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***Roanoke Rapids City Council***

***October 6, 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

 Leigh Etheridge, Finance Director

 Chuck Hasty, Police Chief

 Larry Chalker, Public Works Director

 John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director

 Kelly Lasky, Planning & Development Director

 Stacy Coggins, Fire Chief

 Christina Caudle, Main Street Director

 Kathy Kearney, Deputy City Clerk/Human Resources Manager

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 Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda for October 6, 2015.

Police Chief Hasty read the following email from Chris Rogers with Halifax County EMS:

**SUBJECT:** Commendation

**NARRATIVE:** At approx. 1018 hrs on 9.17.2015, EMS Station 6, along with Fire Station 14 was dispatched to the DrugCo PVA ref possible cardiac arrest. Upon my arrival, I found several members of the Roanoke Rapids Fire Department (G. Pearson, J. Sparks and D. Miles) performing high quality chest compressions along with several employees of DrugCo (K. Lonesky, M. Jones and J. Liverman) assisting as well. I also noticed the presence of an AED (properly placed at the left head side of the patient) prompting the technicians to continue CPR). My apologies if I withheld any names. The patient had been removed from the car, and CPR immediately initiated by

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DrugCo staff. The Roanoke Rapids Fire Department technicians also had control of the patient’s airway with BVM. Once the crew of EMS 603 arrived, Paramedic T. Exum and EMT-Intermediate Spillane took control of the scene. ACLS guidelines, along with NC OEMS Cardiac Arrest protocols were followed, and since we had plenty of help, the decision was made to initiate the Pit Crew method of CPR. Paramedic Proctor and myself assisted as requested.

I want to say thank you to crews of RRFD and HCEMS for their hard work, determination and professionalism that each showed on this scene.

This is the first TRUE Pit Crew CPR that I have been on scene and observed. The crews worked together as one team, along with the assistance of RRPD Sgt. Moseley and his staff, and this call had a positive outcome. After approx. 23 of good quality CPR and ACLS guidelines being followed, the patient regained a strong pulse (ROSC) along with improving vital signs. The patient was transported to HRMC, and then flew to Wake Med for further care.

Even with the hospital being only minutes away, the decision to continue the code on-scene was most likely the difference of ROSC v/s no ROSC.

Once again, I want to thank all that were involved. I truly believe that the TEAM made a difference today.

Chris

Police Chief Hasty stated the positive outcome of this incident was the result of good teamwork by all departments.

Fire Chief Coggins stated about one and a half years ago the Fire Department began their first responder program, and have not asked for a dime more for this program. He stated with the move of EMS to American Legion Road, we felt we could get to calls within two to three minutes. Fire Chief Coggins stated we all have a servant’s heart and are here to help. He stated they have been able to bring back several people, and you cannot put a dollar figure on a person’s life. Chief Coggins stated this was a team effort.

Fire Chief Coggins presented commendation award certificates to the following:

 ***Sergeant Mike Moseley Officer Jeffrey Mason***

 ***Officer Ryan Cross Officer Dale Strickland***

Police Chief Hasty presented commendation award certificates to the following:

 ***Lieutenant Gordon Pearson Engineer Josh Sparks***

 ***Firefighter Darrell Miles***

Police Chief Hasty read the following letter from a young lady that had some issues on social media:

To: Mr. Martin, Mr. Davis

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Thank y’all for helping me so much. I am really sorry I dragged y’all into this. You helped me a lot. I am sorry I told my aunt a lie. I promise not to do it anymore. Thank y’all for helping us. I am going to be a good girl. I put your # in my phone. I will call you if I need help. I am glad we have good police to look after us. I was really scared when I came in today but I know you did it to help me. I will not do it anymore. If someone texts or calls me, I will call you right away. I know the right thing to do is to call you or tell my aunt. Thank you very much. I love you. I am sorry.

Police Chief Hasty presented a commendation award certificate to Investigator Bobby Martin. He stated Investigator Jeffrey Davis could not be here due to a family emergency. He stated both investigators helped this young lady on their own time after hours.

Police Chief Hasty stated police officers get a bad rap. He stated 35 million contacts are made with police officers every day and very few turn ugly—but people do not want to see that. He stated as mentioned earlier by Chief Coggins, we all have a servant’s heart.

Mayor Doughtie thanked both departments for everything they do for our community.

Mrs. Stacey Harrell of S & L Pet Shop stated she and her husband Lee own S & L Pet Shop located at 1060 Roanoke Avenue which just opened. She thanked the Council for allowing her the opportunity to speak when she realizes the City has much more pressing matters to deal with. Mrs. Harrell stated the way the current ordinance is written, her business cannot sell pet pigs. She stated as business owners, they feel it is their responsibility to come before Council to propose an amendment to Section 91.10, which regulates the keeping of swine, to allow miniature pigs as domesticated animals with restrictions.

Mrs. Harrell explained that the breeds in question are Juliana and pot-bellied pigs but their weight will only range from 35 to 100 pounds with proper diet and exercise. She stated contrary to popular belief, pigs are clean, non-allergenic, odor-free, flea-free, charming and inexpensive to feed as well as being very social. She stated the pigs can become so attached to humans that they can suffer from separation anxiety. She stated they are very sensitive animals that can be playful and humorous at times. She stated they are highly trainable and intelligent with known cases such as dunking a ball or playing piano. Mrs. Harrell stated on an intelligence scale, pigs are rated only three species away from humans preceded only by primates, dolphins and whales. She stated as long as you do not expect your pig to be anything else other than that, a pot-bellied or miniature pig can be a marvelous lifetime companion. She stated while pigs do not bark, prowl the streets or spread rabies, there are drawbacks such as being very curious and becoming destructive when bored. She stated the noise levels compared to other pets is very minimal thus making them great pets in close-quartered neighborhoods.

Mrs. Harrell stated several cities across the state have deemed miniature pigs as domesticated animals such as Raleigh which allows two pigs per household as long as they do not exceed 100 pounds and 22 inches in height. She stated Hickory allows one

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pig or goat per family, while Matthews, Weaverville, Charlotte, Belmont and Havelock all allow pigs with a permit. She stated Gastonia allows miniature pigs without restrictions. She asked that before making a rash decision the Council members watch one of the hundreds of videos of pot-bellied pigs on YouTube.

Mr. Bruce Robistow of 817 Rapids Street, Roanoke Rapids, NC stated he is speaking as a professional licensed respiratory care practitioner with 40 years of experience in dealing with respiratory diseases. He stated he is also speaking as someone that has owned a pet pig. He stated in 1989, his wife had a debilitating lung disease and was on a ventilator. He stated he did a lot of research on what would be a good pet as a companion for his wife with her respiratory ailments. He stated, strangely enough, it was a Vietnamese pot-bellied pig. He stated they consulted with his wife’s pulmonary doctor and after he laughed, he condoned getting the pig. Mr. Robistow stated their pig never exceeded 44 pounds and was litter box trained within three days. He stated the pig did not emit odors and the pig would actually get in the bed with his wife. He stated sadly the pig ended up with a rare health condition and only lived four years.

Mr. Robistow stated he also wanted to share his experience with S & L. He stated he just purchased an umbrella cockatoo from them and they did not let it go to just anyone. He stated they have a responsible group of people working at their pet shop. He encouraged Council to venture into something (pot-bellied pigs) that is now widely accepted and makes a great pet.

Mr. David Harvey, President of the Halifax County Branch of the NAACP, 520 Smith Church Road, Roanoke Rapids, NC stated he is here to give Council copies of petitions signed by residents of Roanoke Rapids who object to living in the City of Roanoke Rapids and being excluded from the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District.

Mr. Harvey stated the petition reads: *“We hereby petition the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District and the Roanoke Rapids City Council to stop the racial discrimination against the African American children who live within the City but are prevented from attending City schools by racially-drawn school boundaries.”*

Mr. Harvey stated they understand that this Council does not have the legal authority to change the school boundaries but the folks who signed this petition all live in Roanoke Rapids but outside the attendance zone of the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District. He stated while they will appeal to the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District Board of Education as well, the signers are your constituents, not the Board of Education’s. He stated this Council is the elected representatives of those who are protesting these boundaries and we bring the petitions to you in the hope you will speak out on an issue important to your

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constituents and influence those who do control the school lines.

Mr. Harvey stated in the glaring light of the 21st century, school boundaries that exclude black children who live next door to a school but are bused miles away to a County school looks to us like racial prejudice regardless of motives of those who drew these lines more than 100 years ago. He stated not only do these residents feel the stigma of exclusion, they must also pay City taxes which include public safety and transportation services such as fire, police and road repair from which the Roanoke Rapids Graded School District benefits. He stated in other words, part of their City taxes support indirectly schools their children are barred from attending despite living within municipal boundaries. He stated victims of discrimination pay again and again for living in a City where school boundaries prevent children who can play together from learning together. Mr. Harvey stated it is time for people of conscience to raise their voices and talk about this injustice. He asked the Council to please be among the good people who no longer remain silent.

Ms. Kathleen Robinson of 812 Vance Street, Roanoke Rapids, NC, presented Council with information about “Cross Roads”, a Christ centered recovery mission offering evaluations; Christ centered recovery groups; parenting and holistic lifestyle coaching; mentors; linkage to community resources; transportation; life and coping skills; referral to detox and rehabilitation; Bible studies and crisis services.

Ms. Robinson stated there are a lot of issues and situations going on here, and drug addiction is a huge problem here. She stated she is not from North Carolina but after the death of her husband, God sent her from the richest county in the United States to Roanoke Rapids. She stated she hit the ground running. Ms. Robinson stated God can heal but we need to work together.

Ms. Robinson stated they will host a prayer walk this Saturday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. She stated they will walk and pray up and down Franklin, Madison and Monroe Streets. She stated they will stop and knock on doors, and pray with people. She stated this will be a day of action and people cannot get things done by sitting on their butts. Ms. Robinson asked the Council members, Police Department and citizens to join them this Saturday. She stated their office is located at 1106 Roanoke Avenue and they can be reached at (252) 532-2494.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to approve the September 15, 2015 Council Minutes.

***Mayor Doughtie called for a five minute recess after which the meeting was reconvened.***

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A ballot vote was taken and City Clerk Vincent announced that Ms. Arizona Putney received the unanimous vote for reappointment to the Senior Center Advisory Committee and Mr. Scott Hall received the unanimous vote for appointment to the Recreation Advisory Committee.

Motion was made by Councilman Bobbitt, seconded by Councilwoman Cowen and unanimously carried to reappoint Ms. Arizona Putney to the Senior Center Advisory Committee and to appoint Mr. Scott Hall to the Recreation Advisory Committee.

Ms. Lori Medlin, President & CEO of the Halifax County Convention & Visitors Bureau, stated she is required to come to the City Council at the end of each year and present an annual report. She presented a PowerPoint presentation of the FY 2014 - 2015 Annual Report highlighting the following:

* Mission: To promote the growth of tourism in Halifax County.
* Lodging Tax Revenue: Halifax County (5%) Roanoke Rapids (1%)
* Tourists spent $87.70 million in Halifax County in 2014.
* Travel and tourism industry directly and indirectly employed more than 1,000 people in Halifax County.
* Tourism generated $5.24 million through state sales and excise taxes, and taxes on personal and corporate income.
* Approximately $2.10 million in local taxes were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.
* Total payroll directly generated by the tourism industry in Halifax County was $10.31 million.
* From July 2014 to June 2015, visitors spent $15.9 million on hotel rooms alone (12% increase from previous year).

Ms. Medlin also reported on the success of “getting social” through the website, Facebook and the digital magazine.

Ms. Medlin commended the City Council for promoting the Roanoke Canal Trail and Museum. She stated they are very excited about the proposed bicycle lending program for the Canal Trail. She also encouraged Council to attend the ceremony on November 14th at the Roanoke Canal Museum for the sign dedication for the underground railroad. Ms. Medlin also mentioned the agreement with City Council to help with enhancements of the concession and restroom facilities at the Ledgerwood Complex. She stated a big sporting event is already scheduled at this site for next year. Ms. Medlin stated she works with City Manager Scherer on the dollars collected for Roanoke Rapids, and they want to make those dollars work for the City.

Mayor Doughtie thanked Ms. Medlin for her report. He stated it sounds like there are a lot of things going on.

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***A complete copy of the PowerPoint presentation is on file in the Office of the City Clerk.***

Police Chief Hasty stated in light of recent changes by NCDOT regarding closures of state roads for special events, it is necessary to adopt an ordinance in order to close Roanoke Avenue (NC 48) for the Roanoke Rapids Christmas Parade on December 6. He stated an ordinance has been prepared for Council’s consideration which will be provided to NCDOT prior to the event.

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

ORDINANCE NO. 2015.10

**AN ORDINANCE DECLARING A ROAD CLOSURE FOR A CHRISTMAS PARADE**

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

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

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

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

 **Date(s): Sunday, December 6, 2015**

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

 **Route Description: Roanoke Avenue (NC 48) between 14th Street**

 **and 1st Street**

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

 **ADOPTED** this 6th day of October, 2015.

 Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

ATTEST:

 Lisa B. Vincent, City Clerk

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City Manager Scherer stated he would like to recognize Chief Hasty as well as all the staff members for their outstanding cooperation and efforts in preparing for the forecasted extreme weather event this past weekend. He stated the staff initiated coordination efforts with the county and state emergency management agencies, as well as internally and with local stakeholders such as the Sanitary District. He stated additional equipment needs, such as pumps and generators, were both identified and/or requested, emergency shelter preparations were begun and previously identified areas prone to flooding were monitored over the weekend. He stated while we were fortunate to have escaped the same devastation that South Carolina has experienced, it is worth noting that the City staff was well prepared to respond to any emergency.

City Manager Scherer reported that the external financial auditor is planning on attending the November 17th Council meeting to present his findings on FY 2014 - 2015. He stated while he cannot release any specific figures until his report has been reviewed by the Local Government Commission, he did say that unofficially our final fund balance is slightly above the year before.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Fire Department has several activities planned as October is designated as Fire Prevention Month. He stated these activities include visiting schools, giving station tours and similar actions. He stated the Fire Department is also conducting a Physical Agility Test this Saturday for potential hires for its vacant firefighter position.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Parks & Recreation Department has been in discussions with a donor who would like to refurbish the area next to the Library known as Akers Park. He stated a local contractor has drafted some plans for new landscaping for the donor and the department to review.

City Manager Scherer reported that plans for the new skate park continue to progress with a concept plan in place from the designer and a draft cost estimate for the project being developed. He stated site preparation should begin before Thanksgiving and construction beginning shortly afterwards, weather permitting as always.

City Manager Scherer reported that bookings for private events continue to be made at the Theatre, along with plans being finalized for the November 8th concert. He stated he has talked with two people who are potentially interested in purchasing the Theatre. He stated the Local Government Commission is supposed to contact him this week to discuss their review of our financial situation and potential discussion points with Bank of America.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Planning & Development Department had a pre-construction meeting with the contractor for the new credit union building. He stated they

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have also received plans for a $250,000 remodeling project at Taco Bell, continuing the improvements of the businesses at the 173 exit area. He stated the department is drafting revisions to their ordinances that are based upon new regulations passed by the State Legislature this past session. He stated these revisions will be reviewed by the Planning Board and should then be considered following a public hearing at the next Council meeting.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Public Works Department has completed their quarterly street light survey and forwarded the results to Dominion for their response. He stated they are considering recommending additional street lights at some intersections that are not lit properly. He stated the Public Works Department has also completed the major stabilization work at 1026 Roanoke Avenue.

City Manager Scherer reported that Chief Hasty will be attending a conference in Wilmington later this week, called the 3rd Annual Clergy and Law Enforcement Partnership Conference. He explained that the conference will focus on building bridges between the Police Department and the community. He stated one of the speakers is an officer from the Missouri State Police who led the security plan in Ferguson, MO, along with other law enforcement officers, clergy and university faculty.

City Manager Scherer reported that the Police Department is also hosting a Community Drug Summit on October 29th at 6:30 p.m. at the Kirkwood Adams Community Center. He stated as drug abuse is considered to be the most costly threat the City faces, the Police Department wants to inform the community about topics such as: *Concerns for Users and Families of Users; Recovery Plans and Goals for Recovery;* and *Hope and Future Plans of Action by the Police Department*.

Councilman Smith asked the amount of money in the final Fund Balance.

City Manager Scherer stated the auditor cannot release the actual figure but indicated that it was slightly above last year’s amount.

Councilman Smith asked the amount of last year’s Fund Balance.

City Manager Scherer stated he does not have that figure with him.

Finance Director Etheridge stated the percentage was very close to 25%.

Councilman Smith asked if he could stop by and see the figure.

Finance Director Etheridge stated certainly.

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Mayor Doughtie asked the process for reporting street lights that are out. He asked if the pole number was needed.

City Manager Scherer stated this information can be reported to the Public Works Department.

Public Works Director Chalker stated they will take whatever information they can get.

Mayor Doughtie stated there is a light out in the southwest end of the parking lot of Walgreen’s.

Public Works Director Chalker stated if there is a pink ribbon on the pole, it has already been tagged for repair.

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

 

 10/20/2015