

September 14, 2020

The City Council of the City of Rocky Mount met this day in regular session in the George W. Dudley City Council Chamber of the Frederick E. Turnage Municipal Building with Mayor C. Saunders "Sandy" Roberson, Jr. presiding.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. and called for a moment of silence for individual prayer.

Councilmembers present: André D. Knight, Reuben C. Blackwell, IV, Richard Joyner, T.J. Walker, Lige Daughtridge, W.B. Bullock* and Christine Carroll Miller*.

**joining remotely*

Staff present: Rochelle Small-Toney, City Manager; Pamela O. Casey, City Clerk; Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager; Dorothy Brown Smith, Chief Communications and Marketing Consultant; Ken Hunter, Assistant to the Manager for Budget and Evaluation; Robin Cox, Communications Specialist; Mark Adcox, Video Production Specialist; Will Deaton, Director of Development Services; Joel Dunn, Director of Parks and Recreation; Corey Mercer, Fire Chief and Richard J. Rose, City Attorney.

Some staff members were in attendance as needed and others participated remotely via MS Teams.

SPECIAL CALLED COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

The City Council received the minutes from a special called Committee of the Whole meeting held August 10, 2020. The minutes are as follows:

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL CALLED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HELD MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2020 AT 3:00 P.M. IN THE GEORGE W. DUDLEY CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING WITH MAYOR PRO TEM ANDRÉ D KNIGHT PRESIDING:

NOTE: Participation limited due to Governor Roy Cooper's Executive Order banning gatherings of more than twenty-five (25) people relative to the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19); meeting was available via Microsoft Teams and Facebook Live

MEMBERS PRESENT:

André D Knight, Mayor Pro Tem
Reuben C. Blackwell, IV
Richard Joyner
Lige Daughtridge
W.B. Bullock
Christine Carroll Miller*
Mayor C. Saunders "Sandy" Roberson, Jr.

STAFF PRESENT:

Rochelle D. Small-Toney
Pamela O. Casey
Dorothy Brown Smith
Robin Cox
Richard J. Rose

**Participating remotely*

MEMBER ABSENT:

T.J. Walker

Security Officer: L. S. Parker, Jr.

OPENING OF MEETING

The City Council was provided with an agenda for the Special Called meeting and comments were made by City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney.

Mayor Pro Tem André Knight called the meeting to order at 3:11 p.m. and announced the meeting was called for the purpose of entering into a Closed Session to discuss a matter concerning economic development.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote that the City Council go into Closed Session at 3:12 p.m. for discussion related to a matter concerning economic development.

The minutes of the Closed Session shall be placed on file as **ESM-557** at the end of **Minute Book 37** upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

REGULAR SESSION/ADJOURN. The Mayor Pro Tem convened the Committee in regular session at 5:09 p.m. and the meeting was adjourned.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Walker and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the minutes of a special called Committee of the Whole meeting of the City Council held August 10, 2020 be 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 August 10, 2020. The minutes are as follows:

MINUTES OF A REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HELD MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2020 IN THE GEORGE W. DUDLEY CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING WITH MAYOR PRO TEM ANDRÉ D KNIGHT PRESIDING:

NOTE: Participation limited due to Governor Roy Cooper's Executive Order banning gatherings of more than twenty-five (25) people relative to the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19); meeting was available via Microsoft Teams and Facebook Live

MEMBERS PRESENT:

André D Knight, Mayor Pro Tem
Reuben C. Blackwell, IV
Richard Joyner
Lige Daughtridge
Christine Carroll Miller*
Mayor C. Saunders "Sandy" Roberson, Jr.

STAFF PRESENT:

Rochelle D. Small-Toney
Pamela O. Casey
Dorothy Brown Smith
Ken Hunter
Robin Cox
Richard J. Rose

**Participating remotely*

MEMBERS ABSENT:

T.J. Walker
W.B. Bullock

Security Officer: L. S. Parker, Jr.

Other City staff participated via MS Teams

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Pro Tem André Knight called the meeting to order at 5:24 p.m. and announced that the City Council enter into Closed Session to continue discussion relative to a matter concerning economic development that was not finished in the Special Called meeting today at 3:00 p.m.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. *Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (5 ayes/0 nays) that the City Council enter into Closed Session at 5:25 p.m. for discussion related to a matter concerning economic development.*

The minutes of the Closed Session shall be placed on file as **ESM-557 (continued)** at the end of **Minute Book 37** upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

REGULAR SESSION. The Mayor Pro Tem convened the Committee in regular session at 6:11 p.m.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES/ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS

The City Clerk provided the Council with information relative to Boards, Commissions and Committee members who have expressed an interest in reappointment and personal history forms/resumes submitted by citizens interested in appointment.

The City Council made the following appointments and/or reappointments:

- ***Animal Care and Control Advisory Board*** (three-year term expires June 30, 2023):
 - Tosha Aldridge (Ward 4)
- ***Board of Adjustment*** (three-year term expires June 30, 2023):
 - Robert Davis (Ward 1; reappointed)
 - William Jones (Ward 7; reappointed)
- ***Business Development Authority*** (three-year terms expire June 30, 2023):
 - Blake Tharin (reappointed)
 - Steven Larry Cederberg (reappointed)
- ***Community Appeals Board*** (three-year terms expire June 30, 2023)
 - Troy Davis (Ward 1; reappointed)
 - Mark Frohman (Ward 7; reappointed)
- ***Historic Preservation Commission*** (four-year terms expire June 30, 2024)
 - David Michael Latham (reappointed)
 - Bianca Davis
 - John Mebane (reappointed)

Note: Kera Robinson was appointed inadvertently to a position recently filled

- ***Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission*** (three-year terms expire June 30, 2023)
 - Terry M. Williams (reappointed)
 - Michael Anthony Parker (reappointed)
 - Gloria Whitley-Williams (reappointed)
 - Polly Jones
- ***Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities*** (two-year terms expire June 30, 2022)

- Mary J. Mann (reappointed)
- Priscilla Whitaker (reappointed)
- Cynthia Steele (reappointed)
- Ardelia Burrison (reappointed)
- Ruth A. Bowens (reappointed)
- Robert E. Cordell, Sr. (reappointed)
- Tilmon M. Little (reappointed)
- **Planning Board** (three-year terms expire June 30, 2023)
 - James Robert Davis (reappointed)
- **Redevelopment Commission** (five-year terms expire June 30, 2025)
 - Ida Arrington (reappointed - but does not wish to continue to serve)
 - Steve Deloatch
 - Samuel R. Davis (reappointed - but cannot continue to serve due to health reasons)
 - Elaine Courcelles
 - Gloria R. Downing (reappointed)
 - Andrew Votipka
- **Rocky Mount-Wilson Airport Authority** (three-year terms expire June 30, 2023)
 - Dan E. Herring, Jr. (reappointed)
- **Utility Service Review Board** (four-year terms)
 - Travis Fredrick Ellis (unexpired term expires 06/2022)
- **EXTERNAL BOARDS:**
 - Braswell Memorial Library (four-year terms expire December 31)
 - Reid J. Rhodes (unexpired term expires 12/2022)
 - Terry Anderson

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. *By consensus, the appointments listed above were recommended.*

BLACK LIVES MATTER MURALS - Cooper Blackwell, Black Action Committee

The City Council was provided with a handout from the Rocky Mount Black Action Committee.

Cooper Blackwell introduced himself and told the City Council he resides in Ward 4, serves on the Human Relations Commission, works for a local nonprofit as a research and development manager, is a moderator of non-Facebook groups, has his own event management company and small business consulting service, has been involved in the community since elementary school and has served in different capacities with the City since high school. He stated he comes before Council today as a member and representative of the Rocky Mount Black Action Committee.

Mr. Blackwell advised the Council that the Rocky Mount Black Action Committee is a youth led movement and its mission statement is to create a just and integral community in which Black people are respected. He added that its work towards social injustice is guided by love, empathy and collectivism. He stated the group consists of about 90 members and 25 members are actively participating in the preparation of correspondence.

Mr. Blackwell provided information about the Black Lives Matter organization and said it is important to understand the difference between the BLM organization foundation as a global organization and the BLM movement. He told the Council that the organization is

separate from the movement and clarified that he is not a member of the BLM organization.

Mr. Blackwell explained that the BLM movement:

- Is a crusade for anti-racism and the right to thrive;
- Inspires revolutionary strategies to agitate research and investment in identifying and eliminating home grown, racial inequities such as defunding the Police and reparations;
- Produces the following:
 - Influxes in community reinvestment practices of different racial justice groups and legislative action (in-kind and monetary; George Washington University is offering reparations for black people)
 - Disables crippling narratives of black stories told and sold by people other than them
 - Excitement for advocacy and participation
- May be the largest movement in US history

Mr. Blackwell said the BLM movement had a local impact relative to the protests for removal of the confederate monument and also occurred in more than 550 places in the United States. He provided statistics for the number of people in the United States who said they protested. He said the movement is not a Marxist ploy or revolt but is simply a way to express issues affecting black people and the movement has uplifted the fact that racial inequities exist.

He provided a pictorial representation of a BLM mural proposed to be painted on street and a map of the City adding that the most fragile neighborhoods in Rocky Mount are in the Downtown area in the proposed Black Lives Matter Business Zone. He stated that there is a need for concentrated investment in predominantly black neighborhoods and added that one fourth of Rocky Mount residents are experiencing poverty.

Mr. Blackwell told the Council the Black Action Committee is making a local call for buy-in from the City and Rocky Mount citizens for:

- Community Reinvestment Opportunity
- Asset building (future leverage)
- Support and encouragement of local cultural talent; and
- UNC/SOG (building assets for the rural future)

Mr. Blackwell told the City Council that the Black Action Committee wants to:

- work alongside City staff to develop a plan for creating a bold visual message (BLM)
- work with the Engineering Department to finalize the placement, size selection and installation of the BLM painting
- co-coordinate and facilitate the BLM painting project and plan for a community engagement arts effort at the Train Depot in the Black Business Matters zone
- partner with neighborhood residents to communicate messaging and disseminate information
- work to ensure visual representations for progress in under-resourced communities of color are backed by policy and community-led initiatives to alleviate the stressors of white supremacy locally

Mr. Blackwell told the Council the group meets twice a month and wants to work with local agencies and the City to have a positive result on the community.

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney reported that staff will review the proposals and respond. Mayor Pro Tem Knight thanked Mr.

Blackwell for his presentation and requested that the Manager bring a recommendation to the City Council for consideration.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. *Information only; no formal action.*

MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (MWBE) PROGRAM UPDATE -
Candice Kirtz

Due to time restraints, there was no discussion relative to this item and Mayor Pro Tem Knight requested it be placed on the agenda for the next COW meeting.

RESOLUTION FOR ROUNDABOUTS - Brad Kerr

Due to time restraints, there was no discussion relative to this item and Mayor Pro Tem Knight requested it be placed on the agenda for the next COW meeting.

ADJOURN

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (5 ayes/0 nays) that the COW meeting adjourn at 6:58 p.m.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Walker and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the minutes of a regular scheduled meeting of the City Council held August 10, 2020 be approved as submitted to the City Council prior to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Walker and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the minutes of a regular scheduled meeting of the City Council held August 10, 2020 and minutes of an emergency City Council meeting held August 16, 2020 be approved as submitted to the City Council prior to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA (ADDED IN OPEN MEETING)

Mayor Roberson noted that in the Committee of the Whole just prior to today's regular City Council meeting Council voted to suspend consideration of the Downtown Development project by the Local Government Commission (LGC) and to retain an independent contractor (Parker Poe law firm) to assess the process relative to the project. He asked if there are any further amendments to today's agenda and there were none.

COMMUNITY UPDATE BY CITY MANAGER

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney provided the following community update:

- She welcomed the following new additions to the City's Executive Leadership Team beginning Monday, September 21: Abdul Baloch, Chief Internal Auditor, and W. Gregory Cotton, Chief Technology Officer. She stated that Joel Dunn, who has served as Interim Parks and Recreation Director since January 2020, has been promoted to Director of Parks and Recreation effective immediately. The Manager stated that these men have 50 years of combined experience in government service, all are proven leaders

and she is confident each will contribute to improving the City organization. More information can be found at rockymountnc.gov.

- She said congratulations are in order for Director Will Deaton and the Development Services Department for recently earning a pair of awards from the North Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association. She noted that Development Services was awarded the Marvin Collins Small Area Plan Award for the department's planning and programs regarding the Atlantic-Arlington Corridor Study and added that the Great Transformation Award was received in recognition of the retrofitting and reenergizing of the Rocky Mount Mills development.
- The Manager reported that the Rocky Mount Fire Department has earned a pair of recognitions and in August the North Carolina Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Causey announced the fire department had completed its routine inspection and received an improved rating. She advised that the department was formerly a Class 2 department and has now achieved the highest rating of Class 1. Higher ratings can significantly lower homeowners' insurance rates in that fire district. In addition to the increased rating, earlier this month, the department retained their international accreditation from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International. She added that with its recent upgraded public protection class rating and retention of accredited status, the Rocky Mount Fire Department is in the top two-tenths of one percent of all fire departments in the United States. She congratulated Chief Mercer and the Rocky Mount Fire Department for the ongoing commitment to keeping our community safe.
- Ms. Small-Toney reported that the City's Business and Collections Services Department is working diligently to address any concerns customers might have as a result of the recent network disruption. Customers should note the following:
 - The city is working to put billing cycles back on a normal rotation. Customers may receive bills that reflect a shorter due date or billing cycle. Thanks to the City Council's ongoing moratorium, there will be no utility disconnections and late fees will not be assessed
 - Bills are being mailed to customers and all payments are being processed. Please contact the call center if you are unsure of whether your payment has been applied to your account
 - For your convenience, all three lanes of the drive-thru service are available
 - Due to a high call volume regarding billing and payment concerns, customers might experience longer than normal hold and wait times
 - The system customers use to view their e-bill account is being upgraded, and customers will receive a paper bill until the platform is upgraded
- The Manager stated that OIC continues to hold COVID-19 testing sites at the Rocky Mount Event Center. Those tested will need to bring their photo ID and insurance cards. Insurance is not required for testing. Testing days are Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Registration can be performed prior

to arrival by logging on to oicrmhub.com. Call 252-210-9856 for more information.

- Ms. Small-Toney advised that September City Council Newsletters were recently released and added if residents would like to sign up for the newsletter from their Councilmember they should email: communications@rockymountnc.gov.
- She reminded all that they have until the end of September to fill out and send in their 2020 Census form. The Census will determine funding for housing programs, schools, hospitals, economic development and much more in our community. Response can be made online, by phone or by mail. For more information or to respond, visit 2020census.gov.

COMMUNITY PLANNING MONTH

The Mayor read a Proclamation proclaiming the month of October 2020 as Community Planning Month in the City of Rocky Mount and presented the proclamation to Will Deaton, Director of Development Services. The Mayor and City Manager joined Mr. Deaton for a photograph.

FIRE PROTECTION RATING (ISO CLASS 1)

The Council was informed that the Insurance Service Office (ISO) creates ratings for fire departments and their surrounding communities in order to calculate how well-equipped fire departments are to put out fires in the community. The City Council was advised that the Rocky Mount Fire Department has received an improved insurance rating from the North Carolina Department of Insurance based upon the ISO Classification Ratings from a Class 2 to an upgrade to Class 1.

North Carolina Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey presented Fire Chief Corey Mercer and members of the Fire Department with certification of the update to Class 1 Rating and congratulated the Fire Department on this prestigious accomplishment.

The Mayor, City Manager and Insurance Commissioner joined Fire Chief Mercer and members of the Fire Department for a photograph.

PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mayor Roberson opened the meeting for public petitions and recognized the following individuals. A summary of comments is outlined below:

- ***Bob Norman:***
 - Stated it has been 4 months since the state audit was made public with a finding about unpaid utility bills by a current City Council member
 - Stated the only response from the City has been that the City Manager now has the Business Services Department reporting directly to her
 - Stated the State Auditor informed him the records are in place for everyone to see
 - Stated when he spoke to State Representative Shelley Willingham, he was told that the State Auditor's Office should bring a speedy end to their interference with Rocky Mount's economic, social and political well-being
 - Said someone elected as a City Council member 17 years ago would have been paid almost \$475,000 during the time frame in salary, annual personal expense allowance and car allowance

- ***Clint Williams:***
 - Said the recent cyber breach at the City proves that the City’s mitigations of vulnerabilities are woefully inadequate
 - Congratulated the City on filling the Chief Technology Officer position that has been open since 2018
 - Stated it has been validated that the hackers released and posted personally identifiable information on city customers
 - Stated he feels the North Carolina State Auditor, North Carolina Treasurer and possibly the Attorney General and SBI need to further investigate the City Council's corruption and conflicts of interest at least back to 2014

- ***Doris Stitch:***
 - Said she wants Council to know that Project Momentum, Inc. along with Twin Counties Partnership for Healthier Communities and Lenell and Lillie, LLC, have received a grant from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust to do research on opioid addiction and other substance use and abuse
 - Stated she will be working as a recruiter and they will be conducting interviews in accordance with COVID guidelines
 - Stated their aim is to get new information beyond just the rates and percentages in an attempt to start identifying what the root causes are of the opioid crisis

- ***Johnny Cunningham:***
 - Said he wanted to commend the City on the work being done on the building
 - Stated he feels a line was crossed when a citizen disrespected Councilmember Knight’s mother

- ***Samuel Battle:***
 - Stated there are issues with flooding on Luper Street, Paul Street, Beamon Street, Cleaver Street, Henry Street and Dexter Street
 - Stated he feels City Councilmembers need to be held accountable for their light bills
 - Stated there is a citizen in Ward 2 that needs help with repairs on a house, but he cannot get anyone to call him back
 - Said he feels that nepotism and conflicts of interest are an issue with the City Council

- ***Makayla Knight:***
 - Said she is speaking on behalf of her grandmother, Virginia Knight;
 - Read the following prepared statement:
 To whom this may concern:
 “ I am Virginia Knight and I was born and raised in Rocky Mount North Carolina. I am 81 years old and never have I seen racism like I see it now. Growing up, we were segregated, which is true. We had to use separate toilets, water fountains and had to order our food from the back window of the restaurants. But now there are people that enjoy creating trouble, but never see the good in a person. My family has been targeted long enough. You won't even let my deceased husband rest in peace. Put yourself in our shoes. What kind of message are you sending to the next generation? I have not heard one person talk about the good that Pastor Andre Knight has done for the city. Let me take you back to 1999 when some smart person opened up the dam and flooded out most of Rocky Mount. Andre has opened up his house and let strangers stay as they were at home. He paid the mortgage and utility bills. Fast forward to Mayor Turnage's time, deals that were made fell through. Who profits from that and receive checks? That is the reason that Rocky Mount utility bill is so

high today. Of that debt we have more pressing issues before us than these things. We need to come together and help one another especially those in this pandemic. Lives, businesses and homes have been lost. If you can't say something good about a person then say nothing. I'm looking to live the rest of my days out in peace, love, joy and happiness. Let's come together and make Rocky Mount the greatest city to live in. Let's draw people to our city and not drive them away. Can we come together and work together in peace and harmony?"

- ***Kiyah Darden:***

- Said she wanted to commend the Council for making the Black Lives Matter project a priority
- Stated that Edgecombe County's unemployment and poverty rate is one of the highest in the state and in many of the black communities you see the same convenience stores and fast food restaurants; there are more obese children in these communities because the families have to rely on the convenience of what is in their immediate area
- Stated she would like to see people stop halting economic development because a hotel in Edgecombe County would bring jobs to the area

- ***Nathlyn Ohree:***

- Thanked the City of Rocky Mount for acknowledging the death of her mother-in-law and thanked Councilmember Knight for attending and being a pallbearer
- Thanked the Councilmembers she has heard about and seen passing out food to our citizens
- Stated an ex-employee of the City of Rocky Mount had high praises when he spoke to her about City Manager Small-Toney stating he talked about all the benefits the City Manager had given black employees that had been denied in the past and that the City Manager was not only fair to black employees but to the whites too
- Thanked the Council for the job they are doing and asked that they continue to work together

- ***Nehemiah Smith, Jr.:***

- Said the current commentary and dialogue that refuses to die in our city is a rhetorical bramble that is meant to entangle the accomplishments of Rocky Mount and its leadership in the minutiae and that brambles are prickly and draw blood;
- Said when the agenda is to steal, kill and destroy, a death by 1,000 pricks is as welcome as one stroke;
- Said ultimately this is a three-fifths issue; the Council is made up of four three-fifths Councilmen and a three-fifths City Manager and it is difficult for 100% to be led by 60%, but that difficulty is a choice issue;
- Said the problem is that the 100% are the ones who define the 60% or three-fifths;
- Said when man's inhumanity to man is exposed and on full display across the nation and this world instead of being repentant, they are recalcitrant and the 100% talk about equality but are unwilling to recognize the other two-fifths or 40% needed to make the 60% whole so we get the red herring talk like: "pay your light bill three-fifths Councilman" or "you can't eat lobster and steak three-fifths city manager" or questioning the need for economic development in a majority three-fifths county that makes up one half of a majority three-fifths city;
- Said the 100% want to talk about giving 100% patriotic service to a country that still considers "us" three-fifths and continues to do so 163 years after Dred Scott
- Said "we" have been and continue to give 100% patriotic service hoping for full inclusion but still are only able to realize 60% or most times less because Chief Justice Taney said three-fifths of the nation are regarded as "beings of an inferior order" and altogether unfit to associate with the 100% either in social or political relations and so far inferior that they had no rights which the 100% was bound to respect and that the three-fifths might just sit and lawfully be reduced for their benefit;

- Said he knows why some have a problem with ending racism - they still subscribe to the three-fifths compromise philosophy;
 - Thanked the 100% Councilmembers for working with the three-fifths Councilmen as we move our city forward progressively
- **Bronson Williams:**
 - Stated he feels a television station is spreading lies and misinformation daily
 - Stated the idea to paint the “End Racism” mural shows leadership
 - Stated that ending racism is something we should strive to achieve in America
 - Urged Councilmembers throughout the community to work together to end racism once and for all through conversation and truly understanding people

TEMPORARY STREET CLOSING - ARLINGTON STREET

The City Council was provided with a request from Interim Police Captain Chris Ballard on behalf of Truth Tabernacle Church for permission to close the 700 block of Arlington Street from Bassett Street to Red Gate Avenue on Saturday, September 12, 2020 from 12 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. for a Community Day Event for Ward 3. It was noted that a majority of the City Council had previously approved the temporary street closing.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtride, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that the action to approve the temporary street closing be ratified.

BUDGET ORDINANCE/CARRYFORWARD APPROPRIATIONS AND EXPENDITURES

The City Council was provided with a Budget Ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget to carry forward appropriations and expenditures for activities budgeted in the 2019-2020 fiscal year but not expensed.

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Knight unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that **Ordinance No.0-2020-34** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 FOR CARRYFORWARD OF FISCAL YEAR 2019-2021 ENCUMBERED FUNDS** be adopted.

ANNEXATION NO. 317/762 VESTAL ROAD

The City Clerk provided the City Council with a resolution certifying the petition submitted by Tiffany R. Williams and Maurice A. Williams as sufficient to proceed with annexation of the non-contiguous parcel pursuant to NCGS 160A-58.1.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Daughtride and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that the following resolutions be adopted and that the Department of Development Services be instructed to prepare a feasibility study in connection with the annexation:

- a. **Resolution No. R-2020-28** entitled **RESOLUTION OF CERTIFICATION OF RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION OF THE SUFFICIENCY OF PETITION FOR ANNEXATION OF A NON-CONTIGUOUS AREA BY CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT/ANNEXATION NO. 317 - 762 VESTAL ROAD; and**
- b. **Resolution No. R-2020-29** entitled **RESOLUTION CALLING A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE CITY LIMITS OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT TO INCLUDE ANNEXATION OF A NON-CONTIGUOUS AREA/ANNEXATION NO. 317 - 762 VESTAL ROAD** (schedules public hearing for October 12, 2020).

Z. SMITH REYNOLDS GRANT (ADDITIONAL FUNDS)/BLACK LIGHT PROJECT EXHIBITION

The City Council was advised that the City received a grant in the sum of \$45,000 from the Z. Smith Reynolds foundation in May of 2019 for the Inclusive Public Art Project, the Black Light Project. It was noted that the original scope of the project included funding for 8 large banners at public sites in the City as well as some receptions for the unveilings. The City Manager advised the Council that:

- the project has seen major expenditure savings due to the bids for installation of banners being significantly less than estimates and due to the cancellation of the unveiling receptions and other events due to the COVID-19 Pandemic;
- the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation has extended the time frame of the grant from June 30, 2020 to December 31, 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and has offered the opportunity for all grant recipients to receive an additional \$5,000 to provide supplementary support for the grant extension; and
- staff will use the additional funds to continue to highlight the project.

Motion was made by Councilmember Walker, seconded by Councilmember Daughtridge and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that acceptance of the supplementary support funds (\$5,000) be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute any required documentation and certifications, including any subsequent grant agreement, on behalf of the City.

INTERLOCAL LOAN - MANAGEMENT OF CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUNDS

The City Council was advised that the City is eligible for distribution of Coronavirus Relief Funding (CRF) by Edgecombe and Nash Counties and has been approved as the recipient of \$125,000 from Edgecombe County per the County's distribution of funds received from the State of North Carolina pursuant to Senate Law 2020-80.

Council was further advised that eligible expenses identified by staff for use of this funding include, but are not limited to:

- Reimbursement of wages and benefits of Police and Fire employees actively involved in Coronavirus response;
- Reimbursement of costs for the contracting of an Occupational Health Nurse; and
- Reimbursement of costs incurred by local nonprofits for separate housing of COVID-19 positive clients.

The City Council was provided with an Interlocal Agreement with Edgecombe County for management of said Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) established by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act for consideration.

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Walker and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that the interlocal agreement be approved and that the Mayor be authorized to execute same (C-2020-21) on behalf of the City.

AMENDED ELECTRIC SERVICE AGREEMENT/AD1 ROCKY1, LLC (FORMERLY DOUBLETREE HOTEL)

The City Council received an amended and restated electric service agreement with AD1 Rocky1, LLC (formerly DoubleTree Hotel) that outlines the terms and conditions for the purchase of electric power for their facility at 651 North Winstead Avenue. The City Council was advised that the customer has requested to decrease the contract demand from 375 kilowatts to 250 kilowatts due to modifications to the hotel resulting in lower energy consumption. It was explained that the customer is billed on actual demand usage or the contract demand, whichever is higher.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that the electric service agreement with AD1 Rocky1, LLC, formerly Doubletree Hotel (C-2020-22) be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the same on behalf of the City.

GRANT/END RACISM STREET MURAL

The City Council was advised that a request has been made to research information pertaining to the installation of the phrase "Black Lives Matter" or a similar message on a street or road within the city limits of Rocky Mount. It was explained that the request was to determine a location that would mitigate safety concerns but also be highly visible for the project.

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney advised the Council that after consideration and consultation with the Rocky Mount Black Action Committee and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), it is the opinion of staff that Falls Road (behind the Church of the Good Shepherd) would satisfy the request. Council was informed that the cost of the project is estimated to be between \$15,000 and \$20,000 which includes cost for materials and a \$250 stipend for individual minority and women artists (not to exceed 10).

Council was provided with a rendering of the mural for illustrative purposes.

Councilmember Blackwell told the Council that a citizen had stated previously that it would be a conflict of interest if he were to vote on this item. He clarified that his son is a member of the Rocky Mount Black Action Committee; that the Committee is not receiving any money; there is no compensation to his son; his son has the right to be involved in any activity he chooses and there is nothing that precludes his vote on this item.

Councilmember Daughtridge stated that he agrees with the statement "end racism" but has difficulty with \$20,000 of City funds being used for this initiative and would much rather see the Committee raise the funds to purchase the paint. He added that he does not object to Council giving approval for painting on the street but added that the \$20,000 could be better used for community building conversations or building houses for Habitat for Humanity. He said the community needs to come together for conversation. Mr. Daughtridge said painting the words is great but \$20,000 is a lot of money and on a recent ZOOM call a Nash County Commissioner voiced a similar concern. He added that he would personally donate to this cause but does not agree with using City funds.

Councilmember Miller agreed.

Councilmember Knight stated that Nash County needs to stay out of Rocky Mount's business and that Rocky Mount runs its own city and also funds Nash County through its tax base. He added since 1867 the City has bought flags, banners, fireworks, wording and other items. He suggested that a donation could be made and also a vote cast because it is needed until Officers stop killing black men in America and it needs to be printed in every town and village and on every mountaintop and valley low until it is eradicated. He said he supports black lives and all lives and if this City can spend money everywhere else it can spend it on something that has plagued the City since before his time, his mother's time, his father's time and all our time. Mr. Knight said we need to step up to the plate and stop bashing our City and stop racists folks who don't want to see Rocky Mount grow so that black lives and every black man shall be able live in dignity, honor and respect.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and carried by roll call vote (5 ayes/2 nays; Councilmembers Daughtridge and Miller opposed; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that staff be authorized to collaborate with the Rocky Mount Black Action Committee for installation of a street mural and that funding of \$20,000 be authorized for the project.

BUILDING REUSE GRANT/ARMOROCK

The City Council was provided with a letter from City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney to the North Carolina Department of Commerce requesting de-obligation of funds (\$300,000) for the Armorock Building

Reuse Project because the company has informed the City that they will not be proceeding with the project.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Knight and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that the request for de-obligation of funds be authorized and approved.

BIDS/WATER PURIFICATION CHEMICALS 2019-2020 CONTRACT RENEWALS

The City Council was advised that bids were received and opened on June 20, 2019 for Water Purification Chemicals (2019-2020) after all necessary legal procedures had been implemented and the following companies are offering to extend their contract prices for one (1) year at the contract award amounts previously awarded:

- 1) Liquid Ferric Sulfate - Pencco, Incorporated - 350 tons @ unit price \$1,858 per ton = \$650,300;
- 2) Liquid Chlorine - JCI Jones Chemicals Company - 120 tons @ unit price of \$525 per ton = \$63,000;
- 3) Sulfur Dioxide - JCI Jones Chemicals Company - 17 tons @ unit price of \$1,200 per ton = \$20,400;
- 4) Sodium Hydroxide - Univar USA, Incorporated - 500 tons @ unit price of \$453 per ton = \$226,500;
- 5) Liquid Calcium Hydroxide - Polytec -700 lbs. @ unit price of \$0.1428 per pound = \$99,960;
- 6) Dry Polymer - Brenntag - 20,000 lbs. @ unit price of \$1.82 per pound = \$36,400;
- 7) Calcium Thiosulfate - Water Guard, Inc. - 60,000 lbs. @ unit price of \$1.84 per pound = \$110,400;
- 8) Sodium Hypochlorite - Water Guard, Inc. - 160,000 gals. @ unit price of \$0.69 per gallon = \$110,400; and
- 9) Corrosion Inhibitor - Sterling Chemical - 34,000 lbs. @ unit price of \$0.7558 per pound = \$25,697.20

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that the contract amendments be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute same on behalf of the City. The bid tabulation will be on file in the office of the City Clerk with the 2019-2020 bids as **BD-2019-18**.

APPOINTMENTS

No action was taken to fill the vacancies on the City's Boards, Commissions and Committees.

CLOSED SESSION

A Closed Session was requested relative to matters concerning economic development; property acquisition and attorney-client privilege.

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that the City Council enter into Closed Session at 8:13 p.m. The minutes of the Closed Session shall

be filed as **ESM-562** at the end of **Minute Book 37** upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

OPEN SESSION

The Council returned to open session at 9:14 p.m.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/COGENTRIX PROPERTY (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Daughtride and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that an extension of an option to purchase 85 acres located in No. 7 Township, Edgecombe County, identified as the former Cogentrix Property for the sum of \$25,000 be approved; and that the Mayor and/or City Clerk be authorized to execute such documents as required on behalf of the City. It was noted that the current option expires on October 6, 2020.

BUILDING REUSE GRANT/LS TRACTOR (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Daughtride and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that Resolution No. **R-2020-30** entitled **AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT FOR THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE BUILDING REUSE PROGRAM - LS TRACTOR BUILDING REUSE PROJECT** be adopted and that the Mayor and/or City Clerk be authorized to execute any such documentation as required on behalf of the City.

ASSIGNMENT OF OPTION/BOSEMAN PROPERTY (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Daughtride and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that the assignment of option with Joel M. Boseman and wife, Jean J. Boseman for the purchase of approximately 55.52 acres of real property located on the Thomas Betts Parkway at the intersection with Peele Road be approved and that the Mayor and/or City Clerk be authorized to execute such documents as may be required on behalf of the City.

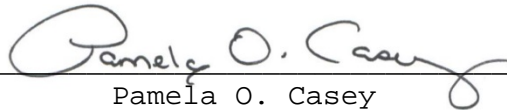
PROPERTY ACQUISITION/REAL PROPERTY - PARCEL NO. 3850-70-4447 (EDGECOMBE COUNTY) (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)

Motion was made by Councilmember Walker, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and carried by roll call vote (5 ayes/2 nays; Councilmembers Daughtride and Miller opposed; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that City staff be authorized to enter into a contract for the purchase of real property identified as Parcel No. 3850-70-4447 (Edgecombe County) (**C-2020-23**) and that the Mayor and/or City Clerk be

authorized to execute such documents as may be required on behalf of the City.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays; the vote for Councilmember Bullock was recorded in the affirmative pursuant to NC 160A-75) that the meeting adjourn at 9:18 p.m.



Pamela O. Casey
City Clerk