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**Roanoke Rapids City Council**

**December 3, 2013**

The regular/organizational meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on the above date at 5:15 p.m. at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

 Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

 Carl Ferebee, Mayor Pro Tem

 Ernest C. Bobbitt)

 Greg Lawson)

 Suetta S. Scarbrough)

 Carol H. Cowen)

 Wayne Smith, Councilman-Elect

 Joseph Scherer, MPA, MS, City Manager

 Lisa B. Vincent, MMC, City Clerk

 Gilbert Chichester, City Attorney

***Prior to the meeting, the Roanoke Rapids High School Army JROTC posted the Colors.***

Mayor Doughtie called the meeting to order and opened the meeting with prayer.

Mayor Doughtie called Council’s attention to the Conflict of Interest statement in the agenda packet.

With no one indicating a conflict of interest with any of the items on the agenda, motion was made by ­­­­­­­­­­­Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by ­­­­Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda for December 3, 2013.

Senior Resident Superior Court Judge Alma L. Hinton administered the Oaths of Office to Mayor Emery Doughtie, Councilwoman Suetta Scarbrough and Councilman-Elect Wayne Smith.

Mayor Doughtie thanked Judge Hinton for taking time out of her busy schedule to administer the Oaths of Office.

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Mayor Doughtie stated he cannot believe it has been four years since he and Councilman Lawson were first elected to the Roanoke Rapids City Council. He thanked Greg for his guidance, wisdom and leadership. He stated Greg has been a very stable presence on the Council. Mayor Doughtie stated he is certain that Councilman Smith will do a great job but we will miss Greg.

On behalf of the City Council, Mayor Doughtie presented former Council Member Greg Lawson a clock/plaque in appreciation for his years of service with the City’s Police Department and for his years of service on the Roanoke Rapids City Council.

Mr. Lawson stated he appreciates this recognition. He stated it has been an honor and pleasure to serve the citizens of Roanoke Rapids for so many years. He stated it is bittersweet but he is glad his buddy Wayne Smith is sitting on the Council. Mr. Lawson stated he feels this Council has accomplished a lot in the last several years. He stated he appreciates the wonderful guidance of City Manager Scherer. He stated he has given more stability to the City and his work is appreciated. Mr. Lawson also thanked the Mayor and Council members, and wished them good luck and God’s blessing.

Mayor Doughtie recognized the Cadets from the Roanoke Rapids High School Army JROTC for posting the Colors at the beginning of the meeting. He presented them with City Seal lapel pins and stated he appreciates their vision for the future and their willingness to give back to their school and community.

***Mayor Doughtie recognized County Commissioner Vernon Bryant in the audience.***

Mayor Doughtie opened the floor for nominations for Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilwoman Scarbrough nominated current Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and made the motion that he continue to serve as Mayor Pro Tem. Councilwoman Cowen seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee thanked the Council members for the vote of confidence.

Mayor Doughtie made the following Council Liaison appointments:

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* ***Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee***—Library Advisory Committee & Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments Representative.
* ***Councilman Bobbitt***—Beautification Committee, Halifax Horizons Board & Peanut Belt RPO.
* ***Councilwoman Scarbrough***—Senior Center Advisory Committee & Canal Museum Advisory Committee.
* ***Councilwoman Cowen***—Recreation Advisory Committee.
* ***Councilman Smith***—Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board.

Ms. Leah Brewer of 1307 E. 9th Street, Roanoke Rapids, NC thanked the Council for letting her come here tonight and share information about Elle and her recent award as the 2013 American Hero Dog. Ms. Brewer stated Elle not only helps children with reading but also has a safety program to teach people how to properly interact with dogs. She stated she also teaches people how to be responsible dog owners. Ms. Brewer shared a video excerpt of the awards show.

Following the presentation, Ms. Brewer stated that Elle has received national media coverage, and it has been a great way to represent Roanoke Rapids and North Carolina. Ms. Brewer also pointed out that Elle will be working with the Roanoke Rapids Fire Department to help teach fire safety.

Ms. Jennifer Clapton, Counselor at Chaloner Middle School, invited everyone to come to Chaloner Middle School and see the work that Elle does with the children. She told a story about Aiden, a student at Chaloner Middle School, and how Elle helped him with his reading and class participation.

Following public comment, Mayor Doughtie read and presented the following Proclamation to Ms. Brewer and Elle:

***City of Roanoke Rapids***

***Proclamation Recognizing Elle the Pit Bull***

***2013 American Hero Dog***

 ***Whereas,*** Elle the Pit Bull began her journey as a therapy dog in 2010 and has touched many hearts; and she is saving lives by teaching children dog safety and helping people overcome their fear of dogs; and

 ***Whereas,*** Elle started a therapy dog program called “Tail Wagging Tales,” helping children enjoy books and improve their reading skills; and

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 ***Whereas,*** Elle also reaches out to educate families about being responsible pet parents, sharing stories about her job as a therapy dog, and spreading positive awareness about dogs that are misunderstood; and

 ***Whereas,*** the American Humane Association “Hero Dog Awards” were created in 2010 to celebrate the remarkable bond between dogs and people in a positive way; and

 ***Whereas,*** Elle was nominated in the Therapy Dog Category for the 2013 American Hero Dog Award; and

 ***Whereas,*** Elle and her parents Leah and Eric Brewer traveled to Beverly Hills, CA for the Awards Show where Elle was announced as the 2013 American Hero Dog winner in the Therapy Dog Category; and

 ***Whereas,*** the City of Roanoke Rapids is proud of Elle and the work she is doing in the community where she has earned the title of “Hometown Hero” in addition to her title as the 2013 American Hero Dog;

 ***Now, Therefore,*** I, Emery G. Doughtie, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Roanoke Rapids, do hereby proclaim October 1, 2014 as ***“Hero Dog Elle Day”*** in recognition of her contributions to the community and her national recognition as the 2013 American Hero Dog.

 ***In Witness Whereof,*** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Roanoke Rapids to be affixed this 3rd day of December, 2013.

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 ***Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor***

Motion was made by Councilman Bobbitt, seconded by Councilwoman Cowen and unanimously carried to approve the November 19, 2013 Council Minutes.

Finance Director Hite stated Council has been presented a budget amendment that will provide additional funding for the Public Works, Parks & Recreation and Police Departments. She stated the budget amendment totals $311,000 that will be appropriated from Undesignated Fund Balance. Ms. Hite stated after this appropriation, the Undesignated Fund Balance represents 32.4% of our current General Fund Budget which is above the 25% minimum.

City Manager Scherer stated our departments have been very frugal with tax dollars. He stated we increased the Undesignated Fund Balance by $1 million last year. He stated over the years, our departments have had to do more with less and he feels it is the appropriate time to address some of our more critical needs. He highlighted some of the needs that will be addressed with this budget amendment:

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* Storm Water Project: *contingency funds for repairs that may not be able to wait for grant funding approval (if any)*
* Rochelle Pond Cleanup: *silt buildup was more extensive*
* Police Department Radios: *radios in severe need of being replaced as current analog radios cannot be repaired*
* Emry Park: *number of issues that need to be addressed*

City Manager Scherer pointed out that we just received notice that we were awarded KaBoom grant funding of $15,000 for new playground equipment at Emry Park.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked what percentage of the Undesignated Fund Balance this budget amendment represents.

City Manager Scherer stated 3%.

Councilwoman Cowen asked the status of frozen positions.

City Manager Scherer stated he hopes to address that in next year’s budget, especially in the Public Works Department.

Motion was made by Councilman Bobbitt, seconded by Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to adopt the following ordinance:

**CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS**

**BUDGET AMENDMENT**

**FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014**

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

**SECTION 1.** The following amounts are hereby appropriated in the General Fund for the operations of the City and its activities for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013 and ending June 30, 2014, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedules:

**SCHEDULE A – GENERAL FUND (OPERATING)**

 Undesignated Fund Balance $311,000.00

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 **GENERAL FUND OPERATING TOTAL (Revenue) $311,000.00**

**SCHEDULE B – GENERAL FUND (OPERATING)**

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 Transfer to Capital $311,000.00

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 **GENERAL FUND OPERATING TOTAL (Expense) $311,000.00**

**SCHEDULE C – GENERAL FUND (CAPITAL)**

 Transfer from General Fund **$311,000.00**

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 **GENERAL FUND CAPITAL TOTAL (Revenue) $311,000.00**

**SCHEDULE D – GENERAL FUND (CAPITAL)**

 Storm Water Project $100,000.00

 Cleanup | Rochelle Pond $ 20,000.00

 Departmental Upgrades $ 40,000.00

 GATOR $ 15,000.00

 Radios | Police Department $ 65,000.00

 Repairs & Maintenance | Police Department $ 10,000.00

 Emry Park $ 45,000.00

 Lockers | Aquatic Center $ 12,000.00

 Carpet | Library $ 4,000.00

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 **GENERAL FUND CAPITAL TOTAL (Expense) $311,000.00**

**SECTION 2.** This Ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

City Manager Scherer thanked Council for adopting the budget amendment.

City Manager Scherer stated a few months ago the City was named in a lawsuit regarding a tax issue with the residents of the Brandy Creek/Wallace Fork Road area. He reported that the County took the lead in the lawsuit as they were more heavily involved. He stated the County has agreed to a settlement of $42,000. He stated our portion of that amount is almost $18,000 which will be deducted from our next property tax payment.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Police Department was able to raise over $4,500 for the “Christmas for Kids” Program. He recognized KapStone for participating in the Turkey Bowl which unfortunately the City did not win.

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City Manager Scherer also recognized the efforts of those involved in the fish fry last week that also went to this cause. City Manager Scherer stated these funds will allow 20 kids to go shopping for Christmas.

City Manager Scherer reported that recently the State acquired two military vehicles and gave one of them to us to be used for this side of the State. He stated it is a Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle. He stated it has been repainted and will be seen in the Christmas Parade on Sunday. City Manager Scherer stated it is 1 of 165 total vehicles donated to law enforcement agencies around the country.

City Manager Scherer reported that according to the Planning & Development Department, Popeyes should be open by the week of Christmas. He stated the Honda dealership at Premier Landing should be opening soon as the final inspection was conducted this week.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Public Works Department continues to collect leaves. He stated they are not on a set schedule and are asking for the public’s patience.

City Manager Scherer reported that the playground equipment at Ledgerwood Park should be completed by the end of the week, and work is progressing on the new shelter.

City Manager Scherer reported that the segment on the Canal Museum will air on UNC TV on Thursday, December 5 at 9:00 p.m., on Friday, December 6 at 8:30 p.m. and on Saturday, December 7 at 8:30 a.m. He stated this is positive exposure for the Canal Museum.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Fire Department continues to upgrade their response time by attending classes. He stated the recently renovated public education vehicle is in the parking lot for viewing.

City Manager Scherer reported on the following upcoming Christmas events:

* ***Fire Department Christmas Supper***, tonight at 7:00 p.m. at Fire Station No. 1
* ***Christmas Tree Lighting***, Thursday, December 5 at 6:00 p.m. at Andrews Building
* ***Christmas Parade***, Sunday, December 8 at 2:00 p.m.
* ***BARC Employee Christmas Luncheon,*** Wednesday, December 11 from 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Kirkwood Adams Community Center

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* ***RABA Main Street Program Fundraiser “Roasting Santa Claus”,*** Monday, December 9 at 6:30 p.m. at david’s (tickets $30.00 each, contact Sherry Hux)

City Manager Scherer recognized Parks & Recreation Director Simeon to provide more information on the Tree Lighting and Parade.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated they are set and ready to go for the Parade this Sunday at 2:00 p.m. He stated they are very excited about having Will Hawkins as the Grand Marshal. He stated little Will has captured the hearts of the community. Mr. Simeon thanked CCB, the overall sponsor of the Parade, and The Computer Guy & Company for the website for registration. Parks & Recreation Director Simeon also thanked rrspin.com and the *Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald* for the media coverage, and Allen Purser and White Motors for the vehicles. He stated the Halifax County Sheriff and our Police Chief will lead off the parade followed by 82 entries. Mr. Simeon also thanked the judges: *Cleve Baker, Betty Bennett* and *Dr. James Ketoff*. He reminded those in the parade to be in front of the Union Mission building at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated the Christmas Tree Lighting will be here at the Andrews Building on Thursday with refreshments at 6:00 p.m. and the tree lighting and Christmas Carols at 6:30 p.m.

City Manager Scherer thanked Mr. Simeon, Kelly Manning and their entire department for their efforts.

Mayor Doughtie also thanked everyone. He stated this is the first time in years that we have not been running around at the end of August wondering if we were going to have a parade or wondering which organization would be organizing the parade.

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilman Bobbitt, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to adjourn.

 

 12/17/13