

Dan Hoffman ([00:06](#)):

Hello, and welcome to another edition of the Rouss Review. I am your City Manager, Dan Hoffman. And with me is Amy Simmons, our Communication Director. Hello, Amy.

Amy Simmons ([00:16](#)):

Hello? How's it going today?

Dan Hoffman ([00:18](#)):

[Laughs] It's going very well. Is that your radio voice?

Amy Simmons ([00:20](#)):

[Laughs] It is. Is it better than last time?

Dan Hoffman ([00:22](#)):

It's always good. It is. I can't even say that it's improving each time because it's just been great from the start.

Amy Simmons ([00:30](#)):

Thank you.

Dan Hoffman ([00:31](#)):

I hope you did well in the snow.

Amy Simmons ([00:34](#)):

Well, I stayed warm. Did not go out in it. I did quite well, actually.

Dan Hoffman ([00:39](#)):

Well, you're from Georgia, but you've been up here for forever. So at this point you're used to it.

Amy Simmons ([00:44](#)):

I'm very used to it. Yeah, it doesn't freak me out anymore. Even the big ones.

Dan Hoffman ([00:47](#)):

Yeah. People keep asking me, 'Oh, you know how you like in the snow?' cause I just moved up here from Florida and I was only in Florida for three years.

Amy Simmons ([00:55](#)):

Yeah, you are from Maryland, right?

Dan Hoffman ([00:55](#)):

Yeah. I spent 20 years in DC.

Amy Simmons ([00:56](#)):

Old pro.

Dan Hoffman ([00:56](#)):

I know a little bit about snow. So I will say I've been very pleased with how city operations have performed. Granted. We did have to close on Monday just to make sure that everyone stayed safe and we opened a little late on Tuesday, but I'll tell ya our roads looked great. We're going to talk to Perry Eisenach, our Public Services Director in a minute. He oversees, one of the things he oversees is, snow removal and that crew, I tell you, they are just, top-notch. The roads, very quickly were cleared. I mean, to be honest with you, we only opened a little bit late on Tuesday. I don't know, out of an abundance of caution

Amy Simmons ([01:41](#)):

Because of our employees traveling in from other places.

Dan Hoffman ([01:43](#)):

Exactly. And just to brag on us a little bit, we, I think, have our streets cleared a little faster than many jurisdictions around us. But I do have a lot of employees that live, you know, in some cases an hour or two away.

Amy Simmons ([01:59](#)):

West Virginia got hit a lot harder than we did.

Dan Hoffman ([02:01](#)):

Exactly. So now I gotta be careful. We all have to be careful when we're dealing with employees. So I am very proud of our crew and how they operated. But now we're all back and ready for another week and tomorrow, we have a City Council meeting. So tell us a little bit about what's on the regular agenda.

Amy Simmons ([02:29](#)):

Alrighty. We have several public hearings. One of them is some new CARE Act funding, which is exciting. It's a resolution to authorize over \$315,000 through the Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus Program for emergency rental, utility payments and food assistance. So, those who are needing assistance, who are impacted by the pandemic, can apply for that. More information will be posted about that after a Council has a chance to review it. Just a quick note though, we, have used all of our previous CARE Act funding for utility payments. That's exciting and also a little sad for those who still need it. So this might come in handy for those who did not get to [apply].

Dan Hoffman ([03:09](#)):

Absolutely. Previously, it was very popular before. And I know between that funding and the other funding that we had for rental assistance, we prevented dozens and dozens of evictions, so a very successful program.

Amy Simmons ([03:25](#)):

Yep. But we do still have the payment plan option for those who do not qualify or don't have access to that grant program. So, there's another public hearing coming up on the ninth and that is a second reading for the rezoning of the Linden Drive project. The rezoning will allow for those 300 condos, over

140 townhouses and 160 active adult multi-family units. So that is going to go up for vote after the public hearing. And then there's a second reading also for another vote for an ordinance to amend the City Code, to prohibit the possession, carrying and transportation of firearms and ammunition. This one is the one that you've been talking with Council about, correct?

Dan Hoffman ([04:10](#)):

Yep. So second reading, meaning it's the third time it's been discussed. So, we've been talking with Council about this for over a month now. And of course that doesn't include all of the discussion that happened last year at the state level. The language for this ordinance comes directly out of state law. All of the discussion and deliberation that occurred in Richmond when this was initially allowed. Remember we're a Dillon Rule state. We talked a little bit about that last time on the last podcast. So, if you aren't familiar with what a Dillon Rule state is, check out our last podcast, but the language we have to be specifically allowed to do something and we can't really vary from that. So the language for this comes directly out of state law. So, yes, this'll be second reading and it'll go into effect there after.

Amy Simmons ([05:02](#)):

All right. So, on the agenda is a first reading, which means there's no action taken, for zoning ordinance text amendment to allow for some additional bonuses for developers to increase their density. Council just has move that forward. It will return to the February 23rd meeting for public hearing and vote. And then we have some great news. Do you want to tell us about the great news?

Dan Hoffman ([05:22](#)):

Yes. Our Finance Department has identified an opportunity for us to take advantage of incredibly low interest rates to save about \$1.2 million. It could go up a little bit, possibly depending on what the rates actually lock in at. But I got a compliment Mary Blowe and Celeste Broadstreet over there, along with that entire team. They're always looking for ways to save the City money and they have found quite a nice one, which will come in handy because we're obviously going into budget season and although some of our revenue streams are still strong, some have been hit by the pandemic. This is going to come in handy.

Amy Simmons ([06:07](#)):

Great. So that is basically all the topics of interest for the regular meeting. Why don't you tell us about the Work Session. Looks like another short one.

Dan Hoffman ([06:15](#)):

Yeah. This would be a quick Work Session. The whole meeting, in and of itself, I think will actually be a pretty concise meeting. On the Work Session that occurs after the regular meeting, we're discussing an MOU between the City, the County and the Visitor's Bureau. It's pretty simple. There's been some articles in the paper about it. The City and the County both fund the Visitor's Bureau, this just outlines how we do that. And then an Executive Session to discuss a contract. So, Executive Session means a closed meeting. Now, some people might ask, 'how can you do that?' 'How can you do something outside of the public view? That's not transparent.' Well, Executive Sessions are actually really important and help the public and help save taxpayer dollars. So imagine if the City had to negotiate or discuss the negotiation of a contract but those people that we were going to negotiate with could hear everything that we were saying. It would be like going to a car dealership to buy a car. And you step off to the side to discuss with your spouse whether or not you want the car, how much you're willing to pay for the car,

but the car dealer, the car salesman, gets to listen into everything you're telling your spouse. It's kinda like that. You wouldn't want that. It probably would not help you save money.

Amy Simmons ([07:47](#)):

Yeah. Not quite fair is it?

Dan Hoffman ([07:48](#)):

Not fair. We have to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars. Occasionally, we can enter into these Executive Sessions which allow us to, in essence, plan and negotiate for the best deal for the taxpayers without fear of that information being used against the taxpayers, in essence. We can also do Executive Sessions for security related issues. For example, if we're discussing a sensitive personnel information or sensitive information about the security of City Hall, we can do that in Executive Session to make sure that that information is not used to harm anybody working or visiting one of our facilities.

Amy Simmons ([08:32](#)):

Yeah. And then also all those reasons for allowing communities to have closed meetings is all allowed by Virginia law, the FOIA laws, Freedom of Information Act. We can only go into closed meetings for those exclusions, basically.

Dan Hoffman ([08:48](#)):

And what's discussed in that close meeting has to stay in that closed meeting. There are penalties if someone who was in a closed meeting were to disclose that information outside of the meeting, you know, that it has the potential, going back to the negotiation analogy, it has the potential to really cost the City in some cases, hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of dollars if some of that information were released. Or even worse, if security information, let's say about City Hall were released, or one of our facilities, someone could use that information to harm people on one of our properties. It's a very serious thing. We take it very seriously. Councilors all have to attest after the session that nothing was discussed that shouldn't have been discussed there. Our City Attorney monitors that as well. It's an important tool for us. It's not meant to try to hide things. It's really meant to protect our operations and empower us to be good stewards of taxpayer resources.

Amy Simmons ([09:56](#)):

Well, great. Well, that is a very short work session. I'm sure everybody will be excited to have a short meeting.

Dan Hoffman ([10:03](#)):

Uh, yes. I love Council meetings, you know, it's the work of the people, but, I don't think anybody's going to complain about a light light schedule.

Amy Simmons ([10:12](#)):

Correct. So, what's next on the schedule for this podcast?

Dan Hoffman ([10:18](#)):

Yeah. And here we have now with us Perry Eisenach, my Public Services Director, your Public Services Director. Now in a lot of different cities, public services departments do a variety of different things. In

some cities down in the south, they have mosquito control. In some cities they have transportation and others, they don't have transportation. Almost all of them do some form of road work, potholes, the signs, stormwater management, trash pickup. They really run the gamut in terms of the variety of things they do. So, real quickly, before we start talking about some of these road projects, Perry tell folks that are listening, what our Public Services Department does.

Perry Eisenach ([11:02](#)):

Sure, good morning, Dan. We are the largest department in the City and we do, like you mentioned, we do a wide variety of things. The two biggest areas are public works, which is maintenance of all the streets, traffic, also includes refuse and recycling pickup. And then the other biggest areas, utilities, water, and sewer. We operate the water and sewer system within the city. Public Services also includes Winchester Transit, our public transit operation, facility maintenance, the maintenance of all the City-owned buildings and then we also do engineering and we manage all of the City's capital, major construction projects.

Dan Hoffman ([11:51](#)):

So that's a lot of stuff. You're pretty powerful guy, Perry. How long have you been with the City?

Perry Eisenach ([11:56](#)):

Well, I've been lucky to be here for over 14 years now.

Dan Hoffman ([12:00](#)):

Awesome.

Perry Eisenach ([12:00](#)):

But, I think I have the best job in the City because every day is different and we really enjoy being able to see the impact that what we do. You know, what we do affects pretty much every resident every day. And, that's an enjoyable part of our job.

Dan Hoffman ([12:21](#)):

Well said. Saying that you have the best job in the City, but you're also the person that oversees snow removal and picking up the trash. That's a pretty powerful statement coming from somebody that oversees areas that a lot of folks, sometimes, like to complain about. Potholes, getting their streets plowed. But being relatively new to the city, I got to say, we have got a top-notch when it comes to snow removal that we've seen over the last this week. Man, those guys do an awesome job.

Perry Eisenach ([12:53](#)):

Yeah. They really do. We have a very dedicated group of individuals that work for us and they're the ones that make it happen. We're very fortunate to have such a good group of employees. They do a great job.

Amy Simmons ([13:07](#)):

They seem to have fun while they're doing it, too.

Perry Eisenach ([13:09](#)):

They do. They do. Absolutely. And you know, enjoying what you do is important for all of us.

Amy Simmons ([13:17](#)):

Always.

Dan Hoffman ([13:18](#)):

Absolutely. So, the reason why we have you here today is to talk about a few big projects. These are road projects that are really gonna affect people's ability to move around the city. They're necessary sometimes a lot of times folks complain about road construction, but hey, you don't have nice roads unless you do road construction. So, we've got three big projects coming up that I know a lot of people are gonna have questions about. Let's start off with the Valley Project.

Perry Eisenach ([13:47](#)):

Sure. This project is on Valley Avenue at the south end of the city from basically Middle Road down to the southern city limits where Rubbermaid is located. So primarily there's two key components. There are some major drainage issues on Valley Avenue, especially around Tevis Street. When we get a big rain, we tend to call it Lake Tevis because the water basically fills up the street there. We are going to solve those drainage issues. Then the other big component of Valley Avenue is, while there are some sidewalks, there are many gaps in the sidewalks. Where no sidewalks currently exist, we will be installing new sidewalks on both sides of the street.

Dan Hoffman ([14:44](#)):

That's awesome.

Perry Eisenach ([14:45](#)):

Yes. Unfortunately, if you drive down Valley Avenue, you often see people having walk out in the street because there are no sidewalks. This is going to be a huge safety improvement for our residents.

Dan Hoffman ([14:59](#)):

Awesome. And when's that kicking off? When will it wrap up?

Perry Eisenach ([15:03](#)):

That project has started, so the contractor's out there, and the project completion will be by July of 2022. It's a year and a half long project.

Dan Hoffman ([15:19](#)):

That's a pretty big one. Now for big projects like these, I know sometimes the public asks, why aren't they, why don't these things happen quickly? Why does it take so long for big projects to occur. Real briefly, give folks a quick taste of what goes into making one of these projects a reality.

Perry Eisenach ([15:40](#)):

Really the majority of the work is on the front end. Getting the funding. Obviously, we can't do these projects without the funding, so we try to obtain as much state and federal funding as we can, and that's supplemented with City funds. So, there's a lot of moving pieces on the funding and it often takes a

while to make that happen. While it's great to get state and federal funds, those often come with certain requirements. They have to review everything and it extends the length of time to do a project from beginning to end. But, in the end it's worth it. Oftentimes, we say, once we actually get to the construction, the hardest part of the project is over. Just because of all the upfront planning work, and especially if there's impacts to property owners where we have to get easements or right away, that takes a while to go through that process.

Dan Hoffman ([16:55](#)):

Gotcha. Let's move on to Hope Drive.

Perry Eisenach ([16:58](#)):

Yes. Hope Drive's something that the City's talked about for a long time. Certainly, there is an existing section of Hope Drive off Valley Avenue, but this project will extend Hope Drive all the way over to Pleasant Valley Road. There will be a new railroad crossing. The two existing crossings, one on Papermill Road, and one on Tevis Street, those will go away. There will just be one new crossing, but in essence, when this project gets completed, there will be a primary route that folks will be able to take from Valley Avenue, going east past Pleasant Valley over the new Crossover Boulevard with the bridge over the interstate that's expected to open later this year. It will be a primary east-west connector route where people can go from U.S. Route 11, Valley Avenue, over to U.S. Route 522 in Frederick County. That will alleviate a lot of the traffic that you see on Jubal Early today, which is really the city's only primary east-west route.

Dan Hoffman ([18:17](#)):

Starts, finishes?

Perry Eisenach ([18:20](#)):

Basically, the same schedule as the Valley Avenue project. The contractor has started. They have a year and a half to get all the work done. So, July of 2022.

Dan Hoffman ([18:34](#)):

You mentioned the Crossover Boulevard project. What's the latest on that?

Perry Eisenach ([18:37](#)):

The City's portion is completed. And it's been done for really a couple of years now. The bridge project, and then the section of new road on the east side of the interstate is proceeding very well. And the last that I heard was that should be opening up later this fall.

Dan Hoffman ([19:00](#)):

Awesome. Yeah, I know a lot of people are very excited, especially a lot of our employees here that come in from the south and they're looking for alternate ways to get into the city.

Perry Eisenach ([19:11](#)):

Yes, absolutely.

Dan Hoffman ([19:12](#)):

Before we wrap up any other major projects on...Tevis, actually. These projects are all seem almost also interconnected.

Perry Eisenach ([19:24](#)):

They are because on Tevis Street, we will be installing a new storm drain line from Valley Avenue to part of the Hope Drive project. As part of the Hope Drive project, we're building a new stormwater management pond. So all of this stormwater from Valley Avenue will go to this new pond, which is adjacent to the railroad tracks. So yes, there are all very much related.

Dan Hoffman ([19:56](#)):

Interesting. For a lot of our residents, it might seem like it's one massive roadway project, but it's actually three distinct projects.

Perry Eisenach ([20:05](#)):

Right.

Dan Hoffman ([20:06](#)):

Awesome. Is it the same contractor for all three?

Perry Eisenach ([20:07](#)):

There's one contractor for Hope Drive and then there's one contractor for Valley and doing the work on Tevis.

Dan Hoffman ([20:16](#)):

Awesome. Excellent.

Amy Simmons ([20:19](#)):

Well, you didn't mention the cul-de-sac.

Perry Eisenach ([20:21](#)):

Yes. So, at the conclusion of the Hope Drive project, Tevis Street will cul-de-sac just north of the Frederick Douglass Elementary School. As I mentioned previously, the existing railroad crossing on Tevis Street goes away. So Tevis Street, which is primarily a residential street, will not have all of that through traffic now.

Dan Hoffman ([20:49](#)):

Oh, great.

New Speaker ([20:50](#)):

They'll be able to use Hope Drive. That will be beneficial for those residents.

Amy Simmons ([20:58](#)):

It's a pretty annoying railroad track. [Laughs]

Perry Eisenach ([21:00](#)):

It is. Yeah. That's one of the struggles that we deal with is dealing with CSX and making sure, because they are the only ones that can work on their crossings. Getting them to do things when we think it needs to be done is not always easy.

Amy Simmons ([21:24](#)):

Yeah. You repaired it not too long ago because it used to be really rough, but now we're getting rid of it altogether.

Perry Eisenach ([21:30](#)):

We're rid of it altogether, so that's a good thing.

Dan Hoffman ([21:35](#)):

Well, Perry, thanks for coming in, giving us an update. If our residents have any other questions about this, we do have a couple of really awesome videos on our website that provide some more context and more information. Amy, why don't you tell folks how to find those in the website?

Amy Simmons ([21:52](#)):

If you go to Winchesterva.gov and click the City Projects button, or you can just search for the Hope, Tevis or Valley project and it'll come right up.

Dan Hoffman ([22:03](#)):

Awesome. Well, Perry, thanks for coming in. And, uh, I'm sure I'll see you around soon.

Perry Eisenach ([22:07](#)):

I think he probably will. [Laughs].

Dan Hoffman ([22:09](#)):

Thanks very much.

Perry Eisenach ([22:10](#)):

Thank you.

Dan Hoffman ([22:11](#)):

Perry Eisenach, is I would say, really one of the unsung heroes public services. It's not as, you know, for lack of a better word, glamorous as some other parts of public service. Police officers and their valor gets a lot of attention. Firefighters and their service and putting themselves in harms way gets a lot of attention sometimes. But I tell you during snow removal, those guys are up working overnight, at all hours, away from their families.

Amy Simmons ([22:42](#)):

Twelve-hour shifts.

Dan Hoffman ([22:43](#)):

Twelve-hour shifts. You know, leaving their loved ones at home to shovel. When the City is closed and we're home warm in our houses, and we were working remotely in some cases, those guys are out in the cold shoveling and plowing. And so, that's a great team there.

Amy Simmons ([23:02](#)):

And we appreciate it.

Dan Hoffman ([23:04](#)):

So moving on, we're going to, in a lot of these podcasts, we're going to occasionally touch on some frequently asked questions. Now, if there's stuff you want to hear us discuss, you can actually submit that on the website. Amy tell folks where they can do that.

Amy Simmons ([23:19](#)):

Yeah, it's on our Rouss Review web page. It's Winchesterva.gov/rouss-review. Or you can just search for Rouss Review. There is an online form that you can fill out that just asks one simple question: what do you want to hear or what is your question?

Dan Hoffman ([23:34](#)):

Absolutely. And we'll try to cover as many of them as possible. One of the things we're going to discuss today and kind of under our mail bag or a frequently asked questions topic is about animals. Obviously, humans coexisting with animals in an urban or quasi-urban setting sometimes we step on each other's toes, whether it is deer or geese, or in some cases, bunnies. We get a lot of calls. The City does have a role in all of that. So we had a question just recently about a Blue Heron that was in distress. We'll talk about that in just a second, but for those of you who, uh, if you see an animal and you feel like that animal is injured or in distress, or, poses a danger to the neighborhood, to your neighbors, you should definitely call the police department. Cause we have an animal control officer.

Amy Simmons ([24:40](#)):

We have two, actually.

Dan Hoffman ([24:41](#)):

We have two of them. That's awesome. I think we're going to call one, here in just a second, cause he's going to be able to answer a lot of these questions better than I can. Our animal control officers, or ACOs for short. They do things like injured animals, including feral cats. If a human has been exposed or bitten by an animal, so that possum is hanging out in your backyard for some unknown reason, you decide you want to move them. Maybe don't. Maybe call animal control, let them take care of that. Pets. If your pet has face-to-face interaction with a wild animal, there's a lot of nasty stuff they can pick up. You want to make sure that obviously rabies is the big one we all think about, but there are a lot of other things. Or if there has been a fight between two domesticated animals, two dogs fighting, two cats fighting, a dog and a cat fighting. That's another reason why you might want to call the police department and get some assistance. Now, a lot of times folks ask about deer, general wildlife management. That is really not the animal control officers' responsibilities. They can help you and they can connect to the proper resources, but the state actually is in charge of wildlife management. And there are a lot of rules and laws in place to protect some of the wildlife. I think the one we see most often are deer. In fact, I just, about a month or two ago, got some messages from a concerned citizen

about a herd of deer that I believe were wandering around their neighborhood, crossing over, I believe it was, Bellview. That's something that the City's not equipped to just scoop up a herd of deer and relocate them. That's not ours. In fact, it is illegal for someone to try to capture a deer and hold it. We'll ask Officer Sales in just a second, but, there are rules to protect the wildlife because what we don't want are people really injuring themselves or inadvertently injuring the animals just because they think they might be doing the right thing. Let's try to call Officer Sales real quick.

Officer Sales ([27:12](#)):

This is Officer Sales.

Dan Hoffman ([27:14](#)):

Officer Sales, it's Dan Hoffman. How are you doing?

Officer Sales ([27:15](#)):

Good. How are you?

Dan Hoffman ([27:17](#)):

Good, good to hear from you, buddy.

Officer Sales ([27:20](#)):

Nice to hear from you. What's going on today?

Dan Hoffman ([27:22](#)):

So, I am recording a podcast. It's this thing we do, Rouss Review. I got Amy Simmons here with me, as well.

Officer Sales ([27:33](#)):

Yeah. So that's why I was calling. I was listening for her voice and I heard your voice. [Laughter] Is that Amy? I was like, I didn't know.

Dan Hoffman ([27:40](#)):

Sorry. No, Amy has a much more sweet voice than I do.

Officer Sales ([27:45](#)):

Well, I was expecting that, but [laughter] go ahead.

Dan Hoffman ([27:49](#)):

Um, Officer Sales. You're one of our two animal control officers.

Officer Sales ([27:54](#)):

Yes.

Dan Hoffman ([27:54](#)):

We've been getting a few questions about what the role of an ACO is and what kind of you do and don't do. Could you just take a couple of minutes, maybe give us the distinction between what an ACO does and what the state wildlife entities do.

Officer Sales ([28:14](#)):

In wildlife situations, basically, if you have a wildlife call, like the raccoons, anything wildlife, we always reference Blue Ridge. They're great. And you can call them and they'll tell you if the animals injured, they want it. And it's just wildlife. There're certain wildlife they won't take like bats and deer they won't, but if it's a wildlife question, you can always call Blue Ridge and then they'll take care of that.

Dan Hoffman ([28:39](#)):

What is Blue Ridge?

Officer Sales ([28:39](#)):

Blue Ridge Wildlife Center out in Boyce, Virginia.

Dan Hoffman ([28:43](#)):

Okay. Who runs that? Is that a private agency or is that a state thing?

Officer Sales ([28:48](#)):

No, it's non-profit organization. You can get on their Facebook site and basically look them up and stuff. They're real, real helpful and if you have any questions like about baby birds falling out of the tree and stuff. I've called them before and they were saying, no, you actually put them back in there, put them back in the nest and they'll be fine. There's always that rumor, you leave them there, leave them alone. No, actually they say placed them in the nest and make a makeshift nest. They're real good.

Dan Hoffman ([29:17](#)):

I always thought that you weren't supposed to touch them because the mother would smell you on them. And then they would like kick them out of the nest or something.

Officer Sales ([29:25](#)):

And that's what I was told too. But I had a dove situation where they were like, no, make a nest, put them back in there. And the mother actually came back and took care of them. So, yeah.

Amy Simmons ([29:35](#)):

That's good to know.

Dan Hoffman ([29:36](#)):

I had no idea these old wives tales literally, or, or mother's tale. I'm pretty sure my mom told me that back in the day and no surprise she was wrong. [Laughs]

Officer Sales ([29:46](#)):

So yeah, like I said, they're great. You get their number for any kind of wildlife stuff. And now wildlife in the house, like sometimes possums and raccoons will get in the house. Yes. You call animal control.

We'll get that out of there. Anytime there's a safety issue with the animal, a dog running, a dog or cat that gets hit, just any calls. Bat calls. We get a lot of those things. Any animal thing related, we're going to pretty much deal with or we'll be able to reference somebody to something. Okay?

Dan Hoffman ([30:12](#)):

Now tell me about deer. Cause I know there's deer, I believe are protected by the state, correct?

Officer Sales ([30:18](#)):

Yeah, but here's the thing with the injured deer. Unfortunately, they don't rehabilitate deer. Blue Ridge will rehabilitate a bunch of things. And unfortunately, if it's an injury, a lot of times I'll take videos or pictures and ask Blue Ridge, what do you think? Is this thing going to survive or not? And a lot of times you just have to humanely put them down. You can't rehabilitate them. There's that certain disease that they carry and stuff and they can't rehabilitate them.

Dan Hoffman ([30:47](#)):

But our residents, under no circumstances, should try to capture deer.

Officer Sales ([30:51](#)):

No, definitely not. No, you shouldn't be capturing any wildlife at all. Basically the only wildlife you can pretty much feed here in the city is like birds, wild birds. So, you're not supposed to be feeding groundhogs, raccoons. It's actually gets state law. You're not supposed to feed anything. Only birds.

Dan Hoffman ([31:09](#)):

Only birds. So speaking of birds, out at Jim Barnett Park, I think that was late last week or early this week, there was a Blue Heron out there that got tangled in some fishing line. When someone sees something like that, who should they contact?

Officer Sales ([31:25](#)):

Definitely call us. I mean, basically we're the start for everything here. They should call animal control and any kind of animal that's injured or hurt, that's our thing to get them to the animal hospital and whatnot. Yeah. Call animal control and we'll assess it. If we can help them out or if they're injured, we're going to take them once again, to Blue Ridge Wildlife, or just help them get free if they're free to go, then that's fine.

Dan Hoffman ([31:46](#)):

Awesome. Well, Officer Sales, I appreciate you letting us give you a call and getting some answers to some of these questions. It was good hearing your voice and I look forward to seeing you around out on the street.

Officer Sales ([31:57](#)):

All right. No problem. Thank you, man. Be sure to tell people, any animal concerns, cats, dogs, dogs being left outside. Like I said, the big thing now is with that legislature a year ago changing. If the weather's below 32 degrees, people are to bring their animals in. They're not supposed to be out there. Let them out to go to the restroom, but you need to get them back inside. You know what I mean? So there's a lot of questions that you can call animal control about.

Dan Hoffman ([32:20](#)):

Yeah. For peat's sake folks, do not leave your animals outside during this. I've got somebody in my neighborhood that has a cat that they leave out and that thing basically lives under my porch. So, one of these days, I might be giving you a buzz,, Officer Sales.

Officer Sales ([32:34](#)):

You call and I'll send you in the right direction so I can help you, alright?

Dan Hoffman ([32:39](#)):

[Laughs] Thank you very much, Officer. Take care. You be safe.

Officer Sales ([32:42](#)):

You, too, take care. Alright, bye. [Car engine starting]

Amy Simmons ([32:42](#)):

He's the best.

Dan Hoffman ([32:44](#)):

He is. I've had a chance to chat with him, in fact, I've been meaning to do a ride-along with him just to kind of see, kind of day in the life of an animal control officer. It's always helpful for us to see, for us I mean, particularly for me as City Manager, given the variety of things I have to oversee, spending time with folks out on the front lines, really helps me feel a little more connected to what they're doing and helps them feel a little more connected hopefully to what we're doing here in City Hall. But a lot of that we'll have to wait till after COVID.

Amy Simmons ([33:22](#)):

Well, it's too bad you weren't on the call about three or four years ago when there was a goat running loose in the city.

Dan Hoffman ([33:27](#)):

A goat?

Amy Simmons ([33:28](#)):

Yes. Of all things in the middle of our metropolitan area.

Dan Hoffman ([33:32](#)):

Metropolitan area. [Laughing] Yes. The great...

Amy Simmons ([33:34](#)):

That's what they call us, right?

Dan Hoffman ([33:34](#)):

The great metropolis of Winchester. We're straight up Gotham. I'm sure.

Amy Simmons ([33:38](#)):

But not a place for goats.

Dan Hoffman ([33:39](#)):

No, no. In fact, there's a lot of debate just about whether or not we should have chickens right in the city. That's going to be coming up on our Planning and Economic Development Committee later this month. Discussing chickens, whether or not people should be allowed to keep chickens. There are very strong opinions on both sides of that one. So it should be a good discussion. All right. Well, that just about does it for us. Uh, but before we wrap up, Amy real quick, give us, a few tidbits. A few hot tips on what's coming up in the next couple of weeks.

Amy Simmons ([34:16](#)):

Yeah, sure. We've got a couple of programs coming up at the park. So if you love volleyball, they have a We Love Volleyball Hat Tournament, and registration is coming up on February 13th. You have to be at least 18 years old to play. And they also have their youth basketball leagues coming up for ages nine to 10 and 11 to 13. My registration is coming up on the 15th. So register now. Also, next month, I'm very excited about this as a baseball and softball fan. My daughter plays softball. She's slightly obsessed. The park has the new event on March 27th. It's a Major League Baseball Junior Home Run Derby. It's free to participate for ages 12 and under and 14 and under. And, all you gotta do is preregister.

Dan Hoffman ([34:55](#)):

That's awesome.

Amy Simmons ([34:56](#)):

I can't wait for that one. Also, our parking garages are you going to get some new technology. Hopefully it be easier to exit and enter coming up soon for monthly and hourly parkers. We will be closed because it's Presidents' Day on the 15th. So WinTran routes we canceled, the courts will be closed and our Rec Center will also be closed. And then, we are celebrating black history month. It's February, right? So we are hosting or posting some videos on our social media pages and our new webpage for black history. Go there and learn about Ruth Jackson, Robert Orrick, Douglas School and Spottswood Poles this month.

Dan Hoffman ([35:34](#)):

That's awesome. I saw the Ruth Jackson one. It was really done. It's a very nice video. Good job.

Amy Simmons ([35:40](#)):

Thank you. That's it. That's all I have.

Dan Hoffman ([35:42](#)):

Well, for Amy and myself and everybody here at City Hall, thanks for listening. We'll be back in a couple of weeks. Make sure if you have anything you want us to discuss to visit the website and in the meantime, stay safe, stay warm.

Outro ([35:56](#)):

[Soft music]