

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
March 15, 2021
Virtual/electronic meeting via Zoom

4:50 PM CLOSED MEETING

The Charlottesville City Council met in an electronic meeting on Monday, March 15, 2021, in accordance with local ordinances to ensure continuity of government and prevent the spread of disease during the coronavirus pandemic. Mayor Nikuyah Walker called the meeting to order at 4:50 p.m. with the following members present: Mayor Nikuyah Walker, Vice Mayor Sena Magill and Councilors Heather Hill, Michael Payne and Lloyd Snook.

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Vice Mayor Magill, Council voted 5-0 (Ayes: Hill, Magill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none) to convene in closed session as authorized by Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711 and 2.2- 3712, specifically:

Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), for discussion or consideration of one or more prospective candidates for appointment to City boards or commissions

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Vice Mayor Magill, Council certified by the following vote: 5-0 (Ayes: Hill, Magill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none.), that to the best of each Council member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the Motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed or considered in the closed session.

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council

6:30 PM REGULAR MEETING

CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

The Charlottesville City Council met in an electronic meeting on Monday, March 15, 2021, in accordance with local ordinances to ensure continuity of government and prevent the spread of disease during the coronavirus pandemic. Mayor Nikuyah Walker called the meeting to order at 6:34 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

Vice Mayor Magill announced:

1. Recovery Roadmap process meetings with the Economic Development Department;
2. Alex-Zan's "My Help List" writing contest for Charlottesville students in grades K-12 from March 15 to April 23, with a cash prize;
3. Charlottesville Climate Collaborative (C3) conducting a public transit survey through March 28 and seeking focus group members.

RECOGNITIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

Mayor Walker announced the intention to recognize Diane Kuknyo, retiring Social Services Director, for her years of service at an upcoming City Council meeting.

BOARD/COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

On motion by Councilor Hill, seconded by Vice Mayor Magill, Council by a vote of 5-0 (Ayes: Hill, Magill, Payne, Snook, Walker; Noes: none) APPROVED the appointment of the following individuals to City boards and commissions:

- Board of Architectural Review – Robert Edwards
- Community Development Block Grant Task Force – Helen Sporkin
- Charlottesville Economic Development Authority - Jonathan Chasen, J'riah Guerrero and Reid Thompson
- Housing Advisory Committee – Philip d'Oronzio and LD Perry
- Retirement Commission – Ben Cullop
- Tree Commission – Jeffrey Aten, Victoria Metcalf, and Jean Umiker-Sebeok
- Vendor Appeals Board – Frank Fountain

Vice Mayor Magill announced openings on Board of Zoning Appeals and the Community Representative seat on the Police Civilian Review Board. She also announced upcoming vacancies for other boards and commissions for the next quarterly cycle.

CONSENT AGENDA*

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

1. MINUTES: February 1, 2021 closed and regular meetings
2. APPROPRIATION: Additional State Funding for Adoption Assistance - \$600,000 (2nd reading)

APPROPRIATION
Additional Funding for Adoption Assistance - \$600,000

WHEREAS, the Charlottesville Department of Social Services has received \$600,000 from the Virginia Department of Social Services to provide assistance to adoptive families.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that the sum of \$600,000 is hereby appropriated in the following manner:

Revenue-\$600,000

Fund 212	Cost Center: 9900000000	G/L Account: 430080	\$600,000
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Expenditures-\$600,000

Fund 212	Cost Center: 3311007000	G/L Account: 540060	\$600,000
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this appropriation is conditioned upon the receipt of \$600,000 from the Virginia Department of Social Services.

3. **APPROPRIATION: Virginia Transit Association (VTA) Free Transit Fare for Working Families Grant – \$180,750 (2nd reading)**

APPROPRIATION
Virginia Transit Association (V.T.A) Free Transit Fare for Working Families Grant
\$180,750

WHEREAS, the City of Charlottesville has received grant funds from the Virginia Transit Association in the amount of \$180,750; and

WHEREAS, the funds will be administered by the Office of Economic Development through the Downtown Job Center and used to support transportation for program participants for employment purposes; and

WHEREAS, the grant award covers the period from July 1, 2020 and June 30, 2021;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that the sum of \$180,750 is hereby appropriated in the following manner:

Revenue – \$180,750

\$180,750	Fund: 210	IO: 1900392	G/L: 430120 State/Fed pass thru
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Expenditures - \$180,750

\$180,750	Fund: 210	IO: 1900392	G/L: 599999 Lump Sum
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this appropriation is conditioned upon the receipt of \$180,750 from the Virginia Transit Association.

4. **APPROPRIATION: COVID Homelessness Emergency Response Program (CHERP) – Homelessness Management Information System Grant Award - \$29,786 (carried)**
5. **APPROPRIATION: COVID Homelessness Emergency Response Program (CHERP) Grant Award - \$806,594 (carried)**
6. **RESOLUTION: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Improvement Project Recommendations**

**RESOLUTION
RIDGE STREET PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOOD FUNDS**

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2019 and May 4, 2019 City Council of the City of Charlottesville recommended Ridge Street as the priority neighborhood for FY 2020-2021, FY 2021-2022, and FY2022-2023;

WHEREAS, the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce recommends the following projects for City Council approval:

1. Traffic Calming Project Recommendations (Estimated \$25,000)
 - a. Adding Speed Limit Sign at Ridge St before Lankford Ave
 - b. Adding Speed Limit Sign between Hartman’s Mill and Raymond Rd.
 - c. Adding Speed Limit Sign between 900-1000 block of Ridge St.
 - d. Adding a flashing Speed limit sign between 700-850 block of Ridge Street
 - e. Adding a flashing crosswalk sign for the South First and Elliot Ave Intersection
 - f. Adding a flashing pedestrian crosswalk for Old Ridge St and 5th St crossing
2. Sidewalk Project Recommendations (Estimated \$220,000).
 - a. East side of Brookwood Dr and Ridge Intersection: Adding sidewalk and retaining wall to fill missing gaps
 - b. North Side of Baylor Lane and Raymond Rd Intersection: Adding Sidewalk
 - c. East Side 6th St SE: Adding sidewalk

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia that the Community Development Block Grant funds for FY 2020-2021, FY 2021-2022, and FY2022-2023 be allocated for the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce project recommendations as presented on March 15, 2021.

7. RESOLUTION: FY2020-2021 Minor Action Plan Amendment - Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) 2020-2021 Habitat for Humanity Contingency Plan

RESOLUTION

Approval of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville Contingency Plan and Approval of FY 2020-2021 Minor Annual Action Plan Amendment

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Charlottesville City Council hereby approves the Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville Contingency Plan and the FY 2020 - 2021 Minor Action Plan Amendment of the 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan. This will assist the City and the subrecipient meet CDBG and HOME timeliness goals. All HOME funds are to be expended by the June 30, 2021 program deadline.

Mayor Walker opened the floor for comments from the public on the Consent Agenda. There were no speakers.

Mayor Walker asked about speed limit signs in the Ridge Street area. Brennen Duncan advised of studies done in that area over the last five to ten years and all show a speeding problem.

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

City Manager Chip Boyles shared an update on the following community matters:

1. He advised that the Parks and Recreation Department has a plan and schedule for the re-opening of city facilities on a staggered basis. He advised of the need to meet safety measures and have proper staffing in order to accommodate various activities.
2. Regarding the Sacajawea, Lewis and Clark statue on West Main, the request for information period ended and nine informational responses were received. He advised that staff would review and come back to Council with a recommendation.

Mayor Walker commented on the hiring of staff to support re-opening city activities, and the need for access to health benefits for part-time and temporary employees.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Mayor Walker opened the floor for comments from the public. The following individuals spoke:

1. Kate Fraleigh asked Council to appoint a board member for the Police Civilian Review

- Board, revise the Executive Director job description, and include an ordinance that addresses changes from the 2021 General Assembly session.
2. Roy Van Doorn, local business owner, spoke about the impact of a reduced budget on the Convention and Visitors Bureau. He also spoke about the need for a collaborative effort for economic recovery and asked that Council vote to sunset the emergency Covid restrictions and allow State guidelines to prevail.
 3. Karin Reed, city resident, spoke in support of opening city pools this summer.
 4. Beth Ann Carta, city resident, spoke in support of opening indoor pools this summer.
 5. Andrea Ross read a letter from city resident Kathryn Harrell in support of opening city pools this summer and beginning aquatic programming.
 6. Lisa Grove spoke about city aquatic programs and in support of opening city pools this summer.
 7. Bill Emory, city resident, spoke about the need to improve access to the Rivanna River.
 8. Tanesha Hudson spoke about the requests from other citizens to have the pools opened. She spoke about budget concerns and a response that she received to an inquiry she sent to the City Manager. She shared a concern about race issues regarding the response to requests to open basketball courts for children last year versus the push to open swimming pools this summer.
 9. Pertelle Gilmore spoke about the imminent threat of violence in the city. He asked for funding of violence interrupter positions for his non-profit organization to address gun violence.
 10. Nancy Carpenter spoke about the desire for boards and commissions to meet in person. She spoke about shifting police funding to community programs.
 11. Virginia Leavell, Chief of the Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad (CARS), shared information about CARS services, volunteers, and need for funding.
 12. Jon Howard, President of CARS, encouraged Council to provide funding that would allow CARS to follow through on the Memorandum of Understanding.
 13. Robin Hoffman, city resident, spoke about Covid vaccination appointment concerns. She also spoke about gun threats in the city.

Councilors directed follow-up comments to Mr. Boyles and addressed Mr. Gilmore's concerns.

The meeting recessed at 8:02 p.m. and reconvened at 8:17 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

PUBLIC HEARING: Proposed Real Estate Tax Rate for FY2022 (1st reading)

City Manager Chip Boyles provided a summary of the City Budget and shared dates of additional upcoming budget meetings.

Mayor Walker opened the public hearing.

- Jeffrey Fogel, city resident, spoke about the need to increase taxes and make full use of property tax relief programs.

Councilors engaged in discussion.

With no more speakers coming forward, Mayor Walker closed the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING: City Manager's Proposed Budget for FY2022 (1st reading)

City Manager Boyles provided a brief summary.

Krisy Hammill, Senior Budget and Management Analyst, advised that this public hearing would be informal and the official public hearing would be April 5, and will be advertised no later than March 28.

Mayor Walker opened the floor for public comment

- Shelby Edwards, city resident, staff member with Public Housing Association of Residents (PHAR), spoke in support of Vibrant Communities funding for the PHAR internship program and the Legal Aid Justice Center.
- Joan Fenton, county resident with businesses in the city, requested that the City honor its agreement with Albemarle County for the building of a downtown parking garage.
- Angela Ciolfi, city resident and Executive Director of the Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC), spoke in support of funding for the LAJC.
- Brandon Collins, city resident and organizer for PHAR, spoke in support of Vibrant Communities funding for the PHAR internship program and the Legal Aid Justice Center.
- Pertelle Gilmore spoke about the unique nature of conflict mediation work and the need for staffing. He requested funding for staffing and stipends.
- Ang Conn spoke in support of funding for the Legal Aid Justice Center and public housing to address equity in the city.
- Tanesha Hudson spoke in support of funding for the Legal Aid Justice Center, PHAR, the Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad, and housing vouchers - programs that address fairness and equity.
- Virginia Leavell spoke in support of funding for the Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad. She asked that the City Manager consider how CARES funding may be used to assist CARS.
- Rory Stolzenberg spoke in support of Council's decision to defer building the 7th and Market Street parking garage. He also spoke about the Parking Enterprise Fund projected surplus and the need to increase transit options.
- Chris Schopper spoke about parking and discouraged the building of a new parking

structure. He asked that funds be focused on transit, housing, and bike-pedestrian connections.

- Chief Hezedeane Smith spoke about the sustainability of the Emergency Management Services system and advised of areas of improvement for Emergency Medical Services for the Rescue Squad and Fire Department. He advised that he would share a report with Council and that the proposed budget should address the goal to efficiently collaborate with CARS to provide service.
- Don Gathers, city resident, asked Council to provide stipends to members of city-appointed boards and commissions.
- Hunter Ware spoke in support of needed funding to address Fire Department and Rescue Squad operations. Chief Smith advised that he has relied on data analysis from staff and is willing to meet with CARS staff to decide on steps forward for service delivery.

Mayor Walker closed public comment.

Councilors discussed cost of living adjustments for employees at various levels, Vibrant Community funding, and use of American Recovery Funds once restrictions are known.

Chief Brackney clarified information regarding the structure for police services formerly provided to City Schools, advising that the officers were re-assigned. She shared information about mobile data terminals in the proposed budget.

Mayor Walker advised that she sent a message to the Commissioner of the Revenue about the Charlottesville Housing Assistance Program (CHAP), and the elderly and disabled real estate fund and will have an update at the next meeting. She noted that the formal public hearing for the budget would be held on April 5.

GENERAL BUSINESS

REPORT: City Assessor Property Assessment Presentation

City Assessor Jeffrey Davis provided a report about property reassessments. He shared 2020 assessment statistics. There were 181 administrative appeals representing 1.16% of the total number of assessments, down from 2019. He advised that the real estate market is expected to remain strong as interest rates for residential real estate are expected to remain low through 2022.

After sharing statistics, Mr. Davis answered a question about land valuation from Councilor Payne.

OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other items for consideration.

MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC

- Ang Conn suggested decreasing the police budget in order to fund other initiatives and resources.
- Nancy Carpenter spoke about the budget process. She advised of enabling legislation from the Virginia General Assembly to allow the Police Civilian Review Board to review the police budget, and perhaps will be incorporated into a future ordinance.

Mayor Walker adjourned the meeting at 10:59 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council