

April 25, 2022

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.

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

Staff present: Peter F. Varney, Interim City Manager; Pamela O. Casey, City Clerk; Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager; Kirk Brown, Director of Communications and Marketing; Robin Cox, Communications Specialist; Mark Adcox, Video Production Specialist; Kena Cofield-Jones, Director of Human Resources; Latasha Hall, Director of Business and Collections Services; Corey Mercer, Fire Chief; 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; Brenton Bent, Water Resources Director; Will Deaton, Development Services; Cornelia McGee, Interim Community Development Director; Darvin Moore, Division Chief; Keyana Walston, Program Manager-Management Analyst; Chynice Chapman, Purchasing Manager; Jayson Dawkins, Policy Analyst, Budget and Evaluation Department; Gregory Cotten, Chief Technology Officer; James Costello, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent; Jim Connolly, Water Treatment Plant Superintendent; Michael Shaw, Fleet Maintenance Superintendent; Andrew Martin, Environmental Services Superintendent; Tim Farmer, Public Works Operations Manager; Nate Williams, Water and Sewer Superintendent; Amanda James, Water Quality Services Superintendent; Scott Miles, Assistant City Engineer - Water Resources; Loretta Braswell, Citizen Assistance Specialist, Community & Business Development; 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. He noted there will be a slight change to the agenda due to the State of the City address and called on the City Clerk for roll call.

STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Mayor Roberson acknowledged some tragic events that occurred over the course of the weekend and requested a moment of silence to remember the loss of two children here in the City and a moment of silent prayer for the family.

He recognized Representative Kandi Smith and thanked her for her attendance. He requested other dignitaries in the audience to raise their hand to be acknowledged and there were none.

Mayor Roberson stated he is honored to be here today and is here on behalf of himself, as Mayor, and the Rocky Mount City Council.

*Councilmember Blackwell arrived

Mayor Roberson outlined the following highlights and accomplishments in the City and a summary of his comments are:

- He stated as we have emerged out of the pandemic over the last two very difficult years we are thankful to all frontline City employees who went above and beyond to care for our community and are grateful to them.
- He noted that unfortunately, we did lose a number of our neighbors to COVID-19 and asked that attendees join him in another moment of silence to remember those individuals and pray for their families and friends.
- The Mayor noted that soon the Rocky Mount City Council will look different with about half of the Council seats up for re-election, including Wards 2, 3, 6 and 7 as a result of a delayed Election Day due to redistricting – from last October to now on May 17th. As a result of the recent census, Rocky Mount was required to redistrict or adjust the ward boundaries to ensure the population numbers in each ward were within a 5% deviation. Consultants were hired to assist with the redistricting and provided Council with three great options. A group of citizens came forward with their own proposed plan and a fourth alternative and after careful consideration and much discussion, the City Council adopted the alternative plan. He said this seldom occurs and is evidence of democracy in action when involved, interested, and informed citizens come together with a plan to benefit the whole community.
- Mayor Roberson stated that both Councilwoman Miller and Councilman Bullock are retiring from service on the City Council and are not seeking reelection this year. He thanked them for their dedicated service, spirited collaboration, and love of Rocky Mount and asked for those present to join him in giving them a round of applause.
- He stated that the Rocky Mount Event Center kicked off 2022 by hosting 13 major sporting events and more than 51,000 guests from around the country have visited our area to attend volleyball, basketball, and cheerleading tournaments at the Event Center since January 1 of this year. These guests have booked hotel rooms, spent money at local retail locations, and dined at area restaurants. These actions have generated more than \$9M economic impact as the Event Center continues to be a regional leader in sports and travel tourism. He said it is expected that the Event Center will generate at least \$15M in economic impact to our area before the end of the year and added that organizations and industries are also finding the amenities of the Rocky Mount Event Center to be positive for business events. Mayor Roberson reported that Event Center staff recently hosted the 50th annual North Carolina Agritourism Networking Association Conference that welcomed hundreds of farmers and state leaders to Rocky Mount. He added that the Blue Cross North Carolina Extra Mile tour also made a stop at the Event Center, bringing executive leadership from this organization to the venue as well as the LSC, the Golden LEAF Foundation, and Education North Carolina.
- The Mayor stated that the Event Center has a strong spring plan with additional volleyball and basketball tournaments as well as major concerts, including the sold-out Kings of Southern Soul event which will be on April 30; and a Mother's Day concert on May 7.
- Most weekends the Rocky Mount Event Center hosts a game day arcade and ropes climbing experience that provides fun for residents and visitors alike. The venue has large spaces for weddings, parties, and other celebrations as well as a talented culinary staff. As more people from near and far experience the Event Center word of mouth generates even more business for greater economic impact. While the Event Center is proving itself to be a powerful economic engine for our community, we still have work to do in preparing to receive large numbers of guests in our city. He stated he believes we need to add additional parking spaces and provide shuttle service or other forms of transportation to connect both hotels and other major venues like the Rocky Mount Mills to events, improve directional signage, and expand public relations and marketing efforts to promote the Event Center to potential patrons as well as to promote all Rocky Mount has to offer to each and every one of our visitors. He said he would like to see the City encourage more downtown promotions especially with large numbers of visitors already being at the Event Center. Things like pop-up shops in empty buildings, themed downtown events to encourage local vendor participation and restaurant attendance, and arts installations or murals that brighten up the

surroundings and start a buzz. He said this energy can lead to more private investment and further downtown improvements.

- The Mayor said that Rocky Mount needs to mend fences with neighboring counties and municipalities and has worked hard over the last year to do so.
- He said after Rocky Mount became an entitlement city with HUD for the receipt of CDBG funding, the City along with the two counties and most of the municipal jurisdictions formed the Down East Home Consortium in 1995. He stated its purpose was to receive funding from the HOME Investment Partnership Program and through the years the members of the consortium have received annual allocations of funding from HUD. The Mayor stated that the City serves as the lead entity for the consortium and is responsible for ensuring compliance with all HUD guidelines and regulations governing the use of HOME funds by the member jurisdictions. It was noted from 2013 through 2016, Rocky Mount spent the HOME funds allocated to the various member jurisdictions for housing improvement projects only in Rocky Mount and last year staff calculated the amounts Rocky Mount should have sent over the years to the various jurisdictions and drafted reconciliation agreements with Nash and Edgecombe Counties and the Towns of Tarboro and Sharpsburg to reimburse these funds. He stated the total amount involved in these agreements equaled almost \$2 million. He reported that the City took this action as a way to try to restore its working relationships with the neighboring jurisdictions adding it is his hope, we can continue to strengthen these ties.
- CSX's new Carolina Connector opened last November in Edgecombe County and we are already receiving inquiries from companies who want to locate nearby. The 330-acre intermodal site allows trucks to transfer cargo containers from ports by truck or by train for transport throughout the United States. The Carolinas Gateway Partnership says they have about 79 active projects interested in being near the intermodal. That represents a total investment of \$8.8B and would create approximately 14,000 jobs. NCDOT invested \$118M and CSX Railroad contributed \$40M to this economic development project. As a result, the Carolina Connector has opened the Port of Wilmington to daily direct rail service through Rocky Mount to the Midwest and has had a positive effect in beginning to dissipate the supply chain log jam in our region. The placement of this facility, relatively close to the US-64 corridor with I-95 capitalizes on the good fortune of our location with great access to major transportation centers and corridors. The intermodal is a game-changer for us in our ability to generate further and future economic development.
- Construction on widening Eastern Avenue between Red Oak and North Old Carriage Roads into four lanes with raised medians began last year and is forecast to be completed in 2024. The project also involves converting the Sunset Avenue bridge over I-95 into an interchange. NCDOT awarded a \$60.5M design-build contract for this project. He stated that over the long term, he believes this project will result in increased commercial and residential development that will connect Nashville and Rocky Mount even more closely together.
- One of the transportation challenges we are facing downtown, not related to the intermodal, results from the lengthening of CSX freight trains coming through Rocky Mount. The length of freight trains has doubled to 10,000 to 12,000 feet long in recent months. Southbound freight trains come to the rail yard on the southside of the city where train crews remove some cars bound for different destinations and add on other cars. This process of rearranging cars often takes as long as 30 to 40 minutes and creates problems for public safety response and routine commerce. The Mayor stated he and Interim City Manager, Peter Varney, have met with a CSX representative who has been very open to discussing ways to mitigate the inconvenience and the delays that result from the crossings being blocked for these lengthy periods of time and their conversations are continuing. He said he hopes to provide an update on this initiative soon.
- We are close to getting the Monk to Mill Trail, an urban and greenway trail connecting Thelonious S. Monk Park and downtown Rocky Mount to the Rocky Mount Mills, completed. The City recently authorized execution of an agreement with NCDOT that will provide 80% of the funding for the \$2M project that will begin at the Wye Street Park named in honor of Rocky Mount native and famous jazz musician Thelonious S. Monk, move through downtown, and then be a greenway following the right-of-way of an old railroad spur to the Rocky Mount Mills. The trail will add another quality-of-life component to life to Rocky Mount that benefits our residents and is a draw to future business relocations.

- Our vision for the city is to increase the availability of affordable housing and to spur job growth through increased economic development.
- Local developers and outside investors have begun ramping up efforts to redevelop our residential and commercial stock throughout the city. As a result, housing availability is very tight, and costs are rising. Our location, halfway between New York and Miami, is fortuitous, but our access to highways both north and south as well as east and west, and our active commuter and commercial rail lines – all add up to opportunities for growth. The city’s reorganized Development Services department has simplified the process allowing developers, realtors, and other real estate professionals the opportunity to easily speak with city professionals involved in each aspect of a development project. Experts tell me that home prices have risen over 23% in the region in 2021 and 16% in the first three months of this calendar year. Days on market have also declined by 50% during the same period. We are desperately in need of additional housing. Regionally, over 600 new homes have been built in 2021 in an effort to meet the demand and new construction continues to boom.
- About 12 years ago the City’s Redevelopment Commission acquired property along the Beal Street corridor from Grace Street to North Tillery Street. This area was characterized by a prevalence of vacant lots and deteriorated housing. Five years ago, the Commission sold land at the corner of Sunset and Grace Street for the development of multi-family residential apartments. Now, they are working to dispose of the remaining 36 lots in the area and will soon issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for redeveloping these lots.
- City leadership is focused on inclusive and equitable economic development and job creation in Rocky Mount. While we are still waiting for progress with the Triangle Tyre project - hung up due to unfavorable relations between the U.S. and China over tariffs - their large plot of land near the intermodal is coveted by other potential investors hoping to build in our area.
- QVC’s decision not to rebuild in our area was not the news we were hoping for and their strong commitment to our community will certainly be lost. As you remember, fire and emergency crews from 6 counties, led by the Rocky Mount Fire Department, responded to this crisis in the middle of the night. Sadly, one fatality was confirmed and approximately 75% of the 1.5M square-foot facility was damaged. However, a large portion of the robotics were not. QVC staff are actively investigating the fire’s cause with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and are offering an award of \$20,000 for information. The Rocky Mount, Tarboro, and Edgecombe County communities have been incredibly supportive of QVC employees. The United Way, the Rocky Mount Chamber of Commerce, and the Carolinas Gateway Partnership partnered to launch a fund to support displaced workers, of which QVC donated \$100,000. Moving forward, there is every indication there are a lot of interested parties on the QVC site, that, though damaged, is build-ready with needed infrastructure already in place.
- Over the past 18 months, the city has approved more than \$2M in grant agreements for establishment or expansion of 7 industrial locations. These grants, funded by the State of North Carolina, helped recruit the creation of more than 300 jobs in manufacturing and logistics.
- With the help of Business Development Services facilitated by the Rocky Mount Area Chamber of Commerce, Rocky Mount saw more than 60 new and expanded retail and commercial businesses in 2021. This created 720 jobs and has provided more than \$56M in capital investment. Remember, this was during the height of the pandemic! The city’s Office of Downtown Development distributed approximately \$440,000 in grant assistance over the past 18 months for redevelopment of central city buildings for retail and residential use. We’ve seen the opening of several new Downtown businesses, and several more are on the way.
- One of the most critical infrastructure issues we face as a city is enabling reliable, universal access to high-speed, broadband internet services for everyone. Access to the internet is as critical to the success of this community as access to drinking water is to our health and eliminating the digital divide supports education, job creation, and economic development.
- According to survey data collected by the state, approximately 60% of residents and businesses cannot receive broadband service. This past year, the Council, with its economic development partners, lobbied the North Carolina General Assembly to take action to allow municipalities to use funds received from the American Rescue Plan, as well as other federal grants, to offer broadband services as a city to area residents. Unfortunately, the Governor and General Assembly did not have the ability sought. Despite this serious setback, there is cause for optimism. The City is currently working with a nationwide fiber

optic internet service provider that is pursuing the construction of a 100% fiber network that will allow up to 10 gigabits of upload and download speeds inside the city. Most importantly, no city funds will be required for this project. We are looking forward to announcing this major, privately funded project soon.

- These past couple of years presented considerable challenges for all of us. The economic uncertainty created by the COVID pandemic necessitated a conservative and adaptable response by the City with respect to the utilization of its financial resources. As a result of this cautious approach, Rocky Mount finished its most recent fiscal year with more than \$2.5M in additional unassigned fund balance. We anticipate “living within our means” with respect to the current fiscal year, and we will be thoughtful and strategic as we move forward in deliberating the budget for the next fiscal year. It will be in a thoughtful and strategic manner that we move forward in deliberating the budget for the next fiscal year to address the priorities of the City Council to help our constituents, along with equipment replacement, facility improvements, staffing, and inflation.
- He stated that public safety is his number one priority and shared by the City Council, as they are making progress in their goal for safer neighborhoods. One of the most encouraging trends in our community during the past year has been a significant decrease in reported crimes. The overall number of crimes in Rocky Mount plunged by nearly 16% in 2021 compared to the previous year, according to the data compiled by the Police Department, and violent crime in Rocky Mount is down 18% over last year. These decreases were reflected in an array of areas - the City saw fewer violent crimes such as aggravated assaults and robberies and fewer property crimes such as break-ins and larcenies. The trend of less crime continued in January of this year, with another 4% overall decrease in crime as compared to the same period last year. At this rate, the City could see a significant reduction in crime by the end of 2022.
- He thanked Police Chief Hassell and his team for their innovative approaches to community policing that have resulted in lower crime numbers. He said understanding that an informed community is a safer community, the Police Department has increased public service announcements and launched the Atlas One app that citizens can download to report crimes and receive crime updates. The department also receives tips from the community on its Rocky Mount Police 2 Citizen Facebook page, which is dedicated to notifying residents about wanted individuals. The newly created Violent Crime and Gang Task Force is seeking to identify crime trends and enhance investigative enforcement and prevention efforts within the City. The unit’s proactive strategies are citizen and data-driven and give it flexibility to adjust policing strategies to areas of the most need.
- The Police Department also works closely with its local and federal partners such as the Drug Enforcement Administration and Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms to rid our streets of illegal narcotics and firearms.
- After a community-led effort to clean up the historic Unity Cemetery, the City of Rocky Mount took up the cause to protect a symbol of our past. Unity Cemetery was founded in 1901 as a public cemetery for Rocky Mount’s African American community. It is the resting place for civic leaders, military veterans, and many other influential and notable residents. This sacred place was not properly cared for in recent decades and the community embraced the effort to change this. Last year, the City Council acted to support the community effort, unanimously approving plans to spend \$1.46M over the next five years on tasks such as gravesite restoration and maintenance. Initially, this effort was focused on preserving the cemetery’s archival records by moving them to the safety of the education building at the Imperial Centre for the Arts and Sciences. Volunteers are also being recruited to work with descendants of those buried at Unity Cemetery to create oral histories and a new website has been launched to publicize and encourage these efforts. Currently, City crews are working to clear overgrown areas in the 18-acre cemetery that represents an important part of our City’s history.
- One of the City’s major accomplishments of the past year came in October when Rocky Mount was recognized as one of 10 winners nationwide of the 2020-2021 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize. This prestigious award honors and elevates communities for working at the forefront of advancing health, opportunity, and equity. The award is a testament to what improving our neighborhoods can mean for our City.
- This has indeed been a year of transition and change, namely in the City’s staff leadership. He voiced his appreciation to Peter Varney for stepping up to take the helm as Interim City Manager as we search for a new City Manager. Mr. Varney continues to try to retire from the City since he first retired at the end of 2012 after a long career as Assistant City

Manager, again after five months in 2018, and then again after nine months in 2021. He thanked Mr. Varney for his unwavering support of this City and for answering the City Council's call for help and added that he can't promise this will be the last time.

- Mayor Roberson noted the City has also said goodbye to its Finance Director, Assistant City Manager, and Director of Community Development. He assured citizens that the City is searching for strong replacements and has interim people in place to keep the City moving forward. He added that to begin the City Manager search, at a recent City Council work session, two representatives from the UNC-Chapel Hill School Government recommended that Council identify the areas of competency they deem to be most needed for the administrative leadership of our City. He stated that Council discussed nineteen areas of competency commonly found in successful local governmental leadership and together concluded the following as the most important to look for in our next City Manager: 1) Integrity; 2) Diversity, equity, and inclusion; 3) Effective staff leadership and human resources management; 4) Functional and operational expertise; 5) Utility Enterprise Management; and 6) Budget and financial analysis. He said he hopes Council can engage an executive search firm this month so that we have a new city manager that exemplifies these characteristics in place as soon as we can.
- The Mayor outlined the vision for the future by saying he has always believed that we can better Rocky Mount by making neighborhoods safer, creating jobs, improving economic development, and creating accountability. He said our city is well on its way to achieving all these goals and we did it together - crime is down and jobs and economic development are up and going forward. We now have a statewide ethics law to keep locally elected officials accountable to you, the voters. He added that he believes and believes the City Council hopes for:
 - increased neighborhood-led, affordable housing initiatives to repair and rebuild damaged and neglected homes that lead to safer neighborhoods, more affordable housing choices, and increased community pride;
 - stronger educational opportunities for our children through innovative 360-degree approaches that include the Obama "My Brother's and Sister's Keepers" launch, Peacemakers Southside Academy, reimagining, and continued innovation of the Edgecombe County school system, just to name a few;
 - focused economic development job growth through a thoughtful comprehensive economic strategy plan that will lay the foundation for expansion, prosperity, and partnership in our region;
 - increased innovation and meeting transportation needs through a potential city micro-transit program that will help solve the transportation struggle for workers and be more convenient for citizens as well as saving them and our city money;
 - more growth in Edgecombe County with potential construction or, at least the study, of an outer loop to connect US 64 to Highway 301 with other parts of our city to encourage growth and closer ties between Rocky Mount Mills and Downtown to make Rocky Mount a destination and a place to stop and play on the way between Raleigh and the coast.

Mayor Roberson stated that the City still has a way to go, but he feels more positivity in the air and excitement of things to come and a joining together to make Rocky Mount better for all of us. He encouraged all to keep the positivity going and thanked them for their attention.

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

Mayor Roberson inquired if there are any changes/additions to the agenda. He noted a public hearing relative to the following rezoning request recommended for approval and found in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Board was held on March 14, 2022:

- Request by Rod Holloman, on behalf of Goldrock Road, LLC, to rezone ±27.42 acres at 601, 635 and 657 Goldrock Road from A-1 to revised R-6MFA

Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney stated that no action was taken following the public hearing and since that time the property

owner has contacted those individuals who signed a petition in opposition to the rezoning and has subsequently requested this matter be placed on today's agenda for consideration by the City Council. The Council was advised that the Department of Development Services has written adjoining property owners to advise the matter will be on today's agenda for consideration and Mr. Varney requested that public comments be allowed this evening and that the matter be placed on the May 9th agenda for Council consideration.

Mayor Roberson clarified that the matter is not on today's agenda and invited those wishing to comment to do so during the public petitions portion of the meeting even though the public hearing was held at the March 14, 2022, meeting.

No other changes to the agenda were requested.

WELCOME

Mayor Roberson welcomed Councilmember Knight back to the in-person meeting following his recent injury and subsequent remote attendance.

INDIVIDUAL PRAYER

The Mayor requested a moment for individual silent prayer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Walker, and unanimously carried that the minutes of a regular scheduled City Council Meeting held April 11, 2022, be approved as submitted to the City Council prior to the meeting.

COMMUNITY UPDATE BY INTERIM CITY MANAGER

Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney provided the following community update. The Interim City Manager:

- Began his report by advising that due to having fallen behind on yard waste collection, over the weekend on Saturday, 40 employees from the Street Division, Park Maintenance, Water and Sewer Division, and the Environmental Services Division collected yard waste. They finished about 85% of the yard waste collection (Tuesday route) and picked up the large piles on the Thursday route. He said the plan is for them to go back out tomorrow to finish the yard waste collection on the Tuesday route and begin collection on the Wednesday route. He added that on Wednesday they plan to finish the Wednesday and Thursday routes. Mr. Varney stated the idea of the plan is for pickup of all of the yard waste that has been accumulating on all of these routes to be completed by Friday. He added crews will be back out on Saturday if that is not accomplished. In response to a comment by Councilmember Miller, he advised that the City will publicize the plan.
- Reported that a number of calls have been received relative to unsecured bonds. He clarified that bonds are set by the Magistrate's Office which is a function of the court system and not part of governmental operations. He added that the Police Department has no influence on the setting of bonds. The community was advised that on April 27, 2022 (Wednesday) at 6:00 p.m. here in the City Council Chamber there will be a training session sponsored/conducted by the Human Relations Department relative to neighborhood associations and housing programs that are available as well as a session on community wealth building.
- Reminded all that the City celebrates Arbor Day every year and this year the event will be on Friday, April 29th at 10:00 a.m. at Martin Luther King, Jr. Park. He announced that the presentation of a tree in honor of Dora Cooper is planned.
- Announced that the Peace Officers Memorial Ceremony which has taken place every year for the past 37 years will be held on May 3rd at 10:00 a.m. here in Rocky Mount at Englewood Baptist Church. He stated the event moves around to different places in the state and the last time it was in Rocky Mount was in 2008.

- Reported that a meeting has been scheduled relative to the Raper Drive rezoning request (public hearing held March 14) for the adjoining property owners on May 2nd at 5:15 p.m. at Parkwood Baptist Church. He stated he would anticipate consideration of the rezoning request to come before Council for reconsideration.
- Announced that May 2-6, 2022, is City Employee Appreciation Week and a number of events are planned to recognize and appreciate City employees.
- Reported that for a number of weeks Parks Maintenance crews have been working in Unity Cemetery cleaning up and clearing out underbrush and vines and raking. He said crews have returned to their normal work due to the Spring season; however, work is being done to engage another crew to resume the work that's been going on in Unity Cemetery.

At the request of Councilmember Joyner, the Interim City Manager announced that early voting starts Friday, April 28. It was announced that the primary election is May 17, 2022.

EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH DAY

The Mayor read a Proclamation proclaiming April 30, 2022, as Ebenezer Baptist Church Day in the City of Rocky Mount in recognition of the dedication of Promised Land Park. The Mayor presented the proclamation to Reverend Thomas Walker. Members of Ebenezer Baptist Church and Councilmembers Blackwell, Joyner and Walker joined the Mayor and Reverend Walker for a photograph.

PUBLIC WORKS WEEK

Mayor Roberson read a Proclamation proclaiming the week of May 15 through 21, 2022 as Public Works Week in the City of Rocky Mount and called upon all civic organizations and citizens to acquaint themselves with the issues involved in providing public works and to honor the men and women in public works whose dedication, diligence and professionalism keep our City a thriving community. The Mayor presented the proclamation to Brad Kerr, Public Works Director, and Brenton Bent, Water Resources Director, and staff of the Public Works and Water Resources Departments, and joined them for a photograph.

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:

- ***Loretta Braswell:***
 - Told the Council she is a City resident and a 47-year employee with the City of which she is very proud;
 - Said over the years, she has watched members of the Council disagree with each other and watched citizens disagree with the Council and said those things happen at board meetings and other meetings;
 - Said she wants Council to know that she prays for them, as all citizens should;
 - Said she lost her mother and her burial was on Friday. She said she was so comforted by receiving a condolence letter from the Mayor and City Council and it touched the hearts of her and her family and voiced appreciation for the letter;
 - Said she loves the City of Rocky Mount, and it shows because she has been working here for a number of years and is proud when she hears the state of the City and hears

- of the proclamations being presented; and
- Said the City is not perfect, and nothing is and voiced appreciation and thanks for the heart of the Council in the work they do
- **Deborah Joyner:**
 - Said she came back to reiterate her concern with the rezoning of approximately 27 acres on Goldrock Road;
 - Said a lot of people signed the petition in opposition of the rezoning and were unable to come today but are still opposed to the rezoning; and
 - Said it devalues their property adding that Mr. Puckett would also like to speak about some issues with flooding
- **Brian Burnett:**
 - Told the Council he is a tailor from Raleigh, North Carolina, and started his business about 5 years ago;
 - Said in being a property owner he feels he can help other small businesses get on their feet;
 - Provided a history of his business efforts since he came to Rocky Mount in 2019 and said he has taken an interest in a property at 319 Marigold Street;
 - Said he loves a challenge and used to play football. He said he graduated from UNC Chapel Hill;
 - Reported he closed on the Marigold Street property and then received an email from Kelly Cook, Community Code Administrator;
 - Said the property had about \$30,000 in taxes and assessments but he and his wife decided to take a chance and closed on the property;
 - Said Mr. Cook advised that the property is on the demolition list;
 - Said he has already spent money on the property and is committed to making it happen;
 - Said the delay in purchasing the property was due to being unable to locate the owners/heirs of the property and they were finally located in March 2022;
 - Requested to be allowed at least 60 days in order to obtain permits;
 - Said they have already started work on the property, having worked on it last summer;
 - Asked that the City delay demolition of the property adding he has spent almost \$40,000 in restoring it; and
 - Said this beautiful historic property was built in 1904 and he wants the opportunity to bring something back to the community and take Rocky Mount to the next level

Mr. Burnett responded to questions from Councilmembers. Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney stated he is not aware of the pending demolition and is willing to honor the request for additional time (60 days).

- **Sue Perry Cole:**
 - Told the Mayor and Council that she resides in the City and is a member of the Community Academy which is a group of concerned neighborhood residents who have come together to improve housing and health conditions in racially segregated and blighted communities experiencing disinvestment;
 - Added that she also currently serves as chairperson of the Rocky Mount Workforce Housing Advisory Commission, also known as the WAC;
 - Said in the wake of the annual retreat, which was conducted last week, and the range of options presented to the City Council, she is speaking today in the midst of a housing crisis;
 - Voiced support for the City Council to continue housing as a priority focus area to seek bold and affordable housing solutions to ensure the most marginalized residents of Rocky Mount, especially low-income people of color, have safe, affordable, accessible, and affordable homes;
 - Said April is National Fair Housing Month, and the Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, and familial status. Stated that the Act furthers the beliefs advocated by Dr. Martin Luther

King, Jr., and other heroes of the civil rights movement and yet 53 years after the Act was signed into law on April 11, 1968, we still live in a society that is racially and economically divided;

- Stated here in Rocky Mount, as was pointed out in the recent HUD-related City planning document, 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;
 - Stated that for the most part, the impoverished and Black residents of Rocky Mount have been concentrated disproportionately in a number of distressed urban core neighborhoods, which is where she lives and has lived for the past 35 years;
 - Said if there is one thing learned since 1968, it's that decades of structural racism and ongoing discrimination have created racial disparities in housing. Housing segregation was designed as intentional public policy, resulting in the highly segregated neighborhoods seen today in the City as well as the lack of affordable housing;
 - Said racial segregation and discrimination in housing sits at the root of a host of other racial inequities, such as poverty, employment, and health care. This means understanding the affordable housing crisis and taking meaningful action is crucial to effectively address these disparities and reduce inequity; and
 - Directed attention to the Rocky Mount Affordable Housing Strategic Plan that recommends the passage of a general obligation bond focused on affordable housing adding that is what she wants to see happen
- **Gary Puckett:**
- Thanked the Mayor, Council, and Interim City Manager for listening;
 - Voiced opposition to the requested rezoning of property on Goldrock Road stating he lives where Goldrock Road crosses Hornbeam Branch;
 - Said there have been three accidents in his front yard in the last year, two of which were very serious;
 - Said Hornbeam Branch is right behind his house and the property being considered for rezoning is about 27 acres and 21 acres of that property is the 100-year floodplain and the 500-year floodplain;
 - Said Hornbeam Branch has gone from a pristine branch to a drainage ditch for the city;
 - Added it is already polluted when it passes his house from all of the other projects;
 - Further explained his concerns by referring to a diagram of the property shown to Council;
 - Said what happens is water from projects related to building houses or condos is pushed onto adjacent property and nobody addresses the adjacent property and people live in those houses; and
 - Said being flooded out of a home is dramatic because there is nothing you can do but watch the water go up and down
- **Kandie Smith:**
- Stated she is the current representative for District Eight, which is in Pitt County;
 - Said she wanted to take this opportunity to come and introduce herself an elected official for this area, as well as to the citizens of Edgecombe County;
 - Said when redistricting happened there were some changes and the new district for the Senate will be Pitt County and Edgecombe County combined;
 - Said she is running for that seat and thinks if someone is running for election they should always introduce themselves to the people who currently serve in elected office because the job is to work with them;
 - Said those running for election should also introduce themselves to the public and she wanted to make sure that she did that;
 - Said she thinks this was the perfect meeting to attend because she got a chance to hear the State of the City from Mayor Roberson and also had a chance to hear where the state legislators fell short with broadband; and
 - Thanked the Council for having her at the meeting today and provided each with her contact information inviting them to contact her at any time

○ **Dr. Kim Koo:**

- Said she lives in the Englewood section of Rocky Mount and is also a member of the Rocky Mount Racial Justice group;
- Said as she watched the Council Retreat online, she was struck by the discussion around financing various anticipated future projects and the sudden and urgent need for a Judicial Center at an estimated cost of \$20M was notable;
- Questioned why a white elephant structure like a Judicial Center is needed;
- Further spoke in opposition to the building of a new Judicial Center saying that Rocky Mount is a divided city and questioned why it matters if someone has to travel several miles to each county seat;
- Said for decades Black communities on the Edgecombe County side of the city have suffered from a housing crisis and other disinvestment and the cry for affordable housing and other social services gets louder as the inequities worsen all over the country;
- Said federal funding keeps getting more and more inadequate and cities are expected to accept this condition of penury;
- Stated that cities scramble for money to cover maintaining adequate services and crumbling infrastructures and federal funds are siphoned to cover war abroad. Since the start of the war in Europe, we have poured more than \$2.4B into Ukraine, all to essentially go up in flames;
- Questioned if the City received any portion of that kind of federal funding;
- Said she echoes the voices of the Black communities for affordable housing and more equitable development on the Edgecombe County side of the railroad tracks;
- Stated every year she has watched in amazement as the support for housing decreases for other so-called more worthy projects and the people who oppose bringing equity in jobs, housing, and other social services to the less fortunate communities;
- Further spoke in support of affordable housing;
- Added it is her belief that we all need to take responsibility for the condition of our communities and eliminate all aspects of privilege based on race;
- Said this not in the Christian spirit; and
- Said she feels the City owes a debt of gratitude to its previous manager, Rochelle Small-Toney

○ **Muntaz Shaik:**

- Told the Mayor and Council that she resides in the City;
- Said when she first heard of the need for a new Judicial Center, she was a bit perplexed and wondered about the current Judicial Center which appears to serve the community adequately;
- Questioned if the City is really in need of a Judicial Center and voiced opposition to building a new Judicial Center;
- Said the City is in dire need of affordable housing to replace the acres and acres of dilapidated structures that have been rotting for many years adding in many parts of the City blight exists;
- Said all available tax dollars should be judiciously used to push for programs to improve people's lives, programs to eradicate joblessness, food insecurity, and homelessness, which is the hallmark of poverty, and the focus should be people, people, people;
- Said affordable housing will positively impact the lives of thousands of people in the City; and
- Encouraged citizens to cast a no vote if the Judicial Center is put to a vote and to cast a yes vote for more affordable housing for the homeless who need a safe haven to call home for a better quality of life

○ **Adrienne Copland:**

- Said recently this Council had interviews with three different recruitment firms to find the next City Manager and to her shock, only five out of seven Council persons showed up for two out of three of three meetings. She added that was really disappointing especially given that Councilmembers can show up in person, or

virtually attend these meetings and in two days out of three two members didn't show up;

- Said given the tumultuous and controversial history around the last City Manager, the choice of the new City Manager is arguably the most important decision Council has in front of them right now and added if her ward representative had not been present, she would have been furious;
 - Said this Council can do better, and the citizens of Rocky Mount deserve to be represented better;
 - Said the house Brian Burnett spoke about would never have gotten in that horrible situation if the City Council had done its job with tax foreclosures. She said he stated back taxes are owed for 18 years and that house has been sitting there dilapidated. She added he is doing the City a favor by bearing the costs of the cleanup of the mess that Council created by not enforcing tax foreclosures. She asked that they do better in that way as well
- **Morrie Minges:**
 - Asked who owns the strip of property between the highway and her property and said an election sign was removed from that area near her property over the weekend but no one removed her sign that says stupid people litter;
 - Said the railroad building in front of the Event Center would be a cool place for pop-up shops if fixed up;
 - Asked who bears the cost of property demolition;
 - Complimented the City on the beautification of City Lake adding she would like to make a sculpture to be displayed there; and
 - Encouraged everyone to pick up trash near their property and asked that people not litter
 - **Greg Bee:**
 - Said he participates in a podcast with Sam Rock called Word on the Street;
 - Said Sam Rock is in the hospital and has been for about a week;
 - Said he wanted to talk about public safety;
 - Said he heard the Mayor say public safety numbers are down by 18%;
 - Said he also read that same thing in the paper earlier but every week somebody's getting shot or killed and gangs are prevalent;
 - Suggested the City put money in communities for playgrounds for the children to actually have something to do that doesn't cost the parent;
 - Said gangs are always recruiting and the City will pay one way or another adding if they can spend \$70,000 for a retreat, they can put some money in the Wards for children; and
 - Said there is only one pool in the entire City and that's not sanitary or safe and puts a strain on lifeguards

AD VALOREM TAX RELEASES

The City Council received the following schedule 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>EDGECOMBE COUNTY</u>				
2021	1001873	GARCIA-ALVAREZ, ADRIAN 1206 ROSEWOOD AVE ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	41.31 8.26 1.37	CITY PEN INT
		TOTAL RELEASE:	50.94	
2020	244	GARCIA ALVAREZ, ALICIA 1206 ROSEWOOD AVE ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	57.14 5.71 8.33	CITY PEN INT
		TOTAL RELEASE:	71.18	PERSONAL PROPERTY LOCATED OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS

2021	307	GARCIA ALVAREZ, ALICIA	54.63	CITY	PERSONAL PROPERTY
		1206 ROSEWOOD AVE	5.46	PEN	LOCATED OUTSIDE
		ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	2.55	INT	CITY LIMITS
		TOTAL RELEASE:	62.64		

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>					
2012	6878	BARNES, WANDA S	355.70	CITY	FORECLOSURE
		517 S WASHINGTON ST	303.23	INT	
		APT A			
		ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801			
		TOTAL RELEASE:	658.93		
2013	6880	BARNES, WANDA S	355.70	CITY	FORECLOSURE
		517 S WASHINGTON ST	271.22	INT	
		APT A			
		ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801			
		TOTAL RELEASE:	626.92		
2014	6868	BARNES, WANDA S	355.70	CITY	FORECLOSURE
		517 S WASHINGTON ST	99.81	INT	
		APT A			
		ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801			
		TOTAL RELEASE:	455.51		

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and unanimously carried that receipt of the report from the Interim City Manager of Schedule A taxes approved for release and/or refund be acknowledged; and that the release and/or refund of taxes listed on Schedule B be approved.

POSITION CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION RANGE ASSIGNMENTS

The City Council received recommendations for newly adjusted pay ranges (Table I - Compensation Grade/Range) which begins at pay grade 7 and goes through pay grade 30; for the incorporation of \$15 per hour as the new minimum wage (2080-hour equivalency); and for adjustment of the current ranges to be in line with the market and to account for the 4.5% COLA approved in November 2021. It was noted that the budgetary impact of the movement to range minimum or \$1,500, whichever is greater, is approximately \$2M. The Table I - Compensation Grade/Range is listed below:

**TABLE I
COMPENSATION GRADE/RANGE**

GRADE	MINIMUM	MIDPOINT	MAXIMUM
30	133,691.02	173,798.32	213,905.62
29	121,537.29	157,998.47	194,459.66
28	110,488.44	143,634.98	176,781.51
27	100,444.04	130,577.25	160,710.46
26	91,312.76	118,706.59	146,100.42
25	83,011.60	107,915.08	132,818.56

24	75,465.09	98,104.62	120,744.15
23	68,604.63	89,186.02	109,767.41
22	62,367.85	81,078.20	99,788.55
21	59,397.95	77,217.33	95,036.72
20	58,832.25	73,540.32	88,248.38
19	56,030.72	70,038.40	84,046.08
18	53,362.59	66,703.23	80,043.88
17	50,821.51	63,526.89	76,232.27
16	48,401.44	60,501.80	72,602.16
15	46,096.61	57,620.76	69,144.91
14	43,901.53	54,876.92	65,852.30
13	41,810.98	52,263.73	62,716.48
12	39,819.98	49,774.98	59,729.98
11	37,923.80	47,404.74	56,885.69
10	36,117.90	45,147.38	54,176.85
9	34,398.00	42,997.50	51,597.00
8	32,760.00	40,950.00	49,140.00
7	31,200.00	39,000.00	46,800.00

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and unanimously carried that the newly adjusted pay ranges (Table I) be approved to be effective July 2, 2022, and that the current pay ranges be adjusted to be in line with the market and to account for the 4.5% COLA approved in November 2021.

FY 2022 INSTALLMENT FINANCING

The City Council was provided with resolutions required in connection with the filing of an application with the Local Government Commission for approval of an installment financing contract for the following projects estimated at \$4,059,000:

- Warehouse Improvements - \$125,000
- Business Services Center Improvements - \$1,034,000
- Battleboro Community Center Improvements - \$400,000 (provides funding for rebuilding the Battleboro Community Center at its former location on West Battleboro Drive where the Battleboro Town Hall, Community Center were demolished some years after the merger of Battleboro into the City of Rocky Mount)
- Denton Street Pool Improvements - \$1,100,000
- Old Mill Road Pump Station - \$1,400,000

Council was advised that the resolutions are a finding of necessary facts supporting the business reasons for financing and authorizes the City to proceed with filing the application.

It was recommended that the City Council adopt the resolutions authorizing the installment financing and direct staff to evaluate the following options:

- Building a new Battleboro Community Center; and
- Entering into an agreement with NEED, Inc. to allow the funds from the installment financing to be used to renovate the M.C. Braswell Center at 649 Morning Star Church Road built many years ago which was used for the Head Start program and as a congregant feeding site and which is still actively in use and in need of extensive repair.

The City Council was advised that evaluations will be brought back to Council for consideration before funds are spent.

The Council was further advised lease financing is customary and the United States Treasury requires adoption in advance of a resolution declaring the City's intent to reimburse expenditures.

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Knight, and unanimously carried that:

- **Resolution No. R-2022-16** entitled **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN INSTALLMENT FINANCING CONTRACT AUTHORIZED BY NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTE 160A-20** be adopted. This resolution authorizes the Mayor, City Manager and Director of Finance to act on behalf of the City in filing an application with the North Carolina Local Government Commission for approval of the project and the proposed installment financing contract and other actions not inconsistent with the resolution; and that
- **Resolution No. R-2022-17** entitled **RESOLUTION DECLARING OFFICIAL INTENT OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT TO REIMBURSE EXPENDITURES MADE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS** be adopted. The Council was advised that the City intends to enter into an installment financing arrangement for the construction of certain improvements as follows which were budgeted in FY 2022:
City Properties: Warehouse, Business Services Center, Battleboro Community Center, Denton Street Pool, and Old Mill Road Pump Station (estimated at approximately \$4,059,000)

MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT/COKEY ROAD AND REX STREET SIDEWALKS

The City Council was provided with a municipal agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for the design and construction of the Cokey Road and Rex Street sidewalks as well as a project map. It was explained that the project will be locally administered with a current estimated cost of \$450,000 and, as a designated Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) project, the local share is 20% or \$90,000 with the balance to be covered by NCDOT. Council was advised that the project is a Powell Bill eligible expense and will add an additional 3,000 feet of sidewalk with 2,700 feet on the west side of Cokey Road from the railroad to Wintergreen Court and 300 feet of sidewalk on the south side of Rex Street from Old Wilson Road to Cokey Road.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell, and unanimously carried that the municipal agreement (**C-2022-15**) with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) (TIP#: BL-0032/WBS Elements: PE 49851.1.1) be approved and that the Mayor, Finance Director and City Clerk be authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the City.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING/SOLID WASTE FRONT LOADERS

The City Council was advised that due to major mechanical failures and supply chain issues the City is in need of front load trucks. The Council was provided with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Orange County, North Carolina, relative to the purchase of two (2) 2009 Peterbilt Front Loaders, which have been operating as spares for the past several years, at a cost of \$60,000 each. Council was advised that the vehicles each have less than 150,000 miles and have been evaluated by City staff. The Memorandum of Understanding outlines the terms for the transfer of ownership of the vehicles and includes a provision for the City to take possession of the vehicles prior to final Board approval of the sale. It is expected the Orange County Board of Commissioners will authorize execution of the MOU at its May 2, 2022, meeting.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Miller, and unanimously carried that the Memorandum of Understanding with Orange County, North Carolina, **(C-2022-16)** be approved and that the Interim City Manager be authorized to execute the same on behalf of the City.

CITY MANAGER RECRUITMENT/POLIHIRE (ADDENDUM FOR FINANCE DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT)

The City Council was provided with a search agreement for recruitment for the City Manager for a fee of \$38,000. It was explained that the fee is inclusive of all expenses except for candidate travel and any associated expenses (lodging) for candidates' final interviews. The agreement outlines the scope of services, terms, commitment to diversity and guarantee and provides for a reduced fee of \$24,000 for any additional searches during the duration of the contract. It was recommended that Polihire also be contracted to provide an additional search for a Finance Director at the reduced fee.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Walker, and unanimously carried that the search agreement and any addendum, as outlined, with Polihire **(C-2022-17)** for services for recruitment of the City Manager and Finance Director be approved and that the Mayor be authorized to execute the same on behalf of the City.

10-YEAR CIP FOR WATER AND SEWER/SEWER ASSET STUDY

The City Council received a CIP overview of the City Manager's 10-year schedule for water and sewer operations of the Department of Water Resources along with resolutions required to apply for a grant the City is submitting to the State of North Carolina for the following projects:

- Sewer Asset Study (\$400,000 grant); and
- Sewer Improvements (\$5,000,000 principal forgiveness loan).

Motion was made by Councilmember Miller, seconded by Councilmember Daughtridge, and unanimously carried that the proposed 10-year schedule

for water and sewer operations of the Department of Water Resources be adopted.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Miller, and unanimously carried that **Resolution No. R-2022-18** entitled **RESOLUTION BY CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT TO APPLY FOR STATE GRANT FOR A SEWER ASSET STUDY** and **Resolution No. R-2022-19** entitled **RESOLUTION BY CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT TO APPLY FOR STATE PRINCIPAL FORGIVENESS LOAN FOR SEWER IMPROVEMENTS** be adopted.

These resolutions authorize the Interim City Manager and Mayor, and successors so titled, to execute and file an application on behalf of the City with the State of North Carolina for a grant to aid in the study of a sewer asset study and for a loan and/or grant to aid in the study of or construction of sewer improvements.

BID/SECOND FLOOR CBDO AND HUMAN RELATIONS FURNITURE ACQUISITION

The City Council was advised that second floor renovations are nearing completion. It was recommended that furniture acquisition for the Community of Business and Development Office (CBDO) and Human Relations Department be made 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 furniture was bid is Contract #420A-Furniture.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Miller, and unanimously carried that furniture acquisition for the second floor Community of Business and Development Office and Human Relations Department a total cost of \$134,311.76 from Institutional Interiors, Inc. be approved and that the Purchasing Division be authorized to issue a purchase order for the furniture 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-2022-16**.

BID/MOBILE COMPUTING DEVICES

The City Council received a recommendation for the purchase of mobile computing devices for the Police Department 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 equipment was bid is Contract #204B-Ruggedized Mobile Computing Devices, Accessories and Peripherals, with Respective Support and Maintenance.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Miller, and unanimously carried that mobile computing devices at a total

cost of \$236,201.07 from Law and Order Technology, LLC be approved and that the Purchasing Division be authorized to issue a purchase order for the equipment 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-2022-17**.

APPOINTMENTS

Councilmember Daughtridge nominated Adrienne Copland to fill the unexpired term on the Historic Preservation Commission.

Councilmember Miller appealed to interested Ward 7 residents to apply to serve on the Animal Care and Control Advisory Board.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and carried by a vote of 6-1 (Councilmember Blackwell opposed) that Adrienne Copland be appointed to the Historic Preservation Commission for an unexpired term to expire June 30, 2025, contingent upon receipt of personal history form.

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

COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

Councilmember Walker thanked the City Council for nominating him to serve as Mayor Pro Tem. He added he believes that led to his nomination as District 5 Director on the North Carolina League of Municipalities. He thanked his grandfather, Reverend Thomas L. Walker, for paving his way, and voiced appreciation to the Mayor and Council and the constituents of Ward 4.

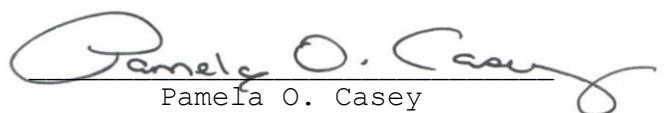
CLOSED SESSION

A closed session was requested to prevent the disclosure of information that is confidential under North Carolina law. The minutes of the closed session shall be placed on file as **ESM-601** at the end of Minute Book No. 38 upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Knight, and unanimously carried that the City Council enter into closed session at 5:26 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION/ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Walker and unanimously that the City Council meeting be adjourned at 5:34 p.m.


Pamela O. Casey
City Clerk