



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, December 5, 2017** at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

Present: Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor
Carl Ferebee, Mayor Pro Tem
Ernest C. Bobbitt)
Suetta S. Scarbrough)
Wayne Smith)

Council Members

Joseph Scherer, MPA, MS, City Manager
Gilbert Chichester, City Attorney
Traci Storey, City Clerk
Leigh Etheridge, Finance Director
Kathy Kearney, Deputy City Clerk/Human Resources Manager
Chuck Hasty, Police Chief
Kelly Lasky, Planning & Development Director
John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director
Stacy Coggins, Fire Chief
Christina Caudle, Main Street Director

Absent: Councilwoman Carol Cowen
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director

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

Adoption of Business Agenda

Mayor Doughtie asked Council members about 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 Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda for December 5, 2017 as submitted.

Installation of Newly Re-Elected Mayor & Council Members

Mayor Doughtie thanked Judge Alma Hinton for her service and giving her time to administer the Oaths of Office tonight.

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

Election of Mayor Pro Tempore

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

Councilman Bobbitt nominated current Mayor Pro Tempore Ferebee and made the motion to appoint Mayor Pro Tempore Ferebee for another two year term. Councilman Smith seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee thanked the Council for their confidence in him being Mayor Pro Tem and he will try uphold the duties when the Mayor is not here.

Public Comment (Unscheduled)

Terry Buffaloe

He thanked City Council for allowing those that spoke during scheduled and unscheduled comment at the last meeting the opportunity to hear from the Department Heads and City Manager. He felt good because he knew what it was like to stand up here and have information to hand out to them and they never say anything. He said he knew the man that spoke felt good by having a response and being heard. He said customer service in government is just as important as it is in any other business. He said he knew City Council has the policy of not commenting when someone addresses them, but believes there should be some gray area. It is something to be standing here with an issue with your property or a concern that they have for the City and the Council just sits there and says nothing; it's not a real friendly atmosphere. Government and citizens should be on a friendlier basis. He said he understands that you cannot do it for everybody, but they should consider it more often; it will create a less hostile reception for a citizen who is trying to get something done. He said he really appreciated it.

Mayor Doughtie stated he and Mr. Buffaloe spoke this week about this issue. He said he told him that Council cannot always give an answer at the time, but they try to let that individual know that we will get in touch with them.

Reggie Edwards

He said last night they had an issue on Love Street. He said this has been an ongoing problem house. Webb Hill is sort of a retired community; he said there was only one or two of them that go to work, the rest are retired. He said there was a duplex that had caught on fire that has had a death, several shootings and last night an overdose. He stated he knew they could not solve it tonight, but they really need some help on it. He said they need to get the property owner in here and follow the guidelines. He stated this is a nuisance house. They have had a meeting with Deputy Chief Jackson and they were going to implement their community watch. They have their petition signed, but they need help on this house. All the activity stems from this one house; people cannot even sit out on their front porch. Ms. Marks lives right beside them and she cannot sit on her front porch and the neighbor across the street, he can't come out. All during the summer, they are hostages of their own home because of this one house. He said at a later date, the entire community plans to come back to a meeting to see if we can get some help from the City with this house.

Diane Bell

She said we do have a problem. Her mother, Noreen Marks, lives right next door and she is afraid for her safety. She said her mother has some memory problems and she lives by herself with her dog. Her mother doesn't drive so she is afraid for her; she is speaking on behalf of her mother. She said everything Reggie said about the neighborhood was true. If anything can be done, she would appreciate something being done for her mother and the rest of the people in the neighborhood on Webb Hill Street.

Deputy Chief Jackson said when they originally had their meeting, there were different tenants in the house; now there is a different group in the house. The Police Department has done foot patrols on that street and some rather extensive foot patrols during the middle of the night. He stated there were issues over there in that area and they are working on addressing them. He said they did have a community watch meeting and they talked about the nuisance and abatement process and how to get that started.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said he lived not too far down the street from the area. He thanked Deputy Chief Jackson for coming over and doing a community watch. He said they had scheduled another one, but it was cancelled; they plan

to get another one scheduled soon. He asked what could be done concerning the nuisance.

City Manager Scherer replied the City could address those issues, but we probably will need to involve the Halifax County Department of Social Services and Health Department because they can take a lot more action over and above what the City can do. He stated they would have to get with them to see what the options are at that location.

Approval of Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to approve the November 21, 2017 Regular Council Meeting Minutes as written.

Old Business

Consideration of Adoption of Hwy. 158 Master Plan

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated at the last City Council meeting he presented the Hwy. 158 Master Plan in detail. He said at that time there were no questions, therefore he asked for Council to consider a motion to adopt the plan.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if there was any one area that would be focused on first.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon replied the immediate focal point will be the splash pad/spray park for the Chaloner Recreation pool area. He said as mentioned in his presentation last meeting, they plan to submit an application to the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation February 13, 2018 for that particular project. Depending on grants and funding availability, they will work on the other parts of the Master Plan.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to adopt the Hwy. 158 Master Plan.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Scherer said we had a successful beginning to our holiday season with the Tree Lighting ceremony last Thursday and the Christmas Parade on

Sunday. I would like to recognize all the City Departments for their cooperation and assistance in helping to make these events an outstanding accomplishment. In particular, I'd like to recognize John Simeon for all his time and effort in making the Christmas Parade a fantastic event that the community looks forward to every year. The famous cartoonist Charles Shultz once said, "Christmas is a time for doing a little extra for someone" and I feel our events help make that possible for many people in our city.

He announced several upcoming events for the holiday season:

- a) Christmas Social at the Jo Story Senior Center, December 5th at 6:00 p.m.
- b) The Fire Department Christmas Dinner, Wednesday, December 6th at 6:30 p.m. at Kirkwood Adams Community Center.
- c) Christmas on the Canal event at the Canal Museum, Friday, December 8th at 6:00 p.m. with Santa and Mrs. Claus there, and maybe an appearance by the Grinch.
- d) Employee Luncheon, Wednesday, December 20th at Kirkwood Adams Community Center beginning with Employee Service Awards at 11:00 a.m.
- e) Holiday Concert at the Roanoke Rapids Theatre, with the U.S. Air Force Heritage of America Band on December 12th beginning at 7:00 p.m.
- f) The Police Departments' Shopping with Kids, Saturday, December 16th beginning at 10:00 a.m. at Chick-fil-A. He recognized the people at Chick-fil-A for helping to kick off this event every year by providing refreshments for the group and helping to make the children feel safe with our people before they go off to Walmart to shop. He added the Police Department has raised enough money to take 39 children shopping this year; this is an outstanding effort by the Police Department.

City Manager Scherer reported Ms. Lasky has coordinated with the plumber selected by the owner of the ice house in the Forest Hills shopping plaza to help determine the most proper way to handle the water discharge. However, there are issues with some easements across the parking lot that are complicating the process.

He also reported they are meeting this week with representatives from the group who is purchasing the Theatre to begin the due diligence process and the transition of the facility to their control. They have their own public relations firm, French West Vaughan (FWV), who has issued a press release on the group's plans.

City Manager announced the City received the Innovation 2017 Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO). The award is given

in recognition of innovative approaches to regional economic and community development. We received it for our participation in the Upper Coastal Plains Council of Government Brownfields Program, specifically for the efforts made at the old WestPoint Stevens industrial site to get the site into the program and evaluated for redevelopment potential.

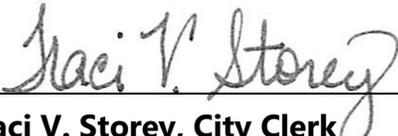
He informed City Council that currently there is no pressing business for the December 19, 2017 meeting. He stated they anticipate the audit will not be approved by the LGC until after the first of the year. He said they were still waiting on the revised agreement from the Roanoke Rapids Sanitary District. He recommended the December 19th City Council meeting be cancelled due to lack of agenda items.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to cancel the December 19, 2017 City Council meeting.

<p style="text-align: center;">Other Business/Comments by Council Members</p>
--

Mayor Doughtie stated the Christmas parade was a great success and thanked Parks & Recreation Director Simeon, Chief Hasty along with his employees and all City staff and everybody that put forth the effort to make it happen. He said they also had great day weather wise and believed the people that came were able to enjoy it. He said everybody has a lot of things going on during the year, but this seems like a time when everybody can find something to be grateful for. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

There being no further business, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to adjourn at 5:40 p.m.



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: January 16, 2018