



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 21, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.** in the Council Chambers at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

Present: Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor
Carl Ferebee, Mayor Pro Tem

Sandra W. Bryant)*
Suetta S. Scarbrough)
Wayne Smith)
Rex Stainback)

Council Members

Kelly Traynham, Interim City Manager/Planning & Development Director
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney
Traci Storey, City Clerk
Kathy Kearney, Deputy City Clerk/Human Resources Manager*
Leigh Etheridge, Finance Director
Christina Caudle, Main Street Director
Jason Patrick, Fire Chief
John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director
Bobby Martin, Police Chief
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director

*Denotes joining the meeting via Zoom.

Mayor Doughtie called the meeting to order and opened with an invocation.

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.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to adopt the agenda as presented.

Special Recognitions

Former City Councilman Ernest Bobbitt

Mayor Doughtie recognized former City Councilman Earnest Bobbitt and read the following Resolution:

Resolution No. 2021.06

Resolution Honoring Ernest C. Bobbitt

WHEREAS, Ernest Bobbitt was born on November 18, 1947 in Littleton, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, Ernest graduated from Littleton High School in 1966 and attended Wilson Technical Institute before proudly serving in the United States Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, Ernest was hired on July 16, 1971 as a Police Officer for the Roanoke Rapids Police Department where he was promoted over the years to Sergeant in 1977, Lieutenant in 1980, Captain in 1984, Interim Police Chief in January of 1998 and served as Police Chief from May 1998 until his retirement in September 2002; and

WHEREAS, following a 31-year career with the Roanoke Rapids Police Department, Ernest decided to run for City Council where he was elected in 2003 to represent the Roanoke Rapids Electoral District One; and

WHEREAS, during his five consecutive terms in office, Ernest served as Council Liaison on the Roanoke Rapids Beautification Committee, Halifax Horizons Board and the Peanut Belt Rural Planning Organization as well as being actively involved with the Kiwanis Club, AMVETS, Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) and the Veterans Museum; and

WHEREAS, Ernest is married to Dorothy and they have two children, Ashley and William, and four grandchildren, Caitlin, Emerson, Colby and Brooklyn.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Roanoke Rapids City Council and the citizens of Roanoke Rapids do hereby recognize the accomplishments of Ernest C. Bobbitt and express deep gratitude for his dedicated service of over 50 years to the community; and wish him and his family much happiness.

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

THIS 21st day of September 2021.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Motion was made by Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021.06.

Mayor Doughtie also read and presented Mr. Bobbitt with a Resolution of Appreciation from the North Carolina League of Municipalities.

<p>Public Comment (Scheduled)</p>
--

Kimberly Graybeal (Hope for Hardy)

Ms. Graybeal stated on behalf of Hope for Hardy, she wanted to thank the City for the support and encouragement they have received while planning Twilight Festival 2021. They are elated to be on schedule for Friday night and are excited to bring an event like this to the city they all love. They have two goals for the Twilight Festival. One is the direct mission for Hope for Hardy which promotes organ donation awareness. They reached out to Main Street Director Caudle about involving historic Roanoke Avenue and all the main street businesses. She has been a pleasure to work with and is always helpful. She has a lot of knowledge that will help them pull off a very successful event. They have people coming to the event from all over the state of North Carolina. As far west as Winston-Salem and as far east as Kill Devil Hills.

She noted Hope for Hardy was founded in 2013 and the goal was to raise money for their dear friend and family member, Doug Hardy who needed a liver transplant. A group of friends got together to decide what kind of fundraisers they could have. They were not very far into their fundraising efforts when to their sadness they found out Doug would not get a liver in time to save his life. She was sorry for those who did not know her friend Doug Hardy. He was a giant of a man. They decided to continue what they were doing in his memory and help others in the same circumstances he was in. She was happy to report they have continued on and believes they have been successful in creating awareness. They have not done enough because there are still people that need organ transplants that do not receive them. She thanked the City for allowing them to have the event and provide the resources through the City such

as Public Works, Police Department, Fire Department and everyone that is going to help them out on Friday night. They are extremely grateful.

Mayor Doughtie read and presented the following Proclamation declaring Friday, September 24, 2021 Hope for Hardy Day.

City of Roanoke Rapids
PROCLAMATION
HOPE FOR HARDY DAY 2021

WHEREAS, more than 100,000 people are waiting for a lifesaving transplant across the nation; and

WHEREAS, another person is added to the transplant waiting list every ten minutes; and

WHEREAS, twenty (20) people die each day because the organ they need is not donated in time; and

WHEREAS, one organ, eye and tissue donor can save and heal more than seventy-five (75) lives; and

WHEREAS, Hope for Hardy began in June 2013 as an organization of people who loved Doug Hardy and wanted to raise money to cover the cost of his liver transplant; and

WHEREAS, sadly Doug passed away before receiving a transplant, but the Hope for Hardy organization continued to raise money and paid his hospital bills; and

WHEREAS, now Hope for Hardy has evolved into a 501(c)(3) private, non-profit foundation promoting organ donation and helping other patients in need who are specifically waiting for a liver transplant or those having already had an organ transplant.

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 **Friday, September 24, 2021** as

“Hope for Hardy Day”

in the City of Roanoke Rapids and commend this observance to all our citizens.

THIS the 21st day of September, 2021.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Approval of City Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to approve the July 13, 2021 Special Meeting; July 20, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting, August 3, 2021 Work Session; August 3, 2021 Special Meeting and August 24, 2021 Special Meeting minutes as drafted.

Committee Appointments

Senior Center Advisory Committee

City Clerk Storey stated the terms of Scott Hall, Megan Rogerson and Kirk Wynn (RR Graded School District Representative) on the Recreation Advisory Committee expired on September 9, 2021. All three committee members have expressed interest in continuing to serve on the committee. The City Clerk also received a volunteer application from Kenneth Hicks expressing interest in serving on the committee. His application along with a current membership list is enclosed in their packets for their review and consideration.

She said Mr. Hall and Ms. Rogerson have served the maximum number of 2 consecutive terms allowed by the City policy. Council has the authority – and has done so in the past – to waive this section of the policy.

She reported City Council took a ballot vote earlier to consider Mr. Hall, Ms. Rogerson and Mr. Hicks as a ballot vote was not required for Kirk Wynn since he is the RRGSD Representative on the Committee. The ballot votes have been tallied with Scott Hall and Megan Rogerson being the top vote getters. She respectfully requested City Council consider a motion to waive the City Policy for Mr. Hall and Ms. Rogerson and reappoint Scott Hall, Megan Rogerson and Kirk Wynn to the Recreation Advisory Committee.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said when they have applicants that have not served on a committee and express interest versus applicants that have already served their two terms and Council has to waive the policy for reappointment, he would like the City Clerk have those who have already served to complete a new application. The reason being it has been six years since they had completed one. He noted he knew the applicants and knows they do a great job, but he was looking at the process. He would like to ask applicants to submit a new application when their two terms have been completed. This way City Council can look at all the applications on the same basis. He asked if they could look at the process so everyone can have a chance to serve.

Interim City Manager Traynham said they could certainly start making sure new applications are completed. She stated when City Clerk Storey came on board with

the City she collected new applications for many of the committee members. She did understand and assured this procedure would be part of the record when making the decision again.

City Clerk Storey stated she was confident she had Mr. Hall's and Ms. Rogerson's applications from three years ago. Since COVID, she had gotten away from asking current committee members to resubmit applications if she had a fairly recent application because many would drop them off at City Hall. She stated she did not have any problem implementing this in the process.

Councilwoman Bryant stated she agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee. She understands that sometimes they do not have people interested in serving, but when they do, she believed they needed to look at all candidates before they automatically waive the policy and allow people to continue to serve. She said this does not reflect on anyone who is currently serving. This process would be more open and people would not be discouraged in trying to serve as volunteers on some of the other advisory committees.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith; seconded by Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to waive the City Policy for Mr. Hall and Ms. Rogerson and reappoint Scott Hall, Megan Rogerson and Kirk Wynn to the Recreation Advisory Committee.

Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board

City Clerk Storey said Steven Ellis and Ellen Heaton have submitted volunteer applications expressing interest in serving on the Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board. Currently, the board has two vacancies with terms that expire June 1, 2024. A copy of their applications and list of the current membership is enclosed in their agenda packet for their review and consideration. A ballot vote was taken earlier and Mr. Ellis and Ms. Heaton received a unanimous vote. She respectfully requested Council consider a motion to appoint Steven Ellis and Ellen Heaton to the Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee; seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to appoint Steven Ellis and Ellen Heaton to the Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board.

Senior Center Advisory Committee

City Clerk Storey said Loretta Riddick has submitted a volunteer application expressing interest in serving on the Senior Center Advisory Committee. Currently, there is a vacancy on the committee with a term that expires August 2, 2024. A ballot vote was taken earlier and Ms. Riddick received a unanimous vote. She respectfully requested Council consider a motion to appoint Loretta Riddick to the Senior Center Advisory Committee.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant; seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to appoint Loretta Riddick to the Senior Center Advisory Committee.

Halifax-Northampton Regional Airport Authority

City Clerk Storey reported Christina Wells with Halifax County contacted her to make the City aware that Calvin Potter's term on the Halifax-Northampton Regional Airport Authority had expired in January. She requested City Council reappoint Mr. Potter or make an appointment for the City's representative. It is a 3-year term that would be effective February 1, 2021. Ms. Wells contacted Mr. Potter and he would like to continue serving on this board. She respectfully requested City Council consider a motion to reappoint Calvin Potter to the Halifax-Northampton Regional Airport Authority.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to reappoint Calvin Potter to the Halifax-Northampton Regional Airport Authority.

Old Business

Award of Service Side Arm & Badge to Patrol Lieutenant Bruce Norton

Police Chief Martin stated Patrol Lieutenant Bruce Norton retired July 1, 2021 after serving the City of Roanoke Rapids and its citizens for 26 years. Mr. Norton was recognized during the August 3, 2021 Work Session. Police Chief Martin requests that the service side arm and badge of Mr. Norton be given to him in accordance with General Statute 20-187.2.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith; seconded by Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to award Bruce Norton his service side arm and badge for and in consideration of the sum of One and No/100 Dollars (\$1.00) received from him and upon his securing a permit as required by NCGS 14-402.

New Business

Ordinance Declaring a Road Closure for the Christmas Parade

Police Chief Martin said in light of changes by NCDOT regarding closures of state roads for special events, it is necessary to adopt an ordinance in order to close Roanoke Avenue (NC 48) for the Roanoke Rapids Christmas Parade on December 5, 2021. He asked City Council to consider and adopt the following ordinance that must be provided to NCDOT prior to the event.

ORDINANCE NO. 2021.13

AN ORDINANCE DECLARING A ROAD CLOSURE FOR A CHRISTMAS PARADE

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids acknowledges a long tradition of providing an annual Christmas parade for the pleasure of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids acknowledges its citizens realize a financial benefit from holding an annual Christmas parade; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids acknowledges a parade requires approximately two (2) hours to install signing and traffic control, and also requires approximately two (2) hours for removing signs, traffic control and litter;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids pursuant to the authority granted by G.S. 20-169 that they do hereby declare a temporary road closure during the day(s) and times set forth below on the following described portion of a State Highway System route:

Date(s): Sunday, December 5, 2021

Times: 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Route Description: Roanoke Avenue (NC 48) between 14th Street and 1st Street

This ordinance to become effective when signs are erected giving notice of the limits and times of the parade, and implementation of adequate traffic control to guide through vehicles around the parade route.

ADOPTED this 21st day of September 2021.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

ATTEST:

Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee; seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2021.13 declaring a road closure for the Christmas Parade on December 5, 2021.

Resolution Approving Surplus Items & Authorization of Sale by Electronic Auction

Public Works Director Chalker presented the following resolution for their consideration and adoption identifying items to be listed as surplus to be disposed of by electronic auction (www.govdeals.com).

RESOLUTION NO. 2021.07
Resolution Approving Surplus Items
In accordance with NCGS 160A-270(c) – Electronic Auction

WHEREAS, the Roanoke Rapids City Council desires to dispose of certain surplus property of the City; and

WHEREAS, the following items have been identified as being surplus to the needs of the City:

<i>No of Items</i>	<i>Item Description</i>	<i>Serial or Vin #</i>
1	Office Desk	
1	Weed Eater	
1	Floor Buffer	
1	Misc. Fire Hose	
1	Aluminum Hose Ramps	
1	Lawnmower	
8	Metal Lockers	
2	Paper Towel Dispensers	
	Old Firefighting Equipment	
	Hose Reels	
	2001 Ford Crown Vic (Gold) #160	2FAFP71W1X174904
	2007 Ford Crown Vic (Black) #P-12	2FAFP71W97X126067
	2006 Ford Crown Vic w/ decals #P-124	2FAHP71W66X119035
	2007 Ford Crown Vic (Burgundy) #P-13	2FAFP71W07X126068
	2007 Dodge Charger w/ decals #P-17	2B3KA43H57H709111
	2005 Elgin Cross Wind Street Sweeper #263	49HAADB85DN90240
	1993 International Thomas Built Bus #623	1HVBAZRM7PH488692
	1994 GMC Vandura 3500 Van (White) #P-63	1GDHG31K3RF526063
	1999 Dodge Van (White) #701	2B5WB35Y8XK533705
	1989 Case Wheel Loader (Yellow) #433	JAK0318208

WHEREAS, the Roanoke Rapids City Council, at a Regular Meeting on December 13, 2011, adopted Resolution No. 2011.25 authorizing the use of electronic auction services to dispose of surplus property; and

WHEREAS, the necessary agreements with GovDeals, Inc. are in place to utilize the company's electronic auction service to dispose of surplus items;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Roanoke Rapids City Council hereby declares the foregoing list of property to be surplus to the needs of the City, and authorizes disposal of these items by electronic auction (specifically by website: www.govdeals.com) in accordance with NCGS 160A-270(c).

ADOPTED this 21st day of September 2021.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

ATTEST:

Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if the City normally receives a good return on the sale of the items. Public Works Director Chalker replied yes, they absolutely get the best return and have been since using this particular method of selling the City's surplus.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith; seconded by Councilman Stainback and unanimously carried to adopt Resolution No. 2021.07 to officially declare the items as surplus and authorize the sale by electronic auction.

2020 Census Data and Electoral District Redistricting

Interim City Manager Traynham stated they were still anxiously awaiting the final data toolkit so they can interpret the data that is currently available in order to compare the 2020 results to the City's current voting district boundaries to determine if any substantial inequity has occurred. They do know the City's population has changed in the last ten years. That change is just over 3%. She reviewed and summarized the following memorandum:

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Doughtie and City Councilmembers

FROM: Kelly Traynham, *Interim* City Manager and Planning & Development Director

Date: September 16, 2021

RE: **2020 Census Data and Electoral District Redistricting Considerations**

Background. On June 28, 2021, by action of the State Legislature under Session Law 2021-56, the City of Roanoke Rapids (*and other cities with electoral districts*) municipal district elections were effectively delayed from November 2, 2021, to March 8, 2022. The law only changes the date for the 2021 elections and will not affect any future elections. Both the United States Constitution and North Carolina Constitution require redistricting to account for annexed/deannexed territory or to correct population imbalances as shown by federal census data. On August 13, 2021, the 2020 Decennial Census data was released, but the redistricting data is in a format that requires additional software to extract certain data. **The Census Bureau will deliver the final redistricting data toolkit to all states and the public by September 30, 2021.** These redistricting data delivery delays are related to COVID-19.

Objective. The City of Roanoke Rapids is required to study its total population relative to the population within the city's three electoral districts. If the results of this study indicate a percent-change that exceeds an established threshold (substantial inequality), then district boundaries must be modified to establish equality. The current threshold based on North Carolina specific case law is +/- 5% (positive or negative five percent).

Citizen Participation and Comments Encouraged. Now that the 2020 Census data has been released, citizens of the city have an opportunity to provide input and are encouraged to submit public comments by email or mail to City Clerk Traci Storey at tstorey@roanokerapidsnc.com or City Hall, 1040 Roanoke Ave, Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870. If redistricting is necessary, then one public hearing is required prior to adopting revised districts.

Who Counts in the Census? Everyone counts and this holds true for the 2020 US Census count. The electoral districts are configured for the ideal population of the City; young, old, voters, non-voters, minorities, and everyone. Some districts may

have more turnout than others and some may have greater participation in elections. However, the “one person, one vote” clause of the Constitution requires the City to configure the districts to be as equal as possible counting the total population. Current Census data is available at www.census.gov.

The 2020 Decennial Census provides that the City of Roanoke Rapids’ population is 15,239 persons. Please see **Table 1** which presents the prior Decennial Census data, changes in population over time, by decade, since the year 2000. Per this info, the City of Roanoke Rapids has experienced a population loss of 3.33 % since the 2010 Decennial Census. During the last 20-years, the City of Roanoke Rapids has experienced a population loss of 10%.

<i>Table 1. Decennial Population Changes by Decade for years 2000, 2010, 2020</i>			
	2000	2010	2020
Population (Decennial Census)	16,957	15,754	15,239
Difference (from prior decennial census)		(1,203)	(525)
% change (from prior)		(7.09%)	(3.33%)
<i>Notes: Parentheses (###) indicate a loss or reduction</i>			

Redistricting Program. The City Council may appoint a committee to work with City staff in redrawing the electoral boundaries for the City’s three districts. The work will utilize the 2020 Census data and by state law must be completed by November. The City’s current electoral district map was drawn by previous census data, and criteria by federal mandate.

City of Roanoke Rapids Electoral Districts

The Charter of the City of Roanoke Rapids (“Charter”) stipulates that City Council (“Council”) be composed of a mayor elected by the population at-large and five (5) councilmembers with representation from three distinct electoral. Currently, two members elected by and from District 1, two members elected by and from District 2, and one member elected by and from District 3.

Ideal Population

Five (5) council members represent the City’s population of 15,239 persons (2020 Census). The *Ideal Population* is determined by dividing the 2020 Census Population of the entire City by the total number of Council Members.

Ideal Population = City Population divided by five (5) Council Members

$$3,048 = 15,239 \div 5$$

Therefore, **the ideal population represented by each of the five council members is 3,048.** For districts with multiple council members, the ideal population is multiplied by the number of elected district members. District 3 is a single-member district is ideally represented a population of 3,048.

Since Districts 1 and 2 are two-member districts, they are ideally represented by a population of 6,096 (*3,048 multiplied by two (2)*).

Substantial Inequality

The expectation is equal population equity among electoral (voting) districts using the principle of “One Person, One Vote” with no more or less than a 5% deviation comparatively. If a district representation by population has changed more than 5%, then **substantial inequality** is determined to exist, and redistricting will be required to maintain equal representation of every district by accounting for population shifts during the previous decade. See **Table 2** for a graphical representation of current and information to be determined (TBD).

Table 2. How is “Substantial Inequality Determined”??					
District	Ideal Population	2020 Population	Deviation	% Change	Substantial Inequality
1	6,096	TBD	TBD	TBD	Yes or No
2	6,096	TBD	TBD	TBD	Yes or No
3	3,048	TBD	TBD	TBD	Yes or No
<i>Notes:</i> TBD: value to be determined per review of 2020 Census Data, as available Formula: Deviation = Ideal Pop. minus 2020 Pop. Percent (%) Change = Deviation divided by Ideal Pop. Substantial Inequality: “Yes (Y)” when the % Change is greater than 5% (gain (+) or loss (-)). “No (N)” is within 5% range (threshold).					

Population Equity

Prior to 1991, members of the city council were elected in at-large voting. This was challenged in federal court under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, resulting in the creation of three voting districts and established in a Consent Decree entered on December 17, 1991. Under this Consent Decree, District 3 was designated to be the voting district in which the black or African American minority population would have a statistically fair opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice to the city council. Amendment of voting district boundaries shall take this into consideration if redistricting is necessary. Since District 3 was established with the intent of representing populations identifying as black/African American/other minority, prior redistricting efforts used population statistics designated as “Total”, “Black” and “Other” in each of the voting districts. *Annexation and redistricting activities in 2007 that resulted in the current Voting District Map, provided for the following statistics and are shown in Table 3.*

Table 3. Population Equity and Statistically Fair Representation			
Category	Voting District		
	<i>District 1</i>	<i>District 2</i>	<i>District 3</i>
2007 Voting District Map, with final amendments (2000 Census Data pop. 16,957)			
Pop. Ideal*	6,782	6,782	3,391
Pop. Actual	6,776	7,036	3,324
Black (%)	1,027 (15.35%)	1,060 (15.07%)	2,169 (65.25%)
Other (%)	5,517 (81.42%)	6,011 (88.35%)	1,211 (35.86%)
2020 Census Review based on population 15,239			
Pop. Ideal	6,096	6,096	3,048
Pop. Actual	TBD	TBD	TBD
Black (%)	TBD	TBD	TBD
Other (%)	TBD	TBD	TBD
<i>Notes:</i> Population (“Pop.”): the total count or sum of all persons in given area. Ideal Pop. was based on the 2000 Census total population of 16,957 TBD: value to be determined per review of 2020 Census Data, as available			

Candidate Filing Period Affected by Deadline Compliance. The candidate filing period is currently December 6-17, 2021. The City shall notify the Halifax County Board of Elections no later than November 12, 2021, whether it will be able to provide revised electoral district boundaries in accordance with State and federal law on or before November 17, 2021. If not, the City of Roanoke Rapids must request an extension of one-month and provide revised districts on or before December 17, 2021. This will move the candidate filing period to January 3-7, 2022, but the election date will remain as March 8, 2022.

Key Points. Local redistricting program activities include, but are not limited to:

- Evaluation of current electoral districts to newly released 2020 Census population data.
- Determining the need for redistricting based on state statute and applicable case law.
- If necessary, redrawing of current electoral districts to meet current state and federal guidelines.
- City Council awareness as to redistricting processes and procedures.
- Encouraging citizen participation by giving opportunities to comment.

Required Action. The City needs to analyze this data to determine whether Roanoke Rapids' current Voting District Boundary Map remains in the legal margin.

2021 Redistricting Guiding Principles. In addition to the applicable legal mandates to help guide the detailed decisions that must be made about district boundaries, the City Council should adopt guiding principles to assist the staff (and potential consulting group members) in preparing district boundary map alternatives.

Staff suggested example of Guiding Principles is listed as follows:

- **Use existing district boundaries as the starting point for making changes to new Council district boundaries, being sure to keep existing Council members in the district to which they were elected; and,**
- **Maintain a population equity as established in the creation of District 3;**
- **Use Halifax County's voting precincts as the building blocks for changes, consider precincts; and,**
- **District boundaries should follow major geographic features such as roads; and,**
- **Keep major neighborhoods/developments in single Council districts; and,**
- **Consider projected growth when establishing district boundaries.**

Scope of Work. During the months of September and October, the Redistricting Working Group (or Committee) will have work sessions with the goal of submitting the draft boundaries to the Mayor and Council for adoption in November. The Committee will work with 2020 Census data, consider geographical boundaries and voting data in drafting district options for each of the City's three districts. The Committee will also seek citizen input on the options for each district before making a final recommendation to City Council. Standards for the redistricting process require that each electoral district has a standard population within a five-percent gain or loss (5% + or 5% -) compared to all other districts.

City Manager Recommendation:

Following the presentation and discussion of the current 2020 US Census Bureau statistics and availability of redistricting data, please discuss and be prepared to take action or consideration of the following items:

1. Adoption of 2021 Guiding Principles to assist in the review of the district map.
2. Appointment of a working group or committee to assist city staff.

Interim City Manager Traynham referred to the handouts they were given before the meeting which included copies of City Council actions amending the voting district map. She stated the map should be dated March 28, 2007. City Council adopted a resolution on February 27, 2007, but after further analysis of the US Department of Justice, some modifications were required. A month later in March 2007, City Council

rescinded the action in February and adopted a resolution to replace the February map with the March map.

She stated she has not identified as to any reason why the 2010 Census data was not formally reviewed. At this point, they have the duty to review the 2020 data to the City's current voting district boundaries.

Interim City Manager Traynham asked for City Council's direction to the adoption of the 2021 Guiding Principles tonight. Otherwise, they can take it up again in next month's meeting.

Councilman Smith asked if they were going to have enough time between the next work session and the deadline to have it back to the State in November. Interim City Manager Traynham replied she hoped so. The data and access to the software allows it to be done from here or any internet access. In years past, groups would have to travel to Raleigh to review the maps and data. It may be they have to schedule some half day work sessions with the group/committee. They have to give notice to the Halifax County Board of Elections by November 12, 2021 to let them know if the map review is completed and in place by November 17, 2021. She advised they could request a 30 day extension if necessary to December 17, 2021. The effect of that would change the filing period for the March 8, 2022 elections. Rather than filing occurring in December, it would occur in January. There is some time built in and there is not a penalty per se if it is not completed by November 12th although she would prefer that it is. She stated if they prioritize it and work towards that goal, she feels confident they can make it happen.

Councilman Smith stated the next meeting would be October 5, 2021 so they could possibly have a called meeting then a work session afterwards. He asked if Council could agree tonight that each of them would bring one person from the community to serve on the committee and make sure they are contacted so they would be ready by the first of October. Interim City Manager Traynham said a public process is encouraged and yes, they can call a special meeting either the same day as the work session or any other time.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee agreed with the idea that each Council member would select a person out of the community. Interim City Manager Traynham stated it was important that all the districts be represented equally so the individual should come directly from the districts they reside.

Councilman Smith said although he did not want the committee to be too big, he felt City staff members should be on this committee as well. Interim City Manager

Traynham said any City staff members would just facilitate the committee, they would not be involved in any final recommendations. She feels it is City staff's duty to ensure this process moves forward. If work sessions for the committee are scheduled and some people are not present, they will keep moving forward and work with who were there. Before any recommendations are made before City Council, the committee would need to make those recommendations.

City Council discussed the idea of having Council members on the committee and that it may not be the same Council member all the time, depending on what was being discussed. For instance, if one district was taking away from another district. Interim City Manager Traynham stated it would be encouraged to have Council members involved. Some of the suggested guiding principles talk about how to make those changes if they come up. The purpose of the committee is to recommend and it is a public open process.

Mayor Doughtie suggested Interim City Manager Traynham put together a list of bullet points for these potential Council appointees on what they were volunteering to do. This way everyone would be telling them the same thing.

Interim City Manager Traynham replied she could certainly do that. The committee needs to work with the 2020 Census data and if any changes are necessary they would need to examine the geographical boundaries considering different options or alternatives. Then they would propose those recommendations to City Council. If changes were necessary, she anticipated there would be at least two variations of a map for City Council to look at and ultimately make a final decision on. The committee is only a recommending committee; they do not make the final decision. Any changes that are required to be made must be reviewed by the US Department of Justice. A public hearing would also be required. There are processes and guidelines involved that would help facilitate the discussion for any potential changes.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked when they anticipated receiving the software. Interim City Manager Traynham replied by the end of September.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee; seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to adopt the 2021 Guiding Principles to assist in the review of the district map and appoint a working committee where each Council member will provide one person to represent their voting district on this committee to assist staff with the redistricting process.

City Manager's Report

Interim City Manager Traynham gave the following report:

1. The Departments Management Team is collectively working to assist with several community events scheduled to take place during the next couple weeks.
 - a. Friday, September 24: Twilight Festival in partnership with Hope for Hardy Charitable Organization and Main Street Roanoke Rapids.
 - b. Saturday, September 25: at 8:00 a.m. the Canal Trail Races are set to begin with three opportunities: Half-Marathon (13.1 miles), 5k (3.2 miles) and 1-mile Fun Run. The event will take place at Dominion's Day Use Park at 100 Oakwood Avenue. The event is kicking off the Centennial Celebration of Roanoke Rapids High School and showcasing the schools 100-year history.
 - c. Friday, October 1: RRHS Homecoming and Centennial Celebration weekend. The football game is scheduled to begin at 6:30 followed by a fireworks display (planning underway).
 - d. Saturday, October 2: Centennial Celebration and Rededication Ceremony at RRHS. Many activities scheduled throughout the day and into the evening with a final event at Kirkwood Adams.
 - e. Thankful for City Staff in their efforts to facilitate these special events within the city.
2. The Fire Department is taking part in "table top exercises" for active training in the event of specific disaster. Each shift will participate beginning today and will conclude on Wednesday. This is taking place at Kirkwood Adams and involves Halifax County Emergency Management.
3. The RRHS Centennial Celebration weekend provides the City Staff with an opportunity to train and implement Emergency Operations. Public Safety is our #1 priority.
4. During the last few weeks, I have met with each member of the Departments Management Team to discuss current activities, identify needs, and gain a better understanding of their functions and environments.

Interim City Manager Traynham announced Human Resources Manager Kearney has scheduled a Flu Shot Clinic in October at City Hall. Those who are interested in getting the shot should contact Ms. Kearney.

Finance Director's Report

Finance Director Etheridge presented the August 2021 Financial Report. General

Fund year to date receipts totaled \$427,410. (The percentage of actual money collected of adopted budgeted figures is 2.6%). General Fund year to date expenditures totaled \$2,685,136. (The percentage of actual monies expended of adopted budgeted figures is 16.1%). After the month of August, 16.67% of the budget year has been completed.

She reported August is another of the City's lowest revenue months, but also a second month with high expenditure requirements. During August 2021, the City has not recognized the first material allotment of its Ad Valorem Tax Revenue or Sales & Use Taxes for FY 2021-2022.

Finance Director Etheridge stated as of this meeting date, the audit staff has completed their initial field work testing of City data. Mr. Redman will present the audit to Council after both completion and approval of the City's annual audit by the Local Government Commission has been obtained.

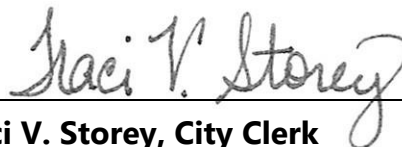
She said Operating Cash and Investment Reserves will continue to remain at lower levels until the City begins to receive monthly Ad Valorem taxes, Sales & Use taxes, and quarterly Utility Franchise tax revenue.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked how she projected the City was doing. Finance Director Etheridge replied they were on the same track as they were last August. August always has a substantial loss until they begin to see their revenue. They also have expenditure requirements such as the Theatre debt, the E911 Quarterly payment, the tennis court project with the RRGSD and things of that nature at the first of the fiscal year.

Councilman Smith asked if they expected an increase in sales tax. She replied it was still trending as it was when they closed FY2020-21. She stated she has not seen it trend down so they were still doing well with Sales & Use Tax. He said the State reported there was about a 14% increase in sales tax so far this year.

Adjournment

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 6:35 p.m.



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: October 19, 2021