



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, May 15, 2018 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)
Carol H. Cowen)
Suetta S. Scarbrough)
Wayne Smith)

Council Members

Joseph Scherer, MPA, MS, City Manager
Gilbert Chichester, City Attorney
Traci Storey, City Clerk
Kathy Kearney, Deputy City Clerk/Human Resources Manager
Leigh Etheridge, Finance Director
Chuck Hasty, Police Chief
Kelly Lasky, Planning & Development Director
John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director
Stacy Coggins, Fire Chief
Christina Caudle, Main Street Director

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

Adoption of Business Agenda

Mayor Doughtie asked Council members if there were any changes or any known conflicts of interest with respect to the matters before them this evening. There being no conflicts, a motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilwoman Scarbrough to adopt the business agenda for May 15, 2018 as presented.

Special Recognition

Police Department

Chief Hasty requested that Deputy Chief Andy Jackson's badge and side arm be declared surplus property and given to him in accordance with General Statute 20-

187.2(a). He will retire May 31, 2018 after serving the City of Roanoke Rapids and its citizens for almost 18 years. His service is greatly appreciated and will be remembered.

Motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt to award Deputy Chief Andy Jackson his service side arm and badge for and in consideration of the sum of \$1.00 received from him and upon his securing a permit as required by NCGS 14-402.

National Public Works Week Proclamation

Mayor Doughtie read and presented the following proclamation to Public Works Director Larry Chalker:

City of Roanoke Rapids Proclamation Recognizing National Public Works Week

WHEREAS, public works professionals focus on infrastructure, facilities and services that are of vital importance to sustainable and resilient communities and to the public health, high quality of life and well-being of the people of Roanoke Rapids; and

WHEREAS, these infrastructure, facilities and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of public works professionals, who are engineers, managers and employees from state and local governments and the private sector, who are responsible for rebuilding, improving and protecting our nation's transportation, water supply, water treatment and solid waste systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities essential for our citizens; and

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest for the citizens, civic leaders and children in the City of Roanoke Rapids to gain knowledge of and to maintain a progressive interest and understanding of the importance of public works and public works programs in their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, the American Public Works Association has celebrated the annual National Public Works Week since 1960;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Emery G. Doughtie, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Roanoke Rapids, do hereby designate the week of May 21 – 25, 2018 as **National Public Works Week**. I urge all our people to join with representatives of the American Public Works Association and government agencies in activities, events and ceremonies designed to pay tribute to our public works professionals, engineers, managers and employees and to recognize the substantial contributions they make to protect our national health, safety and quality of life.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Roanoke Rapids to be affixed this 15th day of May, 2018.

Emery G. Doughtie, Mayor

Mayor Doughtie thanked Public Works Director Chalker and all the department employees for all they do for the community. He stated he knew since he had been with the City, they have not been given as much as they needed to work with and he was proud of what they have done with what they had.

Public Comment (Scheduled)

Martha Myrick

Ms. Myrick stated she was from Weldon and on the evening of April 25, 2018 she stepped out of David's Restaurant located at 1011 Roanoke Avenue to walk to the former Maxway building and back. Before she could completely open and exit the front door, a fast runner from her immediate left from Spartan X Fit ran by her with such speed and not stopping that she barely had reflex time to quickly step back into the foyer before she would have been knocked down by him. She went next door to speak to Mr. Tracy Story, but was told he was out of town until Monday. Everyone does not know another's health history and being knocked down by a runner could have caused me some problems. Runners should be watchful of patrons on the sidewalk especially during the hours that David's Restaurant is open. She reported Spartan told her they were open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday – Friday and 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. on Saturdays.

Public Comment (Unscheduled)

Bill Mueller

Mr. Mueller stated he was the Chairman of the Jo Story Senior Partnership and the Senior Center Advisory Committee. He said tonight Council will be presented with an addition, not a change, but a modification to the name of Jo Story Senior Center. He said it originated in the Jo Story Senior Partnership Board meeting. After two months of discussion, it was unanimously approved by the board. It was then sent to the Senior Center Advisory Committee where it was discussed and unanimously approved. He asked that when Council considers the matter to please look at it in a positive light. He stated he was currently the Vice-President of the Main Street board and on behalf of Main Street and the Halifax County Arts Council, he extended an invitation to the Arts on the Avenue and student art show that will take place on Thursday, May 24th.

Betty Mason and Tony Martin

Mr. Martin stated they reside at 801 Jackson Street and have lived there for over 25 years and it has come to their knowledge that a proposed Dollar General store was looking at the property in question behind the old Social Security building and Askew

Funeral Home, which is diagonal from their property. As they have lived there, they have noticed the traffic runs faster on Jackson Street than Roanoke Avenue. He asked Council to go around Northampton and Halifax County and look at the dollar stores. Look at the front of the stores and what they bring out onto the curbside to sell and ask themselves as property owners if they would like that across the street from their homes. He said they would like to have some kind of knowledge that Council will look into this and if it is already a done deal. As neighbors, they want Council to know they do not want this to be in their neighborhood. There are so many empty buildings on Roanoke Avenue, down Jackson Street and downtown Roanoke Rapids. Ms. Martin stated as a mom, Roanoke Rapids High School is there and there is a ton of young traffic daily up and down. There is no stoplight so they will probably have to invest in a stoplight. She said they have worked hard with their neighbors on both sides and try to watch out for each other and do not understand why. There is a ton of room elsewhere. They love a Dollar General, but please can they look at putting it somewhere else. They feel like it will really bring their property value down.

Amanda Scanlon

Ms. Scanlon stated she wanted to reiterate what the Martins have said and what the other people within the range say about the possible Dollar General location which is caddy corner to her home. It would not be a good location for them and not a good spot for their safety as far them walking in the neighborhood or children coming into their community. They have families coming in now and want them to be able to walk and be able to play on their street.

Mike Askew

Mr. Askew said he was the owner of Askew Funeral Home and on June 4th, he would have poured the concrete there 20 years ago. He looked at several sites before he built the funeral home. He went on a leap and a prayer, starting out from scratch in such a business that takes a lot of money to run and to get started, plus he had no idea that families of Halifax County, Northampton County and Southside Virginia would support him. He said he was very fortunate. He looked at property outside the city, but he chose this property. When he designed the building, he designed it very carefully. He said he thought most everyone in attendance had been in his building. The chapel is on the back southwest corner which is where the proposed dollar store was going to be built. He did this for the reason because he knew log trucks would be going up and down Roanoke Avenue to the paper mill. He did it for sound barrier purposes; he tried to sound barrier his building as good as he could. It is a somber moment. By this building being located on the back corner and the proposed building site plans shows it will be a corner entrance which would be at the corner of his property and the chapel. He feels that would cause major problems for him. He employs three full-time people, seven part-time people; he was not the biggest

employer in town, but this will affect his business as a funeral home with the traffic going in and out of there. He said at the post office a few times a month they will leave their radios going with music thumping that will rattle the windows on that end of his business and he said it will be the same with this on the other side. He stated he goes to these stores too; he frequents the one out by Food Lion on the west side of town. He said that was going to happen. He cannot have that with a service going on and a family has lost a loved one with the traffic and trucks going through there and tractor trailers up and down the road. There has been a fatality on this corner and as said earlier, this was the main thoroughfare for the mill village coming out of Roanoke Rapids High School straight down 8th Street. It happens every day because they cannot ride the bus to school if it is within one mile. He said it would end up being a fatality or someone hurt; he hopes and prays nobody gets hurt, but it is going to happen and they know it. It will increase the traffic volume there. He asked them as a City Council and he has already been told by a couple people on the Council that there was nothing they could do about it. He said it was something they could do about it. It has happened in Durham and Wake County in the last year with the same situation, not with a funeral home, but a retail facility in a neighborhood like here. Their City Council said they were not building it there so it can be done. They can say this cannot be done here, but there are other opportunities right down the avenue. He asked City Council to tell whoever it is that they were not going to allow this to go there.

Wayne Keeter

Mr. Keeter stated he lived caddy corner from where this proposed building was going to be built. He taught at the high school and he knows the issues for people traveling back and forth to the school grounds. They try to keep those folks out but they come through anyway; this was going to increase the number of folks coming through, therefore creating more of situation. Folks can run into situations especially with the safety of the school children that we look at now. Why would we increase the number of chances for somebody to come through and interact with the children over there where something may happen that none of us want to happen? There will be a lot of people walking back and forth at night; that's what it was designed for. The place stays open late at night so they would be walking through campus. He said vandalism could occur and there were so many things that could be negative to this. He said he sleeps on the front corner and it does not calm down until around 9:30 to 10:00 p.m. and now they were looking at increasing the amount of traffic and people to this location. People will be walking by his house all hours of the night and in the morning throwing out trash; he picks up enough trash from the school children. He asked for Council's help in making sure this did not happen. He understands that sometimes your hands can be tied for things you can and can't do, but if we can't be in control of our own city and if the people we elect can't be in charge of what happens in our

city and decide what's good for it or not good for it, then maybe we don't need a City Council. We need to let people do what they want to.

Sharon Driscoll

Ms. Driscoll stated she and her husband moved here in 1982 and brought this house because they wanted a calm place to raise people. They had their own business. She did not want to see something like this because it has been a calm neighborhood. Would you want to look out your front door and see this going on? She said she certainly did not. Her house was built in 1890 and was supposedly on the Historic District, but if this comes along, how historic can it be. She stated she really did not want this.

Mayor Doughtie stated Council would take their comments under advisement.

Approval of Council Minutes

Motion was made by Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to approve the May 1, 2018 Regular Council Meeting Minutes as written.

Appointments/Reappointments

Library Advisory Committee

City Clerk Storey advised the terms of Sandra Duncan and Brian Jones on the Library Advisory Committee will expire May 23, 2018. Ms. Duncan has served the maximum number of 2 consecutive terms allowed by the City Policy.

She stated a ballot vote was taken earlier and both candidates received a unanimous vote to be reappointed. She asked Council to consider a motion to waive the City Policy for Ms. Duncan and reappoint both she and Brian Jones to the Library Advisory Committee.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to waive the City policy and reappoint Ms. Duncan and Mr. Jones to the Library Advisory Committee.

Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board/Board of Adjustment

City Clerk Storey advised the terms of Terry Buffaloe, Henry Ford and Lawrence White on the Roanoke Rapids Planning Board/Board of Adjustment will expire June 1, 2018. Mr. Ford and Mr. White have served the maximum number of 2 consecutive terms allowed by the City Policy.

She stated Council took a ballot vote earlier and the candidates were voted to be reappointed. She asked Council to consider a motion to waive the City Policy for Mr. Ford and Mr. White and reappoint all three candidates to the Roanoke Rapids Planning Board and Board of Adjustment.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Smith and unanimously carried to waive the City policy for Mr. Ford and Mr. White and reappoint all three of the candidates to the Roanoke Rapids Area Planning Board/Board of Adjustment.

New Business

Consideration of Senior Center Name Change

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon advised the Jo Story Senior Center is requesting to change the facility's name to the Jo Story Senior Center for Active Adults. Staff with assistance from the Senior Center Advisory Board are following the current trend across the State to appeal to the largest growing segment of our society which is currently 55-65 year old. This age group is commonly referred to as the baby boomers. It is hopeful this name change will reflect and market to this age group so they can take advantage of the services being offered at our facility. He asked Council to consider a motion to make the name change.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if this was to market to those in that age bracket. Parks & Recreation Director Simeon replied that was correct. They offer a lot of services at the Senior Center and feel they have a lot of opportunity for that age group and have people who could benefit from those services. They would like to see them at the facility taking advantage of those services.

Councilman Smith asked if they were welcome there now. Parks & Recreation Director Simeon replied yes.

Councilwoman Scarbrough stated she was the City Liaison on the Jo Story Senior Center and she had been in on the discussions with the name change. She said they felt that it has been shown from studies throughout the State that people do not want to feel old so they wanted to add that to it, so it would not sound like an old folk's home. She said somebody made the comment that when they rode by it sounded like an old folk's home or retirement home.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon reported there was a wrong perception of the name and that is part of the reason for the name change. It was the perception that

it was some type of assisted living facility.

Councilwoman Scarbrough said Parks & Recreation Director Simeon got in touch with the Story family and they were very pleased that would be added to the Jo Story Center name; they did not object to that at all.

Councilman Smith asked instead of saying it was a name change, could they just say it was an addition to Jo Story. Parks & Recreation Director Simeon replied he had no objection to that.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee to approve the addition and changing of the name of the Jo Story Center to the Jo Story Center for Active Adults. Councilwoman Scarbrough, Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, Councilman Bobbitt and Councilman Smith voted in favor, Councilwoman Cowen voted against. Motion carried.

Councilman Smith asked Attorney Chichester if he had a question. Attorney Chichester replied he did. The way he read the action requested was to change the name from the Jo Story Senior Center to the Jo Story Senior Center for Active Adults and he believed the motion that was made left out "senior."

Councilwoman Scarbrough stated she wanted to withdraw the motion.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee and unanimously carried to approve the changing and the addition of the name of the Jo Story Senior Center to the Jo Story Senior Center for Active Adults.

Consideration of NCDOT Sweeping Agreement

Public Works Director Chalker advised NCDOT requests the City to perform routine sweeping of various streets and bridges (specifically the Roanoke River Bridge at the paper mill) within the corporate limits on an as needed basis. He added this bridge requires more maintenance than most bridges because of the amount of log trucks that come in because they lose bark and wood on a regular basis. The City assists NCDOT in maintaining that bridge. The current agreement cannot be extended therefore a new agreement (Agreement No. 7951) must be approved for the period June 1, 2018 through June 1, 2019. After the approval of this new agreement, one year extensions can be requested and granted each year through June 1, 2023. He reported NCDOT allows the City to bill a maximum amount of \$10,000 per year and the City bills them that maximum every year.

Councilman Smith asked about Exhibit A in the agreement which lists twelve roads that may be swept at NCDOT's request. Public Works Director Chalker replied NCDOT has included those roads/streets because those roads are in the City that NCDOT is responsible for servicing so if they were to have a situation and they asked the City to sweep them, they would be glad to do so, but they only have \$10,000 allotted so if it runs out, the sweeping stops. Councilman Smith asked if all the roads were within the City. Public Works Director said portions of them.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated there was no obligation for anything outside the City limits but rather just naming that road. Public Works Director added it was important to note the City has an excellent relationship with NCDOT and hopes to continue to have an excellent relationship. He said this was one of the things they pay the City for, but they do other in kind things for each other. This was an instance where the City is lucky enough for them to pay us back for some of the things they do.

Councilman Smith stated he had a problem with the statement in Exhibit A, "The bridges and roads on the following routes may be swept either in part or entirely at the request of NCDOT" so that means anytime they request any of these roads to be swept all the way, the City is responsible to do it. Public Works Director Chalker replied he understood what he was saying and asked if it would be proper to make a motion that excluded Exhibit A from the document or Council could table it and ask NCDOT to change the language in the agreement.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated that he understood that if the \$10,000 had run out, then the sweeping would stop and the contract would be null. But if they asked the City to sweep one of the roads and the \$10,000 had not run out, would it be swept. Public Works Director Chalker stated the City would not mind sweeping the routes within the City; we are not allowed to sweep those roads/streets outside the City. He said it was generous for NCDOT to pay the City \$10,000 and they do bill NCDOT for the \$10,000. The street sweeper is the most complicated mobile piece of equipment the City has hence the enormous cost of that piece of equipment. He also noted that the City has never swept anything but the Gaston Bridge.

Attorney Chichester stated it would be appropriate if Council wanted to table the matter so Public Works Director Chalker could contact NCDOT to have Exhibit A excluded. But he did not think it hurts the agreement having it in there because on the very first page of the agreement it refers to Attachment A and says those streets named would only be within the Corporate Limits of the City of Roanoke Rapids so there is no possibility NCDOT could ask for those streets to be swept outside the City Limits. Also in Exhibit A it states "may be" so it is not mandated. The City Manager and Public Works Director would have control of that if it was left as it is now.

Councilwoman Scarbrough asked if that stipulation had been in the agreement before. Public Works Director replied possibly, but he could say for sure; he would have to look at the previous agreement. He stated he did not remember it, but it could have been.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee stated from what he heard from Attorney Chichester, it was within the City and as long as the \$10,000 was still available, the City would swept it up to that point so he did not see it as an issue. Councilman Smith agreed and stated he did not either.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to approve the Sweeping Agreement (Agreement No. 7951) with the NC Department of Transportation for a period of one year (June 1, 2018 through June 1, 2019) and to authorize Mayor Doughtie to execute the agreement.

Mayor Doughtie stated the City was fortunate to have two State highways in the community because the City did not have the funds to maintain Roanoke Avenue, which he knows needs maintenance now, and Tenth Street. He said the City was fortunate to get State dollars to help keep those roads up and they are two of the main corridors that people use when coming into town. He said he was optimistic about how Julian Allsbrook was going to be once they put in the turning lane and when they get Roanoke Avenue redone. It was going to be a lot for people coming into the community for the first time and seeing we have better roads than what we have had for a while.

City Manager's Report

City Manager Scherer announced this week is designated National Police Week, which serves as a way to honor both those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and those who sacrifice each day to ensure our freedom and safety in our community. The thin blue line formed by our law enforcement professionals is the difference between civility and potential chaos.

He said these men and women place the safety and security of others above their own. When facing uncertain dangers and confronting unpredictable threats, they consistently respond with courage, selflessness and strength. And every day in our community, their contributions are felt and deeply appreciated.

We also remember 128 courageous men and women who were killed in the line of duty across this country in 2017. All of them were taken from us – far too suddenly, and far too soon – as they did what they were trained – and sworn – to do: saving the

lives of their colleagues, protecting innocent bystanders from harm, subduing and apprehending dangerous suspects, and pursuing desperate criminals who attempted to flee from justice. By confronting adversity, braving gunfire, and facing down desperate criminals, they set remarkable examples of selflessness, fearlessness, and valor. They inspired their fellow officers and fellow citizens alike. They touched, enriched, and even saved countless lives. And although no words, and no ceremony, can erase the pain we feel at each tragic and untimely loss, my hope is that the families, friends, and colleagues of these fallen heroes can find peace in the certain knowledge that they died doing what they loved. They helped to make this world a far better, and safer place. And, even though these brave officers were taken from us far too suddenly and far too soon, their legacies, and contributions will always endure.

We understand that, even as our officers carry out their responsibilities with professionalism, integrity and uncommon valor, they cannot fully succeed without the partnership of the Roanoke Rapids community they serve. Every day these individuals stand on the front lines of our City's fight against crime and violence. Each face uncertain dangers, and a diverse array of threats, every time they put on their badge and uniform. Our police officers deserve not only the grateful thanks of the citizens of Roanoke Rapids, but also their full and unwavering support in this vital effort.

City Manager Scherer reported the work continues on drafting a final recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2018 – 2019 for your review and comment. He proposed that the City Council's budget work session be held Wednesday, May 30th at the Lloyd Andrews building beginning at 5:15 p.m.

He stated he was not considering recommending any tax increase nor any fund balance allocation for next year's budget. However, revenue projections are trending flat for the next fiscal year. Some usage fees may need to be considered for increases, especially as fuel costs continue to rise. I am projecting we will continue to provide the same level of services as we do now. Healthcare cost estimates are very good with little increase expected in the overall costs of health insurance to the City. The inflation rate for the next fiscal year is expected to remain subdued. He was also expecting that the local unemployment rate will not decrease, and interest rates will rise in the next fiscal year.

Mayor Doughtie commended City Manager Scherer for working with Human Resources Manager Kearney in trying to help the City keep health insurance costs as low as possible. The City has had very small increases in the last short time period. He said it is always out there looming that it may come back and take a big chunk out of the budget. He stated he was glad the City would have another budget year

without any tax increase and that we may not have to take money out of fund balance. He said we did not want to be operating without any money because we have all seen what can happen with a tornado, hurricane or flood. Had we not had any monies to front those costs it would have been much more traumatic to get through it.

Finance Director's Report

Finance Director Etheridge presented the April 2018 Financial Report. The General Fund year-to-date receipts totaled \$12,489,579.91. The percentage of actual monies collected of adopted budgeted figures stands at 79.5%. She said the General Fund year-to-date expenditures totaled \$12,677,254.71. The percentage of actual monies expended of adopted budgeted figures stands at 80.7%. She said after the month of April, 83.32% of the budget has been completed. She reported as of the month of April, the year-to-date revenues exceeded expenditures by (\$187,674.80).

Finance Director Etheridge said the following revenues were received during the month of April:

- Ad Valorem & Solid Waste Taxes: \$123,040
- Sales & Use Tax for month of February: \$234,350
- Motor Vehicle Tax: \$70,085

She reported the City still has several very large expenditure requirements forthcoming in May for Installment Financing and Series 2017A and 2017B loan repayments. The City will also recognize three payrolls in June. June will also recognize the 4th quarter E-911 contractual payment. These requirements are in addition to daily operational spending.

Finance Director Etheridge stated we all have to be mindful with day-to-day expenditures in our last few months to remain favorable to budget as we end the fiscal year. As a result, the City Manager has initiated a spending freeze across all departments for non-emergent items. Non-essential purchases will be deferred until July, 2018.

Mayor Doughtie said in looking at the financial report, there were several items that had a significant amount that had not been collected, such as sales tax. He asked if would be coming in on this years' budget. Finance Director Etheridge replied it typically does and we hope to see that trend upward into the spring months. But with a two month lag time, we are only collected through the February service month, which is a winter month. Mayor Doughtie asked if all the Beer and Wine Tax come in

at one time. She replied yes, we usually receive that in June. He also asked about Other Revenues. She said that usually ramps up in the spring and summer months because most of that is fees, which is based on Parks & Recreation services they provide.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee said in the report it states there are large expenditures forthcoming and asked if the City would still fall within the budget. City Manager Scherer replied that was why he had instituted the spending freeze for any non-emergency and non-immediate operating expenses to hold down spending in order to meet our obligations and stay within the budget. Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if he felt that would take care of it. He replied he hoped so but things continue to break and things have to be done; they are trying to hold the line on expenses as best they can.

Councilman Smith asked how much was the City's E-911 payment. Finance Director Etheridge replied it was approximately \$73,000 per quarter.

Departmental Reports

Human Resources

Human Resources Manager Kearney reported they had two positions open at the time: Part-time Public Works Worker and Sanitation Equipment Operator. She stated sometimes on the report it will show the City only received one or two applications in a month because the City does not take applications unless we have an opening. Sometimes the numbers will be low and sometimes it will be high. If the City was advertising for a firefighter they will receive a lot of applications because they are going to be in a pool.

She said the BARC Committee met on May 3, 2018 and they received four applications from children of City employees who will be graduating high school this year and going to college. At the next meeting on June 5th, they will be recognizing all the applicants and awarding the BARC scholarship. She thanked every employee who donates by either payroll deduction and employees and citizens that buy tickets when they have fundraisers.

Human Resources Manager Kearney said she had been talking to a lot of employees that are baby boomers this month who are becoming or getting close to retirement age. They are turning 60 years old or getting close to 60 and can retire with five years of service. There are several employees that have reached their years of service, 30 years, as far as the City. She said they are excited about retiring, but are very nervous about retiring. She commended her fellow department heads in preparing for the loss

of these employees; we will be losing four this year. She did not know what next year holds, but she has given them a list of who would be eligible to retire in the next five years so they could start pre-planning and training people to fill these spots because we will be losing a lot of talent.

Police

Police Chief Hasty presented his April report. He thanked City Manager Scherer for the kind words in his report for Police Officers Memorial Week. He introduced Arelys Martinez she is the department's intern from Campbell University. She is majoring in homeland security.

He invited everyone to the Fallen Officers Memorial on Thursday, May 17th at 6 p.m. in Centennial Park; if it rains they will move it in the Lloyd Andrews building. He announced Friday, May 18th, the FOP Memorial Service will be held at the Jackson Courthouse at 10 a.m. He said Deputy Chief Andy Jackson would be retiring the end of this month and they have planned a retirement party on June 1st where he will be presented his gun and badge per his request.

Planning & Development

Planning & Development Director Lasky stated she would like highlight a few items in the report and then address some concerns that have been expressed tonight. She reported they have several activities with business use reviews and plan reviews. One was the Premier Boulevard retail building that includes Jersey Mikes, a mattress store, Great Clips and an unnamed restaurant. Some have not started construction yet, but have been previously approved by the department including the revision/revised layout of the Sonic Restaurant and the new Mid-Atlantic Eye Physicians location on Hwy. 125 in the ETJ district.

She said the department has received a significant amount of calls concerning junk vehicles and minimum housing condition issues. They are working to address those issues as quickly as possible. They do have to give notice to the registered owners of the vehicles and give them approximately 7 days, by code, to have those vehicles removed unless they can prove they run on their own power. The department is currently receiving 2-3 complaints per day.

Planning & Development Director Lasky said yesterday morning they met with the site designers, Summit Design & Engineering Services for the property that has been the subject of the unscheduled public comments tonight. She reported they had a very preliminary meeting at this point, no official submittals has been made. The intended development would be a Dollar General retail store. She said the City's ordinance does not discriminate against a new building versus an old building as far

as what they would allow. The Dollar General store classification falls under the same classification as other retail uses in the B-1 district which is primarily Roanoke Avenue, which would even include Food Lion. We are taking a look at the draft plan that has been given to us. Just as a note, the B1 district by definition is designed for a variety of commercial activities primarily those geared toward pedestrian oriented development resulting in intensive and attractive use of the City's commercial business district. The use itself is a permissible use in the zoning district. It is within the historic district of the City and the owners have been notified of that. They have expressed they would be amicable to providing a brick façade that would be complimentary to the surrounding area to make it aesthetically pleasing. But at this time the department does not have an official submittal for review, we have just been given a preliminary look for them to organize. Once they receive additional feedback from the Development Review Committee that consists of Planning staff, Dominion Energy, Roanoke Rapids Sanitary District, NCDOT, Public Works and the Fire Marshal, they will review this. The intent of a permissible use is that they are required to process if it is in accordance with the Land Use Ordinance and will not have any violations. There is a very thorough review that is required as a part of this. Issues such as safety, traffic and transportation will be taken into consideration as they review it. Formal comments will not be provided until a full set of drawings designed by an architect or engineer are submitted to the City and that could be at least 30 days from now. She encouraged all concerned citizens to contact the Planning Department for periodic updates.

Mayor Doughtie said she mentioned safety, traffic and those type things so anything exiting out onto Jackson Street would be onto City property. It was also said there could be a lot of walking traffic so could the City Council or Planning Department have to authority to require sidewalks or sidewalk improvements to be implemented in the development plan. Planning & Development Director Lasky replied, yes and that was an item she mentioned in the meeting yesterday. She said the meeting yesterday and the feedback given was not the last opportunity; it was a first look. She noted the department does this with many applicants for new constructions so when they go through the design phase, which costs tens of thousands of dollars at times, that when they submit their plans they are as close as possible to achieving compliance with the ordinance. Sidewalks and pedestrian accommodations including crossing improvements at 8th and Jackson and 8th and Roanoke Avenue were mentioned yesterday in the meeting to the applicant.

Councilman Smith stated she mentioned it was part of the historic district and asked if that meant no metal frame building could be put there. She replied the historic district was created in the 1990s and as she understands it, once it was established as a National Historic District, the City has been advertising seats on a historic

committee and that board remains vacant since its creation. That committee is advertised on the City's website, City Page and other avenues the City advertises committee vacancies. If the committee was established, the committee would have the opportunity to review such requests and possibly give some comments on it. At this point in time the developer, if the City were to fill a committee say at the next Council meeting, they would have the option to choose whether or not they would want to comply with that process. It would mostly likely occur with the next building or development. Roanoke Avenue has not seen new construction in a while compared to other areas of the city. She assured them the Development Review Committee will review it thoroughly and take into consideration the comments that were expressed tonight and those that they have determined professionally that exist by fact and not opinion.

Councilwoman Scarbrough stated it is obvious that the residents around this site are very opposed to it and asked if they have any kind of recourse or is this a done deal at this site. Planning & Development Director Lasky replied from the City's position we are just getting started, no decisions have been made and no formal application has been provided to the City. From the perspective from outside the City, the property has been for sale for a number of years and the existing zoning has remained in place as early, if not before the 1990s. She asked the site designer if the property had been sold or not yet and if it was contingent upon site approval. Their response was (and this is hearsay) they have a timeline and this was a priority and the property has not yet been sold. Councilwoman Scarbrough asked who has a timeline. She replied the site designers, Summit Design & Engineering, who have been hired by a developer whose client is Dollar General so the department is not communicating with Dollar General. From the City's perspective this is not a done deal, this is just the beginning of a lengthy process and it is very common and happens frequently that the neighbors are expressing opposition. It not only happens here but all over the State. It is our responsibility to ensure that compliance is made with the City's Code of Ordinance and all other applicable regulations by the State and transportation are achieved as part of that planned development.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if any additional things have to be done because it is in the historic district and will any parts of the approval process need to come to Council or is it a use by right; some precedence has been set somewhere else and he was sure the committee would look at that to see what could be done. Planning & Development Director Lasky replied they have to follow codes of the City and the State and there are no historic guidelines established and in place right now. She said to finish answering Councilwoman Scarbrough's question, any decision made by the department as a result of compliance to the Land Use Ordinance, there is a process of appeals that is included in the Land Use Ordinance. That would have to occur by

written application within 30 days of the date of decision. At this time no decision has been made and it could be 45-60 or more days until a decision is made. She stated she would be glad to provide weekly updates that would be available for citizens to contact the department to see what the current status is. The appeals process includes a Board of Adjustment hearing which is made up of members of the City's Planning Board. It would be an evidentiary hearing much like a Conditional Use hearing where evidence of professional testimony would be required rather than opinion.

Councilman Smith told Planning & Development Director he appreciated the way she was honest with everybody and the job she did for the City and knows she will do the right thing; he had a lot of confidence in her. She thanked him and stated she works for the City, the citizenry and not just one particular person. She did not represent any developer or particular landowner; her duty was to carry out the responsibilities that are assigned to her as part of the Land Use Ordinance that belongs to the City. She stated she takes that seriously.

Mayor Doughtie added the Council and the concerned citizens here tonight would appreciate staying updated on what was going on and how the process was moving.

Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon thanked Mr. Mueller for attending the meeting tonight and speaking. He told Mr. Mueller he appreciated him and the efforts he gives him and the department; he really does a lot for them and he truly appreciates it.

He reported he should hear from Kate B. Reynolds on May 24, 2018 or shortly after about the grant for the Chaloner Park project. The Aquatic Center is back to normal operations as of today; they had been closed for a few days due to pool pump issues that have now have been taken care of. The Chockoyotte Park restrooms are currently down due to a major sewer line block. That line is located in the parking lot so it will be rerouted to Wheeler Street which will decrease the line from 300 feet to approximately 150 feet. This will also help with future maintenance issues. They are waiting on a sewer tap from the Roanoke Rapids Sanitary District in order to move the line. Work will commence once the tap is in place.

Parks & Recreation Director Simeon announced the department has set the Summer Camp and program schedule for all their facilities. Information is available at the administrative office at T.J. Davis Recreation Center. He said T.J. Davis will host Project Graduation on Friday, June 8th and the outdoor pool at T.J. Davis will open on Saturday, June 9th.

Councilman Smith asked how the new concession stand was coming at Chockoyotte Park. He replied they were coming along fairly well, but the sewer line issue has complicated connecting onto the plumbing; they are not as far as he would like it to be. The contractor is having some issues with some subcontractors. We are trying to stay on top of things, but he would say they are about 80-85% complete at this point.

Public Works

Public Works Director Chalker reported the Cemetery staff performed six (6) openings and closings and sold two (2) lots in April. The total collected for the month was \$6,152 and total year to date was \$95,691.

He said it was that time of year for nuisance and lot cutting abatement. The department has already assessed \$9,674 this year; we do not collect that immediately but it is assessed to properties by tax lien. The department sends a letter to the owner if the grass is too tall; the department does not want to cut it, but the City ordinance says they are required to notify them and give ten (10) days. This is what they do on a regular basis throughout the grass growing season. They do not just abate tall grass, tall weeds or noxious growth, they also abate standing water, swimming pools that have frogs swimming in them and breeding mosquitos. Also, appliances left in yards that are unsecured where a child could get trapped. These are some examples of what the Public Works Department enforces and they work very closely with all the departments. He said all the department heads talk to each other almost every day and share information.

He said the Public Works Department has spent a large amount of time at 1026 Roanoke Avenue. He said they have taken ownership of that project and he is proud of his employees. He has some very good employees and they work hard every day; some even worked late today to get ahead of the rain. They have also done some work at the Aquatic Center and Chockoyotte Park in assisting the Parks & Recreation Department. He said they have also assisted the Fire Department with their new training facility on Hinson Street. He said it was taking shape now and the Fire Department would be getting some valuable training with smoke in the building.

Public Works Director Chalker announced beginning tomorrow and the next three Wednesdays, the entire department is going to stop doing what they're doing and pick up litter throughout the city. He encouraged the public to come out and help. Their goal is to go to every city street and get up as much litter and trash as they can. He asked the public to not throw things out the car window. He added all the trash in Rochelle Pond comes from city streets because of the water in Rochelle Pond comes from city streets; so if you are wondering why there is some much trash in the pond,

that is why. The rain washes the trash from the streets through the storm drain that goes into Rochelle Pond. We can make a direct impact if we don't litter on the streets. There are some neighborhoods that you don't see it and there are others that they could pick it up today and it would be right back there tomorrow. He thanked the Mayor and everyone for the proclamation and once again it's the employees, they work very hard.

Fire

Fire Chief Coggins reported the Fire Department responded to 142 calls in the month of April with a response time of just over five (5) minutes. Firefighters were engaged in 512 man-hours of training covering various topics. The inspections division conducted 15 fire inspections and completed 11 plan reviews for proposed new businesses or renovations within the district.

He stated the department has been working diligently on the training prop. They are still waiting on the air quality test for the house on Park Avenue they plan to burn. He reported the fire hydrant testing has been completed.

Fire Chief Coggins played a video from WRAL TV where did a story this past week on the firefighters who saved a man's life in a fire that occurred last October. They visited the survivor in the UNC-Chapel Hill Burn Center.

Main Street

Main Street Director Caudle stated before she gave her monthly report, she wanted to provide additional information on the historic district. The Roanoke Rapids Historic District outside of the Roanoke Rapids High School is locally significant. It is the second largest locally significant historic district in the state of North Carolina. The property that is required to follow national or federal historic preservation standards is Roanoke Rapids High School. For all other properties which is close to 1,200 properties within the locally significant district, there are no design standards they have to follow. This is set forth by the federal government and followed up and backed up by the State Historic Preservation (SHPO). She said when the historic district was created in the 1990s, it was approved in 1997 by the National Park Service, all properties were evaluated and they were determined to be either a historic contributing property or a non-contributing historic property. The things done to a property since that historic district was put in place does not impact the neighboring properties as far as it being contributing or non-contributing. If it is a contributing property you can continue to have projects that are eligible for state and federal historic tax credits. If it is non-contributing you do not get the ability to apply for those credits through SHPO. She said at the time the register was created in the

1990s, one of the requirements set forth by the federal government to develop a registry was to develop a preservation society. It is not required to be active. She stated she was not with the City then, but believed what occurred when the register was approved was they created that committee through the City, but never acted on it. She added the historic district hasn't been reviewed since the 1990s and if they did a complete survey again it could change as far as a property being contributing or non-contributing. She said the City works with SHPO on a regular basis with specific property needs and evaluating that information. She stated she wanted to give everyone additional information on how the historic district was created and that it was locally significant. She said being in a network of over 100 Main Street communities, all of which are required to have a historic district in place before they get that designation, most do not have historic preservation design ordinances set forth by the city. It is up to the developer to conform locally to make that aesthetically pleasing within the historic district. She offered to put it out on the Main Street Forum of Main Street managers across the State to see if she can get additional information on in these historic districts and if there are any ordinances set forth by the city; she can get that information to Planning & Development Director Lasky.

She updated Council on the three (3) large public projects that are occurring. The first one is 1026 Roanoke Avenue. They are set to open it to the public on May 24th that is in conjunction with the Arts on the Avenue event. Public Works has been a tremendous asset to us to do a lot of the prep work. They were out there today putting up landscape lighting and hanging guide wires for string lights. The stone contractor, which is an avenue business, has completed the stone seat wall façade today. She said Steve Owens was their landscape contractor and will be finishing that depending on the weather, by Thursday. The only other major piece is finishing the mastic removal and cleaning of the front façade and having a portion of the façade painted by Woodruff Commercial Paint Works. She stated they were in the home stretch with about a week and a half left to the opening.

The Wayfinding Signage program which is in partnership with the Halifax County Convention and Visitors Bureau, has finalized both phases of the signage program. It is a total of thirteen (13) signs, starting out at Exit 173 or 171 and pulling visitors and local residents in. They are working on finalizing the application with NCDOT and will go under review in the coming days. Pending their review, they will finish the purchase and they will be able to purchase both phase 1 and 2 and get all signs installed this summer. As a reminder, this is all being funding with Roanoke Rapids occupancy tax in both this fiscal year and next fiscal year. They will be able to purchase everything at once since they are at the end of this fiscal year.

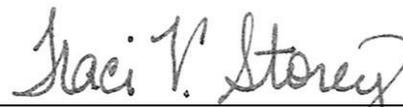
With the Avenue Streetscape Plan, Council graciously approved a \$50,000 match at

the last Council meeting and NCDOT is approving their \$50,000 for a combined \$100,000 that can be put toward safety improvements. The top five (5) improvements include a mid-block crossing in the 1000 block of Roanoke Avenue, either high visibility or enhanced crosswalks for pedestrian and ADA compliance at the intersections of Roanoke Avenue and 11th, 10th, 9th and 8th Streets. All of that is being developed now. They continue to work with NCDOT to try to determine and finalize a timeline for this project. They are also renegotiating the contract with Rivers & Associates. This contract, which is funded by Halifax Business Horizons, and managed by the Main Street non-profit in order to get final cost estimates on all the streetscape design element improvements and determine the most cost efficient and effective ways to implement some of these top on-street priorities. She hopes within the next few weeks to have that finalized and get the consultants working on that final piece and putting that together with NCDOT efforts to have a solidified streetscape plan in conjunction with their resurfacing of Hwy. 48.

Other Business

City Manager Scherer stated he wanted to highlight a few other things. Earlier they mentioned about how to save the City money and Parks & Recreation Director Simeon talked about the sewer line that they needed to relocate by Chockoyotte Park. That project is being done by his department as well as the Public Works Department themselves and will cost approximately \$1,000. If a contractor had to do 150 feet of sewer line it would cost a lot more. He said the Fire Department is building a training center off of Hinson Street and Chief Coggins was able to obtain those containers at a very, reduced cost. The Fire Department and Public Works Department were putting that site together. It has been designed to National Fire Service Standards and will provide them the opportunity to do various scenarios for training that will benefit the department and others in the area. He reported there was a house that burned on Harris Street and it was demolished and hauled away today. Finally, the City has three (3) employees whose parents are in a bad way. He said hospice has been called in or either they were seriously ill. He asked that everyone keep them in their prayers.

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Scarbrough and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: June 12, 2018