



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, October 7, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.** in the Council Chambers at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

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

Andy Jackson)
Rex Stainback)

Council Members

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

Absent: Councilman W. Keith Bell
Councilman Curtis Strickland
Police Chief Lawrence Wiggins

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

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

Adoption of Business Agenda

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

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

Public Comment (Scheduled)

Ms. Mayra Murray-Diaz and Mr. Ryan Short submitted scheduled public comment applications but were not present.

Approval of City Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Jackson, and unanimously carried to approve the September 16, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting minutes as drafted.

Committee Appointments/Reappointments

Recreation Advisory Committee

City Clerk Storey stated the terms for Mayra Murray-Diaz, Kenny Hicks and Todd Lockamon on the Recreation Advisory Committee expired September 9th. All three members were contacted and wish to be considered for another term. Mr. Lockamon has served the maximum number of two consecutive terms allowed by City policy, but Council has the authority to waive this section of the policy and has done so in the past. She reported that City Council took a ballot vote earlier and Mayra Murray-Diaz, Kenny Hicks and Todd Lockamon received a unanimous vote to be reappointed.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Jackson and unanimously carried to waive the City Policy for Todd Lockamon and reappoint Mr. Lockamon, Mayra Murray-Diaz and Kenny Hicks to the Recreation Advisory Committee.

New Business

Consideration of Resolution to Adopt the 2030 Strategic Plan

City Manager Traynham said prior to this meeting, a Special Meeting was held, and a presentation of the 2030 Strategic Plan for the City was received by Hayes Group Consulting. The presentation included how the plan was funded, the expectations and process. A strategic plan was developed after about 7-8 months of information gathering, interviews and so forth. Managing the plan will be the next step in moving

forward with the City's first strategic plan, but first adoption of the plan is necessary to put the plan in official motion.

She added City staff worked closely with Hayes Group Consulting, and they worked closely with members of the community and stakeholders. They also spent a lot of time in one-on-one conversations to gather the personal needs of the community. On behalf of the City administration, they are happy to move forward with this strategic plan. It will take some getting used to, but it will help them capture the things they are doing and to focus on a longer-term plan for the next five years.

City Manager Traynham presented Resolution No. 2025.10 for City Council's consideration which accomplishes the adoption of the strategic planning document called "The Roanoke Rapids Strategy" and recognizes the City of Roanoke Rapids as the "City of Resilience." This plan was completed in partnership with NC Rural Economic Development, East Carolina University and the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission.

CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS RESOLUTION NO. 2025.10

RESOLUTION FOR THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS TO ADOPT THE 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN TITLED "*THE ROANOKE RAPIDS STRATEGY*"

WHEREAS, the City of Roanoke Rapids has embarked on the development of its first Strategic Plan titled "The Roanoke Rapids Strategy," planned through 2030 to guide the city's growth and rejuvenation; and

WHEREAS, the Strategic Plan seeks to establish Roanoke Rapids as a "City of Resilience," focusing on economic vitality, enhanced city services, and an improved quality of life; and

WHEREAS, this initiative is the culmination of efforts from the City Council, Department Heads, Community Stakeholders, and citizen feedback, supported by the expertise and guidance of Hayes Group Consulting, East Carolina University, the North Carolina Department of Commerce, and the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission; and

WHEREAS, the project has been funded by a grant through the Rural Community Capacity Program facilitated by East Carolina University and fully supported by the North Carolina Department of Commerce and the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission.

WHEREAS, a diverse collaboration demonstrates Roanoke Rapids' commitment to developing a comprehensive framework for sustainable development and community well-being; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City of Roanoke Rapids City Council, that the Strategic Plan is hereby adopted and the City Council supports its implementation, ensuring that resources and efforts align to benefit all citizens of Roanoke Rapids.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this adoption affirms the city's dedication to continuous development, fostering community engagement, and pursuing progressive strategies that benefit the community and economic infrastructure of Roanoke Rapids.

Adopted this 7th day of **October 2025**, in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

ATTEST:

Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to adopt Resolution No. 2025.10 adopting the 2030 Strategic Plan for the City of Roanoke Rapids.

Consideration of Resolution Supporting the City of Roanoke Rapids as a City-Run NC Main Street Community and Establishing a Main Street Advisory Committee

City Manager Traynham said Main Street Director Thomas started her tenure here full-time with the City the end of June. On her first or second day, they met with representatives from the Main Street program that work with the state. They provided some guidance to temporarily restructure the City's Main Street program in order to revamp for the next year or so. The action leading up to tonight was culminated from a background that began back in July.

Main Street Director Thomas said the City of Roanoke Rapids is in the process of relaunching the nationally recognized Main Street program to support revitalization, historic preservation, and economic growth in the Main Street District. The city government determines who will administer the program at the local level. The purpose of this agenda item is to request your approval regarding a proposed change in the administration of our Main Street Program.

She stated the Roanoke Rapids Main Street Program is currently structured as a quasi-public entity with a non-profit board that has been inactive for over a year. The recommendation is to transition the administration of the Main Street Program from its current organizational structure (quasi-public) to a public (city-run) program that can provide more targeted focus and resources to relaunch our local program and remain program compliant. If approved, a new advisory committee will be established to guide the program.

Mayor Doughtie asked if this would have any financial effect on the way the program is run. Main Street Director Thomas replied, no.

Councilman Jackson asked what happens to the old Main Street board. Main Street

Director Thomas replied she was not familiar with that board except that it has been inactive for over a year. They were looking to create an advisory board. They would love to hear from those people that did serve on the former board and request they fill out an application if they are interested in serving on the board.

Attorney Davis added the old board has been derelict for quite a bit of time; much more than one year. This is a more solid procedure to modernize or set up a new governing advisory board to reactivate it. Any individuals that served on the old board will certainly have an opportunity to serve on the advisory board if they want to.

Main Street Director Thomas presented the following resolution for City Council's consideration:

RESOLUTION NO: 2025.11

**IN SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS AS A CITY-RUN NORTH CAROLINA
MAIN STREET COMMUNITY AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A MAIN STREET ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

WHEREAS the City of Roanoke Rapids is a designated North Carolina Main Street Community, a program coordinated through the North Carolina Department of Commerce – NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center, Rural Economic Development Division; and

WHEREAS the City of Roanoke Rapids and its Council has embraced the concept of Main Street revitalization and wishes to ensure the ongoing vitality of its Main Street District by supporting the position of Main Street Development Director as the primary coordinator of the City's Main Street revitalization efforts; and

WHEREAS the City of Roanoke Rapids is dedicated to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, which founded Main Street America, and to the philosophy that "Main Street is economic development within the context of Historic Preservation," and supports the Main Street America Four-Point Approach® for revitalization utilizing the principles of Organization, Design, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring; and

WHEREAS the City of Roanoke Rapids recognizes the nationwide success of the Main Street Program in creating new businesses, significant private sector capital investment that increases the property tax base, and a significant increase in net employment; and

WHEREAS the City of Roanoke Rapids understands that, in addition to employing a full-time Main Street Development Director, maintaining active status in the NC Main Street Program also requires providing annual reports on its Main Street District revitalization activities to the North Carolina Main Street Center; and

WHEREAS the City of Roanoke Rapids understands that technical assistance from the NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center is provided at no charge to the City, and reimbursement for travel-related expenses will be requested from the City if this technical assistance requires travel by the NC Main Street and Rural Planning staff; and

WHEREAS the City of Roanoke Rapids recognizes the importance of continued training in the field of Main Street District revitalization and will provide the resources for its Main Street Development Director to attend the educational opportunities provided several times a year by the North Carolina Main Street and Rural Planning Center, and will maintain a membership with Main Street America™; and

WHEREAS the City of Roanoke Rapids recognizes the value of broad community input and intends for the Main Street Advisory Committee to provide guidance, support, and stakeholder perspectives to strengthen the Main Street District revitalization efforts:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Roanoke Rapids City Council recognizes the City of Roanoke Rapids as the local coordinator of its Main Street District revitalization efforts and Main Street Program activities, supports the City as a North Carolina Main Street Community with all the obligations that the designation carries, and authorizes the establishment and commencement of a Main Street Advisory Committee to support the program's activities and planning.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF ROANOKE RAPIDS THIS 7TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2025.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Attest:

Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to adopt Resolution No. 2025.11 supporting the City of Roanoke Rapids as a City-Run NC Main Street Community and establishing a Main Street Advisory Committee.

Main Street Director Thomas announced at the conclusion of this meeting the application will be live on the website at www.mainstreetroanokerapids.com/apply. She also brought paper copies with her if anyone would like to apply. They can mail it or drop it off to the City.

Consideration of Joint-Use Lease Agreement for Collegiate Summer Baseball League

City Manager Traynham stated the action on this item has been tabled. The representative of The Players League had reached out recently while negotiating a lease and said a relocating team has changed its plans, so they are focusing on restructuring that organization. Internally, staff have drafted and reviewed the basics of a lease that would provide a joint-use. At this point without further feedback from The Players League, she advised City Council table this to a future meeting should that development change.

She said from what she understands, there was a team that was part of the league who was intending to relocate, and the City of Roanoke Rapids would have been the receiving team. If that team decides to stay in place, there would not be a team available to relocate. She does not believe this closes the door on the opportunity for the City, it could still come up in the next couple of weeks. Again, it is not advisable

to push anything forward right now without knowing. They remain optimistic that this area would be well served by a collegiate team.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Traynham announced the next City Council meeting will be October 21st and the first meeting in November will be held on Wednesday, November 5th due to Election Day. This building is used as a precinct.

She also announced the following upcoming events:

- The Aging Expo on Thursday, October 9th at Kirkwood Adams
 - Library Halloween Event on Tuesday, October 28th
 - Halloween Events on Friday, October 31st at TJ Davis Rec and Chaloner Rec.
- The City is accepting candy donations, trunk entries and volunteers.

City Manager Traynham shared that last night the American Legion Shaw-May Post 38 held its annual First Responders' Awards & Recognition Ceremony. This year's Police Officer of the Year was Sgt. Joey Spragins and Firefighter of the Year was retired Fire Chief Jason Patrick.

She reported the City received notice of federal funding award to help increase the City's cybersecurity measures. The City will receive approximately \$150,000 to be spent over a 30-month period on cybersecurity infrastructure, protection of digital assets, and enhance readiness against cyber threats.

She said the Senior Center has scheduled its annual trip to the NC State Fair on October 21st and they are also taking appointments for Medicare Part D Open Enrollment. Emry Skate Park which has been funded through a combination of grant resources, charitable donations and city funds. Procurement of construction cost estimates is underway. Once completed they will figure out what is needed to get the project on budget and implemented.

She reiterated the new online registration platform for Parks & Recreation programs and activities called RecDesk at www.rrparksandrec.recdesk.com. There are a few steps to create an account and add family members. It makes registration for activities such as youth basketball easy and can be completed 24 hours a day rather than rushing registrations and payment to TJ Davis Rec during business hours.

City Manager Traynham reported on September 23rd, several City staff members met with representatives from the NC Land & Water Fund and the Tar River Land Conservancy to discuss some monitoring reports of environmental easements that are

held across City properties. This will be an ongoing dialogue with these organizations. The two priorities that emerged from the discussion are to survey the easement boundaries and to identify and mitigate any encroachments that may be within that surveyed area. They have some potential funding available for the surveying. They are awaiting updates from the Tar River Land Conservancy on that effort.

She participated today in a US EPA Brownfields Coalition Grant pre-application meeting. Due to the current status of the federal government, the notice of funding availability has not been officially released yet. The last several years, the City has been the beneficiary through the EPA's Brownfields Redevelopment Program. The City intends to file another application this year with the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments with the redevelopment focused on Interstate Storage/former mill at 5th and Jackson Streets.

City Manager Traynham reported it is time for the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan update that occurs every five years. There are no City funds involved in this, but a consultant has been hired to lead the Halifax-Northampton Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan update. Over the next couple of weeks, they will be completing a Capabilities Assessment which determines what the City's strengths and weaknesses may be in certain events and capitalizing on that data. It will take approximately six months to go through the HMP update process.

Councilman Jackson stated there seems to be some public concern about radios for the Fire Department and asked City Manager Traynham to explain that.

City Manager Traynham said she received an inquiry about the Fire Department's need for radios. She confirmed that in the current year, Fiscal Year 2026, the budget request by the Fire Chief for radio upgrades was in the amount of \$8,000. The budget request was recommended and approved by City Council. Just recently, fire department staff completed the purchase. She reported there are more radios than staff members available.

Other Business/Closed Session

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Jackson and unanimously carried to go into closed session to discuss a legal matter with the City Attorney as allowed by NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(3).

City Council took a brief recess before going into closed session.

Minute Book Pages 22127 - 22132 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. No action was taken.

There being no further business, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Stainback, and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: October 21, 2025