



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on Tuesday, September 20, 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)
Suetta S. Scarbrough)
Carol H. Cowen)
Wayne Smith)
Joseph Scherer, MPA, MS, City Manager
Gilbert Chichester, City Attorney
Traci Storey, 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
Kathy Kearney, Deputy City Clerk/Human Resources Manager
Leigh Etheridge, Finance Director

Council Members

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

Adoption of Business Agenda

Mayor Doughtie asked Council members about any known conflicts of interest with respect to the matters before them this evening.

There being no conflicts, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda for September 20, 2016.

Special Recognitions

Recognition of Retired City Clerk Lisa B. Vincent

Mayor Doughtie read and presented Lisa Vincent with the following resolution:

WHEREAS, *Lisa Barnes Vincent retired on August 31, 2016 after over thirty-one years of faithful and excellent service to the City of Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina; and*

WHEREAS, *Lisa has been a life-long resident of Roanoke Rapids, where she graduated from Roanoke Rapids High School in 1982 and from Halifax Community College in 1984 earning an Associate Degree; and*

WHEREAS, *Lisa began her career with the City of Roanoke Rapids on March 6, 1985 as a receptionist but quickly was promoted to Deputy Clerk and then City Clerk on April 1, 1993; and*

WHEREAS, *Lisa graduated from the UNC School of Government Municipal Clerk Institute in 1996. She attained the Certified Municipal Clerk designation in 1998, the Master Clerk designation in 2010 and the North Carolina Certified Municipal Clerk designation in 2014; and*

WHEREAS, *Lisa served on the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Association of Municipal Clerks and the Program & Education Committee as well as the Membership Committee; and*

WHEREAS, *Lisa performed her duties throughout her years of service in a conscientious and responsible manner with outstanding accuracy and competency; and*

WHEREAS, *Lisa has earned admiration and respect of her colleagues for her dedication, knowledge, professionalism, enthusiasm and positive attitude; and*

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED *that the Roanoke Rapids City Council hereby extend to **Lisa Barnes Vincent** our sincere and grateful appreciation for her outstanding public service as City Clerk and our congratulations on her well-earned retirement and our best wishes to her and her family for continued success, happiness and good health for years to come; and*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED *that a copy of this Resolution be spread upon the minutes of this meeting and that a copy be delivered to Lisa and to the news media.*

ADOPTED this 20th day of September, 2016.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

ATTEST: _____

Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Mayor Doughtie also presented Mrs. Vincent with a commemorative plaque/clock for her 31.5 years of service to the City.

City Manager Scherer read and presented Mrs. Vincent with a retirement resolution from the North Carolina Association of Municipal Clerks.

Mrs. Vincent stated it is rare that someone can say that every day for the past 31.5 years that they looked forward to coming to work and she was fortunate to say she has. She said she had made a lot of good friends and had worked for and with many wonderful people. She said she missed everyone and thanked them for their support, but was looking forward to spending more time doing what she wanted, when she wanted.

Recognition of New City Planner Joe Hatch

Planning & Development Director Lasky introduced new City Planner Joe Hatch. She said Mr. Hatch was brought onboard to assist the department in the functions and carrying out of the Land Use Ordinance and the development efforts throughout the City. She said he was a graduate from ECU with a degree in Urban Planning. She reported Mr. Hatch brings nearly 20 years of experience directly related to planning and development. She stated most recently Mr. Hatch served as the City Planner for the City of Petersburg and had served as the City Planner for the City of Oxford. She added that Mr. Hatch had demonstrated the abilities to interpret codes and ordinances, conduct site plan review and brings a great deal of knowledge and experience to the department.

Mr. Hatch stated he had been with the City for about a month and looked forward to working for the City.

Recognition of New City Clerk Traci Storey

City Manager Scherer introduced the new City Clerk, Traci Storey. He stated Mrs. Storey comes to the City from the Town of Weldon with a wealth of experience in municipal government where she served as the Administrative Services Director. He said she was with the Town of Weldon for 15 years. He reported part of her duties included: Town Clerk, Zoning Administrator and Human Resources Officer. He said she has many years of working knowledge of Council and committee meetings along with municipal rules and regulations. He said he feels Mrs. Storey will represent the tradition of excellence that Mrs. Vincent started for the position and that she will fit in with the City.

Police Department Recognitions

Chief Hasty introduced the department's newest hires Cody Fortier and Obert Wiltsie.

Chief Hasty said Officer Wiltsie was from Weldon and graduated Weldon High School. He stated after he graduated high school, Officer Wiltsie joined the NC National Guard. He reported during his service, Officer Wiltsie was deployed overseas during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. He said in 2007 Officer Wiltsie graduated from Basic Law Enforcement Training from Halifax Community College and began his career with the Halifax County Sheriff's Office. He stated Officer Wiltsie served the Sheriff's Office in both patrol and investigative capacity. He added in 2014 he received his Associate of Arts from Halifax Community College and went on to complete his Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice at Bellevue University. He said Officer Wiltsie was currently enrolled in the Masters program at Bellevue University for Criminal Justice Management and Statistics Program.

Chief Hasty stated Officer Fortier is a native of Roanoke Rapids and graduated from Roanoke Rapids High School in 2006. He said after graduation, he joined the US Navy in 2010 where he was deployed twice to the Persian Gulf. He reported Officer Fortier was an information systems technician and served two years as a part of the Anti-Terrorism Force Protection Team. He said he completed his Basic Law Enforcement Training in 2014 at Wake Technical Community College.

Public Comment (Scheduled)

Mr. Gary Danek

Mr. Danek said he lived in Roanoke Rapids and his issues were with the environment and recycling. He stated the last couple times he visited the City's recycling site, the containers were filled with garbage and trash. He said there is a service in Halifax County that offers recycling pick up in roll away cans that is handled through taxes. He said the program has rules and if a resident puts something in the can that is not supposed to be there, they put a note on it to take care of it and then come back for a courtesy pick up. He said his request would be for the City to provide optional recycling pick up. He stated he did not see what the expense would be other than for the taxpayer. He said it was \$156 annually for garbage and recycling; this would be half of that. He stated that breaks down to \$6.50 per month.

Mr. Danek said the company is called Unity of the Carolinas and they service Halifax County. He stated he would like to see the City get something in motion to start a recycling program and let it be his option whether to pay for it or not; not someone else's option. He said if a little more was on his taxes then so be it because taxes were meant to be used for improvement. He stated this was an important issue for him because he was an environmental guy and he picks up peoples' trash when he goes fishing. He stated that was his proposal and would like some feedback on it.

Mayor Doughtie asked if someone could get back to him on the matter. Mr. Danek replied he would like that and if there was a time frame.

Mayor Doughtie asked Mr. Danek to clarify the numbers he reported to the Council. Mr. Danek replied according to Greg Griffin with Halifax County, it costs approximately \$156 annually for garbage and recycling. He said since the City already provides garbage pick-up, it would only be for recycling. He stated he had the telephone numbers for Unity of the Carolinas and the tax office. He said he had come before the Council before concerning the environment and it was shot out the window because of the cost. He said without spending money on the environment, it goes bad.

Mayor Doughtie stated the Council would take his request under advisement and someone would get back to him.

Approval of Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to approve the August 16, 2016 Regular Meeting Council Minutes.

City Council Appointments/Reappointments

A ballot vote was taken and City Clerk Storey announced that it was a unanimous vote for Dom Fenner to be appointed as an Alternate member of the Planning Board. She said it was also a unanimous vote for Margaret Clark, Todd Lockamon and Artie Jones to be reappointed to the Recreation Advisory Committee.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to approve the appointment of Dom Fenner as Alternate to the Planning Board and reappointments of Margaret Clark, Todd Lockamon and Artie Jones to the Recreation Advisory Committee.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Scherer reported that contrary to some media reports, this area was not under a gasoline crisis. He said while some stations have experienced shortages for a period of time, local distributors have worked to insure tanker deliveries of gasoline are arranged so that any disruptions to our supply are minimized as much as possible. He stated the pipeline has been repaired as of today, and while it will take a few days for full service to be restored to the pipeline operations, there is no need for the public to panic in fear of a widespread gasoline shortage. He said Governor McCrory has taken steps to try and prevent vendors from excessive fuel price, along with trying to get federal highway restrictions lifted to minimize any interruptions in fuel supply deliveries until the pipeline flow can be fully restored. He said the City Administration has not experienced any problems from a fuel shortage and department heads have coordinated with local suppliers for delivery arrangements and information updates.

City Manager Scherer related that in the most recent meeting of the Peanut Belt RPO, the technical subcommittee (of which he and Councilman Bobbitt were members) reviewed a number of potential projects being considered by NCDOT.

He said these projects were submitted by the cities and five counties within Division 4 for review and determining their feasibility. He said these projects are given points by NCDOT, Division 4 and the subcommittee based upon a variety of factors. The projects with the best scores then are listed with NCDOT for their possible funding in the future. He stated the projects we considered high priority and assigned the highest point value we could were:

- a) New sidewalk on 10th Street between Marshall Street and Park Avenue.
- b) Widen NC 48 between Roanoke Avenue and NC 46 in Gaston.
- c) Widen NC 125 from I-95 to Old Farm Road.
- d) Widen NC 125 to 3 lanes from Smith Church Road to Old Farm Road.

He also reported improvements at the Halifax-Northampton Regional Airport were discussed and prioritized (new hangers and taxiway). He said it was indicated these improvements may be funded by separate accounts within NCDOT and not from general fund sources like the other projects.

City Manager Scherer said there is no guarantee these projects will get funded in the future, but I wanted you to know about them and that we are trying to improve the transportation network within the City and the surrounding area.

Finance Director's Report

Finance Director Etheridge presented the Financial Report for August 2016. She called attention to the YTD expenditures had exceeded the revenues by \$2,991,386.02 in the month of August. She said this was largely in response to the requirements for the Theatre which included the July principal payment of \$930,000. She stated the mandated payments made on behalf of the Theatre for August were:

Swap Payment	\$51,295.71
Remarketing Fee	\$46,274.36
Interest Payment	\$5,934.47
Wire Fee	\$145.00

Finance Director Etheridge reported the City's auditing firm, Redman & Associates were on site the week of August 29, 2016 to complete field work testing for FY 2015-2016 audit. She said they had returned September 15 and 16, 2016 and completed final reviews. She said she would keep the City Manager informed as of final completion and when the audit report would be available.

Mayor Doughtie asked Finance Director Etheridge if she said the payment was \$930,000. She replied yes it was for the July principal debt payment. He asked if that payment was made twice a year. Finance Director Etheridge said it was the annual principal payment. Mayor Doughtie asked if that was the reason the interest payment was only \$5,934.47 because he knew the total payment was approximately \$1.8 million. She replied the interest payment was a monthly payment. He asked for her to explain how the total payment came up to the \$1.8 million. Finance Director Etheridge said the City's budget for the payment was \$1.8 million, but some of the payments were not monthly.

Mayor Doughtie stated he wanted to bring to light where the City's money goes so it can be heard in the meeting. He added the swap payment was a part of the financing that the City has that was in the instrument to get the money to purchase the Theatre. He asked if the swap payment of \$51,295.71 was a quarterly payment. Finance Director Etheridge replied it was a monthly fee that was negotiated on the derivative instrument in 2007.

Mayor Doughtie said he and Finance Director Etheridge had conversation on what exactly was the Remarketing Fee and it was \$46,274.36 made on a quarterly basis which comes to approximately \$184,000 a year. He added that Chief Hasty just announced the City was able to hire two new policemen and with \$185,000 the City could hire four more policemen. He said that may not be what the City would do, but these types of things were what constrains the Council to do a lot of the things they would like to do.

Councilman Smith asked Finance Director Etheridge to explain the remarketing fee and what Bank of America was remarketing for them. She replied from her review of the backup documentation, it was a remarketing of the derivative instrument.

Mayor Doughtie asked City Manager Scherer or Attorney Chichester to speak about that.

Attorney Chichester stated to say the instrument that the City of Roanoke Rapids signed with Bank of America was complicated was an understatement. He said one of the things involved in the financing agreement was the remarketing of the bonds. He stated Bank of America was constantly remarketing the bonds at least on a weekly basis and they get to charge a fee for doing that. City Manager Scherer added the bonds turn over to different people on a frequent basis.

Councilman Smith said it appears that Bank of America was saying to the City of Roanoke Rapids we got you and there is nothing we can do about it. Attorney Chichester said they were trying to do something about it. He said it has been an ongoing process for a little over a year. He said the original loan agreement was not that the City was just borrowing money and they would give a deed of trust against the property. He said it was one of the most complex financing agreements he had to deal with in many years. He said it did not just involve the interest payment or the swap, it involves the refinancing and the City has to pay all of it. He said most people that borrow money know that they pay the principal and some interest on that, but the City has to pay many other payments than just the principal and interest on that debt. He said Bank of America constantly remarkets the bonds and the City has to pay for them doing that.

Councilman Smith asked if the swap payment was the same as a LIBOR payment/rates. Finance Director Etheridge replied yes.

Attorney Chichester stated they had been in discussions with Bank of America with the assistance of State officials and politicians trying to get some of this off of the City.

Councilman Smith stated he was frustrated with the whole thing because he had been on the Council going on three years and the Council was not getting anywhere with it. Attorney Chichester said it was frustrating to the Mayor and City Manager as well. He said Bank of America was being extremely inflexible with the City of Roanoke Rapids where there was a real need for the City to get some forgiveness.

Councilman Smith asked Finance Director Etheridge if she could include the monthly costs for the payments made for the Theatre including the costs to operate the Theatre in the monthly Financial Report. Finance Director Etheridge replied she would do so.

Departmental Reports

Human Resources

Human Resources Director Kearney recognized the following City employees where they were recognized last night at the Optimist Club meeting. She said Attorney Chichester received the Community Partner of the Year Award for his

contributions; Charles Ryan Cross received the Officer of the Year Award; Chief Chuck Hasty received the Jay Harris Friend of Youth Award and the Optimist Club Member of the Year was one of the City's part-time employees, Carey Foster.

Human Resources Director Kearney reported she was advertising the Firefighter Applicant Pool because the pool was low. She stated they were taking applications through October 21, 2016 and the testing would be done on October 29th at Fire Station 1. She said they were still advertising for a part-time Public Works worker and Part-time Library Assistant.

Police

Chief Hasty stated the Council has his report but he would like to highlight a few items.

He reported the Police Memorial was well attended and thanked the community for coming out. He said they took part in the Fire Safety Day at the Fire Department with the COPS taking fingerprints. He said the COPS also went out to the Ducky Derby and passed out information and took fingerprints. He said they would be conducting a Medicine Drop at CVS Pharmacy this Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. where the City/County Task Force would be there. He said they were planning a Trunk or Treat on Halloween night at the T.J. Recreation Center with the Parks & Recreation Department.

He said as Human Resources Director Kearney announced earlier, Officer Ryan Cross received the Officer of the Year Award last night from the Optimist Club and he wanted to tell Council a story. He said he was at a meeting at a church recently concerning public relations with the police and a lady told him that he had a real good man working for him, Ryan Cross. She said that her son was afraid of the police and she did not want him to be afraid so she took him to see Ryan. He said Officer Cross showed her son his Superman tattoo on his wrist, the gadgets on his belt and took him to the patrol car and let him work the lights and sirens. He said she told him that her son had a whole different outlook on the police now. He said that was one of the reasons he was nominated for the Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.

He said the Mobile Command Center was coming along thanks to the Public Works Department. He said the vehicle was donated by Dominion NC Power. He said it has been painted and hopefully once it was finished, any jurisdiction could use it. He said it had enough radios in it so everyone should be able to talk amongst each other in case of a natural disaster or other event.

Planning & Development

Planning & Development Director Lasky reported the department was working with the Development Review Committee to review a set of plans for a new AT&T retail store to be located at 96 Premier Boulevard.

She said another set of site plans under review was for the new Dollar General Store in the ETJ. She reminded Council that they approved the rezoning request along Hwy. 48.

She reported in the August meeting Council had approved the demolition order to move forward on an unsafe building located at 205-207 E. 10th Street and since that time it has been demolished. She stated funds were used within the department's operating budget in the amount of \$8,500 for the project. She said it was an immediate threat to the public health and safety and they felt better about the building now being demolished.

She said Kapstone continues to incorporate phases for the expansion efforts with foundation plans and the new Manning School appears to be ahead of schedule.

Planning & Development Director Lasky said she expected the building permit for new State Employees Credit Union to be picked up and paid for by a contractor that has yet to be determined very soon. She said she understood the SECU was soliciting bids and the deadline was last week. She said they anticipate construction to begin at the new location within the next few weeks.

Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon reported he was continuing to get quotes for the Chaloner pool renovation. He said he plans to report back to the Council at the October 18th meeting.

He reported the carpeting was completed in the library and the department took advantage of the library being closed and replaced the lights from T12s to more efficient T8s.

He announced the next concert at the Theatre would be October 8, 2016 with the Nitty Gritty Band. He said the doors open at 6 p.m. with the show starting at 8 p.m.

He also announced the Christmas Parade had been scheduled for December 4, 2016 at 2 p.m. and the Christmas Tree Lighting would be Thursday, December

1, 2016 at the Lloyd Andrews Building with refreshments at 6 p.m. and tree lighting at 6:30 p.m.

Public Works

Public Works Director Chalker presented the August Report. He said with the help of the Police Department, they were able to obtain a used rubber tire loader from the military, free of charge. He stated the vehicle remains the property of the Police Department for a period of one year and Public Works would maintain that for them. He said it had a few small mechanical issues but it was a workable piece of equipment. He said they planned to put it in operation as soon as they could.

He said the Public Works Department was creating some extra storage by adding shipping containers onto the building.

He said the department was working on a Mobile Command Center for the Police Department. He said he estimated thus far a savings to the City of \$3,000 by the department employees doing the work. He said they had installed a generator, a roof top air conditioner and other small things to make it functional. He added that once completed he was going to be proud of it and believed everyone would be proud of it too.

He said the department was about 95% complete with a project to install new wireless antennas and radios to allow connectivity between buildings. He said the antennas were installed on the concrete towers behind City Hall, several of the water towers and at Public Works.

He reported the street sweeper has been down off and on the past three months and they totally rebuilt the vacuum system. He said it works better now that it has for a long time.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked if the green recycling cans were the County's cans. Mr. Chalker replied the bright green ones were the County's and the City's were a darker green. He said the City had blue recycling cans for businesses only that came through the execution of a grant. He said they brought a grant to the Council for residential curbside recycling, but the Council and staff felt at that time they did not have the money to do that. He added that he believed some of the departments may have to come back to Council to request additional funds just make it through the budget year because the budget was probably tighter than it had ever been.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked Public Works Director Chalker to explain what happens to the rubber tire loader after the one year period. Mr. Chalker replied that after the one year, the Police Department could transfer the piece of equipment to Public Works or any other department and that department would assume responsibility for it. He said it was a stipulation of the program to receive the equipment for free that the Police Department had to have possession of the equipment for a period of one year.

Councilman Smith asked Mr. Chalker if he got the engine in the rubber tire loader running yet. Mr. Chalker replied they had not because they were sent the wrong part; it needs a bearing for the camshaft. He said they were waiting on that part to come in.

Fire

Chief Coggins presented the August 2016 report. Chief Coggins reported the department held their 2nd Annual Fire Safety Fair which was a success. He said one of the features added to the fair this year was a puppet show. He stated the department plans to utilize the puppets during the month of October to help with the Fire Prevention program at the schools. He said the firemen did a great job building a stage for the puppets that looks like the front of a fire truck.

He reported four of the firemen attended the South Atlantic Fire Rescue Conference in Charlotte and he attended the National Fire Academy two weeks ago for the Executive Fire Officer Symposium where they talked about hot topics in the fire service.

He said Ms. Reeves put on a nice 9-11 Ceremony that was held at the Civic Center.

Chief Coggins announced the department was awarded the Assistance to Firefighter Grants in the amount of \$100,000 to purchase the remaining air packs.

Main Street

Main Street Director Caudle updated the Council on the NC Downtown Redevelopment Grant they were awarded. She said they sent in the proposal on how to spend the funds by September 1, 2016. She said they decided to split the funds into four different initiatives:

- a) 1026 Roanoke Avenue Redevelopment.

- b) Create a Streetscape Planning Process.
- c) Create a Local Incentive in a Form of a Rental Subsidy.
- d) City will Contract Main Street Roanoke Rapids to Fund Existing Façade Improvement Matching Grant Program.

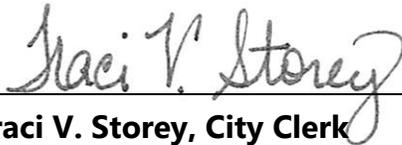
She said they received approval from the State that the proposal was approved and they were currently reviewing the contract now. She said once the contract was signed then they would receive the funds. She gave a special thanks to Representative Michael Wray for making this possible; we were one of 53 communities that received this grant.

Main Street Director Caudle announced there was a new business, Boseman Tattoo Shop on 11th Street that opened in August. She said they had active building permits throughout the district such as the old train depot, the laundromat on the corner of 2nd Street and Roanoke Avenue and ongoing projects going on at the Kapstone complex. She added they had businesses they were helping to find locations and they still had businesses for sale.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked what was happening at the old train station. Main Street Director Caudle replied she did not know of any public use for it, but the owners that purchased it were trying to restore it.

Other Business/Comments by Council Members

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



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: 10/04/2016