

June 12, 2023

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, Tom Harris and Jabaris Walker.

Staff present: Keith Rogers Jr., City Manager; Kim Batts, City Clerk; Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager; Brad Kerr, Public Works Director; JoSeth Bocook, Interim Director of the Department of Development Services; Joel Dunn, Parks and Recreation Director; Archie Jones, Director of Human Relations; Brenton Bent, Water Resources Director; Gregory Cotten, Chief Technology Officer; Latasha Hall, Director of Business and Collections Services; Tracey Drewery, Interim Fire Chief; Michael Roupp, Assistant Chief of Operations; Darvin Moore, Division Chief; Ken Hunter, Assistant to the City Manager for Budget and Evaluation; Robert Hassell, Police Chief; Abdul Baloch, Chief Internal Auditor; Mark Adcox, Video Production Specialist; Robin Cox, Communications Specialist; Cornelia McGee, Community and Business Development Director; Kena Cofield-Jones, Director of Human Resources; Keyana Walston, Senior Management Analyst; Emmanuel Agoh Jr., Intern; Monica Brantley, Deputy City Clerk; and Richard J. Rose, City Attorney.

Security Officers: Corporal Clay Wilder, Sergeant Chris Williams, and Senior Police Officer Shawn Battle.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and requested all in attendance to stand for a moment of silent prayer.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Jabaris Walker, and unanimously carried the minutes of the Regular Scheduled City Council meeting held February 13, 2023 be approved as submitted to the City Council prior to the meeting.

#### **APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

Mayor Roberson stated he had received a request to amend the agenda to:

- Remove items 9D, 9H, 9I from the Consent Agenda for consideration; and
- Remove item 9J from the agenda

Motion was made by Councilmember T.J. Walker, seconded by Councilmember Harris, and unanimously carried that the agenda be amended, as requested.

#### **COMMUNITY UPDATE BY CITY MANAGER**

City Manager Keith Rogers Jr. provided the following community update. The City Manager reported that:

- Stated that the City will be hosting an open house and job fair Wednesday from 10 am to 7 pm at the Rocky Mount Event Center
- Stated this event is ideal for residents who are looking for new career opportunities or seeking to expand their professional network; there will be prize drawings as well as employment opportunities
- Stated the Juneteenth Community Empowerment Festival takes place downtown this weekend June 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>; full details can be found at [downtownrockymount.com](http://downtownrockymount.com)
- Stated the next Downtown Live will be happening on Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> on the lawn at the Imperial Centre beginning at 6 pm featuring North Tower

#### **ROCKY MOUNT LION'S CLUB POLICE OFFICER AND FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR**

Mayor Roberson invited the Police Chief Robert Hassell and Interim Fire Chief Tracey Drewery along with Dr. Bob Cameron, President of the Lion's Club, to introduce the Lion's Club Police Officer and Firefighter of the Year and present them with plaques and checks.

Dr. Cameron stated it was with great privilege and honor that he presented the Police Officer and Firefighter of the Year awards and explained the process for selection. He presented Police Corporal William Mayfield and Fire Captain Charles Spruill with awards and the Police and Fire Chief made comments recognizing their excellent service and congratulated Corporal Mayfield and Captain Spruill on receiving this prestigious award.

#### **PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

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

##### ***Robert Cordell***

- Stated he is requesting the sauna to be repaired or replaced at the Senior Center because he feels it helps the overall health of the seniors
- Stated car registrations have a Nash/Edgecombe County tax, City of Rocky Mount tax, and a garage tax and he would like the City Council to consider eliminating the garage tax
- Stated he would like East and West Thomas Street to be renamed to Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd

##### ***Arnie Jones***

- Stated he is here along with several people he works with to speak on behalf of the Environmental Services department
- Stated they feel they have been overlooked and are second class to every department here; they want to propose that they get a 25% increase to their annual salary
- Stated they do a good job for this city; they have families to support and some of them are having to take second jobs just to make ends meet

##### ***Willie Arrington***

- Stated he is here tonight regarding the old Rocky Mount ballfield as there are claims that a portion of the land is not in the deed
- Stated the deed that he has shows that every portion and every acre of that baseball field is in the deed

- Stated that he started this process in January of 2021, and he still does not have the ballpark after bidding \$105,000 and being outbid by Nash County Holdings
- Stated the goal was to bring baseball back to Rocky Mount; he was planning on having a collegiate team and an independent league as well
- Stated he would like to know if the 0.023 acres of land in question is in fact in the deed
- Stated that Nash County School Board is stating that the City never deeded the 0.023-acre gap between the rear property line of the Ruby Grey Heirs property and the Municipal Stadium property
- Stated in 1977 when the City gave that land to the school board everything was included

Councilmember Blackwell stated part of the reason this was asked to be pulled is because he was unclear and knew there were issues related to it. He inquired about what the school board is saying to the City and if the City's legal department has looked into it.

City Attorney Jep Rose responded that the school board is saying based on a survey they had done that there was a little piece that was left out when the City conveyed the Municipal Stadium in exchange for the Fannie Gorham School in 1977. He also stated the 0.023-acre piece of property is owned by the City according to the surveyor who was not hired by the City. He stated if the City does in fact own that piece of property, it was part of the property that should have been conveyed and he does not think the City would want to own it because of the liability.

Councilman Knight stated the reason he asked for that item to be pulled off the consent agenda is because it seems like something is not right with the bidding process which indirectly involves what is being discussed. He explained that if what Mr. Arrington stated is correct then the school board discriminated against those gentlemen and he does not want to vote on anything until that matter is cleared up. He further stated that the gentlemen placed a bid after the City of Rocky Mount dropped out, the bid was open for 29 days and allowed a billionaire company to get in on the bid. He stated he is hoping that the City will ask the City Attorney to request the public records in reference to the bidding process so they can see the details.

### ***Edith Joyner Joseph***

- Stated she is here on behalf of the Little Raleigh Community Association to bring awareness of the community's plans to move forward and to request consideration and support from the city
- Stated the community has organized and made a commitment to rebuild and revitalize their community
- Stated they will provide as many resources as they can, but they will ask for assistance along the way as they would like to see their taxes at work in their community
- Stated that they have started adopting the streets in Little Raleigh to clean up their community in addition to planning educational programs to educate their community about voting, homeownership, entrepreneurship, and a multitude of programs
- Stated they request that the city maintain good repair all city property that is in Little Raleigh; require those conducting business there to maintain the properties in which they have an interest; encourage desired behavior, and penalize those who continue to disregard their neighborhood

Councilmember Blackwell thanked Ms. Joseph and stated that it takes the majority to make anything move but the City needs to hire an individual to target communities that are inner city, core city communities like Little Raleigh, Happy Hill, Meadowbrook and others. He stated that they need to target development and code enforcement and perhaps have people who can help navigate these creative opportunities to invest in the communities. He stated that the Council is in sync and he believes that most of them are supportive of the concept.

Councilmember T.J. Walker thanked the Little Raleigh Community Association for building up the courage and the strength to come out as he knows it is challenging. He stated he hopes this is the last time they will have to come and Council will get to work and make sure these changes are made.

Councilmember Knight encouraged everyone to keep coming, that this should not be the last time.

Councilmember Joyner stated that he knows all of the 14 communities share the regards that were just shared and Council looks forward to helping the communities reach the goals and objectives that they have laid out.

#### ***Mumtaz Shaik***

- Stated she feels Public Works is the low wage group that is forever struggling to cover their basic needs long-term
- Stated she feels a combination of inflation, stagnant wages and debt has produced a poverty crisis in Rocky Mount with dire consequences, blight, homelessness, food insecurity, home foreclosures, and crime
- Stated she feels increasing the pay rates of law enforcement and first responders by 36 percent and 27 percent and denying a 10 percent increase for these poorly paid Public Works employees is morally reprehensible
- Stated Rocky Mount is livable, clean, sanitary, comfortable and safe because of these low wage City workers who work in all weather conditions,
- Stated the City was eager to pay \$20 million for a Judicial Center, but nothing is more urgent than improving the lives of the low-income public works department

#### ***Mary Warren***

- Stated that the community does not feel like they need the Dollar General in their neighborhood as they are working to transform the Southeast Rocky Mount community
- Stated as they proceed to clean up the community in Southeast Rocky Mount and as the city grows, they will not have a problem finding a business to put on that land
- Stated that Dollar General would not bring quality into the neighborhood, waiting will give other businesses the opportunity to bring something of value to the Southeast Rocky Mount community

#### ***Rev. Nehemiah Smith***

- Stated that as a city we must recognize the worth and dignity of every worker regardless of their role or status
- Stated that one of the ways that we can demonstrate our value for lower level workers is by ensuring they are paid their worth
- Stated that fair and just wages not only provide for the needs of individuals and their families but also acknowledge the significance of their contributions
- Stated the City of Rocky Mount must strive to create a culture that values and compensates all workers equitably

- Stated he feels it is not that the City does not have the resources, it is that they do not have the desire

***Nellene Richardson***

- Stated she would like to thank all the Councilmembers that came out for the Love Walk; she would love to see other Councilmembers come out as well
- Stated she spoke with Councilmember T.J. Walker about some of the things that they plan to do in the community

***Nathlyn Ohree***

- Stated she is here advocating for the sanitation workers to get increased pay as they do a beautiful job keeping the parks and streets clean
- Thanked the sanitation department for the beautiful job they do in the Meadowbrook community
- Stated she would greatly appreciate any efforts that the Council makes to give them a well deserved increase
- Stated they do their job without complaint consistently 52 weeks a year and their efforts should be acknowledged with a raise

***Curmilus Dancy***

- Stated city workers were fighting for justice back in the eighties and nineties and they are still fighting
- Stated he is here representing Edgecombe County Democrats to hold Council accountable and maybe one day someone will come in and put some businesses on Edgecombe County side

***Bronson Williams***

- Stated since 2008 he has seen this Council talk about eradicating poverty, looking at health disparities, educational opportunities, etc., but then on the agenda before it was removed today was bringing the Dollar General to the community against citizen's wishes
- Stated that people matter 365 days a year, not just during election time and there should be community engagement when it comes to what these tax paying citizens want in our community

***Troy Davis***

- Stated that Southeast Rocky Mount, Little Raleigh, Hilltop, all of these communities are neglected by policies that part of this Council and the City of Rocky Mount as a whole have neglected
- Stated that there are houses that have been torn down that the City of Rocky Mount failed to collect demolition fees and now the statute of limitations has expired so the City can no longer collect them
- Stated that there are houses in the City in hazardous conditions with the roofs collapsing while the Community Development Department has given out \$200,000 to build one single house on Branch Street
- Stated that the citizens need to hold these elected officials accountable

Councilmember Knight stated that there was a comment made about the Council adding the Dollar General to the Agenda and that is not true. He explained that the deal was brought on by previous Interim City Manager Mr. Varney who is no longer here. He stated that Councilman Joyner is not to be blamed for neglect for the last 100 plus years, this Council is not to be held responsible for what

people who came before have not done. He named several things that this Council has done such as:

- Tearing down the silos that were contaminated and had been there for years when they were told they could not do it, but they did it
- Taking the initiative to tear down Tip Top Bakery which was blighted for years
- Instituted minority women business development
- Brought Dr. Jim Johnson in to talk about wealth trust being built in our community
- Mirrored the population by the representation of Council

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and unanimously carried that the Consent Agenda be approved, as amended, and that the following items on the Consent Agenda [Items 8(A) through 8(C); 8 (E) through 8 (G) - items 8D; 8H; 8I and 8J were removed], be approved as follows and more specifically:

**A. TEMPORARY STREET CLOSING**

**Ordinance No. O-2023-72** entitled **ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT DECLARING A TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE FOR THE ANNUAL JUNETEENTH COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT FESTIVAL** be adopted:

- **June 16, 2023 from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m.:**  
Temporary Closure of Tarboro Street (US 64 Business) from NE Main Street to Atlantic Avenue (NC 97), N Washington Street from Hill Street to E Thomas Street (US 64 Business), Albemarle Avenue from E Thomas Street to Tarboro Street and W Rose Street from Albemarle Avenue to Atlantic Avenue
- **June 17 and June 18, 2023, from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m.:**  
Temporary Closure of S Church Street (US 301 Business) from Andrews Street to Nash Street, Hammond Street from S Franklin Street (US 301 Business) to SW Main Street, SW Main Street from Hammond Street to a point 200 feet north of Hammond Street and Coastline Street

**B. AD VALOREM TAX RELEASES:**

That the following tax releases be acknowledged and approved 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:**

YEAR	BILL	NAME/ADDRESS	TAX	COMMENT
<b><i>EDGECOMBE COUNTY</i></b>				
2012	422	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVIL LE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801	77.43 7.74 7.46	CITY MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR PEN INT
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>92.63</b>	
2013	137	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801	73.78 7.38	CITY MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR PEN
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>81.16</b>	
2018	549	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801	63.64 6.36 28.70	CITY MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR PEN INT
		<b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	<b>98.70</b>	

2019	418	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	59.80 5.98 21.05 <b>86.83</b>	CITY PEN INT	MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR
2020	446	LUCAS, WILLIE I 720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	55.76 5.58 14.10 <b>75.44</b>	CITY PEN INT	MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR
2021	224	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801 <b>TOTAL REL EASE:</b>	53.91 5.39 8.30 <b>67.60</b>	CITY PEN INT	MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR
2022	311	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	52.06 5.21 2.86 <b>60.13</b>	CITY PEN INT	MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR
2022	335	PVS MINIBULK INC 10900 HARPER AVE DETROIT MI 48213 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	46.70   <b>46.70</b>	CITY	VALUATION CORRECTION
2022	21600	WIGGIN S, MITCHELL R WIGGINS, ELOISE D LT 30 AVERA S/D ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	33.91 1.70   <b>35.61</b>	CITY INT	OWNER CORRECTION

**SCHEDULE B - approve release and/or refund of the following taxes over \$100:**

YEAR	BILL	NAME/ADDRESS	TAX		COMMENT
<i>EDGECOMBE COUNTY</i>					
2022	17692	JONES. HERMAN THEOPLUS 211 E THOMAS ST ROCKY MOUNT NC 27802 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	372.89 18.64  <b>391.53</b>	CITY INT	EXEMPT PROPERTY
2014	2441	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	68.96 6.90 58.41 <b>134.27</b>	CITY PEN INT	MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR
2015	232	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	68.79 6.88 51.46 <b>127.13</b>	CITY PEN INT	MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR
2016	2380	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	64.19 6.42 41.66 <b>112.27</b>	CITY PEN INT	MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR
2017	309	LUCAS, WILLIE 1720 NEVILLE LN ROCKY MOUNT NC 27801 <b>TOTAL RELEASE:</b>	65.47 6.55 36.01 <b>108.03</b>	CITY PEN INT	MOBILE HOME WAS LISTED IN ERROR

**C. SURPLUS PROPERTY DISPOSAL/ELECTRONIC AUCTION**

That the list of personal property proposed to be declared surplus and sold at electronic auction be placed on file in the office of the City Clerk as **BD-2023-14** and **Resolution No. R-2023-35** entitled **RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF CERTAIN PERSONAL PROPERTY AT ELECTRONIC AUCTION** be adopted.

**D. QUITCLAIM DEED**

Item was removed from the consent agenda for consideration.

**E. NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY DIVISION – AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS**

That **RESOLUTION NO. R-2023-36** entitled **RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDS** be adopted. This resolution authorizes the acceptance of \$400,000 in American Rescue Funds from North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Division and authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to execute required documentation including final application, subsequent grant agreement and certifications and assurances on behalf of the City. It was noted that the funding was applied for in April 2022 and requires no match or grant fee.

**F. FY 2022-2023 BUDGET/PROJECT ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS**

1. That **Ordinance No. O-2023-73** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO E911 TELECOMMUNICATIONS CENTER** be adopted. This amendment appropriates \$159,820 in the Emergency Telephone (E911) Fund for Qualified improvements to the E911 Telecommunications Center.

2. That **Ordinance No. O-2023-74** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE BUDGET ORDINANCE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO PEELE ROAD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPROVEMENTS** be adopted. This amendment appropriates \$286,000 in the General Fund for necessary Site Survey and Engineering Work for Peele Road Economic Development Site.

3. That **Ordinance No. O-2023-75** entitled **OCCUPANCY TAX PROJECT ADMENDMENT** be adopted. This amendment appropriates \$250,000 from Occupancy Tax Fund for transfer to the General Fund as called for in the FY 2022-2023 Annual Operating Budget.

**G. FY 2023 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

That the FY 2023 Annual Action Plan be approved and Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to Execute Any Required Documentation or Certifications. City Council was advised that the Annual Action Plan represents year (3) three of the Down East HOME Consortium's Three-Year Consolidated Plan. It is mandated by federal law and regulation promulgated by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the City to receive federal funding for affordable housing and community development initiatives that benefit primarily low-and-moderate income individuals. The City of Rocky Mount expects to receive \$536,901 in CDBG funds and the Down East Home Consortium (DEHC) expects to receive \$464,399 in HOME funding. City Council was also informed the FY 2023 Annual Action Plan is due to HUD on June 16, 2023.

The City Council was advised that a draft of the Annual Action Plan has been available for public review and comment for 30 days



beginning May 10, 2023, and ending on June 10, 2023, and copies of the draft documents were available for review in the Rocky Mount Department of Community Development, on the City’s website and in County office buildings.

This City Council was further advised that public hearings were held on May 20, 2023 in the Warner Meeting Room at the Braswell Memorial Library and on June 3, 2023 in the Pender Room at the Edgecombe County Memorial Library.

**H. REIMBURSEMENT RESOLUTIONS**

Item was removed from the Consent Agenda for consideration.

**I. INSTALLMENT FINANCING**

Item was removed from the Consent Agenda for consideration.

**J. PROPERTY DISPOSITION/1006 COKEY ROAD**

Item was removed from the Agenda.

**2022-2023 PROPOSED BUDGET/PUBLIC HEARING**

The following information was provided to the City Council relative to the proposed budget:

- Public Hearing includes the appropriations within the budget of expenditures for Economic Development for Downtown Improvement Grants as determined by the City Attorney
- Proposed budget includes appropriations of the following amounts beginning July 1, 2023:

General Fund	\$92,985,000	Gas Fund	\$27,000,000
Powell Bill Fund	\$2,827,000	Water Fund	\$19,280,000
Emergency Telephone Fund	\$250,000	Sewer Fund	\$18,743,000
Electric Fund	\$91,007,000	Stormwater Fund	\$6,495,000

- Within the proposed budget in the General Fund, \$600,000 is appropriated for Economic Development in the form of grants for Downtown Development
- The proposed budget is balanced with recommendation of no increase in the property tax rate, which remains at 68.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value

The Mayor opened the public hearing relative to the proposed budget for the City of Rocky Mount for FY 2022-2023.

The Mayor opened the public hearing and recognized the following citizens:

***Hap Turner***

- Stated an inventory of the historic homes in his neighborhood has never been taken, it was completely left out of both the preservation plan and the comprehensive plan
- Requested that money be budgeted for an inventory and preservation plan for his neighborhood as it should have been done 25 years ago
- Stated that without an update in this City’s inventory and preservation plan, the City’s new comprehensive plan cannot and will not be inclusive

***Bronson Williams***

- Stated the presentation and the design of the budget is great
- Stated he was excited to see that there were dollars set aside for the comprehensive plan as well as downtown and housing
- Stated while he understand the concerns of employees with the City, if the Council can find those dollars without an increase in property taxes that would be wonderful as he does not want Council to vote on a property tax increase
- Stated he does know that the City has a budget to abide by and the way math is, there are only so many 25 - 30 - 60 percents you can give out of 100%

***Nehemiah Smith***

- Stated if you are going to call the sanitation workers essential workers, pay them like essential workers
- Stated the City finds money for everything else, they need to find money for them as they work hard everyday and deserve to be paid
- Stated even if property taxes have to be raised

***Nathlyn Ohree***

- Inquired if there is any consideration being made for another Assistant City Manager

City Manager Rogers confirmed there was consideration being made for another Assistant City Manager.

***Antoinette Cutler***

- Thanked the City for not increasing the taxes this year or next year
- Stated she hopes the taxes will not be increased to make up for what has been done this year such as the significant increases for the police and fire departments
- Stated a 10 percent increase is not enough for the sanitation workers as they are the ones that keep our City clean
- Requested at least a 25 percent pay increase be considered for sanitation workers in this budget

Councilmember Blackwell stated that he has not heard anything tonight that he cannot support and he is 100 percent behind looking at the value of the City's essential workers. He explained that while Council is responsible for setting the priorities for the staff to reflect, they do not create the budget so it is up to the City Manager and his team to bring Council something to vote on. He stated that he wants to be certain that the supervisors and department heads really understand and are doing appropriate evaluations so employees are being fairly evaluated and compensated. He stated that he is not clear about what the comp plan is because Council has not seen it yet and he hopes that they will see it so they can be clear that what they are voting on.

Councilmember Knight requested that the pay and comp study be pulled out of the budget until Council receives the information. He stated in 2021 the Council did not pass the pay and comp study because all employees were not going to get a raise and the decision was made to do a 4.5% increase across the board for all employees. He explained that the minimum hourly wage was increased to \$15 in 2021, now it has been increased to \$16.83 in 2023. He stated that the Council needs to see what the ranges are, what the positions are and what the

employees are going to gain. He said that the City Manager made the bold move of providing a 36 percent increase to the police department, which was well deserved, but it caused a domino effect, and all the employees need to be looked at. He stated that the Council manages three people which are the City Manager, the City Clerk, and the City Attorney and the City Manager manages the staff, so Council must give the City Manager direction and speak on what they would like put in the budget.

Councilmember Daughtride stated that he feels confident that they are going to make things work but it has to be done with the monies that are available and he thinks they have more talking to do.

Councilmember T.J. Walker stated that the Council has not seen the pay and comp study yet and he would like all members of Council to see the details before they move forward.

Councilmember Daughtride stated that he agrees with Councilmember T.J. Walker. He added that he has full confidence in the City Manager and he has to make decisions on what to do with the staff and we have to work within the budget.

Councilmember Joyner thanked everyone for being here tonight and expressing themselves.

Councilmember Knight stated again that he would request to pull the pay and comp study because it should be reviewed by Council before being approved in the budget.

#### **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 Shields Family Partnership to rezone two parcels containing +0.32-acres at 803 Carter Street & 612 N. Tillery Street from I-1 to B-5

Councilmember Blackwell inquired if there was an interest in redeveloping the property and if the property owners are leading the development or just wanting to prepare the site for redevelopment.

Mr. Bocook responded there is an interest in reusing the property. He stated the building setbacks in I-1 zoning were 75 feet and the property is only 50 feet so that eliminated the possibility of redevelopment on the site. Mr. Bocook did confirm there was a plan in place.

Mayor Roberson recognized the following who wished to speak on the item:

#### ***Mike Tolson***

- Stated he is here on behalf of the property owner to answer any questions

Councilmember Blackwell asked if Mr. Tolson could provide an overview of the property owner's vision for the property.

Mr. Tolson stated:

- property owner is trying to acquire more properties in that block to alleviate the setback situation, but has not been able to tie a lot of properties down
- owner is currently working on developing self-storage out there, but he is not sure of the long term plan

Councilmember Blackwell confirmed that there is no housing in the plans at this time and stated he would trust that if that changes the owner would work with the planning department to ensure there's appropriate blending.

No one else from the public came forward and Mayor Roberson declared the public hearing closed.

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Joyner, and unanimously carried that **Ordinance No. O-2023-76** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AND MAP OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT** be adopted.

**SB 169**

Consideration was given to a resolution requested at the May 22, 2023 City Council meeting to oppose SB 169. Councilmember Daughtride requested to read the resolution. He stated he wanted to read the resolution to bring attention to the fact that Nash County was seeking to remove the City's authority on satellite annexations.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Daughtride, and unanimously carried that **Resolution No. R-2023-37** entitled **RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT OPPOSING SB 169** be adopted.

Councilmember Knight asked if there were members working with Senator Barnes on this bill and if Representative Chesser's position was on the bill.

Mayor Roberson stated he has been on the forefront of fighting this bill.

Councilmember Harris stated he wanted to go on record stating this bill was an extreme overreach by the Nash County Board of Commissioners and thanked the Mayor for fighting the bill.

Councilmember Blackwell stated he concurred with Councilmember Harris and feels it was an overreach. He stated he was concerned with how a county feels they have the authority and the right to determine and dictate how the City manages its business especially since that county gets an overwhelming majority of revenue from properties that are within the city limits of Rocky Mount.

**RESCIND RESOLUTION R-2021-51/ADOPT NEW RESOLUTION DECLARING OFFICIAL INTENT OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT TO REIMBURSE EXPENDITURES MADE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FIRE STATION 2 WITH NEW PROJECTED COST**

The City Council received a request to rescind Resolution R-2021-51 - Resolution Declaring Official Intent of the City of Rocky Mount to Reimburse Expenditures made for the Construction of Fire Station 2 @ a cost of \$4,100,000 that was adopted on October 25,

2021 and to adopt a new Resolution Declaring Official Intent of the City of Rocky Mount to Reimburse Expenditures made for the Construction of Fire Station 2 @ a cost of \$11,100,000. The City Council was advised that due to an increase in the cost of labor and construction materials, caused by supply chain issues, the project cost has increased to \$11,100,000.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember T.J. Walker and unanimously carried that **Resolution R-2023-38 RESOLUTION DECLARING OFFICIAL INTENT OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT TO REIMBURSE EXPENDITURES MADE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FIRE STATION 2 R-2021-51 RESCINDED** be adopted.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried that **Resolution R-2023-39 RESOLUTION DECLARING OFFICIAL INTENT OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT TO REIMBURSE EXPENDITURES MADE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FIRE STATION 2** be adopted.

Councilmember Daughtridge stated he wanted to ensure it was understood that this item is not approving the construction cost to be \$11 million dollars, he added this was only to request approval for financing up to that amount.

Councilmember Harris stated he asked for the item to be removed from the consent agenda because he feels large projects such as this one should have updates given to the City Council relative to if the project is within budget, over budget or under budget. He stated that the City Council should stay mindful of how these large projects are financed. He also stated he has not seen any construction project recently that has come in under budget, but he is hoping to see this project come in significantly lower than the \$11,100,000.

**INSTALLMENT FINANCING/FIRE STATION 2**

The City Council received a resolution authorizing the filing of an application for approval of an installment financing contract authorized by North Carolina General Statute 160A-20 in preparation of the City's installment financing for Fire Station 2. Council was advised that the resolution is required by the Local Government Commission (LCG) and is a finding of necessary fact to support the business reasons for financing and authorizes the City to proceed with filing the application.

Council was advised that the total proposed financing is estimated at approximately \$11,100,000 consists of the following item:

PROJECT	FUND	ESTIMATD COST	TERMS (MONTHS)
Fire Station 2	General	\$11,100,000	240

Motion was made by Councilmember T.J. Walker, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried that **Resolution No.**

**R-2023-40** 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 this resolution.

**QUITCLAIM DEED**

The City Council was informed that due to a survey error, there is a 0.023-acre gap between the rear property line of the Ruby Grey Heirs property and the Municipal Stadium property that should have been a portion of the Municipal Stadium Property. The Nash Board of Education, the current owner of the Municipal Stadium property, is selling the property and needs the City of Rocky Mount to execute a quitclaim deed for the 0.023-acre gap to correct the boundary line.

Councilmember Knight stated he would like to request the item be postponed after hearing Mr. Arrington during Public Petitions. He stated he would like the City Attorney to make a records request to ensure the bid process was done correctly.

Motion was made by Councilmember Knight, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried that the item be tabled.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, by consensus, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.



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Kim Batts  
City Clerk