

October 25, 2021

The City Council of the City of Rocky Mount met this day in a regular session scheduled for 4:00 p.m. in the George W. Dudley City Council Chamber of the Frederick E. Turnage Municipal Building with Mayor C. Saunders "Sandy" Roberson, Jr. presiding.

NOTE: Participation limited due to Governor Roy Cooper's Executive Order relative to the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19)

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

*Councilmember Miller participated remotely.

Mayor Roberson reminded the Council that all votes today will need to be by voice-vote in light of Councilmember Miller's remote participation.

Staff present: Rochelle Small-Toney, City Manager; Pamela O. Casey, City Clerk; Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager; Jessie Nunery, Interim Director of Communications and Marketing; Mark Adcox, Video Production Specialist; Robin Cox, Communications Specialist; Latasha Hall, Director of Business and Collections Services; Joel Dunn, Parks and Recreation Director; Abdul Baloch, Chief Internal Auditor; Chris Beschler, Director of Energy Resources; Ken Hunter, Assistant to the City Manager for Budget and Evaluation; Archie Jones, Director of Human Relations; Robert Hassell, Police Chief; Brad Kerr, Public Works Director; Keyana Walston, Program Manager-Management Analyst; Brenton Bent, Water Resources Director; Kena Cofield-Jones, Human Resources Director; Gregory Cotten, Chief Technology Officer; Jayson Dawkins, Policy Analyst; Tracey Drewery, Assistant Fire Chief; Charles Bunn, III, Battalion Chief; Will Deaton, Development Services; Michael Roupp, Assistant Chief of Operations; Todd Gardner, Transit Administrator; Chris Ballard, Police Lieutenant and Richard J. Rose, City Attorney.

Security Officers: Police Sergeant Stephen Walker and Senior Police Officer, Shawn Battle.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and requested a moment of silence and additionally asked all to remember Mousa Shehadeh, a colleague of the City who passed away this week.

APPROVAL OF/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)

Mayor Roberson questioned if there were any amendments to the agenda. He stated he is aware of the following two (2) additional items and suggested they be added as numbers 19 and 20, respectively:

- Consideration of the purchase of nine (9) Police vehicles; and
- A closed session matter involving personnel.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the agenda be amended, as requested.

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 September 13, 2021, 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:

- Began her report by reminding the community to mark their calendars for America Recycles Day, which will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 13 at Golden East Crossing Mall. There are a number of items the community may bring to be disposed of safely, including documents, electronics, paint and more. This is a free event. A full list of items is available at rockymountnc.gov/keepamericabeautiful. Please call 252-467-4960 if there are any questions.
- Stated there are a number of ways residents can celebrate the upcoming holidays with the City of Rocky Mount beginning with the City Lake Lighting on Thursday, December 2 at 6 p.m., followed by the Rocky Mount Christmas Parade to be held on Sunday, December 5 from 3 to 5 p.m. in Downtown Rocky Mount. The Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences will hold a Winter Wonderland event on Sunday, December 12 from 1 to 5 p.m. Finally, the Imperial Centre will be home of the Sanders Family Christmas production, with six live shows beginning December 3. Look for upcoming details on these events at rockymountnc.gov and imperialcentre.org.
- Announced the City will be offering Downtown holiday shuttles from Friday, November 26th through New Year's Day 2022. Shuttles will run Thursdays through Saturdays from 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. and Sundays from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Stay connected to the City's website at rockymountnc.gov for future information. The shuttles will run from the Rocky Mount Mills to Downtown and back to Rocky Mount Mills.
- Announced with the Thanksgiving holiday upcoming, the Rocky Mount Fire Department will hold a Turkey Frying Safety Event on Friday, November 19 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Lowe's Home Improvement, located at 700 N. Wesleyan Boulevard. The event will feature fire truck demonstrations, free samples and more. Stay updated on the event by visiting rockymountnc.gov as well as the Fire Department's Facebook page.
- Announced that the Community and Business Development Department is assisting residents through the application process of the Housing Repair Program, which runs through November 12. Eligible homeowners may be able to qualify for a grant of up to \$12,500 for rehabilitation improvements for houses at least 50 years old. To apply, pick up an application on the first floor of City Hall or call 972-1100 to request a copy by mail. Forms may also be downloaded at rockymountnc.gov.
- Reported that applications are also available for the Small Business Assistance Block Grant program through CARES Act funding. An applicant checklist and required documentation details are available at rockymountnc.gov on the Community and Business Development page at rockymountnc.gov.
- Announced that Emergency Rental and Utility Assistance is now available via Community Development Block Grant COVID-19 funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Eligible families must have been financially impacted by COVID-19 due to job loss, reduction in hours or pay, furlough or other documented pandemic-related hardships. For more information, call 252-442-8553 or email housingcenter@embarqmail.com or cas@rockymountnc.gov.

- Invited the community to join the City live from the City Council Chamber on Tuesday, October 26 at 10 a.m. for a special announcement. The announcement will be shared via Facebook and YouTube.
- Stated she wishes to recognize a very important member of her Executive Team, Ken Hunter, whose position will be reclassified from Assistant to the City Manager for Budget and Evaluation to Assistant to the City Manager. She said this will allow her to assign Mr. Hunter additional duties to include supervision over several departments. She added Mr. Hunter has proven his competency working in the area of budget and this is an opportunity for him to expand his career path as well as to bring a great deal of experience and knowledge of the existing departments with the City. She said she would like to congratulate Mr. Hunter publicly adding this change will be effective November 1.

Mayor Roberson thanked the City Manager for her comments and congratulated Mr. Hunter. He called on Councilmember Knight for comment.

Councilmember Knight stated that relative to the matching grant for homes that are 50 years older, it is his recollection that during the City Council retreat Council requested changes in that particular program adding that sometimes homeowners are struggling. He said Council had said if residents had \$12,500, they would have probably already used it for repairs and that Council had asked that the program be amended to no longer require a matching grant. He asked if the grant requirements have been amended and said he is hearing throughout the community that when someone applies for the grant, they are still told that a match is required.

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney responded by saying that staff is to come back with another revised program that will address the concerns mentioned at the City Council retreat to expand the program to include other opportunities, particularly seniors, who also struggle with having limited income, but still have need for renovation of their home. She said staff is currently working on something to bring back to Council.

Councilmember Knight congratulated Mr. Hunter asking that Mr. Hunter not be offended by what he is about to say. He stated that he would have appreciated receiving the information relative to Mr. Hunter's position reclassification prior to today so that he and other Councilmembers would have been prepared to congratulate Mr. Hunter. He told the City Manager that he knows she is the Manager but added Council would appreciate being apprised of any changes in upper management positions in advance.

An exchange occurred between Mr. Knight and the City Manager, and he stated that no comment is needed.

Mayor Roberson stated that it is his understanding the information was provided to Council.

Councilmember Blackwell questioned if there are deadlines and cutoffs relative to the grant or if the City will continue to take applications even though funds might be exhausted.

Ms. Small-Toney stated that there are deadlines, and she thinks it is unfair to keep the application process open when budgeted funds have already been allocated for the year.

Councilmember Blackwell asked if the Manager could advise what has and has not been expended or, if not today, provide this information to the Council at the next meeting so they can be informed and consider whether to make further allocations.

The Mayor questioned if there were other questions or comments for the City Manager and there were none.

PRESENTATION - NASH COMMUNITY COLLEGE - DR. LEW K. HUNNICUTT

The Mayor welcomed Lew K. Hunnicutt, Ph.D., President of Nash Community College, to bring greetings from Nash Community College and provide the City Council with an update on happenings at the college.

Dr. Hunnicutt thanked the Mayor and Council for allowing him to bring a message to them. Some highlights of his presentation are:

- He is about to begin his third year as President of Nash Community College;
- He serves as the fifth President of Nash Community College;
- Just prior to coming to Nash Community College, he served at the University of Georgia as Assistant Provost and had gotten off track because he was at the community college level in Texas for 13 years and when he left to go to the University of Georgia friends told him he was getting off mission;
- It took him about two months to know he was off mission because his mission is changing lives of students and when the opportunity opened to come to Nash Community College, it literally took him only moments on the college's website to know he wanted the job;
- He provided updates about what's going on at the college, the impact the college is having, and where Nash Community College is going in the future:
 - o The college did an economic impact survey and in the year prior to COVID, the college served 79,000 people with 12,000 being students and the remainder attending events at the Brown Auditorium;
 - o He is not going to share 2020 numbers due to the pandemic, but the college has about the same economic impact annually as in 2019;
 - o He reported since 1967, Nash Community College has had an annual impact on the county of \$86M;
 - o He reported the college receives funds from the state and county and provides a \$30 return on every \$1 invested by the county;
 - o He reported that one out of every 38 jobs in Nash County has been touched by Nash Community College and about 70% of its team members give back off hours to the communities where they live; service in the county equals about 7,000 volunteer hours a year adding about 60% of employees reside in Nash County and when Edgecombe and Wilson Counties are added that percentage increases to about 90%;
 - o He provided the Council with a handout entitled "Campus at a Glance" that provides information about the college and includes a tuition comparison;
 - o Dr. Hunnicutt said the most important thing he wants to relay is that he is available to the Councilmembers and urged them to reach out to him when issues come up or they need something that could benefit the City;
 - o He said he does not believe that everybody needs to go to college forever but there are many programs that don't require

- two years and others where students can receive training for a career in three months, six months, a year or two years; and
- o He provided additional information and added that the college has a program called Electric Line Technology which lasts for 16 weeks, one semester, wherein they do 40-person cohorts, and most are underwritten by Duke or ElectricCities or an EMC. He added there is limited to no expense and 100% of students have been hired over the last five years with an average starting salary of \$50,000. He provided more information about the program and other educational offerings.

Mayor Roberson thanked Dr. Hunnicutt for his presentation and the work he does at Nash Community College.

PRESENTATION - FUSUS PROJECT - CHIEF ROBERT HASSELL

City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney reminded the City Council that the FUSUS project was explained during budget deliberations and Chief Hassell provided information on the program that will help improve the transparency of policing in the community. She said the idea is to situate cameras along the corridors where Shotspotters are currently installed. She told the Council that today's presentation will provide an update and demonstration of the progress on the project. The Manager added staff is very excited about the project helping to increase public safety within the community.

Ms. Small-Toney stated she has seen the demonstration and it has been very helpful in some arrests.

Police Chief Robert Hassell presented a PowerPoint presentation to the City Council providing an update on the FUSUS Real-Time Intelligence Center (RTIC) project approved by Council at the July 12, 2021, City Council meeting. It was explained that the Police Department started the evaluation phase of the project that will last thirty (30) days.

Chief Hassell advised the City Council that:

- The official kickoff of the project started in August when the Department entered into a testing phase. The testing phase of all integrated platforms is continuing live in the Central Dispatch Center;
- The software:
 - o Enhances technology around the City with the addition of cameras in the Shotspotter areas which is a goal of the City Council;
 - o Enhances officer safety by making it possible for information to be relayed to officers before they arrive at a scene;
 - o Enhances prosecution of cases with collection of video evidence from integrated cameras;
 - o Real Time Intelligence Center aids in automatic dispatch of officers using vehicle locators to dispatch the officer closest to the scene;
 - o Enhances current technology to allow for a single viewing platform for:
 - Video service platforms;
 - Automatic vehicle locations;
 - Drones (successfully integrated; Fire Department current has several drones that can live feed into the system);
 - CAD (computer aided dispatch) has been successfully integrated along with LPRs (license plate readers);
 - Live stream events (mobile applications are installed on mobile devices and cell phones)

The Police Chief explained illustrations provided of examples of what dispatchers can see on their screens in the dispatch center. Council was advised that currently there are over sixty (60) different cameras feeding video into the dispatch center and the plan is to gradually integrate another sixty (60) cameras in the coming weeks. He told the City Council that the software will allow officers to respond quicker and locate individuals and vehicles and ultimately result in less crime in the City.

Chief Hassell thanked all Departments who have assisted with the technology adding that everyone worked together to accomplish the task. He stated it is expected the evaluation period will last another few weeks and if staff believes the equipment is not providing the set benchmarks and successes the contract can be canceled with no loss of funds, with the exception of the cameras already installed.

The Chief responded to questions from Councilmembers.

Mayor Roberson thanked Chief Hassell and the Police Department for the presentation and the work they are doing. The Chief expressed appreciation to the Council and City Manager for approval of and support for the project.

PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

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

- ***Nathlyn Ohree:***
 - Thanked the Council for the wonderful work they are doing throughout the City;
 - Said she hears positive things about what Councilmembers do individually and that adds to what they are doing collectively;
 - Said as she drives through the City and working on both sides of the tracks, she sees needs that people have being taken care of and added that we are in a trying time, and she prays this trying time won't last forever; said we serve a God that's able to carry us through and she wants all to keep the faith and be mindful of the 10 commandments;
 - Said if all could just embrace the 10 commandments and respect one another there could be a lot more progress;
 - Read/explained the 10 commandments saying she brought them with her in case someone didn't have the opportunity to review them because a lot of people have skipped church over the last two years;
 - Said Councilmembers may be able to assist those needing help and Nash Community College can assist individuals to get the tools needed in life; and
 - Said she continues to pray for Councilmembers and encouraged them to keep up the good work

- ***Gloria Davis:***
 - Said she lives in the City and on a couple of occasions she has stood before the Council to petition the City to add or create a mental health forum and said she makes that petition again;

- Said with the continuous stressful traumatic climate that has presented itself to the City and surrounding areas her petition is to include information for persons with trauma and traumatic experiences, even from the COVID experience;
 - Said her plea for information is for all people;
 - Said there are citizens of all races, creed, color and social status that can benefit from these services because of the traumatic experiences they see or hear about;
 - Said some issues cannot be immediately eliminated but others can be immediately and effectively handled;
 - Said waking up with a pleasant attitude helps people get along with their neighbors and others better because their own attitude is better; and
 - Said nothing is too small in providing service, even small, it can make a person feel good because someone cares
- *Dr. Kim E. Koo:*
- Told the Council she lives in the Englewood section of the City and is a member of the Rocky Mount Racial Justice Group;
 - Said all should question where private public partnerships come from and why we buy into them;
 - Said once upon a time, all public services in this and other cities were paid for with tax dollars and added federal subsidies;
 - Said tax dollars were handled by the municipalities and citizens were hired to provide municipal services;
 - Stated that at that time wages were fairly decent and other added benefits came with the job;
 - Said there were pathways for grievance resolution and while imperfect, civil service jobs were respected and sought for;
 - Said privatization means no accountability to citizens;
 - Said private companies are not required to pay living wages or have grievance resolution mechanisms for workers and can hire and fire at will especially with non-union workers. Private companies are accountable mainly to their shareholders and their main goal is profit maximization;
 - Said as our country has moved towards further privatization of public services, greater cutbacks of essential social services has occurred, and many public services have become marginalized or have disappeared;
 - Said the destruction of public healthcare services in this pandemic sacrificed the lives of more than 700,000 citizens to the altar of profit and these are not the latest numbers;
 - Said she calls this cannibalization by profit seeking corporations;
 - Said in her opinion this started with the neoliberal policies of President Reagan by destruction of the air traffic controllers, who were public workers fighting for decent wages and better working conditions in 1981;
 - Said people living here constantly complain about decreasing services and the City Council seeks to regain ground by subcontracting more and more to private companies;
 - Said she knows Council is trying to do their best with a shrinking pot of money but asked why throw money away to private companies instead of hiring more workers particularly from the more impoverished neighborhoods with a high unemployment rates;
 - Said people are looking for decent jobs, especially youth, adding they can be trained and more people-friendly solutions to the City's problems can be found; and
 - Suggested hiring community organizers to seek help and looking for ideas for longer term, cost saving solutions to bring back public services supported by public money

- ***Samuel Battle:***
 - Said he likes what the Police Chief is doing in the City but there is a lot of stuff going on relative to kids being on drugs and not caring adding the Dollar General has been robbed about three times in the approximately 90 days it has been open;
 - Said the only way to cure the problem is to increase the pay for Police Officers;
 - Said it is good to have technology but there needs to be more Officers;
 - Said it recently took Police 25 minutes to respond to an accident in the Meadowbrook area and took EMS less than 10 minutes to respond;
 - Said there are not enough Officers and ticketing on the bypass should be left to the Highway Patrol;
 - Said crime is growing in every ward and asked when salaries of the Police and Sanitation Workers will be increased;
 - Stated there has been no recognition of citizens who cleaned Unity Cemetery, particularly young people, adding Tarrick Pittman should be on the Board that Lois Watkins is organizing; and
 - Said the majority of the volunteers at Unity Cemetery were White and only 15 Black people volunteered

- ***Jessica Davis:***
 - Stated she is a former City employee and her relationship with the City began in April 2012 when she began volunteering at the South Rocky Mount Community Center Monday through Friday 4 to 5 hours a day without pay until the facility closed for renovations;
 - Said when the center reopened, she was hired as a front desk assistant and later as a part-time recreation supervisor making \$10 an hour;
 - Said as a recreation supervisor she planned, organized and executed many programs and events with a very high success rate and never had any complaints and was never written up;
 - Told the Council she was Employee of the Year in 2019;
 - Stated she accepted a position in Human Resources as an administrative secretary and began work on March 21, 2021, doing very basic administrative duties, answering the phone and sending email correspondence;
 - Said in that position she was spoken to very rudely on a daily basis and mistreated constantly;
 - Said she was told that she was heavy and to stop wearing heels because the clacking irritated her supervisor;
 - Said at that point she made a report to Human Resources Director, Kena Cofield-Jones, and the situation only got worse;
 - Said she went to the Human Relations Department to report the situation to see if there could be some resolution and nothing happened;
 - Told the Council she then reached out to some of the Councilmembers to try to get help but instead of her complaint being investigated she was then evaluated and terminated on May 21;
 - Said she recently read in a newspaper article that the City Attorney had said that under the City's policies employees are instructed to report alleged discrimination to the Director of Human Resources and alleged harassment or bullying to Managers, Supervisors, or to the Human Resource Department and said she did as instructed and followed City policy and the chain of command but was still terminated. She added no investigation was done and instead she was treated badly and terminated;
 - Said she does not think it was about her work performance because she has always done her best because that is how she provides for her children;
 - Said with or without pay she gave her best to the City even working 10 to 12 hours a day only making \$10 an hour adding in the last position she made \$20 per hour and would not have done a bad job, especially since it was a simple job, and she was only sending emails and answering the telephone; and

- Said she thinks something needs to be done because this happened within six months of her Supervisor being employed with the City and she does not think her Supervisor knew City policy because she feels if she did, she would not have created her own evaluation form to write her up and then terminate her
- **John Purcell:**
 - Said he is President of The Restoration Place in Rocky Mount and is not originally from the City;
 - Said his father is from Raeford, Hoke County, North Carolina and he came to Rocky Mount last December because he believes in this City, loves it and thinks it is a great place to live;
 - Said he lives on Rollingwood Drive and received a call this morning that bothered him;
 - Said he was working with one of the Community Presidents and asked what she could do to get other Community Presidents together along with other volunteers so they could coordinate an effort to help each other in all City neighborhoods to have sufficient people, tools and equipment to clean up neighborhoods;
 - Said they started in Happy Hill first and power washed everyone's house and cut their grass for free;
 - Said he was surprised because when the Community President he was working with advised the Human Relations Director this was happening he inquired if she was affiliated with him and the next comment was, "you know, he doesn't like to pay to pay his people";
 - Said he has never met the Human Relations Director but has met someone in his office and if he has some issues, small business owners have issues and that is normal;
 - Said he feels the Director should have reached out to him and had a conversation with before he said things about him;
 - Said since his business opened in July, he has spent \$40,000 with hotels, \$120,000 in payroll; \$50,000 with local contractors; \$200,000 in materials at Lowe's, Walmart, and Builders Discount; \$300,000 restoring houses already in the City and through the purchase of those houses paid the City \$50,000 in back taxes owed by the previous owners, and he also has a building on Winstead Avenue;
 - Said for someone to speak about him to one of the Community Presidents was unprofessional and not the way business should be conducted;
 - Said all should all be working together to make the City better;
 - Praised the Inspections Services Administrator saying he is very professional and when he has had issues with permits the Administrator has sat down with him and brought in inspectors to assist and that is what a professional does; and
 - Said Council might want to take a look at the Human Relations Office to see that it is a little more engaged with someone who's trying to help the community
- **Jacqueline Mills:**
 - Said she is here today to express her grievances and to bring attention to the mismanagement of policies and procedures specifically by the Human Resources Director and the City Nurse;

The Mayor requested she refrain from stating the names of employees.

- Said she was hired by the City as the Administrative Secretary at the Employee Health Center on June 1, 2021, and her Supervisor was the City Nurse;
- Said she was wrongfully terminated on September 10, 2021;
- Told the Council she has 25 years' administrative experience;
- Said she spoke with Human Resources on many occasions regarding her immediate Supervisor's threats and the fact that she was very unprofessional;

- Said her Supervisor threatened her about being within the six-month probationary period, spoke to her in a derogatory manner on several occasions and sent her excessive emails pertaining to her performance;
 - Said she reported her Supervisor to the Human Resources Department so that the Human Resources Department could become her advocate and spokesperson, but nothing was done;
 - Said she shared many emails with Human Resources pertaining to the behavior in the Employee Health Center and she was told that the Human Resources Director would talk to the Supervisor, but nothing was done;
 - Said she found out that the Human Resources Director shared emails with her Supervisor that she had sent expecting that they would be kept confidential, and she feels she was professionally disrespected, and Human Resources was not an advocate for her as an employee of the City;
 - Said she feels for future employees and feels Human Resources should be managed by more than one person adding there should be a panel or team of colleagues to determine if termination is appropriate and one person, especially one with less than 6 months experience with the City, should not have the power to terminate an employee affecting their life and career;
 - Restated that she has 25 years in a professional environment, was degraded, put down, insulted, harassed and worked in a hostile work environment;
 - Said she is a good person and has done well for herself but was put down and thrown out within three months of working for the City and made to feel like she was nothing;
 - Said people want to work and earn a living and she was happy to have a job making \$30,000 to \$40,000; and
 - Said in a meeting recently it was mentioned that pay is an issue but miscommunication and not salary is the issue
- ***Morrie Minges:***
- Thanked the Council relative to an article she read in the newspaper stating they want to do something about litter in the City;
 - Said she is willing to help with litter and with Unity Cemetery;
 - Said the people who landscape City properties do a beautiful job; and
 - Expressed a desire for littering to stop
- ***Bronson Williams:***
- Said processes are defined as a series of actions or steps taken to achieve a particular end and a tone should not exist within an organization that it is always right;
 - Said that vein of thinking will always be wrong and actually harmful for success;
 - Said one can create policies and procedures for just about anything; however, when they lack common sense and sound and prudent judgment based on a perception rather than fact it can lead to the creation of serious concerns;
 - Said he has a major concern with the entire Development Services Division that rests on the shoulders of its Director and those who work in that Department;
 - Said some laws are so plain, it does not take a law degree to understand the meaning;
 - Said a good law is direct, clear, hard to debate and passes the commonsense test or the plain meaning rule;
 - Said a law exists that allows spending up to \$15,000 with some exemptions without a permit and the law is plain on that;
 - Said leadership cannot lead with emotions, bias or the perception of authority;
 - Said he believes the law was created because people in this state were tired of cities, towns and counties attempting to permit people to death, especially when the City's process to obtain permits is antiquated;

- Said the review process is horrible and he believes that the Development Services Department is out of touch with state laws, thus creating additional conflict in the department as it relates to the laws in North Carolina;
 - Said the process needs to be accelerated in keeping with the City Council's goals;
 - Said citizens do not need "big brother" watching over them;
 - Said it is known there are slum lords in the City and the Department could be most effective in addressing this concern;
 - Said instead people have to deal with despair sometimes while it seems landlords get a pass and that is not right;
 - Said the very laws that he sent to the Development Services Department are the ones they sent back to him insulting his intelligence and he has not and will not respond; and
 - Said all hindering blocks at any level no matter where they exist must be removed so development can flow like water in the City
- *Curmilus Dancy:*
- Said he is speaking on behalf of the NAACP and is the Vice President;
 - Said he addressed Council at the last meeting relative to the public comment guidelines and is here to see if what he asked be done is being or will be done and expressed hope that if not being done now, that it will be done;
 - Said all speakers should respect each other even across the Council;
 - Said he has been attending Council meetings since the late 1980's and no one on the Council was there then except for Attorney Rose;
 - Said he has a heart for Rocky Mount and has been working in the City for 35 years and has much family and friends who are residents of Rocky Mount for whom he speaks; said Rocky Mount is like home to him;
 - Said when he comes to speak, he wants to be treated fairly and he treats others fairly;
 - Said he hears a lot of stuff about policies and procedures, and he is a policy procedures man;
 - Said employees need to know policy and procedures and there are avenues to work from such as EEOC because North Carolina is an "at will" state and people can complain but if they don't do their homework and follow the avenues to get things done it will continue;
 - Appreciated the Chief of Police for working to make the City safe adding the people have a role as well; said he has been conducting recent NAACP meetings and Sheriffs Atkinson and Stone and Chief Robert Hassell have visited the meetings; and
 - Said all should show respect for each other and try to work things out adding he gets tired of seeing Rocky Mount in the news and citizens should lead by example
- *Troy Davis:*
- Said Rocky Mount isn't just like home to him – it is home, and he is a lifelong resident of Rocky Mount;
 - Said citizens come to Council to voice concerns about issues and some are being swept under the rug;
 - Said Jessica Davis was born and grew up in Rocky Mount and worked for the City for eight years and was wrongfully terminated and that is completely unacceptable to him and other citizens;
 - Said Jacqueline Mills' termination is completely unacceptable and City management should not tell employees not to bring their phones into an office;
 - Said he has a list of over 50 available jobs within the City of Rocky Mount and he was able to check Assistant City Manager off the list because Mr. Hunter, who is the City Manager's do boy, was able to get that job; and
 - Said the City Manager told Council people cannot be found to fill the jobs because of COVID but numerous applications have been received for various jobs in the City (recited the number of applications received);

Mayor Roberson asked Mr. Davis to refrain from addressing the City Manager by name. Mr. Davis stated he has not called the Manager by name.

- Said the number of vacancies is the reason trash pickup is late and the reason trash on the north side of the City hasn't been picked up every Friday for the last six months;
 - Said people are not being hired because the City wants to pick and choose who they want to hire;
 - Said there should be no reason the City is short on police officers; and
 - Said the Council should get rid of the City Manager
- **Tarek Ibrahim:**
- Said he and his associate and a couple of other friends were at the local skate park on Sunset recently; he said there was no gate and no signage, and they were approached by a couple of Police Officers;
 - Said the Officers were polite, courteous and understanding of the situation and informed him they had to leave because apparently, they were trespassing by skating at a skate park;
 - Said apparently the City deems it necessary to close the skate park down due to vandalism (spray paint) and questioned if the park is supposed to be closed indefinitely;
 - Said he was told if he returned, he would be issued a citation;
 - Said the Officers informed him if he had complaints, he should refer those complaints to Council;
 - Said he was trying to figure out what is going on and why the City feels it is necessary to punish people who are using the park for its proper use;
 - Said none of the people he hangs out with, knows or associates with at the skate park are dumb enough to deface the property knowing that they wouldn't be able to use it anymore;
 - Said it doesn't make sense to him to punish everybody for what somebody else did and he is trying to verify if it was appropriate and even legal for the Officers to tell them they could not be there with no signage and no gate;
 - Said somebody probably took the gate off because they were tired of being told they couldn't use the park because it was being painted; he added painting makes the skate park dangerous for skaters because it makes it sticky; and
 - Said he has volunteered to take care of the small problems at the park, so they are not locked out of the park indefinitely; and
 - Suggested a mural be added to cover up the graffiti

Councilmember Joyner requested the Manager or someone from Parks and Recreation respond to Mr. Ibrahim's complaint and Ms. Small-Toney stated it was her intent to receive the information and have the Parks and Recreation Director reach out to Mr. Ibrahim.

Councilmember Knight questioned if the skate park is closed or open saying that should be a quick answer.

Parks and Recreation Director Joel Dunn told the Council the park is still closed to the best of his knowledge. He said some inappropriate graffiti had been painted in the skate park and staff was working to cover it up. He said he will follow up, is happy to speak with Mr. Ibrahim and will issue a public announcement to ensure the public is aware if the park is closed. He added the park is not closed indefinitely and he will follow up with staff to ensure the appropriate messaging is posted when this type of issue occurs because there are a

number of people who use the park appropriately. He said when issues occur, they work to correct them quickly.

Councilmember Walker stated there have been concerns about skateboarding at City Lake and questioned the City's policy. Mr. Dunn told Mr. Walker that to his knowledge it has always been the City's policy that no dogs or skateboards are allowed at City Lake, and he will confirm that and check on existing signage.

Councilmember Knight stated that the City Council does not hire, or fire employees and it is the City Manager's job to manage employees. He added that the only employees managed by Council are the City Manager, City Clerk and City Attorney. He said the City Council hires the City Manager to make sure Departments run smoothly and the Human Resources Department investigates employee grievances. Mr. Knight told those present that North Carolina is an "at will" state and he has personal experience from years ago with feeling wrongfully terminated. He said "at will" means an employee can be fired for any reason or no reason at all. He said this is a problem that needs to be fixed at the state level. He said he thinks the City Manager or Human Resources Director can speak to whether there is an appeal process for part-time employees and probationary employees who are terminated adding if they have no recourse perhaps the policy should be reviewed.

Mr. Knight added he is from a background of advocacy and feels all employees whether employed by the City or any organization should have an appeal process and be respected as an employee. He said he wants citizens to know that the Council does not get involved with managing employees and Council deals with the City Manager directly if they hear from an employee to see if things were handled correctly. He reiterated that he wants citizens to know the City's policy which has been in place long before he came that no part-time or probationary employee has appeal rights if they do not work past the probationary period, and they can be terminated during that probationary period. Mr. Knight requested the City Attorney to confirm this is the policy and state law and Mr. Rose confirmed his comments are correct.

Councilmember Blackwell stated from time to time the City policies have been revised. He agreed with Mr. Knight that Councilmembers do not have authority over employees and said they have received pushback when they have attempted to intervene in Human Resources matters. He told those present that Council's input is at the policy level, and then to bring enlightenment, or at least information to the management and to the Council and Mayor, when some of them hear matters of concern. He said he can't judge the current situation and Council has to have confidence in leadership and if they don't then it is Council's responsibility to deal with that. He agreed that policies have been revised when Council felt they were unfair and inequitable and questioned if this is an opportunity for Council to look at how

decisions are made and give people recourse in the event that some other eyes need to be on decisions that are made. He said he does not know what fits with North Carolina law and legal requirements at the State level but recognizes if the City wants to attract people who are qualified (and just because people apply for a position, doesn't mean they're qualified to be hired for that position) and the desire is to have a culture to attract people who are good at what they do and want to be a part of the team that needs to be built at the policy level and then from the leadership in place. He further questioned if there should be review of policies to ensure they are appropriate and proper.

Councilmember Joyner questioned if the desire is for Council to review certain policies.

Councilmember Blackwell said that is the question he is asking. He added that previously Council had a concern about policy alignment and there were problems in the appeal process and other concerns and the Manager made recommendations that have been adopted to change that approach in policy management. He questioned what recourse is available for part-time and probationary employees stating Council has heard two complaints from former employees tonight and another complaint from a citizen. He said he is not validating or invalidating the complaints but is asking that the process be explained.

Mayor Roberson suggested this matter may be one for discussion in a Committee of the Whole meeting.

City Attorney Richard J. Rose said policy is up to the Council and is not written in stone and is not something that Council would be prohibited from amending if they wished to change those policies with respect to part-time and probationary employees.

Councilmember Knight clarified that he was not insinuating or inferring that the Human Resources Manager or the City Manager had done anything wrong but wanted to make it clear that Council does not get involved in personnel complaints. He said Council wants to know what the policy is and how policy is carried out but wants the public to understand that in 1947 the General Assembly passed a law that North Carolina cannot become unionized to penalize some employees who were seeking justice and he is speaking in advocacy and justice.

Councilmember Joyner asked if it is being requested that further discussion of this matter be placed on an agenda for a future Committee of the Whole meeting and the Mayor responded that he thinks that is the recommendation requesting the City Manager to include this on a future agenda.

There being no further public petitions, the Mayor closed the public petitions portion of the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. AD VALOREM TAX RELEASES:(recommended for approval)

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

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

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>BILL NO.</u>	<u>NAME/ADDRESS</u>	<u>TAX</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
<u>NASH COUNTY</u>				
2021	1734	MITCHELL, IRENE J T/A LADY ELEGANT 3476 SUNSET AVE ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	7.54	CITY VALUATION CORRECTION
		TOTAL RELEASE:	7.54	
2021	12513	SROA 111 COUNTRY CLUB NC LLC 111 COUNTRY CLUB RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	20.08	CITY VALUATION CORRECTION
		TOTAL RELEASE:	20.08	

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

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>BILL NO.</u>	<u>NAME/ADDRESS</u>	<u>TAX</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
<u>EDGECOMBE COUNTY</u>				
2021	7527	PARKER, ALONZO PARKER, DOROTHY M LOT 5, BLK J, EDGEMONT TERRA ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	292.14	CITY ELDERLY/DISABLED EXEMPTION
		TOTAL RELEASE:	292.14	
2020	1002151	PRIDGEN, WILLIAM S 2624 DEER RUN ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	86.45 25.94	CITY VALUATION PEN CORRECTION
		TOTAL RELEASE:	112.39	
2020	1002152	PRIDGEN, WILLIAM S 2624 DEER RUN ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	85.21 34.08	CITY VALUATION PEN CORRECTION
		TOTAL RELEASE:	119.29	
2020	1002153	PRIDGEN, WILLIAM S 2624 DEER RUN ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	80.72 40.36	CITY VALUATION PEN CORRECTION
		TOTAL RELEASE:	121.08	
2020	1002154	PRIDGEN, WILLIAM S 2624 DEER RUN ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	72.60 43.56	CITY VALUATION PEN CORRECTION
		TOTAL RELEASE:	116.16	
2020	1002173	PRIDGEN, WILLIAM S 2624 DEER RUN ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	87.89 17.58	CITY VALUATION PEN CORRECTION
		TOTAL RELEASE:	105.47	

NASH COUNTY

2021	17550	OPPORTUNITIES INDUSTRIALIZATION CENTER INC N GRACE ST ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	1076.20	CITY	EXEMPT PROPERTY
		TOTAL RELEASE:	1076.20		
2021	2478	RAYMOND LEASING CORPORATION ADVANTAX 538 SUTTERS CREEK BLVD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	330.42	CITY	OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS
		TOTAL RELEASE:	330.42		
2021	1482	UBYS AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE UCILIO SARBELIO RECINO A 1907 N WESLEYAN BLVD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	171.25 17.13	CITY PEN	VALUATION CORRECTION
		TOTAL RELEASE:	188.38		

B. TEMPORARY STREET CLOSING (recommended for approval):

- Request from Brad Kerr, Director of Public Works, for permission to close the following streets for the Third Annual Downtown Rocky Mount Halloween Bar Crawl + Block Party from Saturday, October 30, 2021, at 3:00 p.m. until Sunday, October 31, 2021, at 12:00 a.m. (ordinance adoption requirement of NCDOT standards):
 - Tarboro Street between Main Street and Washington Street (traffic will be detoured onto NE Main Street, West on East Thomas Street, North on Falls Road and East onto Goldleaf Street)

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the recommendations outlined in the Consent Agenda be approved inclusive of approval of the tax releases and/or refunds and adoption of **Ordinance No. O-2021-86** entitled **ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT DECLARING A TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE FOR HALLOWEEN BAR CRAWL.**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR REDISTRICTING/PUBLIC HEARING

The Mayor opened a public hearing relative to the proposed redistricting guiding principles for the City's electoral wards.

City Attorney Richard J. Rose stated a third plan was requested and Ms. Mackie and Mr. Gilkerson have provided a pre-recorded video since they are unable to be present.

Mayor Roberson postponed the public hearing to allow for the pre-recorded video by Caroline Mackie and Bill Gilkerson to be shown. The main points from the video were:

- Ms. Mackie and Mr. Gilkerson watched the video of the Council meeting held on October 18 wherein the question of transparency was discussed. Ms. Mackie confirmed neither of them talked about or shared any draft plans with anyone before they were sent to the City Council and made public;
- They made the commitment and asked Council to make the commitment that all discussions about the maps would be held in public and

open meetings adding they have kept to that and believe Council has kept to that and no Councilmember has tried to contact them, and they haven't contacted anybody else;

- Clarified neither of them have shared plans or discussed the matter with anyone outside of public meetings with the City Council;
- Plan C was introduced;
- It was stated that Ms. Mackie and Mr. Gilkerson came before Council on October 11 and presented two alternative plans identified as Alternative A and B and advised they would present a third Alternative plan if that was desired;
- The idea was that they be advised of what Council liked and did not like about the first two plans and advised of what changes Council desired;
- Ms. Mackie and Mr. Gilkerson watched a video of the October 18 meeting and saw that Council voted to request a third plan;
- The third plan was shown and explained as an interactive map on the City's website and Council was advised that that plan has been available since October 11 but was a work in progress and included some features that some found to be frustrating;
- The three plans are on the City's website and show current wards, Nash and Edgecombe County precincts and can be layered to show the wards;
- No guidance was provided about how to draw Alternative C except that one Councilmember expressed a preference for keeping Ward One entirely in Edgecombe County and Alternative C does that as does Alternative B;
- In each map incumbents are in separate wards and in the same ward as they are currently;
- Preserving the core of existing districts and respecting precinct lines were considered in all maps and Alternative A emphasized respecting precinct lines; Alternative B put more emphasis on preserving the cores of districts; and Alternative C both preserved the cores of districts and respected precinct lines;
- In Alternative C, Ward 1 stays in Edgecombe County but goes further north; Ward 2 which had the largest population deficit picks up more of the Benvenue and Northgreen Country Club territory northwest of 301 and more of the heart of the eastern part of the City; Wards 3 and 4 changed a little more with Ward 3 going westward instead of Ward 4;
- Wards 5, 6 and 7 have little change but Ward 7 goes up to Battleboro;
- The one difference in Alternative C is that the Westhaven neighborhood goes into Ward 6;
- Race was not considered during drawing of any of the maps but was looked at once the maps were completed and it was noticed that six of the seven districts had an African American majority;
- Wards 1, 2, 3 and 4 were over 70% Black in total population; in Wards 6 and 7 the Black percentages go up a little; in Ward 5 the Black percentage stays about the same and the White population went down a bit;
- No justification for changing the maps on the basis of race existed;
- A spread sheet will be available to show all of the demographics of all of the wards in all of the alternatives which will include total population and voting age population;
- In the video of the October 18 meeting, one Councilmember quoted the disclaimers previously made by the demographer and said he had indicated he had not looked at election data or considered or used partisan data as a considerations in drawing the maps; Mr. Gilkerson said he did not communicate with any Councilmember about the maps except in a public meeting and that he interpreted the discussion that followed to perhaps suggest he had shared information with some other person other than a Councilmember or leaked the maps;

- The demographer confirmed he had not conferred with anyone other than Councilmembers in open session about drawing the maps and did not leak the maps to anyone;
- The demographer advised he would consider doing those things a violation of the mission of nonpolitical redistricting which is the basis for the Local Redistricting Service and said he did not even consider doing any of those things;
- Ms. Mackie and Mr. Gilkerson will be happy to answer questions through email, as long as the City Manager is copied so the communications can be part of the public record;
- It is up to Council to discuss these three alternatives and hear from the public on October 25 and November 1 and receive any plans submitted by the public before taking a vote; and
- November 17 is the deadline for adopting a resolution selecting one of the plans, either Alternative A, B or C or a map received from the public

Councilmember Miller requested that the guiding principles for the redistricting be provided again. The Mayor stated the message from Ms. Mackie and Mr. Gilkerson was pre-recorded and asked the City Attorney to respond.

City Attorney Richard J. Rose outlined the guiding principles as:

REQUIRED GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

1. Equal population - as required by State and Federal law;
2. Minority voting strength is not to be diluted, but race should not unnecessarily predominate as required by law;
3. Retaining current configuration of wards to the extent possible to minimize voter confusion (core preservation);
4. Follow natural boundaries and physical features to the extent possible;
5. Use precinct boundaries as building blocks;
6. Recognize and respect neighborhood boundaries;
7. Recognize and respect communities of interest as defined by Council with public input;
8. Avoid pairing incumbents (keep incumbents in the same ward they are currently in);
9. Consider areas of potential future population growth; and
10. Districts should be reasonably compact to the extent possible

Councilmember Miller voiced opposition to Alternative C stating it divides Northgreen into two separate Wards. She said Northgreen is a neighborhood with common interests, has a neighborhood association with an elected board and is racially diverse.

Mayor Roberson opened the public hearing and encouraged speakers to remain socially distanced.

○ ***Robert Davis:***

- Said he lives in the Meadowbrook Community and is President of the Meadowbrook Neighborhood Association and President of the Community Academy, which is a group of concerned neighborhood residents who have come together in Rocky Mount to improve housing and health conditions in racially segregated and blighted communities experiencing disinvestment;
- Said the Community Academy's focus is on building community capacity to participate and lead decision-making processes to meet community needs and maximize community strengths;

- Said consistent with this objective on behalf of the Community Academy, and in partnership with a coalition of other community-based organizations, he is participating in the public hearing today for the purpose of presenting for City Council review and consideration a community generated ward map;
- Said in addition to the Community Academy the redistricting coalition included the following organizations: the Rocky Mount Racial Justice Group, the Rocky Mount Black Action Committee, Black Workers for Justice, the Rocky Mount Chapter of the NAACP, and Democracy North Carolina;
- Said the group has received legal and demographer assistance from the Southern Coalition for Social Justice (SCSJ) which has litigated redistricting cases in a number of states;
- Said he has a copy of the map and will provide it to the Council;
- Said the SCSJ Chief Counsel has made contact with Caroline Mackie at Poyner Spruill, the Local Redistricting legal representative;
- Said a copy of the community generated map and related data files have been forwarded by email to Ms. Mackie by SCSJ Chief Counsel;
- Said the Community Academy desired to foster democratic participation and equity by bringing the divide between community and governance, through direct participation by historically marginalized residents of Rocky Mount and under resourced neighborhoods, in the development and implementation of solutions, policies, and decisions that directly impact them;
- Said it is important that he emphasize that one community generated Ward map was informed and produced with community input;
- Said by introducing a community-generated Ward map today, the Community Academy and the Redistricting Coalition are asserting a clear vision for the redrawn map of municipal ward boundaries that promotes inclusion, racial justice and community ownership;
- Said they intentionally chose to actively participate in the redistricting process now, because they understand that redistricting can ensure that communities of color have a fair shot of election candidates who represent them worldwide and will fight for their concerns;
- Said currently due to the legacy of segregation by racially explicit law and policy in North Carolina intended to separate Blacks and Whites, following decades of under building and under divestment, various predominantly Black impoverished neighborhoods in Rocky Mount mainly located on the Edgecombe County side of the City are suffering from a chronic shortage of quality affordable, available homes, for the City's most economically vulnerable and needy residents; and
- Said there is currently one Ward that is fully on the Edgecombe side of the City which they think should remain and there needs to be at least two other Wards that are partially on the Edgecombe side

Mayor Roberson requested that Mr. Davis provide a copy of his comments and the data used to prepare the community generated map to Councilmembers. He stated Mr. Davis may be asked to come back at some point if questions arise.

Councilmember Daughtridge asked if it is appropriate to ask questions at this time and Mayor Roberson suggested that Mr. Davis may be asked to respond to questions at the November 1st meeting after the Council has had an opportunity to study the community-generated map. He added he will yield to Council's decision.

Councilmember Daughtridge stated that obviously Mr. Davis takes issue with Alternative Maps A and B and inquired what those issues are and asked the percentages reflected in the community-generated map.

Mr. Davis did not have percentages available and said he would provide that data. He said the change in Alternative A increases the Ward 1 White population and reduces the Black population.

The Mayor stated the work in preparing the community-generated map is appreciated adding receiving the data set will be helpful for Councilmembers as they consider the map. He suggested questions be asked at a future meeting.

o ***Susan Perry Cole:***

- Told the Council she lives on Rose Street which is located in the Down East Community;
- Said she is a member of the Community Academy and is participating in the public hearing today for the purpose of stating support for the community-generated redrawn ward map introduced today by the Community Academy in partnership with the Redistricting Coalition;
- Said, historically, it is recognized that for a 70-year period, or most of the prior 20th century, Black candidates ran unsuccessful campaigns to serve on the Rocky Mount City Council;
- Said only one Black candidate was successful during that era and that candidate was Reverend George Dudley who was elected to serve on the Rocky Mount City Council from 1972 until 1983. She said he was the first Black City Councilman in 70 years;
- Said recognizing that historically Rocky Mount's municipal election system was designed to exclude certain populations, namely low-income communities and/or Black communities, is important because this awareness helps us understand the need for intentional efforts to break down the legacy of barriers to participation that may still exist today. Otherwise, failure to take into consideration our City's prior history of exclusion could allow marginalization of certain groups of City residents to continue to occur today;
- Added that in this regard, it's also important that we acknowledge that Rocky Mount today is still a city that is racially and economically divided;
- Stated that on page 63 of the 2021-2023 Consolidated Plan it is noted that "some parts of the city have flourished while others have declined with heavy concentrations of vacancy, deferred maintenance and population loss, bringing instability to once growing communities";
- Said for the most part, impoverished Rocky Mount Black residents have been concentrated disproportionately in a number of distressed and under-resourced urban core neighborhoods, which is where she has lived for the past 35 years;
- Said she stands united with the Community Academy and the Redistricting Coalition by voicing support for the community-generated ward map introduced today, which demonstrates a clear vision for the redrawing of municipal ward boundaries that promotes inclusion, racial justice and community ownership;
- Said from this perspective, she wants to recognize the members of the City Council who represent the City's most under-resourced and disinvested wards and led efforts to develop and consider a currently-pending comprehensive and transformative affordable housing strategic plan during 2019-2021;
- Said once the affordable housing plan is implemented, proposed policies and procedures will certainly benefit residents of the City's most under-resourced neighborhoods;
- Said what is done about access to affordable housing opportunity and the dismantling of neighborhood segregation affects the entire fabric of the City and the achievement of fair housing and dismantling of neighborhood-based segregation are essential to create access to opportunity for everyone in Rocky Mount;

- Said today residents stand up to voice support for a clear vision of a redrawn ward map that will protect City Council leaders who are working to address the most pressing neighborhood interests and concerns;
 - Said the community-generated map introduced today creates a reasonably compact Edgecombe only district;
 - Said for reasons already outlined related to pervasive blight, deterioration and economic decline concentrated on the Edgecombe County side of Rocky Mount in predominantly segregated Black neighborhoods community residents understand the value and importance of the creation of an Edgecombe only district at this juncture in the City's transformation;
 - Added citizens believe the Belmont area does not properly fit in Ward 1 because it does not share the same socio-economic characteristics of the rest of the ward and would dilute the vote of other communities;
 - Concluded her remarks by stating that ordinary community residents must participate in Rocky Mount's redistricting process and provide input to help ensure the proceedings are open, transparent and fair. Citizen participation is one way every City resident can help protect the integrity of the precious democratic system
- *Darlene Spencer-Harris:*
- Told the Council she lives in Ward 3 on Arlington Street;
 - Said she is here today as a citizen concerned about the redistricting and is a member of the Community Academy and the Vice President of the Southeast Rocky Mount Community Organization and serves on the City's Community Appeals Board;
 - Said she feels ordinary citizens need to participate in the redistricting process because if someone has not experienced or endured the experiences of those in blighted neighborhoods, they cannot get a full picture of the things they actually need, want and desire;
 - Said people are not looking for a handout, they just want to be treated equally and fairly and have the opportunity to speak and be heard;
 - Said an example is that a new restaurant, Chipotle, is coming to Rocky Mount and that's a great thing but a great thing for the Nash County side of the City;
 - Expressed the desire for the wealth to be shared with Edgecombe County citizens in the City and said citizens on the Edgecombe side of the City deserve the same opportunities to grow and expand but it is never equal;
 - Said citizens have to come together, be in accord and have the same or similar objectives relative to the redistricting map
- *Dr. Kim E. Koo:*
- Said she lives on Englewood Drive, which is part of Ward 6 and is a member of the Rocky Mount Racial Justice Group as well as the Community Academy;
 - Said it is her understanding that district maps are drawn to allow common interests of groups of citizens to express themselves freely and ward maps help to distribute not just representation of groups of people but also particular concerns of the same communities;
 - Said historically underserved-neighborhoods have very different concerns than the wealthier neighborhoods and poorer people see basic needs like jobs, shelter, food, health care and proper education for their children as the way forward while wealthier neighborhoods may be more concerned with having refined luxuries as they already have the basic necessities;
 - Said when you mix and mingle the poorer neighborhoods with the wealthier neighborhoods in electoral districts, the wealthier people will use their money and influence to vote in their own interests and stack the elections in their favor;
 - Questioned how that is justice for the poorer sections;
 - Said she categorically rejects both Alternatives A and B as proposed by the Redistricting Committee and requested a map for fairer and better representation of

all segments of the City and more equitable development so that less developed neighborhoods are not electorally swamped by richer communities;

- Asked for a map she does not feel is being gerrymandered; and
- Said she has been shown a community-generated map, which she fully supports that has been prepared with the assistance of the Redistricting Coalition that will bring equity and racial justice to the City

○ ***Sharon Evans:***

- Told the Councilmembers she lives in the Hillsdale Community and in Ward 1 and agrees with everything that has been said about the redistricting information;
- Said she has noticed in Alternatives A and B that either Ward 1 or Ward 2 will be affected;
- Says this Council has done exceptionally well with what they have been given and in the last 10 years and have done more than what was done 30 years before;
- Said the people who have been doing the work in Wards 1 and 2 and other Wards will be affected, noting Ward 5 would remain basically unaffected;
- Said the community is not in agreement with Alternative A or B and are in agreement with the community-generated map;
- Said it is time to work together adding the Mayor and City Manager have both been attacked, the State Auditor came in, there was a North Carolina bill and now the redistricting is occurring;
- Questioned why redistricting is necessary; and
- Voiced support of the community-generated map

○ ***Tom Harris:***

- Said he lives on Joshua Clay Drive adding he and his wife moved to Rocky Mount in 1980 and quickly learned Rocky Mount was made up of communities and that there are a lot of communities in Rocky Mount;
- Said all have heard the presentation this evening and have also heard that neighborhood boundaries would be one of the key components of the revised map for the City, as well as core preservation of existing districts;
- Strongly urged all to study the maps saying he wished there had been more time to study Alternative C adding he hopes the interactive map will be on the City's website tomorrow and that a larger map can be displayed in the lobby [of City Hall] like the other maps (Alternatives A and B) so citizens can have a better understanding of what map C is and how it perhaps differs a little bit from A and B;
- Asked the City Council to try to preserve communities as much as possible and not divide communities as they work to decide how the City moves forward for the next 10 years relative to redistricting

○ ***Muntaz Shaik:***

- Said she lives in Westry Crossing;
- Requested that Edgecombe County not be diluted in order to preserve and promote fairness, unity and progress

○ ***Mysha Lynch:***

- Said she is a resident of the Englewood Community and a member of the Rocky Mount Black Action Committee;
- Said upon initial review of the draft maps she was not appeased by the demographic explanation or by what was displayed;
- Said she recently read two federal initial analyses of the 2020 census that furthered her understanding and said she wants to share some of that data;

- Said in 2010 the Census Bureau estimates it overcounted people who checked off the White box for race question and did not identify as Hispanic or Latino, while it undercounted Black and Latinx populations as well as Native Americans who live on reservations;
 - Said for the 2020 census there are concerns for higher government distrust among immigrants and other historically undercounted groups will produce another undercount of people of color;
 - Said those worries came before COVID-19 and before the census outreach plans in the Trump administration when it was decided to end door-knocking efforts early in November;
 - Said the Bureau's acting director noted that the agency's preliminary analysis showed there were higher rates of households not answering the race and Hispanic origin questions in 2020 compared with the previous counts;
 - Said nonresponse rates are higher than experienced in past censuses;
 - Said in trying to keep up with advances in computing the Census Bureau is using a new way of keeping people anonymous in 2020 census redistricting data and the Bureau has warned those protections will make some neighborhoods look fuzzy because they're intentionally designed to obscure the characteristics;
 - Said while the bureau says the fuzziness disappears at higher levels of geography many data users are concerned about the reliability of race and ethnicity data and about rural communities and small geographic areas;
 - Said gerrymandering and intentional inequity towards marginalized populations is historic in this City as displayed by the Edgecombe County line move to disenfranchise people of color and industry in 1871 and in the state, as displayed by US Supreme Court decisions, most recently made in 2011 and 2019, to correct efforts that perpetuate voter suppression;
 - Said although the final counts are not to be released until 2022 this information is being pushed as efficient and it must be recognized with misinformation that current redistricting efforts are very likely based on skewed data inconclusive with actual resident data and ignore historic wrongdoing;
 - Voiced support of the community-drawn map and its efforts to rectify historic wrongdoings
- ***Adrian Copeland:***
 - Said she is glad Chris Miller has chimed in saying she thinks it is very important that that the community hear from Council relative to their opinions on the maps adding she attended the past couple of meetings and was really upset not to hear from Councilmembers;
 - Said Councilmembers technically should know the most about their wards since some have represented their ward for 10 years, or at least since last time ward lines were drawn;
 - Said it is really important that citizens hear and know what Councilmembers are thinking when they come to their ultimate choice;
 - Said she has reviewed maps A, B and C but has not had a chance to look at the one the community submitted, though she would like to, and if she ranked them, she would choose A, C and B in that order for the reasons everyone else is saying relative to compactness, cohesiveness, communities of interest and concern for needs of those communities and residents;
 - Said her community of interest is Ward 4 and it is important to remember historic districts are communities of interest and have special needs and special interests;
 - Said some of the grants talked about address homes that are 50 years or older because it is understood that those properties require a lot more and have more needs and concerns and are usually in the areas that have the most blight;
 - Said she feels Alternate A fully encompasses the historic districts so Councilmembers are not spread so thin because they can't be all things to all people;

- Said she has heard people talking about redrawing lines and saying that is not fair and is gerrymandering but what a lot of people don't understand is that there are laws that have to be considered;
 - Said populations change and Wards 1 and 2 have to get bigger because their populations got smaller and Wards 5 and 6 have to get smaller because their populations got bigger;
 - Said even though citizens might not want to redraw the lines that dilute demographics it might have to be done because the City population is less and to meet the tolerances of plus or minus 5% in every ward will be very difficult to do because if trying to draw a line to encompass a whole community you might have to cut one in half; she said that is tough but these are difficult decisions and sometimes the law is what makes things more difficult and not ill will
- ***Nathlyn Ohree:***
- Stated she lives in the Meadowbrook area;
 - Said she participated as a census collector and communities are becoming more diversified;
 - Said there are people moving into our communities that may look a little different from us and it was a challenge to even record the race of some of the people in the communities because the households were diverse;
 - Said in looking at what the City is dealing with, extreme changes to specific community boundaries are not needed because there are issues within the community that have to be dealt with other than unfair boundary lines; and
 - Voiced opposition to Alternatives A and B adding she is in favor of the new map unless someone can justify a better map
- ***Jackie King:***
- Said she resides in the Battleboro community on Daniels Avenue;
 - Said Battleboro was annexed into the City of Rocky Mount in 1996 because Battleboro decided it could no longer function as a town;
 - Said Battleboro was an all-White run town, and they were about to leave the Black people out of coming into Rocky Mount, but they stood up for themselves and said you take all or nothing;
 - At that time, they chose the Ward they wanted to be in and that was Ward 2 because Ward 7 was not conducive to the citizens of Battleboro because the houses in Ward 2 were more similar to the ones in the Battleboro community; and
 - Voiced support for the community-generated map and opposed Alternatives A and B saying she feels though Battleboro is close to Belmont the housing prices are not the same and agrees with Ms. Miller that if a change must be made that it be a small change

Mayor Roberson said he would like to point out that the redistricting is not being done because anyone wants to do it but because the City has to do it and said the concerns and viewpoints of citizens are appreciated.

- ***Curmilus Dancy:***
- Said the Rocky Mount Branch of the NAACP is committed to ensuring that the redistricting process for the Rocky Mount City Council election does not dilute or weaken the full focus of historically and predominantly Black communities;
 - Said the NAACP supports Ward 1 remaining wholly within Edgecombe County and also supports Edgecombe County continuing to make up significant portions of Wards 2 and 3;

- Said Ward 4 should continue to maintain a core of historically Black communities in Nash County;
 - Said the progress made in the inner-city communities must be continued as the City continues to grow;
 - Said yesterday he was in a redistricting meeting with two state legislators, Senator Don Davis and Senator Toby Fitch, and asked a question like somebody else today because he wanted to hear from those that represent the wards and districts;
 - Said he heard something yesterday that helped him understand the talk that's been going on about redistricting and Representative Fitch addressed his question and what made sense and what people have said today is keeping communities together that have something in common is important;
 - Said Senator Fitch used an example while talking about putting Edgecombe and Pitt County together and Wilson with Goldsboro was that Goldsboro is a military area and Wilson is not and is more compatible with Edgecombe and Nash Counties; and
 - Said that gave him somewhere to look and his point is neighborhoods that are compatible need to be kept together
- **Pete Armstrong:**
- Said he lives on Drivers Circle and is President of the Northgreen Village Association;
 - Said Council has a hard job, and he admires the way they brought in somebody independent to look at the wards and come up with wards that are balanced and fair;
 - Said he was excited because for once a ward extended across the railroad tracks (everybody knows how that boundary is) and he thought finally we are looking over that and doing what is right for the people but along came Alternative C which basically cut Northgreen in half;
 - Said keeping neighborhoods and focal groups together is Guideline Number 6;
 - Said there are 500 houses in Northgreen and a neighborhood association that's been active as long as he has lived there which is over 30 years;
 - Told the Council the Association works each year and has social events for the community, at least they did until COVID, and have started again this year;
 - Said they are having a Christmas celebration with lights, and are urging people to decorate with lights in the community;
 - Said suddenly with the Alternative Plan C they are being divided;
 - Urged Council to vote against Alternative C stating he thinks Alternative B probably keeps neighborhoods together a little bit more but what is more important is that there is good solid data in the creation of the plans and urged them to consider that;
 - Said he wished Nash County people would notice what Nash County is doing relative to redistricting adding not much has been heard but they are having a public meeting this Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. in Nashville and basically Northgreen is being gerrymandered by Nash County too; and
 - Said redistricting is important to all the people that live in both Nash and Edgecombe Counties

Tosha Aldridge said she truly hates to break up the train of thought that everyone is on but said she was encouraged to come speak at this time.

Mayor Roberson questioned if Ms. Aldridge's remarks are related to the redistricting public hearing.

She responded that the Police Officers placed her name on the wrong sheet even though she told them she was here to speak with regard to Item 11 on the agenda and she was instructed that now would be the only time to be able to speak.

The Mayor voiced regret that Ms. Aldridge did not appear at the public petitions portion of the meeting, advised her that comments being made at this time concern a public hearing on redistricting and it would set a bad precedent for him to allow her to speak at this time on a matter not related to the public hearing. He stated if Ms. Aldridge has written comments, he will be glad to accept them and share them with members of the City Council or she is welcome to send them via email.

She said she would email her comments to the Mayor and stated the Police Officers need to know what public hearings are occurring because she has been here a long time. The Mayor responded that Item Number 11 is not a public hearing and apologized for her inconvenience.

No one else appeared and 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 comments can be submitted to the City Clerk at pamela.casey@rockymountnc.gov.

He added that information relative to Alternate C will be posted on the City's website and asked the City Manager if the community-generated map will also be on the website once that information is received. The City Manager responded in the affirmatives adding that the maps will be enlarged and printed and will be available for review in the City Hall atrium (first floor) and in the Business Services Center as soon as possible.

Councilmember Joyner thanked the public and community groups that prepared the community-generated map adding he and all members of Council are grateful to see this level of involvement.

Councilmember Daughtridge thanked the public for their participation. He stated Alternative C is currently on the City's website, including the worksheet and interactive map.

FY 2022 INSTALLMENT FINANCING/CONSTRUCTION OF FIRE STATION 2

The City Council received a resolution declaring the official intent of the City to reimburse expenditures for the construction of Fire Station 2 to allow for reimbursement of expenses incurred and to be incurred prior to the closing on the installment financing, which was considered and tabled at the September 27, 2021, City Council meeting. The City Council was informed that it is customary for the City to pay the costs of the project to be financed in advance and subsequently reimburse the expenditure with the financing and in order to do so the United States Treasury requires approval of a resolution declaring the official intent of the City to reimburse expenditures.

It was noted that the expected type of financing (which may be changed) is secured installment financing pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 160A-20 and the reasonably expected maximum amount of the obligation to be incurred for the purpose of paying the cost of the project is \$4,100,000.

Councilmember Knight asked for clarification that the requested action only relates to the financing of the project.

Motion was made by Councilmember Walker, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that **Resolution No. R-2021-51** entitled **RESOLUTION DECLARING OFFICIAL INTENT OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT TO REIMBURSE EXPENDITURES MADE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FIRE STATION 2** be adopted.

SUPPLEMENTAL PAY FOR ESSENTIAL CITY EMPLOYEES WORKING DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN

The City Council was advised that on June 28, 2021, the City appropriated Rocky Mount’s allocation of funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) in the amount of \$11,521,180. It was explained that guidance from the U.S. Department of Treasury and enabling legislation confirm these funds can be used to provide supplemental pay for employees working for the City during lockdown periods imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Council was advised that the City experienced a lockdown period, including closures of all City facilities, from March 31, 2021, to June 7, 2021, in compliance with an Executive Order issued by the Governor of the State of North Carolina. It was noted that during that period 589 City employees continued to report to work in order to provide essential services either working their regular shifts or rotating during the period in order to minimize the potential for exposure and spreading of COVID-19.

It was recommended that supplemental pay, funded with the ARPA allocation, in the following amounts be provided to the eligible employees:

- \$1,000 = employees who worked regular full-time shifts;
- \$700 = employees who worked on a rotational basis

The City Council was advised that total expenditures for this supplemental pay are estimated as follows:

GROUP	COUNT	PAY PER WORKER	TOTAL PAY	TOTAL BENEFITS	TOTAL COSTS
Worked normal shifts	347	\$1,000	\$347,000	\$ 80,331	\$427,331
Full-time, worked rotation	242	700	\$169,400	\$ 39,216	\$208,616
TOTAL	589		\$516,400	\$119,547	\$635,947

Councilmember Knight questioned the process for determining the amount of the supplemental pay recommended noting there is a \$300 difference between those employees working regular shifts and those working rotating shifts. City Manager Rochelle D. Small-Toney stated that the City continues to function during emergencies and during the COVID-19 pandemic many employees continued to come to work because they were classified as essential services workers, regardless of the pandemic and not knowing for certain what the community was facing.

She added that some employees, for their safety, were allowed to go home but all employees were paid their regular salary throughout the pandemic, whether they went home, worked a rotating schedule or continued to work their regular shifts. Ms. Small-Toney stated that Council supported her recommendation to continue to pay employees and this is an opportunity to acknowledge the sacrifices employees made to keep our City operating. She told the Council some employees were required to work due to their job duties and assignments and because of their commitment and dedication it is recommended they be awarded a bonus of \$1,000. She added that some employees were able to work rotating shifts and it is recommended they be awarded a bonus of \$700.

Discussion was held relative to the amount of the bonuses and the City Manager responded to questions. Councilmember Knight questioned how the allocation would change if the supplemental payment amounts changed and the City Manager stated that benefits would need to be computed at approximately 45%. Ken Hunter, Assistant to the Manager for Budget and Evaluation, reported that the suggested change in the bonuses would result in additional expenditures of approximately \$85,000.

Motion was made by Councilmember Bullock, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and carried by roll call vote (5 ayes/2 nays)(Councilmembers Knight and Blackwell opposed) that the recommendation of the Manager for payment of supplemental pay be approved, as recommended (total of \$636,000).

Councilmember Blackwell asked if any other recognition is recommended to recognize those employees who worked throughout the pandemic. He inquired if part-time employees will be included in the supplemental pay and the Manager responded that the few part-time workers who worked during the pandemic are included. She stated the higher level of supplemental pay was determined by polling other communities and this level of support is higher than the average. She said employees appreciate recognition but prefer that recognition to be in the form of additional pay although additional vacation days could be an option. Ms. Small-Toney advised that Council is able to amend the supplemental pay allocation.

A substitute motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the supplemental pay to eligible employees working through the COVID-10 pandemic be awarded at the rate of \$1,200 to those eligible employees who worked regular shifts during the COVID-19 lockdown period and \$700 to employees working rotational shifts (increases total allocation by approximately \$85,000).

MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING/NASH COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ROCKY MOUNT PREPARATORY SCHOOL - RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM

The City Council was provided with updated Memorandums of Understanding between the City of Rocky Mount, Nash County Public Schools and Rocky Mount Preparatory School. It was noted that Nash

County Public Schools has contracted for the provision of six (6) school resource officers and Rocky Mount Preparatory School has contracted for the provision of one (1) school resource officer. The Council was advised that a change in leadership prompted the amendment and the only change to the existing agreements is an update of the current leadership and official signers.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the updated Memorandums of Understanding with Nash County Public Schools and Rocky Mount Preparatory School be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the agreements on behalf of the City.

The updated Memorandums of Understanding will be filed with the original contracts (**C-2017-44 [Public Schools]** and **C-2017-38 [Prep School]**) in the City Clerk's Office.

WATER ASSESSMENT CONTRACT

The City Council received a water assessment contract with Angel M. Rodriguez for water service to 640 Sutton Road (PIN #375960047100). Council was advised that the connection fees for this property are \$4,265, that the customer has prepaid \$1,265 and the contract requires the remaining fees of \$3,000 to be assessed against the property.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the assessment contract with Angel M. Rodriguez for water service to 640 Sutton Road (**C-2021-33**) be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the same on behalf of the City.

STATE MAINTENANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SMAP)/TAR RIVER TRANSIT

The City Council was advised that each year the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) State Maintenance Assistance Program (SMAP) funds provide operating assistance to eligible small-urban fixed route transit systems and a fully executed "Certified Statement" must be signed by the Mayor in order for the City of Rocky Mount (Tar River Transit) to receive SMAP funds. Additionally, it was explained that a letter addressed to the North Carolina Department of Transportation must be signed by the City Manager. It was noted that the request for funding for FY 2022 is \$224,999 and the agreement confirms that SMAP funding of \$217,697 received in FY 2020 were expensed by fiscal year end (6/30/2021) and that FY 2022 funds will be expensed by end of fiscal year 2022.

Motion was made by Councilmember Bullock, seconded by Councilmember Knight and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the required certification(s) on behalf of the City and that the City Manager be authorized to execute a letter certifying that FY 2020 funds were

expended by June 30, 2020, and that the FY 2022 allocation will be expensed by end of FY 2022.

FY 2023-2027 SECTION 5311 DESIGNATION RESOLUTION

The City Council was provided with a 5311 Designee Certification Resolution which is a requirement of the North Carolina Department of Transportation and authorizes the filing of applications with the North Carolina Department of Transportation-Integrated Mobility Division for grant years FY 2023-FY 2027 for federal transportation assistance.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Walker and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that **Resolution No. R-2021-52** entitled **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF APPLICATIONS WITH THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION-INTEGRATED MOBILITY DIVISION FOR GRANT YEARS FY 2023- FY 2027/5311 DESIGNEE CERTIFICATION FORM** be adopted. This Resolution authorizes the Mayor and/or City Manager to execute and file with the City's applications any required documentation, certifications and assurances and to execute grant and cooperative agreements on behalf of the City. **GRANT APPLICATION/ROCKY MOUNT SENIOR CENTER**

The City Council received a request from the Senior Center for approval to apply for Senior Center General Purpose Funding from the Upper Coastal Plain Area Agency on Aging in the amount of \$14,257 (\$10,693 = grant funds/\$3,564 [25%] = City match) for the support and development of programming and general operations or to construct, renovate or maintain Senior Center facilities.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Miller and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the grant application be approved and that the Mayor and appropriate staff be authorized to execute the application; that staff be authorized to submit the application; and that the Mayor and appropriate staff be authorized to execute any required documentation and certificates, including the subsequent grant agreement, on behalf of the City.

BIDS/FY 2022 PARK MAINTENANCE AND LANDSCAPING SERVICE

The City Council was advised that proposals were received and opened on March 5, 2021, for FY 2022 Park Maintenance and Landscaping Service for Holly Street Park, City Lake Park, Tar River Reservoir Boat Ramp and Saponi Creek Boat Ramp after all necessary legal procedures had been implemented, including newspaper advertising and posting of the solicitation on the City's purchasing webpage, the HUB website and the North Carolina Interactive Purchasing System website. The bid tabulation is on file in the Office of the City Clerk as **BD-2021-35**. It was recommended that the bid be awarded to Precision Cut Landscaping & Lawn Care, LLC for a three (3) year contract at \$102,852 with the cost for the first year being \$34,284. It was noted that Precision Cut Landscaping & Lawn Care, LLC is a woman-owned business.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the bid for FY 2022 Park Maintenance and Landscaping Service be awarded to Precision Cut Landscaping & Lawn Care, LLC and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the bid contract on behalf of the City.

BIDS/FY 2022 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE AND LANDSCAPING SERVICES

The City Council was advised that proposals were received and opened on February 26, 2021, for FY 2022 Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping Services for:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| - Douglas Block | - Main Street |
| - City Hall | - Judicial Center |
| - Senior Center | - Train Station |
| - Imperial Centre | - Bus Station |
| - Business Services Center | - Station Square |
| - Rocky Mount Event Center | |

All necessary legal procedures were implemented, including newspaper advertising and posting of the solicitation on the City's purchasing webpage, the HUB website and the North Carolina Interactive Purchasing System website. The bid tabulation is on file in the Office of the City Clerk as **BD-2021-36**. It was recommended that the bid be awarded to Precision Cut Landscaping & Lawn Care, LLC for a three (3) year contract at a total of \$496,784.88 with the cost for the first year being \$165,594.96. It was noted that Precision Cut Landscaping & Lawn Care, LLC is a woman-owned business.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the bid for FY 2022 Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping Services be awarded to Precision Cut Landscaping & Lawn Care, LLC and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the bid contract on behalf of the City.

BIDS/FY 2022 BATTLEBORO AND NORTHEASTERN CEMETERIES

The City Council was advised that proposals were received and opened on March 15, 2021, for FY 2022 Battleboro and Northeastern Cemeteries, after all necessary legal procedures had been implemented, including newspaper advertising and posting of the solicitation on the City's purchasing webpage, the HUB website and the North Carolina Interactive Purchasing System website. The bid tabulation is on file in the Office of the City Clerk as **BD-2021-37**. It was recommended that the bid be awarded to Precision Cut Landscaping & Lawn Care, LLC for a three (3) year contract at \$131,589 with the cost for the first year being \$43,863. It was noted that Precision Cut Landscaping & Lawn Care, LLC is a woman-owned business.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the bid for FY 2022 Battleboro and Northeastern Cemeteries

be awarded to Precision Cut Landscaping & Lawn Care, LLC and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the bid contract on behalf of the City.

RE-BIDS/WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT BIO-SOLIDS HAULING AND LAND APPLICATION

The City Council was advised that proposals were received and opened on September 30, 2021, for Wastewater Treatment Plant Bio-Solids Hauling and Land Application, after all necessary legal procedures had been implemented, posting of the solicitation on the City's purchasing webpage, the HUB website and the North Carolina Interactive Purchasing System website. The bid tabulation is on file in the Office of the City Clerk as **BD-2021-38**. The proposals were evaluated with the Director of Water Resources, and it was recommended that the bid be awarded to Granville Farms, Inc. for a five (5) year contract at a total cost of \$2,109,500 with the first year being \$421,900. It was noted that Granville Farms proposes fifteen percent (15%) MWBE participation each year of the contract.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the bid for Wastewater Treatment Plant Bio-Solids Hauling and Land Application and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the bid contract on behalf of the City.

BIDS/ WATER TREATMENT PLANT RESIDUAL HAULING AND LAND APPLICATION

The City Council was advised that proposals were received and opened on September 30, 2021, for Water Treatment Plant Residual Hauling and Land Application, after all necessary legal procedures had been implemented, posting of the solicitation on the City's purchasing webpage, the HUB website and the North Carolina Interactive Purchasing System website. The bid tabulation is on file in the Office of the City Clerk as **BD-2021-39**. The proposals were evaluated with the Director of Water Resources, and it was recommended that the bid be awarded to Granville Farms, Inc. for a five (5) year contract at a total cost of \$1,220,000 with the first year being \$244,000. It was noted that Granville Farms proposes fifteen percent (15%) MWBE participation each year of the contract.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the bid for Wastewater Treatment Plant Residual and Land Application and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the bid contract on behalf of the City.

APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Roberson nominated Bianca Roberts and Melvia Batts to fill vacancies on the Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities. Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Daughtridge and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that Bianca Roberts be appointed to the Mayor's Commission on Persons with

Disabilities for a term to expire June 30, 2023, and that Melvia Batts be appointed to an unexpired term on the Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities to expire June 30, 2024.

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

BID/NINE (9) 2022 FORD PI UTILITY AWD VEHICLES (ADDED TO AGENDA IN OPEN MEETING)

The City Council received a recommendation to purchase nine (9) 2022 Ford PI Utility AWD vehicles through the North Carolina Division of Purchase and Contract group purchasing program which allows purchases to be made through competitive bidding and offers competitively obtained purchasing services at discount prices to two or more public agencies, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-129(9).

The statewide term contract on which the vehicles were bid is Contract #070A-Fleet Vehicles (passenger, truck, van, SUV and Law Enforcement).

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the purchase of nine (9) Ford PI Utility AWD vehicles a total cost of \$313,886.88 for the Public Works Department be approved and that the Purchasing Division be authorized to issue a purchase order for the vehicles in accordance with the Council's award.

Bid documentation for this purchase will be filed with the bid documentation in the office of the City Clerk as **BD-2021-40**.

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS/REDISTRICTING MAP

Mayor Roberson surrendered the floor to Councilmember Blackwell for comments.

Councilmember Blackwell questioned if the community-generated ward map and additional requested data will be added to the City's website and the City Manager responded in the affirmative. He requested that it be made clear that the map was community-generated, and that this information will be added to the City's website.

CLOSED SESSION

A closed session was requested to discuss a personnel matter. The minutes of the closed session shall be placed on file as **ESM-591** at the end of Minute Book No. 37 upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Miller and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the City Council enter into closed session at 7:07 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilmember

Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried by roll call vote (7 ayes/0 nays) that the City Council meeting be adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Pamela O. Casey
City Clerk