

## **CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**September 20, 2021**

**Virtual/electronic meeting via Zoom**

### **4:00 PM WORK SESSION**

Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3712, the Charlottesville City Council met in work session on Monday, September 20, 2021, to hear reports. The meeting was held electronically pursuant to a local ordinance amended and re-enacted on April 19, 2021, to ensure the continuity of government and prevent the spread of disease during the coronavirus State of Emergency.

Mayor Walker called to order at 4:01 p.m. and Clerk of Council Kyna Thomas called the roll, noting the following members present: Mayor Nikuyah Walker, Vice Mayor Sena Magill, and Councilors Heather Hill, Michael Payne, and Lloyd Snook.

### **REPORTS**

#### **1. Charlottesville Fire Department Update**

Fire Chief Hezedeane Smith introduced Dr. George Lindbeck, Medical Director, and Deputy Fire Chief Mike Rogers. Chief Smith acknowledged having been with the Charlottesville Fire Department for less than 10 months and he shared the department's vision, core values and new strategic plan through 2023.

Deputy Chief Rogers provided an update on renovations at Ridge Street Station and the Bypass Station.

Chief Smith continued with information about programs to address workforce equity, inclusion, diversity, demographics, cultural change, professional standards, communications and accountability, and training.

Regarding the Neighborhood Risk Reduction Program, Chief Smith demonstrated the data dashboard and other data sources.

Dr. Lindbeck shared background information about a study conducted by the Matrix Group in years ago that looked at fire and rescue services in the County and City, and about his participating on an inter-agency committee to address concerns expressed in the study. The inter-agency group, which made recommendations to City Council, also included residents. He noted that the recommendations were not implemented.

A City of Charlottesville Efficiency Study was done in 2017. Since then, opportunities for improvement have been evaluated. Chief Smith reviewed benchmarks for various emergency

responses and gave scenarios. He stressed the need for implementation of recommended programs, and he shared benefits of the Proximity Dispatch System and data regarding improvement in services and response times. He advised of the need for a comprehensive and collaborative system to address other community needs and showed a video.

After reviewing next steps, Chief Smith addressed follow-up questions from City Council.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mayor Walker opened the floor for public comment.

1. Forrest Calland, a local doctor and volunteer with the Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad (CARS), proposed several questions to Chief Smith related to Advance Life Support (ALS) care, paramedic response, the Emergency Medical Response (EMS) system, staffing, and response from the Charlottesville-Albemarle Rescue Squad (CARS).
2. Shawn Tevendale, Vice President of CARS, spoke of a letter sent to City Council regarding the need for a committee or board to examine fire and emergency services.

Chief Smith provided a response indicating a desire to provide the most appropriate level of care for the community.

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

- Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), for the purpose of discussion of the appointment of individuals to fill vacancies that exist on sixteen (16) city boards or commissions.

The work session adjourned at 6:02 p.m. and Council convened in closed session.

BY Order of City Council

BY Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council