



City of Roanoke, Virginia
**CITY COUNCIL
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

January 5, 2026
2:00 PM
City Council Chamber
215 Church Avenue, SW

AGENDA

The City of Roanoke is a safe, caring and economically vibrant community in which to live, learn, work, play and prosper. A vibrant urban center with strong neighborhoods set amongst the spectacular beauty of Virginia's Blue Ridge.

NOTICE:

City Council meetings will be televised live and replayed on RVTV Channel 3 on Thursdays at 7:00 pm, and Saturdays from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm; and video streamed through YouTube Live at youtube.com/RoanokeVa. Council meetings are offered with closed captioning for the deaf or hard of hearing.

1. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL. Council Member Sanchez-Jones was absent.

The Invocation was delivered by Mayor Joseph L. Cobb.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Mayor Cobb.

Welcome

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING:

Adoption of the meeting schedule for Roanoke City Council commencing January 1, 2026, and terminating December 31, 2026.

Adopted Resolution No. 43333-010526. (6-0)

2. PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Recognition of City employees who achieved 30, 35 and 45 years of service in the calendar year 2025.

Mayor Cobb and Vice-Mayor McGuire recognized tenured employees and presented City gifts.

Mayor Cobb advised that, going forward, the 2:00 pm meeting would begin with the Council Members providing "shout-outs" or announcing community events recently attended. The Council Members made the following announcements:

Council Member Powers "shouted-out" the City department's for their hard work in 2025 and exclaimed she was looking forward to 2026 to accomplish great things.

Council Member Volosin congratulated the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission and Executive Director Mike Stewart on the new flight from Roanoke to Dallas, Texas beginning in June, and acknowledged the one-year anniversary of the Council Members.

Council Member Nash "shouted-out" the NAACP Roanoke Branch for their Jubilee Day event held on January 1 in which he was the keynote speaker. He explained that Jubilee Day celebrates the day the Emancipation Proclamation was signed.

Vice-Mayor McGuire "shouted-out" the City workers who keep the City running over the holidays, as well as the city's health clinic. He also welcomed city students back to school on January 5.

Council Member Hagen "shouted-out" all employees who worked over the holidays, such as Fire-EMS and the Police department.

Mayor Cobb "shouted-out" the most recent Fire-EMS graduating class, a group of folks who walked to Mill Mountain Star for a photo and encouraged all citizens to take care of one another.

3. HEARING OF CITIZENS UPON PUBLIC MATTERS:

The City Council sets this time as a priority for citizens to be heard. All matters will be referred to the City Manager for response, recommendation or report to the Council, as he may deem appropriate.

Airka Ortiz, appeared before the Council and voiced concerns with government processes and the lack of assistance.

Jeremy Thomas, appeared before the Council and voiced concerns with the city's parking situation and opposition of the proposed casino.

4. CONSENT AGENDA: APPROVED, AS AMENDED (6-0)

C-1. A communication from Mayor Joseph L. Cobb requesting that City Council convene in a closed meeting to discuss the selection of a City Attorney for a term beginning March 1, 2026, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1), Code of Virginia, (1950), as amended.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Concurred in the request.

C-2. A communication from the City Attorney requesting that City Council convene in a closed meeting to consult with legal counsel regarding a certain legal matter requiring the provision of legal advice by the City Attorney concerning contract obligations involving a City-owned facility in the Central part of the City of Roanoke, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(8) Code of Virginia, (1950), as amended.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Concurred in the request.

- C-3.** A communication from the City Attorney requesting that City Council convene in a closed meeting to discuss the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(29), Code of Virginia, (1950), as amended.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Concurred in the request.**

- C-4.** A communication from the City Attorney requesting that City Council convene in a closed meeting to consult with legal counsel regarding a certain legal matter requiring the provision of legal advice by the City Attorney concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the Northwest area of the City of Roanoke, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(5), Code of Virginia, (1950), as amended.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Concurred in the request.**

- C-5.** A communication from the City Attorney requesting that City Council convene in a closed meeting to discuss a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the region, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(5), Code of Virginia, (1950), as amended.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Concurred in the request.**

- C-6.** A communication from the City Attorney requesting that City Council convene in a closed meeting to consult with legal counsel regarding a certain legal matter requiring the provision of legal advice by outside legal counsel involving the legal standards for financing of the schools, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(8), Code of Virginia, (1950), as amended.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Concurred in the request.**

- C-7.** Authorize the scheduling of a public hearing to be held on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 7:00 pm, or at such time as the matter may be heard, or at such other date and time as determined by the City Manager, to receive public comment regarding the proposed lease of a portion of City-owned property in the Center in the Square Parking Garage, located at 11 Campbell Avenue SE, Roanoke, Virginia, to The Orvis Company, Inc., for retail space in the Center in the Square Parking Garage.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Concurred in the request.**

- C-8.** A communication from Mayor Joseph L. Cobb recommending certain committee assignments for the Members of City Council.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Received and filed.**

- C-9.** Adoption of the Calendar of Events for Budget Development Activities for FY 2026–2027.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Received and filed.**

- C-10.** Report of qualification of Yvonne Johnson as a member of the Architectural Review Board to replace Byron Dickson for a term of office ending October 1, 2029.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Received and filed.**

- C-11. A communication from the City Attorney requesting that Council convene in a closed meeting to discuss a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the central part of the City, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(5), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended; and to discuss the disposition and/or lease of publicly held real property in the central part of the City, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the City, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(3), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.**

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Concurred in the request.**

REGULAR AGENDA:

- 5. PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.**
6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS: None.
7. REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS AND THE CITY MANAGER:

- 1. City Manager:**

BRIEFING:

November Monthly Budget Report - 15 minutes

ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR ACTION:

- a. Acceptance and Appropriation for the VSTOP Grant.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43334-010526. (6-0)**

COMMENTS OF THE CITY MANAGER.

The City Manager shared the following comments:

In response to multiple tragic DUI accidents in 2025, Community Engagement launched the **“DUI Campaign: Drive Sober, Roanoke”** initiative. Ahead of the holiday season, two testimonial videos were released featuring Roanoke mothers who lost daughters to drunk driving, one produced in English with Spanish subtitles and the other in Spanish with English subtitles. The emotional messaging highlighted the dangers of impaired driving during a time associated with increased alcohol use. While DUI prevention messaging was also shared in the spring and fall, this holiday campaign generated the greatest level of attention and engagement. Within 24 hours, the videos received a combined 60,000 views across Facebook and Instagram, reflecting strong engagement and broad community impact. Beyond the numbers, this campaign mattered because it was

rooted in real loss within our community. Working with Council Member Sanchez-Jones, staff intentionally centered the voices of Roanoke mothers, recognizing that personal stories resonate more deeply than statistics and make the consequences of impaired driving real. Producing the videos in both English and Spanish was a deliberate choice to ensure the message was accessible, inclusive, and culturally respectful. The strong early engagement shows that people stopped, listened, and shared, demonstrating the power of authentic, community-driven messaging. Most importantly, the campaign avoided shaming and instead focused on empathy, accountability, and the lasting impact a single decision can have on families, reinforcing the importance of prevention during a high-risk season.

2. CITY ATTORNEY:

BRIEFING:

Urban Center Partial Real Estate Tax Exemption Program - 15 minutes

3. DIRECTOR OF REAL ESTATE VALUATION:

BRIEFING:

Real Estate Reassessment Briefing - 15 minutes

8. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: None.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

10. INTRODUCTION AND CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS: None.

11. MOTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

1. Inquiries and/or comments by the Mayor and Members of City Council.
Mayor Cobb requested a briefing on PARK Roanoke and city-owned parking facilities. The City Manager advised that the briefing would be added to the January 20, Council meeting.
2. Vacancies on certain authorities, boards, commissions and committees appointed by Council. **None.**

12. RECESSED FOR CLOSED MEETING - 3:14 pm

13. RECONVENED - 7:04 pm

Certification of Closed Meeting. (6-0)

ADJOURNED - 7:06 pm