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**Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on Tuesday, July 19, 2016 at 5:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Lloyd Andrews City Meeting Hall.

**Present:** Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Carl Ferebee, Mayor Pro Tem

Ernest C. Bobbitt) **Council Members**

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

Kelly Lasky, Planning & Development Director

John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director

Larry Chalker, Public Works Director

Stacy Coggins, Fire Chief

Christina Caudle, Main Street Director

Chuck Hasty, Police Chief

**Absent:** Kathy Kearney, Deputy City Clerk/Human Resources Manager

Leigh Etheridge, Finance Director

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

**Adoption of Business Agenda**

Mayor Doughtie announced that the agenda needs to be amended to remove Item 4 (a) as Ms. Harrelson is unable to attend due to a family matter. He asked Council members about any known conflicts of interest with respect to the matters before them this evening.

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There being no conflicts, motion was made by Councilwoman Cowen, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda for July 19, 2016 as amended.

**Special Recognitions**

**Resolution Honoring Rick Gilstrap**

Mayor Doughtie stated it is an honor and privilege to recognize Mr. Rick Gilstrap tonight. He asked Mr. Gilstrap and his wife to join him at the podium. Mayor Doughtie read the following resolution, which was adopted unanimously and presented to Mr. Gilstrap:

**Resolution Honoring Rick Gilstrap**

**WHEREAS,** Rick and his lovely wife Joan moved to Roanoke Rapids in 1982 when he became the President and CEO of Halifax Memorial Hospital (now Halifax Regional Medical Center), a position he held until 2005; and

**WHEREAS,** under Rick’s leadership, Halifax Regional Medical Center more than doubled its number of doctors, significantly increased the number of employees and the number of beds, added countless services, and boasted one of the highest accreditation marks among North Carolina hospitals – a 97 out of 100; and

**WHEREAS,** upon his retirement, Rick served on numerous boards, volunteering countless hours of service to care for others in his community. Some of those numerous boards included serving as Chair of the Roanoke Valley Medical Ministries Clinic; Chair of Halifax Economic Development Commission; President of Halifax Horizons; Vice President of Main Street Roanoke Rapids; member of the Roanoke Rapids Lions Club and several board positions at Chockoyotte Country Club. Rick has also been very active at First United Methodist Church where he leads a weekly prayer breakfast; and

**WHEREAS,** Rick has announced that he and Joan will be leaving Roanoke Rapids to move closer to the Winston-Salem area in order to be closer to their three daughters and five grandchildren; and

**WHEREAS,** all citizens of Roanoke Rapids owe Rick a debt of gratitude for his long years of service to the community and to his fellow man;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids, publicly recognizes and extends its sincere appreciation to Rick Gilstrap for the valuable service he has provided to this community for the past 34 years, and wishes for him and his family years of health and happiness.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of this meeting and that a copy be provided to Rick Gilstrap and to the news media.

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**ADOPTED** this 19th day of July, 2016.

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

**Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor**

ATTEST:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Lisa B. Vincent, City Clerk**

Mr. Gilstrap stated he feels humbled when he sees all of these public servants here tonight that have done so much for the community. He stated he and Joan have had a wonderful time in Roanoke Rapids. He stated they came here with one goal and that was to serve the citizens of Roanoke Rapids and Halifax County. He asked all to keep working hard to serve the community and the Lord. Mr. Gilstrap stated the decision to move was very difficult but he was tired of hearing others talk about going to their grandchildren’s ballgames and various other events. He stated they are looking forward to spending more time with their children and grandchildren.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he came here in 1986 and worked with Rick for about 19 years. He stated you could not find a guy more down to earth than Rick. He stated he was also a great boss. He stated he has a great boss now but Rick would come in and he would know the names of your spouse and children. He stated he had that knack about him that you do not see anymore. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he appreciated being able to work with Rick, and he thanked him for being a great boss.

Mayor Doughtie stated about five or six years ago, he was invited to the Men’s Prayer Breakfast at First United Methodist Church. He stated Rick would have the program every other week and it was always interesting and enjoyable. He stated you never have trouble knowing what he means because he never talks above you. He stated Rick always kept the meetings on a rigid schedule and joked that he would push folks off the podium if they talked too long. He stated Rick would always end the meetings by saying “go out and do good”. Mayor Doughtie stated he is sure that all of the groups and agencies that he was a part of will continue to use what he has taught them. He stated we will miss Rick and Joan, and hope they will grace us with their presence again in the future.

**Police Department Recognitions**

Chief Hasty, before making his presentations, read the following that he sent out to his staff in the wake of last week’s tragedy in Dallas. He stated, unfortunately, since that time there was a similar situation in Baton Rouge.

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In Dallas last night, we witnessed what was probably the most deadly ambush and assassination of law enforcement officers in America in what looks like a planned attack.

We as officers of the City of Roanoke Rapids should always be professional when dealing with people during any kind of interaction. If we treat people with dignity and respect at all times, I hope we would get it in return, but we know that this is not always the case. If we treat everyone in this manner even when they are being difficult to deal with, it will go a long way in the outcome of incidents where we may have to use force on a subject. Giving clear, concise instructions and using professional language will be the best practice in these incidents. Remember that everyone has a camera these days and that only gets a part of the story that can be spun in any direction. Remember to conduct yourself in a professional manner (i.e. not cursing or using statements like “I will kill you” or “I will blow your head off”). These things have been said in Use of Force videos during an incident and can play into different story lines that are not the truth.

We have a job to do today. We need to do it professionally and safely at all times. If you have to use force, then use force that is reasonable and necessary to get you home to your family.

We as a law enforcement family need to pray for the officers and the families of those killed and injured. We also need to pray for the civilians injured during this attack.

We pray for the safety of all law enforcement officers nationwide.

We need to call for calm; we have a system of justice in this country that must be given the chance to work no matter how mad or upset people may be about the system.

Taking the law into one’s own hands is not the right thing to do and it will not solve any of the problems we are facing today.

We as a department, city, county and country must now come together and work together to resolve these issues on both sides.

Chief Hasty recognized the following **“Officers of the Quarter”**: **Lieutenant Perry Parks**; **Officer Jamie Hardy** and **Officer Alex Green**. He stated these officers work on the streets and they make him look good. He presented them with certificates and a gift his wife made.

Chief Hasty stated he receives letters almost every week about our officers going above and beyond the call of duty. He asked **Officer Natara Velazquez** and **Sergeant Mark Peck** to join him at the podium. He read the following letter:

Ret. Deputy William J. Sweeney, Jr.

3536 Betz Court

South Chesterfield, VA 23834

June 14, 2016

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Roanoke Rapids Police Department

P. O. Box 38

Roanoke Rapids, NC 27870

ATTENTION: Police Chief C. T. Hasty, Jr.

Captain Andy Bryant

Gentlemen:

My wife and I wish to thank your department for the help that was afforded us on June 4, 2016. We were traveling from South Carolina back to our home in Virginia, when we experienced two blowouts on our 38 ft. fifth wheel RV. We were heading north and approximately one-quarter mile from Exit 173 on I-95.

When we called our insurance carrier, they suggested we call 911. Officer Natara Velazquez was the first officer on the scene. She was extremely helpful in keeping traffic away from us and our RV which was on the shoulder of the road. A short time later, Sergeant Mark Peck arrived. Both the Sergeant and the Officer were very caring, concerned for our safety, and helpful as I, with the help of a friend who was also traveling with us in his RV, had to change both tires on this 7-ton vehicle on the shoulder of the interstate.

Officer Velazquez made numerous phone calls for us on her personal cell phone to try to locate someone who could change the tires for us. We were never able to get help, either through our insurance company or the Officer’s numerous calls. Sergeant Peck helped guide us in moving the RV so that we could get the tires up on jacks to change them.

We were in this situation for well over three hours, in over 90 degree and very humid conditions, and Officer Velazquez stayed with us the entire time, even holding back traffic so that we could re-enter the highway safely. When we finally got underway, we got immediately off the interstate at Exit 173 and went to the Firestone dealer on US 158 to have them check the tire pressure in the two spares that we had just put on the RV. As we were on a side street, waiting for our friends to fuel up at the BP next to the Ruby Tuesday, Officer Velazquez pulled up alongside of our RV and handed me and my wife a large, cold bottle of water and stated she was worried about us because of the extreme heat. I am 79 years old and it was apparent to everyone that I was struggling changing the tires in the heat.

Your Officer and Sergeant went above and beyond in helping us through a difficult and traumatic situation. I am a retired Deputy Sheriff from Richmond, Virginia, and the friend traveling with us in his RV is a retired Captain from the Suffolk County, N.Y. Police Department. We both understand what your Officer and Sergeant were “obligated” to do and what they did was above what they were required to do.

Again, we want to thank your Department, Sergeant Peck and Officer Velazquez for all of their help and ask that a copy of this letter be provided to each of them, and placed in their personnel file.

Sincerely,

William J. Sweeney, Jr./s/

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Chief Hasty presented **Officer Velazquez** and **Sergeant Peck** with certificates for going above and beyond the call of duty.

Chief Hasty introduced the department’s newest hire **Joe Desare**. He stated Joe was born in the Philippines and relocated to the United States at the age of 15. He stated he served in the Marine Corps, is an EMT-Paramedic, a Tactical Medic and is a certified instructor for EMS. Chief Hasty stated Joe will be attending the BLET program at HCC.

Chief Hasty recognized **Amanda Dawn Slauzis**. He stated Amanda is a summer intern from ECU that has been working with us and today is her last day. He stated she is a native of Roanoke Rapids and a 2012 graduate of Roanoke Rapids High School and 2016 graduate of ECU. Chief Hasty stated she will be attending the BLET program at HCC and we hope she will come to work for us. He stated interns are not paid so the department put together a little something for her.

**Fire Department Promotion & New Hire Ceremony**

Chief Coggins conducted a promotion and new hire ceremony for the following individuals:

❖Newly promoted **Bryan Hollowell** from Engineer to **Lieutenant**.

❖Newly promoted **Lee Vandenventer** from Driver-Operator to **Engineer**.

❖Newly promoted **Darrell Miles** from Firefighter to **Engineer**.

❖Newly promoted **Jared Lynch** from Firefighter to **Engineer**.

❖Newly hired **Bruce Wells** as**Firefighter**.

❖Newly hired **Carter Rowland** as **Firefighter**.

❖Newly hired **Clayton Balmer** as **Firefighter**.

❖Newly hired **Johnathan Woodall** as **Firefighter**.

❖Newly hired **Darrel Sanders** as **Firefighter**.

**Recognition of National Main Street Accreditation**

Main Street Director Caudle invited the members of the Roanoke Rapids Main Street Board that were present to join her at the podium.

Main Street Director Caudle announced that Main Street Roanoke Rapids has been designated as an accredited National Main Street Program for economic vitality and meeting the commercial district revitalization performance standards set by the National Main Street Center®, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation for the second year.

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Main Street Director Caudle stated each year, the National Main Street Center and its partners announce the list of accredited Main Street® programs in recognition of their exemplary commitment to historic preservation and community revitalization through the Main Street Four Point Approach®.

Main Street Director Caudle stated National Accreditation is awarded to Main Street programs for their outstanding accomplishment in meeting the National Main Street Center’s 10 Standards of Performance.  She stated the performance standards set the benchmarks for measuring a community’s application of the Main Street Four Point Approach to commercial district revitalization.  She stated the standards include fostering strong public-private partnerships, securing an operating budget, tracking programmatic progress and actively preserving historic buildings.

Main Street Director Caudle stated of the 98 actively designated NC Main Street Cities and Small Towns, only 44 communities earned National Main Street Accreditation based on 2015 performance.  Roanoke Rapids has been nationally accredited since 2015. She stated congratulations are in order for Main Street Roanoke Rapids and the City of Roanoke Rapids for this great achievement.

Main Street Director Caudle stated this would not be possible without all of these people standing behind her as well as others.

Mayor Doughtie thanked them for their service.

**Recognition of Titus Workman, NC Main Street Champion Award Recipient**

Main Street Director Caudle called on Mr. Titus Workman to join her at the podium. She stated each of the State’s active Main Street programs is given the opportunity to recognize a local Main Street Champion. She stated the dedication and hard work of countless volunteers is required to make a local Main Street program successful, and the Main Street Champion designation acknowledges the extraordinary efforts of those persons who have played pivotal roles in the revitalization of their downtowns over the last 12 months.

Main Street Director Caudle stated in March, 37 NC Main Street Champion award recipients were celebrated at the 2016 NC Main Street Conference in Goldsboro, NC. She stated NC Department of Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarlva, III and Assistant Secretary Patricia Mitchell were in attendance at

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this event. She stated this evening, Main Street Roanoke Rapids would like to present the NC Main Street Champion Award to Mr. Titus Workman.

Main Street Director Caudle stated Titus Workman, publisher of the Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald, is the ultimate volunteer. She stated he is active with several local civic organizations including the Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce, Halifax County Business Horizons, Roanoke Rapids Lion’s Club, and Main Street Roanoke Rapids. She indicated that Titus has given countless hours to our downtown revitalization efforts as a Main Street Roanoke Rapids board member and executive officer over the last few years. She stated his contributions include publicly advocating for a formal partnership between Main Street Roanoke Rapids and the City of Roanoke Rapids, developing our signature “Seafood & Shag Festival” fundraiser, and creating Main Street Roanoke Rapids’ new branding concept and logo. She stated Main Street Roanoke Rapids is eternally grateful for Titus Workman’s dedication to uptown and downtown revitalization.

**Public Comment (Scheduled)**

**Boys & Girls Clubs of North Central North Carolina**

Mr. Floyd Johnson, Chief Professional Officer of the Boys & Girls Clubs of North Central North Carolina, stated he is here tonight to let the City know that on July 1, the Boys & Girls Club of Halifax County merged with them which also includes the counties of Granville, Vance, Franklin and Warren. He stated this was done to create efficiencies in the operation of the club and also to look at ways to expand programs here. Mr. Johnson stated they plan to start offering an afterschool feeding program here like the program in Henderson. He explained that the footprint used to be larger here and they are trying to get back to that not only here in the city but throughout the county.

**Approval of Council Minutes**

Motion was made by Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to approve the June 21, 2016 City Council Minutes.

**City Manager’s Report**

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City Manager Scherer stated he would like to begin by recognizing all of the City departments involved in last week’s Babe Ruth U9 regional baseball tournament held at Ledgerwood Field, especially John Simeon and his department. He stated the other departments involved were Public Works, Police and Fire, along with the Sheriff’s Department and County EMS. He stated the comments he has received from both participants and attendees were very complimentary of how the tournament was conducted and how nice the visitors were treated at our local hotels, shops and restaurants. He stated we all want to make Roanoke Rapids a better place to live, work and play, as well as be great ambassadors to visitors and their families. City Manager Scherer stated Todd Lockamon and the Youth Baseball Association also deserve recognition for their efforts in making the tournament a success.

City Manager Scherer stated as recent media reports have noted, we have listed the Theatre with a commercial online auction company in our attempts to increase marketing efforts and widen the audience awareness and appeal for the property. He stated regarding those activities already scheduled at the Theatre such as concerts, in the event of its sale, it is our intent to have the buyer honor those contracted events.

City Manager Scherer stated after reviewing the situation for needed major repairs at Chaloner pool and how long it would take to accomplish them by a contractor, we have decided not to attempt to affect any repairs this year. He stated the Parks & Recreation Director will begin preparing a plan for what maintenance and repairs would be needed to have the pool ready for next summer, especially with regard to both the pool and the bathhouse. He stated at least two estimates of recommended repairs will be prepared for Council’s review and consideration before anything is acted on. He stated all approved repairs would be accomplished beginning next spring.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he would like to recognize some of the Hodgestown community leaders who are here tonight and were not happy about the pool but recognize that just patching the pool is not the answer. He stated he has talked with the Mayor, other Council members and the City Manager about getting estimates on how best to handle this matter. He stated he realizes the community members are disappointed and he is too but overall, it would be best to open the pool safely and have it open long-term. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated the pool is a major concern and he appreciates the Mayor and Council members looking at it seriously. He stated it may take some time to get the pool where it needs to be, and he asked that the staff get good

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estimates and go ahead now and do what needs to be done. He stated the worst thing that could happen is that we are all here again next year talking about the pool.

Councilman Smith stated the reason he feels the pool needs to be refurbished instead of patched is that the bottom could fall out and then we would have a big problem. He stated he understands that the citizens want their pool and he would be willing to sell the whole complex to the Chaloner Alumni Organization for one dollar so the community can do what they want with it. Councilman Smith stated if we do the work on the pool now, it will sit the whole winter long.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated in talking with community members, he feels they would be satisfied if they knew the work was going to be done.

Councilwoman Cowen stated we need to look at the whole picture and not put a lot of money in an old pool that still will not be good. She stated she spoke with a man today that builds pools all over the United States and he advised that we invest our money wisely and that it might be better to look at the bigger picture.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he agrees that we need to look at all options but also move as swiftly as possible.

**Finance Director’s Report**

In the absence of Finance Director Etheridge, City Manager Scherer reported that the preliminary report for the month of June shows General Fund year to date receipts totaled $14,224,223.88 *(percentage of actual monies collected of adopted budget figures stands at 90.8%)* and General Fund year to date expenditures totaled $15,182,353.83 *(percentage of actual monies expended of adopted budget figures stands at 96.9%)* leaving a deficit of $958,129.95. He stated he realizes that this number is very large but we still have two months of Sales Tax, a month and a half of Ad Valorem Tax and Hold Harmless Revenue to come in. City Manager Scherer stated he expects this number to be drastically reduced when these revenues come in. He stated this represents the hole in our budget due to the loss of privilege license revenues.

Councilman Smith asked if we have any idea how much sales tax revenue we may get.

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City Manager Scherer stated right now it would be a guesstimate.

Mayor Doughtie stated it is approximately $300,000.00 we are not receiving from privilege license fees and we have operated six plus years with no increase in revenues. He stated our health insurance has gone up a lot and he knows we are not paying our employees what we need to be paying them although we do try to give them a modest increase so we do not continue to lose good people. Mayor Doughtie stated Eastern North Carolina is in bad financial shape and he is disappointed that we do not get more help for this area.

Mayor Doughtie stated County Commission Chairman Vernon Bryant is here tonight. He stated he and Vernon have been very close friends for a long time and they have discussed the need for more funding for our rural areas. He stated something needs to be done differently because we are not having any growth in rural Eastern North Carolina. Mayor Doughtie stated every meeting that Chamber Director Allen Purser hosts, we hear that we are continuing to lose population. He stated the schools are losing students. He stated all of this means we are losing money.

Mayor Doughtie stated when we have a sinkhole or a roof leak, we have to patch rather than replace. He stated we took money out of our Fund Balance to balance the budget and if we continue to do that, we will be out of money in four or five years. He stated Councilwoman Cowen said we need to look closely at what we are spending our money on. He stated he does not know the answer as he stated earlier in his opening prayer. He stated we have a lot of things that need to be done. Mayor Doughtie stated money may not buy happiness but it can buy a garbage truck and pave streets, and it is something that we do not have an abundance of.

**Departmental Reports**

**Police**

Chief Hasty stated Council has his report but he would like to highlight a few items. He stated the department will be participating in the Halifax County Touch a Truck event on Saturday, July 30 at the Theatre and also in the Community Wellness Forum on Sunday, July 31 to be held at the Theatre. He stated this forum is an effort to try and bridge the gap between law enforcement and the community. He stated in August, he plans to close a couple of streets downtown and cook for the kids.

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City Manager Scherer asked Chief Hasty about National Night Out.

Chief Hasty stated National Night Out will be held on August 2 at Halifax Community College.

**Planning & Development**

Planning & Development Director Lasky reported that June was a record-breaking month as far as collecting building permit fees and construction values. She stated this is largely in part due to the permit issued for the new Manning Elementary School and also the construction taking place at KapStone. She stated the construction value was over $19.5 million and we collected over $60,000.00 in permit fees. She pointed out that in the last few years, our annual construction value has not reached $10 million.

Planning & Development Director Lasky reported that the Planning Board will consider a rezoning request from residential to commercial, and a conditional use permit request for a wireless cell tower this Thursday evening. She stated public hearings on these two requests are scheduled for the August 2 Council meeting.

Planning & Development Director Lasky reported that she continues discussion with a potential developer for property in the Premier Boulevard area.

**Parks & Recreation**

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon reported that the City Manager did an excellent job reporting on last week’s baseball tournament but he would like to personally thank his peers for all of their help and support.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon reported that the Library has been granted $2,000.00 from the Upper Coastal Plain COG to purchase social studies and current event books. He stated Council is invited to attend the check presentation on Thursday at 3:00 p.m. at the Library.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon reported on the upcoming events at the Theatre: **Saturday, August July 23** – Lip Sync Battle; **Saturday, July 30** – Halifax Co. Touch a Truck; **Sunday, July 31** - Community Wellness Forum; **Saturday,** **August 6** – Southern Soul & Blues; **Friday, August 19** – Tracy

Lawrence; **Saturday, September 17** – Ratt with Thunderstruck and **Saturday, October 8** – Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.

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Parks & Recreation Director Simeon reported that they are winding down a very busy summer and will be switching from baseball to football. He stated they will be doing a lot more programming inside.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked about the dates of the community forums for the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation grant.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated he will need to speak with the company working on the master plan about that but they will probably be held in about six to eight weeks, after school starts back.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated the community will have a chance to provide input.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated that is correct. He stated we will have concept plans for Wheeler Park, Chaloner Recreation Center and Martin Luther King Park.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he appreciates the City Council working with us on this. He asked if he could get some type of timeline on the work to be done on the Chaloner pool.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated yes.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated the Mayor mentioned earlier that things are tight and they have been that way for a while. He stated we have not increased taxes and do not plan to but at some point, something will have to be done. He stated the Emergency Room has never been a money-maker, in fact, the hospital loses money every year on the ER but it is a necessary. He stated he thinks of the Emergency Room in relation to the Chaloner Pool and sometimes it is about doing the right thing.

Councilman Smith asked Parks & Recreation Director Simeon if he has the attendance figures for the Chaloner Pool.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon stated he does. He indicated that the pool is open about 10 weeks out of the summer. He stated the attendance during 2014 was 885 and the attendance in 2015 was 615.

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Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked Councilman Smith if there is a reason behind asking for that information.

Councilman Smith stated he has reservations about having three pools in Roanoke Rapids and indicated that he has discussed this with him in the past.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he is sure the attendance would be higher if it was in better shape. He stated if you do not take care of it like other places, people tend to not come.

Mayor Doughtie stated he would like to thank everyone that had a hand in the baseball tournament last week. He stated it was a good event for the City.

**Public Works**

Public Works Director Chalker reported that during the month of June, the Cemetery staff performed eight openings and sold two lots for a total of $9,452.00. He stated the year to date collection totals for cemetery services was $123,491.00. He stated during the month of June, they sent out 70 letters for code ordinance violations and 44 lots were cut by City forces in the amount of $14,450.00. He stated the total year to date assessed for this was $57,252.00. He stated these numbers will continue to go up as we get deeper into the grass cutting season.

Public Works Director Chalker reported that they performed maintenance in 15 blocks of alleys; cut limbs away from 20 street lights and cut down several trees that were either diseased or hanging over streets.

Public Works Director Chalker also highlighted from Nick Rightmyer’s report that the bridge on Dixie Street leading to Chaloner Park was inspected as required each year, and maintenance is needed to prevent a hazardous condition from developing. He stated the cost to do these repairs is about $2,500.00. He stated if residents see activity out there, they are working on the bridge.

**Fire**

Chief Coggins reported that during the month of June, the Fire Department responded to 178 calls with an average response time of 4.73 minutes. He reported that our firemen were engaged in 624 man-hours of training. He reported that the inspectors conducted 44 fire prevention inspections and/or

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re-inspections, and conducted 3 plan reviews for proposed new businesses within our fire district.

Chief Coggins reported that the department participated in the annual tour of Halifax Regional Medical Center with the hospital maintenance staff. He stated they conducted a heat stress and back safety class; conducted a multi-county night drill; washed and detailed fire apparatus; assisted with the kids camp at T. J. Davis Recreation Center; provided medical care for the RRHS Alumni Softball game; and spent a day and a half assisting the Parks & Recreation Department with cleanup of the Chaloner Pool.

Chief Coggins reported that they will meet with Phil Ricks of EMS to try to get the call numbers for medical response down. He stated he understands there has been some feedback about this and they are doing everything they can to answer justified calls.

**Main Street**

Main Street Director Caudle reported that we received great news at the beginning of the fiscal year that we are to receive a one-time grant (Downtown Development Grant) in the amount of $94,340.00 from the State’s FY 2016 – 2017 Budget. She stated no matching funds are required. She stated we should receive official notification from the State soon. She gave a special thank you to Representative Michael Wray for ensuring that we were one of the 53 communities on the list to receive this funding. She stated this is definitely a shot in the arm for Main Street Roanoke Rapids. She stated they will discuss this opportunity at the August 16 Board meeting and determine a plan to spend the funds.

Main Street Director Caudle highlighted the following business district activities: (1) Carolina Chips (100 Gaston Road) – building addition permit issued and (2) Laundromat (corner of 2nd Street and Roanoke Avenue) building permit issued and work continues.

Main Street Director Caudle reported that the third and final “Fridays in the Park” concert will be held on Friday, August 19. She stated the Wild Country Band will be performing. She stated this is Planning & Development Department employee Donald Tart’s band. She encouraged everyone to come out and support him.

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Main Street Director Caudle reported that the Main Street and NC Downtown Development Association Regional Meetings will be held on Thursday, July 21 at the Halifax County Arts Council Gallery.

Main Street Director Caudle reported that the Main Street Roanoke Rapids Annual Dinner will be held next Monday, July 25 at 6:30 p.m. at the Halifax County Arts Council Gallery. She stated tickets are $20.00 each and asked that those planning to attend RSVP by tomorrow.

Main Street Director Caudle reported that tickets are on sale for the Roanoke Rapids Seafood & Shag Festival scheduled for Friday, August 12 from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at the Kirkwood Adams Community Center. She stated general admission tickets are $35.00 each and VIP tickets are $55.00 each. She stated the Band of Oz will provide the entertainment and David’s Restaurant will cater. She pointed out that this is the non-profit’s major fundraiser.

**Other Business/Comments by Council Members**

Councilman Smith stated he would like to take this opportunity to thank the City Manager and all of the department heads for what they did for the Little League with the baseball tournament last week. He stated Parks & Recreation, Police and Fire provided a lot of help to us. He stated since he is on the Board for the Little League Association, he wanted to thank everyone for what they did and how well it turned out.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated he would like to thank the members of the Hodgestown community and also his good friend Vernon Bryant for coming out tonight.

Mayor Doughtie asked that everyone keep Councilwoman Cowen’s grandson in their prayers. He stated he has been struggling for over a month and when you have someone that ill for an extended period of time, it takes a toll on everyone.

There being no further business, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to adjourn.



**Lisa B. Vincent, MMC, NCCMC, City Clerk**

**Approved by Council Action on: 8/2/2016**