



# Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, June 13, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.** in the J. Reuben Daniel City Hall and & Police Station

**Present:** Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor  
Carl Ferebee, Mayor Pro Tem  
Sandra W. Bryant)  
Wayne Smith)

## **Council Members**

Kelly Traynham, City Manager  
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney  
Traci Storey, City Clerk  
Carmen Johnson, Finance Director  
Bobby Martin, Police Chief  
John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director  
Davis Wise, Planning & Development Director  
Christina Caudle, Human Resources Director  
Jason Patrick, Fire Chief  
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director

**Absent:** Suetta S. Scarbrough, Council Member  
Rex Stainback, Council Member  
Geoffrey Davis, City Attorney

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

Councilman Smith thanked Chief Martin and Gilbert Portela for helping arrange a place for the kids to practice this past weekend at the recreation center in preparation for their playing in Tennessee.

## **Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget Discussion**

City Manager Traynham stated they were meeting to discuss some of the non-operational capital items and needs identified by the departments. She referred to the worksheet provided in their packets and updated via email she sent earlier. It demonstrates over \$6M in needs that have been identified across all departments and divisions. She said there were multiple options for funding that are available. Some may be funded with grants, be financed while others may only be funded with cash.

She stated out of the \$6.3M identified needs, \$3.4M is in vehicles (both passenger and

equipment vehicles). The City has a current need for 29 passenger vehicles in the amount of \$1,119,500. The need of eight other equipment type vehicles total \$2,295,000. She distributed a handout of a spreadsheet on just the vehicles.

**ALL ITEMS BELOW ARE LISTED ABOVE - This is a VEHICLE category for further review**

<b>VEHICLES</b>			
<b>VEHICLES - Passenger</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Average Cost</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>Vehicle - Pickup Truck</i>	12	\$ 37,250.00	\$ 447,000.00
<i>Vehicle - SUV or Sedan</i>	3	\$ 37,500.00	\$ 112,500.00
<i>Vehicle - LAW ENFORCEMENT</i>	14	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 560,000.00
	<b>29</b>		<b>\$ 1,119,500.00</b>
<b>VEHICLES - Single Unit   Combination   Equipment</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Average Cost</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>Pipe Vacuum Truck</i>	1	\$ 550,000.00	\$ 550,000.00
<i>Trash Truck</i>	2	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 500,000.00
<i>Knuckle Boom</i>	2	\$ 220,000.00	\$ 440,000.00
<i>Leaf Vacuum Machine</i>	1	\$ 65,000.00	\$ 65,000.00
<i>Backhoe</i>	1	\$ 90,000.00	\$ 90,000.00
<i>Fire Engine Truck</i>	1	\$ 650,000.00	\$ 650,000.00
	<b>8</b>		<b>\$ 2,295,000.00</b>
<b>VEHICLES  TOTAL</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>\$ 3,414,500.00</b>

She said the City will always have ongoing vehicle needs. Employees need vehicles that are safe and newer vehicles also help with morale. For many employees their vehicle is their office. The list provided is a 3-5 year need, but some of the vehicles are an immediate need. They need to routinely look at the vehicle needs and have the discussion to consider some fleet management like Halifax County has done through the leasing program with Enterprise. They are at a critical point where vehicles are desperately needed.

City Manager Traynham stated she would like to provide City Council with a recommendation for the American Rescue Plan Replacement funds which seems to be the primary funding source for any of these capital needs.

She said the ARPA allocation totals \$4,563,747. Of the items requested, she recommends meeting some of the needs totaling \$3,801,725. She summarized the amounts by the department.

**General Government:** Requested - \$1,061,000; City Manager Recommendation - \$1,025,000 which represents 22% of the ARPA allocation offset funds. Also, represents 16% of the overall need.

**Police:** Requested - \$962,000; City Manager Recommendation - \$493,000 which represents 11% of the ARPA allocation offset funds. Also, represents 8% of the overall need. *This funds 7 of the 14 vehicles, 7 in-car cameras, 50 portable radios and 7 in-car radios.*

**Public Works:** \$2,748,000; City Manager Recommendation - \$1,168,000 which represents 25% of the ARPA allocation offset funds. Also, represents 18% of the overall need. *Includes signal upgrade at 7<sup>th</sup> & Park Ave., 1 trash truck, 1 knuckle boom truck, 1 commercial lawnmower, 2 pickup trucks, backhoe and \$500k in street resurfacing.*

**Fire:** \$900,000; City Manager Recommendation - \$715,725 which represents 16% of the ARPA allocation offset funds. Also, represents 11% of the overall need. *Includes the purchase of a new fire engine that has already been encumbered, generator for Station 1 and an F-250 pickup truck to transport turn-out gear.*

**Parks & Recreation:** \$436,000; City Manager Recommendation - \$231,000 which represents 5% of the ARPA allocation offset funds. Also, represents 4% of the overall need. *Includes Rochelle Park tennis court resurfacing, SUV vehicle, pickup truck, security cameras at TJ Davis and Kirkwood Adams, board meeting equipment at Lloyd Andrews, a 5-year update Recreation Master Plan to be utilized to apply for grant funds, reduction in Kirkwood Adams renovation to \$50,000.*

**Planning & Development:** \$269,000; City Manager Recommendation - \$169,000 which represents 4% of the ARPA allocation offset funds. Also, represents 3% of the overall need. *Includes 2 vehicles (small SUV or Sedan), pickup truck, comprehensive plan update, computers/laptops.*

She also requested an additional \$300,000 for employee bonuses which would be 7% of ARPA allocation replacement funds. This will leave a remainder of \$467,022 or 10% of the total allocation.

Councilman Smith asked if those monies would be put in reserve funds. City Manager Traynham replied yes, that was correct.

Councilman Smith asked how many vehicles the City had now and what were they going to do with the ones they would replace. City Manager Traynham replied most of the time when they replace a vehicle it gets passed along and the ones that were no longer in use are declared surplus property and sold at auction.

Public Works Director Chalker estimated the City had over 200 vehicles, but he would get an exact number. *(He later reported 191 licensed units, 31 of them are trailers – 160 licensed drivable vehicles does not include equipment like tractors, backhoes etc.).*

Chief Martin added they have 44 sworn officers so they have a patrol vehicle for each officer, a spare per squad, a spare vehicle for CID and a spare for K-9 officers. Includes the ones they received from the military that they utilize for undercover work, evidence tech uses them to haul evidence down to Raleigh to be destroyed, animal control, Humvee's for inclement weather.

Councilman Smith asked City Manager Traynham if she felt this was a good recommendation to City Council on how the monies should be used. She replied she feels for the vehicles they should look at alternative financing methods rather than using all the City's deposable cash upfront on them. She would like the City to look at the Enterprise Fleet Management Program like Halifax County along with other government agencies have taken on. The program has proven cost savings over time with fuel consumption and maintenance costs. This would benefit the police and public works departments. She would like to shop local. Some departments such as the planning department do not need vehicles as often so that may be an opportunity to shop local. They have to do more than one department if they went with the Enterprise Fleet Management Program; that is why they would involve public works. She would like City Council to take another look at the program. She has spoken with the representative and they do lease out a trash truck and a pipe vacuum truck as well. Right now her recommendation includes some of the vehicle needs.

Councilman Smith stated he was not impressed with the leasing program when they came and talked with them about it. He believes they can get a better deal locally. City Manager Traynham stated she wasn't comfortable with the level of explanation that was given that particular evening. Now that Halifax County has implemented this program, she believes it would be worthwhile to take another look into it.

Public Works Director Chalker added the following information provided by Halifax County. He reported their first year with Enterprise they went in with 20 vehicles, the next year they went with 19 bringing it to a total of 39 vehicles. In a few weeks they will add 13 more vehicles making their total Enterprise fleet 52 vehicles. Now, instead of getting the vehicles and spending \$5,000-6,000 to upfit the vehicle, the upfit is included in the lease.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked at what cost. Public Works Director Chalker replied he did not get that figure but he could get that. Halifax County told him their yearly maintenance budget for just the Sheriff's Office has been consistently around \$350,000. They have already shaved \$100,000 off that amount. They were not just looking at saving on the cost and upfit of the vehicles, but also the reduction in the cost of maintenance on the backend. He was also told after year four, they should realize a significant savings.

Public Works Director Chalker explained that depending on the vehicle, sometimes it is a

better deal to buy local. He stated that Enterprise has buyers that only buy vehicles out of this leasing program. If the City purchases a pickup truck and installs the light bar and antennae in such a way to not put holes in the roof, when their buyer needs a pickup truck, they could sell it in 2 years for \$10,000 more than what the City paid for it.

Councilman Smith said anyone could do the same thing. He was not impressed with Enterprise, but if they could come before City Council and give a better presentation than last time, he would be willing to listen to them.

Public Works Director Chalker said since nearby Halifax County was in the program, they could see if the program was working like Enterprise says it does. That was important to them and they could see the savings. He knows that they lease vehicles, they can spread the costs over a longer period of time.

Chief Martin said Shane Guyant made a presentation to the Halifax County Commissioners and sent him that presentation. He would forward that to City Council to show the savings they are having at this time. He added that it was not that the City could not do business locally, Enterprise can do the vehicle through the local vendors. They have a wide variety of vendors they can use. He was not trying to cut the local vendors out. His understanding from Halifax County is that the leasing program does save them money over a period of time. He understood what Councilman Smith was saying and if they did want to consider the program again, they should only have them at the meeting instead of two where they have a debate. In his opinion, that was not the type of atmosphere that it should have been. He said the County's cars are nice and new and the taxpayers are seeing that and he would like the City to have that same look. He thinks it was worth taking another look at.

Public Works Director Chalker said they would be good with using local vendors, but he believed the vehicles would have to be bought on State contract because the price is so much better. They name a list of vendors statewide that are required to meet that price. They also need to have access to the vehicles. He added another reason the County went with Enterprise was they had the vehicles and the County has claimed them. That plays a part in it too.

Councilman Smith recalled the City bought the last cars cheaper than State contract from White's. Chief Martin said White's bought them for the same price as State contract through a discount he applied for. Now from his pricing, White's cannot meet the State contract on the vehicles. He has talked with Lawrence White about it. He said they cannot get any Durangos until next November (2023).

City Manager Traynham said they were bringing this up because a majority of the

passenger vehicles are 10 years old or older. This is something to look into and she believes they could get a lot more vehicles for the same investment on a lease-term.

Councilwoman Bryant said she had a question about the pickup trucks and SUVs because someone has brought to her attention that the City employees were driving around in luxury-type vehicles. She asked if they ordered a standard type or mid-grade.

Chief Martin replied there is a police package that is set aside separate from public works and for parks and recreation. They go all standard except they change seat coverings because of blood and other fluids that could be brought into the vehicle. He invited City Council and the public to look at any of the Dodges or Explorers they have. They were at the low end.

Public Works Director Chalker added when they buy a vehicle, they are not looking for luxury, they are looking for something that someone has already written the specifications for that is on State contract. He said his truck was designed to be a game warden's truck except he ordered it in white. There are some other trucks that were destined for public schools or forestry. It's a standard option now, but they do ask for power windows. They get the standard. They do not have carpet in the floors and vinyl seats.

City Manager Traynham explained White Motors was able to get them the Explorer for a great price and that is a vehicle that does not have to be replaced very often. She reported the pickup truck for the planning department does not have power windows or locks and is very basic. She added that the public sees the advertising for these types of vehicles at the retail market price but the City gets them for State contract which is much less.

City Manager Traynham said that she and Chief Patrick were talking recently about back when Dominion was updating their fleet, they donated some of their vehicles to the City. Chief Patrick said they had one of those vehicles that he believed was a 1997 Yukon and when he contacted Dominion to see if they had some others they were willing to donate, they told him they had switched to a lease management program.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked how the spreadsheet she provided for her recommendation related to the percentages of what departments spend of the budget that she reported at a recent meeting. City Manager Traynham replied she was pretty close in those percentages.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he knows the City needs vehicles. He asked if they were getting the best bang for their buck and suggested looking at what other cities and towns were doing. He said they were losing people in the city and wondered how they could use these dollars to bring people here. They have talked about some ideas and they should use some of these dollars that could help.

City Manager Traynham said there are some things you cannot get a grant or a loan for. She referred to the software under General Government and said that was not just for City operations, it is a citizen service. That is a way to help market this community and increase the City's competitive edge. The upfront cost is expensive, but is significantly needed if they were going to transform the community. It meets the original intent of the ARPA funding. She also included a \$500,000 for economic development incentives.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked about funding for demolition. City Manager Traynham said there was funding allocated with the State Directed grant funds. To get to a bigger project to facilitate an entire block area, it would take time; probably over a year to spend the funds. A project like that would be an eligible project for the HOME Consortium grant program that the City and five counties signed up for. She feels monies for projects like that would be set aside for so long when there are immediate needs.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he knew of grants the City did not get because they did not have the matching funds. He felt it was important for them to reserve for that. He stated she had done what he requested by comparing how they would spend the ARP dollars related to how funds are spend in the annual budget. He wants to make sure they were using the funds the best they could because this was a one-time thing.

City Manager Traynham said they could look at bidding out for financing packages for long-term debt on certain things. They do not need to make an immediate decision today, but there are some equipment needs. This is why they were meeting today to discuss these things. For example, the comprehensive plan update for Parks & Recreation is needed to apply for grants. Other departments have plans that are required to obtain grants.

City Council and staff discussed the possibility of certain departments utilizing electric vehicles. Planning & Development Director Wise explained he had submitted a grant application for electric charging stations. The charging stations will bring people into the city's downtown area. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked how they could make money from the charging stations. Planning & Development Director Wise replied the City could charge the users or they could buy energy tax credits or just pay the bill. Human Resources Director Caudle added installing the charging stations behind City Hall would bring tourists off I-95 into the downtown business district where there were 7 restaurants and shopping. They would be buying from local merchants rather than the big name stores and chain restaurants.

Councilman Smith stated City Council has a recommendation from the City Manager on how to spend the ARPA replacement funds and he requested the Mayor to ask for a consensus to implement this so the department heads can go ahead and look at cost because every day it gets more expensive and takes longer to get the equipment. Either get

a consensus or turn it down and they work on something else.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said he believes they need to discuss it more than an hour.

A gentleman from the audience asked if taxpayers were allowed to ask questions.

Mayor Doughtie asked City Council if anyone objected to it. No Councilmember objected.

Mr. Mike Garris asked if all City Council members were in attendance. Mayor Doughtie replied no, two were absent. Councilman Stainback and Councilwoman Scarbrough.

Mr. Garris asked if the American Rescue Plan was federal government money. City Manager Traynham replied yes, it was a grant.

Mr. Garris stated he appreciated all of what they did. He was on their side, he was not an enemy. He was a 9 year veteran of the United States Army and worked with scouting for over 25 years. He has moved people and equipment in both jobs quite often with not enough help. He hoped to help them look at some things from a different point of view. He asked why they needed an F-250 to move equipment after a fire rather than use a trailer. Chief Patrick replied it was also to be used to pull the Fire Safety House.

Mr. Garris said he was not criticizing anyone but wanted to know why this winter the salt truck brined his street six times. It was an expense that they would not think of; he lives on a loop road. He asked why the building code enforcement drives through his neighborhood on a full size truck on a regular basis. He would like to get with some of the department heads to get more in depth information from them. He stated without this Rescue Plan money they would sink.

City Manager Traynham stated the ARP money is a grant and it will help the City address some of their needs. In the absence of taking on additional debt, this is one of the funding options to help fund some of these identified needs.

Mr. Garris asked if the funds could be used to pay off debt. City Manager Traynham replied there were some restrictions that come with it that they have to federally report, but paying down certain debts was not one she recalled. She would check into that further.

Mayor Doughtie stated as a general rule he believed Mr. Garris should contact the City Manager to address his questions rather than contact the individual department heads. City Manager Traynham stated Mr. Garris has the right to request public information that is available from any department. She would be glad to speak with him. Mr. Garris said he would rather speak to the department heads directly and leave out the middle man.

Mr. Garris said it seems like they were going to be paying for the Theatre forever. He would like to know what the City is doing to try to eliminate that debt expeditiously as possible. What percentage of the City's annual budget goes toward that debt and why were they considering bonuses for City employees when the average worker is not getting bonuses. When they have this debt hanging over their heads and they want to raise taxes and trash fees to cover shortfalls. He would like to see everyone get a raise, but he has a problem with bonuses. He appreciated their time; he just wanted them to see it from a taxpayer's point of view.

Councilman Smith stated he wanted to answer Mr. Garris' question about the Theatre. He said there were three people on the City Council that has been to Raleigh ten times. The City did get money from the State to pay off some of the Theatre debt. In the last eight years, City Council has paid the debt down from about \$18M to about \$8M now. The City pays approximately \$900,000 a year as a payment to Bank of America. He added that for every percentage of a raise they give employees they have to cover retirement, 401k, social security etc. It saves money to give a bonus rather than a raise.

Mayor Doughtie stated in all fairness, they typically only allow five minutes for public comment. He also elaborated on the City's efforts to pay down the Theatre debt.

Mr. Garris asked if the City owned the Theatre or if they were financing situation with the owners. Councilman Smith suggested Mr. Garris to attend the City Council meeting on June 21, 2022.

Mr. Lance Martin questioned if he could interrupt their meetings from now on and make comments.

Councilman Smith stated that is why he brought up in one of the last meetings that City Council needed to have an open forum so citizens could ask questions.

Councilman Smith reverted back to his previous question about the Mayor calling for a consensus on the City Manager's recommendation so they could move on to the budget.

Mayor Doughtie called for a consensus by asking each member in attendance.

Councilman Smith stated yes, he was favor of the recommendation the City Manager brought forth to City Council. Councilwoman Bryant stated she was not 100% in favor of it; she appreciated the hard work. She was not ready to endorse at this point. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he was not ready either. He did think the concept was good, but there are some items that he believes need further discussion. He agrees to concept.

Mayor Doughtie asked if they were going to discuss more today or at the next meeting.

Councilman Smith said they had a meeting Tuesday night to discuss this. The meeting was broke off so they could have another meeting to discuss this. They needed to discuss it as long as needed tonight to come to a consensus; they cannot keep having meetings to have a discussion.

City Manager Traynham asked on behalf of the management staff that City Council state those items needing more information or attention so they can provide that to them.

Mayor Doughtie questioned the amount allocated for demolition. It appears no monies have been allocated to demolition in her recommendation. City Manager Traynham replied they had some monies allocated with the State Directed Grant funds. At this time as far as moving forward with additional monies, they do not have the authority at this point to spend that much more money. They could bring proposals when they have completed the due diligence through the legal perimeters. For one individual building, it takes nine months or so. They have monies to address some of the immediate needs through another grant source. She did not recommend it for that reason. She was trying to get the street resurfacing into the budget. She did not want the \$100,000 to sit there and wait when they do not have the project readily available to act on that.

Councilwoman Bryant asked for clarification about the monies in another fund that could be utilized for demolition. City Manager Traynham explained the demolition process and stated they had about \$80,000 set aside with the State Directed Grant funds for demolition activities. She would rather they bring projects to City Council when ready to expend the funds rather than allocate monies when they do not have projects. That is how they have lost the monies for demolition when it crosses over into a new year. She said City Council could set up a capital project fund for demolition and those funds would carry over multiple years.

Mayor Doughtie said the Planning Director showed City Council a large amount of vacant houses and he believes many appear to be beyond repair. He would think the owners would welcome the opportunity to take them down. City Manager Traynham stated they did not want to spend taxpayer money for demolition. It is there to be used for public purpose for public safety. It is not a tool to tear down a house that an owner doesn't want anymore.

Councilman Smith said it was his understanding that the City Manager presents a budget to City Council and either they cut it or set the amount of money for the City to spend. Whether it is this money or the budget; the City Manager runs the City. It was her responsibility to spend the monies they allocate correctly, wisely and efficiently. Unless they need additional money, City Council should not get involved in this. He asked if he

was correct in saying this. City Manager Traynham said it was one of her primary responsibilities, but again the things she implements comes from the goals and services of the City Council. That is the operating budget. They were talking about the capital needs and City Council needs to approve the capital expenses such as the purchase of the new fire truck.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated it was up to City Council to accept it. This was a discussion and he feels Councilman Smith was trying to close it out. Councilman Smith replied he was trying to get something done.

There was some back and forth banter between Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and Councilman Smith.

Mayor Doughtie called the meeting back to order.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said there was one item they asked the City Manager to look at that does not have any monies allocated. If they do not put any monies in it now, they will not have any dollars later. That was for the salary study. They keep going around about whether employees were getting paid enough and feels this would be a good time to do this. He would like to see monies allocated for that. The other item is the software. He asked if they wanted to do that.

Mayor Doughtie asked if City Council feels they need another meeting. Councilman Smith said no. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said yes.

Councilman Smith said they needed to hear the recommendations from Council members and discuss it now. They are having meetings to have meetings.

Councilwoman Bryant said she did not have a problem with discussing it now. She said earlier that a salary study was needed because employees don't know from year to year where they stand. They were overlapping. There were things done last month that threw the whole police scale out of balance. She emphasized the importance of having the study done. Not everybody has to be at the bottom and not everybody needs to be at the top. The goal of the study is to find the midpoint and have something to work towards. As far as the software upgrades, she knows it is a lot of money, but it is important to make it accessible to the public and if they can do something to generate interest from people that want to come to town and do businesses with them. She thinks they need to be proactive and they need to start thinking about what they can do. She wants to see the city grow and not continue to dwindle. She wants some new ideas. She loves the piece on the economic development incentive although she does not know all of what that involves. If it is going to bring new ideas and people here, she wants to see that done. She did not believe

tearing down old mills was such a great idea. She was visiting other cities and she was seeing those old cotton mills turned into amazing businesses generating income. She would like to see Roanoke Rapids be a part of something like that. Maybe she's dreaming, but she wants the City to be better when she leaves City Council than when she came whenever that may be. She would like the City to be forward thinking and not doing things the way they have always done because that is what they are used to. She knows Theatre is a lot of debt, but those people had a vision of what they thought would grow Roanoke Rapids. She still doesn't understand why it hasn't worked. There is potential and she did not know what they could do to help make that happen. She told City Manager Traynham that overall she did an amazing job with this spreadsheet on capital needs. She realizes it was a lot of hours, hard work, thinking and she did not want to hold it up, but she wants to make sure they get the biggest bang for their buck. They will likely never get to experience this type of extra money again. Everybody has needs and wants. She wants to make sure it is the best use of this money.

Councilman Smith asked Councilwoman Bryant what her suggestion was to do with the money. She replied she liked what City Manager Traynham did. She agrees with Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee that the salary study should be done. She definitely wants to keep the economic development piece in there. She would like to see blocks of mill houses revitalized even if they do it one block at a time. She asked what they could do to stimulate that.

Councilman Smith asked Parks & Recreation Director Simeon to give Councilwoman Bryant the name and telephone number that he gave him.

City Manager Traynham said many of the things they were talking about will go into strategic planning which they have monies set aside for that process. Once they get through the budget, she has secured some preliminary work with the NCLM to come in and do some work with City Council such as a one or two day retreat to start the strategic planning process. She stated that is why with some of these things they do not have to make decisions today or next week on a lot of this. The vehicles listed on the spreadsheet because they have a need for a lot of them. They could look at what they need to order as soon as possible before they miss their chance. She firmly believes the software equipment upgrades are going to transform the community with the OpenGov citizen services platform to improve the efficiency, provide better citizen experience and save the City money in the long run.

City Manager Traynham stated if they start showing midpoints, there was going to be a lot of people that begin to say they should be making a lot more money. There are not many people that are on target; there are some. She and Human Resources Director Caudle have looked at the City's lowest paid employees who were below the midpoint and they made adjustments this year to help end those situations. This list of needs is going to keep

growing the longer they defer decisions on making capital purchases.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if she was going to put the salary study in there. She said she would.

Public Work Director Chalker asked if there was a number of what it would cost. Human Resources Director Caudle replied \$30,000 was an estimate based on some preliminary inquiries before having to put out a RFP.

Councilman Smith asked if demolition was another item they wanted to discuss. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee replied yes.

Mayor Doughtie asked if that was something Mr. Speight could help the City with.

Councilman Smith said he has talked with two people as far as recreation grants and redevelopment of houses – blocks at a time. He was going to get with Planning & Development Director Wise about it. There is money available out there. Some homeowners can get \$7,000 to remodel their homes at a 1% rate. If they qualify, they can get another \$10,000 on a grant to remodel the house. He started with Mr. Speight and now it has gone to Mr. Vital. There is monies out there to revitalize blocks at a time as long as the people own their houses on the block.

Mayor Doughtie said if they could pay off the Theatre debt in five years, it would save the City \$1M per year. If they could receive the \$2M-2.5M additional debt that is owed to the City that would make a good chunk of a payment. It was feasible to do in five years, but it would not be easy. The City could do a lot with \$1M a year. He said they owed approximately \$8M.

Councilman Smith asked how much money they wanted to put in for demolition. City Council asked how much they had already put into demolition with the State Directed Grant funds. City Manager Traynham replied she believed it was \$70,000.

City Council agreed to put \$30,000 in for the salary study and add \$130,000 for demolition.

City Manager Traynham reported an ECU student conducted a housing study in the neighborhood of Tenth Street and Vance or Rapids Streets. The final results are ready and the intent was to have a jump start HOME Consortium money. That money can go to owner occupied or renter occupied homes. That is part of the strategic planning, but if City Council wants to start putting aside reserves that is the intent of a capital budget – to serve multiple years.

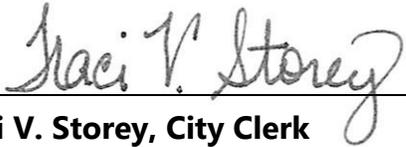
Councilman Smith asked about keeping the City Manager's recommendation as is and taking the \$160,000 from the remainder \$467,022. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said he was thinking it would be good to put all those funds into the fund balance. Councilman Smith said he would hate to take away from the department heads. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said he did too, but he would leave that up to the City Manager to decide where it comes from.

City Manager Traynham said she had enough information to work on revising some things.

City Manager Traynham asked if City Council had any questions on the FY 2022-2023 operational budget since that is what they need to adopt at the City Council meeting next Tuesday. City Council members had no issues with the budget.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilwoman Bryant, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

  
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**Traci V. Storey, City Clerk**

**Approved by Council Action on: July 19, 2022**