



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 1, 2024, 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

W. Keith Bell)
Andy Jackson)
Rex Stainback)
Curtis Strickland)

Council Members

Kelly Traynham, City Manager
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney
Traci Storey, City Clerk
Carmen Johnson, Finance Director
Christina Caudle, Human Resources Director
Shane Guyant, Police Chief
Kelly Daughtry, Parks & Recreation Director
Jason Patrick, Fire Chief

Absent: Larry Chalker, Public Works Director
Kristyn Anderson, Planning & Development Director

Mayor Doughtie called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He provided an invocation and then 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 Bell, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda as presented.

Special Recognitions

Mayor Doughtie read and presented the following Resolution of Appreciation to former Mayor Pro Tem Wayne Smith:

City of Roanoke Rapids

**RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION
Kenneth Wayne Smith**

WHEREAS, Kenneth Wayne Smith was born on January 14, 1943, and has been a lifelong resident of Roanoke Rapids. He is a graduate of Roanoke Rapids High School and retired from CitiFinancial after a successful career; and

WHEREAS, Wayne was elected to City Council in November 2013 representing District 2 of the City of Roanoke Rapids. During his three terms in office, Wayne was instrumental in facilitating the sale of the former Roanoke Rapids Theatre, reducing the City’s long-term debt, and supported economic growth in the city. On December 5, 2023, he was elected by his fellow council members to serve as Mayor Pro Tem until his resignation due to health concerns on June 18, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Wayne served as Council Liaison on the Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board as well as various other boards including the Recreation Advisory Committee, Halifax County EMS Advisory Board, Land Use/Health Care Plan Steering Committee, and the NC League of Municipalities Tax and Finance Legislative Action Committee. Wayne’s calling for service to his community started in the 1970’s serving 15 years of volunteer rescue. He is an honorary member of the Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad where he served as Treasurer, Commander and on the Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, Wayne is a devoted advocate for Roanoke Rapids Youth Baseball and begin volunteering in 1982, serving as treasurer from 2014-2017 and was inducted into the Hall of Fame on September 17, 2018.

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Roanoke Rapids City Council adopts this **Resolution of Appreciation for Wayne Smith** with deep gratitude for his dedicated service of over 10 years on the Roanoke Rapids City Council and many years to the community and extends to him our best wishes for health and happiness in the future.*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be presented to Wayne Smith and a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of this meeting and to the news media.

THIS 1st day of October 2024.

ATTEST: _____
Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

_____ *Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor*

Mr. Smith thanked the citizens of Roanoke Rapids and said they put a lot of trust in him by electing him to City Council. He thanked the City Council for all the times they got together and had a lot of discussion. He thinks they had a good City Council. He appreciated the help they gave him and for backing him on a lot of the decisions that were made. He thanked Ms. Traynham for being a good city manager and he knows Roanoke Rapids will prosper as long as she stays there. He thanked Attorney Davis for the times he talked to him because he called him quite a lot. The person he missed most of all was Julian Allsbrook. He thanked the citizens again for the trust they put in him and the opportunity they gave him to serve on the City Council. He thanked his wife for standing behind him 100%.

Mayor Doughtie called on Halifax County Board of Commissioner's Chairman Vernon Bryant to make a presentation to Mr. Smith.

Chairman Bryant said there was a lot he could say about Wayne Smith. He has been a true friend of his for a very long time, even before he became a County Commissioner and Mr. Smith became a City Councilmember. They have collaborated on many things. He stated on behalf of the Halifax County Board of Commissioners, he noted Vice-Chairwoman Brewer was in attendance as well, they had a letter prepared for him. Chairman Bryant read and presented the letter dated June 19, 2024. He also presented him with a Halifax County lapel pin.

Mayor Doughtie said when he was running for his first term, Mr. Smith helped him. When he says help that means he gets out and beats the streets, calls people and gets things done. He managed to win the seat. Then Mr. Smith decided he wanted to get on City Council. Mr. Smith, Mr. Ferebee and himself went to Raleigh many times working on the refinancing for the Theatre debt. Finally, something happened. It was good for the city; it reduced the debt and the payment. It was all worthwhile. Mr. Smith had a lot of communication with the different people all along who were leasing the Theatre or who had bought it. They felt they had a better chance of selling the Theatre if it was open and operating. Mr. Smith was instrumental in all those things. When Mr. Smith was sitting on City Council, you could see he was getting ready to speak his mind. Sometimes they did not all agree, but he believes that is what made them a good City Council. They were always civil and after the meeting was over, they would all pull together and that is what he believes made them a strong City Council. Mr. Smith has also given a lot of time to the young people of this community. Mr. Smith made the comment about the trust they put in him and the reason they trust him is because he gave them reasons to trust him; he earned that trust because of the things he did for this community.

Mayor Doughtie called for a motion to adopt the Resolution of Appreciation. Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Bell, and unanimously carried to adopted Resolution No. 2024.09.

Approval of City Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Jackson, and unanimously carried to approve the September 17, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting minutes as drafted.

New Business

Consideration of Budget Ordinance (Fire Department Donation)

Finance Director Johnson stated the Fire Department received a donation from Dominion Energy in the amount of \$3,275.21. She presented Ordinance No. 2024.27 for consideration.

**Ordinance No. 2024.27
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, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Fire Dept. – Donations to the Fire Dept. – Dominion Energy	
Project Revenues – Fire Dept.	\$3,275.21

FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$3,275.21

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Fire Dept. – Donations to the Fire Dept. – Dominion Energy	
Project Expenditures – Fire Dept.	\$3,275.21

FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$3,275.2

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Strickland, seconded by Councilman Jackson and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2024.27 in the amount of \$3,275.21 for the donation to the Fire Department.

Consideration of Budget Ordinance (Police Department Donation)

Finance Director Johnson stated the Police Department received a donation from New Dixie Oil in the amount of \$2,000. She presented Ordinance No. 2024.28 for their consideration.

**Ordinance No. 2024.28
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, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Police Dept. – Donations to the Police Dept. – New Dixie Oil	
Project Revenues – Police Dept.	\$2,000.00

FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$2,000.00

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Police Dept. – Donations to the Police Dept. – New Dixie Oil	
Project Expenditures – Police Dept.	\$2,000.00

FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$2,000.00

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2024.28 in the amount of \$2,000 for the donation to the Police Department.

Consideration of Budget Ordinance (OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax)

Finance Director Johnson stated the Police Department received some OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax funds from the NC Department of Revenue. One amount was \$6,324.66 and the second amount was \$18.54. She presented Ordinance No. 2024.29 for their consideration.

**Ordinance No. 2024.29
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, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Fund Balance – Police – OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax	
Project Revenues - OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax	\$6,324.66
	18.54
	\$6,343.20
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$6,343.20

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Funding to General Fund – Police – OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax	
Project Expenditures - OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax	\$6,324.66
	18.54
	\$6,343.20
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$6,343.20

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Councilman Bell, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2024.29 in the amount of \$6,343.20 for OSC Unauthorized Substance Tax.

Consideration of Budget Ordinance (NC Governor’s Hwy Safety Program Grant)

Finance Director Johnson stated a few months ago, City Council approved the NC Governor’s Highway Safety Commission Grant. The City’s match is 15% for FY 2024-2025. She presented Ordinance No. 2024.30 for their consideration.

**Ordinance No. 2024.30
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, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

Fund Balance – Police – NC Governor’s Highway Safety Program – FY 24-25	
Project Revenues – NC Governor’s Highway Safety Program	\$20,310.00
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$20,310.00

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

Funding to General Fund – Police – NC Governor’s Highway Safety Program – FY 24-25	
Project Expenditures - NC Governor’s Highway Safety Program	\$20,310.00
FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$20,310.00

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bryant, seconded by Councilman Bell and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2024.30 in the amount of \$20,310 for the City’s match of the NC Governor’s Highway Safety Program Grant for FY2024-2025.

Finance Director Johnson reported on Monday the City received a check for \$7,140,000 in property tax revenue. They also received a motor vehicle tax check in the amount of \$126,000.

Parks & Recreation Department Presentation

Parks & Recreation Director Daughtry gave a PowerPoint presentation on the programs and events by the Parks & Recreation Department from March – August 2024. She highlighted the following in her presentation:

Athletics

- Youth – Soccer, Softball, Baseball, T-Ball
- Adult Softball
- Field Traffic Hours - 1,354

Weekly/Monthly Programs

These activities take place at TJ Davis, Chaloner Rec Center, Library, Senior Center, Chris Wicker Aquatic Center.

- Exercise Classes
- Swimming Lessons
- Story Time
- Craft Classes
- Health Screens
- Toddler Time
- Offer Adult Day Centers in area for people with disabilities to come in once a week (Tues/Thurs) to have recreation with their clients at facilities

Special/Seasonal Programs

- Pool
- Splash pad
- Summer reading program,
- Easter egg hunts
- Patriotic Picnic
- 12 Summer Camps through TJ Davis

Parks & Maintenance

- Maintained 115 acres of parks & facilities
- 221 Maintenance request tickets completed
- Renovation Doyle Press Box (flooring, insulation, mini-split)
- New sign at Kirkwood Adams
- 63 event set up at Kirkwood Adams
- 29 new signs installed along the Canal Trail
- TJ Davis gyms converted to LED lighting
- 24 windows replaced at TJ Davis
- 17 chairs assembled for Lloyd Andrews Building

Impact

- 6 Facilities open 227.5 hrs./week
- Kirkwood Adams – Rented 504 hours March – August
- 219 Reservations
- Total Contacts: 131,387

Parks & Recreation Director Daughtry acknowledged the Parks & Recreation Department staff. They are making sure grass is cut, they are providing programs and taking care of the kids when they are dropped off for activities. She thanked them for all they do for the community.

Councilman Bell stated her presentation was a thorough display of information and data and he was proud of that. He said if you keep up with the numbers, then you can follow the money and see the trends in order to make sure they continue or be amended for the best interest of the taxpayer's money.

Mayor Doughtie stated the sign at Kirkwood Adams is very nice. Parks & Recreation Director Daughtry said the sign was paid for through the Halifax County Tourism office. The sign is complete, but they want to fix the bottom since it is just concrete. Staff are working to learn how to change the message on the sign from TJ Davis.

Mayor Doughtie said the cemetery and Kirkwood Adams are really the only two facilities the City owns that turn a profit. They've had some dollars to spend on Kirkwood Adams in the past few years. It is the only place where people can have the type of events here in Roanoke Rapids. Parks & Recreation Director Daughtry reported that today was the first day people could book for events in June of 2025 and there were people pulling in the parking lot with her at 7 a.m. this morning to stand in line to book Kirkwood.

Mayor Doughtie asked if the rates varied. She replied the rates are the same throughout the year, but there is a resident and non-resident rate, so city residents get a lower rate. City Manager Traynham added the rates are established in the Fee Schedule which is part of the City's annual budget.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Traynham announced on Thursday of this week the Senior Center will host the Roanoke Valley Aging Expo at Kirkwood Adams from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This is a big event for the senior citizens in the community and region. There are over 200 people registered to attend.

She said on October 9th a Flu Shot Clinic will be held in the Human Resources Department at City Hall from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. She said they were recruiting people to host and decorate a trunk for Trunk or Treat to be held on October 31st. Those interested should reach out to the Parks & Recreation Department.

City Manager Traynham reported the City is working with Upper Coastal Plain COG on a Brownfields application to the EPA to secure funding for starting the process on 501 Jackson Street (Interstate Storage property) to include it for review and future reuse.

She called on Police Chief Guyant to give a report on the Battle of the Badges Blood Drive.

Chief Guyant said they hosted the Battle of the Badges Blood Drive for the first time here in Roanoke Rapids today. Normally, when the Red Cross holds a blood drive here, they average 50-60 donations. At this time, they have 102 donations. They also have an event tomorrow with 50 people scheduled. It is the most to ever give blood in Roanoke Rapids; the record was 82. They had people who came from all across eastern North Carolina today to give blood. That is exacerbated by what has happened in western NC. They also collected donations of supplies they can provide to those in the western part of the state. They have two officers from the Police Department in western NC and have rostered to send more if needed. That is coordinated through the Emergency Operations Center. From his experience working with the state on the emergency response team and his familiarity with these types of events, this could take years to get to any kind of recovery for those people. What the people of this community did today was impressive. He was proud no matter who wins – blue or red; they won. He thanked everyone that showed up today and those who will show up tomorrow.

City Manager Traynham commended Chief Guyant and Fire Chief Patrick for finding an innovative way to have a community donation project that touches so many people and impacts lives. Little did they know the western part of the state was going to experience such a catastrophic event from Hurricane Helene.

City Manager Traynham reported Friday she, Attorney Davis and Patrol Captain Jeff Baggett had a meeting with the RRGSD administration and a few other representatives from the school system about the Cross Safe proposal City Council elected not to participate in. They wanted to hear more about the alternatives, ideas that were out there for open discussion and to focus on addressing the public safety need. She feels there are some temporary things that need to be done immediately

and there is the long-term visioning that needs to take place. She believed the dialogue between the two was well received. They all have an interest in public safety, especially for the students exiting and entering school property. There is also the business part of it such as deciding who is going to be responsible for having people out there. Without the City providing a direct financial contribution, they have the ability to implement some traffic control officers as recommended through the Police Chief to address some of the pedestrian concerns at the beginning and end of the school days at the elementary schools and Chaloner Middle School. The completion of the NCDOT report dated September 10, 2024, addresses some recommendations for Belmont Elementary School traffic concerns. They also talked about options there with the best interest in mind of safety. She asked Attorney Davis to add his comments.

Attorney Davis stated he believed it was a very productive discussion and he was happy with how the meeting went. They listened and shared each other's concerns. One of the biggest things they shared with the RRGSD was the Cross Safe proposal had the City contributing financially to the provision of crossing guards and they had concerns doing that. Not everyone who pays taxes to the City receives the benefit of the city schools. If there was financial contribution, maybe it was better to come from those individuals who live in the school district. The RRGSD had other liability concerns. They have concerns about placing their employees out on the road and doing traffic control operations.

He explained currently the way this functions, the City's law enforcement officers after they finish their shifts, they can sign up for off-duty assignments. They are off duty when they are working as crossing guards. They are wearing the police uniform and may have a vehicle there. They currently are paid \$45/hr. to do that by the RRGSD. They are not the City's employees while they are doing this. He has taken the position as City Attorney that when a law enforcement officer is working off duty and is in their jurisdiction, if a crime occurs in their presence, especially a misdemeanor or felony, at that point the officer is empowered and becomes the City's employee even if they are off duty. That triggers a lot of things from the City's perspective from a liability standpoint. Not only their acts and admissions, but also if they are injured on the job as a workman's comp claim. It would not be covered at the \$45/hr. rate, but at their normal salary. The numbers in workman's comp are heavily tied to what somebody's salary is. Those formulas are built into workman's comp laws. That helps to know what the liability is in a workman's comp case for an injured worker. He stated this is one of the school's biggest concerns. He said the City ran into this at the end of last fiscal year when they raised salaries, and it left a deficit in the workman's comp premiums; that is more liability for the insurance company, so they had to pay them added liability. He said that is the system they have in place right now.

Attorney Davis stated they had a possible suggestion for resolving this because he thinks there needs to be some kind of work towards a more permanent situation. The volunteer assignment may have worked 15-20 years ago, but now in 2024 it is not a surprise to him they are having trouble getting folks to fill this role. One of the things they suggested to the RRGSD was the City looking into creating traffic control officer positions. They would be City employees. It would be a job that somebody has, but they would not be a law enforcement officer. This would trigger a few things. They would not go through law enforcement retirement, and they can use the traffic control officer statute that Chief Guyant made City Council aware of that gives the individuals who want law enforcement officers the color of authority to be out there in the crosswalk to manage traffic. There was some concern from RRGSD where they would feel more comfortable with an actual law enforcement officer. They responded that how would the motoring public know whether that person had a law enforcement certification or not if they have the indicia of being a crossing guard in a uniform, vehicle and lights and had the legal authority of the traffic control officer. He thinks that could be a solution and they were looking at permanent employment versus a sign-up sheet that is voluntary. This would supplement or replace the system they already have and the RRGSD would pay for it completely. He and City Manager Traynham talked about this being permanent part-time employment for a non-law enforcement officer and the rate could presumably be significantly lower. That is good for the school. If the school is paying 100% of that they are paying less money than they are now and getting somebody to be there. The second thing is about employees and liability. If they do it that way, that person would be a City employee so the City would have liability there. Comparing this to the liability the City has now with a law enforcement officer out there, if they have these traffic control officers, the City's liability for workman's comp is going to be pegged at the hourly rate the City is paying them, not the law enforcement salary. He believes it reduces the City's liability from that standpoint.

He asked for City Council's feedback and if this would be something they would be interested in. If it was, they could go back to the RRGSD board and offer this as a resolution to the situation. He sees this as a win-win situation. He reluctantly said that the City could say this was the school's problem because he did not see where they had any responsibility to provide crossing guards to cross the street any more than the City has responsibility to have a law enforcement officer out on patrol. That is something the City chooses to do to keep the citizens safe and provide public services. They would all agree that students K-12th grade are a more vulnerable population. There is a lot of heavy traffic around the schools, and they want somebody there to maintain some order. He believes the City does have an interest in doing that with these schools being geographically located within the city limits.

Attorney Davis stated this was the basis of a proposal that he wanted to bring before City Council and receive some feedback on it. Right now, they have a temporary fix where the Police Department is going out of their way to make sure these areas are covered. It is difficult because when an officer goes on maternity leave or is injured, that is another person they do not have to fill one of these roles. They are making it work and they are committed to doing that to the best of their ability. Now that the issue has arisen, they need to look at a more permanent solution. He was not looking for a motion today, he has not put a word down as far as an agreement, but if they did do it, it would come before City Council in a memorandum of understanding as far as an interlocal agreement.

Mayor Pro Tem Bryant asked if the City would be hiring three permanent part-time employees for a couple hours a day. Attorney Davis replied he would not say three right now, they would have to look at the numbers, but maybe 1-3 employees would be reasonable. It would be part-time and would be when schools are taking in and letting out. They also would not be school resources officers. Their job would not be for the school itself; it is maintaining order. Belmont Elementary is the most acute concern because it is the longest distance across the road. Students are more vulnerable there and more chances of things going wrong than at Manning or Chaloner. This would not be something the City would be committing to forever. He would suggest an agreement with a yearly renewal so they could trial it.

Mayor Pro Tem Bryant questioned that since the school pays for this now and these people would be employees of the City, then the City would be responsible. Attorney Davis stated he would propose that the school reimburse the City for full costs. The City would be accepting some liability for them, but he believes the City's liability would go down with this scenario.

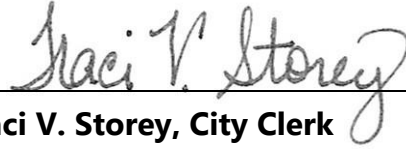
Mayor Doughtie confirmed that the City would not be responsible for any retirement or health insurance. Attorney Davis replied no, not if they are part-time.

Councilman Bell asked if they would have to do this during summer school. Attorney Davis replied if they needed it. He said in the meeting they also discussed better communication between the City and RRGSD and to have some liaisons to better communicate things such as early release days and when they would need to be there.

Attorney Davis said if City Council was receptive to this proposal, he and City Manager Traynham would go back to the school and work towards something they can bring before City Council.

Adjournment

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilman Bell, seconded by Councilman Strickland, and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: November 6, 2024