

May 9, 2022

The City Council of the City of Rocky Mount met this day in a regular session scheduled for 7:00 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, Jr., Lige Daughtridge, W.B. Bullock and Christine Carroll Miller.

Staff present: Peter F. Varney, Interim City Manager; Kim Batts, Deputy City Clerk; Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager; Mark Adcox, Video Production Specialist; Chris Beschler, Director of Energy Resources; Joel Dunn, Parks and Recreation Director; Brad Kerr, Public Works Director; Will Deaton, Director of the Department of Development Services; Archie Jones, Director of Human Relations; Gregory Cotten, Chief Technology Officer; Latasha Hall, Director of Business and Collections Services; Tracey Drewery, Assistant Chief of Administration & Planning (Fire Department); Corey Mercer, Fire Chief; Michael Roupp, Assistant Chief of Operations; Darvin Moore, Division Chief; Lorenza Wilkins, Human Resources Benefits Manager; Ken Hunter, Assistant to the City Manager for Budget and Evaluation; Abdul Baloch, Chief Internal Auditor; Kevin Harris, Downtown Development Manager; Robert Hassell, Police Chief; Robin Cox, Communications Specialist; Chynice Chapman, purchasing manager; Cornelia McGee, Interim Community and Business Development Director; Kena Cofield-Jones, Director of Human Resources; Pamela O. Casey, City Clerk 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 7:03 p.m. and requested all to stand for a moment of silent prayer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Miller, and unanimously carried that the minutes of a regular scheduled Committee of the Whole Meeting and minutes a regular scheduled Committee of the Whole Meeting held April 11, 2022, and Special Called Committee of the Whole Meetings Held April 13 and 14, 2022 be approved as submitted to the City Council prior to the meeting.

The minutes of the regular scheduled Committee of the Whole meeting are below:

MINUTES OF A REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HELD MONDAY, APRIL 11, 2022, AT 5:00 P.M. IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING WITH MAYOR PRO TEM T.J. WALKER PRESIDING:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

*Participating remotely

Others Present:

From Colin Baenziger &
 Associates (CB&A) -
 **Colin Baenziger
 **Stephen Sorrell
 **Lynelle Klein

STAFF PRESENT:

Peter F. Varney
 Pamela O. Casey
 Kim Batts
 Robert Hassell
 Mark Adcox
 Abdul Baloch
 Elton Daniels
 Kirk Brown
 Brenton Bent
 Archie Jones
 Greg Cotten
 Chris Beschler
 Kenneth Hunter
 Latasha Hall
 Corey Mercer
 Brad Kerr
 Lorenza Wilkins
 Paula Loftin
 Richard J. Rose

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Pro Tem T.J. Walker called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and called on Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney to introduce the first agenda item.

CITY MANAGER RECRUITMENT/INTERVIEW - Colin Baenziger & Associates

Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney told the Council that three (3) responses to the request for proposals (RFP) were received from search firms relative to the City Manager recruitment. He noted that two (2) firms responded to the RFP and CB&A responded from seeing the request for proposals on the City's website. Mr. Varney provided the City Council with a proposal to provide executive search services for the City Manager for Rocky Mount received from Colin Baenziger & Associates (CB&A) from Daytona Beach Shores, Florida.

He introduced **Colin Baenziger, Principal/Owner of CB&A. Mr. Baenziger told the Council the firm is a nationally known recruiting firm and introduced his associates **Stephen Sorrell, Senior Vice President, and **Lynelle Klein, VP/Operations. Mr. Sorrell provided information relative to his background and Ms. Klein made brief comments. The Council was provided with information relative to the firm's:

**joined remotely

- qualifications and experience;
- success rate;
- project management approach:
 - o information gathering/needs assessment/brochure preparation;
 - o recruitment;
 - o screening and finalist selection;
 - o coordination of interview process and selection; and
 - o negotiation and continuing assistance

Mr. Baenziger outlined the goal of the firm and responded to questions from Interim City Manager Varney and Councilmembers.

The City Council received the proposed project schedule and information relative to fees/warranties.

Mayor Pro Tem T.J. Walker thanked Mr. Baenziger for his presentation and advised that two other interviews with search firms

are scheduled for April 13th and 14th (4:00 p.m.). Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney stated that the interview with Polihire will be on April 13th (remotely) and the interview with GovHR USA will be on April 14th (in-person).

It was noted that the City Council will hold a retreat on April 19th and 20th and will discuss the matter of the City Manager recruitment further at that time.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Information only; no formal action

CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION STUDY - Paula Loftin, Human Resources Manager, and Kenneth Hunter, Assistant to the City Manager for Budget and Evaluation

Human Resources Manager, Paula Loftin, informed the City Council that the current pay and classification plan has 30 pay grads and was last updated in 2016. She stated the proposed pay and classification plan would have 24 pay grades and would be effective July 2, 2022.

Ms. Loftin presented the following highlights of the proposed pay and classification plan:

- Increase annual pay of all full-time active employees to either a new range minimum or \$1,500 (whichever is greater)
 - o 199 employees will receive an increase due to new range minimum; and
 - o Remainder of employees will receive the \$1,500 increase (approximately 611 employees)
- Pay grades 7 - 14 will receive the greatest benefit
- Pay grades will begin at Grade 7 with \$15/hour minimum (2080 hr-equivalency)

Kenneth Hunter, Assistant to the City Manager for Budget and Evaluation, informed the City Council that the proposed increases were designed to ensure pay grades 7 - 14 receive the most benefit. He stated the combined impact between the COLA increase and the proposed pay grade increases averages to a little over 9%.

Ms. Loftin provided a brief review of key positions that had been evaluated to ensure the City is competitive in salary to the surrounding area. The key positions reviewed were police officer, sanitation equipment operator and 1st class lineman.

Mr. Hunter provided the City Council with the following costs associated with the COLA increase and proposed pay and classification plan for Fiscal Year 2023:

- COLA, including benefits, \$2,743,963
- Proposed Pay and Classification Plan, including benefits, \$1,976,386
- combined cost impact for the COLA increase and the proposed pay and classification plan, inclusive of benefits, \$4,720,348

Mr. Hunter stated that based on revenue estimates the upcoming budget should be able to accommodate these increases.

Ms. Loftin informed the Council that the next steps would be to work with existing career ladders to ensure continuity across the City and work with new career ladder opportunities as needed. She added that applicable policies and ordinances would need to be reviewed to ensure any needed updates are made.

Councilmember Blackwell thanked Mr. Hunter and Ms. Loftin for the information presented. Councilmember Blackwell asked what

measures were being taken to ensure employees are evaluated and trained appropriately and to ensure leadership is building a positive culture.

Ms. Loftin informed the City Council that systematic training opportunities are being implemented and there is now an in-house training staff person. She stated the Human Resources Department is working with the IT Department to streamline training and working with department heads to review performance plans and to make sure the same tools and resources are being used. Ms. Loftin explained that the classification and compensation study expected to be performed in the fall should help address compression and job descriptions.

Mayor Roberson asked if there had been any negative feedback concerning the proposed pay plan. Ms. Loftin responded that she did not feel there had been any negative feedback.

Discussion was held relative to ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all employees.

Councilmember Blackwell asked how the pay plan would apply to the Fire Department considering the difference in their work schedule.

Interim City Manager Varney stated the complexity of the work schedule of the Fire Department creates a challenge when addressing the pay plan. He told the Council staff will investigate to see what other cities have done to address the issue.

Councilmember Blackwell asked if the research into a solution could be made a priority since the Fire Department is a large and critical department for the City.

Interim City Manager Varney stated there used to be considerable time invested in supervisory training when he was here before and a piece of that was spent on the evaluation process. He stated if that is not still in place, he will look at reinitiating it. Mr. Varney informed the Council that during his time back, he has been told some supervisors have rated everyone very generously while others have been rating employees very conservatively. He stated plans to research this matter to see what may need to be addressed. He reported there are issues with compression and said he is hoping the next study can target compression and provide ways to address the compression problem.

Councilmember Daughtridge asked what the impact of the pay plan could have relevant to property taxes.

Mr. Hunter informed the City Council that the goal is to present a budget without a property tax increase. He stated the pay plan would create about an 8% increase to the current salary and benefit budget and he believes the increase is sustainable based on the current revenue structure.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Received information; no formal action

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES - Kenneth Hunter, Assistant to the City Manager for Budget and Evaluation

Kenneth Hunter, Assistant to the City Manager for Budget and Evaluation, informed the City Council the City has received notification from Congressman Butterfield's office that he is accepting applications for localized legislative appropriations. He stated the notification was received about 10 days ago and the deadline for applications is April 14, 2022. Mr. Hunter presented

the legislative appropriations categories provided to him as follows:

- Community Facilities
- Local Transportation Priorities
- Housing
- Justice Assistance
- Small Business Initiatives
- Pre-Disaster Mitigation
- Emergency Operations Centers
- Nonprofit Sustainability
- Habitat Conservation
- Urban Forestry
- Employment & Training Assistance
- Emergency Operations Centers

Mr. Hunter stated the guidance provided recommended submitting 2-3 projects for consideration. He stated the 3 projects staff has focused on are Community Facilities, Local Transportation Priorities, and Housing. Mr. Hunter informed City Council that 2-3 projects would need to be identified today in order for staff to have time to prepare the applications. Mr. Hunter stated the 3 projects identified at this time are as follows:

- Downtown Pedestrian Bridge \$5,000,000
- New Judicial Center \$20,000,000
- Workforce Housing \$5,000,000

Mr. Hunter briefly reviewed the projects and stated they could be adjusted pending recommendations from City Council.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. By consensus, the City Council approved the projects outlined by staff.

CRIME STATISTICS - Robert Hassell, Police Chief

Police Chief Robert Hassell presented a summary of city-wide crime numbers to the City Council for March 2022. It was noted that the presentation covers crime incidents throughout the City currently and in comparison, with the prior year during the same time period. The Council was advised that crime numbers are tracked by the FBI and shared with the Bureau of Justice Statistics for tracking purposes and the presentation includes investigation outcomes for violent crimes and related arrests. The presentation also included maps depicting areas of shots fired, incidences of aggravated assault and murder and highlighted efforts and successes of the Police Department to combat violent crime.

An overview of PowerPoint presentation provided to the Mayor and Council includes:

- National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Part 1 crime comparisons by type were provided. Total crime numbers by months and years were reported as:

Crimes/NIBRS Part 1	March 2021	March 2022	+/-	YTD 2021	YTD 2022	+/-
Total	134	170	+26	422	475	+53

- March 2022 crime numbers for murders, aggravated assault and shooting into occupied building(s)/vehicle(s) (map of locations provided):
 - Aggravated assault cases and investigations:
 - Aggravated assault cases = 18
 - Aggravated assault victims = 27
 - Number cases with multiple victims = 5
 - Aggravated assault arrests = 9
 - Aggravated assault cases cleared = 5
 - Case Dispositions (total = 18):
 - Cases cleared by arrest = 5
 - Inactive cases = 3

- Open cases = 10
- Crime Report:
 - Murder, aggravated assault and shooting into occupied building/vehicle: total victims = 26
 - *Victims with injuries = 15
 - *Victims without injuries = 13
- ShotSpotter and Citizen calls City-wide:
 - Shots fired = 77
 - Calls resulting in shell casings found = 32
 - Number shell casings found = 166
 - Number of Firearms Seized = 37
 - Number firearms seized (year to date) = 97
 - Weapon violation arrests = 11
- Update on Initiatives:
 - FUSUS & LPR:
 - Located witness vehicles and helped identify suspects
 - Assisted in identifying suspect involved in a shooting case
 - Provided real-time information to include suspect vehicles within a short period of time and suspects were arrested
 - Subject was identified committing at least three commercial breaking and/or entering cases. Subject was located through a Fusus alert, which was generated from a Flock hit. \$500 in stolen property was recovered along with physical evidence from the break-in
 - Four (4) stolen vehicles were recovered with a total value of \$92,000
 - Violent Crime & Gang - Crime Reduction Unit
 - Made up of two teams
 - Tasked with investigating violent crime in identified areas
 - Lead investigations related to gangs and suspected gang members
 - Work with Narcotics and other units
 - Activities
 - Increased presence in identified areas
 - Additional officers to assist patrol during peak hours
 - Seek violent and more serious offenders who have warrants
 - 125 warrants served
 - 49 arrests
- New Initiative:
 - Enhanced Focused Patrol

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identified areas are data and citizen driven 2. Crime Analyst creates a packet per patrol district 3. Situational Alerts 4. Directed Enhanced High Visibility Patrols 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Community Engagement & Crime Prevention 6. Problem-Oriented Policing Module 7. Time 30 to 60 days 8. Crime Analyst will monitor and report on progress
---	--

The goal is to reduce crime and improve the quality of life for citizens by proactively identifying areas of increased crime and directing resources with the objective to identify those committing crime, other causes that may foster crime, and other community issues that lessen the quality of life

- Community Involvement:
 - **Police Athletic/Activity League** - The Police Department hosted "Every Kid is an Artist" activity in the West End Terrace area with the Housing Authority
 - **Read Across America** - Officers read to students in the classrooms of several schools within the City

Councilmember Blackwell asked if there was a process in place that allows departments to follow up on the areas of concern that are noted by the Police Department when they are patrolling the City. Interim City Manager Varney stated that is a process that needs to be discussed. He stated there was something in place before, but he would like to see the process set up in a way that allows the reporting officer to see steps that are being taken to correct the issue. He stated that way the reporting officer would be able to see that what was reported is being addressed and how.

Councilmember Daughtridge asked how often the Atlas information was updated and who decides when the information is updated. Chief Hassell responded that the information on Atlas is updated as soon as the situation is investigated to ensure the correct information is relayed. He stated this keeps false alarms from being reported. He added that incidents that are reported on Atlas are more of the major crimes and not every incident is posted on the app.

Councilmember Knight stated he was concerned about a recent article he read. He stated the article questioned if Rocky Mount citizens felt safe. He reported the article relayed information that was received at a Nash County GOP rally that appeared to question the reports that crime is decreasing and challenged the numbers being reported. Councilmember Knight stated he had not seen a rebuttal from the Police Chief, the City Manager's Office, or the Mayor.

Mayor Roberson stated he was at the rally and was able to speak for 3 minutes as a candidate. He told the Council he did rebut the statement and stood behind the Police Chief. He stated that even though the newspaper did not print his statement, he felt very safe in Rocky Mount and was very proud to live in Rocky Mount.

Chief Hassell informed the City Council that he can't speak to what someone outside the Rocky Mount Police Department may say, but he does possess the experience to make a difference in Rocky Mount. He stated he feels safe in Rocky Mount and that every staff member in his department works extremely diligently to make a difference in the City. Chief Hassell stated his integrity would not allow him to report false numbers about the City's crime. He stated he and his staff are making a difference in crime and would continue to do so going forward.

Chief Hassell responded to questions from the City Council relative to police presence in the downtown area. He informed City Council the Police Department is working to reimplement bike officers to create relationships between officers and citizens without the barrier of car doors and windows.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Received report; no formal action

CLOSED SESSION

City Attorney, Richard J. Rose, stated the reason for entering into closed session was to keep confidential information that is not a public record as it relates to security features of the City's technology system.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. By consensus the City Council enter into Closed Session at 6:13 p.m.

The minutes of the Closed Session shall be placed on file as **ESM-600** at the end of **Minute Book 38** upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

ADJOURNMENT

Without objection, the Mayor Pro Tem adjourned the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

A printed copy of the PowerPoint presentations are on file in the office of the City Clerk.

The minutes of the Special Called Committee of the Whole Meetings Held April 13 and 14, 2022 are as follows:

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL CALLED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HELD WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13, 2022, AT 4:00 P.M. IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, THIRD FLOOR OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING WITH MAYOR PRO TEM T.J. WALKER PRESIDING:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

T.J. Walker, Mayor Pro Tem
Richard Joyner
Lige Daughtridge
W.B. Bullock
Christine Carroll Miller
Mayor C. Saunders "Sandy" Roberson, Jr.

STAFF PRESENT:

Peter F. Varney
Pamela O. Casey
Ken Hunter
Mark Adcox
Kirk Brown
Latasha Hall
Elton Daniels
Richard J. Rose

MEMBERS ABSENT:

André D. Knight
Reuben C. Blackwell, IV

OTHERS PRESENT:

*Kenyatta L. Uzzell, President/CEO, Polihire

**participated remotely*

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Pro Tem T.J. Walker called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and thanked Kenyatta L. Uzzell, President and CEO of Polihire for attending today's meeting (virtually). Mr. Walker stated that the Council will continue its interviews of recruitment firms relative to the City Manager recruitment process.

He called on Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney for comments. Mr. Varney invited Mr. Uzzell to provide a presentation relative to Polihire's response to the City's Request for Proposals (RFP) for recruitment and selection of the City Manager.

CITY MANAGER RECRUITMENT/INTERVIEW - POLIHIRE

Mr. Uzzell thanked the City Council for the opportunity to meet with them and provided a brief PowerPoint presentation overview and executive summary of Polihire and its services. He noted he founded the firm in 2005 and it is headquartered in Washington, DC and has an office in Durham, North Carolina.

The City Council was provided with the firm's response to the City's RFP which included information relative to Polihire's:

- approach;
- qualifications and experience;
- years in business and experience;
- ability to complete project objectives;

- examples of past experiences;
- references;
- client list;
- key personnel;
- services provided;
- executive recruitment campaigns;
- process;
- advertising plan;
- ongoing processing and analysis of applications;
- screening criteria;
- interviewing, background investigation, and assessment;
- communications and recruitment plan;
- negotiation of offer;
- transition and follow up;
- approach to equity, diversity, and inclusivity;
- proposed timeline;
- guarantee;
- pricing/timeline;
- advantages to the City; and
- previous engagements with the City.

Mr. Uzzell told the Council the firm has worked up and down the east coast and added, if the firm is hired, he will be the point of contact. He stated other members of the team will include Kenneth Evans, Executive Vice President, De'Shawn Wright, Director, Dr. Kamala Jones, Director of Search Assessment, and General Kip Ward. He shared information relative to the team members.

The City Council was advised that the firm utilizes its six-step AccuMatch process to conduct all searches and explained the steps of the process. He stated their job is not finished when the placement is made, and the firm continues working with both the candidate and client for one year after the hire to ensure a successful job transition. Mr. Uzzell told the City Council the firm's strategic approach includes: technical intelligence, emotional intelligence, and leadership intelligence. He shared information relative to the firm's recruitment sources and said the goal is to work with a candidate who is not actively seeking employment and they look for these individuals.

Mr. Uzzell told the Council he is from Goldsboro, North Carolina and is familiar with the area. He said it will be up to the firm to sell the City and the firm will be a diverse group of candidates. He added that the firm considers themselves headhunters. He invited and responded to questions.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Information only; no formal action.

ADJOURNMENT

Without objection, the Mayor Pro Tem adjourned the meeting at 4:28 p.m.

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL CALLED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HELD THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2022, AT 4:00 P.M. IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, THIRD FLOOR OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING WITH MAYOR PRO TEM T.J. WALKER PRESIDING:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

T.J. Walker, Mayor Pro Tem
 Richard Joyner
 Lige Daughtridge
 W.B. Bullock
 Christine Carroll Miller
 Mayor C. Saunders "Sandy" Roberson, Jr.

STAFF PRESENT:

Peter F. Varney
 Pamela O. Casey
 Ken Hunter
 Mark Adcox
 Kirk Brown
 Latasha Hall

Elton Daniels
 Kena Cofield-Jones**
 Richard J. Rose

MEMBERS ABSENT:

André D. Knight
 Reuben C. Blackwell, IV

OTHERS PRESENT:

W. Lane Bailey, Senior Vice President, GovHR USA LLC
 Byron Marshall, Co-Director, Institute for Excellence in Public Service

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Pro Tem T.J. Walker called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and thanked all in attendance for their presence at today's meeting which was called to continue City Council interviews of recruitment firms relative to the City Manager recruitment process. He called on Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney for comments.

Mr. Varney introduced W. Lane Bailey, Senior Vice President, GovHR USA LLC and Byron Marshall, Co-Director, Institute for Excellence in Public Service.

CITY MANAGER RECRUITMENT/INTERVIEW - GOVHR USA LLC

Mr. Bailey introduced himself and said they would be brief in their PowerPoint presentation to provide information relative to GovHR USA LLC. He stated he wanted to talk about the partnership GovHR USA LLC has with the Institute for Excellence in Public Service. He began his presentation by sharing the following information about the company:

- GovHR USA LLC:
 - Is a certified woman-owned business founded in 2009 by 2 former local government managers: Heidi Voorhees, President (from the midwest) and Joellen Cademartori, Chief Executive Officer (former assistant Catawba County manager);
 - Is a national firm with a lot of strengths and also has North Carolina and regional ties;
 - Has 20 full-time employees; 6 permanent part-time employees; and 25 project consultants/subject matter experts;
 - Works exclusively with local governments and organizations that work with local governments; and
 - Is based in Northbrook, IL, with satellite offices in 12 states.

Mr. Marshall explained the company's philosophy to include:

- Service - will be the City's partner throughout the process and has a lot of repeat business;
- Integrity - will deliver services thoroughly, on time and professionally; encouraged the City to contact prior customers of the firm;
- Trust - will provide the City with an honest assessment of candidates; and provide candidates with information about potential challenges in the City and the skillset needed; and
- Respect - are well regarded in both the local government and executive recruitment professions, bringing credibility to the process; the desire is to have a process with which the City Council is comfortable and to be partners with the City.

Mr. Bailey and Mr. Marshall shared information about themselves including background and experience. It was noted that Mr. Bailey has a lot of contacts in North Carolina (southeast region) and works with all 16 North Carolina Council of Governments. Mr. Marshall told the Council he works for the National Forum of Black Public

Administrators (NFBPA) that has a consulting arm which is the Institute for Excellence in Public Service (i4x). He explained he is the co-director for the Institute for Excellence in Public Service and shared information about the Institute for Excellence in Public Service.

Mr. Bailey told the Council GovHR is a national firm and has all the horsepower of a national firm with strong North Carolina ties.

The Council was provided with information relative to the firm's services which include:

- Project management approach;
- Proposed work plan (recruitment and evaluation strategies);
- Phases were identified and explained to include:
 - Phase I: Position assessment, position announcement & brochure;
 - Phase II: Advertising, candidate recruitment & outreach;
 - Phase III: Candidate evaluation & screening;
 - Phase IV: Presentation of recommended candidates;
 - Phase V: Interviewing process & background screening; and
 - Phase VI: Appointment of candidate.
- Project timeline;
- Guarantee;
- Unique and specialized services provided;
- Examples of community engagement/input;
- Price proposal;
- Payment for fees and services;
- Conflicts of interest;
- Previous engagement with the City;
- Why GovHR and NFBPA should be chosen and the advantages to the City; and
- Option services.

Mr. Bailey provided information relative to recent recruitments in the southeast. He said he believes the organization should look like the community it serves and GovHR is very committed to this. He said the firm partners with a lot of different groups to create a diverse candidate pool. He added they utilize social media networks and organizational networks and believes the firm's relationship with the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) will aid them in developing a diverse candidate pool.

Mr. Marshall provided the Council with recent examples of the work of GovHR to increase city manager diversity through active recruiting. He stated:

- 28% of GovHR clients are repeat customers and 46% of the repeat customers have conducted more than 2 recruitment processes with GovHR;
- the firm has 31 consultants across the country who bring a unique combination of experience in executive recruitment and in serving as managers in all disciplines of local government; and
- out of 286 placements tracked over the past 5 years, 89% of candidates remain in their positions and only 11% had left their position and the average tenure was 3.5 years.

Mr. Marshall provided an overview of the firm's tailored process for the recruitment and selection process. He told the Council everyone who replies receives a personal response. He stated the firm will use their experience to provide recommended candidates or the Council may prefer to see information from every

candidate. The potential interview and due diligence processes were explained.

Mr. Bailey summarized the path to success adding the firm is known for its commitment to the profession of local government management.

Mayor Pro Tem Walker thanked Mr. Bailey and Mr. Marshall for their presentation and invited questions from Councilmembers. Councilmember Miller questioned if the process includes an emotional intelligence assessment and was advised it can be added for an additional fee.

In response to a question from Interim City Manager Peter F. Varney relative to whether the 11% of placements appointed leaving within 3.5 years indicates a bad placement, Mr. Marshall stated that in the event someone leaves in the first year the firm will provide an additional search at no costs other than travel.

Councilmember Daughtridge noted there were no placements in North Carolina from 2019 to the present on the City Manager client list and Mr. Bailey noted he is new to the firm, having recently retired.

Mr. Bailey and Mr. Marshall responded to additional questions.

Mayor Pro Tem Walker thanked the GovHR representatives for traveling to Rocky Mount and for their time and commitment. He noted the City Council has a retreat planned for Tuesday, April 19, and Wednesday, April 20, at the Rocky Mount Event Center and will hold a discussion relative to the recruitment and selection of the City Manager at the retreat.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Information only; no formal action.

ADJOURNMENT

Without objection, the Mayor Pro Tem adjourned the meeting at 4:27 p.m.

***arrived at 4:10 p.m.*

COMMUNITY UPDATE BY INTERIM CITY MANAGER

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

- Stated the election for City Council will occur on May 17; new Ward maps are on display on the first floor of the City Hall lobby so people can come in to see what ward they may be in; he believes the Boards of Election issued post cards indicating which ward/districts people are located in;
- Stated garbage and recycling collection is mostly back on schedule; crews were working today on collecting bulk items and tree limbs
- Stated some changes will be made in the City Council Chamber to upgrade technology – screen monitors will be located on tables on the sidewalls to ensure everyone seated in the Chamber will be able to follow along with presentations;
- Stated initiating a tax foreclosure program was discussed at a prior retreat; first one planned is for 306 Villa Place – details of property are as follows:
 - home is in poor condition
 - normally would be submitted for demolition
 - due to being in a historic area, he is hoping a historic preservation enthusiast will be interested
 - City taxes are in arrears over \$4,000, county taxes about \$1,800, several other assessments bring total to about \$8,600

- Stated the City applied for a Mobi award with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and it was awarded last week; the award actually goes to the Carolinas Gateway Partnership; award is for the CSX CCS Carolina connector, truck to train terminal that CSX operates because it's a multimodal facility
- Reminded everyone that the Tackle the Tar – Family Fun Fest and race will be Friday, May 13th and goes through Saturday, May 14th; the Fun Fest begins at 6:00 p.m. on Friday at the Rocky Mount Stadium; there will be live music; bounce houses; food trucks; a mini obstacle course and more; first race on May 14th @ 8:45 a.m. at the Sports Complex;
- Downtown Live returns to the Imperial Centre on May 19th @ 6:00 p.m. with the Tams;
- Lawn Chair Theater returns on May 20th @ the Imperial Centre – movie will begin at dusk

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:

Adrienne Copland

- Thanked City Council for starting tax foreclosures
- Stated she was hoping for more than a symbolic State of Emergency from the emergency meeting that was called
- Stated she feels all the tools discussed to fight crime are for use after the crime occurs
- Stated she would like to see police substations set up in communities
- Stated she feels if the City is known for being safe the maybe private investors would come and ease the burden on the City for housing and economic development

Mysha Lynch

- Stated she is a member of Rocky Mount Black Action
- Stated research shows things do not just happen and that most often poverty is the greatest initiator and catalyst for community dysfunction, poor outcomes, and violence
- Stated high unemployment rates, underfunded school systems, racial inequity and not investing in communities are a few things that contribute to how the community is in its current state
- Said local, state, and federal government that intentionally invests in the lives of the people and that is socially aware is needed
- Stated she feels it has been a State of Emergency but is only now a priority because the devastation has crossed the tracks
- Stated the people dealing with poverty need day to day support not just people making initiatives, but actually taking action for the things the community needs

Nathlyn Ohree

- Stated she has heard the reports of violence in the community and bad things occur because of lack of spiritual connection
- Commended the pastors in the City and in the counties for how they have responded during the pandemic
- Wanted to encourage people to seek spiritual help and mental health help
- Hopes the City has some type of collaboration with churches and pastors

Warren Daughtridge

- Stated the decline of the City was years in the making and there has been a steady decline in respect for government, laws, City, and each other
- Stated he was ashamed to see the Police Chief blamed for the current state of affairs in the City
- Stated his suggestions are to give the police the resources they need, pay them enough to attract and retain top quality officers and enforce the existing codes and laws
- Stated it was time to unify

Janee' Avent Harris

- Thanked Councilmembers Blackwell, Joyner, and Walker for bringing attention to trauma
- Suggested increasing human and fiscal resources to support trauma informed mental health professionals to work alongside police officers to respond to officers, staff, and community members
- Suggested supporting a mental health task force to be involved at every level of city government informing policy and planning and implementing programming
- Suggested supplemental programming for social emotional learning for youth

Dr. Kim Koo

- Stated the crime statistics have made a horrible turn
- Stated she feels the excessive sanctions in Russia have plunged society into greater depths of desperation
- Stated she does not feel more law and order will solve the problem because it will just cause overcrowding in the jails and more financial costs for court proceedings
- Stated she was forming a community group to help stop the violence and is willing to work with everyone concerned to find a sustainable solution

Brenda Cooper

- Stated she agrees with what others have said
- Would like to see industrial properties addressed that are making neighborhoods look bad
- Stated speeding on community streets is still an issue
- Stated she hopes summer jobs are provided to keep people off the streets and to keep them out of trouble

Councilmember Walker asked if Interim City Manager Varney could speak about funding that was applied for to demolish some properties in Ward 3.

Interim City Manager Varney stated that funding was applied for, but it was in a different neighborhood due to the fact that the grant source identified property that was in a floodway.

Councilmember Joyner asked Interim City Manager Varney if he could speak on the property about which Ms. Cooper was referencing.

Interim City Manager Varney stated the following:

- Property address is 1515 South Church Street, and it is owned by B & B Associates that has a post office box located in Rocky Mount
- Tax valuation of the land is \$48,400; tax valuation of the building is \$23,600
- The warehouse contains 99,650 square feet and sits on a lot that is about 118,000 square feet
- There are unpaid taxes (city - about \$12,000 and county - about \$24,000) and some other assessments on the property
- There are extensive judgments applied against the property which makes it difficult to come up with a solution for acquiring or dealing with the property at this time

Muntaz Shaik

- Stated she agreed with a Councilmember who put the cause of income inequality and poverty squarely on the history of slavery
- Stated there is poverty in housing, poverty in jobs, poverty in health care, poverty in food availability and poverty in wages
- Stated crime and violence will only get worse unless better social and economic conditions are pushed for
- Stated tax dollars need to be utilized to improve the lives of people who have lived in poverty and whose poverty has been made worse by the pandemic
- Commended the Rocky Mount Black Action Coalition under the leadership of Cooper Blackwell

Crystal Wimes-Anderson

- Stated as a nurse and a teacher, she sees some of the issues the kids are dealing with at home and at school
- Stated she would like to see the City rally together and try to address the issues in neighborhood association meetings
- Stated there are issues in the school system that we are unaware of because she spoke with a mother the other day that said her daughter was being bullied and tried to commit suicide

Nehemiah Smith, Jr.

- Thanked the Councilmembers from Ward 1, Ward 2, Ward 4, and Ward 6 for their comments at Saturday's meeting
- Invited the City Manager, Mayor and City Council to a Spring Festival on Saturday, May 14th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Mount Zion First Baptist Church, 320 West Thomas Street – will be food, fun and information for the community; will be at least 20 employers on site and some will not require a background check
- Stated he would like someone to explain what a symbolic State of Emergency is
- Stated no one from the public was allowed to speak at the emergency meeting
- Stated campaigns should not be promoted off of real pain in the community
- Stated he would like to see the City designate parks and places of worship as safe zones and if someone is caught with a gun or with narcotics within a 1-mile radius they should receive automatic jail time

Councilmember Joyner asked the Mayor if he would explain what is meant by symbolic.

Mayor Roberson stated a State of Emergency is something that is normally declared by a Mayor to provide for local, statewide, and federal funding in the event of a national emergency. He stated in this case, there is no specific provision for a State of Emergency as it relates to crime. He stated the symbolic State of Emergency provides no function other than to say, the City Council is entirely supportive of our Police Chief, Police staff, and Police initiatives, and want to know how Council can provide support going forward in this particular dark period of time in our City's history.

Samuel Battle

- Stated he agrees with Nehemiah Smith about the safe zones
- Stated he feels every business should be a safe zone
- Stated he feels it should be mandatory for every business in Rocky Mount to have cameras
- Stated the City needs more updated technology to be able to fight crime

Bronson Williams

- Stated he feels the issues in the City are real issues and he feels having a meeting and not allowing the public to vent their frustrations or offer their solutions was a waste of time
- Stated he feels often in this community people like to speak at people instead of listening
- Stated he feels the City needs to strengthen its partnership with the school system
- Stated with the speed at which the Police Department was able to make arrests in the recent events it shows community partnerships are being strengthened

Moe Deloach

- Stated he partners with the City a great deal on programs for kids and there are a lot of programs going on through the City right now
- Stated he would like to see police presence around the gym areas daily
- Asked if there was an update on the lighting downtown

Interim City Manager Varney stated a lighting study in the downtown area is being initiated and should be underway soon.

Shanté Batts

- Stated she keeps hearing the issues are gang related and she does not feel everything is gang related
- Stated her son is locked up and cannot get out unless he tells on his friend, but people do not understand that if the kids turn on one another they could be killed, or something could happen to their family member
- Stated the system doesn't allow you to get help with your child unless they are in trouble

Cooper Blackwell

- Stated he feels the violence that is being seen in the community right now is a twofold issue
- Stated he feels one issue is a systemic problem with under resourced neighborhoods, health inequities, and historic traumas that is leading to bad behaviors
- Stated he feels another issue is that some type of support/resources needs to be looked at in our neighborhoods to help bridge gaps
- Stated he feels resources are needed to provide programs that address the cultural issues being seen, the traumas of COVID-19 that have impacted peoples' social skills, and issues that are seen in the school system
- Stated in Wilmington there is a group that works with gang members and formerly incarcerated individuals to create businesses in the community
- Stated the Rocky Mount Black Action Coalition is trying to lead a new effort to help stop violence

Erica Mitchell

- Stated regardless of a person's background, socioeconomic status, or entity affiliations, to be killed by the hands of someone else is just unacceptable
- Stated she feels these crimes need to be prevented
- Stated that even when a murder is solved, we should remember that someone still lost a child or a parent
- Stated a solution needs to be created that sets a clear goal to identify key people and places that are driving the violence
- Thanked the Police Chief for asking for additional help that is needed and thanked the Mayor for declaring a State of Emergency

Councilmember Joyner asked if the written statements could be collected if the speakers wanted to provide them.

Mayor Roberson stated the written statements could be given to the security officer or they could be emailed to the Cit Clerk at pamela.casey@rockymountnc.gov.

Troy Davis

- Stated he appreciated the explanation of the symbolic State of Emergency but feels nothing is symbolic about people dying
- Stated he feels a State of Emergency should include a curfew
- Stated the City needs to be competitive in their pay for police officers and should require officers to live within the city they serve so they can get to know the community; and need to make sure cars are up to standards so the officers can respond properly
- Stated the gang and drug task force needs to go back to the jump out boys that were around years ago
- Stated he feels Parks and Recreation facilities need to be open longer hours, so kids have somewhere safe to go
- Stated he would like for the Interim City Manager to look at the Inspections Department because it should not take from October 12, 2021, until May to get a CO

Jarvis Lancaster

- Stated many people are being lost due to senseless violence
- Stated he feels the State of Emergency should be doing something
- Stated he was contacted by family when there was someone prowling around their house; he realizes the dispatchers are trained to ask certain questions, but he feels the questions waste valuable time
- Stated he came to the City Council meeting because he is concerned about all that is happening in Rocky Mount

Mayor Roberson concluded the Public Petitions portion of the meeting.

Discussion was held following up from the Emergency Meeting held on May 7, 2022, related to the recent violent acts that have occurred in the City.

PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Council received the minutes and recommendations from a Planning Board meeting held April 12, 2022. The minutes are on file in the office of the City Clerk.

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

A. PUBLIC HEARING/REZONING REQUEST

The Mayor opened a public hearing relative to the following rezoning request recommended for approval and found in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Board:

- Request by Jack Garvey, on behalf of Hanson Aggregates Southeast, LLC, to rezone property located on NC Highway 97 West identified as [PIN 387132039700] from A-1 to I-2

Will Deaton, Director of Development Services, gave an overview of the request.

Councilmember Blackwell asked if there were any objections from the neighbors. Mr. Deaton stated there were none.

No one from the public appeared and the Mayor declared the public hearing closed.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Walker, and unanimously carried that **Ordinance No. O-2022-9** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AND MAP OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT** be adopted.

REZONING REQUEST

The City Council received the following rezoning request recommended for approval and found in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Board at a Meeting held on February 8, 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

A Public Hearing was held on March 14, 2022, and no action taken was taken by City Council.

Mayor Roberson recognized the following for questions/comments related to the proposed rezoning:

~ Deborah Joyner

- Expressed concerns with increased traffic and traffic accidents associated with adding multi-family homes
- Concern about decreased property values
- Stated she feels there may be environmental issues to be addressed also

~ Gary Puckett

- Expressed concerns about flooding due the area being in a flood zone
- Concerns about increased traffic
- Stated he is not against building houses and updating but he is concerned about the flooding he feels multi-family units could cause

~ Mike Tolson – Mack Gay and Associates – representative of developer

- Stated in response to concerns about runoff that a pond would probably be dug that would impound storm water to keep it from being a runoff issue
- He stated in response to concerns about increased traffic that is something that is normally addressed during the site development plan
- Stated he is not against building houses and updating but he is concerned about the flooding he feels multi-family units could cause
- Stated the citizens in the area had been contacted to address their concerns and there were still about 3-4 citizens that have objections to the project

Discussion was held.

Mr. Deaton responded to questions from Council. He stated that any new development built today would have to meet higher standards due to stricter state and local regulations that have been established.

Mayor Roberson asked if there was a motion to adopt the new ordinance as recommended.

No motion was made.

STOP LOSS CONTRACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022

Human Resources Director, Kena Cofield-Jones, and Mark III Broker, Mark Browder provided the City Council with a proposal from the Aetna Life Insurance Company (also serving as the City's health plan provider) for Stop Loss Insurance Coverage. It was reported that the current proposal reflects an increase from \$96.04 per employee per month to \$115.29 per employee per month representing a 13% increase. It was noted that the proposal also covers an allocation for laser care at \$325,000 (due to fact that there is one beneficiary that requires the high-cost procedure). The City Council was advised the total annual cost may increase up to \$218,795.50.

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and unanimously carried that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the Stop Loss Agreement with Aetna Life Insurance Company.

FY 2022-2023 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

City Council was advised that an Annual Action Plan is required by localities receiving funding through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and the HOME Investment Partnerships

(HOME) Program of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It was stated that funding allocations for FY 2022-2023 have not yet been made official by HUD, therefore last year's funding allocations are being used as estimates for planning purposes. The City of Rocky Mount expects to receive \$506,949 in CDBG funds and the Down East Home Consortium (DEHC) expects to receive \$407,772 in HOME funding. City Council was informed the FY 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan is due to HUD on June 30, 2022.

The City Council was advised that a draft of the Annual Action Plan is available for public review and comment for 30 days beginning May 10, 2022, and ending on June 13, 2022, and copies of the draft documents will be available for review in the Rocky Mount Department of Community Development, on the City's website and in County office buildings.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and unanimously carried that the Draft FY 2022-2023 Annual Action Plan be approved and authorize the Department of Community Development to advertise a public hearing for June 13, 2022.

PROPERTY DISPOSITION/HOME PURCHASE AGREEMENT-811 AND 815-821 HAMMOND STREET

The City Council received information that Michael Lewis, who made an offer of \$40,000 to purchase 811 and 815-821 Hammond Street, has refused to execute the Home Purchase Agreement as required. City Council were notified that SBC was the second highest bidder. SBC has reconfirmed its bid of \$33,001 and is willing to execute the Home Purchase Agreement.

Motion was made by Councilmember Walker, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell, and unanimously carried that **Resolution No. R-2022-20** entitled **RESOLUTION ACCEPTING OFFER TO PURCHASE PROPERTY** be adopted.

The resolution authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the Home Purchase Agreement described above and provides for the City to sell the property to SBC for the agreed-upon amount and to execute the deed transferring ownership of said property upon fulfillment of the obligations contained in said Home Purchase Agreement.

LEASE/LICENSE AGREEMENT/GAY ROAD PROPERTY

Interim City Manager Peter Varney advised the City Council that since 2004 REB Properties, Inc. has been allowed to use the 87 acres of City-owned property on Gay Road (formerly used as a solid waste landfill) for hunting purposes pursuant to a license agreement. He stated REB Properties, Inc. would like to enter into a new license agreement with a five-year term for use of the property at a cost of \$850 per year.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Bullock, and unanimously carried that **Resolution No. R-2022-21** entitled

RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO ENTER INTO LICENSE AGREEMENT be adopted. This resolution authorizes the City Clerk to advertise a Notice of Intent to approve the lease pursuant to N.G.S.G. 160A-272).

HOUSING INCENTIVE GRANT AMENDMENT

The City Council was provided with a request from AFRESHnewStart, LLC to extend the term of a housing incentive grant agreement entered into on November 24, 2000. The amendment would extend the agreement from December 31, 2021, until May 31, 2022. City Council was informed the extension was being requested due to delays with delivery of supplies and labor shortages associated with Covid.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and unanimously carried the housing incentive agreement amendment with AFRESHnewStart, LLC be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the amendment on behalf of the City. The amendment with AFRESHnewStart, LLC will be filed with **(C-2021-10)** in the office of the City Clerk.

PARKING AGREEMENT/TRI-FAITH MINISTRIES

The City Council was provided with a parking agreement with Tri-Faith Ministries. The key terms of the agreement were outlined as:

- **Fees** Tri-Faith agrees to allow the Event Center to collect a parking fee for each space. The Event Center will remit 50% of the parking fee collections to the church.
- **Limit vehicle size** The Event Center staff will allow only "standard" size vehicles such as sedans, minivans, SUV's, and pickup trucks into the parking lot.
- **Indemnity** The City agrees to hold the church harmless from any claims made by guests of the Event Center.
- **Term** The agreement will begin May 16 and continue for five years unless sooner terminated by either party.

The Agreement also provided that the City will ensure the parking lot is left clean and orderly after each use; allows Tri-Faith Ministries to block off any number of spaces at any time for any reason; and allows the Event Center to place temporary signs indicating availability of parking.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell, and unanimously carried that the Parking Agreement with Tri-Faith Ministries **(C-2022-18)** be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City.

NCDOT MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT/BRIDGE INSPECTIONS

The City Council received a municipal agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation for inspection of the bridges on the following City maintained streets:

Street
Olive Street
Coleman Avenue
East Virginia Street
Tanner Road
Jones Road
Tarrytown Bridge
Briarcliff Road
Gorham Lane

Council was advised that the City's bi-annual cost will be 20% or approximately \$5,000.

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and unanimously carried that municipal agreement **(C-2022-19)** with the North Carolina Department of Transportation for bridge inspections [Project BRZ-NBIS(22)] be approved and that the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the same on behalf of the City.

APPOINTMENTS

Councilmember Knight stated he had received some personal history forms and they had been given to the City Clerk.

City Clerk, Pamela Casey, advised Councilmember Knight that some of the information on the personal history forms was incorrect, therefore, she was waiting for the corrected information.

Councilmember Knight made further comment.

Councilmember Daughtridge suggested the appointments be postponed until the next City Council meeting to allow everyone time to review.

Motion was made by Councilmember Walker, seconded by Councilmember Daughtridge, and unanimously carried to appoint Kera' De'Sean Robinson to the Redevelopment Commission for Ward 5.

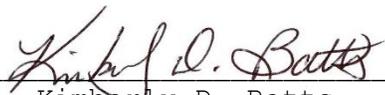
CLOSED SESSION/ATTORNEY CLIENT/PROPERTY ACQUISITION (added in open meeting)

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell, and unanimously carried that the City Council go into a Closed Session at 9:05 p.m. The minutes of the Closed Session shall be filed as **ESM-603** at the end of **Minute Book 38** upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

REGULAR SESSION/ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor convened the City Council in regular session at 9:38 p.m.

There being no further business for regular session the meeting was adjourned at 9:39 p.m.



Kimberly D. Batts
Deputy City Clerk/
Acting City Clerk