



FY26 BUDGET MEMO # 10

DATE: April 28, 2025

TO: The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Bryan D. Foster, City Manager

FROM: Juan Martinez, Chief Financial Officer/Assistant City Manager
Melanie Zipp, Acting Deputy City Manager

SUBJECT: Answers to Councilmember McQuillen's FY26 Budget Request from April 21, 2025 (emailed)

Councilmember McQuillen's April 21, 2025 Email:

I've been going through the budget questions and responses and I have a few Parks and Recreation specific questions I'd appreciate more detail on:

1. **Question:** Restroom Alternatives – I recall some discussion when I was on PRAB, around potential options or alternatives to the Throne bathrooms and was wondering if any data or information was ever collected on the City potentially owning its own portable bathrooms that could be moved and relocated for events or as needed?

Answer: We are on our second procurement process for the smart restrooms. The last bid process took place in 2024. During that time we reached out to several contractors providing similar facilities. Some did offer the opportunity to purchase the units. However, once it was purchased, the city was responsible for the maintenance, cleaning, and pumping/filling of the units. Currently our monthly rental with Throne covers a live operator monitoring the units, cleaning every 50 uses, and full coverage of maintenance, repair, and any liability.

The Throne units are more expensive when compared with a port-a-john. However, the units are more comparable to our brick and mortar facilities. In addition to the initial cost of construction, those units require utilities, cleaning, and regular maintenance. These restrooms are intended as a stop gap measure until additional public restroom facilities can be built within the City. For example once the Old Town Hall renovation is complete that space will have a public restroom and we will remove the Throne unit.

2. **Question:** Asian Festival – In reviewing past budgets, I believe there was originally an agreement in place for the Asian Festival to reimburse the City \$20,000. Could someone clarify what happened with that arrangement, and whether it would be feasible to return to that model moving forward?

Answer: Stacey and I were not here when the Asian Festival started; however, from what we understand the festival did reimburse the City for services provided during the first year of the festival. Following that year the City agreed to provide those services without reimbursement. We do not have access to the Festival's financials and would not be able to speak to their current ability to reimburse the City. Tina Disch (executivedirector@oldtownfairfax.org) is the Executive Director of the OTFBA and may be able to share that information.

3. **Question:** Chocolate Lovers Festival Revenue – Do we receive any vendor revenue from the Chocolate Lovers Festival? I didn't see any listed in the budget breakdown.

Answer: This event is a fundraiser for the IDCC (Independence Day Celebration Committee). They collect the vendor fees and those fees the City's 4th of July Celebration. The IDCC uses the funds to pay for special entertainment at the Parade and the Evening Show band. Additionally, they give back 15% of the proceeds from Chocolate Lovers to support community grants. The grants will be given out at this week's Council meeting.

4. **Question:** Kitty Poser Memorial Garden – Could you provide more information about the \$10,000 fee associated with the Kitty Poser Memorial Garden?

Answer: This garden is located behind the Ratcliffe Allison House which is the small stone house operated by Historic Resources located behind Old Town Hall. This historic garden had been maintained by a local volunteer group for years. However, most of its members are in their 80's and attempts to recruit new volunteers have been unsuccessful. The historic nature of the garden requires a great deal of physical labor. To keep the space looking it's best we have engaged a local landscaping contractor to assist with the weeding, mulching, planting, and maintenance of the space. We split this cost with Historic Resources. Our portion is approximately \$10,000. Our budget reduction would included transitioning the garden to a more manageable design that would not require an outside contractor.

5. **Question:** Weekend Trash Removal – Could you please provide more detail regarding the \$20,000 allocated for weekend trash removal? Is this related to events, or does it cover other areas as well?

Answer: During high use seasons we pick up trash at the parks 7 days a week. Depending on the current workload this often requires using overtime. This reduction proposed no longer using overtime and only completing weekend trash removal when

standard hours are available. This would save funds but might also effect weekend rental revenue and park aesthetics. Weekends tend to be our highest trash generating times.

6. **Question:** Fishing Derby – What exactly is the Fishing Derby, and why was there no event this year?

Answer: This popular event has been suspended the last few years as it takes place at Ashby Pond. After the pond is dredged, the event is slated to resume. It is a kids fishing derby at Ashby Pond. The pond had become too shallow to support fish in the last few years.

7. **Question:** Holiday Market – Would reducing the Holiday Market to one weekend help decrease expenses, or is it continuing to grow in a way that supports keeping the current structure? I recall from my time on PRAB, that interest and participation seemed to be increasing each year.

Answer: Reducing the Market to a single weekend would reduce our staffing costs. The primary cost drivers are staff overtime for the set-up, staffing, and tear down of the market. The drive behind having two weekends has been to create a "holiday feel" downtown and encourage holiday shopping in the historic downtown. The Market continues to be more and more popular. Two years ago the event expanded to include Old Town Hall. Vendor applications continue to be quite high.