



# Eastside Express

Circulation 630 Households

Volume 31 No. 5&6

◆ River Forrest Shores ◆ Wayside Manor ◆ Easton Place Civic League

## Check out our new website, [eastsidecivicleague.org](http://eastsidecivicleague.org)!

The River Forrest Shores/Wayside Manor/Easton Place Civic League has launched its new website, [eastsidecivicleague.org](http://eastsidecivicleague.org). If you haven't taken the time to visit it yet, please do so soon as we are sure it will prove to be a valuable resource for our community.

Here is a brief overview of what [eastsidecivicleague.org](http://eastsidecivicleague.org) has to offer:

- You can join or renew your membership online.
- You can find links to important information and resources that residents typically need. For example, do you want to file a service request with Norfolk Cares; report an electrical outage to Dominion Power; or request a bulk trash pick? If so, just visit our Resources page and you will find all this information and even more there.
- Need to get in touch with the civic league to talk about a community issue? Just fill out the contact form and let us know what is on your mind.
- Are you interested in volunteering? Those opportunities are posted.
- Want to find an article in a certain issue of our newsletter, *The Eastside Express*? You can download back issues.

(Continued on page 2)

## Norfolk Sheriff Joe Baron to speak at May 13 meeting

Norfolk Sheriff Joe Baron will be the guest speaker for the civic league's Monday, May 13 meeting. He will advise attendees on the various scams now circulating in Hampton Roads and how to avoid them. He will also give residents an overview on other services provided by his office. The meeting will take place at 7 p.m. at Aldersgate United Methodist Church on Sellger Drive.

Sheriff Baron is a Norfolk native who has an impressive record of service in law enforcement. After serving 26 years with the Norfolk Police Department, he has spent the last 12 years in the Norfolk Sheriff's Office. He was first elected to his current post in 2017.

During his tenure with the Norfolk Police Department he served as a patrol officer, investigator, and later in the supervisory ranks. His notable positions include creating security plans for some of the city's largest events, including Harborfest and presidential visits. He also served as a homicide detective, investigating 77 murders in Norfolk and solving all but seven of those cases. He retired from the Norfolk Police Department as the violent crimes commander in charge of homicide, robbery, and gang investigation units. In 1995, Sheriff Baron received the Norfolk Police Department's Top Cop award.

(Continued on page 2)



Sheriff Joe Barron

### Recycle Dates

May 14th and 28th, June 11th and 25th

Please put your recycling can out.

Street Sweeping: RFS, WM, EP on June 28th

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### May Meeting

Will be held in the social hall at Aldersgate United Methodist Church on May 13th, at 7:00 p.m.

(Continued from page 1—Website)

- Looking for a civic league calendar of events? That calendar is online so you can mark your calendar for what interests you.

..... and those are just a few features

Many thanks to Second Vice Trustee Edith Lizalde who developed [eastsidecivicleague.org](http://eastsidecivicleague.org) and now serves as our webmaster. If you have an idea of something you would like to see added, please contact her at [edith.lizalde@yahoo.com](mailto:edith.lizalde@yahoo.com).

(Continued from page 1—Sheriff)

Sheriff Baron currently serves on the board of directors for the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority and as a board member with both the Virginia Sheriff’s Association and the Hampton Roads Regional Jail. He also served as the Region 3 Regional Director for the Special Olympics Virginia in 2022 and in 2023 he served as the Virginia Law Enforcement Torch Run Chairman.

Sheriff Baron served in the U.S Navy. and Navy Reserves. He holds a bachelor’s degree in criminology from St. Leo University and a master of public administration degree from Troy University.

### Join our civic league’s Facebook conversation

By now you know that a lot happens in our three neighborhoods. It’s a benefit to have a quick news source and our civic league Facebook page serves that purpose. If you haven’t joined the conversation yet, consider doing so now.

Here’s a little of what’s been posted on that page in recent weeks: Details about an Earth Day recycling effort, Celebrate Trails Day activities, and a little about St. Peter’s upcoming Summer Camp, just to name a few.

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**For Emergency Call 911**

### Our Community Officers:

**Officer Joseph Brown:**

**Cell-757-377-4750**

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## *Presidents Corner*

Do you like to stay informed about community happenings ...crime and otherwise? Where do you get your information? Is it by watching the local news on TV or is it through resources such as Nextdoor, a Facebook Scanner Group or the civic league's Facebook group page?

Recently someone in our community suggested we start a Neighborhood Watch. Last year I asked Norfolk's Police Chief Mark Talbot about the idea of bringing a Neighborhood Watch to our community and his response surprised me, but also made sense. He said communities like ours don't necessarily need a city-organized Neighborhood Watch. Instead, he said what works best is getting to know our neighbors on either side of us and across the street. Of course, the more neighbors we get to know the better.

So, do you want to make this a safer community? If so, exchange phone numbers with your neighbors. Make it a point to get to know the vehicles that frequent each of their homes, learn one another's work habits, and keep your eyes and ears open! When going out of town let your neighbors know and ask them to keep an eye on your property. When you see something out of the ordinary be the neighborhood crier. Don't be afraid to call the police! Inform your neighbors about what you have seen and also consider posting details to our civic league Facebook group page. If you are witnessing a crime in process, call 911. If the crime has already taken place call the non-emergency at (757) 441-5610. Police reports can help identify criminal patterns.

If everyone followed the advice above, we would be safer and feel more comfortable in our homes!

Each month (September-June) you can attend our monthly meetings and discuss any safety issue on your mind with our Community Resource Officer. Monthly meetings are also a great time to get feedback from others in the community.

Your civic league is a treasure trove of community connections and important information. Make it a priority to connect with this vital organization. We look forward to seeing you on May 13 at 7 p.m. The location is Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 5767 Sellger Drive.

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### **Brother, sister, can you spare a snack?**

The civic league is asking members to consider bringing a snack to the next civic league meeting (May 13) to share with neighbors. After each meeting we have a social time, a great way to catch up with longtime friends and to make new friends. And that's always easier and more fun when you do it over food!

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### **Hold this date: Monday, September 9!**

No matter what our individual party affiliations or personal and political beliefs may be, we can all agree 2024 is going to be a high-interest election year. However, in all the debate about the impending presidential election, we sometimes miss the fact that local elections are important too. Our local elected officials make decisions that affect us in very meaningful ways - from deciding our tax rate to determining what our kids study in school.

So, let's all purpose to stay in tune with what is happening at the local level by knowing who is running, what they stand for and how their platforms align with our own beliefs. The civic league wants to help keep local elections in the forefront of residents minds. **That's why on Monday, Sept. 9, we will be hosting a candidate forum for all who will be running for the Superward 7 seat on City Council.** So mark your calendars and plan to attend this information-rich event.



Hello Neighbor

I'M THE TOP AGENT TO REACH OUT TO IN

Our Neighborhood

Whether you need to sell your home, need some real estate advice, or simply want to unwind and have good conversation, I've got you covered. Let's meet up and uncover the true value of our amazing community. Cheers to your lively and vibrant neighborhood!

-Karen Davis

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VBS

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Kids Ages 4-18 years old are invited to

Riverside Baptist Church



July 6th  
Registration Event

July 15th-19th  
6-8:30 pm

MUSIC CRAFTS  
BIBLE  
FOOD GAMES

July 21st  
Commencement  
11am

Register at RBCnorfolk.org/vbs

5768 Sellger Drive, Norfolk, VA



## Riverside Baptist Church

5768 Sellger Drive Norfolk, Virginia 23502  
 Phone: (757) 466-9461  
 Sunday School: 9:45am  
 Worship Service: 11:00am  
<https://www.rbcnorfolk.org>

K.K. German, Treasurer  
[Kkgerman@gmail.com](mailto:Kkgerman@gmail.com)  
 (757)714-2335

Suzanne Duncan, Trustee  
[Suzanneduncan63@gmail.com](mailto:Suzanneduncan63@gmail.com)  
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Dustin Wallace, First Vice Trustee  
[dustin\\_l\\_wallace@yahoo.com](mailto:dustin_l_wallace@yahoo.com)  
 (210)843-5059

Edith Lizalde, Second Vice Trustee  
[edith.lizalde@yahoo.com](mailto:edith.lizalde@yahoo.com)  
 (808)284-9311

### 2024 Board of Directors

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Kathy O'Hara, First Vice President  
[keohara@cox.net](mailto:keohara@cox.net)  
 (757)461-5252 - home

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[AlbertfamilyVA@aol.com](mailto:AlbertfamilyVA@aol.com)  
 (757)681-0131

Sarah Ware, Recording Secretary  
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**5767 Sellger Drive, Norfolk**

**[AldersgateNorfolkUMC.org](http://AldersgateNorfolkUMC.org)**

**A PLACE FOR YOU**

**Worship Experience — 11:00am**

**Norfolk’s proposed operating and capital budgets: A quick overview for residents**

Chances are when some folks read this headline they will skip reading the article all together because budgets are often thought of as boring. Actually that shouldn’t be the case because a city’s budget has the potential to affect our everyday lives.

Norfolk’s proposed FY-25 operating and capital budgets will have impact on citizens. Here are a few details of the \$1.9 billion operating budget and the \$323.1 capital improvement plan (CIP). An operating budget pays for personnel, programs and day-to-day expenses such as utilities. A CIP pays for constructing and/or renovating facilities and infrastructure (such as streets and water and sewer systems).

**Proposed operating budget highlights**

Some of the proposed expenditures and programs that will affect citizens are:

- A 2-cent reduction to the real estate tax, from \$1.25 per \$100 to \$1.23 per \$100 (Important note: real estate assessments citywide rose 6.24 percent).

- Fee increases in areas of water, sewer and storm-water. These fee increases are established automatic increases that generally take place annually.
- Establishment of a homelessness task force to mount street level intervention.
- Enhanced hours for these libraries: Slover Downtown, Pretlow, Jordan-Newby and Richard Tucker. Note that our library at Janaf will not be the beneficiary of expanded hours.
- Re-opening of the Ingleside Recreation Center
- A retention bonus for 911 call takers and telecommunications
- \$150,000 for the Elizabeth River Trail
- Upgraded security and elevators at city facilities
- Mechanical ventilators in ambulances and two new ambulances
- A Housing Trust Fund which will concentrate on funding the last gap in affordable housing projects, investing in a variety of housing initiatives, and unlocking a greater amount of federal, philanthropic, and private funding. A plan for this trust fund is scheduled to come before City Council later this year.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6—Budget)

- **Proposed capital improvement budget highlights**
- Downtown and Westside projects make up 51.2 percent of the FY-25 proposed CIP.
- Planned projects in the 26-acre St. Paul’s area amount to \$15.9 million. In comparison school maintenance citywide (51 schools and centers) is allocated \$18.7 million.
- The downtown flood wall is allocated \$73.85 million
- Funding in the immediate downtown area includes Harbor Park improvements and maintenance. USS Wisconsin maintenance, Scope maintenance and renovation, Chrysler Hall maintenance and renovation, improvement of the Waterside Ferry Dock, Nauticus matching funds for exhibit renovations, improvement of the NEON district streetscapes, Slover Library maintenance and replacement, Commercial Park upgrades, and improving cultural facilities. All together these costs total \$24,125,000.

### **A bright spot in the city’s CIP**

The proposed FY-25 CIP sets aside \$350,000 for a needs assessment for planning for an Eastside Recreation Center. **This center is a direct result of your civic league’s lobbying efforts. Down the road, our area will be the beneficiary of a state-of-the-art recreation center.**

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## **General Meeting Minutes River Forrest Shores/Wayside Manor/Easton Place Civic League Aldersgate United Methodist Church March 11, 2024**

President Debby Forehand called meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and asked Terry Haddock to proceed with the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. It was reported by Second Vice Trustee Edith Lizalde that there was a quorum in attendance this evening.

The main speakers for the evening were Mayor Dr. Kenneth Alexander, and City Manager Patrick Roberts. Mrs. Forehand introduced them and Officer Joseph Brown, our resource officer, to those attending. Officer Brown advised there has been no crime reported in our neighborhoods in the past month. However, there had been larceny reports in business/industrial parking lots nearby. He reminded everyone to lock their doors and be aware of their surroundings.

Mayor Alexander started by saying that he brought the new city manager, Pat Roberts, with him to help answer questions our civic league might have during

the meeting. The mayor wanted to make sure that he expressed his priorities up front, emphasizing that public safety is his number one priority. He has a three-prong approach to public safety that includes: 1) engagement, 2) life-long learning, and 3) enforcement. The first prong to engage comes from his own experiences as a civic league president here in Norfolk where he wanted to engage the people. The second, lifelong learning, where people need to continue to learn from the community around them as well as other communities and the third, enforcement, he pointed out that through police enforcement crime, homicide, and vehicle theft have all decreased across the city.

Mayor Alexander pointed to finance as his second priority He noted that previous leaders had borrowed a lot of money to fund projects like the light rail, Nauticus, and libraries. The borrowed funds came with high interest rates due to our bond rating or our city credit rating, which did not at the time rank as “triple A,” which is the desired rating. During his tenure he has been able to improve our city’s bond rating to be “triple A” which is the highest rating a bond agency awards to an investment that is considered to have a low risk of defaulting and thereby making it the most creditworthy. This will help the city save money when borrowing for future projects.

This led Mayor Alexander into how the city would secure funds to continue to improve our city. The city’s income through personal property taxes accounts for about 30% (or \$320 million) of the \$1.9 billion operating budget expenditures. He noted there has been disgruntlement among citizens across the city regarding personal property taxes and assessments and thus raising taxes is unacceptable to them. He emphasized City Council cannot change the property assessments as that is done independently through a professional real estate assessor, However, he has asked the city manager to recommend lowering the tax rate in the proposed budget for next fiscal year. The city manager said that he was looking into how he can make that happen. The mayor went on to say that Norfolk also has a lot of non-taxable property such as military installations, churches, and schools. This is why he is trying to diversify our income by going outside of personal property and looking to state and federal funding. Mayor Alexander has been to Washington and met with sitting presidents to gain funding for our city. The mayor noted he met twice with President Trump and helped obtain \$30 million on his first visit and \$15 million on his second.

(Continued on page 10)

## Norfolk Sheriff's Office



**Joe Baron**  
Sheriff/High Constable

**Sheriff's Office**  
811 City Hall Ave  
Norfolk, VA 23510

**Committed to Public Safety,  
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**Fax: (757) 441-2531**

**Website : [www.norfolk-sheriff.com](http://www.norfolk-sheriff.com)**

**Community Affairs: 441-1066**

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Treasurer's Budget Report  
RFS/WM/EP Civic League  
For the month ended April 30, 2024

	Annual Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to date Actual	Over (under) Budget
<b>Income</b>				
Newsletter Ads	1,475		470	(1,005)
Dues	1,300	676	676	(624)
Other (interest and donations)	265	43	110	(155)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3,040</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>1,256</b>	<b>(1,784)</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>				
Newsletter Printing *	1,575	59	631	(944)
Marketing *	254			(254)
Membership Drive	25			(25)
Postage/Office Supplies	30			(30)
Meeting Refreshments	20			(20)
Door Prizes	90		90	-
CL Meeting Hall	315		315	-
Zoom purchase *	150	168	168	18
Webmaster Training *	762			(762)
Federation Dues	20		20	-
Awards	100			(100)
Special Events	1,800			(1,800)
Incorporation fees	25		25	-
Board Meeting Hall	100		100	-
[1] Other *	37	8	8	(29)
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>5,303</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>1,358</b>	<b>(3,945)</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>(2,263)</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>(101)</b>	<b>2,162</b>
Add back Block grant received from the city fall of 2023				
[2]	2,073	209	781	(1,292)
<b>Net income (Outflow)</b>	<b>(189)</b>	<b>693</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>869</b>

Reconciliation:	Trust			Total cash
	Checking	Reserve (Savings)	Account (CD)	
1/1/2024	2,707.74	2,617.52	11,992.31	17,317.57
<b>2024 year to date (from above column)</b>			<b>(101.30)</b>	<b>17,216.27</b>
4/30/2024	2,539.34	2,617.85	12,059.08	<u>17,216.27</u>

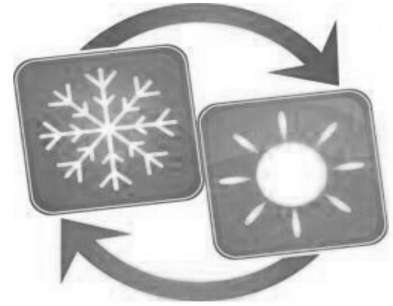
[1] Other: Paypal fees + website domain

[2] The civic league received \$2500 from the city in November 2023 to offset marketing and outreach efforts of the civic league. The asterisked (\*) items indicate the categories the civic league has received a grant to assist with. \$2073.40 is being allocated to 2024 and therefore the net outlay of the civic league for 2024 is -\$189.46.

KKG 5/4/2024



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(Continued from page 7—March 11 Minutes)

The mayor was provided with some topics that the civic league members had wanted addressed. One being personal property taxes and another regarding the slow progress of projects involving developers like the Military Circle Mall project and the Casino at Harbor Park. In regard to these projects the mayor refuses to allow the developers to make unreasonable changes to their original agreements that the taxpayers have voted for.

The mayor wanted our civic league members to know that our civic league board members are very vocal on what our members want from the city, and he commended them for their diligence. As a former civic league president, he understands the importance of civic leagues and is trying to do more to connect the 100 neighborhoods in Norfolk.

Next when City Manager Pat Roberts was introduced it was noted he has been employed with the City of Norfolk for 2 years and was appointed city manager last summer. He spoke briefly about his previous experience

as Suffolk City Manager and how he helped to improve that city's "double A" credit rating. He expressed the importance of getting loans to fulfill emergency situations such as repairing/building schools and ensuring clean drinking water. While he made no drastic changes after his immediate appointment, he did make several organizational changes, moving the 911 call center under the police department. He has also moved Norfolk Cares from neighborhoods to the city manager's office as this will enable him to oversee that citizens' issues are being resolved and in a timely manner. Mr. Roberts encouraged citizens to attend city budget meetings to voice their opinions on what they would like to see in their city. Both the Mayor and City Manager agreed that the eastside of Norfolk needs a recreation center and an improved library. They noted a recommendation to begin planning for a new recreation center would be in the proposed FY-25 operating budget.

Following Mr. Roberts' remarks, the floor was opened for a question-and-answer session. A question-and-answer (Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10—March 11 Minutes) session occurred at the conclusion of their talks. Topics discussed included retention and recruitment plans for police officers and 911 operators: school system finances and Military Circle plans.

At the end of the meeting Second Vice President Liz Albert, reminded everyone about the membership drive and asked those attending to considering volunteering.

President Forehand asked if there was any new business or changes to the minutes for January or February that were posted in the last newsletter. With no new business or changes, Mrs. Albert made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Rick Thomas.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

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## **Minutes**

### **River Forrest Shores/Wayside Manor/Easton Place Civic League**

**April 8, 2024**

President Debby Forehand called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.. Clara Allen was called to do the invocation and lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Officer Joseph Brown gave the crime report. He reported there had been no crimes in the past month. He advised everyone to be diligent in locking their car doors, noting: “f you see something; say something!” Overall, the city’s crime rate is down.

President Forehand asked Second Vice Trustee Edith Lizalde if there was a quorum for the meeting in the event as vote was needed. Her response was affirmative.

President Forehand introduced Codes Enforcement Specialist James Hetherington and Senior Code Specialist Frank Moreira. They explained what they do in their roles with the city and did an interactive quiz to see if the attendees could identify what was and wasn’t a code viola-

tion. Afterwards, they explained the results and the regulations that governed them.

Send Vice President and Membership Chairman Liz Albert gave an update on the membership drive. Many people are using the Paypal account and QR code to join or renew their memberships. The duration of the membership drive is the entire month of April. Mrs. Forehand noted the civic league needs widespread resident support if its work to affect positive change in the community is to continue.

President Forehand shared that the City Council’s Budget Public Hearing would take place Wednesday, April 10 at 6 p.m. at Granby High School. She noted that she and other board members would be speaking at that meeting and encouraged other residents to attend. She noted the current capital improvement budget proposal includes a feasibility study for an Eastside Health and Wellness Recreation Center and Media Center. She also shared that more than 51 percent of the city’s capital improvement budget is going to downtown and the westside with named projects for other areas of the city totaling a mere 6-plus percent. She then noted the city’s Real Estate Reassessment Hearing was scheduled for April 30 at 5 p.m. The operating budget proposal includes a 2-cent real estate tax reduction.

Another important date stressed was the City Council’s retreat on April 30 at the Slover Library from 9 a.m. -4:30 p.m. Members of the civic league board would be in attendance, she said.

She asked those attending if they had looked at the Civic League’s new website and issued A BIG THANK YOU to Mrs. Lizalde for building and rebuilding the website! The address for the new website is **[eastsidecivicleague.org](http://eastsidecivicleague.org)**

A raffle was held, and the winner was Millie Hanson! Congratulations, Millie!

Dustin Wallace made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kathy O’Hara. Following the meeting a social time was held.



**MISSION: POSSIBLE**  
A FUTURE TOGETHER

# SUMMER MIXER

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- Sail into the future with Nauticus Build-a-Sail.
- Conversation cafés:
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  - Boosting Spirits with Community Cheerleading
  - Turning Passion into Action
- Interactive art and music projects.



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\* \$10 ticket is for food only. All other activities are FREE!