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***Roanoke Rapids City Council***

***June 2, 2015***

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on the above date at 5:15 p.m. at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Carl Ferebee, Mayor Pro Tem

Ernest C. Bobbitt)

Suetta S. Scarbrough)

Carol H. Cowen)

Wayne Smith)

Joseph Scherer, MPA, MS, City Manager

Gilbert Chichester, City Attorney

Lisa B. Vincent, MMC, NCCMC, City Clerk

Kathy Kearney, Deputy City Clerk/Human Resources Manager

Leigh Etheridge, Finance Director

Chuck Hasty, Police Chief

Kelly Lasky, Planning & Development Director

Larry Chalker, Public Works Director

John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director

Stacy Coggins, Fire Chief

Christina Caudle, Main Street/Development Director

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

There being no conflict of interest with any of the items on the agenda, motion was made by Councilman Bobbitt, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda for June 2, 2015 as presented.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Cowen, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to approve the May 19, 2015 Council Minutes.

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City Manager Scherer stated this proposed budget for FY 2015 - 2016 went through a long and hard development process based upon the following priorities:

♦ To maintain an acceptable level of current quantity and quality of services for our citizens;

♦ To have no layoffs or reductions of employee benefits;

♦ To provide a 2% COLA;

♦ To use no installment financing for capital needs;

♦ To continue to demonstrate good stewardship of public funds.

City Manager Scherer stated the Operating Budget percentages are as follows:

♦ Public Works Department- 26%

♦ Police Department - 23.4%

♦ Fire Department - 14%

♦ General Government - 20% (Theatre Debt: 12%)

♦ Parks & Recreation Department - 12.8%

♦ Planning & Development Department - 3.8%

City Manager Scherer reviewed the revenues as follows:

♦ Loss of Privilege License Revenue - $375,000

♦ Loss of Lease Revenue from Theatre - $240,000

♦ Unknown effect of Sales Tax legislation pending in Raleigh

♦ Looking at an estimated 4% increase in Sales Tax Revenue

♦ Looking at a Revenue Neutral Property Tax Rate of $.651/$100 Valuation

♦ Other major revenue sources remain flat (Solid Waste User Fees; Utility Franchise Tax; Powell Bill)

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City Manager Scherer reviewed the following recommended changes to the proposed budget:

♦ Add a new emergency generator at City Hall (estimated cost: $32,000);

♦ Remove one (1) new police patrol vehicle from Capital (estimated total package cost: $31,770).

City Manager Scherer stated we have developed a balanced budget for Council’s consideration, based upon our best estimate of forecasted revenues, along with the uncertainty of pending sales tax revenue legislation at the State Legislature. He stated every department continues to strive to be good stewards of our taxpayer dollars, always looking for ways to accomplish their jobs in the most efficient manner possible, while maintaining an appropriate level of service to our citizens.

City Manager Scherer pointed out that this budget will still provide the City with an Undesignated Fund Balance of 22%. He stated this balance still allows us to be prepared to weather any major emergency and still provide all our services as necessary. He stated we feel this budget demonstrates that we are doing the right things for our citizens and have also thought about how best to protect their future.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked how the revenue neutral tax rate would affect a home valued at $50,000.

City Manager Scherer explained that a house valued at $50,000 would pay $312 at the current $.624 rate. He stated depending on if the value decreased 5%--$47,500 at the current $.624 rate the taxes would be around $296 and at the $.651 revenue neutral rate the taxes would be around $310. City Manager Scherer stated the revenue neutral is a wash.

Mayor Doughtie stated he believes the City Manager did a good job with the budget considering what we started with and what we ended up with. He stated we started out with a realistic budget knowing there would not be a lot of capital improvements. Mayor Doughtie stated we have a lot of things we really need to be doing but we are trying to pick the ones in the direst need like the generator at City Hall. He stated if that goes down, we will be

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in a bad way. He stated he appreciates the work Council, department heads and City Manager put into developing this budget. He stated he is disappointed that the community has not given us anymore input of what they would like. He stated when you are making a budget for 15,000 people, you would obviously like to know what they would like to have. Mayor Doughtie stated he hopes everyone will appreciate the effort put into this budget.

Councilman Smith thanked the City Manager and department heads for their hard work on this budget. He stated he knows the City Council cut a lot of stuff that should have been done but we did not have the money to do it. Councilman Smith also thanked the City Manager for putting up with all of the requests made by him and other Council members. He stated hopefully things will be better next year.

A public hearing having been advertised and proper notices having been given according to law, Mayor Doughtie opened the public hearing for comments.

Mr. Allen Purser, President & CEO of the Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce, stated he appreciates the City holding to a revenue neutral tax rate. He stated the last time there was a de facto increase in the City, the tax rate was not adjusted.

There being no one else to speak, Mayor Doughtie declared the public hearing closed.

Public Works Director Chalker stated he is requesting that Council extend the Sweeping Agreement (Agreement No. 3193) with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) until June 1, 2016. He stated this is just a housekeeping item as this agreement has been in place for the last three years. Public Works Director Chalker explained that we sweep the bridge between Roanoke Rapids and Gaston, and NCDOT pays us $10,000.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to extend the Sweeping Agreement (Agreement No. 3193) with the North Carolina Department of Transportation

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for a period of one year (through June 1, 2016) and to authorize Mayor Doughtie to execute the following letter:

May 20, 2015

Ms. Lisa Vincent, City Clerk

P. O. Box 38

Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870

SUBJECT: Sweeping Agreement - City of Roanoke Rapids

WBS 4B.104211

Agreement No. 3193

Purchase Order #5900009952

Dear Ms. Vincent,

This letter is in reference to the subject agreement. In accordance with the agreement, the North Carolina Department of Transportation is exercising its option to extend this agreement for an additional period of one year. All other terms and conditions of the agreement will remain the same.

Your authorized agent’s signature in the designated space below will be evidence of your acceptance of these terms.

If you accept this extension, the agreement will remain in effect from June 1, 2015 through June 1, 2016.

If you have any questions, or if I can be of any further assistance, please advise.

Respectfully,

Jerry P. Page, PE/s/

Division Four Project Manager

JPP/

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Agent Date

City of Roanoke Rapids

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Police Chief Hasty stated he and Parks & Recreation Director Simeon are requesting amendments to the penalty sections of Chapters 70, 97 and 99 of the Roanoke Rapids Code of Ordinances.

Chief Hasty explained that Chapter 70 “General Provisions” includes increases in penalties from $25 and $40 to $50 for violations of the Traffic Code.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated at the last Council meeting during discussion about the Canal Trail, there was interest expressed about increasing the fine in Chapter 97 “Parks & Recreation” for motorized vehicles on the trail. He stated he is requesting the fine be increased to $500.

Chief Hasty stated he is also requesting an amendment to Chapter 97 “Parks & Recreation” to increase the fine for vehicles in the park from $25 to $50.

Chief Hasty stated Chapter 99 “Alarm Systems” includes an increase from $25 to $50 for a false alarm fine and the fine for failure to register an alarm system.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked Chief Hasty to define “vehicles in parks”.

Chief Hasty stated vehicles in the grassy areas and on the ball fields.

Councilman Smith asked if signs would be put up at the parks.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated they will be glad to put up signs.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to adopt the following ordinance:

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTERS 70, 97 AND 99 OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS CODE OF ORDINANCES.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE RAPIDS, NORTH CAROLINA,** that:

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**SECTION 1.** *Section 70.99 (A) of Chapter 70 “General Provisions” be amended to read as follows:*

**§ 70.99 PENALTY.**

(A) Civil Penalty. Pursuant to G.S. 160A-175(c), a violation of any provision of this Traffic Code shall subject to offender to a civil penalty to be recovered by the City in a civil action in the nature of debt if the offender does not pay the civil penalty within five (5) days from the date of issuance of the citation for violation of the Traffic Code ordinance. The following is a list of civil penalties for selected violations of the Traffic Code:

1. **$40.00 Civil Penalty**

a. Use of parking lots - 72.13 (Loitering)

2. **$50.00 Civil Penalty**

a. Speeding - 71.01

b. Failure to obey traffic control device - 70.20 (Stop Sign, Red Light)

c. Muffler violation - 71.07

d. Signals on starting, stopping or turning - 71.08

e. Too close to corer - 70.21

f. Blocking marked driveway - 70.21

g. No parking zone - 70.21

h. 12" from curb - 72.03 (A)

i. Left side of curb - 72.03 (C)

j. Outside lines - 72.03 (D)

k. Two hour parking - 72.35 (Uptown-Downtown Roanoke Ave.)

3. **$150.00 Civil Penalty**

a. Obstruct passage - 72.04 (City Streets)

b. Stop, stand or park in prohibited areas - 72.05

c. Parking/standing prohibited for certain purposes - 72.06

d. Parking truck/tractor in residential area - 72.12

e. Fire hydrant - 70.21

f. Truck lane - 71.06

g. One hour parking limit - 72.09 (Truck Traffic)

h. Fire lane - 94.18

**SECTION 2.** *Section 97.99 of Chapter 97 “Parks & Recreation” be amended to read as follows:*

**§ 97.99 PENALTY.**

(A) (1) Any person who violates any provision of this chapter to which no other specific penalty applies shall be subject to a civil penalty in the sum of $25 per day.

(a) A citation for said civil penalty shall be issued by a police officer.

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(b) Each citation for a civil penalty must be paid within 72 hours of issuance.

(2) Each and every day that the violation continues shall be a separate and distinct offense.

(B) Any person who knowingly or willingly violates § 97.02 shall be subject to a civil penalty of $50.

(C) Any person who knowingly or willingly violates § 97.15 (C) shall be subject to a civil penalty of $500.

(D) The municipality may also, and in addition, seek any and all appropriate equitable remedies, injunctions and/or abatement orders from the appropriate court of competent jurisdiction pursuant to G.S. § 160A-175.

**SECTION 3.** *Section 99.08 of Chapter 99 “Alarm Systems” be amended to read as follows:*

**§ 99.08 FALSE ALARM FINES.**

(A) The holder of an alarm registration or the person in control of an alarm system shall be subject to fines for false alarms emitted from an alarm system based upon the following schedule:

***Each False Alarm…………….$50 fine***

(B) Any person operating a non-registered alarm system will be subject to a citation and assessment of a $50 municipal ordinance fine in addition to the false alarm fine.

**SECTION 3.** This ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Fire Department should conclude their hydrant testing this week with no major problems detected. He stated they will begin their equipment testing next month.

City Manager Scherer reported that Parks & Recreation Director Simeon and Public Works Director Chalker will begin the planning phase of the skate park project with a meeting with the designer this week to begin drafting the final layout.

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City Manager Scherer reported that the Parks & Recreation Department was extremely busy this past weekend with all ball fields, shelters and the Kirkwood Adams Community Center being utilized. He stated the local economy benefitted by the large number of out of town guests at these venues. He recognized Parks & Recreation Director Simeon and his staff for their outstanding efforts at maintaining these venues.

City Manager Scherer stated he would also like to recognize the Parks & Recreation Department and Fire Department for their efforts to prepare Veteran’s Park for the new memorial ceremony held this past Saturday.

City Manager Scherer stated the Parks & Recreation Department continues to prepare for the Canal Half Marathon on June 20. He stated the number of registered runners is up with an estimated 325 total participants.

City Manager Scherer reported that the outdoor pools will open next Saturday, June 13.

City Manager Scherer reported that the dam repair project at Rochelle Pond is almost complete. He stated stormwater infrastructure repairs at 3rd and Franklin Streets are complete and the intersection has been repaved.

City Manager Scherer reported that the new handicap-friendly intersection at 10th & Park has also been completed.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Theatre transition is almost done with cleaning and minor repairs. He stated staff will be bringing a budget amendment to Council at the next meeting to appropriate HSV escrow funds to use for the minor repairs, carpet repairs, etc.

City Manager Scherer reminded everyone of the Seafood & Shag Festival this Friday evening at Centennial Park. He stated this is a major fundraiser for Main Street Roanoke Rapids. He stated tickets can still be purchased from Main Street/Development Director Caudle. City Manager Scherer pointed out that they have developed plans to relocate the festival to the Kirkwood Adams Community Center in the event of inclement weather.

City Manager Scherer reported that plans are being finalized for another season of “Fridays in the Park” concerts in Centennial Park to be held on the

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last Friday of June, July and August.

City Manager Scherer reported that Main Street/Development Director Caudle is working with Planning & Development Director Lasky on the demolition project at 1026 Roanoke Avenue. He stated the project is currently on hold pending relocation of the natural gas meter and lines by the utility company.

City Manager Scherer reported that a petting zoo will be set up at Becker Village Mall from tomorrow through Sunday.

City Manager Scherer also reported on an email he forwarded to Council from Main Street/Development Director Caudle about a photojournalism project being done by UNC students. He stated it highlights different things going on in the Roanoke Valley and also features one of our firefighters Gordon Pearson. City Manager Scherer stated this is an on-going project for the class.

Councilman Smith asked about the $50,000 budget amendment for the next meeting.

City Manager Scherer explained that when HSV originally signed the lease, they put in escrow funds in the amount of $50,000 for purchase of the Theatre. He stated part of the agreement when they departed from the Theatre was for the City to retain those funds. City Manager Scherer explained that staff will bring the budget amendment to Council at the next meeting to incorporate those funds to pay for the minor repairs to the Theatre.

Councilman Smith asked if our Public Works Department employees will be doing the painting.

City Manager Scherer stated they will be patching and painting.

Councilman Smith asked if it would not be better to hire someone instead of using our employees which are already overburdened.

City Manager Scherer stated Public Works Director Chalker is fortunate to have a couple of employees that are outstanding at this type of work and

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have already started.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if the carpet is in decent shape.

City Manager Scherer stated overall it is in decent shape but there are some spots that may have to be replaced.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if the $50,000 will cover the repairs.

City Manager Scherer stated yes.

Mayor Doughtie asked Main Street/Development Director Caudle for an update on the Seafood & Shag Festival.

Main Street/Development Director Caudle reported that they have had great response from the sponsors. She stated the main sponsors are Edward Jones and KapStone. She stated ticket sales were slow up to a point but they have picked up and they are poised to make money. She stated they are still selling tickets and they may have a limited number of tickets available at the door. Main Street/Development Director Caudle stated they had great feedback from people that attended last year and although this is a new event, she feels it will continue each year.

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to adjourn.



6/16/2015