

November 9, 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 7:06 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 and Christine Carroll Miller*.

**joining remotely*

Councilmember absent: W.B. Bullock.

Staff present: Rochelle Small-Toney, City Manager; Pamela O. Casey, City Clerk; Dorothy Brown Smith, Chief Communications and Marketing Consultant; Robin Cox, Communications Specialist; and Richard J. Rose, City Attorney.

Other staff members in attendance, as needed, were: Mark Adcox, Video Production Specialist; Amy Staton, Finance Director; Charles Williams, Interim Police Chief; Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager and Latasha Hall, Director of Business and Collections Services.

Security Officer: Police Sergeant Stephen Walker.

COMMENTS

Councilmember Miller recognized and voiced appreciation for the increased wearing of face masks in today's meeting.

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)

Mayor Roberson stated there is a need to amend the agenda to add consideration of:

- A lease agreement with Ethel L. Harper for approximately 1,050 square feet at 136 Nandina Court (Edgecombe Meadows; 7-month lease @ \$315 per month; no public hearing required)

There were no objections to amending the agenda, as requested.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Miller, and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that the minutes of a regular scheduled meeting of the City Council held October 12, 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 October 12, 2020. The minutes are as follows:

MINUTES OF A REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HELD MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 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 relative to the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19); meeting was available remotely

MEMBERS PRESENT:

André D Knight, Mayor Pro Tem
 Reuben C. Blackwell, IV
 Richard Joyner
 T.J. Walker*
 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**
 Ken Hunter**
 Amy Staton
 Candice Kirtz**
 Greg Cotten**
 Aaron Harris**
 Richard J. Rose

**Participating remotely*

***Present as needed in open session only*

Security Officer: Scoey Lewis

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Pro Tem André Knight called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and announced that the agenda will be amended to hold the Closed Session at the beginning of the meeting and the City Council will enter into Closed Session to hold discussion relative to a matter concerning attorney/client privilege.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. *Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the City Council enter into Closed Session at 5:01 p.m. for discussion related to a matter concerning attorney/client privilege.*

The minutes of the Closed Session shall be placed on file as **ESM-564** 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 5:10 p.m.

MINORITY AND WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM - Amy Staton/Candice Kirtz

The City Council was advised that efforts are underway to enhance the City's Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) program. Finance Director Amy Staton introduced Purchasing Manager Candice Kirtz to provide an overview of the MWBE program including general information about the program, goals, results and the status of the plan milestones that are completed, ongoing, in progress, recommended and pending. Ms. Staton told the Council that staff is well-qualified. She reported that Ms. Kirtz has been with the City as purchasing manager since May 2019 and is a certified local government purchasing officer, a certified professional public buyer, has 8 years public procurement experience, has a wealth of knowledge and is very motivated. She told the Council there is still work to be done, but she is excited about the positive progression of the program and looks forward to the opportunities for continued enhancement.

Ms. Staton introduced the new MWBE Coordinator, Aaron Harris, who will start next Monday and will help to carry the program to the next level. She stated Mr. Harris has a master's degree in public administration from North Carolina Central.

Ms. Kirtz presented a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the following topics:

- Minority and Women-Owned Business (MWBE) Defined
 - A business that is at least 51% owned and controlled by one or more minority persons or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals; and
 - A business in which at least 51% of stock is owned by one or more minority or socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (corporations)
- Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB) Defined
 - HUB Office: An organization within the Department of Administration that advocates actions which increase opportunities for historically underutilized businesses and promotes diversity and inclusion in state government procurement and contracting
- Mission and Vision
 - Mission: To promote economic opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses in City procurement and contracting that will foster potential growth and profitability
 - Vision: To promote actions which increase opportunities for minority and women-owned businesses and promote diversity and inclusion in City procurement and contracting
- Program Roles
 - Provide equal opportunity to participate in the bidding process;
 - Provide workshops and training sessions;
 - Provide one-on-one sessions as requested on opportunities of interest; and
 - Prohibit discrimination against a business because of race, creed, color, religion, national origin or handicap
- Functions
 - Liaison between City and MWBE Community;
 - Develop alliances to increase participation and utilization; and
 - Monitor and report MWBE participation
- Building Construction
 - 10% goal over \$100,000 for state-funded
 - 5% goal over \$100,000 for local-funded
- NC HUB Certification
 - Historically Underutilized Businesses Certified (HUB);
 - Businesses must comply with provisions of NCGS 143-48.4 for historically underutilized businesses for minority participation purposes
- NC DOT Certification
 - Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
 - Businesses must meet social and economic disadvantaged criteria of Federal Regulations

Ms. Kirtz outlined the factors contributing to low participation in the programs and listed vendor expectations as:

- Vendor Expectations
 - Communicate vendor information changes to purchasing;
 - Provide capability statement (new vendors);
 - Meet insurance and bonding requirements;
 - Become HUB certified;
 - Compete in bid process; and
 - Win bids (lowest responsive responsible bidder)

She provided Council with a list of locally certified vendors and explained reporting for State HUB and Local MWBE, MWBE statistical information, opportunities and milestones and responded to questions from Councilmembers.

The Mayor Pro Tem stated this program has long been overdue and added he is glad to see it has come to fruition. He thanked Ms. Kirtz, the City Manager and Councilmember Blackwell and called on City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney.

Ms. Small-Toney said it is good to see discussion formulate into an actual program. She said a great deal of the City's expenditures are not necessarily bid contracts, but Department purchases and training will be implemented relative to those purchases. She thanked Ms. Staton, Ms. Kirtz and Mr. Harris.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Information only; no formal action.

CONTI NETWORK DISRUPTION UPDATE - Greg Cotten

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney introduced Chief Technology Officer Greg Cotten to provide an update relative to the Conti Network Disruption.

Mr. Cotten noted the City encountered a serious ransomware (CONTI) attack on August 14, 2020 which lead to a City-wide network outage on citizen centric applications used, messaging and infrastructure services on the telecommunications level. He said cybersecurity criminals attempted to hold the City hostage demanding a ransom between \$250,000 to \$500,000, payable by Bitcoin, which the City refused to pay upon recommendation of law enforcement including the FBI. He advised the City is about 95% recovered from the attack and there are some small applications yet to be finalized (mostly older applications that have now been taken off the network). He explained efforts for containment, eradication and recovery to prevent the malware/ransomware from spreading and recovery actions. He reported a triage analysis has been performed by the contracted CIO group, Davenport, and once he is in receipt the final document, he will share the same with the City Manager.

Mr. Cotten told the City Council that following containment Technology Services installed network analyzers to analyze network traffic to resolve any future intrusions and the network is currently in a good position.

Mr. Cotton advised that opportunities exist for changes to the network fabric, technology policies and procedures, end-user (staff), ongoing cyber security training and awareness and Technology Services human capital. He outlined and explained the following recommended changes indicating some are yet to be made while others are underway or complete:

- Update to Administrative Policies III.1 and III.12
 - o Use of email;
 - o Use of smart phones, iPads and MS Surfaces and laptops to prohibit personal devices on the network, controls for remote desktop access, software installation approval process and expanded requirement approval process for privileged accounts;
 - o Password changes every 90 days to include use of special characters and prohibit sharing of passwords;
 - o Generate multi-factor authentication virtual private network policy and hiring a Business Systems Analyst; and
 - o Hiring of a Project Manager.

Mr. Cotten outlined and explained critical steps taken following the attack and challenges:

- Critical Steps:
 - o Preparation (taking proactive cyber security measures including training);
 - o Detection and Analysis (outlined methods); and
 - o Post-Incident Activity (secure network to decrease future risk)
- Challenges:
 - o Funding;
 - o Resources - Technology Services (additional training) and Subject Matter Experts (to help identify intrusions prepare service level agreements);
 - o Training (current and future staff); and
 - o Technology policies

Councilmember Daughtridge questioned if an estimate of the recommendations is available and was advised that has been explored and will be provided to the City Manager in a future meeting. Councilmember Daughtridge added that he has benefited from a password generator and feels this would be a good investment.

Councilmember Joyner questioned if Mr. Cotton has made a comparison of the City to other local jurisdictions. Mr. Cotton responded that he has looked at Durham however has not yet spoken with Durham's CTO and plans to mimic some of the agents on its network and expand upon it, especially in terms of more fiber connectivity around the City.

Councilmember Miller requested that Council be provided with a brief glossary of terms used in the presentation.

The City Manager thanked Mr. Cotten for his presentation and welcomed him to the City. She stated she has had conversations with him since his arrival relative to plans for the new department and has learned some technology lingo. She said the City is limited in the services it can provide without expanded technology, including protecting the vulnerability of the City's systems and told the Council the purchase of the Munis system is a step in the right direction.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Information only; no formal action.

DISCUSSION ON COUNCILMEMBERS' REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION TO THE CITY MANAGER AND STAFF

Mayor Pro Tem Knight stated it is a good time to be reminded of the role of the Manager versus the roles of the Mayor and Councilmembers. He said Council appointed Rochelle D. Small-Toney to serve as the City Manager and she is responsible for the management of all City activities and services, overseeing day to day functions and long-range planning for the City; providing oversight for all City departments and ensuring all carry out the City's mission, vision and values; and has the responsibility of carrying out policy decisions enforced by the Mayor and members of the City Council.

He outlined the roles of the Mayor and City Councilmembers adding that the Council is in no way responsible for the day to day operations of the City.

Mayor Pro Tem Knight said from time to time Councilmembers have requested additional information from the Manager beyond what was provided in a meeting but should not attempt to shame the City Manager by saying she is not providing information and that is not acceptable and even more so when it is not true. He explained he is referring to a post to social media, a video on YouTube and comments recently made to the local newspaper by Councilmember Daughtridge. He stated as long as he has been on the Council, he has not seen that done and thinks Council should set the direction of what Council can and cannot do based upon

the City's Charter and advice of the City Attorney. He said the video was very unprofessional, unnecessary and undermining to everything the City is doing and said he feels the Manager is owed a public apology. He said as Mayor Pro Tem any issues the Mayor or any Councilmember has with the City Manager should be brought to his attention so they may be placed on a Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion. He said he has not personally seen all requests made by Councilmember Daughtride but has been included on email requests by Councilmember Daughtride that would require weeks, if not months, to answer. He continued by saying if each Councilmember made similar requests of the Manager, she nor staff would have time to take care of the day to day operations of the City. He said the magnitude of the requests made by Councilmember Daughtride is a distraction to the organization and often pulls staff away from their core jobs. He said comments made by Councilmember Daughtride that he cannot speak to staff are misleading. Mayor Pro Tem Knight added that all Councilmembers can speak to staff, but it is not the role of Council to be directly involved with staff and request information because all employees report to the Manager. He questioned what a Councilmember would do with the requested information and said going forward any requests made to the Manager should be clear, specific, focused and unthreatening and to frequently made such requests serves no purpose and is not the role of Council. He said negative comments being made about City leadership by an elected official is getting old.

The Mayor Pro Tem read aloud from the City's Charter, Chapter III. entitled Governing Board, Article III. CITY MANAGER, Section 81. *Appointment; Duties; Removal*, subparagraph (b) *Administrative Service* and Chapter IV. entitled Police Department, Section 140. *Appointment, Powers and Duties of the Chief of Police and Police Officers*, subparagraph (a) *Chief*.

Mayor Pro Tem Knight stated the Fire Chief is also appointed by the City Manager.

Mr. Knight asked the Attorney to clarify what is acceptable behavior from Councilmembers if he is familiar with the Charter. Mr. Rose stated he is familiar with the Charter and verified the Mayor Pro Tem had read from the Charter. Mayor Pro Tem opened the floor for discussion.

Councilmember Blackwell stated that all Councilmembers have responsibilities to their wards and constituents and sometimes will need additional information or have information or concerns to report to the City Manager. He said he has served with three City Managers (Raper, Penny and Small-Toney) and there have been times when his perspective has been different from the Manager's, but he has had a respectful working relationship with all Managers. He told Councilmember Daughtride he is disappointed relative to the posting of the video and, if his desire is to work with this Council, that is not the way to do it. He said questions can be asked but the Manager is not required to take direction from one Councilmember but her guidance is provided by the Council as a body and if a Councilmember is unable to persuade a majority of the body to support an effort then no traction will be obtained. He added that sitting leadership must be respected and have to work together. Mr. Blackwell said that majorities change from vote to vote but effective legislation requires collegiality. He told Councilmember Daughtride it was his right to take such action and in turn it is his right to respond by saying "shame on you and I don't know how you expect to get things done for the people in your ward if you can't work with everybody here." He told the City Manager if a majority of Council has not supported a request, she should move it to the edge of her desk and get to it when she does.

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney stated she has collected the data requested by Councilmember Daughtride which consists of incident reports for Part I crimes and approximately six (6) boxes of information which was delivered to Councilmember Daughtride's seat on the dais. She reported that the information consists of approximately 6,000 documents

dating back to January 2018. She said she would have the information delivered to his home if he desires. She said approximately ten (10) staff members from ten (10) divisions worked to assemble the information in this blanket request so that the City would not have to pay overtime for staff and the amount of documents delivered gives some idea of how much time, energy and effort is required by staff to assemble the information. She said if the idea was for the next step to be for staff to analyze the information that would require another 10 or 15 people. She said it is not that people are not willing, but consideration should be given to the amount of time, energy and effort required by these ten (10) staff members taken away from their day to day operations and duties and this is just one example. She said she wanted to make it very clear, though it is clear in the Charter, that any requests from Council related to any staff member is to come through her. She said in an ideal world everyone talks to each other and her requirement is that if Council interacts with staff that she be copied because sometimes what happens is at the end of the day the Manager is looked to to sort through the issues and get things back on track. She said it is not a prohibition but an opportunity to help provide information needed by Council. She asked that a Councilmember not set up a meeting with a staff person (giving the example of the Animal Control Advisory Board) without speaking with her. The Manager said she is and has always been available and willing to work with Councilmembers. She added she took an oath and will abide by that oath and will perform her duties as set out in the City's Charter and is clear that the City Council makes the final decisions. She thanked the Council for their attention to this matter.

Councilmember Daughtridge said he has obviously gotten the attention of everyone. He said each Councilmember is the representative of their ward and the Mayor was elected by the entire City. He said Council is asked to make decisions that requires information and while some of the information he has requested has been provided, a lot has not been, and some has been provided for only a short time. He said those things include monthly revenue expense reports, Event Center P&L and the fund balance. He added often Council is told when they vote that an expense will come from the fund balance and he has no way of knowing how much the fund balance is. Mr. Daughtridge stated he has a concern relative to fund transfers. He said Council is being asked today to vote on discontinuing something he was not in agreement with and voted against (the moratorium relative to utility payments) because of a concern that it was going to get out of hand adding that existing arrearages are now estimated at \$3M. Mr. Daughtridge voiced concern with the degree this will hurt the City. He stated he has been asking for a long time about the collection of unpaid property taxes saying it is not fair for one taxpayer to pay their taxes and others who do not pay to receive the same benefits. He voiced a concern for infrastructure issues. Mr. Daughtridge thanked the Manager for providing crime reports today but said the last crime statistics Council received are on the Police Department webpage and are CompStat reports from 2018. He said if he was asked how many murders occurred this or last year, he would not have that information. He added he has asked if nonprofits receiving funds from the City are being monitored to ensure funds are being appropriately spend. Councilmember Daughtridge said he has asked for addresses of flooded properties and when he asked about building reuse grants the Carolinas Gateway Partnership was brought in to explain a process which he is perfectly clear about because he serves on the board. He said he requested that Council receive yearly audit reports relative to housing incentive grants and has questioned if the City checks to be sure the rent is still affordable.

Mr. Daughtridge said he feels that as a Councilmember elected to represent Ward 5, he is not being provided the necessary information to make informed decisions. He added the State Auditor's report brought up many issues. Councilmember Daughtridge said the Council voted to remove the Confederate monument at a cost of \$250,000 but \$281,000 has been spent. He stated Council was recently provided with information that the City has lost funding which is disturbing, and he assumes that will be discussed at some point.

Councilmember Daughtridge said he also has a lot of concerns with the City partnering with David Hunt.

Mr. Daughtridge said, while he may have gone about requesting information differently than any other Councilmember, he realizes the Council works as a body. He said he thinks he and the entire Council needs information and that some may be receiving information he is not receiving.

Mr. Daughtridge said he will use his voice and try to be respectful. He said he is asking for transparent, fiscally responsible government and that the views of all are respected. He stated it has been said he has been disrespectful and added he has been subjected to some of the most disrespect he has ever seen by some City Councilmembers both prior to being elected and after. He concluded by saying he thinks all Councilmembers need to look at how they treat each other.

Mayor Pro Tem Knight responded that Councilmember Daughtridge was still speaking relative to areas that are the responsibility of staff. He stated that the State Auditor was sent to investigate as a targeted investigation and that she reported her findings, the City responded and that is concluded. He said every item on the agenda has backup information, which is provided to all, but it is too much for a Councilmember to request huge amounts of information, as contained in the six (6) boxes provided to Councilmember Daughtridge today. He said certain Councilmembers know how many people have been murdered because most of those people live in the Wards they represent, and they feel it and see it. He said the City is not the only utility provider with write-offs. He added that the Councilmembers have the heart of their people and when you look at the socio-economic status of the people of Rocky Mount and jobs and living conditions you can see the reason some Councilmembers have run for election. He said Councilmembers want to help the underserved and to dwell on the utility moratorium shows where one's heart is.

The Mayor Pro Tem concluded by saying it was the City of Rocky Mount who fought Progress Energy and Duke Power and he was dragged through the mud going to NCEMPA meetings in Wilson when speaking out against the plight of those with huge utility bills and it was Rocky Mount who challenged Duke Power. He said it was the bondholders who benefited from the money poor people were paying in utilities and, if people in Rocky Mount don't pay another dime, the people in this City have paid a lot. He said some Councilmembers went to Raleigh to fight when information was presented to the General Assembly, but that fight started in Rocky Mount. He said the City has the facts and minutes to support the stance taken.

Councilmember Joyner thanked all and said since he has been on the Council, he has had the privilege to work with all and invited all to call each other and ask for each other's help and advice as they work in their Wards and in the City. He said when he has asked for assistance from other Councilmembers, he has found each to be helpful and even when there is disagreement they still work as a team. He said as this Council leads the City forward, he prays all will take the opportunity to spend time with each other even when they don't agree adding if that is done, he thinks they will find themselves in a good place.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Information only; no formal action.

ADJOURNMENT

Without opposition, the Mayor Pro Tem adjourned the Committee of the Whole meeting at 6:19 p.m.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that

the minutes of a regular scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting held October 12, 2020 be approved as submitted to the City Council prior to the meeting.

COMMUNITY UPDATE BY CITY MANAGER

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

- Reported that the City proper is seeing an uptick in the impact Covid-19 is having on City operations especially in the Departments of Public Works, Engineering, Development Services – Community Code and Community and Business Development and currently all employees are required to wear mask. She said initially the wearing of masks was voluntary but when employees are out due to the Pandemic there is a direct impact on the City’s ability to deliver high-quality services and mask wearing is now mandatory; and
- Announced the appointment of Charles Williams as Interim Chief of Police. She added that Interim Chief Williams is a Rocky Mount native and has spent his entire professional career with the Rocky Mount Police Department. She noted he was sworn in as an officer in 1995, worked in Patrol Services for five years, was promoted to Corporal before serving as a Sergeant for 12 years in Patrol Services and Criminal Investigations, served five years as a Lieutenant and his most recent duties have included serving as Patrol Services Captain. She provided information relative to his educational background. The City Manager reported that Chief George Robinson will be retiring effective December 1 and thanked him for his service. She stated she looks forward to Interim Chief Williams’ leadership during this time of transition and will continue to provide updates regarding the national search for the City’s next Police Chief; and
- Announced the promotion of Latasha Hall to Director of Business and Collections Services adding that Mrs. Hall has served in the position in an interim basis since May, and her leadership has been instrumental, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. She provided information relative to Ms. Hall’s educational background and reported that she has more than 17 years of leadership/management experience that consists of a background in Customer Service/Call Center, IT Support, Case Management, Banking Operations, Collections, Project management and Business Analytics; and
- Reminded all that the City’s extended moratorium on disconnection of utility services due to the COVID-19 hardship was lifted effective, Friday, October 30. She added that staff will work diligently with customers to make reasonable payment arrangements on past due balances and late fees will not be accessed for accounts until March 30, 2021. The Manager reported that the Business and Collections Services Department will be working with customers who qualify for COVID-19 relief funds due to financial hardships and advised that proof of financial hardship as to lost wages must be provided to receive federal COVID-19 relief funds; and
- Advised that although the Imperial Centre is closed to the public, citizens can take advantage of a variety of free virtual arts programs including yoga, drawing and painting. The Imperial Centre will also hold a virtual Christmas Celebration at 6 p.m. on December 4 featuring a variety of local musical talents. She stated that more information about the event can be found by visiting rockymountnc.gov and imperialcentre.org; and
- Reported that the City will be a sponsor of the America Recycles Day event this Saturday, November 14 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Golden East Crossing Mall and added that items that will be accepted for disposal include prescription medications, household chemicals and pesticides, paint and more. The Manager noted that a complete list of items can be found by visiting rockymountnc.gov or calling the City’s Keep America Beautiful office at 252-467-4960; and

- Noted that OIC continues to hold COVID-19 testing sites at the Rocky Mount Event Center and stated 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. and registration can be performed prior to arrival by logging onto oicrmhub.com. She advised citizens can call 252-210-9856 for more information.

Upon request from Councilmember Knight a report from Interim Police Chief Charles Williams will be added to today's agenda.

In response to a question from Councilmember Joyner, the City Manager stated that the City has revised its protocol and a negative test is required before an employee can return to work after having tested positive.

Councilmember Knight thanked Latasha Hall and her staff work for their work with utility customers during the pandemic.

PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

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

- ***Samuel Battle:***
 - Questioned why the City is not having sports events at the Sports Complex, especially in light of Red Oak holding baseball events;
 - Said there is racism on both sides and suggested meetings be scheduled for groups to hold discussions; said no one on the Council is doing anything to resolve the issue and said there are 4 pastors on the Council; he stated there is an election in 2021.

Mayor Robinson asked that Mr. Battle refrain from identifying individuals.

Mr. Battle continued and:

- Voiced concern that nothing is being done to clean up Unity Cemetery;
- Congratulated Interim Chief Williams on his appointment and said Marty McCoy should be considered as the next Police Chief and was born and raised here and knows the City

Councilmember Joyner stated that when Councilmembers' names are called out during the Petitions from the Public portion of the meeting something needs to be done. Mayor Roberson responded by saying he welcomes an opportunity to hold a discussion with Council relative to this concern and to consider a protocol. Councilmember Knight added that the rules have been identified but when someone is hired to come to a Council meeting to assassinate the character of Councilmembers representing Wards 1, 2, 3, 4 and the City Manager people can see that.

- ***Gregory Spence:***
 - Stated he has lived in Rocky Mount for more than a decade and graduated from Wesleyan College;
 - He said though there is more to do in the City he believes it is headed in the right direction, especially with the progress of Downtown Development;
 - Supported consolidation of two positions (and the addition of an administrative assistant) to support Downtown Development and placing this office in a central location; he said any vote in opposition of this change was a vote to stifle the City's growth and urged Councilmembers not to slow down progress due to unfounded concerns and said he believes a more united and successful City is the goal of all citizens. He urged Council to keep that goal in mind when making decisions in the future

- ***Morrie Minges:***
 - Asked why citizens cannot come into the Council Chamber for meetings on a first come first served basis if they spread out. She added it is difficult to hear comments while waiting in line and outside the Council Chamber;
 - Said she never heard anything about an anti-litter campaign;
 - Said the former Ebony and Ivory building on N. Church Street looks terrible and said it is in an area where visitors to the City see it;
 - Said there are fire ants in residential neighborhoods;
 - Said NCDOT has not gotten back with her relative to her concerns relative to 301 North;
 - Said she is willing to volunteer to help with cleaning up Unity Cemetery;
 - Said Council should be respectful to people who come to petition the Council by making eye contact or appearing to listen;
 - Questioned if Council acts on suggestions made by citizens at the public petition period

- ***Bronson Williams:***
 - Said he is aware that Council has responded to a number of concerns from citizens with one being a request to make meetings available live; he added they are now live on Facebook, but he would also like to see them broadcast live on TV 19;
 - Thanked Councilmembers for listening to citizens who come to petition Council;
 - Requested the City look at how to address the cleanup of Unity Cemetery to ensure ownership is taken or conversations held with the current owners; he stated those buried there should be honored and were a part of the Rocky Mount citizenry;
 - Said as he visits Downtowns across the Nation, he sees Courthouses and suggested the City look at moving the Judicial Center from Cokey Road to the Downtown as a catalyst to Downtown redevelopment;
 - Said Council's decision to continue to keep the Council Chambers closed to the public is a responsible action

In response to a question from Councilmember Joyner relative to what can be done to address the concerns regarding Unity Cemetery, City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney stated the first place to start is to perform an evaluation of the cemetery to ascertain the cost to get it in good shape and to identify the costs for maintenance. She said the City can take a look at this and provide a report to Council. Discussion was held. Councilmember Knight said he is in full support of allocation of funds to begin restoration of Unity Cemetery.

Councilmember Blackwell said there was an extensive plan to clean up Unity Cemetery years ago, but the City Council as a whole shifted its plan adding that the community has invested time, funding and a plan and former Assistant City Manager Peter Varney had developed a plan and that plan needs to be located. He added the community also needs to come out to assist because Unity Cemetery is historic and would be a phenomenal heritage tourism site.

- ***Nathlyn Ohree:***
 - Said she has been a City resident for over 36 years and has been a part of a number of concerns that come up from time to time;
 - Commended the City Manager for her training, knowledge and work and said the presentation at the last meeting from the Manager relative to Downtown Businesses moved her heart;
 - Encouraged the Council to work together to move the community forward and thanked them for their continued commitment.

PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Council received the minutes and recommendations from a Planning Board meeting held virtually on October 13, 2020.

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Daughtridge and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that receipt of the Planning Board minutes be acknowledged. The minutes are on file in the office of the City Clerk.

The following action was taken upon the recommendations of the Planning Board:

REZONING REQUEST/PUBLIC HEARING

Will Deaton, Director of Development Services, gave an overview of the following rezoning request and recommendation for approval by the Planning Board and found in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan:

- request by George Barnes to rezone +/-1.38 acres on at 2258 W. Raleigh Boulevard from A-1 to B-5

The Mayor opened a public hearing relative to the rezoning request and recognized the following:

Brent Purdum with Triangle Site Design told the Council he is present on behalf of the developer to answer any questions the Council may have. There were no questions and no one else appeared. The Mayor declared the public hearing closed and noted written comments will be accepted up to 24 hours after the public hearing in accordance with NCGS 166A-19.24 and such comments can be submitted to the City Clerk.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Walker and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that **Ordinance No. O-2020-51** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AND MAP OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT** be adopted, subject to reconsideration upon receipt of additional comments. No additional comments were received.

PROJECT/BUDGET ORDINANCES

Consideration was given to the following Project and Budget Ordinances:

Grant Project Ordinance:

- FY 2020-2021 Project Ordinance appropriating funds from the U. S. Department of Justice - Bulletproof Vest Grant and the General Fund (total \$19,488 = \$9,744/U. S. Department of Justice; \$9,744/General Fund - local match)

Budget Ordinance Amendment:

- FY 2020-21 Budget Ordinance Amendment increasing appropriations to the General Fund for the Black Light Project (\$5,000 supplemental funding from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation)

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Miller and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that the following Ordinances be adopted:

- **Ordinance No. O-2020-52** entitled **GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE/BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP GRANT;** and

- **Ordinance No. O-2020-53** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 FOR BLACK LIGHT PROJECT.**

ANNEXATION NO. 318/1523 WEST MOUNT DRIVE

The City Council received a petition from Constance D. Parker for annexation of a contiguous parcel at 1523 West Mount Drive.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that receipt of the petition be acknowledged and that **Resolution No. R-2020-39** entitled **RESOLUTION ORDERING THE CITY CLERK TO INVESTIGATE THE SUFFICIENCY OF A PETITION FOR ANNEXATION OF A CONTIGUOUS AREA INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT/ANNEXATION NO. 318 - 1523 WEST MOUNT** be adopted.

ANNEXATION NO. 319/1533 WEST MOUNT DRIVE

The City Council received a petition from Constance D. Parker for annexation of a non-contiguous parcel at 1533 West Mount Drive.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that receipt of the petition be acknowledged and that **Resolution No. R-2020-40** entitled **RESOLUTION ORDERING THE CITY CLERK TO INVESTIGATE THE SUFFICIENCY OF A PETITION FOR ANNEXATION OF A NON-CONTIGUOUS AREA INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT/ANNEXATION NO. 319 - 1533 WEST MOUNT** be adopted.

ANNEXATION NO. 320/GREEN HILLS ROAD

The City Council received a petition from John T. and Barbara B. Coley for annexation of three (3) contiguous parcels at on Green Hills Road (PIN Nos. 383200003921, 383100196530,382108986433).

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that receipt of the petition be acknowledged and that **Resolution No. R-2020-41** entitled **RESOLUTION ORDERING THE CITY CLERK TO INVESTIGATE THE SUFFICIENCY OF A PETITION FOR ANNEXATION OF A CONTIGUOUS AREA INTO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT/ANNEXATION NO. 320 - GREEN HILLS ROAD (PIN NOS. 383200003921, 383100196530,382108986433)** be adopted.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING MINI-ROUNDBOUTS

The City Council was advised that following a joint traffic study by the Public Works Department and North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) of the Goldrock Road (NC 48) corridor it is recommended that mini-roundabouts be constructed at the intersections of:

- Goldrock Road/Roundtree Drive - Waterloo Drive; and
- Goldrock Road/Greyson Drive - Cunningham Drive.

Council was advised that the City will be responsible for 50% of the utility relocation costs estimated at \$140,000.

Discussion was held and it was noted that a very recent serious accident occurred in this area. Public Works Director Brad Kerr responded to questions about the project. He added if the project scores and receives funding it will return to the Council for consideration. Councilmember Knight stated he has been advocating along with the Neighborhood Association for a stop light at the intersection of Springfield/Leggett Road since he is aware there have been a number of accidents at that particular intersection and NCDOT has refused the request.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Miller and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that **Resolution No. R-2020-42** entitled **A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE INTENT OF THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO CONSTRUCT MINI-ROUNDBABOUTS AT TWO INTERSECTIONS IN ROCKY MOUNT, NASH COUNTY** be adopted. **FY 2021 HOUSING INCENTIVE GRANTS**

City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney provided the City Council with a recommendation for the allocation of \$533,830 in housing incentive funds to the following agencies in the following amounts:

623 Branch Street Renovation	\$ 43,830
Grandma' House, LLC	75,000
Berkshire Community Renovation	40,000
aFresh New Start, LLC	300,000
Sumner Apartments	75,000

The Council was advised that currently budgeted housing incentive funds total \$500,000 and an additional sum of \$33,830 of unspent prior year funds from previous Housing Incentive allocations are available.

Councilmember Daughtridge voiced concern that no terms were listed. He noted the agenda item stated that a Council Subcommittee made the recommendations and stated he is unaware of such a subcommittee and asked who the members are who serve on the subcommittee. He questioned the process for applying and monitoring the grants and noted that, if approved, two agencies will have received 58% of the total housing incentive grant funds awarded since May of 2020 and said there are a lot of accountability questions.

The City Manager said there is a Subcommittee of Councilmembers who review applications and make the recommendations for funding and projects are monitored by staff. She said there is no set limit and applications are evaluated based on merit and to what extent they address Council's initiatives relative to providing housing in the Downtown or for affordable housing. Councilmember Daughtridge questioned if any of the agencies listed have received other grants and the City Manager responded to say there is nothing to prevent a project from receiving multiple grants although she does not know if these agencies have received multiple grants.

Councilmember Blackwell stated it might be helpful to have it explained at the time Council approves the projects that the projects

meet the priorities set by Council for safe and decent housing. He added that he agrees that total project costs should be outlined, and the return quantified though return beyond costs has to be evaluated. He said housing is a way to address crime and health issues. A budget ordinance was provided to appropriate the \$33,830 unspent allocations from prior years.

Councilmember Miller voiced concern for the standards of the redeveloped properties and the City Manager noted that all improvements to properties would need to pass code requirements. Further discussion was held.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and carried by roll call vote (5 ayes/1 nay; Councilmember Daughtridg opposed) that funding allocations outlined above be approved, as recommended and that **Ordinance No.O-2020-54** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 FOR HOUSING INCENTIVES** be adopted.

LEASE/136 NANDINA COURT (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)

The City Council was provided with a seven-month lease for temporary housing for approximately 1,050 square feet of space with Ethel L. Harper for 136 Nandina Court. Council was advised that the lease requires a monthly rent of \$315 per month.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Knight and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that the lease be approved and that the Mayor be authorized to execute the Lease Agreement (**C-2020-27**) on behalf of the City.

APPOINTMENTS

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) that LaShawnda Washington be appointed to fill the vacancy on the Braswell Memorial Library Board. This unexpired term shall expire on December 31, 2021.

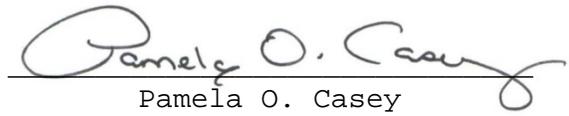
No action was taken to fill the remaining vacancies on the City's Boards, Commissions and Committees.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)

Interim Police Chief Charles Williams provided the City Council with the October 2020 Crime Report and year-to-date statistics and responded to questions from Councilmembers. A PowerPoint presentation provided by Interim Police Chief Williams is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (6 ayes/0 nays) the meeting be adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pamela O. Casey". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Pamela O. Casey
City Clerk