



Office of the Town Manager
Christopher Martino

Warrenton Town Council
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Eric Gagnon, Ward 5
Paul Mooney, At Large
David McGuire, At Large

STAFF REPORT

Council Meeting Date:	June 9, 2026
Agenda Title:	Proposed Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Calendar
Requested Action:	Consideration of the Fiscal Year 2028 Budget Calendar
Department / Agency Lead:	Finance and Procurement
Staff Lead:	Stephanie Miller, Director of Finance and Procurement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town Council has expressed a desire to accelerate the timeline for the annual budget process to align the adoption of property tax rates with the adoption of the budget. Calendar year property tax rates must be adopted no later than May 14th each year according to the Town Code. This allows time for processing first installment real estate tax bills to meet the June 15th due date.

BACKGROUND

The Code of Virginia and the Code of the Town of Warrenton provide deadlines for certain actions related to the proposal and adoption of the Town's annual budget. These are:

Date	Action	Reference
No later than April 1	Delivery of proposed budget to governing body	Virginia Code § 15.2-2503
No later than May 14	Adoption of calendar year tax rates	Town Code Sec. 15-1
7 days prior to budget adoption	Public hearing on the proposed budget	Virginia Code § 15.2-2506
No later than July 1	Adoption of the budget	Virginia Code § 15.2-2503

The Town Code requires adoption of the calendar year tax rates by May 14th due to the billing cycle for real estate taxes. The first installment is due on June 15th, and bills must be mailed to taxpayers no later than 14 days prior to the due date (Virginia Code § 58.1-3912). A later adoption of the tax rates would not meet this Code requirement.

Council desires to receive the proposed budget earlier and to adopt the calendar year tax rates and the budget at the same time. Staff will work towards delivering the budget to the Council by March 1st with a public hearing in April, allowing for budget adoption when the calendar year tax

rates are set in May. However, there are several changes currently underway that may impact the timeline for the next fiscal cycle. These are:

1. **Town Manager:** The annual budget is an important planning process that impacts operations and capital investment. With the hiring of a new Town Manager, it is recommended to allow the new Manager time to gain familiarity with the Town and to evaluate the budget.
2. **New ERP System:** The Town is in the process of implementing the budget module of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software. The initial setup of the budget document in the system requires significant time. This phase of implementation begins in September 2026 and may pose a challenge in moving to the March 1st delivery date for the FY28 budget cycle.

As an interim measure, it is recommended that the Council consider the timeline shown on the next page. The blue box highlights some of the changes to this calendar, including:

- A Budget Development Progress Briefing will be added to the March meeting. This will highlight key elements in the FY28 budget. Topics may be chosen for subsequent budget work sessions at this time.
- The initial budget work session will be held at the April Council meeting.
- A second meeting will be planned in April for the budget public hearing. Budget work session #2 will be planned immediately prior to the public hearing.
- A third budget work session will be held the morning of the May Council meeting.
- The adoption of the budget, CIP, and tax rates will occur on the evening of the May meeting.

The benefits that this schedule provides include:

- A new Budget Development Progress Briefing prior to the delivery of the proposed budget;
- Three planned budget work sessions; and
- Alignment of the adoption of the budget with the setting of tax rates.

Recommended Timeline

FISCAL YEAR 2028 BUDGET CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT
September 2026	Budget requests made available to Town Departments and Outside Agencies.
November 2026	Town Department budget requests due to the Finance Department.
December 2026	Outside Organization funding requests due to the Finance Department.
December 2026	Finance Director and Budget Manager meet with Town Manager to provide an overview of the compiled budget
December - February 2027	Town Manager meets with each Town Department to review budget requests. The Town Manager works with the Finance Director and Budget Manager to draft the proposed budget.
January 2027	Planning Commission work session to review the draft capital improvement plan (CIP) for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. <i>As needed if new projects are added.</i>
February 2027	Planning Commission public hearing on the draft capital improvement plan. <i>As needed if new projects are added.</i>
March 9, 2027	Budget Development Progress Briefing provided to Town Council
April 1, 2027	Delivery of the Town Manager's proposed budget to the Town Council.
April 13, 2027	Town Council budget work session #1
April 27, 2027	- Town Council budget work session #2 - Public Hearing on the Fiscal Year 2028 Proposed Budget and 2028 - 2033 Capital Improvement Plan
May 11, 2027	- Town Council budget work session #3 - Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2028 Budget, the 2028-2033 Capital Improvement Plan, and tax rates for the tax year beginning January 1, 2027
July 1, 2027	Beginning of Fiscal Year 2028

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

No action is necessary at this time. Staff recommends that Council consider following the budget calendar as noted herein. The date of the second April meeting may be adopted as part of the Town Council's organizational meeting in January 2027.

Service Level/Collaborative Impact

The adoption of the budget with the calendar year tax rates will enhance clarity around the budget process.

Policy Direction/Warrenton Plan 2040

This action will support Plan Warrenton 2040 by promoting greater efficiency and an aligned budget process.

Legal Impact

The second April meeting should be set as part of the Town Council's organizational meeting in January 2027. The public hearing advertisement will be moved to accommodate the requirements of Virginia Code.

Fiscal Impact

There is no additional cost associated with advancing the public hearing or the adoption of the budget.

ATTACHMENTS

None