

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

**Monthly Meeting**

March 17, 2026

Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center, Room #4  
1108 Jefferson Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

**Summary Minutes**

**Committee Members Present:** John Ruthinoski, Mayor Gaskins Designee (Chair); Randall Williams, Vice Mayor Bagley Designee (Vice Chair); Sonya Day, Citizen-at-Large; Erica Kaster, Citizen-at-Large; Jake Truex, Chamber of Commerce Designee (Virtual)

**Absent:** Nancy Drane, School Board Designee (Secretary); Mindy Lyle, Councilmember Elnoubi Designee; Lester Simpson, Councilmember Greene Designee; Mark Tonsetic, Citizen-at-Large

**Staff Present:** Morgan Routt, Director of the City of Alexandria Office of Management and Budget (Virtual); Meghan McGrane, Budget Management Analyst

**Guest:** None

1. **Call to Order: Chair Ruthinoski** called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
2. **Approval of the Minutes of the March 10, 2026 Meeting: Truex** made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2026 meeting, seconded by **Williams**. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote of those present.
3. **Discussion of BFAAC Budget Memo**

**Ruthinoski** turned to the draft BFAAC budget memo as previously circulated for comment and feedback.

He began with the section on legislative advocacy and state funding. BFAAC's primary message is to acknowledge that enhanced state advocacy on funding issues is part of the Council's legislative package, urge that to be continued, and convey our hope to see increased coordination with regional partners to strengthen the message. **Routt** shared that legislators in Northern Virginia are jointly advocating in Richmond and that there has been discussion among local City/County officials to promote a wider range of support for these budget-related priorities.

**Ruthinoski** also suggested an emphasis on a year-long approach to this topic so that this issue is more broadly discussed. **Williams** also suggested we flag the opportunity for a more coordinated effort to calculate and share the aggregated extra costs the City incurs for state-funded positions.

He also suggested that we increase emphasis on the point that there is an imbalance between what the state and what the City provides and this needs to be a bigger focal point in the future. **McGrane** suggested that we could develop clearer communication about what we provide above what the state thinks is appropriate and how that translates into dollars. **Ruthinoski** suggested this could be a future BFAAC work product.

**Ruthinoski** then turned to other sections of the draft memo. Generally, he suggested re-ordering points to put the managing community expectations and improving community understanding of capital investments closer to each other. He also suggested that we feature the chart with blue bars conveying how long we are paying for projects in the capital investment section.

**Ruthinoski** then asked BFAAC members present if BFAAC should support the City Manager's recommendation that any additional revenue through a tax increase should go towards paying down debt. There were no objections among those present.

As for the budget tradeoffs discussion, **Ruthinoski** is still making some revisions to the draft. He shared that **Drane** suggested some additional discussion of how Council and the City might go about better educating the public on these topics. **Ruthinoski** suggested highlighting an excellent video on the City's website on budget development and suggesting that the City expand efforts like that to incorporate the tradeoff topics in our memo. He also suggested that Council identify budget-related concepts that Council and the City could communicate in multiple ways, emphasizing likelihood of public education and understanding through repetition.

As for the preview of BFAAC's budget framework memo, **Ruthinoski** suggested that he would condense the one-page document created by **Truex** and would appreciate additional suggestions from the AI group, particularly on reworking the bullet to mention the importance of leveraging AI and new technologies and including some examples.

**Ruthinoski** shared that he would work on finalizing the memo by the end of the week for submission to the Council. He asked BFAAC members to share any additional bullet points by close of business on Thursday. As for the presentation itself, **Ruthinoski** will only be able to participate remotely, so **Williams** will lead the in-person presentation. **Routt** will get a sense of BFAAC's placement on the agenda and time allocation – probably somewhere between 20-30 minutes.

After the Council work session, BFAAC can finalize the memo and work on completing it in the months of April and May. We will also wait to get feedback from Council on the two memos we suggested in our most recent memo: ACPS funding approach and City debt policy.

#### **4. Other Updates and Reports**

**Routt** provided an update on the Council's budget deliberations. He shared that there has been considerable discussion in the public safety portfolio, with conversation around how we handle the jail and navigating vacancies among police officers and parking payment collectors. Council

was supposed to also discuss the livable housing portfolio last evening, but that discussion was postponed. **Routt** also shared that Council has asked the budget team to cost out some potential changes to the City Manager’s proposed budget. Those will be shared with Council in due course.

**Williams** shared that he continues to attend the City’s IT Commission meetings. One important conversation happening is the City’s use of FLOCK license readers and related security concerns. Other topics included the snow/ice event’s impact on IT in the City and a discussion of how the City uses GIS technology. **Ruthinoski** suggested raising the City’s use of AI in a future meeting to learn more.

5. **Adjournment:** A motion was made by **Williams** and seconded by **Day** to adjourn the meeting. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was then adjourned.

**Upcoming Meeting(s) / Important Dates:**

<i><b>Event</b></i>	<i><b>Date/Time</b></i>	<i><b>Location</b></i>	<i><b>Status</b></i>
City Council FY27 Budget Work Session	Wednesday, Mar 25, 2026 –7:00pm	Del Pepper Community Resource Center	<i>Noticed</i>
BFAAC Regular Meeting	Tuesday, Apr 14, 2026 – 6:30pm	Lee Center, Conference Rm #4	<i>Noticed</i>
BFAAC Regular Meeting	Tuesday, May 19, 2026 – 6:30pm	Lee Center, Conference Rm #4	<i>Noticed</i>

Note: Calendar items in ***bold and italic*** have changed or been added since the previous month’s agenda.