



# Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A Work Session of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.** in the Council Chambers at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

**Present:** Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor  
Carl Ferebee, Mayor Pro Tem  
Sandra W. Bryant)  
Suetta S. Scarbrough)  
Wayne Smith)  
Rex Stainback)

## **Council Members**

Kelly Traynham, City Manager  
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney  
Traci Storey, City Clerk  
Tammy Fahey, Interim Finance Director  
Bobby Martin, Police Chief  
John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director  
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director  
Christina Caudle, Human Resources Director  
Jason Patrick, Fire Chief

Mayor Doughtie called the meeting to order and opened with an invocation.

## **Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Department Budget Discussion**

### **Human Resources**

Human Resources Director Caudle stated when they met last Thursday, they reviewed a majority of the software upgrade proposal. She asked if there were any questions concerning the software upgrade. There were no further questions.

She said the other capital request that was included in the memo distributed last week was to unfreeze and add a full-time administrative support employee. In her research on the matter, it has actually been a frozen position since fiscal year 2012-2013. She believes that was when former Human Resources Manager Kearney took over the department head leadership role and that position was never filled. The cost estimate based on the current salary schedule for an employee with all the benefits would be approximately \$60,000 per year. Her justification for the request is that the Human Resources Department serves about 245 employees (full-time and part-time active employees and all of the retired employees). There are a lot of benchmark reports especially over the last 10 years that give

a ratio per 100 employees. The Society of Human Resource Management which is the national standard for human resources for all industry types, reported in 2017 the HR to employee ratio is 2.6 HR full-time employees for every 100 active employees. Bloomberg's 2017 report states 1.4 full-time HR employees for every 100 workers. In 2020 Gartner published a Human Resources Budget and Staffing Survey which was broken out by industry. Their recommendation for state government organizations of all sizes is 1 full-time HR employee per 43 government employees. Even with the request of one additional full-time employee still does not meet with those standards, but believes it would be a good start.

She said with Human Resources servicing 245 employees and growing with one person makes it hard to do so effectively today. She gave the example of her schedule today. There was a staff meeting for 2 hours this morning and she had been in this building since about 3 p.m. so that means she was unavailable about half of the day to help anyone. Depending on what time they get out of this meeting today, she will likely go back to office to check on voicemails, emails and other things she has not been able to do. It could be a retiree asking for a certification from their file to a workers comp claim. An admin could really do this type of thing in order for the department head such as herself to continue to do the management level work. Former HR Manager Kearney, who she worked with since she had been with the City, has asked for this every year. She was not sure if the request ever made it to City Council. Now that she is in that position, she can see it is needed to effectively and efficiently serve all the City's employees past and present. That one additional person could help keep the ball rolling. She stated the software items and the full-time position are the two HR capital requests.

Councilman Smith asked if City Council decides to update the software which she stated would cut out a lot of work, would they still need an additional employee. Human Resources Director Caudle replied in her opinion, yes. Because the workload placed on her as the department head and the demand to be in several different places will not change. There may be abilities for employees to go into software and pull a W-2 or see when a certification is due, but all the phone calls, workers comp and other things an admin could do to keep the ball rolling. She was not sure if it would remain a full time position once the software was implemented. It will be 24-36 months of it being integrated in the organization. She believes they will find lots of places they will save labor time.

Councilman Smith asked Human Resources Director Caudle why she was out of the office so much. She replied for such things as staff meetings or meeting with G.W. Hux & Company for insurance. She encouraged Council to reach out to former HR Manager Kearney for more information. Ms. Kearney also could not complete daily tasks in an 8-hour work day. She was finding that to be true as well. In her opinion, for the department head positions, the City is paying them to do management level work and some of that is

going to require them to be out of the office doing things. An admin does not have to do that. Right now they are having the Human Resources Department be an admin and a manager.

City Manager Traynham added when people have complaints or questions about benefits, employment, hiring/firing, they are getting pulled in different directions. When they are meeting with 1-2 people on one issue, then another comes up. The years of not having an assistant in that department has caused a backlog of paperwork. If they could catch up on some of those administrative duties then Human Resources would be able to play a more active role in providing programming for City employees. In reference to the software, it does not alleviate the need for another person in this division, but could help when retirements come up in the future. Once the product is implemented they may not have to backfill some of the positions as they become available. It does not replace employees, it would help make things more efficient where they could review staffing levels as they come open.

Councilwoman Bryant confirmed with Human Resources Director Caudle that she was still functioning to some extent with Main Street. She replied that is some of her day, but reported she does all of it at night because she does not have time to do it during the day. She stated that position will be filled. It has to be filled because it is part of the annual agreement with the State to keep the City's designation. She said City Manager Traynham and the Main Street Board have been actively working on that. She believes they are getting close to a solution. In the meantime, to satisfy the agreement, someone has to keep that work rolling. She said that has placed a lot of extra stuff on her right now, but outside of things she has to react to during business hours, she is doing all of it from home.

Councilwoman Bryant asked if that was something this admin person would be able to function as by splitting their time between both. Human Resources Director Caudle replied for communities of 10,000 people or more for a Main Street designation per the annual agreement, they must have one full-time 40 hour per week employee that is dedicated to Main Street. She found in that role that it was not a one-person job either. She reminded them that the City has the second largest historic district in the entire state. There is a lot that comes with that, but as long as you have a cell phone and you can move you can do that job which was why it was easy to do from home during COVID and to continue doing stuff at home after hours. She stated to satisfy that agreement, they have to have one full-time person. They do not need to be a standalone department; there are some ways to share some responsibilities.

Mayor Doughtie asked how much of what involves insurance could be asked for if not provided by their insurance carrier. Human Resources Director Caudle said they have changed some of that. Former HR Manager Kearney liked the admin aspects of the position

so she was doing all of that in-house. She believes if the City pays them for a service, they should utilize them as much as they could especially with them being right across the street. They have tried some different things with new hires and when somebody needs to make an enrollment change. It still has to come back to them because the City is the one doing the payroll deductions. The City is also on the frontline of any life changes. They are trying to realize some efficiencies now to make things better.

Mayor Doughtie said the thing that concerns him is that right now the City is in better shape financially than they have been in quite a while. He realizes City Council has cut back some positions but as a general rule when somebody comes on and stays awhile, they stay. And they do not have any control over anything but their salaries. The other thing that concerns him is the software. They do not know when it's going to be obsolete and they do not know how much it's going to cost. She had already told them it was going to be \$75,000-\$100,000 per year. He thinks out three years from now where they might have spent all this money they are getting and then would get another down turn. At the last meeting, they were told the software would speed things up quite a bit and especially young people did not want to come in for face-to-face. When he would call and was lucky enough to get someone, they generally refer him to the City website. In his opinion, the website has not been kept up and it's been more frustrating than help. It makes a lot of difference when a website is user friendly. He continued to say in several departments they have frozen positions and vacancies. From this side of things, it's not just what will make things easier, it's what the City can afford. He asked her to repeat the information she reported in the last meeting concerning the software package she was recommending; the initial costs and costs during the 3-year agreement.

Human Resources Director Caudle said there were two different software companies they were looking at because one does not offer all products. The OpenGov product for the full project which would include citizen services, finance, budget & planning, procurement and reporting & transparency; the first year costs is \$390,000. It is a \$90,000 annual subscription but year one they have the implementation and training fee of \$300,000. Years 2 and 3 it would drop down to \$90,000. She reported NeoGov which would fully integrate with the OpenGov products so that would be Insight (they already own) that is an applicant screening tool, on-boarding, e-forms, performance module for annual reviews, all the core HR products for personnel, payroll, payroll services, time & attendance and benefits. The year 1 costs is \$110,408. NeoGov tries to help absorb that first year implementation and training so they do a graduated subscription plan. Year 1 subscription is \$46,868 and the implementation and training is \$63,540 for the total of \$110,408. Year 2 would be \$70,302 and Year 3 would be \$93,736. She explained that if they decided to do a full project of OpenGov and NeoGov, Year 1 would be \$510,000 (this upcoming fiscal year) and when they would get to Year 3 (the two annual subscription renewal services) would be approximately \$190,000. Originally, how this started and ended up in the Human

Resources department was because they had ARPA money. This was a black and white use that would reduce or eliminate face-to-face interaction and paper and that would be a qualifying expense. The City has since changed it and is taking the standard allowance option so it is a little different. So even though it is a Human Resources request, it is something that supports and can be spread across all departments for efficiencies.

Councilman Smith stated he has been a big supporter of updating the software for the last four years and if they were going to consider doing it they should do every department at one time. He did not believe they should patch it. This is something to talk about during budget time.

Human Resources Director Caudle began her review of the department's operating budget. She understood that this past year was the first year that they broke out the HR department from Administration. It appears they did not move the Training, Meetings and Education line so she has requested this be done so to make it a complete department. She was requesting \$7,000 in that line. It is the same situation for Dues & Subscriptions. Other increased lines she wanted to call their attention to were: Employee Drug Screenings/Testing - \$20,000 and Health Reimbursement - \$55,000. She reported the total expenses excluding the salary, longevity and benefits, is approximately a 20% increase compared to last year. This is mainly due to the increases in the employee screenings and moving the lines from Admin to HR. The dollar amount increase, not including salary and benefits, is \$18,824.

City Manager Traynham reminded City Council they were just presenting the needs at this point until the next phase of the budget when she starts meeting with each department. The revenue estimates are expected to come out this week. They were not asking City Council to make any decisions tonight, she just wanted them to hear the needs so they would be aware of them.

### **Finance**

Interim Finance Director Fahey reviewed the Finance department's budget. She said after speaking with the auditor, he indicated there would be a slight increase this year due to the additional audit for some of the new funds. They were requesting \$40,000 for that line item.

Councilman Smith interrupted and said he was shocked by that number. They had been paying \$19,000 for audits in the past. Interim Finance Director Fahey replied they have paid Cavanaugh McDonald who do work for the City regarding the GASB 73 Separation Allowance and GASB 75 Healthcare which runs \$13,000 per year. So far this year the City has paid \$20,000 for the regular audit by Greg Redman, CPA. He said his fee would increase about \$3,000 for this upcoming year because of the ARPA funding.

Interim Finance Director Fahey continued to review the department's budget. She stated most items they just increased slightly. She noted that they had some issues pop up with computers and printers. The department's computers and equipment are really getting old. City Manager Traynham added that the Finance department has specialized printers in order to print checks.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if they were looking at updating all computers in order to possibly get a better deal. City Manager Traynham said they were accessing the equipment to see what the needs were city-wide.

Interim Finance Director Fahey reviewed the Collections and Revenue which is the Tax Department. They discussed the collection costs for taxes by the County.

### **Planning & Development**

City Manager Traynham distributed the Preliminary Budget for FY 22-23 for the Planning Development Department.

She began by introducing newly hired Planning & Development Director, David Wise and also the Finance Director appointee, Carmen Johnson. Ms. Johnson will start work the end of April and Mr. Wise started last week.

She explained the budget line items that are shaded in various colors on the report are the lines items she would like to highlight. She requested adding a part-time minimum housing officer. She explained before her time with the City, they had as many as four minimum housing inspectors. The program was more aggressive at that time. They feel the addition of that employee would help spur some of the code compliance that is inactive throughout the city. Currently one person handles the junk vehicle complaints as well as the minimum housing processes that requires extensive research at the Register of Deeds Office and following the lengthy notification process from start to finish.

City Manager Traynham said the Professional Services were reserved for any engineering or contract services. They were requesting an increase in Training, Meetings, Schools because due to COVID many schools for certifications were done virtually and now things are starting to go back to in-person. Many of the required certification courses/training for employment are not offered locally so it also includes travel expenses. She continued with Maintenance & Repairs to Equipment which covers any office equipment and computer upgrades. The Software Support is for reactivating the ARC GIS license for mapping. Many of the other lines remain somewhat the same with some minor increases. They were requesting \$50,000 for Demolition.

She said the last lines showed the request for a funding an additional Minimum Housing

Officer in the amount of \$54,088.52. The final request was for \$30,000 for a new vehicle to replace one of the department's older vehicles that is about 20 years old now. The total requests is \$699,088.52.

Councilman Smith asked what a Minimum Housing Officer does. She replied they handle complaints about junked/nuisance vehicles. Roger Bell is the only person in that position right now. If they see a house with a door open or a structure that appears dilapidated or unfit for human habitation, they conduct the process involved from contacting the property owner of record to bringing the ordinance to City Council for action. The timeline at a minimum can be 120 days for one structure for demolition or compliance.

Councilman Smith asked if they were having trouble now getting the work done. City Manager Traynham replied the city's housing stock continues to age and there is a lot of dilapidated homes that have been abandoned or stopped being taken care of. It is a public safety issue. The Minimum Housing Officer does residential and non-residential buildings.

Councilman Smith stated he knows City Council has allocated monies in past years for demolition and somehow it disappears out of the Planning Department's budget and goes somewhere else. He asked if they put it in there this year, would it stay in there. She assured him that it would. She stated demolition is an activity that City Council as deemed desired to improve community standards.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked if there was an ordinance that addresses a property that has junk up to the second floor. City Manager Traynham replied they did and the Public Works Department handles the nuisance code. It is difficult to get people to comply; they try to get people to do it on their own. After giving them many chances and hearing many excuses, then they consult with the City Attorney about when it's time to go onsite and haul the junk off.

Mayor Doughtie said he believed earlier on City Council had discussed allocating more than \$50,000 to demolition. There are a lot of houses that are dilapidated and citizens are asking him why he cannot do anything about making Roanoke Rapids look better. He added there were a lot of broken windows on Roanoke Avenue where they have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to improve it and still have buildings that do not have glass in the windows. He feels a person should have a pane in their window on a building. City Manager Traynham replied they address things in the code they are required to do. They can only go as far as the local and state laws allow them to. She reminded City Council that \$50,000 is requested in the Planning Department budget which would address three homes, depending on the size. They have also allocated more than that with the State Directed Grant funds so with the two requests combined would be just over \$100,000. There would be more money allocated to demolition than they've had in over 10

years.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked newly hired Planning & Development Director Wise to look at how many houses would need to be torn down. He would like to look at all the needs and what it would take to take care of all their needs; not to say they can do them all. He said that could be a special project.

Councilman Smith said he would like to see the \$50,000 stay in the budget and use another \$100,000 from the ARPA funds.

City Manager Traynham said they had not conducted a housing survey in a number of years. They have discussed conducting a survey throughout the city and ranking by priority. Then they would have a list to work from and the city has a significant number. As far as any incentives for redevelopment it would go through the general government budget for economic development or housing development rather than the Planning Department budget.

Councilwoman Bryant asked if the City could not issue citations in the matter Councilwoman Scarbrough brought up to encourage people to clean up. Public Works Director Chalker replied it would be a combination answer because Chief Martin would speak to the citation part of it. The Police Department has issued several citations for yards similar to what they were talking about. The property Councilwoman Scarbrough was talking about along with about five others across the city have hauled in so much material that he does not have the manpower to remove it. That does not mean they cannot go make different visits on different days. If he would take the number of workers to needed to take this stuff out, they will not be able to do anything else that day including trash pickup. It is a big issue. He said citizens have asked why not get a contractor to do it. They do not have the money set aside to use a contractor; they try to do everything themselves as much as they can. When he took this job several years ago, they had line items in the Public Works, Planning and Police budgets for "Operation Clean-Up." That was a city-wide effort to address different problem housing areas. They have yards that look like dump sites and other yards that look like timber yards. They do try to deal with them with the abatement process and send them letters. They keep records on all of that.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked if they could make the property owner or renter pay for having the junk removed. Public Works Director Chalker replied they do have that ordinance on the books now. They bill so much per hour plus charges for equipment and labor and if they do not pay, it gets attached to their property as a tax lien per ordinance.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked why it is the City's responsibility to clean up their mess and why can't the City make them clean it up. Attorney Davis replied as Public Works



Director Chalker stated they do have an ordinance on it. The basic process is they would have to expend City resources through actual City personnel and equipment or spend City money outside contractors to come in and perform those services. Once that is done whatever those costs are become a lien on that piece of real estate. Then they try to collect on that lien by taking the piece of real estate and having it sold to the extent that will satisfy the lien. Depending on the costs, sometimes it can and sometimes it can't. The City's process is to cite them to let them know there is an issue, if the owner does not take steps to remedy then the ball is back in the City's court. Then the City has to expend those resources to clean it up for them.

Mayor Doughtie said City Manager Traynham mentioned earlier about the health issue. He wondered if they could approach it that way. It's a real problem that did not get that way overnight. There are a lot of absentee landlords here.

City Manager Traynham stated the authority for the City to have ordinances not just on tall grass, but also unsafe buildings and dilapidated homes comes under the authority for public health and safety.

Public Works Director Chalker added there are properties that become repeat offenders. Maybe they need to look at adding a line item back into the budget that was previously called Operation Clean Sweep, but community funds for cleanup of certain residences.

Planning & Development Director Wise said he has lived in historic districts and rehabbed historic properties. The City has the largest historic districts and that was a consideration when he took the job. He was a big preservationist. He was also a developer and has rehabbed commercial property too. He has also served as a preservation consultant in a lot of communities that he has lived in. He has a Masters in Historic Preservation, Urban & Regional Planning and Public Administration. He was given a tour on his first day and knows there is a housing need here. He was more than happy to go out and do an assessment; he has done that before and graded properties. He was shown the turtle house and told it was slated for demolition. That would be a loss for the community. He was good at making partnerships and explained how he has gone about saving properties as a developer in the past. He has grant writing experience as well and reported many grants he has written.

City Manager Traynham stated they may believe they have gotten off track in the budget discussions but they were getting into the real goals and ideas of what Council's role is in this. She asked City Council to discuss and share with her their goals and priorities.

Mayor Doughtie suggested City Council members and department heads to ask the community what they wanted. They wanted their input.

Councilman Smith said they needed to find out what the income was going to be before they can decide on expenditures. City Manager Traynham replied according to the NCLM the revenue estimates will be published this week. She did not know a specific date or time. They are still within the NC General Statute requirements for having department budget requests due into the Finance Director and City Manager by April 30<sup>th</sup>. They are way ahead of that now.

City Manager Traynham introduced Finance Director Appointee, Carmen Johnson. She stated Ms. Johnson has a profound experience in finance and local government accounting. They look forward to her starting April 25<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Johnson said she lived in Jackson and her experience includes working as a Controller for Georgia Pacific for 9 years, worked for the NC Department of Revenue for 5 years and Trillium Healthcare Resources as the Accounting Manager for the last 9-1/2 years. She said she was excited about this opportunity.

City Council took a 5 minute break.

Mayor Doughtie called the meeting back to order.

### **American Rescue Plan Act Funding Guidance for Standard Allowance Option**

City Manager Traynham they have participated in the Office Hours and with the information provided the School of Government who is in partnership with the NC League of Municipalities and working with the US Treasurer's Office to help make the process of this very generous grant as easy as possible for administration by the City. They have a mandatory report that is due by April 30, 2022. The report will document activities from March 3, 2021 up to March 31, 2022. She reported the City has not spent any of the ARPA monies at this point.

She stated the School of Government, other partners and units of government who have populations below a certain threshold and received less than \$10M are strongly encouraged to take the Standard Allowance Option. She has previously discussed how to make it work and how it goes forward. On Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., she and Interim Finance Director Fahey have registered for a School of Government course that will provide them step by step guidance, templates and documents on what to do in order to make the process as easy as possible and to be in compliance with the law. She understands that if they code the monies to salaries and benefits which are a government expense for that time period, they are essentially reimbursing themselves.

City Manager Traynham reported she has completed the identity verification in order for her to be the administrator for the reporting documents. She looked at the reporting documents yesterday and it appears to be fairly user friendly. The course on Monday will

be more intense. She would like to bring the grant project ordinance to City Council at the April 19, 2022 meeting for their consideration in order to move forward. The reporting at the end of the calendar year, all of that will satisfy the reporting for the immediate future. If they were to consider other methods of funding they would have to substantially increase auditing expenses and administrative line items for that. She would like to follow the encouragement that has been offered to them that is an allowable option.

She invited City Council members who may be interested to join them in the course on Monday. She will have the virtual meeting on in either her office or the conference room. She said there will be one of the weekly Office Hours tomorrow morning that is offered by the School of Government via Zoom.

City Manager Traynham stated the federal government has created this program and there is a lot of monies out there for municipalities and local governments. The City is doing everything they can to follow the exact guidance in accordance with the law.

Mayor Doughtie stated he believes this will make all of City Council feel much more confident with documenting what the City is doing with this money. City Manager Traynham said she did not expect there to be any issues. This is a nationwide funding program, not just localized to North Carolina. Roanoke Rapids is one of thousands of communities that is exercising this option and is encouraged to do so.

### **Progress Report – Employee Salaries, Benefits**

City Manager Traynham said she wanted to give an update because during the March 15, 2022 meeting, City Council heard from the Police Department about some salary adjustments or changes that would assist with employee retention and recruitment. She said she would have some recommendations for City Council at the next regular meeting with is April 19<sup>th</sup> but she wanted to provide a progress report tonight. There have been some discussions about whether they were just going to look at the Police department or all City staff.

She referred to the salary schedule enclosed in their agenda packets. She reported this is the schedule that City Council adopts for each job. It states the grade, job description/classification (whether it is exempt or not) and minimum and maximum of the salary range. This is City Council's document that is established and any changes requested is what City Council has to approve.

City Manager Traynham called their attention to page 2 between Grades 18 and 19, they have the Police Officer classification starting at \$38,000. If they look just above that at Grade 18 Master Officer, it is a step above the Police Officer which is at \$37,000. That is one of the discrepancies when the starting salary was increased to \$38,000. This is an

adjustment that was not made that needs to be made. In order to change some of the salaries to be more competitive they would need look at some amendments to this classification schedule that would change some of the starting pay of not just Police Officer positions but also other positions within the City. Adjustments that are requested or desired that are within the minimum and maximum go into salary lines through merit increases or obtaining certain training or certifications.

She stated she was not sure how long this style of grade and class has been in place. Human Resources Director Caudle is conducting a comparative analysis and looking at what other communities are doing to incentivize increased pay and get people off the bottom so they are not constantly on the minimum of their salary range.

She said she has received Chief Martin's career development plan and will be taking a look at it to see where there could be some opportunities not just with the Police department, but across the City for improvements to pay based on merit and accomplishments. She reported since she had been with the City there has not been an active merit program in place associated with an annual review. It has been done as employees went to school or do certain things to get increases. As part of the upcoming budget, adjusting salaries will require money. She stated the City has a lot of really good employees. Some of the employees have been with the City for over 13 or even 20 years that are still on the bottom part of their salary range. She does not know how that happened other than a lot of it was cost of living increases. She believes it's time to take a closer look at how the City evaluates and pays employees and try to become competitive City-wide to not just attract employees, but to retain employees. They would like to find ways to incentivize employees to stay with the City and keep contributing to that longevity instead of hopping around in order to get a temporary increase in pay. Recruitment and retention is not solely about salaries, but it is about the other types of things the City offers. They are looking at the longevity pay, schedules and vacation accruals. There is not one easy application that fits all employees because there is such a different level of work.

City Manager Traynham said she wanted to give an update and feels confident by the meeting in two weeks she will have a more specific recommendation for City Council's consideration.

Councilwoman Bryant appreciated City Manager Traynham sharing this information because this is what she had been asking about. The only thing she saw that was missing would be a mid-range for the salaries. If they could get to a point where they would feel comfortable with implementing a COLA, it would be a tremendous improvement. Employees would probably feel better knowing they were being compensated. The mid-range salaries should be what most people were aiming for.

Mayor Doughtie said he hoped City Manager Traynham would encourage department heads to evaluate their people. He was not a fan of moving people up just because they have been on their job for five years, but because they are doing a better job or taking on more responsibility. He learned a lot about this while serving on the school board. They should help people move forward in their career or position or they help them realize that this is not where they need to be. It works better for everyone involved when they have some objectives/goals.

City Manager Traynham agreed and believes there has to be some motivating factor. Whether it is pay or some other type of benefit and to try to restore some of those cushions in salary or merit program to make it stronger would go a long way to help with career development. In leaner times, the City has cut out travel and training and that is where many employees get their opportunities for growth in their career. The City needs to ensure the employees are getting opportunities that they need to become the best they can be.

Councilwoman Bryant confirmed that Human Resources Director Caudle indicated there was a performance evaluation in the HR part of the proposed software program. Performance should be definitely a part of it, not just longevity.

Human Resources Director Caudle said she has found that some departments do have annual reviews, but they are not tied to any merit. They do not have a structured performance evaluation process. The performance module will have templates they can use and a manager can log good and bad things for an employee. Having documentation to support that performance will help. She believes whether the City has merit or not, they should implement some kind of annual review system across all departments for all employees.

City Manager Traynham added that communities are getting creative in providing incentives for their employees or either increasing benefits.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked who was the Canal Museum Supervisor. City Manager Traynham replied right now that position is not funded, but part-time employees operate the museum. Park & Recreation Director Simeon included restoring funding that position in his budget meeting.

Councilman Smith stated he wanted every employee of the City to make a good living, but they need to be careful about what they do. He said the City is like the family out there on a fixed income. The only monies they get is tax revenue. They could give employees a big raise, and he would like to see that, but when they do they will have to take away something from that department. They need to think about it. They give something on the top end,

then they have to take something off the bottom end. Again, he would like the employees to have a good living and benefits.

City Manager Traynham said she fully agreed with Councilman Smith. That is part of the next phase of this budget process. She noted the \$3,000 salary increase for all full-time employees last summer was a significant increase. There are a lot of things to look at and she was following up on the request that had been presented.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said he would like for them to look at the survey. They may not be able to get everyone there because of the City's situation. He believes that every employee should get an evaluation every year.

### **Miscellaneous**

City Manager Traynham announced on Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. there will be an Easter Egg Hunt for ages 0-12 years old at TJ Davis Recreation Center followed by a Magic Show at 2 p.m.

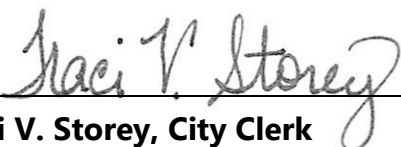
Public Works Director Chalker said there would be Community Clean Up at Rochelle Pond this weekend. Several people from the community will be there to clean up the trash.

Mayor Doughtie suggested people go by Rochelle Park to see the picnic facilities. Last weekend a group met there and painted the building and cleaned up the restrooms. Parks & Recreation put new boards on the picnic tables.

City Manager Traynham said the Fire Department's training that had been planned for this Thursday has been postponed due to the weather. It will be rescheduled.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

  
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Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

**Approved by Council Action on: May 18, 2022**