



Minutes of the Roanoke Rapids City Council

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Roanoke Rapids was held on **Tuesday, June 12, 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
Larry Chalker, Public Works Director
Stacy Coggins, Fire Chief
Christina Caudle, Main Street Director
John Simeon, Parks & Recreation Director

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 Councilwoman Scarbrough, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to adopt the business agenda for June 12, 2018 as presented.

Special Recognitions

2018 BARC Scholarship Award

Human Resources Manager Kearney explained that BARC stands for Benevolent Awards and Recognition Committee and this committee is comprised of representatives from each department within the City. They meet once a month where they talk about employees having hardships due to family illnesses or illnesses themselves. If an employee has a loss in their immediate family, a BARC member will take food to their home. None of this uses taxpayer dollars, it is all employee donations or donations from the community and they also hold a fish fry fundraiser every year. When they hold the fish fry fundraiser, one of the main purposes for the fundraiser is to raise monies for the scholarship. Over the past couple of years, they have gone from giving one scholarship up to one year giving three because they had the funds since they had a successful fundraiser. She introduced fellow members who were in attendance, Donald Tart (Planning Department) and Helen Reed (Fire Department).

She said this year they had five applicants and called each to come forward with their parent(s).

Allison Renee Clements (daughter of Sheri and Michael Clements - Michael Clements is the Deputy Chief in the Roanoke Rapids Fire Department) is a 2018 graduate of Roanoke Rapids High School. Allison is a member of DECA, the Varsity Swim Team, Distinguished Young Women Program, Junior Volunteer at Halifax Regional Medical Center, Varsity Tennis and the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council.

Allison plans on attending the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, North Carolina. Her career goal is to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and pursue a career as a Labor and Delivery Nurse. A quote from Allison: *“Being a nurse is indeed challenging and also requires a lot of dedication. Nurses have the ability to change a person’s life on a daily basis.”*

Isaiah Orlando Perry (son of Leyonda and Jeffrey Perry – Jeffrey Perry is a Sanitation Equipment Operator II in the Roanoke Rapids Public Works Department) is a 2018 graduate of KIPP Gaston College Preparatory. Isaiah played football and now Isaiah has advanced to be the Section Leader of the KIPP Pride High School Drum Line of the KPHS Performance Band, He has become the Co-director of the band as a whole. His expertise allows him to play multiple instruments including the piano, drums, and bass guitar. Isaiah’s passion for

music goes beyond the walls of KIPP Pride High School, working as the main keyboardist for a group of young men singing quartet style gospel music.

Isaiah plans on attending Elizabeth City State University where he will be majoring in music with a concentration in performance. His career goal is to become a Music Teacher and Touring Artist. A quote from Isaiah: *“I would like to use my musical talents and abilities to make something of myself, strengthen the Roanoke Valley and close the Achievement Gap.”*

Aaron Tyler Jackson (son of Brenda and Edward (Andy) Jackson – Andy Jackson was the Deputy Police Chief in the Roanoke Rapids Police Department – he retired on June 1, 2018) is a 2018 graduate of Roanoke Rapids High School. Aaron has been a member of DECA for 4 years. He has played baseball for RRHS during his 4 years there. Aaron’s hobbies include weight lifting and skim boarding at the beach. He participated in two U. S. National Skim Board Competitions over the past several years that were held at the outer banks.

Aaron plans on attending Cape Fear Community College in Wilmington, NC and then transfer to UNC Wilmington where he plans to seek a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring as a Sports Trainer. A quote from Aaron: *“I have played all four years with the Roanoke Rapids High School baseball team and this year will bring a close to my baseball career and hopefully open the door to a career as a sports trainer.”*

Camden Brant Parks (son of Sandy Odom and Perry W Parks, Jr – Perry Parks, Jr. is a Lieutenant in the Roanoke Rapids Police Department) is a 2018 graduate of Roanoke Rapids High School. Camden has been focused on making good grades in order to make his college dream a success. With math and science being the areas that he excelled his decision to study engineering was easy. Camden was on the Roanoke Rapids Soccer Team and has been Captain the past two years. He has been a member of DECA and a member of the National Honor Society and is a Roanoke Rapids High School Scholar.

Camden plans on attending East Carolina University in Greenville, NC where he plans to seek a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering. His career goal is to become an Industrial Engineer. A quote from Camden: *Keeping my feet planted firmly on the ground and utilizing everything gained while in high school will give me the courage to begin a new chapter. The educational experience that I will gather while at ECU will help mold me into a better member of society as well as career individual.”*

James Eldridge Jones (son of Russell and Lori Clements Jones – Lori Jones is the Payroll/Tax Collector in the Finance Department at the City of Roanoke Rapids) is

a 2018 graduate of Roanoke Rapids High School. James' areas of academic interests are Science, Math Literature and Music. He is a member of Science National Honor Society, Science Olympiad team, Jazz band and Marching Band. He is a member of the National Honor Society, UNC-G Honors Jazz Band, UNC-W Honor Band and UNC-G Honors Band. James is also a Roanoke Rapids High School Scholar

James plans on attending the University of North Carolina in Greensboro, NC where he plans to study Music Composition and his career goal is be a Musical Composer. A quote from James: *“My future path is to head to University of North Carolina at Greensboro, a school well known for its music program on an international level. It would not only be an honor to be sponsored by the city I live in, but it would be a great help with my first year of college expenses.”*

Human Resources Manager Kearney said since they had five students and a very successful fundraiser this year, BARC decided to award all five applicants a \$500 scholarship. She noted this was the most applicants they had ever had. She encouraged everyone to support BARC when they hold their annual fish fry fundraiser.

Sons of the American Revolution Awards

Ken Wilson with the Halifax Resolves Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution along with fellow SAR member and Councilman, Ernest Bobbitt recognized and presented the following awards to Roanoke Rapids firefighters and police officers who were recommended by Chief Hasty and Chief Coggins.

Life Saving Award

Councilman Bobbitt presented the SAR Lifesaving Award to **Lieutenant Brian Hollowell, Engineer Ramah Long, Firefighter Ben Sloan and Firefighter Austin Jarrett** for their actions on April 3, 2018. He reported around 10:30 p.m., first responders were dispatched to 132 Elm Street regarding a woman who had passed out and was not breathing. Upon arrival these individuals began CPR on the patient, who was in cardiac arrest. EMS arrived and after several minutes of resuscitative efforts by all personnel, the patient regained a pulse and respiration. The patient was then transported to HRMC for further medical attention. Without the efforts of these individuals, this patient may not have survived.

Fire Safety Commendation Medal

Mr. Wilson recognized **Deputy Chief Michael Clements** who has 30 years of service with Roanoke Rapids Fire Department. He said during his time with the

Department he has attained Level III Fire Officer and Live Burn Instructor. He currently oversees the department's training and fire prevention division and is instrumental in training Roanoke Rapids firefighters as well as firefighters throughout the county.

He said Chief Clements is leading a project for the first-ever training facility in the city of Roanoke Rapids. He will be retiring at the end of June with the hopes of having the training center completed. Deputy Chief Clements is a dedicated employee who has helped take the Roanoke Rapids Fire Department to a higher level of training and competency. In recognition of his service to the citizens of Roanoke Rapids and Halifax County, the SAR awarded him the Fire Safety Commendation Medal. This is a once in a lifetime award. The citation reads - *In recognition of accomplishments and/or outstanding contribution to protect human life and property by preventing injuries or casualties due to fires.*

Medal of Heroism

Councilman Bobbitt stated it was with great pleasure this evening that he recognize two local officers for their actions that took place during an incident in December 2017. Officer Joe DeSare conducted a traffic stop of a vehicle for a violation in the 1000 block of Franklin Street and during the stop he noticed an odor of marijuana coming from inside the vehicle. Officer Matt Hunsucker arrived to back up DeSare on the stop and at this time the passenger jumped out from the vehicle attempting to run away, but was caught by DeSare. Almost simultaneously a second subject attempted to run away, but was apprehended by Hunsucker. During Officer DeSare's foot pursuit of the first suspect, Officer Hunsucker called in the pursuit and stayed with the vehicle. Once Officer DeSare caught the suspect, the suspect continued to fight. During the struggle Officer DeSare dropped his flashlight and the suspect tried to pick it up to use it on him. The suspect continued to reach into his pants until he was finally subdued by Officer DeSare and taken into custody. During the search of the suspect, a handgun was found inside the suspect's pants along with narcotics. It was learned the suspect was out on bond on a murder charge.

The acts of both Officer DeSare and Officer Hunsucker resulted in both suspects being taken into custody without any injuries to the suspects or officers. Officer Hunsucker's selfless devotion to his partner and his decision making was instrumental in keeping his partner safe and directing officers to him. Officer DeSare's restraint and tenacity for justice led to the arrest of the suspect while putting himself in harm's way in a situation that could have led him to use deadly force. Officers DeSare and Hunsucker's acts of heroism reflect great credit upon themselves, the department and the City of Roanoke Rapids.

The SAR wishes to recognize **Officer DeSare** and **Officer Hunsucker** with the Medal of Heroism, which is a once in a life-time award. The citation reads, *In recognition of outstanding bravery and self-sacrifice in the face of imminent danger, thus exemplifying the high ideals and principles which motivated and sustained our patriot ancestors.*

Law Enforcement Commendation Medal

Mr. Wilson stated the SAR wished to recognize Captain Bobby L. Martin. He said Captain Martin is an exceptional leader within the Roanoke Rapids Police Department supervising the Criminal Investigative Division which is comprised of criminal investigators, narcotics investigators and an animal control officer. In addition, he assists with the daily operation of the police department with making policy, budget and personnel matters that come up throughout the department. Captain Martin serves on various committees and boards to help serve not only the citizens of Roanoke Rapids but the citizens of Halifax County. He takes the lead in reaching out to the youth in our community by inviting them to early morning basketball games on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the TJ Davis Recreation Center. Another example on how Bobby is trying to bridge the disconnect between law enforcement and the youth was when two young men were caught smoking marijuana and instead of arresting them or siting them with criminal charges, he spoke with the parents of the two young men and learned they were good kids and doing well in school. Bobby took them under his wing and has been providing a mentorship to them. They have helped the Police Department on various community events on their own time. Instead of marking their lives in a negative way, he has had a positive impact on them. The division Captain Martin leads has a lot of pressure placed on them to help the victims of crimes, whether it is a bike larceny, missing person, sexual assault or homicide. He works diligently to provide each victim with some type of resolution or closure in each case. He works long hours on and off the clock to provide the best service to the crime victims. He is heavily involved in providing information at community events and programs to the public. Captain Martin is always ready to assist any officer that has a need or advice on how to handle cases. Bobby understands when he hears his name called from the chief's office that something needs to be handled immediately. He and his staff are always ready to drop what is on their plate to take care of things.

Mr. Wilson said in recognition of his service and contribution to the citizens of Roanoke Rapids to keep them safe, the SAR presents **Captain Bobby L. Martin** with the Law Enforcement Commendation Medal. This is a once in a lifetime award

and is awarded in recognition of outstanding achievement and dedication to the maintenance of law and order.

Planning Department Summer Intern

Planning & Development Director Lasky introduced the Planning Department's summer intern, Natalie Scarbrough. She is from the University of Memphis where she is a senior in the Urban Studies and Planning Department. She will be graduating in December. Planning & Development Director Lasky said they would be seeing her around the office and would be attending meetings; they are excited to have her onboard. Miss Scarbrough thanked them for letting her be here this summer and she was exciting to work in the Planning Department.

| |
|-------------------------------------|
| Public Comment (Unscheduled) |
|-------------------------------------|

Mayor Emery Doughtie

Mayor Doughtie called his daughter Lauren forward. He said Lauren received her City calendar and noticed her birthday was not it for June 13th. He said Lauren has always felt birthdays should be celebrated just below Christmas. They had always celebrated her birthday and had a party, she always enjoys it. He stated when you have a child as special as Lauren, you really appreciate the bond. With so many people the bond they have with their children is so short lived. When they go from diapers to middle school to being married, it's gone so fast. He and Lauren have had a long time to develop their relationship. He read the following to her:

Dear Lauren,

I just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate all that you do for me in helping me as the Mayor. So many times I have called on you to remind me of events that I am supposed to attend. Countless times when we have been out and about in town, we would come across people and have a conversation with them and I had no idea after we left what their name was. If Lauren had ever seen them one time, then she would usually be able to call their name, she would tell you who their children were, where they go to school and where they go to church. You have been a very dedicated servant to me all these years as the Mayor.

He proclaimed that tomorrow, June 13th will be "Lauren Doughtie Day" in the City of Roanoke Rapids.

He invited everyone to join in helping him sing Lauren Happy Birthday.

Approval of Council Minutes

Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to approve the May 15, 2018 Regular Meeting, May 21, 2018 and May 31, 2018 Special Meeting minutes as written.

Public Hearing

Proposed FY 2018-2019 Budget Hearing

City Manager Scherer read the following Budget Message:

Dear Mayor and City Council:

I am pleased to submit the proposed Roanoke Rapids City Budget for FY 2018-19. It has been prepared in accordance with the NC Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act. The Budget is balanced and identifies all the revenue and expenditure estimates for FY 18/19. The General Fund budget includes revenues and expenditures each totaling \$18,052,137. The property tax rate is recommended to remain the same at \$.651/\$100 of valuation.

The Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act mandates that every local government shall operate under a balanced annual budget and mandates every local government shall have on hand an undesignated fund balance equal to no less than 8% of the current year's expenditures. The proposed budget you have been presented with meets both requirements. This budget reflects our commitment to provide quality services and amenities to our citizens and includes all operating, special revenue and capital project funds for the City. The total amount appropriated for expenditure in these multiple funds that, when combined, make up the proposed budget for the next fiscal year is \$18,052,137, as noted above. This amount is slightly above the amount presented to you at the May 30th budget presentation. This is due to the slight increase in a couple of our revenue sources estimation by our Finance Director.

While this proposed budget does not fund all our department's needs, it does address City Council's priorities and goals without requiring an increase in the City's property tax rate. As always, we will continue to seek new ways to minimize our expenses and improve efficiencies through technology, public/private partnerships and new or revised work processes.

Once adopted by City Council, the budget establishes the direction for all City government programs and services for the coming fiscal year. It represents the synthesis of City Council direction and employee recommendations on how best to accomplish our goals and respond to community needs in accordance with available resources, established policies and sound financial and business

practices. With that in mind, the review and adoption of the budget is one of City Council's most important roles.

Goals

The goals for the FY 18-19 Budget are as follows:

- a. Improve the Public Works Department's ability to accomplish better street maintenance and reliable sustainable street and alley repairs.
- b. Improve the ability of the Police Department to provide better public safety service by aggressively investigating misconduct involving drug related crime and gang violence.
- c. Provide our valued employees with a relevant monetary honor that is financially practical for the City.
- d. Provide for quality recreational, leisure and cultural opportunities as outlined in the 158 Master Plan.
- e. Continue to provide quality services and amenities to our citizens to make Roanoke Rapids a livable community.
- f. Finalize the sale of the Roanoke Rapids Theatre into private hands and complete the bond termination process.

General Fund Revenue

Ad-Valorem taxes comprises approximately 36.9% of General Fund revenue. The estimated property tax revenue is based on a projection of \$6,655,115 and a levy of \$.651/\$100 of valuation with a 98% collection rate. Sales taxes are the second largest source of City revenue, at approximately 18.7% and are estimated to increase approximately 1% over the current year; however, local sales tax revenues are not projected as high as the overall state rate is estimated to be. We are estimating Sales Tax income to be approximately \$3,387,062. The Utility Franchise Tax is the City's third major source of revenue, at 8.1%, which we are estimating at being approximately \$1,475,132. Powell Bill funds are the City's fourth major source of revenue, at 2.4% and we estimate it will provide \$448,399. Solid Waste fees are the City's fifth largest source of revenue. Due to increased operational expenses such as tipping and landfill fees, we request the fee be increased by \$10.79 to \$215.29 per year per household. The previous rate of 204.50 has been in place for the last 4 years. We are also requesting the City's share of license plate fees be increased by \$5 to \$11 total. This additional revenue of approximately \$67,650 will be dedicated for street infrastructure maintenance. Most other taxes and unrestricted intergovernmental revenues are projected to be stable. No fund balance appropriation is proposed for FY 18/19.

Several anticipated grant awards or loans impact the general fund revenue. If approved, both a \$150,000 grant from the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation and a \$200,000 grant from the state Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF), plus a \$50,000 appropriation from the City will provide 100% funding for major improvements at the Chaloner Recreation Center, including the construction of a new splash pad. The City will compete in the coming fiscal year for an additional \$50,000 in grants from NCDOT for improvements to our Roanoke Avenue area including key intersection safety

improvements in the 800 thru 1100 blocks. The Fire Department is looking at receiving up to \$198,000 in a grant to upgrade their radio communications capabilities.

General Fund Expenditures

We are proposing to add two (2) investigator positions to the Police Department to concentrate on drug activity and gang violence. No other new positions are proposed. Employee wages will remain flat this budget year. There is not a planned COLA or merit salary increase for the employees included in this budget year. What is planned is to provide a one-time bonus of \$1500 to full time employees and \$750 to eligible permanent part-time employees. The health insurance costs for next year's plan increased only 1.8% over this year's costs. The City offers health plans to the employees, including primary health coverage, at a 60/40 coverage plan and a \$2,500 deductible amount of which the employee is required to pay the first \$500. This approach has worked well for the City in keeping health costs down although the family dependent coverage, paid by the employees, has increased. Dental, vision, eye, and life insurance expenses are slated to remain the same. The City's contribution to the State and Local Government Employees Retirement System has increased from 7.56% of salary to 7.82% this year. A 3% contribution to the State 401(k) program has been maintained. Other employee benefits proposed for funding is the continuance of longevity pay, Christmas bonus and contributions for a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA).

All Departmental operating budgets are proposed for funding levels similar to the current year.

Capital Outlay/Equipment

The following equipment/capital items are proposed to be purchased with a 5-year short-term loan proceeds. Police Department: financing of 5 police patrol vehicles, a radar speed monitoring trailer and taser equipment; Public Works: (2) dump trucks, (1) asphalt patching machine, (1) street sweeper, (1) knuckle boom trailer, (1) pick-up truck, (1) leaf machine ; Parks and Recreation; (1) pick-up truck.

Debt Service

At July 1, 2018, the City's total debt is anticipated to be \$1,223,109 compared to \$1,769,292 at July 1, 2017. Annual debt service payments for the General Fund in the proposed budget are \$258,285. Debt service expenditures for the Roanoke Rapids Theatre are anticipated to be an additional approximately \$1,080,000 to be paid in quarterly installments

Fund Balance

The total fund balance in the General Fund is expected to be \$6,829,308 as of June 30, 2018, compared to \$5,106,884 as of June 30, 2017. Approximately \$3,097,777 or 45% of the fund balance is reserved, leaving a fund balance available for appropriation of \$3,731,531 or 21% of budgeted expenditures. The General Fund budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018 was balanced without using any fund balance appropriation.

I would like to commend my staff for their teamwork, vision and sense of accountability to our citizens they have displayed as we developed this budget. I offer a special commendation to our Finance Director, Leigh Etheridge and her staff who worked diligently to provide the financial information needed to prepare this proposed budget.

Sincerely,

Joseph Scherer, City Manager
City of Roanoke Rapids, NC

Mayor Doughtie opened the public hearing for public comment and/or questions. With no one present wishing to speak, Mayor Doughtie closed the public hearing.

City Manager Scherer stated no other action was needed, the final budget ordinance is scheduled for the next Council meeting for their approval.

Mayor Doughtie asked if until the budget was actually voted on, was it possible for changes to occur. City Manager Scherer replied yes, that was correct.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked what the \$1,500 bonus per employee equated to in comparison to the 3% raise they were talking about before. City Manager Scherer replied according to their calculations, the 3% COLA would cost the City \$282,596 while the \$1,500 bonus would cost \$262,000.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked when they were proposing to pay out the bonus. City Manager Scherer reported he had asked the department heads to talk with their personnel, but in general he believes they were going to pay it out next month in July.

Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee asked if the City had the funds to take care of that next month. City Manager Scherer replied yes, the City did have the funds to accomplish that next month.

| |
|-------------------------------------|
| <p>City Manager's Report</p> |
|-------------------------------------|

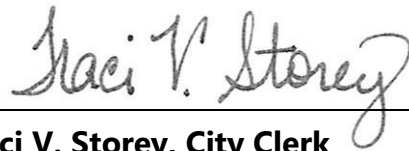
City Manager Scherer announced the City would be hosting a Regional Babe Ruth Baseball Tournament the weekend of June 28 – July 1. It would be the U10 and U11 brackets. They expect it to be a positive impact on the community for the

hotels, shopping and eating. The Parks & Recreation Department is coordinating this with the help from all the other City departments.

He said the Police Department is also coordinating a preliminary inspection of the Carolina Inn. If they recalled, the Carolina Inn was given a 90 day period to bring the facility up to code and convert it to an actual motel rather than a boarding house. Chief Hasty is conducting the preliminary inspection with other departments to check the status of where they are with bringing it up to code. He said the 90 day period expires July 16, 2018.

| |
|-----------------------|
| Other Business |
|-----------------------|

There being no further business, motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Ferebee, seconded by Councilman Bobbitt and unanimously carried to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.



Traci V. Storey, City Clerk

Approved by Council Action on: June 19, 2018