

City of Alexandria, Virginia
BUDGET AND FISCAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BFAAC)

Monthly Meeting

August 19, 2025

Alexandria City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria VA 22314
Sister Cities Conference Room #1101

Summary Minutes

Committee Members Present:

Michelle Millben (Vice Chair), John Ruthinoski (Secretary), Michael de la Guardia, Nancy Drane, Erica Kaster, Randall Williams.

Excused/Absent:

Melinda Lyle, David Millard, Lauren O'Brien, Mark Tonsetic

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Staff:

Morgan Routt, Meghan McGrane

Agenda:

1. **Call to Order: Vice Chair Millben** called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Approval of the Minutes of the May 20, 2025, meeting:** A motion was made by **Drane** and seconded by **Williams** to approve the minutes of the May 20th meeting with the following correction: under Other Business, the person the City Manager introduced to Vice Chair Millben was Deputy City Manager Alethea Predeoux. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote.
3. **BFAAC Elections** – Following a call for nominations:
 - **Vice Chair Millben** nominated **Ruthinoski** for Vice Chair
 - **Ruthinoski** nominated **Vice Chair Millben** for Chair
 - **Drane** and **Williams** expressed willingness to serve as Secretary.

The election will be held at the September BFAAC meeting

4. **BFAAC Workplan Items: Memo #01 – FY 2027 Workplan Vice Chair Millben** reminded BFAAC members that the videos of the Budget 101 sessions were not of high enough quality to post and that **Williams** had suggested creating short, 60-90 second, videos ("BFAAC Budget Bites") on individual topics for the general public and volunteered to create an example video over the summer. **Williams** reported that he had two ideas for topics – a brief introduction to the series and a general video about the budget. The sample videos are currently under development but not ready to be shared at this time. Vice Chair Millben stated that she does not know the future of this project at this time.

Vice Chair Millben asked that a review of the BFAAC Charter be added to the agenda for the September BFAAC meeting.

In preparation for the FY 2027 Workplan Memo discussion, **Drane** asked to see the list of questions raised by City Council after the BFAAC presentation at the FY 2026 Budget Work Session. **Vice Chair Millben** reviewed the issues BFAAC raised after the meeting, including BFAAC seeking clarity about which topics raised by Council were formal requests for BFAAC. To that end, she noted BFAAC was looking to establish a feedback loop to ensure that BFAAC and Council were in agreement about what was being asked of BFAAC. **Drane** asked how the BFAAC could communicate its understanding of the Council's direction. **Routt** suggested putting the BFAAC's understanding in writing. **Ruthinoski** added that doing so would give the BFAAC an opportunity to clarify which items are a priority for Council and which the BFAAC believed it might not be possible to complete with the time and resources available.

Drane suggested the FY 2027 Workplan Memo should begin with BFAAC's recommendations regarding this process. The second part of the memo should be what BFAAC plans to do this year. She also stated that November was too long to wait to get Council's feedback on BFAAC's Workplan. She suggested that BFAAC come to a consensus on the Workplan in September and reach out individually to Council members for feedback and finalize the Workplan in October. **Vice Chair Millben** asked **McGrane** to send the list of items discussed at the Spring Budget Work Session to BFAAC members.

Routt reviewed the purpose of the Fall Budget Retreat for new BFAAC members. It is an opportunity to review the forecast for the upcoming year and as well as to outline the projected gap between needs and resources. It is not an opportunity for deep dives into one subject, although Council sometimes asks for a presentation on a topic likely to be an issue in the upcoming budget (e.g. Housing or Human Services).

Ruthinoski reminded the BFAAC of Mayor Gaskins's request for assistance on a framework for how to make decisions in a difficult budget year. **McGrane** added the focus for the Council is twofold: 1) How do you make decisions and 2) How to communicate decisions to the public.

5. **Other Business: ACPS Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Meeting.** **Drane** reviewed the history of the BFAAC and BAC's collaboration on memos to Council. A topic is usually agreed upon and staff from the School Board usually take responsibility for drafting the memo. **Drane** offered to reach out to the School Board Chair and Vice Chair to begin that process. She added that there is a monthly City/Schools Subcommittee consisting of members of both Council and the School Board that could be an opportunity to explore potential topics. **Drane** will send BFAAC members a list of the topics from past joint BFAAC/BAC memos.
6. **OMB Report:** **Routt** reported that the next City/Schools Subcommittee is September 29th and will focus on DASH. The next meeting on the CIP and the Long-Range Strategic Budget Retreat will be held on October 7th, at 5:30 with remote participation available if BFAAC members are interested. The Fall Budget Retreat is tentatively scheduled for November 1st.

McGrane reported that staff is still looking for space for BFAAC meetings once City Hall renovations begin in January, OMB will be relocating to Tavern Square, but there is no meeting space available there. The main limitation is the availability of AV equipment. Other locations, such as libraries, would close before the meetings end. Lee Center is a possibility, but the meetings would need to end by 8:30. There was no objection to the suggestion to possibly move the start time back to 6:30 PM if that solution were to be chosen.

7. **BFAAC Representatives.** Vice Chair **Millben** confirmed that **Williams** volunteered to serve on the Stormwater Utility and Flood Mitigation Advisory Group and **Tonsetic** volunteered as BFAAC's representative on the Commission on Information Technology
8. **Adjournment:** **Drane** moved the meeting to be adjourned. **Ruthinoski** seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.
9. **Upcoming Meetings/Significant Dates:**
 - BFAAC Regular Meeting - September 16, 2025 – 7:00 PM
 - BFAAC Regular Meeting - October 21, 2025 – 7:00 PM
 - BFAAC Regular Meeting - November 18, 2025 – 7:00 PM
 - BFAAC Regular Meeting - December 16, 2025 – 7:00 PM
 - BFAAC Regular Meeting - January 20, 2026 – 7:00 PM
 - BFAAC Regular Meeting - February 17, 2026 – 7:00 PM
 - BFAAC Regular Meeting - March 17, 2025 – 7:00 PM
 - BFAAC Regular Meeting - April 21, 2025 – 7:00 PM
 - BFAAC Regular Meeting - May19, 2025 – 7:00 PM