mr. Kearney mentioned that he received the final instructions from USDA for closing the water loan.

### **4. Council Committees / Members**

#### **a. Budget & Finance**

None.

#### **b. Outdoor Spaces**

Ms. Burch provided the following report for the Outdoor Spaces Committee:

They met for a City tour this past Saturday. They drove around the floodwall, Camden Field, and Glen Maury Park. They took a lot of photos and made a list of possible projects. They also reviewed the work that was completed over the past year and the work currently being done by Public Works and the Parks & Rec employees. Their goal is to do at least two or three more tours and come back to Council with two to three projects to recommend for funding. We have provided a report from that meeting, and we will keep everyone updated on those future meetings.

Vice-Mayor Staton noted that they traveled the floodwall from one end to the other and if you have never done that you would have no idea how many nice spaces and opportunities there are.

Councilman Cash pointed out that one of the locations being considered for a soccer field is on the river side of the floodwall right on the outside of the bend, so he believes that every time the river gets up, it would flood the field.

**c. School Facilities**

Mayor Cooper reminded everyone that they are planning to have their first meeting on May 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Ramsey Center.

**5. Department Heads / Constitutional Officers / Court Clerks**

None.

**6. Invited Community Organizations**

None.

**ADG #6: CONSIDER APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES**

**Board of Zoning Appeals**

Mrs. Jody Fix has resigned from the Board of Zoning Appeals following her appointment to the Economic Development Authority. This appointment will begin immediately and will expire on December 31, 2026. This is the fourth time it has appeared on the agenda.

There were no applicants for this opening; it will be carried over to the next meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**OB #1: SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE TAX RATES FOR THE CITY OF BUENA VISTA FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025**

Mr. Clemmer stated that there are currently no changes. We do have a mostly finalized reassessment and based on those totals; our new equalized tax rate would be 91¢. This is not finalized yet because citizens have until June 7th to appeal their assessment. The appraiser hopes to have the process completed by June 18th, so hopefully by the Council meeting on June 20th we will have the official final number. However, we do have enough information if Council would like to go ahead and set the rate today and then at that later meeting we may have to adjust it.

Mr. Kearney stated that if we know 91¢ is going to take care of it, we need to go ahead and reduce it. Mayor Cooper asked Mr. Clemmer what the certainty is that that will be the new rate. Mr. Clemmer stated that after speaking with the COR, this is within 1 or 2 cents, it will just depend on

how many citizens disagree with the new assessment. Mayor Cooper asked if we could leave it as it and then adjust the rate next month when we have the finalized rate. Mr. Kearney said that the budget has to be approved this month, and the tax rate normally goes hand in hand with that because the rate is tied into the budget so that there is revenue to take care of the budget.

Councilman Webb asked if the tax rate needs to be approved tonight and Mr. Kearney said that it has never been done separately, and he wasn't sure if we could. Vice-Mayor Staton asked if we could amend the Ordinance and Mr. Kearney said that that's what we need to figure out. Mayor Cooper asked again if we should approve this tonight so that the budget can be approved and Mr. Kearney said that they should and if we can amend it next month, we will. Mr. Kearney said that the rate should be amended to at least 91¢ tonight. Mayor Cooper recalled that they had discussed approving it at \$1.27 and then amend it once the reassessment was finalized. Mr. Kearney advised that it would be best for them to go ahead and approve the budget tonight because it has to be passed by the end of the month and then do the tax rate next month. He said there is no reason to adopt the Ordinance with the \$1.27 tax rate when we know we are going to change it.

The Ordinance will be carried over to the next meeting.

**OB #2: SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 MUNICIPAL BUDGET**

Mr. Clemmer stated that there have been no changes to the Ordinance.

Councilman Cash moved to read the Ordinance by title only, seconded by Councilman Jones, and carried by Council.

Ms. Burch read the Ordinance by title.

Councilman Jones made a motion to **adopt** the Ordinance with Vice-Mayor Staton seconding. Ms. Burch completed a roll call vote of Council as follows:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Councilman Henson		X			
Councilwoman Poluikis	X		X		
Councilman Webb	X		X		
Councilman Jones	X		X		
Councilman Cash	X		X		
Vice-Mayor Staton	X		X		
Mayor Cooper	X		X		

The following Ordinance was approved by a unanimous vote.

**An Ordinance Approving the  
Fiscal Year 2025 Municipal Budget**

**WHEREAS** the City Council, on May 2, 2024, held a public hearing on the proposed budget for the Fiscal Year 2025; and

**WHEREAS** the City Council, during a series of work sessions, has developed a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2025.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF BUENA VISTA,** that the following budget be and the same is hereby adopted for fiscal planning purposes:

**CITY OF BUENA VISTA, VIRGINIA  
FY 2025 PROPOSED MUNICIPAL BUDGET**

**GENERAL FUND REVENUE  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
General Property Taxes	\$7,104,820
Other Local Taxes	\$2,372,934
Permits, Privilege Fees	\$27,730
Fines & Forfeitures	\$45,300
Earnings from Investments	\$3,000
Charge for Services	\$796,500
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$259,333
Non-Categorical Aid from Virginia	\$676,719
Shared Expenses	\$1,218,982
Categorical Aid from Virginia	\$3,811,093
Categorical Aid Federal	\$194,543
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE</b>	<b>\$16,510,954</b>

**GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
City Council	\$39,555
City Manager	\$306,305
City Attorney	\$70,000
Information Technology	\$157,700
Human Resources	\$82,282
Finance Director	\$205,395
Independent Auditor	\$85,821
Commissioner of the Revenue	\$235,478
Reassessment	\$33,000
Board of Equalization	\$3,000
City Treasurer	\$319,534
Insurance	\$74,250
Electoral Board	\$234,748
Circuit Court	\$6,234
General District Court	\$9,270
Juvenile & Domestic Relations Court	\$40,620
Clerk of the Circuit Court	\$287,223
City Sheriff	\$534,385

Commonwealth's Attorney	\$296,188
Criminal Justice Services	\$73,414
Police Department	\$2,328,913
Fire Department	\$163,500
Rescue Squad	\$160,903
Probation Officer	\$3,000
Magistrate	\$340
Medical Examiner	\$150
Economic Development	\$230,199
Planning	\$246,078
Administration & Engineering	\$287,275
Street Maintenance	\$1,148,015
Streetlights	\$73,000
Refuse Collection Department	\$517,382
Refuse Disposal	\$300,000
Maintenance of Building & Grounds	\$485,710
Cemetery Maintenance	\$41,418
General Tax Relief	\$80,000
Retiree Medical Plan	\$26,000
Central Dispatch	\$459,913
School Fund	\$2,408,493
Regional Jail	\$868,851
Transfers to Other Funds	\$431,649
Debt Service	\$230,964
Social Services	\$2,350,000
Non-Profit Agencies	\$574,799
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$16,510,954</b>

**WATER REVENUE  
2024-2025**

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed</u></b>
Charge for Services	\$1,455,851
<b>TOTAL WATER FUND REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,455,851</b>

**WATER EXPENDITURES  
2024-2025**

<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Proposed</u></b>
Water Administration	\$49,534
Water Maintenance	\$495,835
Water Production	\$300,191
Debt Service	\$610,291
<b>TOTAL WATER FUND EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$1,455,851</b>

**SEWER REVENUE  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Charge for Services	\$1,254,329
<b>TOTAL SEWER FUND REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,254,329</b>

**SEWER EXPENDITURES  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Sewer Administration	\$48,534
Sewer Maintenance	\$373,321
Waste Water Treatment Plant	\$832,474
<b>TOTAL SEWER FUND EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$1,254,329</b>

**PARKS & RECREATION REVENUE  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Charge for Services & Misc. Revenue	\$344,125
Transfer from General Fund	\$407,337
<b>TOTAL PARK FUND REVENUE</b>	<b>\$751,462</b>

**PARKS & RECREATION EXPENDITURES  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Administration	\$241,023
Recreation Department	\$170,559
Activities Department	\$16,300
Maintenance of Parks & Campgrounds	\$265,791
Swimming Pool	\$57,789
<b>TOTAL PARK FUND EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$751,462</b>

**SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION REVENUE  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
City Funds	\$23,181
Interest Recovery	\$19,583
<b>TOTAL SCHOOL CONSTRUCT REVENUE</b>	<b>\$42,764</b>

**SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION EXPENDITURES  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Middle School Loan	\$42,764
<b>TOTAL SCHOOL CONSTRUCT EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$42,764</b>

**SENIOR CENTER FUND REVENUE  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
BV/Lex/Rockbridge County	\$8,500
<b>TOTAL SENIOR CENTER REVENUE</b>	<b>\$8,500</b>

**SENIOR CENTER FUND EXPENDITURES  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Utilities and Operation Costs	\$8,500
<b>TOTAL SENIOR CENTER EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$8,500</b>

**SCHOOL NUTRITION FUND REVENUE  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Nutrition Revenues	\$876,642
<b>TOTAL SCHOOL NUTRITION REVENUE</b>	<b>\$876,642</b>

**SCHOOL NUTRITION FUND EXPENDITURES  
2024-2025**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Nutrition Expenses	\$876,642
<b>TOTAL SCHOOL NUTRITION EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$876,642</b>

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Tyson T. Cooper, Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sarah M. Burch, Clerk of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Adoption

**NB #3: SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE CITY OF BUENA VISTA FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025**

Mr. Clemmer reported that there have been no changes to this Ordinance.

On a motion by Councilman Webb, seconded by Vice-Mayor Staton, and carried by Council, Ms. Burch read the Ordinance by title only.

Councilman Webb moved to **approve** the Ordinance with Councilman Jones seconding. Ms. Burch took a roll call vote of Council as follows:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Councilman Henson		X			
Councilwoman Poluikis	X		X		
Councilman Webb	X		X		
Councilman Jones	X		X		
Councilman Cash	X		X		
Vice-Mayor Staton	X		X		
Mayor Cooper	X		X		

The following Ordinance was approved by a unanimous vote.

**An Ordinance Appropriating Funds for the  
Operation of the City of Buena Vista for Fiscal Year 2025**

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF BUENA VISTA, VIRGINIA**, that in accordance with Section 4-1, Budgets and Appropriations, of the Charter of Buena Vista, funds to support the operations of the City for the Fiscal Year 2025 is hereby appropriated effective July 1, 2024 in the amount of \$20,900,501 and in accordance with the following provisions:

<b>General Fund</b>	<b>\$16,510,954</b>
<b>Water Fund</b>	<b>\$1,455,850</b>
<b>Sewer Fund</b>	<b>\$1,254,329</b>
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation Fund</b>	<b>\$751,462</b>
<b>School Construction Fund</b>	<b>\$42,764</b>
<b>Senior Center Fund</b>	<b>\$8,500</b>
<b>School Nutrition Fund</b>	<b><u>\$876,642</u></b>
<b>TOTAL FY 2025 BUDGET</b>	<b>\$20,900,501</b>

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tyson T. Cooper, Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sarah M. Burch, Clerk of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Adoption

**NEW BUSINESS**

**NB #1: PROCLAMATION IN RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL POLICE WEEK 2024**

Ms. Burch read the following Proclamation:

**Proclamation in Recognition of National Police Week 2024**

**WHEREAS** the well-being of all citizens of Buena Vista is preserved and enhanced as a direct result of the vigilance and dedication of the members of the Buena Vista Police Department and Sheriff's Office; and

**WHEREAS** the men and women of the Buena Vista Police Department and Sheriff's Office, at great risk to their own personal safety, presently serve their fellow citizens as guardians of the peace; and

**WHEREAS** 137 federal, state, county, municipal, military, tribal, and campus officers were killed in the line of duty in 2023. This includes 48 from gunfire, 37 from traffic-related incidents, and 52 from other causes. In addition, 25 K9 officers were killed in the line of duty protecting their communities; and

**WHEREAS** since the first know line of duty death in 1791, over 24,067 United States law enforcement offices have made the ultimate sacrifice and have their names memorialized on the wall of the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, DC; and

**WHEREAS** each year, during the month of May, a week is dedicated to honoring the memory and holding tribute to the many courageous and heroic officers who have laid down their lives in the protection of our homes and our persons, and to those officers who continue to faithfully protect and serve the citizens of Buena Vista; and

**WHEREAS** it is important to promote public respect and appreciation for the protection and rescue efforts in which our officers are performing.

**NOW, THEREFORE, WE,** The City Council of the City of Buena Vista, do hereby proclaim May 12 through May 18, 2024, as National Police Week and urge all citizens to honor our police officers and sheriff's deputies for their outstanding service to the City of Buena Vista, and to honor the memory of all officers who have given their lives in the performance of their official duties.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** I, Tyson Cooper, as Mayor of the City of Buena Vista, have hereunto set my hand and caused to be duly affixed the Seal of the City of Buena Vista, Virginia, this 16<sup>th</sup> day of May 2024.

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Tyson T. Cooper, Mayor

Councilman Webb moved to **adopt** the Proclamation with Councilman Jones seconding, and it was carried by Council.

**NB #2: ARPA REQUESTS FOR GAS MONITORING EQUIPMENT AT THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT & FOR POOL RENOVATIONS AT GLEN MAURY PARK**

Mr. Clemmer recalled that late last year, Council approved \$60,000 for gas monitoring at the WWTP, but that was not the final contract price which is about \$105,000. Therefore this request is for an additional \$45,000 for the gas monitoring equipment.

The other request is for renovating the pool at GMP. Initially in the early discussions, the cost was going to be about \$500,000. We have gotten the final quote for that which is about \$650,000.

The combined request tonight is for \$695,000 which would still leave us a little over \$2M of unallocated ARPA funds.

Councilman Webb asked if the extra \$45,000 for the WWTP is just for the gas monitoring or because they want to do something else to the roof. Mr. Clemmer replied that when we got the initial quote for \$60,000 it was a different vendor, but then we had to do an RFP for the actual work and the company that gave the \$60,000 quote didn't bid on it and this was the best quote that we got through that process.

Councilman Jones moved to allocate the ARPA funds as requested. Councilman Cash seconded the motion, and it was carried by Council.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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Sarah M. Burch, Clerk of Council

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Tyson T. Cooper, Mayor