



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, September 19, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.** in the Council Chambers at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

Present: Carl Ferebee, Mayor Pro Tem
Sandra W. Bryant)
Wayne Smith)
Rex Stainback)

Council Members

Kelly Traynham, City Manager
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney
Traci Storey, City Clerk
Carmen Johnson, Finance Director
Shane Guyant, Police Chief
Christina Caudle, Human Resources Director
Jason Patrick, Fire Chief
John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director
Tony Hall, Main Street Development Director
David Wise, Planning & Development Director
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director

Absent: Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

With Mayor Doughtie being absent, Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee presided. He called the meeting to order.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee provided an invocation and then the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Adoption of Business Agenda

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked Council members if there were any known conflicts of interest with respect to the matters before them this evening. Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Councilman Stainback and unanimously carried to adopt the agenda as presented.

Special Recognitions

Police Department

Police Chief Guyant recognized the following officers:

- **Jeff Baggett** - Captain of Patrol (Promoted August 1, 2023)
- **Harold Phillips** - Captain of CID (Hired August 28, 2023)

- **Morgan Worrell** – Lt. CID (Promoted August 30, 2023)
- **Matt Hunsucker** – Lt. over Shift (Promoted August 13, 2023) Not in attendance.

- **Clarice Hagbourne** – Sgt. over Squad (Promoted July 30, 2023)
- **Sammy Langley** – Sgt. over Patrol Units (Promoted July 30, 2023)

- **Nicole Powell** – Master Officer (Promoted July 2, 2023)
- **Kathleen Williams** – Master Officer (Promoted August 13, 2023)
- **Damien Norfleet** – Master (Promoted August 13, 2023) Not in attendance.

- **Brian Biggerstaff** - Investigator (Hired September 11, 2023)
- **Tyler Acree** – Investigator Narcotics Unit (Hired September 11, 2023)

- **Officer Jay Conrad** – PACE (Reassigned September 3, 2023)
- **Officer Isaac Nielsen** released from Field Training early (Effective August 30, 2023)

Chief Guyant also recognized the following officers for obtaining their Advanced Law Enforcement Certification and presented each with their framed certificate and pin:

- **Captain Gorton Williams** (Obtained August 11, 2023)
- **Detective Nick Bankert** (Obtained August 11, 2023)

Approval of City Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to approve the August 15, 2023, City Council Regular Meeting and September 5, 2023, Joint Meeting minutes as drafted.

Public Hearing

CDBG-NR 2023 Potential Funding Application

City Manager Traynham stated the NC Department of Commerce Rural Economic Division has opened a new round of funding for the Community Development Block Grant or CDBG – Neighborhood Revitalization Program. The City was awarded a grant in 2020 and now have the opportunity to apply for additional funds. As part of the application process and submittal, two public hearings are required. This is the first public hearing. The purpose of this public hearing is to obtain citizen views and responses from the public on the proposed funding. There is approximately \$12.5 million available through the 2023 program. The maximum grant amount is \$950,000 as opposed to before it was \$750,000.

She stated the CDBG-NR activities have to meet at least one national objective benefiting low to moderate income persons. She explained if it was a neighborhood benefit, it has to be at least 51% low and moderate income. For any direct benefit such as homeowners, they must be low to moderate income persons to apply. The types of activities they would typically see with this are home renovations or rehabilitation. If it was a substantial improvement it would have to undergo certain approvals with the State prior to being able to be funded.

City Manager Traynham reported the grant does not require a match by the City and activities can be applied towards public facilities. Under the current program from 2020, the restroom facility at Chaloner was purchased with those funds.

She noted they were currently accepting applications which are available tonight, online or by request. To qualify for the homeowner program for improvement if it is a household size of one person, the maximum annual income is \$38,750. The income limits increase with the larger household size. Anyone residing in the house 18 years old and up their incomes must be listed as well.

She stated the intent of the program is to identify the structure deficiencies and any water/sewer needs. What would not apply is cosmetic improvements. She said if any homeowners were interested in the program they should submit an application no later than October 15, 2023. Anyone who has applied in the past couple of years will get a new application mailed to them.

She said the public hearing should be opened tonight to receive any public comments and close with a motion. A second public hearing will be required once the City receives homeowner applications and determines the projects. The application is due November 15, 2023.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked what the maximum incomes for family households were. City Manager Traynham replied they were set by the state and federal government through the program. It must be at least 80% of the median income of the county. She said the household income maximums are as follows:

- Household of 8 – Maximum \$73,100
- Household of 7 – Maximum \$68,650
- Household of 6 – Maximum \$64,250
- Household of 5 - Maximum \$59,800
- Household of 4 - Maximum \$55,350
- Household of 3 - Maximum \$49,850
- Household of 2 - Maximum \$44,300
- Household of 1 - Maximum \$38,750

To qualify for the program, the City must have proof of income.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee opened the public hearing to receive comments.

There being no comments, motion was made Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Councilman Stainback and unanimously carried to close the public hearing.

New Business

Consideration of Ordinance Declaring a Temporary Road Closure for the Christmas Parade

Police Chief Guyant stated they have to close Roanoke Avenue (Hwy 48) in order to hold the Roanoke Rapids Christmas Parade. This is for the purpose of the application the City submits to get permission from the NC Department of Transportation. He presented and read the following ordinance for City Council's consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. 2023.12

AN ORDINANCE DECLARING A TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE FOR A CHRISTMAS PARADE

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids acknowledges a long tradition of providing an annual Christmas parade for the pleasure of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids acknowledges its citizens realize a financial benefit from holding an annual Christmas parade; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids acknowledges a parade requires approximately two (2) hours to install signing and traffic control, and also requires approximately two (2) hours for removing signs, traffic control and litter;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids pursuant to the authority granted by G.S. 20-169 that they do hereby declare a temporary road closure during the day(s) and times set forth below on the following described portion of a State Highway System route:

Date(s): Sunday, December 3, 2023

Times: 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Route Description: Roanoke Avenue (NC 48) between 14th Street and 1st Street

This ordinance will become effective when signs are erected giving notice of the limits and times of the parade, and implementation of adequate traffic control to guide through vehicles around the parade route.

ADOPTED this 19th day of September 2023.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

ATTEST:

Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2023.12 declaring a temporary road closure for the Christmas Parade on December 3, 2023.

Consideration of Resolution Authorizing a 2023 Application for Funding with the NC Division of Water Infrastructure

City Manager Traynham said the NC Department of Water Quality Division of Water Infrastructure has opened up grant applications in several categories. The project engineer with Mack Gay & Associates the City has been working on with the Southgate project, has provided some guidance and activities that could be accomplished with that funding. The primary purpose of Resolution No. 2023.14 is to authorize the City to apply for the grant funding. As part of that City Council needs to authorize a representative (City Manager) to submit the application on behalf of the City.

She reported they intend to apply for two projects. One is the replacement of the bridge on Dixie Street that serves Chaloner Recreation Park. The current bridge over

Chockoyote Creek does not allow for emergency vehicles to pass over it. The City would apply for \$611,000 to construct a bridge that would be able to handle a fire truck and ambulance, which is very much needed. The other project would be for the completion of the stormwater inventory and assessment study. The City has made some small progress over the last few years with other funding, but would like to move forward and complete that project at an estimate of \$150,000. All of this is pending state appropriations which they expect to be funded. The applications are due by 5 p.m. on October 2, 2023. One of the main requirements is the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2023.14

BY CITY COUNCIL OF THE ROANOKE RAPIDS

WHEREAS, The City of Roanoke Rapids has need for and intends to construct, plan for, or conduct a study in projects described as **Chaloner Bridge Replacement**, and **Roanoke Rapids Stormwater Inventory and Condition Evaluation**, and

WHEREAS, The **City of Roanoke Rapids** intends to request State loan and/or grant assistance for the project,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS:

That the **City of Roanoke Rapids**, the **Applicant**, will arrange financing for all remaining costs of the project, if approved for a State loan and/or grant award.

That the **Applicant** will provide for efficient operation and maintenance of the project on completion of construction thereof.

That the **Applicant** will adopt and place into effect on or before completion of the project a schedule of fees and charges and other available funds which will provide adequate funds for proper operation, maintenance, and administration of the system and the repayment of all principal and interest on the debt.

That the governing body of the **Applicant** agrees to include in the loan agreement a provision authorizing the State Treasurer, upon failure of the **City** to make a scheduled repayment of the loan, to withhold from the **City** any State funds that would otherwise be distributed to the local government unit in an amount sufficient to pay all sums then due and payable to the State as a repayment of the loan.

That **Kelly Traynham – City Manager**, the **Authorized Representative** and successors so titled, is hereby authorized to execute and file an application on behalf of the **Applicant** with the State of North Carolina for a loan and/or grant to aid in the study of or construction of the project described above.

That the **Authorized Representative**, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate State agency may request in connection with such application

or the project: to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required in connection with the application.

That the **Applicant** has substantially complied or will substantially comply with all Federal, State, and local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, and funding conditions applicable to the project and to Federal and State grants and loans pertaining thereto.

Adopted this the 19th day of September 2023, at Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Councilman Smith asked if this was going to be a grant or an interest loan. City Manager Traynham replied it was her understanding it was grant funding. There could be some performance stipulations. She added an application does not obligate the City to the projects. If they are funded and she hopes they are, they would find out in early 2024, and if it looks like it is not a straightforward grant then she would bring it back to City Council for consideration prior to acceptance.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Councilman Smith, and unanimously carried to adopt Resolution No. 2023.14 authorizing the City Manager to submit an application for funding to the NC Division of Water Infrastructure.

Consideration of Ordinance for Cost Sharing of a Preliminary Engineering Report

City Manager Traynham said since 2019 the City has been involved in corridor study types of meetings with Halifax County, the Roanoke Rapids Sanitary District and other potential partners that have utilities in the jurisdiction. This is related to NC Department of Transportation's extension of Premier Blvd., American Legion Road and the widening of Hwy. 125. The City has completed the rezoning to commercial classification which is the first step in the development process. The second step would be site planning. Utilities are not directly available in the area as far as water and sewer. Primarily the area is currently served by septic systems and a "dead-end" water line on Hwy. 125. A preliminary engineering report (PER) is necessary for the Roanoke Rapids Sanitary District to determine the size and capacity of water and sewer lines to serve potential development there. The PER would be used for Halifax County to apply for funding for the water/sewer infrastructure to serve the sites along expanded roadways. All this area is within the City's planning and zoning jurisdiction and some of it is within the city limits or on the edge of it.

She reported the total estimated cost of the PER is \$36,000 which has been contracted with the Roanoke Rapids Sanitary District. During a meeting on August 31, 2023, that the Mayor Doughtie attended, they discussed sharing the cost of the report. The City's 1/3 cost would be \$12,000 to contribute to obtaining the report.

She said some of the things it would do is increase the fire flow in the area and water quality as well as allow for economic development to occur. A budget amendment would be necessary for the City to share in the costs with the RRSD and Halifax County because they do not have \$12,000 in the current budget. The \$12,000 would come from the undesignated fund balance.

Councilman Smith asked what the fund balance was now. Finance Director Johnson replied \$13 million less the \$2 million received from the sale of the Theatre.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked what the percentage of fund balance to the operating budget was. City Manager Traynham replied that percentage usually comes in with the audit report and the audit is in the final stages of completion. They will have to see how they closed out the last fiscal year. Finance Director Johnson said she would have to get back to them.

Councilman Smith stated he believed City Council set a minimum of 23% for fund balance. City Manager Traynham said City Council did have an ideal fund balance percentage. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked Finance Director Johnson to provide City Council with the fund balance percentage later.

Ordinance No. 2023.13
CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS
BUDGET AMENDMENT

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS:

SECTION 1. The following additional amounts are hereby appropriated for the operation of City Government and its activities for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Cost Sharing of a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER)

Project Revenues	\$12,000.00

FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$12,000.00

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Cost Sharing of a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER)

Project Expenditures	\$12,000.00

FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$12,000.00

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2023.13 amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget.

Consideration to Declare Closeout of Completed Capital Projects

Finance Director Johnson said the City's auditor, Greg Redman, has recommended the City close several completed capital project accounts so he would not have to continue conducting audits on them. They are Hodgestown, Local Law Enforcement Block Grant Fund, Theatre – First Citizens Bank & NC Cash Management Account and the Downtown Revitalization Project.

Councilman Smith asked if she could explain what the Theatre – First Citizens Bank & NC Cash Management Account for \$52,073. Finance Director Johnson replied they had \$51,000 in an NC Cash Management account and approximately \$1,500 in an account at First Citizens Bank. These funds are from where the City used to operate the Theatre.

City Manager Traynham added most of these capital projects that require an independent audit, separate from the City's regular audit, have been on the books for at least 10 years; except the Downtown Revitalization Project. The remaining funds in these accounts will be returned to the fund balance.

Councilman Smith asked if the \$52,000 was the money City Council approved for maintenance of the Theatre. Finance Director Johnson replied no, those monies are separate. City Manager Traynham said the \$60,000 was a budgeted amount; this is actual cash.

Councilman Smith asked since they did not spend the \$60,000 of the budget for the Theatre, why were they going to take money out of fund balance to pay \$12,000 for the Preliminary Engineering Report (previous agenda item). City Manager Traynham said City Council would still have to approve the amendment to the budget to pay for it. Staff cannot take those funds and apply somewhere else without their authorization because it is a totally separate project. Finance Director Johnson stated it was accounting. They would put the \$57,000 into the fund balance and then take \$12,000 back out. City Manager Traynham said the City has a policy that states they cannot spend designated money on the Theatre for something else that is not related

to the Theatre; up to a certain amount. There are certain limits City Council must approve in order for staff to change it. Councilman Smith asked if they were going to put the \$60,000 in the fund balance. City Manager replied it was still in the budget right now. The Theatre budget is a budgeted amount based on anticipated revenues so that \$60,000 is not sitting in the bank. Since the City no longer owns the Theatre, they do not have to actually fund those activities. It will help the numbers in the end.

Attorney Davis added he assumed at the end of the fiscal year they would have a \$60,000 surplus from that budget item since they budgeted that amount but did not spend it.

Councilman Smith said he knows money can be moved from one line item to another. City Manager Traynham replied with a budget amendment they can do that. It is a little cleaner to do it the way they have proposed to do it. Councilwoman Bryant said this way they could see what goes in and what comes out.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said this money was going into unrestricted fund balance. Right now, it is restricted. It is in the budget but can only be used for whatever it is designated for. This would be going into unrestricted fund balance so they could use it for anything to include the \$12,000. Finance Director Johnson said that was correct.

Attorney Davis added that between the motion that has already been passed and this one, they were roughly adding \$45,000 to the fund balance. They were adding \$57,000 and taking out \$12,000.

City Manager Traynham stated the action is needed for documentation of transferring funds between accounts.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant, and unanimously carried to declare closeout of the following capital projects: Hodgestown, Local Law Enforcement Block Grant Fund, Theatre – First Citizens Bank & NC Cash Management Account and the Downtown Revitalization Project.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Traynham reported the Department Management team as a team project have been discussing some improvements to the exterior of Kirkwood Adams such as landscaping to give it a renovation. The building was constructed in the 1970s. With the lead of the Parks & Recreation Department, they have listed some activities and had a meeting with representatives from Lowe's Home Improvement and

Lowe's Distribution Center for an in-kind service project from them. They will determine a date shortly to hold a work day. Many of the activities include some touch-up painting, fixing light poles, fixing and adding outside benches, cutting down a few trees and removing shrubs that are overgrown and replacing with new ones. The work will start soon and although the intent is to have a good amount finished before the holiday season, they will not accomplish all that needs to be done before then.

She announced staff has a busy weekend coming up. The Hope for Hardy Twilight Festival is this Friday night, September 22nd at 5 p.m. The concert will conclude at 9:30 p.m. Activities will begin in the 1000, 900, and 800 blocks of Roanoke Avenue earlier in the evening. The concert in Centennial will start at 7:30 p.m. They expect a lot of people to attend since it has been a successful event the past couple of years. Following the event Friday night, on Saturday, September 23rd, the Police Department is hosting a Bike Rodeo at the Aquatic Center parking lot from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

City Manager Traynham said on Wednesday, September 27th the HCIA will be meeting with the City of Roanoke Rapids being the host. The purpose of the meeting is for the annual Opioid Crisis meeting which is open to the public to discuss the use of opioid funds. Again, the meeting is open to the public because of the amount of funding received from the opioid settlement. The municipalities are expected to be engaged in the process of determining how those monies would be spent.

She stated on Friday, September 29th is the Roanoke Rapids High School Homecoming. There will be many activities associated with that including the parade during the day at the school, then the football game, homecoming dance and a concert on the softball field that evening. She added there would be fireworks after the football game as well.

She announced the Weldon Mills Bourbon and Spirits Festival will be held on Saturday, September 30th at the Theatre. There will be a lot of activity within the city limits for the next couple of weeks. These events do not come without a cost to the City, not in actual donations or money, but through staff time and effort. She appreciates staff willingness to step up and participate to allow community members to have a good time and be safe.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if the HCIA meeting on September 27th was going to have their usual meeting setting or was it going to be fully on the opioid crisis. City Manager Traynham replied it is her understanding from Halifax County Assistant Manager Christina Wells, the opioid crisis meeting would be the primary event that night in lieu of any other topics or updates. The public portion was from 6 – 7 p.m. followed by the meal and remainder after that.

Finance Director's Report

Finance Director Johnson reported for the period ending August 30, 2023, general fund year to date receipts totaled \$2,016,181.89. General fund year to date expenditures totaled \$3,260,657.34. Year-to-date expenditures exceeded revenues by (\$1,244,475.45). After the month of August, 17.1% of the budget year has been completed.

She stated the trend continues this month with expenditures well exceeding revenues at the beginning of the fiscal year. During the month of August, operations are funded primarily from the City's Cash Management savings. The City typically begins to receive material revenue allotments beginning in September with Ad Valorem, Sales & Use, and Utility Franchise Tax revenues of which they received \$5 million about a week ago and put it directly in the NC Cash Management account. Our first allotment of State Powell Bill funding was also received in the month of September.

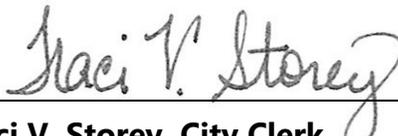
She said the City received the following collections during the month of August:

- Current and Prior Year Ad Valorum Tax
- Residential Solid Waste Fees
- Commercial Solid Waste Fees
- Interest Revenue
- Grants & Donation Funds

Finance Director Johnson reported the auditor has completed their initial field work and testing of the City's data. He hopes to have the audit completed by the end of September and submitted to the Local Government Commission by October 31st. Once completed, Mr. Redman will present it to City Council.

Adjournment

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant, and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: October 3, 2023