



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, April 19, 2022 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, City Manager
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney
Traci Storey, City Clerk
Christina Caudle/Human Resources Director
Tammy Fahey, Interim Finance Director
Jason Patrick, Fire Chief
Bobby Martin, Police Chief

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. There being no conflicts, motion was made by Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to adopt the agenda as presented.

Public Comment (Unscheduled)

Jerry McDaniel

Mr. McDaniel stated he was confused. A while back he and the Mayor spoke and he was under the impression that the Council and Mayor were helpless to do anything about the river coal ash dumping and they were sick and tired of hearing about coal ash. He asked if he had that correct.

Mayor Doughtie stated normally they do not have conversation back and forth. He said Mr. McDaniel had talked with him about it as he just mentioned. He believed

they had gotten some information back from the State that they had done some investigation (this was not recently) and they had deemed there was no further action that needed to take place. That was all the conversation he and Mr. McDaniel had about it.

Mr. McDaniel continued to say he heard back from NCDENR and one of the gentlemen commended him on his interest in historical coal ash dumping. Personally, on NCDENR letterhead cautioned him against self-implication. They do not know what he had to go through to get an appointment with a State Representative. He had to sit here and make a deal not to read them the letter he had wrote to VistaGreen. He had to wait for an appointment for 6-8 months to tell them about his river dumping. When he threatened to read letter to the City Council, he got an appointment in 48 hours. When he walked into the doors, two guys were standing there and told him to be careful what he said today because they were going to report him to the Capital Police for extortion. They do not know what goes on. The composition of the City Council has changed and he wondered if they were still unanimous in the fact that he dumped enough coal ash in the Roanoke River to move the property line out in the river for a decade. He asked if they did not feel like they owed somebody that lives on River Road an explanation or an investigation. The only person that has asked him lives on River Road and knows all about it, obviously does not share it with his neighbors. He did not know if City Council needed to get together to see if they were unanimous; he just wanted to know where they stand with it. He was trying to reach out to them. He was not sure if he should reach out to them separately.

Mayor Doughtie said he did not mind speaking to him. He would call him or he could come to his office to talk. Mr. McDaniel said he was interesting in knowing how the rest of the Council feels. Mayor Doughtie said they could speak and then they would go from there.

Approval of City Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to approve the March 15, 2022 Regular City Council meeting, March 24, 2022, 9 a.m. Budget Work Session, March 24, 2022, 1 p.m. Budget Work Session, March 29, 2022, 8:30 a.m. Budget Work Session and March 29, 2022, 1 p.m. Budget Work Session minutes as drafted.

City Council Appointments

Roanoke Canal Commission

City Clerk Storey reported the Roanoke Canal Commission has two vacancies for the

City of Roanoke Rapids representatives on their board. Mr. Kendrick McBride has submitted an application to be considered for appointment. A vote was taken earlier and Mr. McBride received a unanimous vote, therefore she requested City Council consider a motion for his appointment.

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to appoint Kendrick McBride as the City of Roanoke Rapids Representative on the Roanoke Canal Commission.

Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board (ETJ member)

City Clerk Storey stated the term for Terry Campbell as an ETJ member on the Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board will expire May 31, 2022. Mr. Campbell has served the maximum number of two consecutive terms allowed by the City policy. City Council has the authority to waive this section of the policy and has done so in the past. A ballot vote was not required since the Halifax County Board of Commissioners make the final decision on ETJ appointments.

She requested City Council make a motion to recommend Terry Campbell be reappointed by the Halifax County Board of Commissioners to serve as an ETJ member on the Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to waive the City policy and recommend Mr. Campbell be reappointed by the Halifax County Board of Commissioners to serve as an ETJ member on the Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board.

New Business

Consideration of LSTA 2021-2022 Adapting Technology Grant Budget Amendment

Interim Finance Director Fahey presented Ordinance No. 2022.06 to establish a budget for a project to be funded for purposes referenced in the LSTA 2021-2022 Adapting Technology Grant, State Project Code: NC-21-337. The Grant agreement is between the Roanoke Rapids Public Library and the State Library of North Carolina, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. The City of Roanoke Rapids expects to receive funds in the amount of \$9,000 from the State Library.

She recommended City Council adopt Ordinance No. 2022.06, which is necessary to proceed with the grant project within the terms of the grant documents, the rules and regulations of the State Library of North Carolina, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources and the budget.

**Ordinance No. 2022.06
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, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE A – PROJECT FUND REVENUES

State Library LSTA Grant– Federal Resources	\$9,000
Library Services & Technology Act	
Project Revenues (To be reimbursed by Grant)	
GENERAL FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$9,000

SECTION 2. The following additional revenues and reductions in appropriations are available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022, in order to meet the foregoing appropriations, according to the following schedule:

SCHEDULE B – PROJECT FUND EXPENDITURES

STATE LIBRARY LSTA Grant	\$9,000
Project Expenditures (To be reimbursed by Grant)	
GENERAL FUND PROJECT TOTAL	\$9,000

SECTION 3. This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

ADOPTED this 19th day of April, 2022.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2022.06.

Consideration of CDBG Asbestos Contract Award

City Manager Traynham stated the City of Roanoke Rapids was awarded a Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization Grant and that follows all the federal uniform guidance. As part of that, any contracts the City enters into must be properly advertised, a competitive bidding process conducted and for the City Council to award such contract. They have been advertising for many professional services including attorneys, surveyors and asbestos contractors. The

only one they have had competitive responses to are for the asbestos abatement services. Since they have received three responses, they have evaluated them with their project consultant and awarded points based upon their qualifications, per unit fee, sample fee and their average response time to get the most competitive results. They received three proposals and they recommend the contract be awarded to the most qualified contractor.

She reported the proposals were received from Michael Baker International, Keenan Construction & Consulting and Geological Resources Inc. In partnership with the consultant, they recommend to first award the asbestos inspection services contract to Keenan Construction & Consulting (86 points) because they were the highest ranked proposal. The second highest ranked proposal was Geological Resources (80 points) followed by Michael Baker International (77 points).

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a CDBG Neighborhood Revitalization Program Asbestos Services Contract hereby awarded to the most qualified firm which is Keenan Construction & Consulting based on proposal evaluation and scoring completed by the Administrative Consultant.

Consideration of Agreement between City and Halifax County for Chockoyotte Creek Flooding Abatement Project

City Manager Traynham stated the contract itself is an administrative agreement because the \$1M State Directed Grant was awarded to Halifax County for flooding abatement projects on Chockoyotte Creek within the City of Roanoke Rapids. She added the contract has been reviewed by the City Attorney. She called upon Public Works Director Chalker to provide information and answer any questions concerning the grant.

Public Works Director Chalker confirmed the \$1M grant was awarded to Halifax County for the use in the Chockoyotte Drainage Basin only. They already had this project identified based on a complaint by a citizen on Charles Circle which is just off Southgate Drive. There are approximately 15 parcels with homes that are affected by this project. There is a very severe drainage situation. The water is not running as it was originally designed to run behind these homes. The lady that called with the complaint was seeing erosion on three sides of her home. They were not aware at that time they had a drainage easement there which was controlled by the City. Once they identified that they began to look at ways they could better provide them protection from this massive amount of water running behind their homes during thunderstorms and very heavy rains.

He reported the project was in its infancy right now. They've had a group of engineers with Mack Gay & Associates who are very adept at dealing with storm drain projects and all different types of grants. The scope of the project is the better control the storm water runoff behind these peoples' homes. There is also a large power transformer on a concrete pad that actually ends up under water during heavy rains. There are several things they aim for correct there with this grant. There is a good amount of work that needs to be done on Charles Circle which is a cul-de-sac. The cul-de-sac over time as settled and the driveways were not maintained properly. They are setting up to rebuild that cul-de-sac to get it back to the proper grade and get the water running where it is supposed to. They anticipate putting in some more drainage collection points (grates).

Public Works Director Chalker said there is erosion on Southgate Drive where the asphalt is flaking off. Part of that is from erosion from heavy storm water. They intend to pipe a portion of that ditch in to improve the surface of the roadway.

Councilman Smith asked what is the cost of this project. Public Works Director Chalker replied they did not have that information tonight; there is \$1M to spend. Everyone tells him that once they get into that cul-de-sac and start pulling old asphalt out and re-grading and putting more storm drainage pipes in, they will soak up a good amount of that money.

Councilman Smith said that the contract states if there is any overrun then the City would be responsible for it, not the County for any additional funds. Public Works Director Chalker said they do not anticipate spending the entire \$1M and certainly do not foresee any overrun at this point. The engineers have only been out there once so they know what they are looking for. The first phase will be surveying because there are so many properties involved, so many property line and several different easements and right-of-ways in this subdivision. They have to identify all of this and utilities. That part of the work should be approximately \$700,000 and that is with contingencies.

Public Works Director Chalker reported the foundation of a shed of one of the residents, Ms. Mason, was completely washed out. Once the City found out they had a drainage easement there, the Street Department went out to temporarily correct that condition for her.

Mayor Doughtie asked how long that subdivision been there. City Manager Traynham replied the subdivision was established in 1970. Mayor Doughtie asked if this would not be an issue if that subdivision would have been built any different. Public Works Director Chalker replied it would be hard to go back and say that now. An example

above this area there has been several new constructions. Olde Town Village Housing is the closest. There is a very large detention pond there and the intent was to detain the water and meter it out slowly. There is a small design flaw in that detention pond that will be part of this project. They hope to correct the problem so the storm drainage pond works properly and doesn't dump so much water on the people downstream at such a high rate. They want to slow that rate down and use the capacity of that pond.

Public Works Director Chalker said Halifax County has received the first check in the amount of \$250,000, but they have to have this agreement between the City and Halifax County before they can proceed with anything.

Councilman Smith asked if they had copies of the grant. Public Works Director Chalker replied yes, the County sent a copy of the grant and other paperwork to the City Manager and himself in addition to the City Attorney.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilwoman Bryant and unanimously carried to approve the agreement and authorize the Mayor to execute the agreement.

Consideration of American Rescue Plan (ARP) Project Ordinance- Standard Allowance Option

City Manager Traynham presented a project ordinance (Ordinance No. 2022.07) for the City of Roanoke Rapids for the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. The City should receive a total of \$4,563,747.40 by the end of August 2022. She reported the City has already received the first allocation last August in the amount of \$2,281,873.70. She said a project ordinance is required to accept the funds and state how they intend to be used.

She stated they have had many conversations about the Standard Allowance and under that revenue replacement category that allows local governments that received up to \$10M in ARP monies to expend the total allocation in this category. With salaries and benefits being one of the City's largest expenditures makes it the ideal place with basically the least path of resistance to justify the funds. That in turn frees up any offset funds for use under general spending that is allowed by the City per state law.

City Manager Traynham reviewed and summarized the following ordinance:

ORDINANCE No. 2022.07
Grant Projects Ordinance for the City of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina,
American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina, that pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following grant projects ordinance is hereby adopted:

Section 1: This ordinance is to establish a budget for various projects to be funded by the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds of H.R. 1319 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA/CSLFRF) and to authorize and/or direct other actions necessary for the proper appropriation and expenditure of the funds. The total allocation of ARPA/CSLFRF funds to Roanoke Rapids is \$4,563,747.40. The City has received the first tranche in the amount of \$2,281,873.70, with the remainder to be distributed on or about August 18, 2022. These funds may be used for the following categories of expenditures, to the extent authorized by state law:

- A. Support public health expenditures, by funding COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, and certain public health and safety staff;
- B. Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector;
- C. Replace lost public sector revenue, using this funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic;
- D. Provide premium pay for essential workers, offering additional support to those who have borne and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors; and,
- E. Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet.

Section 2. The City hereby elects to take the standard allowance for replacement of lost public sector revenue as authorized by 31 CFR Part 35.6(d)(1) and to expend all ARPA/CSLFRF funds for the provision of government services.

Section 3: The following amounts are appropriated for the following government services projects and authorized for expenditure:

Internal Project Code	Government Services Project Description	Expenditure Category (EC)	Cost Object	Appropriation of CSLFRF Funds
01	Law enforcement services for period retroactive to July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024	6.1	Salaries	\$ 1,066,144.64
			Benefits	\$ 298,520.50
02	Finance Services for period retroactive to July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024	6.1	Salaries	\$ 266,659.15
			Benefits	\$ 74,664.56
03	Fire Services for period retroactive to July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024	6.1	Salaries	\$ 1,040,692.80
			Benefits	\$ 291,393.98

04	Parks & Recreation Services for period retroactive to July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024	6.1	Salaries	\$ 213,608.60
			Benefits	\$ 59,810.41
05	Planning and Development Services for period retroactive to July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024	6.1	Salaries	\$ 305,579.33
			Benefits	\$ 85,562.21
06	Public Works Services for period retroactive to July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024	6.1	Salaries	\$ 522,289.57
			Benefits	\$ 146,260.88
07	General Administration Services for period retroactive to July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2024	6.1	Salaries	\$ 150,438.10
			Benefits	\$ 42,122.67
			TOTAL SALARIES	\$ 3,565,412.19
			TOTAL BENEFITS	\$ 988,335.22
			GRAND TOTAL	\$ 4,563,747.40

Section 4: The following revenues are anticipated to be available to complete the projects:

CSLFRF Funds: \$ 4,563,747.40

General Fund Transfer: \$ -0-

Total: \$ **4,563,747.40**

Section 5. The City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to establish and implement all policies and procedures necessary for the administration of the CSLFRF Funds pursuant to 2 CFR 200 (Uniform Guidance) and other grant award terms, including but not limited to the following:

Eligible Use Policy

Allowable Costs and Cost Principles Policy

Nondiscrimination Policy

Records Retention Policy

Conflict of Interest Policy

Financial Management and Internal Controls

Program Income Policy (if deemed necessary)

Procurement Policy (if deemed necessary)

Property Management Policy (if deemed necessary)

Subaward Policy (if deemed necessary)

All necessary policies and procedures shall be established by the City Manager and implemented by the appropriate City staff prior to the expenditure of any funds and otherwise as required by the granting agency.

Section 6: The Finance Director is hereby directed to maintain sufficient specific detailed accounting records to satisfy the requirements of the grantor agency and the grant agreements, including payroll documentation and effort certifications, in accordance with 2 CFR 200.430 and 2 CFR 200.431, and the City's Uniform Guidance Allowable Costs and Cost Principles Policy.

Section 7: The Finance Director is hereby directed to report the financial status of the project to the governing board on a quarterly basis.

Section 8: Copies of this grant projects ordinance shall be entered into the minutes of the governing board within five days after adoption and be filed with the Finance Director, City Manager, and the City Clerk.

Section 9: This grant projects ordinance expires on December 31, 2026, or when all ARPA/CSLFRF funds have been expended by the City, whichever occurs sooner.

ADOPTED this 19th day of April 2022.

ATTEST:

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Councilman Smith stated they had discussed the expenditure of this money and the different projects they would like to get done. He asked City Manager Traynham if she had considered what this money is going to be spent for. She replied they were looking at all the budget needs for the upcoming year and City Council will be involved in any of the budgetary decisions that need to be made just as they would be with any monies. None of the funds have been earmarked for any specific purpose.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee reiterated that they have a full list of needs from every department that City Council can look at along with the City Manager to get some ideas. He asked for clarification of what this ordinance states on what they will do with the monies.

City Manager Traynham said it says the City will be spending its ARP money on salaries and benefits. Then the offset from that goes back into the general fund and they can use the money as they lawfully can expend money under state guidance and typical rules of expenditures.

She said they were preparing the draft FY2022-23 balanced budget and City Council has heard some of these needs during their budget work sessions. She anticipates that they will request some of these offsets from the ARP money be used for some of these needs. Councilman Smith asked if she was talking about capital outlay. City Manager Traynham replied they can if City Council chooses to do so, but they will present that as part of the budget next month.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if they would get that list before then. City Manager Traynham said it would be included in the budget. She will send her draft to them.

Councilman Smith said they had a list that most of the departments have given them of what they would like for capital outlay or capital improvements.

City Manager Traynham said by taking the Standard Allowance Option and using for salaries and benefits which creates an offset of approximately \$4.5M to the General Fund. Staff will present the expense needs to City Council and then they will decide how to fund it. Councilman Smith stated they had some main capital outlays they need to do.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to adopt Ordinance No. 2022.07 electing to take the standard allowance for replacement of lost public sector revenue and to expend all ARPA/CSLFRF funds for the provision of government services.

Consideration of Police Department Salary Analysis

City Manager Traynham said during the March 15, 2022 City Council meeting Chief Martin presented a request to Council about increasing the starting pay for the Police Officer position from \$38,000 to \$41,000 and also provide increases in salaries for officers within the department. After review of the Personnel Policy, the way to change the grade of pay it outlined in its procedures in place. The Policy describes the roles and responsibilities of City Council and City Administration in the development and the revisions of the Position Classification Plan, the Pay Plan and the Salary Schedule that summarizes each position with a grade assignment and starting salary and maximum salary for that position. The salary schedule identifies which positions are exempt or non-exempt as well. It is City Council's duty to assign grades, starting pay and maximum pay for specific positions then the administration manages the levels of pay in between for each position.

She said the process of making any changes to it, City Council must approve the amendments to the schedule prior to its implementation. With the short turnaround time they have looked a few different scenarios. The Human Resources Director has

conducted a study and review which is enclosed in their packet. They have also identified some other positions in other City departments that are due for salary grade adjustments as well that will be recommended at another time.

City Manager Traynham stated she has divided it into three phases of consideration.

- 1) Immediate Action (Implemented upon adoption)
- 2) Near-Term Action (Could be adopted as part of FY2022-23 Budget)
- 3) Long-Term Consideration (Things they could work on during the upcoming fiscal year and beyond)

She said one of the immediate actions would be FY2021-22 schedule that does not have a grade assigned to the Police Officer position that is currently blank. She has gone back as far as FY2012-2013 and it was blank on that one. This has been an omission on the schedule for 10+ years. The Police Master Officer position is still listed as a Grade 18 with a starting salary below the starting salary of a Police Officer. The Master Officer is the next step up in rank in grade. The other positions within the department could potentially be moved as well. It is up to the City Administration and department managers to identify and present adjustments that are required as a result of changing salary and grade.

City Manager Traynham said there were two options for the salary schedule for the current year in their packets. One would be to add a position of Police Cadet/BLET student who is in training and not certified that the City pays to go to school. Currently, they are paid \$33,000 and upon completion of their state certification exam when they come to work for the City, they complete a training program where their salary increases to \$38,000 (current starting salary).

She reported during their review, they found many employees that have been at the starting salary for several years. She noted the Police Department has its own professional development plan for providing increases.

However, given the opportunity to review the salaries and look at what other communities were doing to encourage the retainment of existing employees and also recruitment there are some other ways that have been identified in the attachments she provided to them tonight. The attachment provides an analysis of where the salaries are and gives examples of different types of pay options. She reviewed the examples from Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, Town of Wake Forest, City of Rocky Mount and the Raleigh Police Department. She stated this demonstrates there are other ways to encourage recruitment and retain employees beyond the current pay plan under the Police Department's policies.

City Manager Traynham noted that the City will have to pay more for employees retirement because the rate went up for regular employees from 12.01% to 12.1%. For law enforcement employees from 13.01% to 13.1%. Also, for regular employees the City offers employees 401k retirement match up to 3% match; law enforcement employees get an automatic 401k contribution of 5% of their salary without a matching requirement. That is an additional paid benefit.

She referred to an additional document given to the City Council showing the history of the COLA pay from 2003-04 to the current fiscal year. She also provided a salary schedule with cost of living options. As they move forward with the budget process in the next couple of weeks, she wanted City Council to see how a COLA could affect minimum salaries for all positions throughout the City.

Human Resources Director Caudle stated she felt it was important to discuss what they could immediately do and what they should consider as part of the upcoming budget that would become effective July 1st. She believes City Manager Traynham has covered the salary schedule and the errors they found within that. She and Chief Martin had discussed that before and they needed to make some adjustments. This is within the Personnel Policy for City Council to take that action. One of the things they need to decide tonight specific to the Police Officer that is not assigned a grade right now is what grade would they like it to be. She referred to the two options within their Council packet. They could create a new grade of 18.5 and leave the starting salary at \$38,000 or the second option was to move it to grade 19 which would increase the starting pay based on the current salary schedule to \$39,670.46 and a maximum of \$57,460.54.

She said the Master Officer is in Grade 18 which starts at a lower pay scale than what the City has been starting officers with no experience so they need to move that up. City Council could move that into Grade 19 or 20 depending on what they decide to do with the Police Officer grade. That will start a snowball effect to ensure the separation of grades as you move up in rank.

She stated another thing they have identified as an immediate need is they do have current sworn officers who are at the minimum and they have been here for a two to five year period. The department currently increases salary based on additional development. Through their research over the past couple of months, there are a lot of reasons they have not seen a lot of action with that professional development plan. They do feel they should do some type of assistance for these officers that have been here a while that would still be within the range to help retain good officers. It does not require City Council action. City Council adopts the grade and the salary range and it would then be up to the administration and the department managers where

an employee would fall within that grade. These are two things they could do right away. She reiterated what City Manager Traynham reported about the compensation plans other departments throughout the State are using to attract and retain police officers. They felt the examples given to City Council earlier were some good ones. She played around with a few scenarios by using some of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg example and applied it to some of the City's current employees based on their years of experience now. So an officer making \$38,000 right now, if they were recruiting them today they would bring them in somewhere between \$40,000-42,000 if they were using that type of mode. It does help with recruitment and retention of the City's police force. If they used the Wake Forest or Rocky Mt. style where they were giving them a combination of percentage increases and bonuses for things like being fluent in a foreign language or living within the city limits, etc., they would be looking at where the City is currently recruiting an officer at \$38,000, they would be recruiting them in somewhere between \$40,000-42,000. Those compensation plans would be very helpful and takes the bias out. She feels the City does as fair of a job as possible. If they had a true compensation plan, it would make it very clear when they were talking to officers that have a combination of education and years of experience and where they would fall within that grade.

City Manager Traynham explained the attachment to her email dated today. (Copy on file in Clerk's Office). If City Council wanted to keep the current Police Officer starting salary at \$38,000 which allows a range up to \$49,961 then they need to assign a grade to that and then they would need to move up the Master Officer grade. If City Council decided to move the Police Officer position up to Grade 19, the starting salary would \$39,670.46 effective immediately. They would have to go in and make adjustments to that. She also wanted to bring to their attention some COLA scenarios because of how it affects the police department and all City employees. They are not all department specific. As they are preparing the upcoming fiscal year budget, they were basing the cost of living on inflation and looking at the history of it and an adjustment is due. To what extent is why they were looking at the numbers and at the next Work Session she hopes to provide them more information on that. A COLA is across the board for all employees. It depends on the projected revenues for the upcoming year and also expenses. They do want to help out based on the rapidly rising cost of living for all.

She said tonight she would like City Council to decide what they wanted to do about the starting Police Officer pay for entry level; right now it is at \$38,000. She asked if they wanted to keep it at that and assign a grade to it and adjust the Master Officer up. Once she knows what City Council would like to do, they can move forward to the next step.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked for her recommendation. City Manager Traynham replied with the City being in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year, the most conservative thing to do would be to keep the starting pay at \$38,000 and make adjustments in salaries for years of experience. They also need the Master Officer position to be adjusted. They could assign the Police Officer at Grade 18.5 and Master Officer to Grade 19. The next Budget Work Session they could discuss COLA scenarios affecting all employees effective July 1st. She said the immediate need is to clean up the salary schedule so they have an assigned salary and pay to make those corrections.

Councilwoman Bryant asked if according to this schedule the Police Master Officer has been a Grade 18 along with a beginning Police Officer. City Manager Traynham replied a beginning Police Officer is not assigned a grade so it has been hanging out there without an assigned grade. Even if they assign it at Grade 18.5, it still has a starting salary above the Master Officer. She reminded them that through her research, it has been like this for ten years.

Councilwoman Bryant stated she could see why it has been a problem because when these others are allocated in grades the police should have been included. It seems they are looking at trying to piece mill. She has asked for them to consider having someone look at all the positions. If they were to do that including the police department, they would have something that would not be arbitrarily established and everyone would be on the same page.

City Manager Traynham said she had that under a long-term recommendation. That is her reasoning for the immediate action and near-term action (effective July 1st). In this short amount of time, the City would not have the ability to have results of a study by July 1st.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated if they knew they had a problem and have identified it, they need to fix it. There should be nobody without a grade. That should happen yesterday. He was not sure if they have looked at other positions as well. That would be the first step. The second step is it doesn't make sense to have the Master Officer position lower than the Police Office position.

Mayor Doughtie suggested correcting the grades and adjusting the police salary now to be more competitive with neighboring organizations. Then when they look at the COLA, the salary would not be more than what they wanted the starting salary to be. City Manager Traynham stated if City Council took action now, they could not exclude certain positions when giving a COLA that is why she provided the COLA scenarios in their packets. She added there were other amendments that need to be made to the

salary schedule and will be brought up at the next Work Session. Right now, the priority was the Police Department. They are looking at the other departments too.

Human Resources Director Caudle reminded City Council that if they assigned the Police Officer Position to a Grade 18.5 that starts at \$38,000 but goes up to \$49,961.58, as part of their recruitment they can bring them in at \$40,000 or \$41,000. They are allowed to do that; it is justified. It is based upon their education, professional development and years of service. They have the ability to do that without leaving someone out of a COLA. That can still take those actions and apply them to the end of this fiscal year. Then they can make a further adjustment, if needed, in addition to whatever COLA may come.

Councilman Stainback stated they were behind and they were fortunate to have the good quality help that they do in the Police Department. They have some very capable officers right now. With his knowledge of being a young officer 40 years ago, he could say if there was a department next door offering several thousand dollars more a year, it would be very enticing for him to move. He personally liked the idea of the immediate action option even though it is just a few weeks before the new fiscal year. This would let these guys know even at the \$38,000-\$39,000 range that the City was going to look out for them. He believes they will see a lot of change in law enforcement in the area. They have two sheriff elections right now and they do not know how that will pan out. But more than likely when new sheriffs take office there is a number of openings that happen. He said they have a number of open positions now in both departments. The City's biggest competitor locally is several thousand dollars higher than they are. They are also looking at a COLA for July. They need to stay competitive while they have some good help now. The sheriff's election will be before the next fiscal year starts. They need to take that into consideration too. They cannot lose any more officers. He believed they had 4 frozen positions and 4-5 short.

Human Resources Director Caudle said they have four patrol positions open where one will go to BLET, two are in screenings so if those pass then there will be one open patrol position.

City Manager Traynham added they currently have two positions that are funded but not being advertised at the moment: Patrol Sergeant and Sergeant of Investigations CID. In the current fiscal year they have been encouraging changes in the pay and plan.

She called attention to the two options enclosed in their packets that could be for immediate action. (Memorandum dated April 14, 2022 – Police Department Request to Increase Starting Pay for Officers – On File in Clerk's Office).

- Option 1: Within Grade 14 create a position for Police Officer Cadet/BLET Under the current Police Officer position at \$38,000 - \$49,961 they would establish a new Grade of 18.5. From there, adjust Master Officer up to Grade 20 and bump up other grades as appropriate.
- Option 2: Basically accomplished the same as in Option 1, but instead of assigning a Grade 18.5, they would move the Police Officer position to Grade 19 where the starting salary would be \$39,670. The other adjustments are included which they can see in the green bars along with the text in red.

City Manager Traynham referred back to the document showing what would happen to the starting salaries if given a COLA. If City Council wanted to keep it this way by assigning the 18.5 Grade, under the administrative authority they would like to see increases made to discrepancies they found not just in the Police Department but others where they have some good employees who have been with the City for a number of years that are due additional salary for their years of service.

Councilman Smith confirmed the attachment with the COLA was for all employees. City Manager Traynham replied that was correct. He stated he thought tonight's discussion was for the Police Department and feels they will discuss a COLA for all employees at next budget meeting. She agreed and said she just wanted them to know the impact from whatever action they took tonight. Councilman Smith said he had some concerns about how it's set up. A person on the high end getting a 5% would be a big increase as compared to a person making \$25,000. They need to look at how to get the bottom people up when they issue a COLA. They should set different ranges as far as COLA is concerned as you step up the ladder.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said they needed to look at all employees. He was not in favor of creating a new grade. He would like to see that position moved to where it should be in a grade they already have.

Councilman Bryant said that is where the salary study would look at all the positions and all the grades. They would also looking at the beginning salary and top salary and what the median should be. That should be where they are trying to get their employees; not at the beginning salary.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said he liked Option 2.

Motion was made by Councilman Stainback to go with Option 2 for immediate action to move the starting Police Officer to Grade 19 and encourage the City Manager to adjust any compression issues that may result as she sees fit.

He stated he makes this motion because they are way behind of their competitors at this minute. He did not want to lose three or four officers in the next 60 days.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if that would include the Police Master Officer position. Councilman Stainback said it would just be the beginning officer.

City Manager Traynham said Option 2 is provided in the agenda packet. They will see Option 2 at the top.

Attorney Davis suggested the simplest thing to do to make a motion to adopt Option 2 as presented. That would fix the issue where the Police Master Officer would be in Grade 18 which was below the proposed Grade 19 of the Police Officer position.

Councilman Stainback said that is why he stated in his motion that the City Manager could address any compression issues.

Attorney Davis stated City Council needs to adopt the salary schedule; he did not believe the City Manager had the discretion to change the actual listing under the salary schedule. He again suggested if City Council was receptive to Option 2 with respect to the Police Officer position, they should go ahead and reclassify the Police Master Officer position. He recommended the motion be to adopt Option 2 as presented to make it simple for everyone.

Councilman Stainback made the motion to adopt Option 2.

Human Resources Director Caudle stated Option 2 as presented would create the Police Cadet (BLET) position as Grade 14 (new line item). She listed all the changes in Option 2 in the green lines and in red text. In summary they would basically be assigning a higher grade to what the City is currently paying the Police Officer, adjusting the Master Officer and all subsequent positions into a higher grade to reflect that change to Police Officer in Grade 19, creating BLET cadet position at Grade 14 and removing non-existent position off the salary schedule.

Councilman Smith asked for the amounts of the increase in salaries, not just the increase in grades.

Human Resources Director Caudle said all that would change now since they are moving from the \$38,000 starting salary to the higher Grade 19 at a minimum of \$39,670.46: they will have to recalculate that. She reported 7 current patrol officers have all been with the City for over a year and some close to 4 years are all the current \$38,000. Now they at the new minimum \$39,670.46.

Councilman Smith asked with the new grades how much was each grade going to cost. Human Resources Director Caudle replied it was by the person so the salary schedule is by the position.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if it was going to cost \$100,000 to do it, \$30,000 to do it or \$10,000 to do it. Mayor Doughtie added it was going to depend on how many people they have in the position and he doubted they would be able to answer that question.

City Manager Traynham explained the grade may change for some, but their actual salary will likely still be in the grade. The Police Officer and Master Officer position is where the current employees are at the bottom of their range. All other grades of the department have employees who are within the range. Changing it incrementally to the next grade may not require significant change in the immediate. The immediate change would be for those police officer positions that are currently making \$38,000. All the others would not be as significant.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if she could send that figure to Council later because he felt it could be calculated when she numbers.

Councilman Smith stated the City Council and the City of Roanoke Rapids lives on a budget. He confirmed with the City Manager that she stated earlier they pay \$7M in salaries and their total budget is about \$16M. He said almost half the City's budget was going to salaries now. He wants everyone to have a decent living, but if they keep increasing the salaries, for example another \$500,000, then that is half of the City's budget. Then they will have to tell the department heads they will have to lay somebody off or either cut half of what they were doing right now. Or they will have to increase taxes and asked if they thought that was going to be good for the public. He did not want to increase taxes, but that was the only way they can get any money. Until they realize they are on a fixed budget, department heads are going to have to cut to increase salaries or the City will be left with paying salaries and no service. This is something they will have to look at in the future. If City Council agrees to raise taxes, they will have to raise taxes to pay to do it. He thought there would be two or three people here that will be on Council, but he knew probably 2 that will not be on Council if they raise taxes this coming year.

Councilwoman Bryant stated she was concerned about just arbitrarily reassigning the grades. She asked if they do that for all these positions and finally get a complete audit, what happens if some of these people were not where they should be or raised higher than the audit indicates. It was going to be worse if they had to tell them they have to cut their salary because they should have been in a lower grade. She would

like to see the complete audit done first.

Human Resources Director Caudle stated she had the same opinion as City Manager Traynham because of those concerns she feels they should keep it at the current grade or assign it to Grade 18 and still bring them in at \$38,000 or whatever they choose based on experience, professional development and education and leave that up to the hiring managers to decide. And then adjust in the upcoming budget year they are working on now.

Mayor Doughtie stated there is nothing that says they have to hire them at the minimum. Human Resources Manager Caudle replied that was correct.

Mayor Doughtie called for a second. Councilman Smith seconded the motion. More discussed ensued.

Councilman Stainback amended his previous motion to adopt Option 2 with respect to making the Police Officer a Grade 19 with starting salary at \$39,670.46 effective immediately.

City Council members asked for further clarification.

Councilman Smith withdrew his second on the previous motion.

Councilman Stainback re-amended his motion to adopt Option 2 with respect to making the Police Cadet (BLET) position a Grade 14, the Police Officer position a Grade 19 and the Police Master Officer position a Grade 20.

Human Resources Director Caudle questioned if they were leaving Investigator and Sergeant in the same grade as the Master Officer. She did not want to create another problem.

Councilman Smith called for a Point of Order; there was a motion on the floor.

Mayor Doughtie called for a second. Councilman Smith seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion; motion carried unanimously.

Attorney Davis stated he got the sense from the City Manager and Human Resources Director that this will not be the last time City Council will address the salary schedule and not just the Police department, but other salaries. They were going to deal with something more than triage as they move into the next couple of months.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Traynham announced the Sarah Keys Evans Public Park Project Committee has won the Governor's Volunteer Service Award and the Governor's Medallion Award for Volunteer Service. This was nominated by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and Human Resources Director Caudle. The public art committee members receiving the honors include: Dr. Charles McCollum Sr., Dr. Georgette Brown Kimball, Parks & Recreation Director John Simeon, Dr. Helen Rosser, Mr. Napoleon Hill, Mr. David Putney and Dr. Ervin Griffin, Sr. There will be a virtual awards ceremony tomorrow evening at 6:00 p.m. An in-person presentation will be planned for a later date. She thanked the volunteers named in the creation of the Sarah Keys Evans public art project located Martin Luther King Jr. Park.

She reported the Public Works Department has an ongoing storm water issue near First and Jackson Streets that was discovered when the trash truck was making its rounds. They are looking at some higher expenses for that and more information will be forthcoming on that. Public Works is trying to maintain the area where it is located as they move forward in finding the funding for that.

She announced the NCDOT project for Premier Blvd. and American Legion Road/Hwy. 125 is expected to be completed for travel by the middle of June. There will be some differences in traffic patterns experienced throughout town between Exits 171 and 173.

City Manager Traynham said tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. the Fire Department will be conducting its live burn training exercise on Hinson Street. She invited City Council to attend.

Finance Director's Report

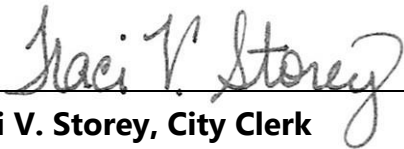
Interim Finance Director Fahey presented the financial operations for the City of Roanoke Rapids for the period ending March 31, 2022. During the month, the Finance Department issued 69 purchase orders, wrote 68 payroll checks, 297 direct deposit vouchers and 286 accounts payable checks. General Fund year to date receipts totaled \$13,416,854. General Fund year to date expenditures totaled \$11,894,512. As a result Year-to-Date Revenues exceeded Expenditures by \$1,522,342.

She stated overall the City's revenues are favorable at nine months and year-to-date expenditures are holding consistent to budget. However, the expenditures did exceed revenue for the month of March.

Interim Finance Director Fahey reported they received the following collection of revenue for the month of March: Ad Valorem Tax, Sales & Use Tax, Motor Vehicle Tax and Utility Franchise Tax.

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 7:35 p.m.



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: May 18, 2022