



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 2, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.** in the Council Chambers at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

Present: Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor
Sandra W. Bryant, Mayor Pro Tem

Andy Jackson)
Rex Stainback)
W. Keith Bell)
Curtis Strickland)

Council Members

Kelly Traynham, City Manager
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney
Traci Storey, City Clerk
Carmen Johnson, Finance Director
Lawrence Wiggins, Police Chief
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director
Christina Caudle, Human Resources Director
Ashley Thomas, Main Street Director
Kristyn Anderson, Planning & Development Director
Kelly Daughtry, Parks & Recreation Director
Kenneth Hollowell, Interim Fire Chief
Richard Cook, Interim Fire Chief

Mayor Doughtie called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Mayor Doughtie provided the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Adoption of Business Agenda

Mayor Doughtie asked Council members if there were any known conflicts of interest with respect to the matters before them this evening.

There being no conflicts, motion was made by Councilman Bell, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda as presented.

Public Comment (Scheduled)

Ryan Short

Mr. Short (Rivers Edge Parkway) stated he was here to discuss a few situations he has been fighting and gone through since June. He had to go over Public Works and actually spoke with the City Manager to get one of the things resolved and that is as far as he has got. He distributed a packet with photos and information to City Council (On file in Clerk's office). His main concern is the enforcement of the grass in the neighborhood. He had to go over Public Works and after speaking with the City Attorney and City Manager, they were able to push forward with that to a certain extent. They are building a lot of new homes in this neighborhood. On some of the lots they are building on, the grass is five feet tall. The porta johns are on the sidewalks and the sidewalks have been covered by gravel. One injury has resulted from riding a bike. When the bike hit the gravel, the kid went over the bike. He understands the City is required to maintain the sidewalks for people to walk and ride bikes on and it is impossible for anyone to do that at this moment.

He added that other people have built homes and nobody who has built home have put porta johns on the sidewalks, containers on the sidewalks. If a kid were to wreck a bike again and hit a container could get a cut across their face or arm, they could only imagine the lawsuits that would be lined up. After reading the Code of Ordinances, he feels he has a reason to bring it forth.

Mayor Doughtie reiterated the City Council's general procedure is they listen to the public's comments and take them under advisement so to speak. It appears he was already having some conversation with Public Works and the City Manager and that is generally the way things are followed up.

Approval of City Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Bell, and unanimously carried to approve the August 19, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting and August 20, 2025, Strategic Planning Retreat minutes as drafted.

Committee Appointments/Reappointments

Library Advisory Committee

City Clerk Storey stated the term for Marci Merritt on the Library Advisory Committee expired May 23rd. Ms. Merritt has served the maximum number of two consecutive terms allowed by City policy but would like to be considered for another term. Council

has the authority to waive this section of the policy and has done so in the past. Also, Amy Major submitted an application to serve on the Library Advisory Committee which was enclosed in your packet. She is eligible and there are currently two (2) vacancies on the committee. She reported City Council took a ballot vote earlier and both Ms. Merritt and Ms. Major received a unanimous vote to be reappointed and appointed.

Motion was made by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant and unanimously carried to waive the City Policy and reappoint Marci Merritt and appoint Amy Major to the Library Advisory Committee.

New Business

Consideration of Resolution (NC Governor's Hwy. Safety Program Grant)

Finance Director Johnson stated this is the second year the Police Department has participated in the Governor's Hwy. Safety Program. Last year when they participated, they purchased a vehicle. The funds for year two are already included in the FY2025-2026 budget. She presented and requested City Council consider adoption of the following resolution:

Resolution No. 2025.08

North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program **LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the Roanoke Rapids Police Department (herein called the "Agency") has completed an application
(The Applicant Agency)

contract for traffic safety funding; and that The City of Roanoke Rapids (herein called the "Governing Body")
(The Governing Body of the Agency)

has thoroughly considered the problem identified and has reviewed the project as described in the contract;

THEREFORE, NOW BE IT RESOLVED BY THE City of Roanoke Rapids, IN OPEN MEETING ASSEMBLED IN
(Governing Body)

THE CITY OF Roanoke Rapids, NORTH CAROLINA, THIS 2nd DAY OF September, 2025, AS FOLLOWS:

- 1. That the project referenced above is in the best interest of the Governing Body and the general public; and*
- 2. That City Manager Kelly Traynham is authorized to file, on behalf of the Governing Body, an application*
(Name and Title of Representative)
contract in the form prescribed by the Governor's Highway Safety Program for federal funding in the
amount of \$81,752.00 to be made to the Governing Body to assist in defraying the cost of the project
(Federal Dollar Request)
described in the contract application; and

3. That the Governing Body has formally appropriated the cash contribution of \$20,438.00 as required by the project contract; and
(Local Cash Appropriation)
4. That the Project Director designated in the application contract shall furnish or make arrangement for other appropriate persons to furnish such information, data, documents and reports as required by the contract, if approved, or as may be required by the Governor's Highway Safety Program; and
5. That certified copies of this resolution be included as part of the contract referenced above; and
6. That this resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

DONE AND ORDERED in open meeting by Mayor Emery G. Doughtie
(Chairperson/Mayor)

ATTESTED BY: Traci V. Storey
(Clerk)

DATE: 09/02/2025

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to adopt Resolution No. 2025.08 accepting the NC Governor's Highway Safety Program Grant Agreement and funding for Year 2.

Consideration of Budget Amendment (OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax)

Finance Director Johnson stated the Police Department received OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax in the amount of \$57.35. She presented the following budget amendment for City Council's consideration:

Ordinance No. 2025.28 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, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Police – OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax	
Project Revenues - OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax	\$57.35
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$57.35

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Police – OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax
Project Expenditures - OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax **\$57.35**

FUND PROJECT TOTAL **\$57.35**

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Jackson, seconded by Councilman Bell, and unanimously carried to adopt Budget Amendment (Ordinance No. 2025.28) in the amount of \$57.35 for OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax.

Consideration of Budget Amendment (FY2024-2025 FEMA Reimbursement)

Finance Director Johnson stated some members of the Fire Department voluntarily participated in deployment to western North Carolina during October 2024 to assist in emergency response to the disaster caused by Hurricane Helene. They received \$10,844.86 in reimbursement from FEMA. She presented the following budget amendment for City Council’s consideration:

**Ordinance No. 2025.29
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, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Fire – FEMA Reimbursement Hurricane Helene
Project Revenues – FEMA Reimbursement **\$10,844.86**

FUND PROJECT TOTAL **\$10,844.86**

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and ending June 30, 2025, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Fire – FEMA Reimbursement Hurricane Helene
Project Expenditures – FEMA Reimbursement **\$10,844.86**

FUND PROJECT TOTAL **\$10,844.86**

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Bell, seconded by Councilman Jackson, and unanimously carried to adopt Budget Amendment (Ordinance No. 2025.29) in the amount of \$10,844.86 for FY 2024-2025 FEMA Reimbursement.

Consideration of Rules of Decorum for Public Comment

Attorney Davis presented the proposed Rules of Decorum for Public Comment (On file in Clerk's office). He stated this is something a lot of municipalities have nowadays. The City wants to give the public the opportunity to come in to say their peace and comment on City business. He and staff drafted these rules which are substantially based on what other municipalities have. These rules are essentially memorializing the rules the City Council has always applied to public comment. For those that have been on City Council for a while or attend the meetings understand these different rules that are in here.

He said this was not expanding and certainly not restricting public comment. It puts the rules down on a short one-page document. This way potential speakers can have access to it and understand beforehand. He thinks this a good thing for the public to have access to so they can look at it rather than being called out in the moment, which was essentially a rule before. He referred to the document used by the City called Rules of Procedure that was adopted years ago. He suspects at some point in the past there were some rules of decorum, but he and the City Manager discussed that even if there was an existing document, it may be from the 1990s. He would rather put a new document before City Council so they could look at it, express their thoughts and feelings on it. The City has always been receptive of public comment. If someone calls, the Clerk will get it on the agenda. He would never want to do anything to discourage the public from coming to a meeting, from being involved in City business or from expressing their opinion. This will help the public understand what the guidelines are and the things where public comment would not be the correct forum for it.

Mayor Doughtie commented that the statute only mandates that they hold public comment once a month, and the City of Roanoke Rapids since he has been here, has always allowed it at both of their regular meetings. Therefore, the City allows public comment twice a month. They can come at the last minute and sign up or reach out to the Clerk and get on the agenda to speak.

Attorney Davis added that there are more restrictive rules of decorum out there from other municipalities, but this is not as restrictive. He feels this is fair and memorializes what City Council already does.

Motion was made by Councilman Strickland, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant and unanimously carried to adopt the Rules of Decorum as a supplement to the Rules of Procedure of the Roanoke Rapids City Council, Section 5 Public Comment to the Council.

Consideration of SRO Agreement with the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District

Attorney Davis reminded City Council that this item was on the agenda at the last meeting, and they chose to table it because it was being presented to the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District Board the same night. He informed them the school board passed the agreement with some changes to it. The agreement enclosed in their packet reflects those changes. He noted the two major changes are as follows:

- Clarifications regarding the storage of VIPER radios, which are the radios law enforcement transitioned to in order to communicate with 911/Central Communications.
- The elimination of the last version's Section V, which discussed potential ideas for the future transition of the SRO agreement.

He stated the version that is being presented to City Council now, is essentially the same document presented two weeks ago, but with those changes the RRGSD Board adopted.

Mayor Doughtie asked if the agreement was for one year. Attorney Davis replied that was correct. They went back and forth on that as they were drafting the agreement over the summer. They settled on one year to see how the situation works over the year; a year from now, they may be presenting the same agreement. This way City Council and the RRGSD Board are not locked into it.

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Bell and unanimously carried to approve the SRO Agreement between the City of Roanoke Rapids and the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District and authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Traynham said the next City Council meeting will be on Tuesday, September 16th. With the approval of the SRO agreement, staff will present a budget

amendment for their consideration for the cost sharing of the VIPER radios which is included in the agreement. Also, at the next meeting a resolution of support will be presented to City Council for an application for the Halifax County Business Horizons Local Economic Development Grant Program. They are offering a grant ranging from \$15,000 to \$50,000 for municipalities in Halifax County including the County itself aiming to support local economic development projects that boost community vitality. There are a range of different types of projects that would be allowable under the program. The program does require a resolution of support or letter of support from City Council. The next meeting will be their opportunity for Council to consider a resolution prior to the October 1st application deadline. Staff will present some ideas and they welcome City Council's feedback and ideas.

She announced the NCDOT is offering its biannual cleanup drive or Fall Litter Sweep September 13-27. The litter sweep is part of their roadside litter removal initiative. Volunteer supplies are available by contacting the county coordinator in Halifax. The City is constantly picking up debris and this is a real initiative to focus on the litter sweep. She added NCDOT has a Swat-a-Litterbug Program for educational purposes. It encourages individuals to report those who litter by calling a phone number or there is an app that can be downloaded on your phone. When information is submitted NCDOT will in turn send the registered vehicle owner by mail giving notice of the littering offense, inform of penalties and urge compliance by throwing out their waste in a proper receptacle. She encouraged participation and to continue to pick up litter and improve the community.

City Manager Traynham said Fire Chief Patrick officially retired September 1st. She announced Richard Cook (Asst. Chief Operations) and Kenneth Hollowell (Asst. Chief Prevention) will serve in the interim in a dual capacity until the recruitment selection process is completed. During the September 16th City Council meeting, they will officially recognize Jason Patrick's retirement as well as some other department promotions. September is Lymphoma Awareness Month. Firefighters will be wearing lime green shirts to honor the memory of Battalion Chief Kevin Hawkins who passed away in October 2019 from Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma. The Fire Department continues to prepare Engine 145 to enter service which is good timing because the ISO Rating inspection is coming soon. Having the new equipment in service helps preserve the insurance rating if not improve it. This inspection is conducted every 5 years so this could have major cost savings for property owners. She announced on Saturday, September 6th, the Fire Department will be participating in the Emergency Services Community Day at the Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad from 12 – 3 p.m.

She reported the Police Department will be participating in the following activities:

- Cookies with a Cop hosted by Chick-Fil-A on Tuesday, September 9th from 5 – 7 p.m.
- SAFEKIDS Seat Check on Saturday, September 27th.
- 5th Annual Police Club Cornhole Tournament on Saturday, September 27th. Proceeds fund the annual Christmas for the Kids program.

City Manager Traynham reported MJ Price is still loading and hauling grindings from the May 16th storm. The city had an unprecedented season of growth with grass. Public Works conducted nuisance abatement at 1407 Forest Street and 301 Premier Blvd. (closed Hwy 55 restaurant). She announced the installation of four new gateway signs is coming soon. She referred to the image in her report. The project was funded through the Halifax County Convention and Visitors Bureau last fiscal year. The signs will say, “Welcome to Roanoke Rapids” and will be located at the four main entry points into the city. These signs will be complimentary to the wayfinding signage that was installed a few years ago.

She announced the Planning Board will meet Thursday, September 11th to review some changes to the Land Use Ordinance coming down from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Prior to City Council adoption, a Planning Board review is required then a public hearing and adoption is set for September 16th with City Council. FEMA has a mandatory adoption prior to September 19th so that current flood policies remain active and renewals made possible. She reported there were several building projects taking place in the city. Stateside Landing continues with progress for multi-family homes. Planet Fitness has a tentative opening date of October 3rd. Site plans are under review to redo the drive-thru at Burger King on Julian Allsbrook Hwy. as well as a proposed 7-Eleven at 1479 Julian Allsbrook Hwy. She announced the following upcoming special events:

- Walk For Life on September 13th from 1026 Roanoke Avenue to Centennial Park
- Alabama Concert on September 13th at Carolina Crossroads Amphitheatre
- Twilight Festival on SATURDAY, September 20th at Centennial Park from 2 – 9 p.m.
- Lynyrd Skynyrd on October 3rd at Carolina Crossroad Amphitheatre

City Manager Traynham said Main Street Director Thomas continues to make progress to re-establish the Main Street Program here in the city. She has updated the website with helpful information, met with a few new property owners and tomorrow will have a meeting with NC State Historic Preservation Office about the Tax Credit Program.

She announced the following activities and events hosted by the Parks & Recreation Department:

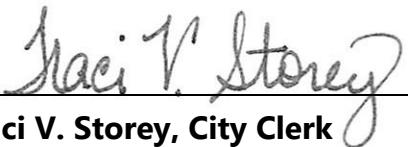
- Roanoke Canal 5k will be held Saturday, September 13th with a patriotic theme to help kickoff the 250th.
- New classes at the Aquatic Center including Aqua Zumba and Aqua Tabata on Wednesdays; Aqua Tai Chi on Fridays.
- “Step”tember at the Senior Center on Mondays and Thursdays at 3 p.m. to get steps in; Movie Monday on September 8th; ECU Health will host Health Screenings on September 9th from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.; Advance Care Planning class on September 9th at 2 p.m.; a representative from Don Davis’ office will be available from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. on September 17th.
- Toddler Time has resumed at TJ Davis Recreation Center at 10 a.m. on Fridays; youth basketball registration will be starting this week with the online registration option through RecDesk. This provides a way for parents to submit their child’s participation application at any time via the website. Staff will provide some tutorials on social media on how to use the online registration software.
- The library is conducting its annual magazine fundraising drive. On September 15th the public computers will be shut down while they migrate to new computer reservation software. There are several passive programming opportunities at the library to participate in.
- The Splash Pad will remain open likely through the end of the month as long as the weather remains warm. Karate will be held at Chaloner Recreation Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The after-school program started last week, and they have five participants.

City Manager Traynham reported Human Resources is advertising for the new Fire Chief position which is open until filled. However, the first review of resumes will occur no later than September 26th. Other open positions include: Firefighter Applicant Pool, certified Police Officer, Public Works Street Maintenance Worker, Parks & Recreation Custodial Worker, PT Parks & Recreation Building Supervisor, PT Parks & Recreation Lifeguard. The City is in the final stages of testing the NEOGOV Government Human Resources Information System. This program will help reduce the burden of manual processes for Human Resources and Finance teams. It will streamline employee benefits, timekeeping and payroll processes. Other NEOGOV solutions underway include online recruiting, applications, performance management, employee onboarding, training management, documents and forms. Implementation is scheduled to begin on September 21st for all employees.

She stated that in addition to NEOGOV, the City is working with OpenGov and the two systems are complimentary. These systems were benefited from the American Rescue Plan funds. OpenGov Budget & Planning Module training for department leaders is scheduled for Thursday, September 4th in order to start FY2027 budget planning early. Auditor Greg Redman will be on site September 17-19 to review the FY2025 financials.

Adjournment

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Bell, and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: September 16, 2025