



# **City Manager's Report**

August 2022

## UPDATES FROM CITY MANAGER MICHAEL ROGERS

- It's my pleasure to share with you that the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) has notified the City that we have again received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellent in Financial Reporting for the FY'21 Annual Financial Report (ending June 30, 2021). This is the 42nd consecutive year the City has been awarded this honor. This award acknowledges the dedication and professionalism of the City's financial management team, especially our Comptroller and accounting staff who. Congratulations to our finance team, job well done.
- Charlottesville is ranked #22 of 2300 best places to live by Livability Magazine. Only two cities in Virginia made the list. Virginia Beach came in at 43.
- The Office of Economic Development is excited to offer a fourth round of the Building Resilience Among Charlottesville Entrepreneurs (BRACE) Grant. This program is a matching, reimbursable grant of up to \$2,500 to help offset qualifying expenses incurred by City businesses. The business is required to provide a 30% match for the City's contribution. Applications will be accepted from August 15, 2022, at 9:00 AM until September 2, 2022 at 5:00 PM. Interested City businesses can learn more at the OED website.
- On July 19th the City closed on the purchase of a parking lot at 921 East Jefferson Street. The additional spaces will become part of the City's public parking program and be available for monthly lease soon.
- Following its recent update to the City Council, the Office Economic Development (OED) has issued a request for proposals for a qualified consulting team to develop a comprehensive economic development strategic plan to help guide the City's development activities for the next five years. The project is expected to commence this fall.
- I attended the Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority and Rivanna Solid Waste Authority Board meetings. The highlights were a presentation on their Cyber security Preparation. And the report out on their strategic plan
- The Committee for the Preservation, Maintenance and Security of the Downtown Mall convened last week to begin evaluating some of the long-standing issues on the Mall as shared by many of the business owners and residents. The committee will access some immediate changes and hold discussions with business owners as we seek to plan for the 50th Anniversary of the Mal. We will present an update on actions to be taken in the next several months which is being conducted by Rafftelis. Both presentations were very useful and will be used as the city moves forward with our cyber security plan and development of new Strategic plan.
- The search for Police Search is underway. POLIHIRE is the recruitment consultant that is working with us on this project. POLIHIRE will establish a portal for access to a survey that the community can use to give confidential feedback on the traits, experience residents would like to see in the next chief and the issues they would like the next chief to address. The feedback from the survey will be used to develop the recruitment profile that will be used to attract candidates and define those who would more closely match what the community is looking for. The recruiter will submit 5 candidates for our internal Committee to review and the committee will select two candidates to present to City Council. After council's input the City Manager will select, and Council has final approval. A link to the survey has been posted on the City's Web Page. And the link will go directly to POLIHIRE for the confidential collection of responses. Responses will be used to develop a recruitment profile that will be advertised nationally. The survey will be open until close of business August 15. To date nearly 500 responses have been received and we encourage all who are interested to complete the survey. Simultaneously, POLIHIRE will conduct virtual focus group sessions with stakeholder groups from a cross section of the city. This process will close on August 15 as well.

- At the last Council meeting a question was raised about employee salaries. After consultation with Council the city manager approved a pay plan for the Police Department that increases salaries for department personnel and make their salaries more competitive with surrounding agencies to which we have lost several officers. From the savings in vacancies in the department we were able to increase salaries without increasing the department budget. Tonight, through the recommended ARP allocation we are proposing to increase salaries for The Fire Department and the Sheriff's department. We are also evaluating our ability to address the salary situation at Charlottesville Area Transportation where we have lost a number of employees to area agencies. We expect to have this matter resolved in days and this would include pupil Transportation. We are evaluating methods for a significant overall for all transit workers Competitiveness of salaries of other city employees is being evaluated through a compensation study that is underway and will be reported at the end of the year.
- Working with the Director of Human Resources Mary Hardie and senior staff we are reviewing the new proposed Personnel Manual. These rules have not been updated since the 80s and are woefully in need of updating. We will be rolling out the new rules to staff in October.
- The Compensation study which will define where Charlottesville is with respect to compensation in our market will be presented in November. Council will be asked to consider compensation improvements for staff to close the gap we expect to find on the regional competition scale.

#### **UPDATES FROM DEPUTY CITY MANAGER ASHLEY MARSHALL**

- **2022 Employee Engagement Survey**
  - The City of Charlottesville has reengaged the University of Virginia Center for Survey Research within the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. The survey was opened to staff on May 11, 2022 and closed on June 6, 2022. The Center for Survey Research is currently working on analyzing and compiling the results of the study but has reported that our employee participation slightly exceeded that of the 2017 administration of the survey, and the Center is also working on ensuring that there are helpful crosstabs of the data created.
- **Office of Equity and Inclusion**
  - The Office of Equity and Inclusion is proud to announce the inclusion of the City of Charlottesville in the City Health Dashboard. DCM Marshall applied to the competitive process seeking inclusion in the Dashboard to aid the City's commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion by having the opportunity to evaluate data in key areas of the social determinate of health. OEI is thrilled the city was selected as one of 29 cities for the inaugural "Put Us on the Map Challenge" which provided an opportunity for smaller cities to make their case for why the city should be added to the Dashboard and honored that our application reasoning is part of their national press release. City Health Dashboard originally planned to add only 10 communities, but they selected 29 due to the quality of the applications. The City of Charlottesville is one of three Virginia localities selected, along with Hopewell and Petersburg. More information about the competitive program can be found at: <https://www.cityhealthdashboard.com/blog-media/1642>. Further, the Office in partnership with the Office of Human Rights will be hosting a second Virtual Groundwater session in August of 2022 led by the Racial Equity Institute. The Groundwater Approach is designed to help people at all levels internalize the reality that we live in a racially structured society, and that is what causes racial inequity. In June 2022, nearly 90 attendees from the City of Charlottesville, City Council, CRHA, JMRL, the

Charlottesville-Albemarle PMT, and United Way of Greater Charlottesville participated in the session. Currently, the session is completely full of 100 attendees signed up!

#### **UPDATES FROM DEPUTY CITY MANAGER SAMUEL SANDERS**

- **Staffing Update**

- Congratulations to Scott Carpenter who has been promoted to serve as Deputy Chief - Emergency Services in the Charlottesville Fire Department. Carpenter has been with the department for 22 years.
- Now Hiring: Housing Program Manager, Grants Manager, Assistant Traffic Engineer, Traffic Inspector, Transportation Planner, Senior Transportation Project Manager – Transportation Project Manager, Transportation Project Manager – ADA. All great career opportunities with the City of Charlottesville.

- **Safe Routes to Schools**

- The city continues working closely with Charlottesville City Schools in the identification of priority interventions in support of providing safe routes to schools. Public Service staff have begun installing new crosswalks, signage, and other items all aimed at supporting the expanded walking zones beginning this school year. We will be working with neighborhood groups on projects they have proposed to implement as longer-term demonstrations to promote our ongoing safe routes work across the city.

- **Emergency Management**

- The city will have its citywide Continuity of Operations Plan completed by early September. This has been a long-delayed plan of action to be deployed in times of business interruption outside of emergency response situations. The completion of the plan is a precursor to every department and office filing their individual plans to ensure the city has met this preparedness expectation.

#### **CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE UPDATES**

- **Office of the City Manager** – Executive Assistant Terry Bentley (she/her)

- The Office of the City Manager would like to remind the public that they continue to provide support as the main information line for the community. To reach them please call 434-970-3333, but also the public should be aware that the phone tree system is active to ensure quick transfer to the proper departments.

- **Budget and Management** – Director Krisy Hammill (she/her)

- The new budget year is underway, and the Budget Explorer has been updated to include comparisons of FY22 and FY23. Quarterly reports will also be updated and available on a regular basis. To view the budget explorer citizens can go to: <https://www.charlottesville.gov/1473/Budget-Explorer>. The Office is also working with the Clerk of Council to set the public meeting calendar and will begin rolling out further information as it becomes available on the budget office webpage at: <https://www.charlottesville.gov/169/Budget>

- **Communications & Public Engagement** – Deputy Director David Dillehunt (he/him)

- No report at this time.
- **Community Solutions** – Interim Director Alex Ikefuna (he/him)
  - We encourage any residents interested in serving on the Housing Advisory Committee (HAC), Charlottesville Affordable Housing Fund Subcommittee, and CDBG Task Force to express their interest by applying when applications are posted on August 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - The staff is working with the Neighborhood Leaders across the city in the development of a directory that further supports the Neighborhood Connections web page on the City’s website. This effort is intended to help identify contacts for anyone interested in discussions happening in their neighborhoods and to serve as place for new residents to make connections upon moving to the city.
  - We are posting two new positions we hope to fill this Fall. A Housing Program Manager will manage all the City’s affordable housing efforts in an expanded role previously titled Housing Coordinator. And this budget year provided additional funds to add a Grants Manager to provide central oversight of all federal, state, and philanthropic pursuits by all departments and offices of the local government.
- **Economic Development** – Director Chris Engel (he/him)
  - The Office is proud to announce that Charlottesville has once again been named to the Top 100 Best Places to Live in America list by Livability.com, outpacing more than 2,300 cities based on the data-driven ranking. The city came in at number 22, with the only other Virginia City being Virginia Beach at number 43. The ranking looks at 50 data points measuring economics, housing, amenities, infrastructure, demographics, social and civi capital, education, and health care. The Office also has issued a request for proposals for a qualified consulting team to develop a comprehensive economic development strategic plan to help guild here City’s development activities for the next five years to commence this fall. Finally, the office has concluded its 29<sup>th</sup> vacancy study which provides a detailed glimpse into the economic health of the city. The report only studies retail properties within the six City shopping centers: Barracks Road, Downtown Mall, McIntire Plaza, Preston Plaza, Seminole Square, and The Corner. As City businesses continue to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the vacancy rate continues to fluctuate at several of the shopping centers. Overall, the total vacancy rate for the six centers is 7.21%, which is up from 5.01% recorded during the January 2022 study. The full report can be found on our website: <https://www.charlottesville.gov/201/Economic-Development>
- **FOIA** – Acting FOIA Officer Teresa Pollack (she/her)
  - No report at this time.
- **Human Rights** – Director Todd Niemeier (he/him)
  - The Office of Human Rights continues to receive an increasing number of incoming requests for individual support. In June, the office received an average of 15 incoming contacts per day, for a total of 430 incoming and outgoing contacts related to individual service provision for the month. The Director remains the sole investigator for the office's eight open formal complaints, which are in varying states of investigation and mediation. The office continues to partner with Resolute Mediation and Arbitration for mediation services. Most of the daily contacts with the office center around requests for advocacy related to supports for homelessness, landlord relations, accessing mental health supports, and navigating the complex network of non-profit and governmental supports in the community. These informal inquiries, which include walk-ins, phone calls, community visits, and scheduled appointments, occupy the bulk of staff time. Victoria McCullough, Community Outreach and Administrative Specialist for the Office of Human Rights has been

meeting with a wide variety of community partners to explore ways in which the office can engage in collaborative outreach events. Victoria has engaged in several outreach activities in the past month including door-to-door outreach in partnership with Region Ten’s Community Based Recovery and Support team and tabling at OAR’s “One Stop Shop” events for people re-entering the community. Victoria also contributes significant time to assisting with incoming inquiries and individual service follow-up. Interns Lily Gates and Ginny Helmandollar completed a full year of service to the Office of Human Rights in June. They hold the primary responsibility for individual service data entry and completion of minutes for publicly noticed meetings of the Commission. Working only a collective average of twelve hours per week they have kept these essential functions of the office running smoothly. The office is deeply indebted to them for their excellent work and grateful to them for their extended commitment. Finally, the Human Rights Commission will meet in August 2023 to review the finalized CY2021 HRC and OHR annual report, as well as an amended draft of the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance focused on refining the enforcement process and meeting the requirements for entry into a Fair Housing Assistance Program with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

- **Office of Equity and Inclusion** – Employment & Financial Opportunity Manager Roy Fitch Jr. (he/him)
  - The Home to Hope staff participated in the first two OAR/Fountain Fund led “One Stop Shops” at the OAR/District 9 parking lot. Staff set up a table and handed out H2H rack cards and H2H swag along with business cards to potential clients. The events have been postponed due to low numbers in attendance, as the State continues to work through processing the early releases.
  - The Downtown Job Center has seen an approximate 50% increase in center traffic from January 2022 to July 2022. In January and February, the center averaged 12 client visits a month, but in June and July the center averaged 20 client visits each month.
  
- **Police Civilian Review/Oversight Board** – Executive Director Hansel Aguilar (he/him)
  - No report at this time.
  
- **Charlottesville Area Transit** – Director Garland Williams (he/him)
  - CAT continues to prioritize its search for drivers during this critical shortage. City administration continues working to modernize the compensation structure for the critical transportation services.
  - CAT is working with interested parent groups on how the use of CAT routes can support the challenges with pupil routes being limited by the driver shortage. Parent Ambassador groups are being considered for monitoring student groups on public transit for the school year.
  - The city is joining Albemarle County and TJPDC in supporting the local match expense of the Transit Authority Governance Study. The city share is \$30,000.
  - CAT has begun an effort to update its Transit Strategic Plan, a state requirement for urban systems to assess their fleet, facilities, operations, and opportunities.
  
- **Charlottesville Fire Department** – Chief Hezedean Smith (he/him)
  - CFD and CPD recently completed a series of sessions focused on a Tactical Emergency Casualty Care exercise.
  - The department hosted its first-ever Girls’ Fire and Rescue Camp, a unique opportunity for young people to learn more about fire service to hopefully spark interest in future careers.
  - CFD deployed CPR chest compression assists devices on two engines and two ambulances because of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). These devices significantly increase timely and consistent delivery of critical response to cardiac arrest patients.

- **Charlottesville Police Department** – Assistant Chief Major LaTroy Durette (he/him)
  - Charlottesville Police Department is proud to announce their selection by the Project Beloved program to receive an installation of a soft-interview room in Victim/Witness for survivors of sexual assault. Project Beloved, a Texas based nonprofit, was founded by Tracy Matteson after the rape and murder of her daughter, Molly Jane Mathewson, in 2017. The Department is also pleased to announce the swearing in of five new Sergeants on June 25, 2022. Finally, the Department continues to search for Mr. John Milton Harris II, Alton with VDEM. If anyone has any information on his whereabouts, please call Crime Stoppers at 434-977-4000, and a photo of Mr. Harris is on the CPD website at: <https://www.charlottesville.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=1126>
  
- **Human Resources** – Director Mary Ann Hardie (she/her)
  - The Department is continuing the PDQ process for the classification and compensation study. This process will be done in three phases and the data provided will assist in Gallagher moving forward in our process. Currently, HR is working on collecting data through PDQ forms from all employees. The anticipated completion of this study will be around December 2022/January 2023. Further, the Department is focusing on providing additional, strong support to our supervisors with creating a core group of HR team members who may be able to assist departments with employee relations matters. Finally, the department continues to focus on hiring processes, including for the Director of Communications and Engagement which has recently completed its second round.
  - Other Hires: The City is working on completing many hires in multiple departments. Please go to our website to see all openings and encourage eligible applicants to apply: <https://www.charlottesville.gov/695/Employment-with-the-City-of-Charlottesville>
  
- **Human Services** – Director Misty Graves (she/her)
  - The Department of Human Services Community Resource Hotline is healthy and distributing an average of \$20,000 to City residents weekly. The department continues to support youth through the summer Community Attention Youth Internship Program (CAYIP) and Teens GIVE.
  
- **Information Technology** – Interim Director Steve Hawkes (he/him)
  - Internally, the department is completing interviews for a vacant Helpdesk position and hopes to have a third member of the team in the next month. The department also wishes to congratulate Michelle Washington, telecommunications specialist, as she is embarking on her 22<sup>nd</sup> year of service with the City IT team! The staff also will attend several key conferences to ensure the city and staff are up to date on the newest technologies, cybersecurity threats, and trends in the industry. The team continues to migrate offices from the server H: Drive to the Microsoft OneDrive cloud-based system and the project is more than halfway complete. Most recently the City Attorney, Utilities, Facilities Development, Facilities Maintenance and Utility Billing have been migrated. The PC replacement program is underway for this fiscal year to replace the remaining 2017 or earlier PC s in the organization. Cybersecurity is focusing on upgrading systems used by vendors and staff to access City systems when outside the city network, and they continue to build out the City's Cybersecurity Incident Response Plan and leverage our Cybersecurity training platform KnowB4. Applications is completing a pilot project with JMRL staff to provide electronic paystub access to library employees and have also recently implemented branded email signatures for all IT staff. The team is also making updates to our

enterprise ERP system – SAP – to integrate with CPDs time entry system to create a more efficient process, as well as updating the City’s intranet and upgrading a Helpdesk system that will allow City staff to enter Helpdesk tickets and view their tickets.

- **Neighborhood Development Services** – Director James Freas (he/him)
  - Continuing to work through the Zoning Diagnostic aspect of collecting and synthesizing community feedback as we move into the actual code rewriting section of the rewrite process.
  
- **Parks & Recreation** – Director Dana Kasler (he/him)
  - Led internal group on a tour of the Downtown Mall in preparation for the development of a Task Force to study the various issues facing the mall as it approaches its 50<sup>th</sup> year in 2026.
  - Staff worked with PHAR in the planning and coordination for this year’s Westhaven Days held on Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup>.
  - Staff have revisited longstanding concerns at Oakwood Cemetery and we are looking at various interventions for the drainage issues that continue to be an issue in the area.
  
- **Public Works** – Director Stacey Smalls (he/him)
  - Charlottesville recognized as a DEQ Sustainability Partner for a 10<sup>th</sup> year in a row (the program has been in place for 10 years)
  - **Town Hall Community Workshop**  
There will also be a virtual Community GHG Reduction Town Hall Community Workshop on Wednesday, August 17, 6 pm - 8 pm. During this event, the City of Charlottesville encourages all community members to provide input on developing our potential GHG reduction priorities.
  - Register for the Town Hall Community Workshop at the link below:  
Wednesday, August 17, 6 pm-8 pm ([https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAud-iqqD8vHNe3nkoenflDVf\\_ycZCkfRRN](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAud-iqqD8vHNe3nkoenflDVf_ycZCkfRRN))
  
- **Social Services** – Director Sue Moffett (she/her)
  - The Department of Social Services would like the community to know that if they participate in any of the following programs, they are automatically qualified for the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), a federal program that makes the internet more accessible to low-income households: SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), WIC, Veteran’s Pension or Survivor Benefits, Lifeline. The ACP provides discounts on internet service of up to 430 per month as well as a one-time discount of up to \$100 to purchase a computer. Learn more at: <https://www.fcc.gov/ACP>. Further, DSS is actively participating in many community events including the One Stop Pop Ups coordinated by the Community Reentry Council, Westhaven Wednesday’s which is a bi-monthly outreach initiative at the Westhaven Community Center and will attend Westhaven Days on Saturday August 6, 2022. Should you need assistance please contact the Department of Social Services at 434-970-3400 for additional information/ Comuníquese con el Departamento de Servicios Sociales al 434-970-3400 para obtener información adicional.
  
- **Utilities** – Director Lauren Hildebrand (she/her)
  - July marked the one-year anniversary of the new utility bill pay portal. The portal provides enhanced online account management services where customers can enroll in paperless billing, Pay by Text, and automatic payments, as well as access their account information



24/7. To date, nearly 7,000 Utilities customers have signed up for paperless billing, saving the city \$6 a year per account, and equaling a combined annual savings of almost \$42,000. To further the success of paperless billing, and continue to increase enrollment in it, Utilities is launching a targeted campaign to reach Charlottesville's annual influx of UVA student-residents and new-to-the-community permanent residents. For more information on the new utility bill pay portal, and to register your account to receive enhanced online management services visit, [www.charlottesville.gov/billpay](http://www.charlottesville.gov/billpay).

## APPOINTEES AND ELECTED OFFICIAL UPDATES

- **Circuit Court** – Honorable Lizelle Dugger, Clerk of Circuit Court (she/her)
  - No report at this time.
- **Commissioner of the Revenue** – Commissioner Todd Divers (he/him)
  - Commissioner of the revenue wishes to make sure citizens know that the revamped chap program (charlottesville homeowner assistance program) is up and running. Applications can be filed online ([www.charlottesville.gov/cor](http://www.charlottesville.gov/cor)) or in person through September 1, 2022. The office is beginning to work on the fall personal property supplements, which is a large undertaking. This also is the last opportunity to pick up and bill unassessed items from the 2019 tax year. The business tax office will soon begin issuing statutory business license assessments for businesses who failed to renew for this year, and finally the office will again be participating in the Commissioners and Cans Food Drive throughout the month of August. This is a statewide effort coordinated through the Commissioners of The Revenue Association Of Virginia.
- **Finance Office** – Director Chris Cullinan (he/him)
  - The Finance Department is proud to announce that the City has been awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the FY21 annual financial report by the Government Finance Officers association. This is the 42<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year that the city has received this award. The Department is also working on closing out the recently completed fiscal year and preparing for the annual audit. Risk Management is assessing the City's automated external defibrillators (AED) for replacement and upgrades, as well as working on integrating a new risk management information system and streamlining the incident reporting and reception process. Utility Billing continues to provide flexible payment arrangements for customers who are behind on their utility bills – please contact them at 434.970.3211 or review the website (<https://www.charlottesville.gov/602/Utility-Billing>). The Assessor's Office has completed updating new construction and building permits; a comprehensive review of several neighborhoods will begin in August 2022 which leads into the beginning of the 2023 reassessment process. The Department also continues to work to fill several vacancies including an accountant and a buyer.
- **Sheriff's Office** – Sheriff James Brown, III (he/him)
  - No report at this time.
- **Treasurer's Office** - Treasurer Jason Vandever (he/him)
  - The Treasurer's Office has wined down the annual trash decal renewal season, selling approximately

4,000 annual trash decals for the collection year commencing July 1, 2022. Sales of zone parking permits began on July 25<sup>th</sup> and residents who had permits last year will receive a renewal notice in the mail. The new zone parking permit year begins September 1, 2022. Finally, the office is pleased to announce the resumption of U.S. Passport application services. Appointments can be made on the City's website at: <https://www.charlottesville.gov/551/City-Treasurer>

- **Voter Registration and Elections** – Registrar Taylor Yowell (she/her)
  - No report at this time.