



# **Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, July 19, 2022 at 5:30 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)  
Wayne Smith)  
Rex Stainback)

## **Council Members**

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

**Absent:** Suetta S. Scarbrough, Council Member

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

## **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 Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to adopt the agenda as presented.

## **Installation of Newly Re-Elected Mayor and Council Member**

Mayor Doughtie called upon Judge Brenda Branch and Judge Teresa Freeman to administer the Oaths of Office for the newly re-elected Mayor and City Council member.

District Court Judge Teresa Freeman administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Emery Doughtie.

Chief District Court Judge Brenda Branch administered the Oath of Office to Councilman Wayne Smith.

Mayor Doughtie announced Councilwoman Suetta Scarbrough was supposed to be sworn in as well, but she is still out on medical leave. She will be sworn in by the City Clerk in the next week.

### **Special Recognitions**

#### **Fire Department**

Fire Chief Patrick recognized Fire & Life Safety Educator Michael Butts who has been with the Fire Department for about ten years. Halifax County Safe Kids Coordinator Frances King presented Mr. Butts with an Excellence in Injury Prevention Award by an individual.

Chief Patrick announced that unfortunately Mr. Butts' last day would be Friday. He had accepted a position with another company.

Mr. Butts thanked the City for the opportunities given to him during his tenure with the Fire Department for the past 10 years. He wanted everyone to know what a wonderful group of people were in the Fire Department and work for the City. He expressed to City Council that he feared he would not be the last one to leave the Fire Department with the current salary situation and the way other places are recruiting by offering higher salaries. He respectfully asked City Council to consider doing something to fix these issues.

### **Public Comment (Unscheduled)**

#### **Jerry McDaniel**

Mr. McDaniel stated he appreciated the Fire Department. Unless you've ever awoken and smelled smoke in the house, you are suddenly in love with a fireman. In the meantime you forget about them. You only have to smell it one time and your views will change. The Police Department is the same way.

He asked Mayor Doughtie if he knew Russell Grant or Blackwell Pierce. Mayor Doughtie replied he knew Mr. Pierce. Mr. McDaniel said he was happy to get thrown out of the meeting when making a comment and mentioning a name and he should have gotten thrown out; it's the nastiest word he's ever heard. He did not think they

understood who said it because he rolled into a meeting here on cloud nine. He got such a warm reception and they didn't throw him out. He did not know what kind of double standards they had or agendas they have. He stated one of them was race relations and one of them is coal ash. Anyone that is new better get ready to handle them.

### **Approval of City Council Minutes**

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to approve the June 13, 2022 Special Meeting and June 21, 2022 City Council Regular Meeting minutes as drafted.

### **Committee Appointments**

#### **Library Advisory Committee**

City Clerk Storey reported the terms of Marci Merritt, Janet Moore and Alice Newsome on the Library Advisory Committee expired on May 23, 2022. All three have served the maximum number of 2 consecutive terms allowed by City policy. Council has the authority – and has done so in the past – to waive this section of the policy. A copy of their volunteer applications and a list of the current membership were enclosed in their agenda packet for their review and consideration.

She stated City Council took a ballot vote earlier and all three received a unanimous vote to be reappointed.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to waive the City Policy for Marci Merritt, Janet Moore and Alice Newsome and reappoint them to the Library Advisory Committee.

#### **Roanoke Canal Commission**

City Clerk Storey stated the Roanoke Canal Commission has a vacancy for a representative for the City of Roanoke Rapids. John Thomas has submitted an application to be considered for appointment. A copy of his volunteer application and list of the current membership was enclosed in the agenda packet for their review and consideration. The term for this vacancy expires July 17, 2024.

She reported City Council took a ballot vote earlier and Mr. Thomas received a unanimous vote to be appointed.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to appoint John Thomas as the City of Roanoke Rapids representative on the Roanoke Canal Commission.

## Old Business

### Roanoke Rapids Theatre Update

City Attorney Davis stated the City does not own the Theatre and has not owned the Theatre since 2016. They sold the Theatre to G&T Holdings LLC and the City kept a promissory note on it. As discussed last time, the balloon payment is overdue. The original agreement with G&T Holdings was they were to make monthly payments. At some point a few years ago, they were supposed to make a balloon payment and pay off everything that was owed on the Theatre and the interest. They were not able to do that so they came back to the City. Several extensions were worked out with different terms to try to move that balloon payment into the future because they were having difficulties with paying it at the time. They are at a point where it appears that will not be a possibility. G&T Holdings are in default and they have not discussed any extension plus he believes it has passed time for that.

He gave City Council the following three options on how to proceed:

Option 1: They could go back to G&T Holdings and extend the loan again. City Council has done this in the past, but it does not appear G&T Holdings would be able to make the balloon payment. He stated he did not feel that was a very good option.

Option 2: The City could authorize him as City Attorney to foreclose on it. The process may be more familiar to the public. There are a lot of costs related to that legally and with time. The building would be sitting aging and G&T could say they were not paying the utilities or insurance on it; it could be a problem. He did not think this option was the best option if they did not have to take it.

Option 3: The City could accept the property back from G&T Holdings in lieu of a foreclosure proceeding called a Deed in Lieu of Foreclosure. He presented that document to City Council (On file in Clerk's Office).

Attorney Davis suggested City Council considered Option 3 and ask for the property back in lieu of entering into any foreclosure procedure. He added the corporation G&T Holdings was the owner of the Theatre, not Thomas McLean, Evon McLean or members of the corporation. G&T Holdings does not have any other assets other than the Theatre. If the City went through foreclosure proceedings, their best day is the City either gets the Theatre back or get whatever somebody is willing to pay for it in an auction. He did not believe they were good scenarios.

He said if City Council votes to accept a deed in lieu of foreclosure tonight, ultimately the property comes back into the possession of the City for the first time since

2015/2016. It would be up to City Council what they would want to do with that. He believes they could have it signed and have the property back in their possession by the end of this week. He added later in the meeting there would be some discussion on the costs for the building such as insurance and utilities.

Attorney Davis said before his tenure as City Attorney, he believed there was a period where the City tried to manage the Theatre as a business. He was skeptical that would be something the City would be interested in.

He said if they moved forward with his recommendation tonight, at the August meeting City Council could consider accepting bids. He and staff would work on ideas to present to City Council.

Councilman Smith asked if a title search had been done. Attorney Davis replied yes, a title search has been done and no liens were found. He added a bill of sale for all the personal property for the Theatre such as the light board and furniture would be done to return that property to City.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked Attorney Davis if he foresaw any issues with getting this taken care of. He replied if City Council agrees to it tonight, he had representation from G&T Holdings' attorney that they were willing to execute it tomorrow.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked how much the balloon payment was. Attorney Davis replied \$2.1M plus \$400,000 in interest. G&T Holdings have paid the 2021 taxes, but the 2022 taxes have not come due yet.

Mayor Doughtie stated they have been in the building for six months so G&T Holdings would owe taxes, but the City probably would not be able to collect them. Attorney Davis agreed because the corporation has no assets. He explained the law and how individuals cannot be held responsible for a corporation.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to go with Option #3 to accept the Deed in Lieu of Foreclosure on the Roanoke Rapids Theatre.

## **New Business**

### **NC Department of Transportation Sweeping Agreement Extension**

Public Works Director Chalker reported in the past, City Council has authorized the Mayor to execute an agreement with NCDOT for the City to perform routine sweeping of various streets and bridges within the corporate limits on an as needed basis.

One year extensions have been requested and granted each year and NCDOT is again requesting that the City Council extend this agreement for an additional period of one year (through June 1, 2023). A copy of the letter from Mr. Randy Davis, Bridge Engineer for NCDOT is attached.

Public Works Director Chalker stated the main bridge the City sweeps as part of this agreement is on Hwy. 48 at the paper mill. It is very hazardous because the bark falls off the trucks going to and from the mill. He added they use every bit of the \$10,000 NCDOT pays with this agreement.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to extend the Sweeping Agreement (Agreement No. 7951) with the NC Department of Transportation for a period of one year (through June 1, 2023) and to authorize Mayor Doughtie to execute the attached letter.

#### **Contract to Conduct Annual Audit for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2022**

Finance Director Johnson stated in accordance with NCGS 159-34(a), City Council must approve a contract for the audit of the City's financial statements. Attached are copies of the Engagement Letter and Contract with Gregory T. Redman, CPA to conduct the audit of the City's financial statements for 2022 in the amount of \$22,400.

Councilman Smith asked if that amount was an increase over last year. Finance Director Johnson replied yes and that was due to ARPA funds and Mr. Redman is required to perform a single audit on those funds.

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to approve the Letter of Engagement and Contract with Gregory T. Redman, CPA to conduct the audit of the City's financial statements for 2022 and to authorize the Mayor to execute the Engagement Letter and Contract.

#### **Consideration of Budget Ordinance No. 2022.12 – Byrne Justice Assistance Grant**

Finance Director Johnson presented Budget Ordinance No. 2022.12. The Police Department received a State grant through the Department of Public Safety – Division of the Governor's Crime Commission called the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant; Federal Grant #15PBJA-21-GG-00278-JAGX CFDA #16.738 in the amount of \$24,001.85 to purchase helmets and vests for police officers. The City will pay out these funds, but will be reimbursed through the grant.

**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, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023, according to the following schedule:

**SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES**

Byrne Justice Assistance Grant - LEBG	
<b>Project Revenues – Police</b>	<b>\$24,001.85</b>
	<hr/>
<b>FUND PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$24,001.85</b>

**SECTION 2.** The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

**SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES**

Byrne Justice Assistance Grant - LEBG	
<b>Project Expenditures - Police</b>	<b>\$24,001.85</b>
	<hr/>
<b>FUND PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$24,001.85</b>

**SECTION 3.** This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

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Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to adopt Budget Ordinance No. 2022.12 in order to increase the FY2022-2023 budget in the amount of \$24,001.85.

**Consideration of Budget Ordinance No. 2022.13 – Theatre Expenses**

City Manager Traynham stated when the Deed in Lieu of Foreclosure takes place there are several items that need to be budgeted for, therefore a budget amendment is required to fund certain activities for the Theatre building and property. A copy of the expected budget expenses were distributed to City Council showing the costs for 3 months, 6 months and 12 months. (Copy on file in Clerk’s Office). She recommended approving Budget Ordinance No. 2022.13 to increase the budget to cover 3 months of expenses on the Theatre in the amount of \$51,420.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked for clarification on the costs that state annually, but show up on the spreadsheet three times. Public Works Director Chalker explained that no matter which option they chose, the expense would be one time only.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked even though the building would be empty, they would still expect the utility costs to be these amounts. Public Works Director Chalker replied they had been interfacing with G&T Holdings and they have shared their most recent utility bills. They increased the amounts a little with the goal to not spend over this amount. They planned to approach Roanoke Electric to negotiate a better rate schedule.

Councilman Smith asked if it was necessary to have phone and internet in the building for 3 months when nobody would be in the building. Public Works Director Chalker replied that was based on a comment Attorney Davis had in an email that the City needed to be prepared to make the building available for rentals so they could possibly recover some of their monies. One example is Dominion Energy stages there during storms and one day rental from them is very good rental fee. They tried to look at the big picture. The City's price for phone and internet service per month is about a \$1,000 savings because of negotiation with the vendor as opposed to what G&T Holdings pays.

Attorney Davis added that he believed the security system required a phone line. Public Works Director Chalker agreed and said the elevator has a required phone line and the fire system requires two phone lines and security system requires one. One of the fire system phone lines and security system phone line can be shared. There makes it a minimum of three phone lines. Also, there is identifiable marketed phone number (252) 536-3333 that they were already talking to the phone company about holding on to that number.

Attorney Davis stated it is just a budget and that does not mean it all has to be spent. The goal was to put a reasonable number out there that would not cause staff to come back in a month and ask for another budget amendment. He feels 3 months was a reasonable time frame.

Public Works Director Chalker stated they were not interested in promoting shows although they would be open to renting to Dominion because it requires minimal effort and would benefit the City financially.

Councilman Smith asked where the monies were coming from for the budget amendment. City Manager Traynham replied the general fund.

**Ordinance No. 2022.13**  
**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, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023, according to the following schedule:

**SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES**

Theatre Expenses	
<b>Project Revenues – Theatre</b>	<b>\$ 51,420</b>
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<b>FUND PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 51,420</b>

**SECTION 2.** The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

**SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES**

Theatre Expenses	
<b>Project Expenditures - Theatre</b>	<b>\$ 51,420</b>
	<hr/>
<b>FUND PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 51,420</b>

**SECTION 3.** This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

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Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Stainback and unanimously carried to adopt Budget Ordinance No. 2022.13 for three months of Theatre expenses in the amount of \$51,420.

**Consideration of CDBG-NR Construction Contract**

City Manager Traynham stated as discussed in previous meetings, there are several homes slated for rehabilitation under the Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization (CDBG-NR) program funded by the NC Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division.

She said City Council needs to approve the CDBG-NR construction contract award for the demolition and new home construction for properties at 1012 Washington St and 137 Poplar St. These two homes have the severest needs compared to the others and are the only demo and rebuilds under the CDBG-NR program. The sealed bids were opened and tabulated by grant administrator Insight Planning & Development. They received two responses, one from B&B Construction and one from Paul Woolard Construction. The recommendation is to award the contract to the lowest bidder, Paul Woolard Construction.

The remaining homes will have renovations and will be presented for contract award at a future meeting. After we get moving along on these two, our grant administrator (Insight) will be in contact with the other homeowners to schedule site visits, develop a scope of work for each property, procure contractors through bidding, and tabulate results. These two homes are in the greatest need.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee clarified this would be for demolition and rebuild. City Manager Traynham confirmed that was correct. The homeowners have selected their floor plans in working with the consulting firm and are very excited.

Mayor Doughtie asked if the homeowners would have a mortgage on the new home. City Manager Traynham replied that was correct. There is a forgiving balance every year through this grant program. These were some severe needs and they meet the criteria for replacement.

Councilman Smith asked if the homeowners would be required to pay the taxes on the homes. City Manager Traynham replied yes.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked when the work would get started. City Manager Traynham replied hopefully very soon. They need to get the contracts executed in order to get the permits.

Councilman Smith asked what type of homes they were going to be – 3 bedroom brick homes. City Manager Traynham replied for 1012 Washington, it is in the historic district so it has to be like in kind to the other homes in the district. They had to get approval from the State for that. The floor plans will be comparable to the existing home and homes in the neighborhood. He said he hates to approve something that they do not know what they are approving. They do not know what the homes will look like.

City Manager Traynham stated there are different options the State allows under the CDBG program so the homeowner were able to pick from about three different concepts. The program itself is federally funded by the State so the options included is at the discretion of what the program will allow. These are not high-end luxury homes. All is done in compliance within CDBG guidelines and no City costs going into this; it is all going through the grant.

Mayor Doughtie asked if they owned the homes now. City Manager Traynham replied yes that was one of the requirements. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee clarified that the owners had to live in the homes for eight years to meet the full requirements. City Manager Traynham replied that was correct.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to authorize the City Manager to execute a CDBG-NR Construction Contracts with the lowest qualified bidder for reconstruction of 1012 Washington Street and 137 Poplar Street.

### **Consideration of Budget Ordinance No. 2022.14 – Capital Expenses**

City Manager Traynham stated this was continued discussion from previous meetings about capital expense items for FY 2022-2023 budget. She presented a spreadsheet to City Council (On file in Clerk's Office). She noted an error on the spreadsheet under Public Works for the purchase of a trash truck (Line 31). Under the City Manager's recommendation, the amount should be \$0 because they found they could lease a trash truck. The recommended amount for Public Works tonight was \$623,631.

She stated tonight she was recommending City Council consider a Capital Ordinance No. 2022.14 in the amount of \$1,876,514. It includes the following:

#### **General Government**

- \$500,000 for economic development incentives

#### **Police Department**

- Lease 14 police vehicles - \$153,300
- Upfit and graphics for 14 vehicles - \$128,800
- 14 in-car cameras - \$98,000
- 50 portable VIPER radios - \$150,000
- 14 in-car radios - \$49,000

**Total for Police Department: \$579,100**

#### **Public Works Department**

- \$30,000 for the signal upgrade at 7<sup>th</sup> & Park Avenue.
- Lease a trash truck for \$57,220 per year.
- Commercial lawn mower - \$12,000
- Lease a staff vehicle - \$7,235/year
- Lease seven (7) F-150 Pickup trucks - \$63,826/year total
- Lease F-250 Pickup truck - \$10,570/year
- Street Resurfacing - \$500,000

**Total for Public Works: \$623,631**

#### **Fire Department**

- Ten (10) portable VIPER radios - \$30,000
- Station #1 needs three (3) A/C units replaced - \$21,000

- Lease F-250 Pickup truck (tow Safety house & other needs) - \$10,225/year

**Total for Fire: \$61,225**

Parks & Recreation Department

- Lease staff vehicle SUV - \$7,235/year
- Lease Pickup truck - \$9,118/year
- Two (2) security camera systems (TJ Davis & Kirkwood Adams) - \$8,000
- Virtual Board Meeting Audio Equipment & Upgrade (Lloyd Andrews) - \$12,000
- Recreation Master Plan 5-year Update - \$50,000

**Total for Parks & Recreation: \$86,353**

Planning & Development Department

- Lease three (3) SUVs - \$21,705/year
- Replacement of laptops/computers - \$4,500

**Total for Planning & Development: \$26,205**

City Manager Traynham reported her grand total recommendation for tonight is \$1,876,514. This was in addition to the total amounts that had already been approved by City Council as the ARPA offsets in the amount \$1,338,945. Of the total ARPA allocation, if tonight's recommendation is approved, would leave a remainder of ARPA offset funds in the amount \$1,348,288 which they could look at the deferred needs that were not recommended at this time.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked what the plan was to look at the items that she did not include in her recommendation that they hoped would be on the list. City Manager Traynham replied City Council has some strategic planning scheduled in the Fall and she recommends deferring any other additional expenses. The other needs will still exist and should look at them in the next few months.

Councilwoman Bryant stated she was still not understanding why they would lease so many vehicles and how that would benefit the City in the long run. She asked for better clarification because they were looking at 28 or 29 vehicles in all.

City Manager Traynham said they looked at the overall need during the budget process and what they spend annually. They have a documented need for 29 vehicles. To purchase outright 29 vehicles would cost the City approximately \$1.3M. They looked at how the ARPA funds were to meet significant needs. The City has a very significantly aged fleet of vehicles. She said purchasing a vehicle by the City is a lot different than purchasing a personal vehicle. Getting new vehicles is not just for the procurement, it is also for worker safety. When a fleet is behind, leasing vehicles is recommended to catch up in a way. She added the City would not have access to many of these vehicles without being in the leasing program.

City Manager Traynham reported she spoke with the Enterprise representative this afternoon and he informed her the City could get a majority of the vehicles by August. She said the City spends a lot of money on fuel and newer vehicles meet better fuel efficiency standards. The City is also spending a lot of money on the maintenance of old vehicles; they are spending more than what they are worth.

City Manager Traynham referred to the handout distributed by Police Chief Martin listing the Police Department's current fleet of vehicles and costs. She reported almost \$350,000 has been spent on maintenance and repair costs since those vehicles have come into their fleet. When looking at the vehicles from model year 2017 up to 2022, less than 5% of the cost was spent on repair. They have only spent \$16,671 on the newer vehicles. From model years 2012 up to 2016, they have spent almost \$250,000 on maintenance. Models prior to 2012, the City has spent \$180,000 on maintenance as of June. She stated 32 of the Police Departments vehicles have over 75,000 miles on them and 20 have more than 100,000 miles on them.

She said the City's passenger fleet consists of about 113 vehicles. She said 50% of those vehicles pre-date modern electronic stability control safety features. Only about 20% of the fleet up to date on federally mandated safety features. Many of the City's vehicles meet the severe driving conditions as defined by CARFAX and AAA. She explained it is considered workplace hazards for the employees.

City Manager Traynham said in the balancing of the costs and benefits of leasing versus purchasing the vehicles, she found leasing the vehicles will allow the employees to be safer and the City will not spend as much on fuel as well as newer vehicles require less maintenance. The leasing program allow Enterprise to trade out and the City would get the equity in those vehicles they trade out and sell after just a few years depending on the demand and program. The payments are affordable and reduce the administrative overhead. It will help with employee morale by giving people proper equipment to use and save in capital costs.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee referred to the handout and asked if they had that many vehicles in their possession. Police Chief Martin replied the "grayed out" items means they no longer have those vehicles. Mayor Doughtie added there were a lot of cars on this list. Chief Martin reminded City Council that they have 44 sworn law enforcement officers, administrative staff, detectives as well as undercover and spare vehicles. Chief Martin said what Enterprise brings to the table is they have the vehicles readily available at a reduced price. He explained to Councilwoman Bryant that the benefit of leasing the vehicles versus purchasing them was they would spend hundreds of thousands of dollars more if they bought them outright. They also have the opportunity to rotate them out in 3 years or 5 years thus possibly reducing the

payments, depending on the market. They are getting a reduced price through the lease program which is going to cost the City less money in the long run. It reduces the cost on maintenance of vehicles, the wear and tear, they are rotated out and they have a planned maintenance that can be worked with the City garage. In his discussion with the Sheriff's Office, they have already replenished their entire fleet and it has reduced their maintenance 75-80% in the last year and a half. He said if they purchased 14 vehicles outright upfront they would need \$730,000 right away. If they lease them through this program, it would be \$630,000; they would still get them at State contract. This includes the price of the vehicle, upfit and graphics. This way they can sell the patrol vehicle at a higher price because it is already wired up to be a patrol vehicle to another agency. They would take the radios out and move on; that is where the savings comes in. He said it would not only benefit the Police Department but other City departments as well.

City Manager Traynham added Enterprise could sell the vehicles at a higher price than the City could.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked how they would select vehicles to replace because he sees a lot of vehicles that need to be gone. Chief Martin replied they were going to look at the market value of the vehicles.

Public Works Director Chalker said he had been studying SUVs and pickup trucks and looking for a mechanism to use these vehicles for a set amount of time. If Enterprise offers to come pick them up and give the City "x" amount of dollars and the City makes money on the vehicle then they would ask them to bring another vehicle and do it again. He said to do this they cannot drill holes in them or would need to do it minimally for upfit. He said they were anxious but excited about this and want to come back to City Council in 18 months to report the program works.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked how they were going to get rid of the really old vehicles. Public Works Director Chalker replied however many units the City gets is how many old vehicles were going up for auction. They have their list made out.

Councilman Smith asked what was the total cost of the lease program for all the vehicles per year. City Manager Traynham replied she believed it was just under \$240,000 per year. She noted the City has that amount budgeted in vehicle maintenance. Also, if they act now, they can take advantage of the 2022 vehicles. If they delay a decision, they could be looking at 2023 models that will be six more months out.

Councilman Smith asked why they would spend \$9,200 on upfit when it could be

done cheaper than that. City Manager Traynham replied the graphics were included in that and this is budgeted based on some of the values Chief Martin provided. If things can be done in a less expensive amount they would opt for that. Chief Martin reported they reached out for quotes for installation. He has spoken with Public Works Director Chalker about upfit, but the price of materials is high. Per NC State Statutes there are certain guidelines they have to follow for a patrol vehicle. He noted they have cut it to the bare minimum. He went through the list and has knocked \$2,500 - \$3,500 off that he felt would keep them within the guidelines.

Councilwoman Bryant asked how many vehicles did they anticipate needing next budget year. City Manager Traynham replied she did not know. They would have to bring that to City Council for their consideration in the upcoming budget year. Right now they know they have a documented need for 29 vehicles. The leasing program will allow them to do that and sustain that need with time.

Councilwoman Bryant asked if a down payment was required for the leased vehicles. City Manager Traynham replied no and they were not required to make the first payment until the vehicles are delivered.

Mayor Doughtie asked Councilman Smith and Chief Martin if they had anything that City Council needed to know. *(Councilman Smith gave Chief Martin a quote from a vendor – B&G Electronics for upfit in the amount of \$5,300)*. Chief Martin stated he did not have a problem with that if they could do the work for \$5,300. Mayor Doughtie said Chief Martin would need to look into that to make sure it was the same quality of work. Councilman Smith said he took it upon himself to go and he had given a copy to the City Manager too.

Councilman Stainback stated the part he liked about the leasing program was the vehicles were going to be under warranty. He asked Chief Martin if the warranty was 5 years or 100,000 miles. Chief Martin confirmed that was correct. The maintenance costs would be cut back tremendously.

City Manager Traynham stated if City Council wanted to move forward with the recommendations she had made tonight, she requested a motion be made to adopt Ordinance 2022.14 in the amount of \$1,876,514.

Councilwoman Bryant said she noticed the Organizational Assessment and Salary Study was not included in the City Manager's recommendation and she keeps hearing the City is losing employees for the lack of money. She thinks the study is important because they need to know where they stand as compared to other towns our size. The City cannot compete with Raleigh or even Rocky Mount, but if they were going to

know what the City's salaries were compared to other cities that provide the same services, she feels that is important. She also noticed the \$50,000 for Kirkwood Adams was not included and demolition. City Manager Traynham replied she classified those things as deferred needs at this point. They were waiting to see how they end up with using the State Directed Grant funds. The \$50,000 would be better spent for updating the Master Plan that is required to apply for certain grants. She reiterated that the items she did not recommend for funding are just deferred needs for future consideration. She has spoken with department heads and some staff, especially ones who were talking about salary issues, and asked what they thought about a salary study. A lot of the feedback she is getting is they would rather see the money spent directly towards the employees. She feels that may be something that would work down the road, but with the City's financial position, she did not believe they would be prepared to move forward with all aspects of it. She stated she felt it was not an immediate need right now.

Councilwoman Bryant asked if the employees were aware that the City was incurring about \$96,000 for insurance for them which at 169 employees that was an additional \$568. She stated benefits were important and thinks the employees need to know what they are. City Manager Traynham said she was not opposed to the study, she finds the other needs were more significant at this time.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated in a previous meeting, they were told staff had done some of the things in house or could do it. Is that still an option? He agreed with Councilwoman Bryant that it was important and believed if they did not do it now, they would never do it.

City Manager Traynham said to add the \$30,000 for the Salary Study would bring up the total recommendation \$1,906,514.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Stainback to adopt Budget Ordinance No. 2022.14 for the capital expenses in the amount of \$1,823,314 and for the upfit for the police vehicles not exceed \$5,400 each. Councilman Smith, Councilwoman Bryant and Councilman Stainback voted in favor; Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee abstained from voting. Motion carried.

**Ordinance No. 2022.14**  
**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, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023, according to the following schedule:

**SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES**

Capital Expenses	
<b>Project Revenues – Capital</b>	<b>\$ 1,823,314</b>
	<hr/>
<b>FUND PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,823,314</b>

**SECTION 2.** The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

**SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES**

Capital Expenses	
<b>Project Expenditures - Capital</b>	<b>\$ 1,823,314</b>
	<hr/>
<b>FUND PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 1,823,314</b>

**SECTION 3.** This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

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Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

**City Manager's Report**

City Manager Traynham thanked City Council for the approval of the employee bonuses at the last meeting. The disbursements of the bonuses for employees were made on July 15, 2022 and been very well received. She reported the bonus for full-time employees would be \$1,800 and \$500 for permanent part-time employees in lieu of a COLA this year.

She announced Saturday, July 30<sup>th</sup> was the Sarah Keys Evans Day observance at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park at 6 p.m. The rain date will be August 6<sup>th</sup> at same time and place.

Councilman Smith asked for an update on Kirkwood Adams Civic Center. She replied the roof repairs are completed and the carpet has been installed and replaced. The fire alarm system is on order. The bids for the restroom renovations have come back. Parks & Recreation Director Simeon reported they have received three bids for the restroom renovations. Staff is putting them together to make sure they are comparing apples to apples. They should receive the comparative final bids in the next couple of

days. They will follow the City's policy on selecting the company and then get with the committee to start looking at colors, tiles, etc. He said they had a little trouble with the fire alarm system company they were working with because they lost one of their employees that was working with the City on the project. They are on track now and have a purchase order so they are moving forward to get it completed.

Mayor Doughtie asked if the work on Kirkwood would be completed by the holiday season. Parks & Recreation Director Simeon replied yes.

Councilman Smith asked for an update on the Chaloner Recreation restroom building. Parks & Recreation Director Simeon replied the delivery date for the swing set/play area is August 26, 2022 and it will be installed a week or two later. City Manager Traynham added as part of the grant program they will be moving into the next phase of the project. They have a floor plan of the restroom building and intended location. One of the main issues was the location due to utilities and topography. Unfortunately, the restrooms will not be open for the current season, but should be ready to go next Spring.

Councilman Smith asked what was going on with the State Directed Grant funds for Main Street. Human Resources Director Caudle replied one of the projects they plan to use the monies on is the "Selfie" Stations. They have three of the four locations committed. Once they have the fourth one in place which she hopes will be in the next day or two, they will send out an artist call. They've already had bids from artists so that should be a quick turnaround. They were on target to have that finished by the end of September. She reported there was another amount of money they were using for site furnishings uptown. That is coming from Main Street's Master Plan they adopted in 2017. The furnishings include trashcans, benches, etc. and they were looking at a 12-18 month turnaround from when you order it. They are on hold for that. The other two things are in limbo, but hopefully once the new Main Street Director gets in place they can start that. This includes the local incentive which they have allocated \$75,000. The Board has not met to have those conversations. The 1026 Roanoke Avenue space is the fourth project and that includes tables and chairs and other small improvements. Again the turnaround for those items is 12-18 months and there have been discussions on whether they should be permanent or semi-permanent. Hopefully, that will be ordered by the new Director.

Councilman Smith stated they were getting some pressure on why this money has not been spent. Human Resources Director Caudle replied it was being worked on. He said if things are on hold, it's not being worked on. Main Street needs to have a meeting. She anticipates the Main Street Board will meet the third or fourth week in August once a new director starts.

## **Finance Director's Report**

Finance Director Johnson presented the preliminary financial report for the period ending June 30, 2022. The General Fund year to date receipts totaled \$17,800,725.17 which includes the 2.2 million of ARPA Funds. General Fund year to date expenditures totaled \$16,249,338.73. After the month of June, 100% of the budget year has been completed. As a result, Year-To-Date Revenues exceeded Expenditures by \$1,551,386.44 which includes ARPA Funds. If they had not received the ARPA funds, Expenditures would have exceeded Revenues by \$730,000.

She reported during the month of June, the City received the following revenues:

- Ad Valorem Tax Revenue
- Sales & Use Tax Revenue (April Sales)
- Hold Harmless Tax Revenue
- Utility Franchise Tax Revenue

## **Other Business/Closed Session**

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to go into Closed Session to consult with the City Attorney on a legal matter as allowed by NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(3).

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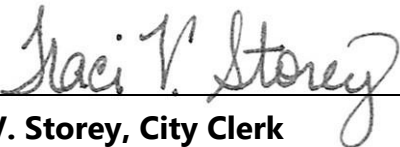
*Minute Book Pages 20914 - 20917 contain Minutes and General Account of a Closed Session which have been sealed until such time as public inspection of those minutes would not frustrate the purpose of the Closed Session.*

**Open Session / Adjournment**

City Council returned to Open Session.

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to authorize the Mayor to sign the Stipulation in the E-911 lawsuit as presented by City Attorney Davis.

There being no further business, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Stainback and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

  
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Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

**Approved by Council Action on: August 16, 2022**