

November 25, 2019

The City Council of the City of Rocky Mount met this day in a regular session scheduled for 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: André D. Knight, Reuben C. Blackwell, IV, Richard Joyner, E. Lois Watkins, Tom Rogers, W. B. Bullock and Christine Carroll Miller.

Staff Present: Rochelle D. Small-Toney, City Manager; Pamela O. Casey, City Clerk; Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager; Dorothy Brown Smith, Interim Chief Communications and Marketing Officer; Chris Beschler, Director of Energy Resources; Ken Hunter, Budget and Evaluation Manager; Chase Norwood, Management Analyst; Brad Kerr, Public Works Director; Archie Jones, Director of Human Relations; George Robinson, Police Chief; Elayne Henderson, Director of Human Resources; Kevin Harris, Business Development Manager; Amy Blanton, Communications Coordinator, Department of Energy Resources; JoSeth Bocook, Planning Administrator; Michael Roupp, Interim Division Chief of Operations; Darvin Moore, Division Chief; Tracey Drewery, Division Chief; Anthony Ladd, Senior Training Officer; Robin Cox, Communications Specialist; Tim Farmer, Operations Manager, Public Works Department; Cornelia McGee, Community Development Administrator; Darry Strother, Electric Distribution Manager; Kim Batts, Deputy City Clerk; and Richard J. Rose, City Attorney.

Security Officers: Police Sergeants L. S. Parker, Jr. and Stoney Battle.

The Mayor called the meeting to order and called on Councilmember E. Lois Watkins to offer prayer.

#### WELCOME

The Mayor welcomed citizens and directed them to copies of the agenda near the entrance of the City Council Chamber.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

By consensus, the minutes of a regular scheduled meeting of the City Council held November 11, 2019 were approved as submitted to the City Council prior to the meeting.

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

The City Council received the minutes from a regular scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting held Monday, November 11, 2019. The minutes are as follows:

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HELD MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2019 AT 5:00 P.M. IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING:**

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tom Rogers, Mayor Pro Tem  
André D Knight

#### STAFF PRESENT:

Rochelle Small-Toney  
Pamela O. Casey

Richard Joyner  
 E. Lois Watkins  
 W. B. Bullock  
 Christine Carroll Miller  
 Mayor David W. Combs

MEMBER ABSENT:

Reuben C. Blackwell, IV

Chris Beschler  
 Ken Hunter  
 Amy Staton  
 Nicki Gurganus  
 Omar Briceno  
 Dorothy Brown Smith  
 Elayne Henderson  
 Rusty Owens  
 Archie Jones  
 Will Deaton  
 Kim Batts  
 Richard J. Rose

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Pro Tem Tom Rogers called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and welcomed all present. He recognized Mayor Elect C. Saunders (Sandy) Roberson, Jr.

The Mayor Pro Tem outlined the guidelines for Committee of the Whole work sessions and called on City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney to introduce the agenda items.

The City Manager introduced Interim Communications and Marketing Officer Dorothy Brown Smith and noted that the Council will be receiving emails and correspondence from Ms. Smith.

Ms. Small-Toney reported that the Mayor Pro Tem has requested that the presentations end at 6:15 p.m. promptly and that staff has been advised to keep presentations as brief as possible.

The City Manager stated that today's presentations will begin with the audit presentation which occurs annually. She told the Council the City is in good standing and has received the outstanding audit presentation from the Government Finance Officers Association for the 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, which is no easy task.

**1. 2019 AUDITOR PRESENTATION – Kari Dunlap, Martin Starnes and Associates**

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney called on Finance Director Amy Staton to introduce the auditor.

Ms. Staton introduced Kari Dunlap with Martin Starnes and Associates to provide a presentation relative to the audit. Ms. Dunlap told the Council she has been with Martin Starnes and Associates for twelve (12) years, although different members of the firm perform the annual audit. She stated the firm is out of Hickory, North Carolina and specializes in government accounting. She provided information relative to the firm.

Ms. Dunlap thanked the Council for allowing Martin Starnes to prepare the annual audit and accounting staff for their cooperation and assistance during the audit preparation and gave a high-level brief PowerPoint presentation of the annual financial audit highlights.

Ms. Dunlap stated that audit staff is onsite twice a year but communicate with City staff during the year and communicate via email with the Mayor and Council.

She stated 2019 is her third year on the City audit and said she appreciates the efforts of City staff to assist in meeting the deadline of October 30 set by the Local Government Commission (LGC).

Ms. Dunlap stated the firm has examined the City's financial statements and in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States has rendered an unmodified (clean) opinion on all of the City's funds.

Ms. Dunlap outlined the following highlights of the audit:

- General Fund: expenditures up (mostly due to the purchase of three new fire trucks and the Event Center)
- Small decrease (2%) in unassigned fund balance as a percent of expenditures net of Powell Bill (General Fund)
- Ad Valorem taxes - increased from \$25,061,494 (2018) to \$27,112,512 (2019)
- Local Option Sales Tax - increased; up across the state
- Intergovernmental Revenues - increased from \$8,612,102 (2018) to \$8,712,803 (2019)
- Sales and Services - increased from \$8,555,114 (2018) to \$9,792,320 (2019) mostly due to the Event Center

Mayor Pro Tem Rogers questioned if Ms. Dunlap would report any unhealthy trend in any fund to Council were that present and the response was in the affirmative.

Ms. Dunlap outlined revenues, expenditures and available fund balance for each of the enterprise funds and responded to questions from the Councilmembers.

The Mayor Pro Tem thanked Finance Director Amy Staton and her staff for the good work to achieve this great result and award.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION.** *Received report; no formal action*

**2. CENSUS 2020 PRESENTATION – Archie Jones**

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney noted that 2020 is the year of the census and said it is extremely important to have an accurate count because many grants are based upon population. She added it is important to get information relative to the census out to the community. She called on Human Relations Director Archie Jones to present information regarding the City's approach and involvement with the 2020 census.

Mr. Jones reported that the Human Relations Department is assigned to spearhead the City's efforts in preparation for the upcoming 2020 Census count. He told the Council that Human Relations staff have been actively engaged by attending meetings in Edgecombe and Nash Counties. Mr. Jones stated that every ten (10) years everyone in the country is counted in the census and April 1, 2020 is a very important date and by that date every home will have received an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. He noted that the key to the success of the census is community involvement.

The following dates were outlined as important dates for the 2020 Census count:

- January–September 2019: The U.S. Census Bureau opens 248 area census offices across the country;
- August 2019: Census takers begin visiting areas that have experienced a lot of change and growth;
- January 2020: The Census Bureau begins counting the population in remote Alaska;
- April 1, 2020: Census Day is observed nationwide and by this date every home will have received an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census;
- May 2020: The Census Bureau begins visiting homes that have not responded to the 2020 Census to make sure everyone is counted; and
- December 2020: The Census Bureau delivers apportionment counts to the President and Congress as required by law

Mr. Jones explained that Census data is used:

- For distribution of more than \$675B annually in federal funds back to tribal, state and local governments;
- Redistricting of state legislative districts;
- Determining areas eligible for housing assistance and rehabilitation loans; and
- Designing facilities for people with disabilities, the elderly and children

He added that the 2020 Census process should be easier than ever before.

Council was advised that Human Relations staff were involved in:

- The Nash and Edgecombe County kickoff meetings on August 14 and September 9, respectively;
- Nash County Complete County Committee (September 25, 2019);
- NC Black Census Online Summit Webcast (October 9, 2019); and
- The 2020 Census Peak Recruiting kickoff webcast on October 14, 2019

He reported that it is important that the City plays a part in the Census because of the large number of residents in the City.

Mr. Jones presented a PowerPoint including information relative to the Complete County Committee (RMCCC), marketing and outreach and Census jobs. He stressed that Census information is private, and the U.S. Government only wants to ensure that everyone is counted, and it is important to get that information out to the community. He added that information will be posted on the City's website in both English and Spanish.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION.** *Received report; no formal action*

**3. MOTOROLA RADIO MAINTENANCE CONTRACT - Rusty Owens**

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney advised the Council that consideration of a system maintenance and software upgrade contract with Motorola for coverage of the City's 800-megahertz radio system will be on tonight's agenda. She introduced Rusty Owens with the Energy Resources Department to explain the item.

Mr. Owens reported that the City completed a major radio system upgrade in 2017 when the system moved from analog to digital. He explained that Motorola, the vendor who provided the upgrade, included in their pricing a three-year maintenance and software upgrade package which will expire in June 2020. Mr. Owens told the Council that Motorola has provided pricing to extend the maintenance contract which is valid through November 15, 2019 and has offered three options. He explained the options and advised that staff recommends approval of Option 2 at a total cost of \$2,384,821 (cost per year of \$397,470; 6-year contract) as it is the most cost-effective pricing option on an annual basis.

In response to a question from the Mayor, Mr. Owens noted that the contract includes hardware, but does not include radios, antennae or batteries.

Mr. Owens responded to questions from Council.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION.** *Received report; no formal action*

**4. ONE STOP SHOP UPDATE - Will Deaton**

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney told the City Council that conversation was held two (2) years ago about the importance of working to make changes to assist the development community. She added this is when she suggested exploration of a one-stop shop model and, once the

new focus for Development Services was clarified, work began on the model. She stated that the space on the first floor made available by the move of the utility billing to the Business Services Center was identified for the one-stop shop. She introduced Will Deaton, Director of Development Services, to provide an update.

Mr. Deaton explained that the purpose of the one-stop shop concept is to improve customer experience with the development review process, permitting and inspections and in order to achieve this concept the department is evaluating and implementing new technology, process redesign, the physical lay-out of the department and operational enhancements.

He presented a PowerPoint presentation and outlined the mission of the one-stop shop to be to improve the coordination, predictability, timeliness, quality of customer service and development of the review process. He added that delivering these improvements includes the following four main components:

- Technology
- Streamlining review processes
- Physical space; and
- Operational enhancements

Mr. Deaton outlined and explained the one stop functions and website updates. He added that streamlining individual development review processes will include changes to the following:

- The application information;
- Payment;
- Next steps;
- Review sequence;
- Notification; and
- Routing

He explained that the field inspector app mobile software application will utilize technology to simplify the on-site inspection process and documentation.

Council was advised that the one stop shop will house 21 employees from planning, zoning and inspections and was shown photographs of the current space and a diagram of the proposed design/layout. It was explained that the coordination of systems, procedures and staff teams can increase the number of customers that can be assisted and improve service quality.

Mr. Deaton responded to questions from Councilmembers. Mayor Combs reported that he has used the interactive web site and it works great.

The City Manager reported that the team visited Durham as a first step in the planning process. She noted that Council will be kept up to date as the process continues and reported that a lot of the heavy work has been done.

Assistant Manager Chris Beschler advised that it is hoped that the bid process will begin in January of 2020.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION.** *Received report; no formal action*

**5. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – Pam Casey**

The City Council received information relative to Boards, Commissions and Committees, including current vacancies.

Councilmember Joyner nominated Gloria Williams to serve on the Community Appeals Board, pending receipt of her personal history form

and Mayor Combs nominated Kevin Macklin to serve on the Workforce Housing Advisory Commission as a Housing Authority member, contingent upon receipt of his personal history form.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION.** *By consensus, the nominations were recommended for approval, contingent upon receipt of personal history forms.*

6. **CLOSED SESSION/PERSONNEL**

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Miller and unanimously carried that the City Council go into Closed Session at 6:11 p.m. for the purpose stated. The minutes of the Closed Session shall be placed on file as **ESM-541** at the end of Minute Book 36 upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

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**REGULAR SESSION/ADJOURNMENT**

The Mayor Pro Tem convened the Committee in regular session at 6:50 p.m. and the Committee of the Whole was adjourned.

***PowerPoint presentations are on file in the office of the City Clerk.***

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

**COMMUNITY UPDATE BY CITY MANAGER**

Power Outages

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney reported that customers in Wards 3 and 4 recently experienced a few power outages while the substation was being rebuilt, but the transmission pole replacement project has been completed and substation maintenance work will be completed by the end of the year. She added this additional work is expected to have minimal effect on system reliability.

Grant

The City Manager reported that the Parks and Recreation Department has received a matching funds grant of \$2,639 from the North Carolina Arts Council Grassroots Arts Grant Program. She added this grant must be spent on Nash County or local regional multicultural artists and more details will be coming very soon.

Christmas Parade

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney announced that the annual Christmas parade will be held Sunday, December 1, 2019 starting at 3:00 p.m. in Downtown Rocky Mount.

Imperial Centre

The City Manager stated that for the first time the Imperial Centre will be open the Friday after Thanksgiving (November 29) from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Saturday, November 30. She added that First Friday and the lighting of the Imperial Centre Christmas tree will be held on Friday December 6, 2019 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and the event will include carriage rides, music and an appearance by Santa. She noted admission is free.

The Manager announced that Langston Hughes' Black Nativity, a gospel play featuring an all local cast, will run for two weekends in December (December 6-8 and 13-15) at the Imperial Centre theater with Saturday and Sunday matinees and stated tickets are available at the Imperial Centre for purchase.

Ms. Small-Toney added that the Winter Wonderland will be held on Sunday, December 8, 2019 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and will feature music, a sledding hill, carriage rides and a visit from Santa with free admission.

#### **SMART ENERGY PROVIDER AWARD**

The Mayor introduced Roy Jones, Chief Executive Officer of ElectriCities of North Carolina, Inc. for presentation of the Smart Energy Provider Award to the Department of Energy Resources.

Mr. Jones stated that the City is being recognized in three different areas including load management, sustainability and environment efforts which promote a clean, sustainable environment and outstanding customer service.

He reported that there are over 2,200 public power communities that own their own electric system across the country and 72 public power communities in North Carolina. He stated that only two public power communities are receiving this award in 2019 and Rocky Mount is one of the two.

He congratulated the load management team for the fantastic job they do and said he is glad to present the award on behalf of the American Public Power Association.

Mayor Combs thanked the Energy Resources Department for the work they do adding that when there are storms, they keep our lights on and work to restore power expeditiously.

Mayor Combs thanked Mr. Jones for the presentation and joined him, the load management team and the City Manager for a photograph.

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

The Mayor outlined the guidelines for petitions from the public and opened the meeting for public petitions. Mayor Combs recognized the following individuals and a summary of comments is outlined below:

- ***Warren Daughridge:***

- Thanked the Mayor and Councilmembers Watkins and Rogers for their service to the community and added he hopes God will bless their future endeavors;
- Said comments were made by a speaker at a recent meeting calling his group (Love Rocky Mount) and him personally white supremacists and that person was applauded publicly;
- Said that person and some others think people like him who are only trying to do good are against them;
- Said 17 years ago he swore an oath to protect and defend, with his life if necessary, and though honorably discharged considers that oath still in effect;
- Recommended a book he is currently reading entitled "You Are Worth It" about a Marine and American hero who selflessly threw himself on a grenade to save his

- teammates and though mortally wounded survived and was awarded our nation's highest honor the Medal of Honor;
- Said it's time to cut the crap and come together as a community; time we recognize we are all in this together and time to stop blaming others for what none of us can control;
- Added it is time to recognize teamwork starts with us and time to commit to jump on a grenade for each other when it becomes necessary;
- Said it is time to recognize we are worth it and drop the divisive dialogue and work together to make Rocky Mount the jewel of the East;
- Said Rocky Mount has everything it takes to be the example for not only Nash County, Edgecombe County and North Carolina, but the United States and we have the ability to show how teamwork makes the dream work for the ultimate benefit of everyone

Councilmember Blackwell responded to comments made by Mr. Daughtridge by saying:

- He has tried his best to be intelligent, respectful in his communication and dialogue and honest at all times and has an almost 40-year history of work in Rocky Mount;
- Said his work and commitment is to Christ and this City;
- Said his children have grown up in a household where they have seen their Dad disrespected, called names, made fun of on websites and social media sites;
- Said his son's comments were in response to dialogues made on social media sites that are documented;
- Said he, himself, has never responded to any of those comments;
- Said he stands behind the work the Council does and they engage with and work with every sector of the City;
- Said it cannot be denied that there is a racialized element in the City and folks have intentionally attacked leaders of color and policies they have held;
- Said for Mr. Daughtridge to think he can say whatever he wants to say and do whatever he wants to do and not be held accountable is incorrect and if the desire is for the negative talk to stop, then he should stop throwing the grenades;
- Said his father and uncles served in the military and he knows what heroes look like because he comes from a family of heroes;
- Said he has chosen to work in public service and as a Dad of a young man growing up has tried to be socially conscious and true to his convictions and intelligent in his discourse;
- Said he is his son's father and defends and supports him adding that his son's observations are not incorrect or without merit and stated his son is 24 and fiery but is not the elected official;
- Said Mr. Daughtridge should not use this podium as a place to deal with his criticism of his son's words and said he is the elected official and if there is an issue with him, Mr. Daughtridge should speak to that issue and should not attack my family in the public square

A point of order was called from the audience. The Mayor called the meeting to order and the meeting resumed.

- ***Johnny Cunningham:***
  - Thanked the Council for their work and said he is humbled by the way he has been treated by Councilmembers Blackwell, Knight and Joyner and Mr. Dancy in spite of comments he has made;
  - Said he is humbled that they forgave him and said he was wrong in his approach and did not realize how hurtful his comments had been, adding that he was mad and stuck on poverty;

- Said never did any of them retaliate or say anything nasty, negative, mean, derogatory or demeaning to him and that taught him humbleness;
  - Said there is an element of racism in this City;
  - Said we do have a racist problem and it is called white supremacy and it is alive
- **Nehemiah Smith:**
    - Commended the Public Works crew who recently went to his home to repair a water main break for their great work and enthusiasm;
    - Stated the City needs to do some code enforcement on Raleigh Road, especially in the area near the Walnut Shopping Center adding that people feel better about their place and their community when communities look like they are supposed to;
    - Thanked the Mayor and Council for their work and said he will miss the members who will be leaving

Councilmember Joyner requested that the City Manager respond to Mr. Smith's comments to explain steps taken relative to code enforcement.

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney stated that the City has a rather aggressive code enforcement process and that staff will take a special look at the Raleigh Road corridor. She said a consideration prior to code enforcement is for property owners to take responsibility for the upkeep of their properties and be good neighbors. She noted that in North Carolina there are steps and processes that must be followed relative to code enforcement which can be quite extensive. She added that it is expected that Council will receive an update from Community Code relative to some complaints that have been received and citations issued at an upcoming Council meeting.

Councilmember Watkins stated that code enforcement has been an ongoing issue for quite a number of years. She stated that staff has gone out to the area Mr. Smith referred to on Raleigh Road many times and the owner will clean it up for a while and then revert to old habits. She said it is her hope that once the commercial zoning piece is in place the City can be more aggressive about doing something on another level. She thanked Mr. Smith for bringing his concern to the Council.

- **Bronson Williams:**
  - Stated it is his understanding that a “point of order” cannot come from the audience, but only from the Board;
  - Added that there are many successes in our City that need to be celebrated and it seems often we are blinded by negativity and forget to celebrate our successes;
  - Stated the City needs to have another campaign similar to the “ask me why I love Rocky Mount” campaign from a few years ago because that brought a number of community members together to talk about the great things about Rocky Mount and why it is a great place to live;
  - Said too often people fail to remember the positive and only hone in on the negative things;
  - Said WNCR TV plans to broadcast the 64th annual Rocky Mount Christmas parade live and asked that the City help them get the word out about that;

- Said there is a high level of poverty in our community and conversation needs to be held relative to how to address poverty and talk about gentrification;
- Said he hopes the Council will continue its work and the momentum of improving the communities in which people are living each and every day;
- Said another concern is access to healthy foods in communities and conversation about how to rid ourselves of this food desert;
- Said we should want to key in on those positive things in our community and create more success stories for years to come

Councilmember Knight requested that the City Attorney provide context for use of the term "point of order" relative to *Robert's Rules of Order*.

City Attorney Richard J. Rose advised that a "point of order" has to come from the Council and cannot come from the audience. He added that the ability to run the meeting belongs to the Mayor and while point of order from the audience may give the Mayor some support, it doesn't give him any legal power that he does not already possess as moderator.

Mayor Combs said he has given a lot of leeway to petitioners and believes in free speech and that people should be able to speak their mind. He said he has tried to manage this portion of the meeting, but sometimes people get emotional and passionate about what they're saying. He added that for those who may at times feel he should have stopped a speaker, he doesn't know what they're going to say until they have said it. He stated that legally the City only has to allow public petitions once per month, but Council chooses to do so twice a month because they want to hear from the public. Mayor Combs stated that when he became Mayor 12 years ago few people come to the meetings and very few people addressed the Council. He stated the City has had some issues in the last couple of years that it has moved through them and public dialogue is part of the process though it is not always comfortable or easy. He said he believes the Council has done a fairly good job over the years though some may disagree.

- **Dr. Thomas Walker:**

- Thanked Councilmembers Watkins and Rogers and Mayor Combs for their service;
- Said it should be mentioned that the City Manager is an outstanding person and said he praises God for that;
- Reminded the Council that in 2020 he will have served this community as a pastor for 50 years and Ebenezer Baptist Church will be having a tremendous celebration; he invited them to do whatever they deem positive and necessary towards "this poor preacher" who has struggled for those 50 years;
- Said he appreciated the Resolution adopted for the sanitation workers and said a lot of things about the City needs to be documented; and added he is happy the City is recognizing the sanitation workers;
- Said there was a tremendous amount of pain associated with the sanitation workers' strike and stated he knows because he was in the midst of them as their spiritual leader at that time;
- Said he is happy that his grandson will be on the Council and is sure he is going to be his own man and he has been taught the value of life and the value of people; said he hopes this Council and the community will allow his grandson to be himself and carry out that which he feels is right for this City

- **Leroy Williams:**
  - Expressed appreciation for being allowed to speak;
  - Said a great injustice done in America upon people is the wiping out of the native Indian and slavery among his people;
  - Spoke about Jim Crow laws, redlining and noted people should stand on the words of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, “we are coming to Washington to get our check”;
  - Said he has heard that one cannot serve two masters, but prayer without works is dead;
  - Said he respects the Native American Indians standing on land ownership versus \$1.3 billion held by the US Treasury Department and said if they can stand as a unit, why can't we?
- **Soladin Muhammad:**
  - Said 56 years ago he took an oath and went into the military and if that gives him some special kind of recognition and maybe some respect, he welcomes it when he is here to encourage the passage of the resolution for restitution for the 1978 sanitation workers;
  - Said the restitution resolution follows a resolution of apology by the City of Rocky Mount for an unjust action taken by the 1978 City Council against Alexander Evans and the sanitation workers that stood to support Mr. Evans' fight for justice;
  - Said he is hopeful that the apology is strengthened by the restitution resolution, which he feels is very important in the lives of a working people and, in this instance, African American workers;
  - Said “we've” gotten all kinds of apologies over the years...apologies for slavery and apologies for this or that, and believes that apologies are strengthened when restitution accompanies the apology to show that the City is ready to commit some resources to address the injustice that was done;
  - Said he hopes the apology is an indication of a direction of fairness that gives voice to all of the workers in the City of Rocky Mount so that they can have a collective voice and speak their piece without fear of retaliation
- **Lige Daughtridge:**
  - Offered thanks to Mayor Combs and Councilmembers Watkins and Rogers for their service to the City acknowledging the time taken from their schedules to serve the citizens of the City;
  - Said he looks forward to working with and serving on the Council to promote and move the City forward; he invited all members of the Council to reach out to him anytime they wish and said he would love to sit down with each of them about how they can work together;
  - Voiced concern relative to Item 12 on the agenda, Housing Incentive Grant assistance, and said he has no problem with the allocation of \$500,000 for housing, but outlined the following concerns/questions:
    - Whether an application process was taken relative to award of the grant opportunity and advertised to the public?;
    - If not, how are potential housing developers made aware of the opportunity for the grant?;
    - For recipients who have promised affordable housing units in exchange for the grant, will their grant agreement include specifics on the rents and length of time the units will remain affordable?;
    - Will city staff monitor these units during the affordable period to ensure the rents and the incomes of the residents meet the goal of affordable housing?;
    - Are these grants part a larger plan in the 2019-2020 annual action plan?
  - Said these are some of the questions he has now and will have in the future and thinks the City needs to follow up on these moving forward and monitor the grants because it is vital to our community and because Council has to be responsible fiduciaries of the public's money; he asked that his questions be answered as Council considers their vote on Item 12 on today's agenda; he added that if his questions

cannot be answered today he thinks it would be prudent to defer action until the questions can be answered

The Mayor closed the public petitions portion of the meeting.

#### **ASSESSMENTS/HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT/PUBLIC HEARING**

The Mayor opened a public hearing relative to assessments proposed to be levied to recover costs incurred by the City in connection with Housing Code Enforcement on the following property:

- 300/302 Middle Street

It was noted that consideration of this matter was deferred at the November 11, 2019 Council meeting.

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney stated that Chris Beschler, Director of Energy Resources, and his staff along with members of the Police Department have met with the property owner relative to her concerns. She called on Mr. Beschler to provide an update.

Mr. Beschler provided an update and recommended that consideration of the assessment be deferred to allow staff to continue discussions with the property owner.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and unanimously carried that consideration of 300/302 Middle Street be deferred until the December 9, 2019 meeting of the City Council.

#### **AD VALOREM TAX RELEASES**

The City Council received the following schedules of ad valorem taxes recommended for release and/or refund:

#### **SCHEDULE A – 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>EDGECOMBE COUNTY</u>	<u>TAX</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
2019	1000003	DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE, INC 116-118 N WASHINGTON ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	34.69	CITY OWNER CORRECTION <b>34.69</b>
2019	1000004	DOWNTOWN RENAISSANCE, INC 116-118 N WASHINGTON ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	34.69	CITY OWNER CORRECTION <b>34.69</b>
2019	1000097	MAZUREK, SHARON H 2630 MEADOWBROOK RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	3.65 2.19	CITY VALUATION PEN CORRECTION <b>5.84</b>
2019	1000098	MAZUREK, SHARON H 2630 MEADOWBROOK RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	3.69 1.85	CITY VALUATION PEN CORRECTION <b>5.54</b>

2019 1000099 MAZUREK, SHARON H 3.33 CITY VALUATION  
2630 MEADOWBROOK RD 1.33 PEN CORRECTION  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **4.66**

2019 1000100 MAZUREK, SHARON H 3.37 CITY VALUATION  
2630 MEADOWBROOK RD 1.01 PEN CORRECTION  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **4.38**

2019 1000101 MAZUREK, SHARON H 3.43 CITY VALUATION  
2630 MEADOWBROOK RD 0.69 PEN CORRECTION  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **4.12**

2019 1000102 MAZUREK, SHARON H 3.34 CITY VALUATION  
2630 MEADOWBROOK RD 0.33 PEN CORRECTION  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **3.67**

2019 1000069 MCI COMMUNICATION SERVICES INC 0.45 CITY VALUATION  
ATTN: PAMELA MONOPOLI  
PO BOX 2749  
ADDISON, TX 75001  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **0.45**

**NASH COUNTY**

2019 1001504 GLOVER, STEVE FRANKLIN 7.45 CITY VALUATION  
GLOVER, GLORIA SYKES  
3420 GREENBRIAR DR  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **7.45**

2019 1001542 HARPER, BOICE CORNELIUS JR 33.39 CITY OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS  
1929 HUNTER HILL RD  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **33.39**

2019 1000968 HUDGINS, SYLVIA JEAN 27.56 CITY VALUATION  
PO BOX 6184  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27802  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **27.56**

2019 1000112 JOHNSON, TONYA D 53.22 CITY OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS  
1323 S CHURCH ST  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27803  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **58.54**

2019 23700 PATE, JOE ROSS 1.46 PEN LATE LIST REMOVAL  
4840 CRAPE MYRTLE ST  
BATTLEBORO, NC 27809  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **1.46**

2019 20008 PHILLIPS, GARY STEPHEN & PAMELA 2.11 PEN LATE LIST REMOVAL  
809 SHORT SPOON CIR  
ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804  
**TOTAL RELEASE:** **2.11**

2019	1001050	PHILLIPS, GREGORY BURTON PHILLIPS, DEBORAH NEAL 1356 FAIRWAY TER ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	58.10	CITY	OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS
2019	11530	POLAND, JOHNNY W SR 4915 GREEN HILLS RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	0.21	PEN	LATE LIST REMOVAL
2019	1001875	STRICKLAND, ROGER WAYNE 502 CLIFTON RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	13.20	CITY	OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS
2019	1001892	TEAGUE, ERNEST JAMES JR TEAGUE, SHARON FAULKNER 136 BRIDGEPORT CT ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	32.11	CITY	OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS
2019	1001893	TEAGUE, ERNEST JAMES JR TEAGUE, SHARON FAULKNER 136 BRIDGEPORT CT ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	24.23	CITY	OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS
2019	11501	WILKINS, JASON D & LOVEY MARSHAN D 1775 ACORN RIDGE RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	5.00 0.50 <b>5.50</b>	CITY PEN	VALUATION CORRECTION

**SCHEDULE B – taxes over \$100 recommended for release and/or refund by the City Council:**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>BILL NO.</u>	<u>NAME/ADDRESS</u>  <u>EDGECOMBE COUNTY</u>	<u>TAX</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>	
				CITY	OWNER
2019	273	CENTRAL EAST SERVICES, INC 4352 N OLD CARRIAGE ROAD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	1221.42 122.14 <b>1343.56</b>	CITY PEN	CORRECTION
2019	22107	WILKINS, BEULAH H 1605 BARNES ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	233.39	CITY	ELDERLY/DISABLED EXEMPTION
		<b><u>NASH COUNTY</u></b>			
2019	1651	BARLEY AND BURGER 2921 ZEBULON RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	96.15 9.62 <b>105.77</b>	CITY PEN	VALUATION CORRECTION
2019	20153	LIDL US OPERATIONS LLC 940 N WESLEYAN BLVD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	506.26	CITY	VALUATION CORRECTION

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Knight and unanimously carried that the report from the City Manager of taxes under \$100 listed on Schedule A approved for release and/or refund be acknowledged; and that the taxes over \$100 listed on Schedule B be approved for release and/or refund.

**RESOLUTION PROVIDING RESTITUTION TO EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATING IN THE 1978 SANITATION WORKERS STRIKE**

Consideration was given to a resolution providing restitution to employees participating in the 1978 Sanitation Workers Strike. The Mayor called on City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney to provide a recommendation.

It was noted that approximately 36 employees participating in the 1978 Sanitation Workers Strike were terminated by the City on July 25, 1978 and reinstated on July 31, 1978. The Council was advised that the honorary restitution recommended represents one week's pay and benefits for each employee adjusted for inflation. The City Manager reported that the idea of presenting the families with some form of restitution originated at the showing of the Sanitation Workers documentary and is a way of closing the loop or turning the page on a very troubling period in the City's history. She said the restitution of \$1,000 does not fully compensate the employees or their families but is an attempt to recognize the sincerity of the apology offered. The following former employees have been identified as participants in the strike:

English Edmonson	Rudolph Edmonson	Alexander Evans
Leonard Giles	Willie Moody	William Moore
Robert Pittman	Roosevelt Pittman	Robert Smith

Ms. Small-Toney stated that distribution of the funds will be administered by the City Manager's Office and the Department of Human Resources and will not exceed \$36,000. She expressed hope that the gesture to the families is a sign that their sacrifices are appreciated.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried that the following **Resolution R-2019-46** entitled **RESOLUTION PROVIDING RESTITUTION TO EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATING IN THE 1978 SANITATION WORKERS STRIKE** be adopted:

**WHEREAS**, approximately 36 employees of the City of Rocky Mount participated in a walkout strike from July 25, 1978, to July 31, 1978; and

**WHEREAS**, the strike was in response to actions by the City against a fellow employee, Alexander Evans; and

**WHEREAS**, by Act of Resolution on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the City of Rocky Mount apologized to the family of Alexander Evans and the workers for the actions taken by the City Government in 1978; and

**WHEREAS**, actions taken by the City of Rocky Mount included the termination of employees that participated in the walkout strike from July 25, 1978, to July 31, 1978; and

**WHEREAS**, the employees that participating in the walkout strike were reinstated and returned to duty on August 1, 1978; and

**WHEREAS**, the City, as stated in the Resolution of October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, believes the actions of these workers participating in the strike “made an improvement in racial justice in Rocky Mount”; and

**WHEREAS**, the City, as stated in the Resolution of October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, “desires to recognize the courage and determination of sanitation workers who risked their jobs for justice for a co-worker unfairly accused and stood fast with their community supporters in the face of the City administration at that time which failed to do the right thing to resolve this issue with Mr. Evans and the workers”;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

1. That the City of Rocky Mount does hereby approve honorary restitution in the amount of \$1,000 per employee who directly participated in the walkout strike of July 25, 1978, to July 31, 1978.

2. That the City of Rocky Mount shall pay this honorary restitution to those former employees who were fired as a result of a participation in the walkout strike, or in the case of their decease, to their families; and

3. That the City Manager and Department of Human Resources shall make all efforts to verify and ensure appropriate disbursement of funds for this purpose; and

3. This resolution was adopted by the City Council of the City of Rocky Mount this 25<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2019.

**HOUSING INCENTIVE GRANTS**

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney provided the City Council with a recommendation for the allocation of \$495,000 in housing incentive funds to the following agencies:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Recommended Award</u>
South Eastern North Carolina CDC	\$150,000
Greater Joy CDC	100,000
Gotta Win, LLC	85,000
AFRESHnewSTART	100,000
Berkshire Community	30,000
Around the Wye Community	30,000

At the request of Councilmember Watkins, the City Manager outlined the process for grant funding. It was explained that information, including an application, is gathered and provided to a subcommittee for consideration. Ms. Small-Toney stated that the current year subcommittee members were Councilman Knight, Mayor Pro Tem Rogers and Councilmember Watkins.

In response to a request by Councilmember Miller relative to requirements that the units be maintained as affordable housing the City Manager stated that staff will continue monitoring to ensure the program patterns the HUD requirements.

Councilmember Rogers stated this is the largest funding allocation he remembers and said he was impressed by this year's process. He made comments about the process and said he is proud of the work the City has done in this regard and the impact these projects will have.

Councilmember Knight offered comments relative to Council's initiatives for providing assistance to impoverished neighborhoods and

the demolition process, historically, and stated the initiative started as an effort to help restore and bring back housing to challenged neighborhoods to ensure the need for housing is addressed and that all of Rocky Mount is a beautiful, safe place to live. He added that he too is pleased with this year's allocation.

Councilmember Joyner said because of community organizations like the one in which Sue Perry Cole is involved, communities are given opportunities to participate in managing their communities. He said rather than focusing on the bad, there is an opportunity to tell the story of how good communities are. He appreciated the Councilmembers for their work and for the incentives provided to communities.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Rogers and unanimously carried that funding allocations outlined above be approved, as recommended.

#### **HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM GRANT CLOSEOUT CERTIFICATION**

The City Council was advised that the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has determined that all of the City of Rocky Mount/Down East HOME Consortium's HOME grants can be closed out for grant years 1995 through 2010 and has prepared a Grant Closeout Certification for approval. It was noted that the City is also required to submit all financial, performance and other reports including the SF-425 Federal Financial Report.

Motion was made by Councilmember Watkins, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried that the Mayor be authorized to execute the required certification and federal financial report on behalf of the City.

#### **REPORT OF CLAIM RESOLUTIONS - EVENT CENTER (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)**

City Attorney Richard J. Rose reported that the following claims filed relative to the Rocky Mount Event Center has been resolved:

- Louis Nettles - class reunion event - \$23,848.33
- Team NC, Inc - gymnastics event - \$13,202.41
- Phillips Bricks Alumni Association - \$1,500

#### **NAMING/ROCKY MOUNT EVENT CENTER LOBBY**

A Motion made by Councilmember Blackwell that the lobby of the Rocky Mount Event Center be named in honor of former City Manager Charles W. Penny, was seconded by Councilmember Miller and unanimously carried.

#### **NAMING/PUBLIC WORKS HEADQUARTERS (ALBEMARLE AVENUE)**

Councilmember Blackwell recommended that the Public Works building be named in memory of former City employee Alexander Evans to recognize and remember the contributions made by the City employees involved in the 1978 Sanitation Workers Strike.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried that the Public Works Headquarters be named: The Alexander Evans Public Works Complex.

**RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION**

A motion made by Councilmember Blackwell that a Resolution of respect and gratitude for the contributions made by Mayor David W. Combs and Councilmembers E. Lois Watkins and Tom Rogers be adopted was seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously passed.

Councilmember Knight appreciated Mayor Combs and Councilmembers Watkins and Rogers and said he has enjoyed working with them.

**CLOSED SESSION/ATTORNEY-CLIENT (PERSONNEL ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)**

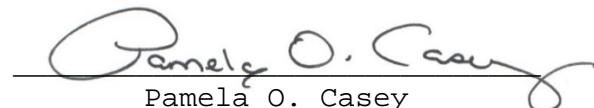
A Closed Session to discuss matters concerning attorney-client privilege and personnel was requested.

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried that the City Council go into Closed Session at 5:37 p.m. The minutes of the Closed Session shall be filed as **ESM-544** at the end of **Minute Book 36** upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

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**REGULAR SESSION/ADJOURNMENT**

The Mayor convened the City in regular session at 6:15 p.m. and there being no further business for regular session, adjourned the meeting.

  
Pamela O. Casey  
City Clerk