

Barry Lee ([00:03](#)):

Hi, I'm Barry Lee with 92.5 WINC FM excited to host the second season of the City of Winchester's podcast, The Rouss Review. This episode, I'll provide an overview of this week's Council meetings and talk with Winchester Fire and Rescue Interim Chief about the City's fire and rescue services. After that, keep listening for the Now U Know segment and some current announcements to keep you informed. So, let's get started.

Barry Lee ([00:26](#)):

Up first is the Council BLUF, a Bottom Line Up Front recap of the September 22, 2020 Council meetings. At the Regular Meeting Council adopted an ordinance that would modify chapter 26 of the City Code regarding small cell wireless facilities on public property. Wireless phone providers are authorized to install small cell facilities within the public right of way under certain conditions by the Code of Virginia and other federal regulations. This ordinance modifies City Code so that it's consistent with state and federal regulations. Council continued discussions and approved an ordinance regarding changes to an agreement between the City and Shenandoah University for the improvement of four ball fields in Jim Barnett Park. Since early March, COVID-19 has negatively impacted the community as well as Shenandoah University. As a result, the university wishes to revise the project schedule to break the project into phases. First, they will complete improvements on Bodie Grim and Henkle Harris this year in preparation for John Handley High School's 2021 baseball and softball seasons. The improvements to Bridgeforth and Rotary Fields would be completed in phase two and delayed to a later date next year. During the interim period, bridge and rotary would remain with parks and recreation for management, maintenance, scheduling, and rental. Council approved a resolution of support for Winchester's first responders and a resolution of support for an agreement for the continuity of the healthcare services partnership between Valley Health and Anthem of Virginia. At the work session Council discussed conditional use permits to convert the ground floor of a single family detached dwelling to multi-family use at 305 North Loudon Street, and to construct a non-compliant fence in the front yard of 206 West Wyck Street. Both conditional use permits were forwarded to the October 13, 2020 Regular Meeting for public hearing and official vote. Council discussed a publicly-sponsored City Code text amendment submitted by a citizen. City Code currently allows for the keeping of chickens if a property has two or more acres. The proposed ordinance amendment would open up the regulations to allow for single family dwellings with less than two acres to keep chickens provided they meet all the permit regulations contained in the amendment. Council forwarded the item to the October 13 meeting for the first reading. Council discussed a proposed resolution regarding the creation of several Council committees. The proposed resolution would authorize the creation of a finance committee, a public safety committee, and the boards and commissions committee. These committees would be delegated the responsibility of conducting work session business concerning specific agenda items prior to being considered by the entire Council. During Regular Meetings, the resolution was forwarded to the October 13, regular meeting for official vote. For more information on these topics and to view the agenda packet, or to watch the meeting video, visit the City of Winchester website and click Council meeting agendas under the government tab.

Barry Lee ([03:32](#)):

There's a lot happening at the Winchester Fire and Rescue Department, so we thought that we'd invite Interim Chief Hadden Culp to the show to give us an overview. Chief, welcome to the show.

Chief Culp ([03:42](#)):

It's a pleasure to be with you, Barry. Thanks a lot for having me back.

Barry Lee (03:45):

Before we get started on the new and exciting activities that are happening at the department, let's talk a little bit about fire and rescue services as it is done here in the City of Winchester. We have a combination system, right?

Chief Culp (03:57):

Yes, that's correct. We have both paid and volunteer parts of our system to compose the fire and rescue organization.

Barry Lee (04:03):

And how does that combination system work when fire and rescue is dispatched for local emergency calls?

Chief Culp (04:10):

Well, basically there's four volunteer fire departments and stations in the city and each volunteer organization provides the building and emergency apparatus at those locations. There's also volunteers who provide staffing, but the bulk of the response to the staffing is provided by City fire and rescue firefighters. These organizations working together as what we call our combination system.

Barry Lee (04:33):

Alrighty. Speaking of arriving on scene, what is the Department's response time when personnel get the call at the station to arriving on the scene?

Chief Culp (04:42):

Well, that is something that we're very proud of. In fact, in 2019, we responded over 6,000 calls for service here in the city. And we're typically on the scene and less than five minutes from the time of dispatch and this is really a major asset to the community. You get to calls for illness or injury or fires very quickly.

Barry Lee (05:01):

Wow, very impressive. So, here's a question that a lot of people may have when an EMT or a paramedic is needed on scene of an accident or another emergency. They want to know why does the fire truck sometimes arrive along with the ambulance?

Chief Culp (05:16):

Well, sometimes it just takes more than two people on an EMS unit to get the patients safely out of the house or to give them all the treatment that they may require. So, on certain types of calls, EMS calls in particular, like a heart attack or, um, a haste case where there's a lot of trauma, we will go ahead and send a fire truck that also has trained first responders on it to assist that medic unit. They may need help getting them down out of the third floor, extricated from a car, or if it's a complicated scenario, like a heart attack, they may need help with doing compressions ventilations, communicate with the hospital, administering drugs, or just packaging patient to help them get transported.

Barry Lee ([05:59](#)):

Gotcha. The department's been recognized for their cardiac arrest response over the years. So tell us about that and what it means for our community.

Chief Culp ([06:07](#)):

Well, we like to call our system really a system of care, and this really begins with the bystanders, our citizens out there doing bystander CPR. That is absolutely critical to the successful save rate that we have here. Next comes our dispatchers who gather information from the people making the phone call. And in some cases they actually provide instructions back to the call takers, I mean, back to the people in the scene to help them with the patient. Then, a quick response with qualified personnel, a rapid transport and a very good medical facility here in town to turn patients over to are all critical parts of providing this service. In fact, due to our efforts with CPR, we've recently got a Gold+ award from the American Heart Association that continues our fine tradition of providing this service and recognition to our emergency responders for that. So, it's a great attribute to our department and our community.

Barry Lee ([07:09](#)):

Congratulations. That's awesome. And I hear you have a couple of new assistant chiefs who have been recently appointed

Chief Culp ([07:15](#)):

That's correct. We're very honored to have had the opportunity to evaluate candidates and subsequently select battalion chief, John Henschel and Deputy Chief J.D. Orndorff both for promotion to Assistant Chief. They both have been members of the Winchester Fire and Rescue Department for many years. We're fortunate to have them and other folks like them in the fire and rescue system to provide this talent to the community.

Barry Lee ([07:40](#)):

Excellent. So, last year, the city hired a consultant to evaluate the fire and rescue services and to help figure out where improvements could be made and a master plan was developed for those recommended improvements. Where does the department stand on the master plan implementation?

Chief Culp ([07:57](#)):

Well, that report was provided to the Council a few months ago, back in May, and I gave the first quarterly report to the Council in June. And I just gave them another update two weeks ago. One of the things that we've been doing, probably the most critical, is aggressively researching and planning and implementing solutions to some of the recommendations that are identified in the report. So, the most important one that we tackled first was to increase the number of personnel that are riding on the fire apparatus. So, we've done that. That was instituted on September 5th, and that's been working out very well since we implemented that. There are many other suggestions that we've also been working on as well. For example, reviewing our policies to bring them up to speed. A lot of internal reviews there and updating, and our record keeping for our training hours. We've instituted some new software to keep track of all that, training hours that we're putting in. And we're also developing training plans to make sure that we're getting all the required training and it's being effectively implemented throughout all the fire and rescue.

Barry Lee ([09:14](#)):

Excellent. So you've made some great progress so far. What are you going to be working on next?

Chief Culp ([09:19](#)):

Next thing that we're going to take a look at is to take a look at how we're providing emergency medical response here in the community. We have three medic units that do a spectacular job, however, they're on the road quite a bit. And sometimes there just may be another way to provide the assistance that the person in need might have. In other words, we want to keep the medic unit available for critical calls, but still want to make sure that the people get support. An example that might be if somebody has just needs assistance. They've fallen onto the floor and need help getting up. We're tying up a medic unit to go give that assistance. How could we do that in another way? Or if we have somebody who maybe just wants their blood pressure taken and instead of sending the medic unit over there to take their blood pressure, there might be another way to provide that assistance to the community. So,, part with educating the community and look at other resources or ways to provide services community, I think is one of the things that we're going to take a look at next.

Barry Lee ([10:20](#)):

Excellent. Well, Fire Prevention Week is coming up next month and what's the theme this year.

Chief Culp ([10:26](#)):

This year's theme is to serve up fire safety in the kitchen. And some of the things that we're looking at, that we're focusing on really is kitchen safety, because cooking is the number one cause of home fires and home related fire injuries, it's really due to unattended cooking. In fact, we just had a fire last week, where believe it or not, the citizen who was cooking on their stove, they were boiling water and had a frying pan going, got distracted, children. Went upstairs and next thing you know, the smoke alarm's going off and called us. And fortunately, there was a fair amount of damage, but you know, it didn't destroy the house. So, they were still able to live there. But some of the things we're trying to get people to do is to keep the pot handles turned in so that small children won't try to grab a handle and pull something, hot water, hot cooking material down onto them so they sustain burns. To keep other combustible material away from the burners. You know, sometimes our kitchen counters get a little cluttered and things get too close to the burners. And next thing you know, you've got a fire again. Just leaving food unattended is not a good idea. And one of the other things that we have seen several times is that if you do have a fire in a skillet and the skillet happens to catch on fire, like you're just cooking bacon or something like that, is to have a lid there. You can slip a lid right on top of that frying pan and it will put that fire out almost instantaneously. But what people have a bad habit of doing is they grab that frying pan and try to take it outside. And what happens is, when they go about 10 feet, the flames come back and either hit them in the face or on their arms, they drop the frying pan and now the house is totally on fire, right? So the secret is to keep a lid handy, put it on there. And if it's getting out of control, call 911 and get out of the house.

Barry Lee ([12:32](#)):

Good point. Good, good point. Other than kitchen safety, any other fire tips that you'd like to share with us?

Chief Culp ([12:38](#)):

Well, unfortunately, with our recent tips to make sure everybody's staying safe due to the COVID and everything, we're not going to be quite as prevalent in the community during Fire Prevention Week activities during the month of October. But we do have some exciting videos that we've recently produced and they'll be available shortly on our webpage. And I also want to say that we want to remind everybody, especially now that it's getting colder, if there's wood-burning appliances, we always seem to run calls where people shovel their fireplace or wood stove ashes into trash bags or trash cans. They put them outside beside their house and it catches the house on fire. It takes a long time for ashes to cool off. So, to properly dispose of those ashes is critical.

Barry Lee ([13:31](#)):

Okay. Alrighty. You mentioned some videos to coincide with Fire Prevention Week. Where can we find those?

Chief Culp ([13:39](#)):

Well, there'll be available on our Fire and Rescue social media pages, like the fire department website, as well as our Facebook page, as well as the City's YouTube channel and on Comcast cable channel 6.

Barry Lee ([13:54](#)):

Excellent. Chief, thank you so much. Anything else you'd like to cover before we let you go?

Chief Culp ([13:58](#)):

Just to remind, one last pitch about making sure you have a good working smoke detector. You need to test those weekly and replace the batteries twice a year. And there's absolutely no reason why anybody here in the city should not have a smoke detector. If you do not have a smoke detector, please contact our office and we'll make sure we get one to you.

Barry Lee ([14:18](#)):

Excellent. Thanks again, Chief for being on the show. We thank you and your team for the service you give to our community and stay safe out there.

Chief Culp ([14:25](#)):

Thank you. It's our pleasure.

Barry Lee ([14:27](#)):

And now it's time for the Now U Know segment where we talk about interesting City of Winchester facts you may not be aware of or important information you need to know. This week's segment provides fire safety tips for Halloween from the National Fire Protection Association at nfpa.org/education. When choosing a Halloween costume stay away from long trailing fabric. If your child is wearing a mask, make sure the eye holes are large enough so that he or she can see out. Provide children with flashlights to carry for lighting or glow sticks as part of their costume. Use a battery operated candle or glow stick in jack-o-lanterns. If you use a real candle use extreme caution. Make sure children are watched at all times when candles are lit and when lighting candles inside jack-o-lanterns use long fireplace style matches or a utility lighter. Be sure to place lit pumpkin's well away from anything that can burn and far enough out of the way of trick or treaters, doorsteps, walkways, and yards. Remember to keep exits clear of decorations so that nothing blocks escape routes, make sure all smoke alarms in the home are

working. Tell children to stay away from open flames, including jack-o-lanterns with candles in them. Be sure they know how to stop, drop, and roll. If their clothing catches fire, have them practice stopping immediately dropping to the ground, covering their face with their hands and rolling over and over to put the flames out. And did you know the decorations are the first thing to ignite in 800 reported home fires each year? Dried flowers, cornstalks and crepe paper catch fire really easily. Keep all decorations away from open flames and other heat sources like light bulbs and heaters. More than one third of fires involving decorations were started by a candle. So be sure to blow out all candles when you leave the room or when you go to bed. Avoid the use of candles in the bedroom and other areas where people may fall asleep. More than one third of home candle fires started in the bedroom., Keep candles at least one foot away from anything that can burn. Use candle holders that are sturdy and won't tip over easily and never use a candle if oxygen is used in the home. Have flashlights and battery powered lighting ready to use during a power outage, never use candles, and remember, never leave a child alone in a room with a burning candle. Keep matches and lighters up high and out of children's reach in a locked cabinet. And lastly, consider using flameless candles in your home. They look and smell like real candles. Well, if you didn't know before, now, you know.

Barry Lee ([16:59](#)):

And in our final segment, some announcements to keep you informed. Governor Northam announced today that Rebuild Virginia, the \$70 million economic recovery fund launched in August, is expanding its eligibility criteria to allow more small businesses to apply. Businesses that received funding from the federal Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security or CARES Act and supply chain partners of business whose normal operations were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic are now eligible to receive grants of up to \$10,000. For more information, visit www.gov.virginia.gov/rebuildVA. The Virginia Department of Social Services has launched a new COVID-19 energy assistance program. Eligible households will receive a one-time payment of \$300 to address their immediate energy costs, including energy debt accumulated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Applications can be submitted online through the COVID-19 Virginia resources mobile app, or by phone until Friday, November 20, 2020, as long as funds are available. For more information and to apply visit www.VAservices.dss.virginia.gov/cares. All parents of pooches 16 weeks and older are invited to register their pups for basic obedience classes at Jim Barnett Park. The course will be held on Saturdays, October 3, through November 7 at 10:00 am on Amphitheater Hill in Jim Barnett Park. Registration will close September 30 and proof of rabies vaccination is required. Visit www.winchesterva.gov/parks for details, and to register online, or you can call (540) 662-4946. Designated times for drop-in pickleball at the Jim Barnett Park gym for ages 21 and up we'll begin on October 6. Check the park website under facilities for the schedule. The latest episode of the Winchester Police Departments true crime podcast, DEFROST has been posted online. Listen on Apple podcasts, Spotify, or anchor, or visit www.winchesterpolice.org/defrost podcast. And last, but certainly not least, mark your calendars with these two announcements. First City offices, the Rec Center, courts, and WinTran will be closed on Columbus Day, October 12. Recycling collection on that Monday is moved to Wednesday, October 14. Yard waste is canceled on Wednesday that week. These cancellations and closures were not included in the City's annual informational calendar, so be sure to add them. Also, the City will be holding a dedication ceremony for the new Ruth Jackson Memorial Park at the corner of East Cecil and South Kent Streets on Thursday, October 15 at 11:00 am. The community is invited to attend and pay tribute to Ms. Jackson and her former restaurant, Ruth's Tea Room. In case of inclement weather, the event will be moved to Thursday, October 22 at 11:00 am.

Barry Lee ([20:06](#)):

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Well, that's it for this week's Rouss Review podcast. Thanks for joining us. I'm Barry Lee with 92.5 WINC FM. We'll be back on the second Thursday in October at 5:00 pm. So long for now. Stay safe.