

Barry Lee ([00:04](#)):

Hi! Barry Lee with 92.5 WINC FM excited to be at Rouss City Hall to host the second season of the City of Winchester's podcast, the Rouss Review. So twice each month, on the second and fourth Thursday, we explore City services, programs and events and we discussed the information you need to know. So hope you'll keep tuning in.

Barry Lee ([00:22](#)):

Up first is the Council BLUF, a Bottom Line Up Front recap of the March 10, 2020 Council meetings. During the regular meeting, Council received an overview of the Coronavirus from the Lord Fairfax Health District Department Director, Dr. Colin Greene, and the City's response and preparations from the City Manager and Emergency Management Coordinator. The details from this discussion will be highlighted in the Now You Know segment later on in this podcast. Council also adopted an Ordinance to establish the composition and election schedule for the Winchester School Board. The General Assembly recently signed the City Charter Amendment regarding the school board's composition. Council also approved a resolution to amend the Comprehensive Plan to consider the whole city as an Urban Development Area per Virginia State Code. This will assist the City in applying for transportation funding in the future. Council also adopted a resolution of sorrow for former Council President Charles T Gaynor who recently passed away. Last, Council held first readings of an Ordinance to address inconsistencies in personnel procedures in the Winchester City Code. The Charter states that the City shall be managed by a City Manager who was responsible for administration of the City's affairs including management, appointment and supervision of all City employees. Essentially, the Council establishes the policies and overall goals of the City and the City Manager is responsible for the daily operations and implementing those policies and goals. Section 5(c) of the Charter gives Council the right to appoint or remove department heads at its pleasure but Council has only opted to exercise this right with the Police Chief position as stated in City Code. Also in City Code, the Police Chief was allowed to appeal his or her termination by the City Manager to Council. These two operations are inconsistent with the charter structure of the Council-Manager form of government and are not required by the Code of Virginia. At the Work Session, Council discussed standards of decorum for the Common Council as drafted by Councilors Wiley and Herbstritt. After reviewing the proposed document, Council opted to draft a resolution to be presented at the next regular meeting for official vote. Council also began discussing the preliminary budget options for Fiscal Year 2021 as presented by Interim City Manager Mary Beth Price. Ms. Price provided a summary of budget options, five-year capital improvement plan, personnel request, the information technology plan, and the City's current debt load and how it relates to City policies. The FY21 budget options include \$14.85 million in debt issuance, including \$12 million for the Douglas Community Learning Center and Shihadeh Innovation Center and \$2.85 million for City projects. Expenses for many items are much higher than last year and include several mandatory expenses such as debt service and an increase in employee health insurance rates. Based on current revenue trends, staff is projecting modest organic growth in personal property and meals taxes for FY21. In addition to the City's next biennial real estate reassessment will be completed in 2021 Ms. Price presented four budget options with associated tax rates. Each 1 cent increase in the real estate tax rate will generate approximately \$320,000 in revenue. Each 0.5% increase in meals tax will generate around \$750,000 in additional revenue. No other tax increases are proposed in any of the four FY21 budget options. The City utilizes a base budget model. Therefore, the expenditures listed in the summary are for additional items to be added or subtracted from the base budget. At the beginning of the budget preparation process, departments were tasked with closely examining every budget line and recommending cuts up to 10% where possible, excluding mandatory and contractual obligations. The budget amounts presented represent the cost to support current service levels as well as additional items that support the City's

adopted strategic plan goals and previous fiscal plans. A detailed list of what each option will fund is included in the Council Work Session agenda packet. Council consensus was to not advertise a higher rate, thereby maintaining the real estate tax rate at 93 cents per \$100 of assessed value. Whether or not to increase meals tax will be decided at another time. Council will continue the budget options discussion at the March 24, 2020 Work Session. For more information on these topics and to view the agenda packet, visit the City of Winchester website and click Council Meeting Agendas under the Government tab.

Barry Lee ([05:04](#)):

This week is Virginia Flood Awareness Week and the purpose of the week is to bring awareness to the dangers of floods, also to get prepared, to take a look at our property's flood risk, and to purchase flood insurance. So we're going to be discussing all of this on the next episode of publiCITY, which is the City's monthly new show. That'd be later this month. More information is available on the City's website under Emergency Management and speaking of emergency management, the City's Emergency Management Coordinator Scott Kensinger is here to talk about flood preparedness and safety. Scott, good to have you with us.

Scott Kensinger ([05:37](#)):

Thank you. Very happy to be here.

Barry Lee ([05:39](#)):

So, from an emergency management perspective, Scott, why is flood safety so important?

Scott Kensinger ([05:45](#)):

Well, Barry, in the United States, 90% of all natural disasters involves some sort of flooding. Here in Winchester, the threat of flooding can occur from frequent storms that pass over our area, rapid snow melt, tropical depressions that are remnants of hurricanes, and in some cases, backups from storm drains. These threats can develop slowly over time or within minutes depending on the weather event.

Barry Lee ([06:09](#)):

So you just said within minutes?

Scott Kensinger ([06:12](#)):

Yes, flash flooding occurs when large amounts of water inundate our waterways in a short period of time and overflow the banks of streams causing extreme hazards to the surroundings such as roadways.

Barry Lee ([06:23](#)):

Yeah. You know, we see on the news all the time where people are out in water stranded in their cars and you wonder how does this happen and what can people do to prevent it from happening to them?

Scott Kensinger ([06:33](#)):

Well, the first thing, it's hard to judge the depth of the water that is covering the roadway and people underestimate the power that water has to make a vehicle buoyant. It only takes several inches of rain covering the roadway to create this hazard. Our advice is to never drive across a road that is covered

with water. You're placing yourself, family members and first responders in great danger. A good phrase to remember when you see water on the road is "Turn around. Don't drown".

Barry Lee ([07:01](#)):

I like it. So what can people do to prepare for floods?

Scott Kensinger ([07:06](#)):

First and foremost, watch and listen to weather reports for impending storms. The national weather service is a great resource for accurate and timely information. The City's notification system will also send you watches and warnings if you opt in to receive those weather alerts. Purchasing a weather radio that has a battery backup in the event of power going out. The national weather service broadcasts critical information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And also know the difference between flash flood watches or warnings. The watch describes an event that is possible, whereas a warning means the event is occurring or will occur soon. Another area would be to seek shelter to higher ground and call 911 if you find yourself stranded with no way out. Always be prepared without necessities for a period of time. This includes power, access to clothing, medical and food. And lastly, never eat food that has been soaked in water.

Barry Lee ([08:05](#)):

All right, and you mentioned getting alerts by way of the City's notification system about flash flood warnings and watches. Can you tell us a little bit more about that?

Scott Kensinger ([08:14](#)):

Sure. The City's committed to keeping the public informed of impending threats to the community. Individuals can receive critical weather information via text, email, or landline phones by subscribing to the City's notification system to sign up, people can visit the City of Winchester's website at [www.winchesterva.gov/getalerts](http://www.winchesterva.gov/getalerts) and opt-in under subscriptions when creating an account. If anyone needs assistance with registering or accessing an existing account, residents can contact me or the City's Communication Director at City Hall.

Barry Lee ([08:50](#)):

Excellent. Scott, thanks so much for the information. Also, thanks for all you do to help our community prepare for the unthinkable.

Scott Kensinger ([08:57](#)):

Thank you. Glad to be here.

Tim Youmans ([09:05](#)):

Hey, this is Tim Y the History Guy...

Amy Simmons ([09:07](#)):

And Amy S the podcast guests together bringing you...

Tim Youmans ([09:10](#)):

another episode of Winchester 101. Thanks for being my guest today, Amy.

Amy Simmons ([09:16](#)):

Thanks, Tim. I'm glad to be here this time as we focus on some notable women in Winchester in recognition of Women's History Month. While there are so many women who have contributed to making Winchester and beyond a better place, this podcast is intended to highlight the achievements of a few notable women.

Tim Youmans ([09:32](#)):

Yes, and an excellent source for learning more about important women in Winchester's history is a book titled, "Some Worthy Women", written in 2007 by a much-admired history guy, Michael Foreman. Mike's motivation for the book was partly in response to a book by Dr. Garland Quarles titled, "Some Worthy Lives", that was published in 1988. Foreman noted that Dr. Quarles had only included 11 women out of his 216 biographies in that book.

Amy Simmons ([10:05](#)):

Wow. Okay. But enough about these history minded men. Let's get back to the topic at hand. Winchester has been home to many notable women. Some have fame that extends far beyond Winchester. This includes country music hall of fame inductee, Virginia Patterson Hensley, better known as Patsy Cline, and Pulitzer Prize winning author Willa Cather. While she may not have the name recognition as Cline and Cather, Nancy Larrick Crosby's impact on children's literature was also felt on an international basis. And Tim, I think you've talked about some notable women in earlier podcasts.

Tim Youmans ([10:38](#)):

That's right. In a prior podcast focused on the contributions of civil rights leaders, I talked about the role of Union sympathetic Quaker Rebecca Wright, who had written an account of Confederate troops strength in Winchester at the request of Union General Philip Sheridan. In the fall of 1864, she worked with Thomas Laws who, as a slave, agreed to carry a message from Wright to General Sheridan, who was preparing for battle against Confederate forces. Wright's intelligence proved beneficial in the Third Winchester battle, which represented the last time that the Confederate army occupied Winchester.

Amy Simmons ([11:17](#)):

And I believe that same 1864 Civil War battle would also bring fame to a nurse by the name of Matilda Russell as told in a book by noted author John Esten Cooke. "Tillie" Russell walked four miles out onto the battlefield after the final retreat of the Confederate Army to find a wounded soldier needing medical care. She stayed with him all night keeping him alive. Her heroic actions as told in the book led to the commissioning of a famous painting titled a night on the battlefield that was displayed at major national exhibitions.

Tim Youmans ([11:49](#)):

And another woman featured in that prior podcast on civil rights leaders was civil rights advocate Ruth Jackson, a black restaurant owner who operated Ruth's Tea Room on East Cecil Street where white and black patrons were seated in different sections as required by the state as a condition for obtaining a liquor license. However, Jackson did not insist that they stay segregated once inside her restaurant.

Amy Simmons ([12:15](#)):

Winchester women have been in a wide array of leadership roles in Winchester. In business, Mary Henkel led the prominent Henkel-Harris furniture company for many years. In medicine, Winchester native Dr. Sarah Winifred Brown became an early black gynecologist and would later become the first woman appointed to the Howard University Board of Directors. Also, in education, Dr. Tracy Fitzsimmons is the first woman president of Shenandoah University.

Tim Youmans ([12:41](#)):

As far as local government, the contributions of women are substantial despite archaic rules from nearly a century earlier that denied women the right to vote and to hold public office. This is even more notable for women of color who faced far greater obstacles. Among the notable "firsts" was Dorothy Allen, who served as the first white woman on City Council in Winchester. Born in 1891, Mrs. Allen was elected to City Council in 1954 and reelected in 1958 and Amy, Mrs. Allen is particularly notable to me in my role as Planning Director for the City because she was the driving force behind establishing a Planning Commission back in the 1950s.

Amy Simmons ([13:25](#)):

And the first African-American member on City Council was Effie Davis. Effie was a guidance counselor at Handley High School following integration. In 1975, Davis was appointed to fill an unexpired term on Council. She would be elected to a full term in 1978. Thus, there was a black woman on Council long before there was a black man on Council.

Tim Youmans ([13:48](#)):

In 1988, Council history was made again when Elizabeth "Betsy" Helm was elected as the first female Mayor of Winchester without having served on City Council prior to her mayoral election victory. Mayor Helm had otherwise broken many glass ceilings serving on corporate boards of directors including local banks and large corporations, some of which were outside of Winchester.

Amy Simmons ([14:13](#)):

In 2004, a long-serving female member of City Council, Elizabeth "Liz" Minor became Mayor of Winchester. She served the second longest term of any Winchester mayor. Liz first served on Council in 1980 and was appointed chair of a number of standing Council committees as well as special committees like the building committee created to lead the major renovation of Rouss City Hall in 1986. The Council Chambers in Rouss City Hall is named in her honor.

Tim Youmans ([14:40](#)):

Though never on City Council, local historic preservationist Katherine "Katie" Rockwood was instrumental in the formation of a grass-roots historic preservation group. She was instrumental the formation of Preservation of Historic Winchester and served as PHW's first executive director and then as president of that organization. Rockwood was very involved in creating the first architectural survey of Winchester's historic resources and in the effort to establish a local historic district in the 1970s. Though she died young, her contributions to saving Winchester's vast inventory of historic buildings is a lasting testament to her efforts.

Amy Simmons ([15:21](#)):

Well, Tim, I think we can all agree that Winchester is a better place today because of the contributions of so many women, only a few of whom had been highlighted here. As we present this podcast, it

cannot be left unnoted that we say goodbye to out-going City Manager Eden Freeman, the first female City Manager in Winchester's century-long list of professional managers. Eden deserves credit for her leadership at among other things, securing the City's first ever AAA bond rating, implementing technology and guiding the 2019 major renovation of City Hall.

Tim Youmans ([15:54](#)):

Well that's it for us, Tim Y the History Guy...

Amy Simmons ([15:57](#)):

and Amy S the podcast guest, until the next episode of

Tim Youmans ([16:01](#)):

Winchester 101.

Barry Lee ([16:09](#)):

Now it's time for the Now U Know segment where we talk about interesting City of Winchester facts that you may not be aware of or important information that you need to know. This segment will focus on the hot topic of the Coronavirus in the United States as presented to Council by the Director of the Lord Fairfax Health District at the March 10, 2020 Council meeting. There are seven different Coronavirus strands, four cause common cold symptoms and three are more serious. The serious versions include the severe acute respiratory syndrome or SARS, middle East respiratory syndrome, and the current COVID-19. The 2019 version of the Coronavirus causes lower respiratory symptoms such as cough, fever and shortness of breath. In more serious cases, it can cause pneumonia, respiratory failure or death. Coronavirus was initially linked to an animal market in China, but now it's not clear how it started. It is spread from person to person and the virus was exported to other countries through travel. The World Health Organization declared the outbreak a public health emergency. There are presently eight positive cases in Virginia as of Wednesday, March 11 [2020] and it's only a matter of time before it hits the Shenandoah Valley. Authorities are not 100% sure how the virus is spread as it's a new virus, but it seems to be spread like the cold and flu. It's spread through close person to person contact, which would be within six feet, respiratory droplets that are then inhaled. So, for example, when somebody doesn't cover their mouth, when they cough or sneeze and possibly from touching contaminated surfaces. The incubation time from exposure to showing symptoms is five days and in some cases, 14 days. Individuals who have been exposed but aren't yet showing symptoms are asked to self quarantine for 14 days. Those who are most affected or are the most at risk are individuals over 60 years old, someone with a compromised immune system such as cancer, diabetes, or on immunosuppressive medication. So, here's how you can improve your chances of not attracting the virus, which is the same safety actions to prevent getting the common cold and flu. Number one, wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can sing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" if you get bored. If there's no soap, use hand sanitizer, that's at least 60% alcohol. Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Stay away from people who are sick. Don't travel to areas where the disease is prevalent. Stay away from large crowds or confined spaces with crowds. Completely cover your cough and sneezes with your elbow or tissue. Clean surfaces with disinfectant. And most importantly, stay home if you're sick. Seek medical care if you have a fever, cough and/or difficulty breathing. And if you have traveled to a high-risk area, have had close contact with a known case, or have severe symptoms regardless of travel or contact, let your doctor or EMS provider know if you have traveled to a high-risk area or have been in contact with someone who has the virus so they can take the necessary precautions. Please note that

surgical masks only help if you are the one who's sick. There's a lot of talk about stopping stocking up on supplies. Authorities recommend that you don't hoard, but consider keeping up to two weeks nonperishable food in case you do get sick. Stay informed with credible sources such as the CDC, VDH, and the World Health Organization. Avoid most .com or .org sites and social media. Look out for scam artists trying to sell masks or any other Coronavirus supplies. Now, I'm going to turn it over to City Manager Eden Freeman to discuss the City's preparedness and response thus far.

Eden Freeman ([19:53](#)):

Thank you, Barry. Our staff and especially public safety personnel have been monitoring the outbreak and meeting regularly with state and local officials. The Virginia Department of Health is the lead agency in the Commonwealth's response. Our Senior Management Team have met to discuss operations and precautions and we continue to discuss the outbreak, proper hygiene and the City's response on a regular basis. We have implemented glove wearing for those who handle money or work directly with the public. Staff is sanitizing areas frequently and our awesome cleaning crew is taking extra precautions when they clean our public buildings. Our first responders have a supply of masks and emergency management is reviewing the City's Continuity of Operations Plan and the City's Pandemic Plan and updating both as needed. Coronavirus information with links to the authorities websites has been added to the City's and it will be updated regularly as information is made available. The City is also working closely with the Winchester Public Schools and will provide any assistance needed. Barry, it's only a matter of time before the virus hits Winchester and we strongly urge everyone to take this seriously, but don't panic, and know what your risk is. When you want information or updates, rely only on reliable sources like the CDC, the Virginia Department of Health, the City of Winchester or your local government, or the World Health Organization as there is a lot of misinformation out there on social media and in the media. We get our information directly from conference calls with and memos from state officials and we'll pass it along to our community via our social media pages, website, newsletters and more.

Barry Lee ([21:39](#)):

Thanks a lot, Eden. Well, if you didn't know before now you know.

Barry Lee ([21:44](#)):

And here's a few upcoming events and activities offered by the City of Winchester and partners. Defrost, Winchester Police Department's new true crime podcast, was launched on Wednesday, March 11th [2020] at 11:00 AM. Over the course of several shows, the podcast, hosted by Lieutenant Amanda Behan and retired Detective Craig Smith, will detail a cold murder case from the 1970s in hopes of finding new leads or bringing closure to those impacted. The podcast is available in many formats. Find the podcast on your favorite podcast player using Anchor or join the Defrost Facebook group for regular updates. The 2020 curbside Yard Waste Collection Season will begin on March 18th [2020]. Visit the Public Works web page for details. Winchester Parks and Recreation will host an indoor family movie night on Friday, March 20th in the Jim Barnett Park gym. The free featured movie is Ratatouille. Come at 5:30 pm to enjoy some fun activities before the movie starts at 6:15. Sign up now for Winchester Parks and Recreation's Try Dive program and try scuba diving to see if you like it. The next Try Dive classes will be held on March 21st and April 18th [2020]. This class is for ages 12 and up and held at the Jim Barnett Park indoor pool. Scuba certification classes are also offered by Winchester Parks and Recreation. And save the date for the next Newcomers Welcome Event at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitor Center on Thursday, April 2, 2020. This free quarterly event is a great opportunity to learn more about your new hometown.

Barry Lee ([23:17](#)):

Thanks a lot for joining us on the second season of the Rouss Review. I'm Barry Lee with 92.5 WINC FM. We'll be back on the fourth Thursday in March at 5:00 PM. Take care.