

October 23, 2017

The City Council of the City of Rocky Mount met this day in regular session at 4:00 p.m. in the George W. Dudley City Council Chamber of the Frederick E. Turnage Municipal Building with Mayor David W. Combs presiding.

Councilmembers present: Andre' Knight, Reuben Blackwell, IV, E. Lois Watkins, Tom Rogers and Christine Carroll Miller.

Councilmembers absent: Lamont Wiggins and W. B. Bullock.

Staff Present: Tasha Logan Ford, Assistant City Manager and Acting City Manager; Pamela O. Casey, City Clerk; Tameka Kenan-Norman, Chief Communications and Marketing Officer; Elayne Henderson, Director of Human Resources; Todd Gardner, Transit System Manager; Archie Jones, Director of Human Relations; Ronnie Raper, Assistant Fire Chief; Brenton Bent, Assistant Director of Public Works and Water Resources; Kim Batts, Deputy City Clerk; Robin Cox, Communications Specialist, Public Affairs; and Richard J. Rose, City Attorney.

Security Officer: Retired Police Sergeant Stoney Battle.

The Mayor opened the meeting and prayer was offered by Councilmember Reuben C. Blackwell, IV.

#### **WELCOME**

Mayor Combs thanked Assistant City Manager, Tasha Logan Ford for acting as City Manager in today's meeting and welcomed citizens. He directed citizens to copies of the agenda near the entrance of the City Council Chamber.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of a regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council held October 9, 2017 were approved as submitted to the City Council prior to the meeting.

#### **UNITED NATIONS DAY**

Mayor David W. Combs read a portion of a Proclamation proclaiming the week of October 24, 2017 as United Nations Day in the City of Rocky Mount and presented the Proclamation to Debora Lightfoot and the following members of the Chi Omega Chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority: Bettie Archibald, Terry Anderson and Helen Hines Hunter. The Mayor joined them for a photograph.

Ms. Lightfoot thanked the Mayor and City Council for helping the Sorority to celebrate 72 years of global developmental leaders in the local area.

#### **PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Mayor Combs requested citizen sign-in sheets be completed and given to the Deputy City Clerk. He stated the Council has been lenient relative to petitions from the public in the past and the City Council wants this to continue to be a time when citizens can raise questions. He said comments should be directed to the Council as a whole and, in most cases, Council will not respond to public comments, but will refer matters to the City Manager's Office. He added that personal attacks

which have the potential to disrupt the meeting will not be tolerated and will result in removal from the meeting.

The Mayor opened the meeting for petitions from the public.

**Nehemiah Smith** of 1620 E. Virginia Street stated he has had an opportunity to review the Fire Department's report relative to diversity in the department and is glad it was prepared. He said he has received calls from black firemen who say they have never been consulted relative to diversity in the department and added the report reveals the matter is worse than he originally believed. He voiced his desire that the City continue to look for a solution and stated he is willing to assist.

**Lige Daughtridge** of 112 Candle Court applauded the Council for providing sign-up sheets for petitions from the public at Council meetings and posting full agendas on the website. He questioned changes relative to the current TIGER grant application (resolution adopted 10/9/2017) particularly with regard to the deletion of Peachtree Street. He requested information be publicized relative to from which funds the money will be taken and plans for use of the funds.

**Johnny Cunningham** of 1105 Branch Street told the City Council gentrification has spread to Arlington Street, Myrtle Street and Southeast Rocky Mount. He expressed concern relative to a recent purchase of a large amount of property in the City and a concern with people be dislocated.

**Lewis Turner** of 158 W. Washington Street told the Council he encountered a worker measuring for cable in his building last week. He stated his belief that existing cable should be properly maintained before new cable is added.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

##### **A. FY 2017-2018 ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS: (recommended for adoption)**

- Budget Ordinance Amendments:
  - 1) **Ordinance No. O-2017-89** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018 FOR OUTFALL REHABILITATION** (appropriates funding to the Sewer Fund for proposed rehabilitation of a 54-inch outfall line - \$1,800,000; bid for the rehabilitation project is on today's agenda for Council consideration); and
  - 2) **Ordinance No. O-2017-90** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2017-2018 FOR PFIZER GAS DISTRIBUTION EXTENSION** (appropriates funds in the Gas Fund for extension of gas services for Pfizer -\$159,670).
- Project Ordinance Amendment:
  - 1) Appropriates the following FY 2017-2018 Community Development Block Grants - *grants require matching \$50,000 appropriations included in 2017 Annual Budget*):
    - a. **Ordinance No. O-2017-91** entitled **PROJECT ORDINANCE/2017-2018 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ENTITLEMENT PROJECT** (\$523,065); and
    - b. **Ordinance No. O-2017-92** entitled **PROJECT ORDINANCE/2017-2018 HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROJECT** (\$459,285)

**B. AD VALOREM TAX RELEASES (recommended for approval):**

**SCHEDULE A - acknowledge receipt of report of the following taxes under \$100 approved for release and/or refund by the City Manager:**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>BILL NO.</u>	<u>NAME/ADDRESS</u>	<u>TAX</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
<u>NASH COUNTY</u>				
2017	23337	ANTONY ALVIN K & JENNIFER YAP 738 CHIMNEY HILL WAY ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	10.82 1.08	CITY PEN NEW OWNER NO PERSONAL PROPERTY
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>11.90</b>	
2017	13960	BUTLER CLAUDE E & DORIS JEAN 2900 WESTMINSTER DR ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27803	10.00	DOG NO DOG
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>10.00</b>	
2017	19962	CROWN CASTLE SOUTH LLC 1166 KATHERINE TRL ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	28.84	CITY INCORRECT VALUE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>28.84</b>	
2017	1465	FITZGERALD EARL S JR ELSIE 1108 PAUL ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27803	10.00	DOG NEW OWNER NO DOG
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>10.00</b>	
2017	16640	GAPSRAFOVA FAMILY TRUST 707 FALLS ROAD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	30.00	DOG NEW OWNER NO DOGS
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>30.00</b>	
2017	11012	GINN JOHN P & SHERRI D 4128 CARYBROOK RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27803	20.00	DOG NEW OWNER NO DOGS
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>20.00</b>	
2017	16863	GLOBAL SIGNAL ACQUISITIONS IV LLC 121 RIVERSIDE DR – CELL TOWER ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	52.67	CITY INCORRECT VALUE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>52.67</b>	
2017	10480	MATTHEWS TROY E & KIMBERLY L 3701 WOODLAWN RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	20.00	DOG NEW OWNER NO DOGS
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>20.00</b>	
2017	17236	PETWAY JOEY T 1024 GAY STREET ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	10.00	DOG NEW OWNER NO DOG
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>10.00</b>	
2017	23393	PURNELL JENNIFER CHAVIS 3056 WOODS WALK WAY ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	10.00	DOG NO DOG
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>10.00</b>	

2017	23402	RACKLEY RANDALL N & SUSAN A 520 WOODS WALK LN ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	10.00	DOG	NEW OWNER NO DOG
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>10.00</b>		
2017	11100	WRIGHT PAMELA D 112 N APPLEWOOD CT ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27803	20.00	DOG	NEW OWNER NO DOGS
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>20.00</b>		

**SCHEDULE B - approve release and/or refund of the following taxes over \$100:**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>BILL NO.</u>	<u>NAME/ADDRESS</u>	<u>TAX</u>		<u>COMMENT</u>
<u>NASH COUNTY</u>					
2017	15270	COURSER MARTHA E 130 RAPER DR ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	152.39	CITY	BILLED IN ERROR
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>152.39</b>		
2017	20215	DAUGHTRIDGE ENTERPRISES INC T/A FUEL DOC 8 961 N WESLEYAN BLVD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	110.73	CITY	BILLED IN ERROR
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>110.73</b>		
2017	1269	ENGS COMMERCIAL FINANCE 2441 WARRENVILLE RD SUITE 310 LISLE, IL 60532	275.42 27.54	CITY PEN	BILLED IN ERROR
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>302.96</b>		
2017	1313	FINANCIAL PACIFIC LEASING LLC ATTN GARY BERGSTROM PO BOX 4568 FEDERAL WAY, WA 98063	202.40	CITY	BILLED IN ERROR
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>202.40</b>		
2017	4806	GARDNER MARCIA P & ALBERT L JR 2429 S CHURCH ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27803	478.30	CITY	BUILDINGS DOUBLE LISTED
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>478.30</b>		
2017	4807	GARDNER MARCIA P & ALBERT L JR 2423 S CHURCH ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27803	191.47	CITY	BUILDING DOUBLE LISTED
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>191.47</b>		
2017	1402	GREATAMERICA FINANCIAL SERVICES CORP PO BOX 609 CEDAR RAPIDS, IA 52406	125.76	CITY	INCORRECT VALUE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>125.76</b>		
<u>EDGECOMBE COUNTY</u>					
2017	22864	HARRIS, SADIE M LOT 6, BLK A, BRANTWOOD S/D ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	346.00	CITY	REINSTATE SENIOR EXEMPTION
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>346.00</b>		

2013	18121	PORTER, SARAH W 514 E HOLLY ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	206.45 73.81	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>280.26</b>		
2012	18125	PORTER, SARAH W 514 E HOLLY ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	206.45 92.39	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>298.84</b>		
2011	18187	PORTER, SARAH W 514 E HOLLY ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	195.77 105.23	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>301.00</b>		
2010	18136	PORTER, SARAH W 514 E HOLLY ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	195.77 122.85	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>318.62</b>		
2009	17043	PORTER, SARAH W 514 E HOLLY ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	195.77 111.24	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>307.01</b>		
2017	276	SPEEDWAY LLC 539 S MAIN ST FINDLAY, OH 45840	436.23	CITY	INCORRECT VALUE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>436.23</b>		
2013	18545	WILLIAMS, EMMA JEAN 520 PARK AVE ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	508.57 181.81	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>690.38</b>		
2012	18545	WILLIAMS, EMMA JEAN 520 PARK AVE ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	508.57 227.59	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>736.16</b>		
2011	18588	WILLIAMS, EMMA JEAN 520 PARK AVE ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	482.27 259.22	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>741.49</b>		
2010	18551	WILLIAMS, EMMA JEAN 520 PARK AVE ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	482.27 302.62	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>784.89</b>		
2009	24011	WILLIAMS, EMMA JEAN 520 PARK AVE ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	482.27 346.03	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>828.30</b>		
2008	23967	WILLIAMS, EMMA JEAN 520 PARK AVE ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	300.88 88.01	CITY INT	TAX FORECLOSURE
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>388.89</b>		

**C. TEMPORARY STREET CLOSING (recommended for approval):**

- Request by Pastor Garland Jones, on behalf of Mount Zion Christian Church, for permission to close the 100 block of Howard Street from 12:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. on Friday, October 27, 2017 for a Harvest Night Youth Event

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Watkins and unanimously carried that the recommendations relative to the Consent Agenda items be approved inclusive of adoption of the ordinances and approval of the tax releases and street closing contained therein.

**FY 2019 COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM - TRANSIT GRANT APPLICATION/PUBLIC HEARING**

The Mayor opened a public hearing relative to a Tar River Transit Grant Application for an FY 2019 Community Transportation Program Grant for funding of \$1,266,279 through the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Program, for a portion of the Tar River Transit administrative, operating and capital expenses. It was explained this grant will require a local match of \$263,080.

No one from the public appeared and the Mayor declared the public hearing closed.

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried that the Transit Grant application be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the required documentation and certifications, including the subsequent grant agreement on behalf of the City; and that **Resolution No. R-2017-54** entitled **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM RESOLUTION** be adopted.

**FY 2019 5310 ELDERLY AND DISABLED - TRANSIT GRANT APPLICATION/PUBLIC HEARING**

The Mayor opened a public hearing relative to a Tar River Transit Grant Application for a Section 5310 Elderly and Disabled Transportation Grant for FY 2019 through the North Carolina Department of Transportation which would provide \$160,000 for funding for the position of mobility manager and transportation after normal business hours for the elderly, disabled and general public. It was explained this grant will require a local match of \$66,000.

**Lewis Turner** of 158 W. Washington Street requested that information relative to this service be publicized more widely and suggested posting on transit buses.

Todd Gardner, Transit System Manager, provided further information relative to use of the transit system and Council supported expanded marketing for the transit system. The Mayor requested Human Relations Director, Archie Jones, to have discussions relative to use of the transit system with neighborhood groups.

**Mattie Hinton**, president of the Woodhawk Community Watch Program, invited Mr. Gardner to attend a community watch meeting and added there is a need for the bus to pick up senior citizens.

No one else from the public appeared and the Mayor declared the public hearing closed.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried that the Transit Grant application be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the required documentation and certifications, including the subsequent grant agreement and other required documentation on behalf of the City.

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES**

The City Council received the minutes from a Committee of the Whole meeting held October 9, 2017. The minutes are as follows:

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HELD MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2017 AT 5:00 P.M. IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

W. B. Bullock, Mayor Pro Tem  
 André D. Knight  
 Reuben C. Blackwell, IV  
 Lamont Wiggins  
 Lois Watkins  
 Tom Rogers  
 Chris Miller  
 David W. Combs, Mayor

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Rochelle D. Small-Toney  
 Pamela O. Casey  
 Tasha Logan Ford  
 Thomas Moton, Jr.  
 Tameka Kenan-Norman  
 John Jesso  
 Elayne Henderson  
 Mike Varnell  
 Archie Jones  
 Ken Graves  
 JoSeth Bocook  
 Mike Whitley  
 Ronnie Raper  
 Kim Batts  
 Richard J. Rose

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Jackie Turner, Ratio Design  
 Jen Sisak, Ratio Design

**OPENING OF MEETING**

Mayor Pro Tem W. B. Bullock called the meeting to order and welcomed all present. He explained Committee of the Whole Meetings are work sessions and Council does not normally accept questions from the floor.

He called on City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney to introduce the agenda items.

The City Manager told the Council today's meeting will consist of an update from RATIO Design relative to an implementation plan, a report from the Fire Department concerning a diversity recruitment strategic plan and a closed session for a matter concerning attorney/client privilege. She called on Assistant City Manager Tasha Logan Ford to introduce the RATIO consultant team.

**1. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES PLAN AND LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE UPDATE - Jackie Turner and Jennifer Sisak, RATIO Design**

Assistant City Manager Tasha Logan Ford introduced Jennifer Sisak and Jackie Turner from Ratio Design to provide an update regarding the work conducted relative to the Implementation Strategies Plan (ISP) and the Land Development Code (LDC).

Ms. Sisak identified the team members as:

- RATIO:
  - Jackie Turner, Project Director/Senior Planner
  - Matt Rueff, Economic Development Specialist
  - Dave Kroll, Historic Preservation Specialist
  - Lisa Esterrich, Landscape Architect
  - Jen Sisak, Associate Principal/Architect

- VHB - Jody Lewis, Transportation Planner/Engineer
- Joyner Media & Strategies, Inc. - David Joyner, Public Engagement Specialist

Ms. Sisak and Ms. Turner provided a high-level overview of the plan including work relative to:

1. Public Engagement (has been rigorous)
2. Scope of Work overview (was to be very strategic)
3. Project goals and objectives
4. Suggested quick wins
5. Process updating the LDC
6. Organization and procedural recommendations; and
7. Overlay District code enhancements.

The City Council was provided with drafts of the Downtown Overlay District and Development Code Assessment and Implementation Strategies Plan, which focuses on the northeast quadrant. Ms. Sisak told the Council the team looked at concepts that could be more broadly applied and a focus on the northeast quadrant was due to the location of the event center, the Imperial Centre, high development potential and parking availability.

Ms. Turner provided a schedule relative to the LDC update and draft implementation strategy advised that between December 2016 and September 2017 a number of people participated in conversations. She outlined public engagement to include:

- Three presentations to the Central City Revitalization Panel;
- 10+ stakeholder group interviews;
- A Downtown Rocky Mount Facebook Page;
- Two open houses (December and September);
- Direct mail to neighborhoods;
- Three pop-up events; and
- A project website.

The City Council was advised the desire was to facilitate a mixed-use development and ensure new development is compatible. Ms. Turner stated the plan is to reuse historic structures and the city has a great downtown with most buildings intact. She outlined the scope of work overview to include:

- Preparation of a Strategic Plan focused on Implementation:
  - Market & opportunities analysis
  - Quick win strategies
  - Targeted redevelopment projects
- Update of the Land Development Code (LDC) with a Downtown Overlay District (DOD); and
- Increase existing community support

Ms. Turner advised the City Council of the following project goals and objective and suggest quick wins divided into six months and one year:

- Project goals and objectives:
  - Facilitate mixed-use development;
  - Provide a higher-level design standard;
  - Improve appearance and function of entry points to downtown;
  - Ensure new development is compatible with existing;
  - Recruit and retain businesses;
  - Reuse historic structures;
  - Extend the award-winning downtown streetscape
- Suggested quick wins: 6 months - 1 year (total of 20 but 5 identified in PowerPoint presentation)
  - Enhance awareness of incentive packages for downtown developers;



- Devise a communication strategy to disseminate positive and accurate information about downtown;
- Identify historic district and contributing buildings on property advertisements and note credits they may be eligible to receive;
- Charge CCRP with implementation of a downtown window beautification plan: debris/dirt removal, window washing and setting up a display;
- Seek and assist local entrepreneurs to set up "pop-up" businesses for a week or a month that generate foot traffic

She added that select implementation strategies for years 1 through 8 include:

1. Complete implementation of streetscape plan (Main Street is quite detailed and fabulous);
2. Bringing residential growth downtown;
3. One-way to two-way streets (reviewed 2010 gateway and corridor plan and outlined a couple of examples they felt the city could not afford not to do - Washington Street and part of Tarboro Street); and
4. Character districts (restaurant district, event and entertainment district and an art district near Howard Street)

Ms. Turner stated the team chose 8 years because they wanted to be able to ride the wave of the event center and catch as much momentum as possible. She said updating the LDC/Downtown Overlay District would require a text amendment to create standards consistent with and a bit more elevated and concentrated on urban form and keeping the character of the district and could include:

- Assessing the existing LDC (the historic district boundary, downtown core subdistrict and downtown transitional subdistrict were identified)
- Creating a Downtown Overlay District
  - Underlying zoning remains the same
  - Douglas Block standards incorporated
- Respecting the historic character, scale and mass of existing development pattern

The Council was provided with the new downtown overlay districts which provided standards similar to peer cities in the region, facilitate mixed-use development and ensures compatibility with existing neighborhoods through infill standards.

Ms. Turner noted that select development services recommendations and select LDC/DOD enhancements are to:

- Development Services Recommendations:
  - Enhance development submittal: add clear procedures supplemented by flow charts and time lines
  - Ensure ease of access to GIS Database for Land Use, Infrastructure, Parcel Data
  - Use similar nomenclature as peer communities for procedures
  - Consider adding a mid-level planner
  - Provide training in retail-style customer service
  - Require pre-application meetings for projects prior to submittal

*(City is working on some already; consideration given to experience new hires would need)*

- LDC/DOD Enhancements:
  - Form-based character district with attention to scale and mass
  - Development standards tailored to the urban context
  - Mix of uses and prohibited uses

- Updated parking standards
- Required wall/landscape screening for parking, mechanical equipment, waste and recycling receptacles
- Enhanced exterior lighting standards

*(Consideration given to parking screening; on-street parking shows life and slows traffic; parking decks are a good option)*

The City Council was provided with select public house comments. Ms. Turner told the Council that residents are looking forward to implementation of the plan and are motivated. The RATIO Team recommends the next steps:

- NEXT STEPS:
  - October 10: Planning Board Public Hearing (make recommendations)
  - November 13: City Council consideration of adoption of the DOD and approval of the ISP
  - November 30 - Final document delivered

Councilmembers responded as follows:

- Mayor Combs requested a more detailed explanation of the plan.
- Councilmember Knight suggested the name given to the Douglas Block has historical significance and requested it not be changed and Council agreed, by consensus.
- Councilmember Blackwell stated this was a good beginning, but more time is needed to review and digest the information and perhaps meet with the CCRP and Committee that prepared the document. He noted gentrification is a concern and needs to be directly addressed to have a balance between recruiting from outside without losing local investment and working with local and minority businesses and property owners to achieve goals. Mr. Blackwell stated some cities have not addressed how to achieve a balance between new recruitment while maintaining the flair and feel of local investment and added levels identifying how property owners can participate and a programmatic pathway for existing and new property owners needs to be considered when considering higher levels of design standards. He requested clear bulletproof goals and objects as a part of the plan and gentrification concerns needs to be at the forefront.
- Councilmember Wiggins said there is a concern relative to participate at all levels and concern heightened design standards may price out certain groups.
- Councilmember Miller stated consideration needs to be given as to how to balance participation by all without minimizing the quality of development.
- Councilmember Knight requested efforts be made to reach out to existing businesses for input (staff to provide a list of existing businesses).

Ms. Turner and Ms. Sisak responded to Council questions.

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney noted there is a public hearing scheduled for October 10 to receive comments and staff will provide additional information to the City Council in November with a plan to move forward with adoption of the plan in December.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Report only. No official action.**

**2. FIRE DEPARTMENT DIVERSITY RECRUITMENT STRATEGIC PLAN - Mike Varnell, Fire Chief**

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney reported to further enhance the fire department's efforts in recruitment and retention of a more diverse workforce, the department has committed a Diversity Recruitment

Strategic Plan (provided to Council) to identify internal and external factors that impact recruitment efforts, outline recruitment related goals for the department and establish objectives intended to help advance recruitment efforts. She introduced Fire Chief Mike Varnell to outline the plan content and goals established.

Chief Varnell thanked Humans Relations Director Archie Jones, Human Resources Director Elayne Henderson, the City Manager and Assistant City Managers for their assistance in creating the two-part plan. He stated the focus of today's conversation will be recruitment. Chief Varnell outlined the plan as follows:

- MISSION: to serve the City by protecting lives and property through quality and excellence in service
- VISION: to provide continuous improvement at a measured and focused pace driven by high professional standards, collaboration and innovation
- VALUES: Integrity - Honesty - Respect - Teamwork - Dedication
- PURPOSE: to guide the department's recruitment efforts to a more diverse public safety workforce
- CONCERNS: creating a workforce that reflects the community it serves; valuing diversity

Chief Varnell provided fire service demographics for the city, state and country based on a 2015 American Community Survey as follows:

- City total labor force - \$26,398
- Target age group for Public Safety 20-44 years of age - 14,724
  - Men - 6,324
    - o African American - 3,613
    - o Caucasian - 2,343
    - o Hispanic - 368
  - Women - 8,400
    - o African American - 5,225
    - o Caucasian - 3,030
    - o Hispanic - 145
- Total labor force (potential applicants):
  - African American - 8,838
  - Caucasian - 5,373
  - Hispanic - 513

Chief Varnell provided a PowerPoint presentation and explained the 2015 hiring process breakdown and application phase elements. He stated applications are screened applicants provided to the Department by the Department of Humans Resources. He recommended a plan of action to address concerns help applicants prepare for the process to include:

- APPLICATION PHASE:
  - Requirement for base application only;
  - Face-to-face orientation to cover checklist items once applications are complete;
  - Ensuring applicants understand and know how to obtain each item required
- STRENGTH AND AGILITY PHASE:
  - Host quarterly opportunities for interested applicants to be introduced to and participate in relevant job skills required by firefighters
  - Advertise sessions through multiple mediums with partner organizations
  - Include firefighter orientation/opportunities to perform job-related functions during sessions
- PANEL INTERVIEW PHASE:
  - Seek to partner with local community colleges and OIC to offer developmental sessions on interviewing skills

- Seek commitment from partner organizations to provide opportunities on a quarterly basis
- SCREENINGS AND TRAINING PHASE:
  - Department will have no bearing
  - Department will continue to provide mentors to each candidate throughout training academy and remain in contact weekly
  - Mentors will maintain contact with academy directors to ensure candidates are progressing and help provide support in areas of weakness

Chief Varnell explained current internal impacts and factors explaining the goals and objectives of the established recruitment committee, fire training staff and the recruitment officer.

He noted anticipated staffing needs to hire 10 or more firefighters within the next 24 months due to retirements, resignations and terminations.

Chief Varnell outlined concerns relative to competitive compensation and recruitment funding.

The City Council was advised that the Fire Department currently has established relationships with local high schools (certification program at Rocky Mount High School successful; hope to add Nash Central High School) and colleges and community partners. He outlined proposed external impacts and factors and strategic plan goals to:

- PROPOSED EXTERNAL IMPACTS AND FACTORS:
  - Establish key relationships with Historically Black Colleges
  - Identify target institutions and events that include diverse populations
  - Provide opportunities for the public to interact with fire personnel to demonstrate the benefits and complexities of the fire service
  - Seek partnerships with local community colleges for class and skill sharing opportunities
  - Establish an ad hoc public safety (Fire & Police) recruitment advisory taskforce comprised of a diverse group of citizens
- STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:
  - Evaluate recruitment materials and processes
  - Identify target locations for diverse candidate pools
  - Identify new communication mediums that support better access to potential candidates
  - Engage other resources for ideas
  - Identify alternative benefits to encourage recruitment/interest

Chief Varnell told the Council the Fire Department remains committed to an enhanced approach toward recruitment of a diverse group of qualified applicants with a focus on hiring high-quality public safety professionals to provide the level of service citizens and visitors of the community deserve. He responded to questions posed by Councilmembers.

Discussion and concerns included:

- Part-time:
  - Small percentage of part-time employees moving to full-time;
  - Difficulty of working part-time (18 months or less) as head of household (salary);
  - Applicants paid while attending the academy;
  - Comparison with Police Department (no part-time Police)
- Successful completion of academy:
  - Challenges relative to certifications/drop outs and building skills sets needed to pass

Chief Varnell told the Council that the dynamic is changing, albeit slowly. He noted criminal history is an issue (convictions) relative to State certification.

Chief Varnell advised that consideration is being given as to how to include recognition of the first female and first African American female in the Fire Museum.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Report only. No action.**

The City Manager requested a closed session to discuss a matter concerning attorney-client privilege.

**3. CLOSED SESSION**

Motion was made by Councilmember Wiggins, seconded by Councilmember Knight and unanimously carried that the City Council adjourn to Closed Session at 6:32 p.m. The minutes of the Closed Session shall be placed on file as ESM-483 at the end of Minute Book 33 upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

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**4. REGULAR SESSION/ADJOURNMENT**

The Mayor Pro Tem convened the Committee in regular session at 6:57 p.m. and, there being no further business for the Committee of the Whole, the Mayor Pro Tem adjourned the meeting.

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Rogers and unanimously carried that the minutes of and recommendations from the Committee of the Whole be approved.

**DEMOLITION ORDINANCE**

The City Council received an ordinance ordering the Community Code Inspector to proceed with demolition of the following substandard properties:

- a. 506 S. Franklin Street
- b. 117 N. Tillery Street
- c. 505 Pender Street
- d. 801 Pender Street
- e. 1517 Tadlock Avenue
- f. 1233 Barnes Street

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Rogers and unanimously carried that **Ordinance No. O-2017-93** entitled **ORDINANCE ORDERING THE COMMUNITY CODE INSPECTOR TO PROCEED TO DEMOLISH CERTAIN DILAPIDATED STRUCTURES PURSUANT TO THE HOUSING CODE OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT** be adopted.

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING/NASH-ROCKY MOUNT SCHOOLS RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM**

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney provided the City Council with an agreement between the City of Rocky Mount and the Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools. She advised the Council that Nash-Rocky Mount Public Schools has contracted six (6) sworn Rocky Mount police officers to serve as school resource officers in the middle and high schools as well as the alternative school here in the city for several years. She told the Council the memorandum of understanding will include the financial agreement and has already been approved by the School System.

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried that the memorandum of understanding

**(C-2017-44)** with Nash-Rocky Mount Schools be approved and that the Police Chief, Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the City.

**UTILITY CONSTRUCTION AGREEMENT/SPRINGFIELD ROAD WIDENING PROJECT**

The City Council was advised that adjustment and relocation of the city's water and sewer infrastructure is necessary for the widening of certain street and highway improvements relative to the Springfield Road widening project. The Council was further advised that the project consists of SR 1250 (Springfield Road) from US 64 Alt to SR 1243 (Leggett Road). Assistant City Manager Tasha Logan Ford reported the city will be responsible for reimbursing NCDOT for 100% of the construction costs estimated at \$805,860 upon completion of the project which is estimated to be December 2019.

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Knight and unanimously carried that the Utility Construction Agreement **(C-2017-45)** with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (U-4762/WBS Elements: 39930.3.2) be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the same on behalf of the City.

**BIDS/54-INCH INTERCEPTOR REHABILITATION PROJECT**

The City Council received the tabulation of bids received for the 54-inch interceptor rehabilitation project. Bids were received and opened on October 3, 2017 after all necessary legal procedures had been implemented and the bid tabulation is on file in the office of the City Clerk as **BD-2017-34**.

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Rogers and unanimously carried that the bid be awarded to Layne Inliner, LLC at a total cost of \$1,407,747 and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the bid contract on behalf of the City.

**BIDS/CUSTOM PUMPERS (2) FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The City Council received a recommendation to purchase two (2) custom pumpers for the fire department using HGACBuy Cooperative Purchasing, a unit of local government that strives to make the governmental procurement process more efficient by establishing competitively priced contracts for goods and services and providing the customer service necessary to help its members achieve their procurement goals. Bid documentation is on file in the office of the City Clerk as **BD-2017-35**.

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Rogers and unanimously carried that the bid be awarded to Fire Connections, Incorporated based on the HGACBuy Cooperative Purchasing contract at a cost of \$503,258 each for a total of \$1,006,516 and that the Purchasing Division be authorized to issue a purchase order for the equipment in accordance with the Council's award.

**APPOINTMENTS**

No action was taken to fill the vacancy on the Board of Adjustment.

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE/TIME CHANGE**

Motion was made by Councilmember Rogers, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried that the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for Monday, November 13, 2017, begin at 4:00 p.m., one hour prior to the regularly scheduled meeting.

**CLOSED SESSION**


The City Attorney requested a Closed Session to discuss a matter concerning attorney-client privilege.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Rogers and unanimously carried that the City Council adjourn to Closed Session at 4:38 p.m. The minutes of the Closed Session shall be filed as **ESM-484** at the end of **Minute Book 33** upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

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**REGULAR SESSION/ADJOURNMENT**

The Mayor convened the City in regular session at 5:16 p.m. and there being no further business for regular session, adjourned the meeting.

  
Pamela O. Casey  
City Clerk