



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, September 1, 2020 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. Bobbit)
Sandra W. Bryant)
Suetta S. Scarbrough)
Wayne Smith)

Council Members

Joseph Scherer, MPA, MS, City Manager
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney
Traci Storey, City Clerk
Leigh Etheridge, Finance Director *
Kathy Kearney, Deputy City Clerk/Human Resources Manager
Bobby Martin, Police Chief
John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director*
Jason Patrick, Fire Chief
Christina Caudle, Main Street Director

Absent: Kelly Lasky, Planning & Development Director
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director

**Denotes those joining remotely using Zoom.*

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

Adoption of Business Agenda

Mayor Doughtie asked Council members if there were any additions, corrections or 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 Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda for September 1, 2020 as presented.

Special Recognitions

Sons of American Revolution Awards

Ken Wilson with the Halifax Resolves Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution presented SAR life-saving medals to Firefighters Dylan Clark and Vincent Mollicone for saving a person's life on Christmas Day 2019.

Mr. Wilson also presented SAR life-saving medals to Firefighters Jeffrey Brown and Brandon Shearin for saving a person's life May 21, 2020.

Fire Department Promotions and New Hire Ceremony

Fire Chief Patrick announced the following promotions made earlier this year:

- **Chris Horvath** promoted to **Battalion Chief** (pinned by his wife Hazel)
- **BJ Harris** promoted to **Battalion Chief** (pinned by his wife Emily)
- **Ramah Long** promoted to **Lieutenant** (pinned by his daughter Harper)
- **Chad Turner** promoted to **Lieutenant** (pinned by his wife Allison)
- **Patrick Pegram** promoted to **Engineer** (pinned by his wife Kelly)

Fire Chief Patrick also introduced and recognized **Firefighter Hunter Whitmire** who was hired in March. He was pinned by his mother, Tina.

He also wanted to recognize all the firefighters in the department; they work hard every day. They are concerned about their community and volunteer their time in the community. What they do at the Fire Station is not even half of what they do.

Lymphoma Awareness Month Proclamation

Mayor Doughtie read the following proclamation and presented to Fire Chief Patrick:

City of Roanoke Rapids
PROCLAMATION
LYMPHOMA AWARENESS MONTH
SEPTEMBER 2020

WHEREAS, lymphoma is the most common form of blood cancer; and

WHEREAS, more than one million people in the United States are living with, or in remission from lymphoma and chronic lymphocytic leukemia, and every five minutes, someone is diagnosed with lymphoma; and

WHEREAS, a cure for lymphoma can only be realized through advanced cancer research; and

WHEREAS, awareness and education are powerful tools in the race to find a cure for lymphoma; and

WHEREAS, the health and vitality of the people of North Carolina are significantly enhanced by local efforts to increase communication and education pertaining to blood cancers; and

WHEREAS, the Lymphoma Research Foundation offers a wide range of support services and programs for people with lymphoma, their loved ones and caregivers; and

WHEREAS, Lymphoma Awareness Month helps to raise general awareness of the disease and provides hope to all those affected by a lymphoma diagnosis.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Emery Doughtie, as Mayor of the City of Roanoke Rapids and on behalf of the Roanoke Rapids City Council, do hereby proclaim September as

“Lymphoma Awareness Month”

in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina and commend this observance to all our citizens.

THIS the 1st day of September, 2020.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Fire Chief Patrick said he appreciated City Council doing this; it means a lot to the Fire Department. One of their colleagues passed away last October from lymphoma. He battled it for about a year and a half to two years. The Fire Department wanted to do something this year to honor him.

He said the department would be wearing a special uniform shirt for the month of September. Wrenn Sports & Graphics has donated lime green shirts which is the color for lymphoma. They are doing this to bring awareness to lymphoma cancer. They are also selling different shirts from their uniform shirts. The proceeds will be donated to lymphoma awareness in honor of Chief Hawkins.

Fire Chief Patrick stated the firefighters wanted to bring awareness to this cause. It touched each and every one of them. He thanked City Council on behalf of the department and stated it means a lot to them.

He announced shirts were available at the Fire Station. People can call the Fire Department or get in touch with one of the firefighters to get a shirt. The shirts cost \$20.

Public Comment (Unscheduled)

Jerry McDaniel

Mr. McDaniel said he has spoken with City Manager Scherer, Councilman Smith, Mayor Doughtie and Chief Martin in my house. The subject was Michael Wray. Tried to get on the same subject but something kept holding me back; it seemed like they wanted me to give him a break of some type. What they didn't understand was I know a different type of Michael Wray supporter, campaigner, protégé. I'd like to quote this guy and this is a quote. He began to use profanity and racial language so Mayor Doughtie interrupted Mr. McDaniel and had Police Chief Martin remove him from the meeting.

Mayor Doughtie apologized for having that type of outbreak and behavior in the Council meeting.

Approval of City Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to approve the August 18, 2020 Regular City Council Meeting minutes as drafted.

Committee Reappointments

Senior Center Advisory Committee

City Clerk Storey stated the terms for Gladys Wells and Larry Beale on the Senior Center Advisory Committee expired August 2, 2020. Ms. Wells and Mr. Beale are interested in continuing to serve on this committee. They have both served the maximum number of two consecutive terms allowed by the City policy, but City Council has the authority to waive this section of the policy.

She reported a ballot vote was taken earlier and Ms. Wells and Mr. Beale received a unanimous vote. She requested City Council make a motion to waive the City policy and re-appoint Gladys Wells and Larry Beale to the Senior Center Advisory Committee.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to waive the City policy and reappoint Gladys Wells and Larry Beale to the Senior Center Advisory Committee.

City Clerk Storey noted she had one other committee member, Ms. Clements, she has not been able to make contact with so she may be bringing that reappointment to City

Council at a later date.

Roanoke Canal Commission

City Clerk Storey said Steven Snyder has submitted a volunteer application to serve on the Roanoke Canal Commission as one of the City’s representatives. There currently is a vacancy on this committee. City Council took a ballot vote earlier and Mr. Snyder received a unanimous vote. She requested City Council make a motion to appoint Steven Snyder to the Roanoke Canal Commission.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to appoint Steven Snyder to the Roanoke Canal Commission.

Canal Museum Advisory Committee

City Clerk Storey stated Mike Green previously served as the Roanoke Canal Commission representative on the Canal Museum Advisory Committee. Since Mr. Green is no longer a member of the Roanoke Canal Commission he can no longer serve in that capacity on the Canal Museum Advisory Committee. Mr. Green has submitted a request to serve as an ex officio member of the Canal Museum Advisory Committee. There is a vacancy for an ex officio member on this committee.

She requested City Council consider a motion to appoint Mike Green as an ex officio member of the Canal Museum Advisory Committee.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to appoint Mike Green as an ex officio member of the Canal Museum Advisory Committee.

<p>City Manager’s Report</p>

City Manager Scherer gave the following report:

Governor Cooper announced today the move to Phase 2.5 of the virus response plan beginning this Friday. This now allows gyms and bowling alleys to be open at 30% capacity but does not increase the capacity of restaurants or retail stores. Bars and other indoor establishments remain closed. The ban on alcohol sales after 11:00 p.m. was extended to October 2nd. Outdoor playgrounds can be open and indoor gatherings are now limited to 25 and outdoor gatherings limited to 50. Masks will now be required of everyone 5 years old and above.

The Police Department will receive their new body cameras next week. They are a great improvement over the current ones ordered 3 years ago. They have a 3 year battery life, record a better video even while running, have a better uniform secure

system to keep the camera (and battery) from falling off a person, a Cloud-based video storage system (save money by not having to buy CD's for DA's, defense lawyers and individuals) and better components. The system also has the capability to automatically turn on themselves and the in-car camera at the same time. (once new ones are purchased from the same company). The recent incidents around the country show the need for our officers to have effective body cameras to accurately portray actions by both the officer and the public, for the protection of both.

The Police Department continues with its recruiting and training mission. Three new officers will finish their training this week and then be assigned to squads, one former officer (minority) returns October 1st and the current BLET student is doing well and is on track to graduate in January. Other candidates have been interviewed for potential hires, to include women and minorities. The Department used the \$9,100 grant from Vidant Hospitals to purchase portable defibrillators and disposable bag face respirators for every squad.

After talking with the public and businesses, they feel the community wants to see some kind of Christmas Parade this year. It will depend on what Governor Cooper allows for Phase 3. For now, no outside agencies will participate (i.e., Shriners). We will begin putting together a plan for it. It could be a community morale boost in this time of virus pandemic and inspire some Christmas spirit.

The Chamber fundraiser for the Fire Department was a success, twenty-one (21) mattress sets were purchased for use at both stations and the additional funds raised will be used to purchase equipment such as new radios. We have not received a final tally from the Chamber. On behalf of the Fire Department, I'd like to thank all the organizations and volunteers who made this event so successful, especially Ginny Lewis, the Chamber President and CEO. The Fire Department has applied for two grants to be used for purchase of thermal imaging cameras and the purchase of a laptop, projector, and portable printer. This will help with new fire and life safety educator outreach programs, and may some software in with it to aid in inspections.

The auction of surplus City property on GovDeals was successful and brought in almost \$23K.

Chiefs Martin and Patrick and I met remotely with a representative from a national fleet leasing company to discuss the possibility of leasing pursuit vehicles for the Police Department and an administrative pickup for the Fire Department. This company already has vehicle lease programs with over 50 cities and counties in the state. This program has the potential of reducing our maintenance costs by removing older vehicles from the fleet and providing newer vehicles without obtaining a loan for

them. I will report back to Council on our recommendation for this plan after we review more information and contact other municipal references.

Mayor Doughtie stated he hopes the vehicle leasing works out well. City Manager Scherer said the company already has leases with over 50 cities and counties in the state so there must be some benefit to this program.

Mayor Doughtie thanked all City personnel and the community that made the mattress fundraiser turn out so well. He thinks when people can see instantly what their efforts are producing, it makes a difference. People were able to see mattresses were purchased and they had money left over.

Fire Chief Patrick stated the Weldon Fire Department also benefited from the fundraiser. They were able to replace all their mattresses too.

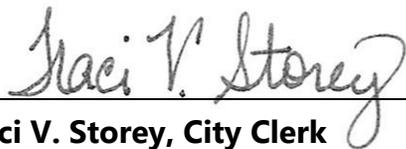
Mayor Doughtie said people ask how they can help, but sometimes bad help is worse than no help. He may not be able to help them put out fires and that sort of thing, but this gave people a way that everybody could help.

Fire Chief Patrick stated there has been a lot of support for the department. People have come by and made donations. They are very thankful for all the support through this.

Adjournment

Councilman Smith said he would like to apologize to the audience and the public for the outburst they had earlier. He also thanked Police Chief Martin for his fast action in removing the person from the meeting. Mayor Doughtie echoed that statement.

There being no further business, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.


Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: September 15, 2020