

VILLAGE OF ALEXANDRIA SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

March 3, 2026

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Sean Barnes at 6:01pm.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Council Members Present: Sarah Chambers
Herb Lower
Mitch Peters
Spencer Giese
Cari Meng
Lyle Simpson

Village Representation Present: Mayor Sean Barnes
Administrator Kendra Borrer
Zoning Inspector Jacob Brooks (6:58)
Fiscal Officer Carol Gissingner
Solicitor David Ball (6:45pm)
Police Chief Dan Bunting

Citizens Present: Kelly Bunting, Claire Lewis, Terry Ellis & Margo Ellis

NEW BUSINESS

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss items related to Temporary & Permanent Appropriations for 2026.

Review of appropriations

Mayor Barnes opened up with a statement about what we would like to see financially moving forward to be more fiscally responsible.

Discussion:

Administrator Borrer reviewed Job Descriptions vs hours worked per month and pay for each position, reviewed water usage cost due to leaks \$13,000 not including having Granville St sewer jetted and the storm drains on Granville St cleaned as well as the water main repairs and reviewed road paving project & cost estimated at \$24,000 for Church St only.

Mayor Barnes stated memberships to MORPC \$1250 and LCATS \$3300 per year. Planning Commission is asking for \$5550 for total of \$6,000

Councilman Peters mentioned he does CAD work

The village currently does not have employees to handle regular maintenance and the keeping of minutes during council meetings

Councilman Peters suggested getting rid of Water Department to cut costs or to increase water payments to cover Jack's salary increase.

He was advised that we cannot do that because the water and sewer are non-profit.

The council also considered how much money would be needed to run the police department for the upcoming year.

Discussed Police Dept operating funds should be 1/3 of budget but can we run on \$47,650, Mayor reiterated Chief Buntings comment at the Dec 30th meeting to disband police dept. if it would benefit the village. Chief once again offered to take a pay cut to his 2023 salary of \$25,200 if that would help the village but would not comment on what he had said at the previous meeting in December.

Councilman Peters stated the public wanted and voted for the police department

Mayor Barnes stated that Council is who voted in the Police Department not the residents and asked Councilman Peter's how he gauges the return on investment. Typically, municipalities set 1/3 of their budget for police and in

our case that would be \$60,000. If you look at our appropriations, we just can't do that and take care of services for the village like paving the roads.

Councilman Peters retorted with the question "What is your return for investment for being a Tree City?" which the village was awarded Tree City certification.

Mayor Barnes replied that Tree City cost is \$2 per resident which is approximately \$1000 and opens the village up for additional grants as opposed to over \$60,000 or the recently discussed \$47,650 for the police department.

Councilman Peters said to Mayor Barnes "That's your opinion, though. You're not God here", in a heated tone.

Mayor Barnes responded "Wow, I'm surprised you're taking it to that place," I find that insulting, because I don't carry that kind of energy."

Chief Bunting also commented on the potential dissolving of the police department. "I took an 18% salary decrease. So, if you took an 18% salary decrease from all the other positions, that might save the village some money."

Mayor Barnes stated, "but you also said in December that if we can't afford the police department, we should just dissolve it."

Chief Bunting asked "Do you want to own that? You want to let everybody in the village know that you cut the police department?"

Mayor Barnes stated, "If we are in a place where we can't do everything, we've got to cut,"

Chief Bunting stated "If you want to put your name on that, that you gutted the police department, then I'm all for it. I'll resign. But you need to own up to it,"

Mayor Barnes reiterated "I'm just repeating your words. You made that statement. You've also made it to people in public, too. So it's out there,"

Chief Bunting retorted with "Right, and you've lost every other employee, just about, so why not lose another one?"

Councilwoman Meng broke in and asked "Is this productive? Let's move on, as a village, our job is to provide services to residents, maintenance is a service, police is a service. What I will say is that the majority of people who wake up Monday through Sunday, 365 days a year in this community, rely more on the services provided by maintenance. We are a low-incident community, knock on wood, I'm grateful for that. I do think if our residents could be polled right now, and it was water service versus police in town, they would possibly, probably, value things more like, 'Does your water turn on?' and 'Do you have all the services you need in town provided by maintenance?'"

Councilman Giese stated "If our citizens want more services, they're going to have to pass the tax increase that was already lost on a tie, and if there's not a wake-up call from that, they're going to see reduced services in future years because we cannot continue to operate when costs go up with the same money coming in. It's expensive to be a village, expensive to exist."

Administrator Borrer conferred with David Ball at this time to verify adjourning the special meeting and moving into the regular session due to other business that still needed to be discussed.

David Ball conferred that yes now would be a good time to adjourn the special meeting.

Adjournment

There was no more business to come from Council.

Councilman Peters made a motion, seconded by Councilman Simpson to adjourn the council meeting. All voted in favor; the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 8:48p.m.

Respectfully submitted, (March 17, 2026)


Kendra Borrer, Administrator

Certified Sean Barnes
Sean Barnes, Mayor/Chairperson

Date 3/17/2026
Approved: 03/17/2026