

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
December 7, 2020
Virtual/electronic meeting

6:30 PM REGULAR MEETING

The Charlottesville City Council met in an electronic meeting on Monday, December 7, 2020, in accordance with a local ordinance enacted on July 27, 2020 to ensure continuity of government and prevent the spread of disease. Mayor Nikuyah Walker called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present: Mayor Nikuyah Walker, Vice Mayor Sena Magill, and Councilors Heather Hill, Michael Payne and Lloyd Snook.

City Council observed a moment of silence.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Snook, Council unanimously approved the meeting agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor walker announced the December 11 deadline for board and commission applications for expected appointments to be decided on December 21.

Dr. Denise Bonds provided a Covid-19 update, advising of a rapid rise in cases across the district. She also shared information about potential vaccines and about testing locations.

Councilor Hill made an announcement about voting for the Imagine a Day Without Water regional youth art contest.

CONSENT AGENDA*

Clerk of Council Kyna Thomas read the following Consent Agenda items into the record:

MINUTES: October 5 closed and regular meetings, October 6 work session on boards and commissions, October 19 closed and regular meetings, October 27 special meeting

APPROPRIATION: Fire Truck Insurance Reimbursement - \$21,214.18 (carried)

RESOLUTION: Disposition of City Council appointed Boards and Commissions

RESOLUTION
Disposition of City Council-appointed Boards and Commissions

WHEREAS, the Council of the City of Charlottesville previously established specific

entities pursuant to its authority conferred by Virginia Code Section 15.2-1411; and

WHEREAS, the Council convened an October 6, 2020 work session to determine if these entities should still exist or be appointed by the Council; and

WHEREAS, after its deliberations, the Council determined that the status of several entities needed to be revised.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville that the following boards or committees are dissolved: Belmont Bridge Steering Committee, Hydraulic Road Planning Advisory Panel, and Streets That Work/Code Audit Steering Committee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following boards or committees will transition from public bodies appointed by City Council to staff-advisory committees: Parking Advisory Panel, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, PLACE Design Task Force, and Water Resources Protection Program Advisory Committee.

Mayor Walker opened the floor for comments from the public on the Consent Agenda. No speakers came forward.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Snook, Council by the following vote APPROVED the Consent Agenda: 5-0 (Ayes: Hill, Magill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none).

CITY MANAGER RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY MATTERS (FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS)

Acting City Manager John Blair shared an update on the following community matters:

1. Regarding an inquiry from Ms. Albiston about a mowed down garden plot, he advised that it occurred in the County section of the Willoughby subdivision. He advised that Mr. Wheeler followed up with Ms. Albiston and would forward her additional concerns to Traffic Engineer Brennan Duncan.
2. He advised that on Friday, December 11 at 11:00 a.m., the Historic Resources Committee would be reviewing the City's Honorary Street Naming Policy.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

The following members of the public spoke during Community Matters:

Telicia Ivery, city resident, spoke about recent events in the community, including shootings. She was seeking Council approval for funding for arts development, music and

computer training programs to work with youth and young adults in underdeveloped communities to develop skills and talents. She spoke of the Waking Up With a Purpose program.

Roy Van Doorn, city resident and Treasurer for Downtown Business Association of Charlottesville, shared information about a new gift card program to support downtown businesses. He also made a funding request.

Jojo Robertson asked about openings on boards and commissions. She expressed concern about the opening of parks and city schools. She asked about opportunities for youth.

Robin Hoffman asked about HVAC systems for buildings that are re-opening, to alleviate particulate matter concerns. She spoke of concerns regarding recent shootings and she also spoke in support of neighborhood engagement activities.

Harold Folley, representing the People's Coalition, encourage Council to fill a vacant seat on the Police Civilian Review Board as soon as possible with a particular candidate.

Jeannean Carver spoke about the skate park in relation to transmission of Covid-19 and keeping the skate park open with mitigation measures to allow an open-air outlet for youth.

Kerri Heilman, Crozet resident, spoke in support of keeping the skate park open, as compliance with Covid-19 requirements has increased.

Don Gathers, city resident, stated that Council should fill the vacant seat on the Police Civilian Review Board regardless of what decisions are made at the State level. He spoke about recent shootings and asked how the city plans to address them. He also spoke of putting strong guidelines in place to mitigate the spread of coronavirus and about filling the City Manager position.

Gloria Beard spoke about a recent funding request that she sent to Mayor Walker, where she was questioned about having a 501(c)(3) organization. She shared concerns about the senior community in Charlottesville.

Nancy Carpenter shared concerns about the expiration of the Moratorium on Evictions at the end of the month. She also advised Council to fill the vacancy on the Police Civilian Review Board as soon as possible.

Skippy Norton, 7th grader, spoke about the skate park. He advised of ways to keep the skate park Covid-safe.

Alice Christian, 6th grader, spoke in support of keeping the skate park open with Covid-safe measures. She spoke about mental health benefits of skateboarding and cautiously connecting with others.

Aafreen Aamir, 11th grader, advocated for keeping the skate park open.

Melissa Collier, spoke in support of keeping the skate park open with safe measures.

Tanesha Hudson spoke about the state of the city and turnover at higher levels of local government.

Councilor Snook offered a response to the skate park issue.

The meeting recessed at 7:49 and reconvened at 8:06 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

PUBLIC HEARING/APPROPRIATION: Fiscal Year 2020 Year-end Adjustments (carried)

Chris Cullinan, Director of Finance, presented a fiscal year 2020 financial summary and recommendation for year-end adjustments.

Mayor Walker made comments about uses for funds. Council agreed to hear comments from the public; however, no speakers came forward.

After input from Council, Krisy Hammill, Senior Budget and Management Analyst, shared information about financial policies.

Council agreed to move this item forward to the December 21 Council agenda as an Action Item for public hearing and second reading.

PUBLIC HEARING/ORDINANCE: Closing, vacating and discontinuing a public gas utility line easement within the Stonefield Shopping Center in Albemarle County

Lauren Hildebrand, Director of Utilities, presented the request with staff recommendation.

Following clarifying questions from Council, Mayor Walker opened the public hearing. With no one coming forward to speak, Mayor Walker closed the public hearing.

On motion by Councilor Snook, seconded by Councilor Hill, Council by the following vote APPROVED the ordinance: 5-0 (Ayes: Hill, Magill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none).

ORDINANCE CLOSING, VACATING AND DISCONTINUING A PUBLIC GAS UTILITY LINE EASEMENTS WITHIN THE STONEFIELD SHOPPING CENTER LOCATED IN ALBEMARLE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

ORDINANCE: 817 Nassau Street rezoning (carried)

Matt Alfele, City Planner, presented the rezoning request forwarded on unanimous recommendation from the Planning Commission. After clarifying questions and comments from Council, the item moved forward to the Consent Agenda for December 21.

ORDINANCE: Covid-19 Ordinance amendment

Acting City Manager John Blair shared an update on coronavirus measures implemented at the state level, which would affect the locality, and shared the impetus for a local ordinance. Councilor Snook made a proposal to repeal the local ordinance and follow guidelines issued by the Governor. Councilors shared feedback.

Lisa Robertson, Acting City Attorney, asked Council to clarify intentions of regulating entertainment venues, definition of public places, and requirements for face coverings in outside spaces.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Payne, Council by the following vote APPROVED the ordinance: 5-0 (Ayes: Hill, Magill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none), striking the word "concerts" from the definition of public gatherings.

Council agreed to further discuss the ordinance and bring changes back to a future meeting.

AN ORDINANCE TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS, SARS-CoV-2, AND THE DISEASE IT CAUSES, COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS COVID-19

RESOLUTION: Sister City Partnership with Huehuetenango, Guatemala

Kate Kogge, Co-chair of the Charlottesville Sister Cities Commission introduced the resolution.

Jordan Lindbeck and Kelly Eplee from the Ixtatan Foundation shared a presentation about the proposed Sister City, Huehuetenango, Guatemala.

Councilors shared feedback and asked clarifying questions about the process of becoming a sister city, including the initial Friendship status.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Snook, Council by the following vote APPROVED the resolution: 5-0 (Ayes: Hill, Magill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none).

REPORT: Legislative Agenda

David Blount, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), presented the draft regional legislative program.

Lisa Robertson, Acting City Attorney, presented the draft Charlottesville legislative program. She advised of proposed edits to the Vehicles and Transportation section.

Kristel Riddervold, Environmental Sustainability and Facilities Development Manager, addressed a question regarding environmental positions, and communication and coordination with other localities.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Councilor Payne, Council by the following vote ADOPTED the local and regional legislative programs, to include changes to the Vehicles and Transportation section as presented: 5-0 (Ayes: Hill, Magill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none).

GENERAL BUSINESS

REPORT: Comprehensive Annual Finance Report (CAFR) - FY2020 Audit

Chris Cullinan, Director of Finance, shared a summary of the requirement for audit and introduced auditor John Aldridge from Brown Edwards, who shared details of the report. Mr. Edwards reported a clean audit opinion for the City of Charlottesville's finances and made a few recommendations. He advised that the only portion of the audit that had not been completed was the testing of federal monies because the City received CARES funding and the federal government had not yet issued rules regarding those funds.

OTHER BUSINESS

Councilor Hill asked about the Strategic Planning process. Mayor Walker recommended that two Councilors would be part of a committee to develop a proposal for a strategic planning process and present a process proposal to Council in March. Other Councilors voiced concern about timing and staff capacity with other major projects and budget season. Council agreed that the City Manager would convene a small group within the next month to make recommendations on how to move forward. After discussion Mayor Walker and Councilor Snook volunteered to serve as Council representatives. They agreed that the group would include budget staff.

Mr. Blair advised Council of the resource nature of a strategic plan to guide land use and budgetary processes and avoid the ad hoc nature of decision making that could have detrimental consequences to a locality.

MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

Don Gathers, city resident, spoke about dysfunction in Council communications.

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council