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**Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council**

A special meeting (Budget Work Session) of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on Tuesday, April 26, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in the first floor conference room of the J. Reuben Daniel City Hall & Police Station.

**Present:** Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Carl Ferebee, Mayor Pro Tem

Ernest C. Bobbitt)

**Council Members**

Suetta S. Scarbrough)

Carol H. Cowen)

Wayne Smith)

Joseph Scherer, MPA, MS, City Manager

Lisa B. Vincent, MMC, NCCMC, City Clerk

Leigh Etheridge, Finance Director

Kelly Lasky, Planning & Development Director

John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director

Chuck Hasty, Police Chief

Stacy Coggins, Fire Chief

City Manager Scherer stated he asked Department Heads to go over their major capital and expense items again in order for Council members to provide him a list of priorities they would like for him to include in the upcoming budget.

**Planning & Development Department**

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated during her last budget presentation, Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked for a listing of her departmental vehicles showing mileage. She distributed a copy of the following to the Council members:

**Planning & Development Department Vehicle Inventory** *as of April 6, 2016 at 9:00 a.m.*

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|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **City Fleet Vehicle #** | **Make** | **Model** | **Type** | **Exterior Paint** | **Year** | **Mileage** |
| 154 | Chevrolet | Malibu | Compact | White | 2003 | 68,683 |
| 155 | Chevrolet | Malibu | Compact | Silver | 2003 | 103,131 |
| 160 | Ford | Crown Victoria | Sedan | Tan/Gold | 2001 | 131,018 |
| 163 | Ford | F-150 | Truck | Burgundy | 2000 | 163,441 |
| 164 | Ford | F-150 | Truck | White | 2016 | 1,230 |

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated the overall goal of her department is code compliance. She pointed out that her number one need is staffing. She stated she is requesting a Planner. She stated this position was laid off in March 2009 and has not been funded since. She stated the requested amount of funding for this position is just over $54,000 which includes fringe benefits. Planning & Development Director Lasky explained that this position would field day to day questions about the Land Use Ordinance, the Sign Ordinance, fences, etc. She pointed out that the office averages between 5 and 10 calls per day, and she serves as Planner in addition to being the manager of the entire department. She stated the Planner would work with her as well as the Minimum Housing Code Officer and the Code Enforcement Officer. She stated a lot of things are going unpermitted. She stated the Planner would work in the field doing routine inspections.

Councilman Smith asked if having this position would speed up the process of businesses opening.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated it will on the front-end. She stated she does try to prioritize many of these requests but site plan reviews can be a lengthy process.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated her next priority is the needed vehicles for her department. She stated as you can see from the list of vehicles she distributed, many are old and have a lot of miles. She stated they have only one reliable vehicle to travel out of town for school certifications. She stated they would like another truck and two SUV type 4-wheel drive vehicles that they can drive out to job sites and also during emergency situations.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked the cost of the vehicles.

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Planning & Development Director Lasky stated they have examined the State Contract and identified a small to mid-size SUV for $24,000, and they would like to be able to get two, and also one Ford truck in the amount of $30,000.

Councilman Smith asked Planning & Development Director Lasky the total number of vehicles she is requesting.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated three.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked Planning & Development Director Lasky if having the Planner will bring them back to full staff.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated it would fill all positions but it would not bring them back up to the staff they had before 2009 when they had multiple Building Inspectors and Code Enforcement Officers. She stated having the Planner will improve the function of the department.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked the total of the department in 2009 and the total now.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated eight or nine in 2009 and having the Planner would bring them to six.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated they are also requesting funds to build up the demolition fund and also requesting funding ($29,000) to update our Land Use Ordinance to contract with someone to do more graphics and to make it a more user-friendly document. She also pointed out that updates are needed to comply with changes in the General Statutes.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked the amount requested for the demolition fund.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated $10,000 to $25,000 a year has been funded for residential demolition and they would like to start a demolition fund for non-residential (unsafe commercial) buildings. She stated we have several current Court orders that we cannot act on due to the lack of funding.

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Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked how much money they are requesting.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated $120,000 to start the fund.

Councilman Smith stated we spent $50,000 to tear down the building in the 1000 block of the Avenue and it is still sitting there. He stated he would hate to spend $120,000 for the same thing to happen.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated they determined that the building at 1026 Roanoke Avenue was in imminent danger of spilling out onto Roanoke Avenue, which would have created a larger problem. She stated having these funds available will help us prevent emergency situations. Planning & Development Director Lasky pointed out that the City has the responsibility to make the funds available since we have Court orders on these buildings.

Councilman Smith stated he does not mind demolitions being funded if we can take possession of the properties.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated unfortunately it is a long process. She stated we are moving forward with 1026 Roanoke Avenue.

Councilman Bobbitt asked about plans for 1026 Roanoke Avenue once the Court matter is resolved.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated the Planning & Development Department has fulfilled its responsibility with regard to the demolition of the property for safety concerns. She stated as far as any further action, her department does not have any responsibility for that.

City Manager Scherer pointed out that the City Attorney has submitted a filing to the County to obtain the property through a lawsuit.

Councilman Bobbitt asked the value of the parcel.

City Manager Scherer stated he does not have that information with him.

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Councilman Smith stated we need to look at funding the Planner position. He asked Planning & Development Director Lasky which of her current vehicles she would take off if the requested vehicles are funded.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated #163, #160 and #155. She stated they may keep #163 since it is a truck but it is not reliable to drive out of town.

Councilman Smith stated he knows the recommendation is for Dodge vehicles but he is not a big fan of Dodge vehicles. He stated he feels we need to try to fund the three vehicles and we need to do something with the Land Use Ordinance. He stated he believes we should try to fund the number 1, 3, 4 and 6 priorities (referencing the following list presented at the April 5 budget meeting):

**Additional Funding Expenditure Listed by Priority**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Priority** | **Description** | **Funds Requested** | **Type of Fund** |
| 1 | Planner, *reinstate full-time position*  *(unfunded since March 2009 due to lay-off)* | $ 54,088.52 | Operational - ongoing |
| 2 | Staff Vehicle 2 *4WD SUV* | $ 27,000.00 | Capital, one-time |
| 3 | Staff Vehicle 3 *Ford F150 4x4* | $ 30,000.00 | Capital, one-time |
| 4 | Staff Vehicle 4 *4WD SUV* | $ 27,000.00 | Capital, one-time |
| 5 | Demolition of Non-Residential Buildings | $120,000.00 | Operational - ongoing |
| 6 | Unified Development Ordinance  *include graphics, user-friendly explanations* | $ 29,000.00 | Capital, one-time |

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he agrees with respect to the Planner. He stated as far as the vehicles are concerned, he is in agreement with the truck. He stated we should try to fund at least one or two cars. He pointed out that the department did get a new truck last year. He stated as far as the demolition is concerned, we need to look at monies that may be out there and we do need to start on some of the commercial buildings.

Councilman Bobbitt asked if there are other commercial properties other than the old People’s Theater and the King property on Jackson Street.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated we also have an order for an outbuilding at 222 Hamilton Street. She stated they are also in the process of working on a building on E. 10th Street across from Domino’s. She stated it is an imminent safety issue. She stated the building at 1302/1304 Roanoke Avenue has significant issues that could collapse into the street.

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Councilman Bobbitt asked if there is asbestos in the building.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated they have not gotten that far in the process yet.

Councilman Bobbitt stated we had talked at one time about a truck with a shell on it to cover plans, etc.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated the SUV would work to carry the large building plans and poster boards around for meetings.

Mayor Doughtie stated the building that adjoins the Union Mission (1302/1304 Roanoke Avenue) obviously has no value. He stated instead of the taxpayers paying to clean it up, if we could get the owners to donate it to the Union Mission, it would be a tax deduction for them and they could get out from under the legal issues.

Planning & Development Director Lasky pointed out that if the owner does not own the property outright, there would be trustees involved.

Mayor Doughtie stated it looks like the Courts try to make it more difficult on us. He stated we have an order for the building at 5th and Jackson Streets.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated yes, we have a Court order for that property.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked if the building in the 1300 block of the Avenue is locally owned.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated yes, and the owner has said he will not put any more money into the property.

Mayor Doughtie stated he thinks it depends on where you are in the state. He stated if you are in a metropolitan area, you can take a building down and recover the cost so much easier, and then put up another in its place.

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Councilman Smith stated we have so many departments that need so much.

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated again that her top priorities are the Planner position and the staff vehicles. She stated we can look at the demolition funding as situations occur.

Councilwoman Cowen asked if we put signage up at the condemned properties to let people know we are not liable.

City Manager Scherer stated that is something we could do.

**Police Department**

Chief Hasty stated he has identified some priorities to help combat drugs and some of the crimes related to drugs. He stated he has requested three positions in order to create the P.A.C.E. Team he described at his first budget meeting. He stated this team would go into areas having the most problems. He stated the cost of the three positions would be $149,500 and the cost of the equipment (includes vehicle, weapon, equipment) would be $140,500.

Chief Hasty pointed out that the Police Department has had a seven man squad since the 1990s. He stated since that time, our call volume and the complexities of these calls have increased. He stated we need more officers on the street.

Chief Hasty stated they have a lot of older vehicles in the department. He stated they have 11 2007 vehicles on the road and are using parts from the other older vehicles. He stated they are requesting seven new vehicles including equipment (radios, lights and sirens) at $41,000 each for a total of around $290,000. He stated this is for the Ford Police Interceptors.

Councilman Smith asked the cost difference between the regular police vehicles and the SUVs.

Chief Hasty stated the car is about $5,000 less but the SUV is just as gas efficient and it is also all-wheel drive.

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Councilwoman Cowen asked the cost of the Interceptor.

Chief Hasty stated $41,000 each. He pointed out that the vehicles for the P.A.C.E. Team are included in the $140,500 mentioned above.

Chief Hasty stated they are also requesting funds to replace handguns.

Mayor Doughtie asked what they would do with the old handguns.

Chief Hasty stated they would trade them back in for credit.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked Chief Hasty if he had looked at purchasing the vehicles locally versus State contract.

Chief Hasty stated the local dealer in Roanoke Rapids was about $400 cheaper per vehicle.

Mayor Doughtie asked if there was any reason not to buy locally.

Councilwoman Cowen cautioned that there are certain guidelines that need to be checked.

City Manager Scherer stated we would need to ensure that the local dealer is a State authorized vendor.

Councilman Smith stated the City-County Drug Task Force is doing a good job but if push comes to shove, he asked why we could not pull our officers back to handle Roanoke Rapids.

Chief Hasty stated we have done that.

Councilman Smith asked if we would still need three more officers.

Chief Hasty stated he would like to have eight more but being a realist, is asking for only three.

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Councilman Smith stated he does not know how we can fund three more positions plus vehicles and supplies. He stated that is over half a million dollars. He asked if there was some way to get a grant so that we could pay over a period of time.

Chief Hasty stated they are looking at that. He stated the first year of the grant would be funded fully, then the second year would be at 75% and the third year would be at 50%.

Councilman Smith stated it would be a lot easier for us to do that. He stated our Finance Director has already said we may have to go into the reserve fund to get through the current budget year. He stated he does not see how we can fund three new positions without a grant.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if there was a way to combine the mid-size SUV vehicles that Planning & Development Director Lasky is requesting with the vehicles the Chief is requesting. He stated if we purchase more cars, we may be able to get a better deal.

It was pointed out that the SUV vehicles are very different vehicles—one being designed for police use.

Councilwoman Cowen asked Chief Hasty if he is thinking of hiring three new people for the P.A.C.E. Team or opening it up to the officers currently in the department.

Chief Hasty stated the people on the P.A.C.E. Team would come from within and they would be replaced with new hires.

Councilman Smith stated he does not think we can afford this without a grant. He stated he can go along with the purchase of five vehicles instead of seven.

Councilwoman Cowen stated she cannot make that decision until she hears from all of the departments about their needs.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked the cost of the handguns.

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Chief Hasty stated $22,500 for 50 handguns.

Councilman Bobbitt asked the unit price of the seven vehicles requested.

Chief Hasty stated $31,000 for the vehicle and $10,000 for the equipment.

Councilman Bobbitt asked what they are doing with the 2007 vehicles.

Chief Hasty stated 11 of them are on the road.

Councilman Bobbitt asked how many are in the scrap pile.

Chief Hasty stated five.

Councilwoman Cowen stated she is still getting a lot complaints about the police vehicles being around town.

Chief Hasty stated it may be where the officer lives.

Councilwoman Cowen stated she realizes that. She stated there have been some in her neighborhood for a long time.

Chief Hasty stated some departments do “hot seating” where vehicles are shared by officers. He stated you would have less vehicles but you would need to replace them every two years because they will wear out quicker. He stated in cases of an emergency, an officer would have to use his personal vehicle to come to the Police Department to pick up a vehicle. Chief Hasty stated we cannot expect officers to drive their personal vehicles to calls.

Councilwoman Cowen stated when you use taxpayer monies, the general public does not see that. She stated all they see is the City purchasing more police vehicles for them to sit around town.

Chief Hasty stated he means no disrespect to Councilwoman Cowen but disagrees with her.

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Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked the likelihood of getting a grant for the personnel.

Chief Hasty stated he does not know.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked the timeframe for the grant.

Chief Hasty stated it ends in June.

City Manager Scherer stated it is usually mid fall when they announce the grant awards.

Councilman Bobbitt asked if the P.A.C.E. Officer’s vehicles will be marked.

Chief Hasty stated yes with the exception of the investigator’s vehicle.

Councilman Bobbitt stated it will be harder to sneak up on people in the marked vehicles.

Chief Hasty stated they will be able to sneak up on the bicycles.

Councilwoman Cowen stated the bicycles were really effective especially in the schools. She stated the officers would come and eat lunch with the children. She stated there are a lot of children that are afraid of or do not like officers because of what they have heard at home. She stated this helped to build a good relationship between the school children and the officers.

Councilman Bobbitt asked about central dispatch.

City Manager Scherer stated we are still waiting to find out the total cost to fund.

**Fire Department**

Chief Coggins stated last year they were fortunate to be able to purchase air packs. He stated they are requesting $60,000 for this year to purchase more and will request $50,000 next year which will give them what they need. He stated

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the $60,000 requested for this year will purchase eight air packs and seven bottles.

Chief Coggins stated they are also requesting $10,000 to redo the parking lot behind Fire Station No. 1. He stated it is 20 years old and it is starting to sink and crumble.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked about using cement.

Chief Coggins stated the cement would be more expensive.

Chief Coggins stated they are also requesting four new personnel. He stated they have submitted a grant and will see what happens with that. He stated we need to raise our minimum staff level.

Chief Coggins stated he is also asking Council to consider either a 5% or 7% across the board raise for his department.

Councilman Bobbitt asked the cost of the four men.

Chief Coggins stated $169,000 with benefits plus $16,000 for uniforms and turn-out gear. He pointed out that we have been very blessed to not have run into problems with our minimum staffing level. He pointed out that a task analysis revealed that we need 15 at a structure fire.

Councilman Smith stated he does not see how we can fund four new personnel.

Councilwoman Cowen stated the salaries in the Fire Department are mighty low.

City Manager Scherer pointed out that the salaries of all our positions are low.

Councilman Smith stated it would not be fair to give the Fire Department more than the other employees.

Chief Coggins stated he agrees but he was just basing that on what happened five years go.

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Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if Human Resources Manager Kearney had done salary surveys for all departments.

City Manager Scherer stated yes.

Councilman Smith stated if we could afford it, he feels we should give every employee a big increase. He stated he is also a firm believer that we need to get out of the first responder business. He stated the program was set up by former Interim Manager Wyatt with the intent that it would be evaluated after a year to see if it was still needed. Councilman Smith stated he believes that Chief Coggins was aware of conversations about that.

Chief Coggins stated he will talk with Marshall Collier but if the Council does not want this program, he is here to appease the majority of the Council.

Councilman Smith stated Chief Coggins is talking about adding four personnel for a cost of $160,000.

Chief Coggins stated the request for more people is to comply with requirements by NFPA for fighting structural fires.

City Manager Scherer pointed out that this is the recommendation of NFPA.

Councilwoman Cowen stated you cannot put an amount of money on a person’s life.

Councilman Smith stated he realizes that but we have to start looking at the cost to do it. He stated the first responder program is costing us. He stated we pay three cents of tax dollars to the 911 Center and we run a $500,000 vehicle up and down the road. He stated EMS is overlapping Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad and we are overlapping Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad. He stated it is time for the County to take some responsibility for Roanoke Rapids. He stated we pay taxes to the County for EMS. Councilman Smith stated he does not mind telling this to the County Commissioners. He stated we have a volunteer organization. He stated we need to let them step up to the plate. He stated the County is costing the City too much money.

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Councilwoman Cowen stated we make a hefty donation to the Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad every year.

City Manager Scherer stated we gave them $25,000 in last year’s budget and we gave them $17,000 in this current year’s budget.

Councilman Smith stated they are requesting $35,000 in the upcoming budget.

Chief Coggins stated they will ask for more money if they have to make more calls.

Councilman Smith stated he has seen the rescue squad beat the Fire Department to calls.

City Manager Scherer stated we are here to prioritize capital budget requests today. He stated this is a discussion for another time.

Councilman Smith stated he is willing to consider funding the air packs and bottles, and the parking lot. He asked about the roof at Fire Station No. 1.

Chief Coggins stated that was a request along with a new generator. He stated he feels they can hold off on the generator.

Mayor Doughtie stated last year at this time, we were asking the City Manager how this year would look. He stated we are already talking about taking funds out of Fund Balance and he is concerned with how things will look next year. He stated the County is looking at a sizeable tax increase to fund the new school and other things. He stated if the County does this, he is concerned about how the larger corporations here will react and worries about how people and other business and industry will feel about coming to Roanoke Rapids.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated when he worked in retail, he remembers being told to make plans for a 10% gain and to do it with 5% less money.

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**Parks & Recreation Department**

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon reviewed the following with Council:

**T. J. Davis 10-6200-9991 T. J. Davis Supervisor**

Unfreeze this position: $51,477.16

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated not having this position affects the overall management of the T. J. Davis Recreation Center. He stated they are the largest facility that has no programming. He stated other employees, including the Assistant Parks & Recreation Director and the Parks Supervisor, are doing other duties that take away from their regular duties. He stated the T. J. Davis Supervisor position coordinates all adult and youth athletics. He stated it is their largest program and they make over 80,000 contacts each year. He stated this position also helps to supervise the part-time employees at Kirkwood Adams Community Center as well as keeping track of rental contracts. He stated this position also plays a vital role in our larger special events such as Halloween and the Christmas Parade. Parks & Recreation Director Simeon also pointed out that with the retirement of Rose Massey at the Senior Center and the subsequent promotion of Thomas Goble to her position, we now have a Program Leader vacancy to fill at the T. J. Davis Center.

Councilman Smith asked if someone would be promoted from within for that position.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated that is what they did with Thomas.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked how many staff members are at the T. J. Davis Recreation Center.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated right now, it is two—himself and Assistant Director Manning. He stated sometimes they have to put the Parks Superintendent in the office to answer calls. He stated it is putting a lot of stress on staff because no one can find time to take vacation.

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Councilwoman Scarbrough ask the difference between a Program Leader and a Supervisor.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated a Program Leader is basically an Administrative Assistant that answers phone calls, helps patrons and prepares monthly reports.

Councilman Smith asked how many part-time employees work for the Parks & Recreation Department.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated about 30 but most of them are seasonal such as lifeguards.

Councilman Smith asked how many part-time employees work at the T. J. Davis Recreation Center.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated they rotate about three or four. He stated they cross-train them to also work at the Community Center and the Library.

Councilman Smith asked Parks & Recreation Director Simeon if we took him away from the Theatre so he could get back to his regular duties, would he still need to make this hire this year.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated they had these same concerns with the shortage in staff long before he started working at the Theatre.

Councilman Smith asked why Thomas was taken out of the Recreation Center and put at the Senior Center.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon explained that Thomas applied for that position as it is a substantial promotion for him.

Councilman Bobbitt stated ever since he has been with the City, a woman has always run the Senior Center.

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Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated Thomas has had a lot training with Rose. He stated he has also taught fitness and computer classes at the Senior Center.

Someone asked what position Mike Manning holds in the department.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon indicated that Mike is in charge of facility maintenance.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked if the new fellow at the Canal Museum is split between the Museum and the T. J. Davis Center.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated Koy is split between departments but he does not go to the T. J. Davis Center until the evenings. He stated all of his administrative responsibilities are at the Canal Museum.

Councilwoman Scarbrough stated she does not want him spread too thin.

Councilman Smith asked how much we pay the Museum Manager.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated he believes it is around $32,000.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon pointed out that the rest of the items on the list are operating:

**T. J. Davis 10-6200-1500 Maintenance & Repairs - Building**

1. $19,500 to replace HVAC Control Panel. Currently, we have no control over thermostats in our building making us **totally inefficient** and creating an uncomfortable environment for patrons and employees. Either we are running this system at maximum capacity for heat and cooling or we have to shut it off completely, putting a lot of stress on the unit.
2. $6,000 to repair the lower front roof covering the offices. Currently, this roof leaks at such a point that the walls and carpeting are wet when we have heavy rains. Roof is 16 years old.

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**Library 10-6300-1500 Maintenance & Repairs - Building**

Requesting $8,000 for The Library Corporation (TLC) service contract which includes a computer server that handles the circulation and cataloging system for the Library. This contract ends this year, so we must fund this in order to continue our circulation and cataloging system.

Councilman Bobbitt asked the length of the contract with TLC.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated five years. He stated Bob Agoglia with The Computer Guy & Company assists us with this.

Councilman Bobbitt asked if we pay Bob and TLC.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated yes.

**T. J. Davis 10-6200-1600 Maintenance & Repairs – Equipment**

$18,000 to replace the **1957** basketball goal assemblies that have failed and are in dire need of replacement. This includes replacement and removal of existing goal assemblies. Please understand that if these fail, we could have the possibility of severely injuring a child and/or an employee. These assemblies are used daily to support, and raise and lower the backboards.

**Parks 10-6210-1500 Maintenance & Repairs**

This line item was originally $35,000 from the previous year.

1. Requesting $14,000 to add back to the budget that was previously cut for routine maintenance needed.
2. Requesting $16,000 to replace the failed roof at Doyle softball field restroom which is shared with the wading pool at T. J. Davis. This restroom is used by the wading pool, girls’ softball, T. J. Davis tennis courts, and youth girls’ cheerleading.

Councilman Bobbitt asked when the roof failed.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated about three years ago. He stated replacement was in the budget last year.

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Councilman Smith stated it is dangerous. He asked the total amount requested for parks.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated $70,000.

**Library 10-6300-1500 Maintenance & Repairs - Building**

Requesting $14,500 to replace dated **1989** carpeting.

Councilman Smith asked if it would be better to put down a new type of flooring.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated we could look at that but one concern would be the noise.

Councilman Smith stated his concern about the carpeting is that it would bubble up like the carpeting in this building.

**Library 10-6300-1600 Maintenance & Repairs - Equipment**

Requesting $9,000 to replace 7 of the 13 public computers recommended by Bob Agoglia. Last year, we replaced 6 of the 13 so this will keep us on a systematic schedule as recommended by Bob Agoglia.

City Manager Scherer asked if this includes the software license.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated he believes that everything is included in the price.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he thought at one time there were grants for computers at libraries.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated a Bill Gates grant is what put the original equipment in place.

Mayor Doughtie stated it looks like the kind of thing we could get a grant for.

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City Manager Scherer pointed out that he stumbled across a possible Federal program that provides internet capability or hardware and software.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated he will take a look at that.

**Parks 10-6210-1500 Maintenance & Repairs**

Requesting $15,000 for replacement of bleachers and picnic tables needed at parks that we have not been able to replace over the last several years. Picnic tables generally cost $2,000 and bleachers generally cost $5,000. We currently need 5 sets of bleachers and 15 picnic tables but this will be a start to replace these items.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated they have not been able to replace any of these in the last several years. He stated this will help to get them started.

Councilman Smith asked what type of picnic table costs $2,000.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated an industrial metal-coated picnic table.

Mayor Doughtie asked if we have to get that kind.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated due to vandalism, this is the best kind.

Councilman Bobbitt stated at the back side of the concession stand/bathroom at Emry Park, the soffit is rotten. He stated there is also a lot of growth back there. He stated it would not take but about 10 minutes to get that cleaned up. He stated the front is beautiful.

Councilman Smith stated he noticed that an independent contractor was spraying at the parks instead of the Public Works Department doing it.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon explained that they receive a lot of complaints about mosquitoes at Chockoyotte and Centennial Parks, and Public Works is very busy. He stated this is a very effective contract.

Councilman Smith asked the cost.

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Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated about $2,000 for the whole year.

Councilman Bobbitt asked if the high school still uses the tennis courts at Emry Park.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated no. He stated they use the courts at T. J. Davis. He stated they are looking at having to do something with the courts at Emry Park. He stated the last quote we received to repair them was $160,000. He stated he does not feel there is enough activity to ask Council for these funds. He did point out that tennis courts are in the School System’s Master Plan.

Councilman Bobbitt stated the courts at Emry Park are in terrible shape.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated they are looking at taking the nets and posts down.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if they would take all of them down.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated they need to take a good hard look at those courts.

Councilman Bobbitt stated the fence also needs painting.

Councilman Smith asked what Tourism gives us to maintain the Canal Museum and Trail.

City Manager Scherer stated $2,000 per quarter for the Canal Museum operations which is $8,000 annually.

Councilman Smith stated they used to give us about $33,000.

City Manager Scherer stated we just obtained a budget from them. He stated the majority of Tourism’s funds for Roanoke Rapids for this year have been spent at Ledgerwood.

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Councilwoman Cowen asked if we have any input on how they spend the monies.

City Manager Scherer stated no.

Councilman Bobbitt requested a list of all of the different associations and leagues that use our fields.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon distributed copies of the Parks & Recreation Department’s Annual Report which includes that information.

Councilman Bobbitt asked if all of the associations turn in a list of the players.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated they provide us with rosters and schedules.

Councilman Smith pointed out that the only association that does not pay fees to the Recreation Center is the Youth Baseball Association. He stated that was part of the original agreement when the land was given to the City. He stated the Association takes the money it makes and puts it back into the fields.

Councilman Smith stated he would like to see most of these items funded. He stated he is hesitant about the new position.

Councilman Bobbitt stated he agrees.

Councilwoman Cowen stated she feels we need the extra person. She stated the staff at T. J. Davis is having to do a lot of other things. She stated she would like for us to fund this position if the money can be found.

City Manager Scherer stated he will put together a master budget for Council’s first review.

Councilwoman Cowen stated the way she looks at it, we really need Police and Fire. She stated we also need Recreation because there would be more criminals on the street. She stated kids that may not come from good homes but have a

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leader or coach through recreation have a better chance of being good citizens.

City Manager Scherer stated it all goes back to quality of life.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated the grand opening for the Skate/BMX Park will be May 5. He distributed flyers to Council members. He stated at 4:00 p.m., ProTown BMX will conduct free clinics for the kids on how to safely do tricks. He stated they will also be putting on a show. He stated around 5:00 p.m., he will be recognizing everyone that participated, donated funds and volunteered time to make this park a reality.

Councilwoman Scarbrough reminded everyone of the chain cutting and “meet and greet” for the new Museum Manager this afternoon at 5:30 at the Roanoke Canal Museum.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned.



**Lisa B. Vincent, MMC, NCCMC, City Clerk**

5/17/2016

**Approved by Council Action on:**