

ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL-REGULAR SESSION

August 2, 2021

9:00 a.m.

The Council of the City of Roanoke met in joint session with the Roanoke City School Board on Monday, August 2, 2021, at 9:00 a.m., at Fallon Park Elementary School, 502 19th Street, S. E., City of Roanoke, Virginia, with Vice-Mayor Patricia White-Boyd, presiding, pursuant to Chapter 2, Administration, Article II, City Council, Section 2-15, Rules of Procedure, Rule 1, Regular Meetings, Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, and pursuant to Resolution No. 41964-010421 adopted by the Council on Monday, January 4, 2021.

PRESENT: Council Members Vivian Sanchez-Jones, William D. Bestpitch, Joseph L. Cobb, Robert L. Jeffrey, Jr., and Vice-Mayor Patricia White-Boyd-5.

ABSENT: Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr., and Council Member Stephanie Moon Reynolds-2.

The Vice-Mayor declared the existence of a quorum.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Robert S. Cowell, Jr., City Manager; Timothy R. Spencer, City Attorney; and Cecelia F. McCoy, City Clerk.

SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEES PRESENT: Diane M. Casola, Mark K. Cathey, Michael L. Cherry, II, Elizabeth C. S. Jamison, Natasha N. Saunders, Joyce W. Watkins, and Chairman Lutheria H. Smith-7.

SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEES ABSENT: None-0.

Representing the City of Roanoke: Clarence G. Grier, Deputy City Manager; and W. Brent Robertson, Assistant City Manager for Community Development.

Representing Roanoke City Public Schools: Verletta White, Superintendent of Roanoke City Public Schools; Archie Freeman, Chief Academic Officer; and Cindy H. Poulton, Clerk of the Roanoke City School Board.

SCHOOLS: Vice-Mayor White-Boyd welcomed everyone to the joint meeting of City Council and the Roanoke City School Board and called upon the School Board Chairman for remarks; whereupon, Chairman Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that it was the first joint meeting for the newest School Board Trustees Diane Casola and Michael Cherry, II.

City Council/School Board Communication:

Chairman Smith advised that the School Board desired to increase communication efforts with the Council and would initiate monthly communications among City Council/School Board buddies as well as after each School Board meeting.

RCPS+/5th Quarter Update:

Verletta White, Superintendent, expressed excitement about the RCPS+ program and advised that the overall goal was keeping kids strong, healthy in school while having fun. She noted that the program served 2,589 students, an increase of 251 students, in ten sites versus seven sites in 2019. She also highlighted the 5-5-5 program which allowed elementary school students to explore five occupations within five days.

2021 – 2022 School Readiness:

Ms. White explained that the school division would be hosting health and safety clinics at various schools to offer COVID-19 vaccines and immunizations. She noted that the plan to maintain three feet distance whenever possible would remain at all schools; air purifiers were purchased and installed in schools and on school buses; handwashing and sanitizing stations would remain; instructional time would be increased before and after school; Saturday school would be added; and breakfast would be provided at all schools to help to ensure a healthy and successful school year.

ROTEC Internships/Transportation Planning for 2021 – 2022:

Council Member Cobb advised that the questions were in follow up to the previous Equity in Action presentation where it was stated that students were to intern with local businesses, but did not have access to stable transportation; whereupon, Ms. White advised that the school division was committed to providing transportation to students who utilized the program.

Efforts to create and sustain safe space for LGBTQ+ students and best practices; and practices for treatment of transgender students:

Council Member Cobb commented that transgender students were doing great things just by living their lives and standing in their truth and inquired as to the best practices for treatment of the students within the schools.

Ms. White replied that the school division was committed to an inclusive school environment and currently followed a strongly respected equity policy with instruction reflective of every child.

Equity in Action:

Ms. White reiterated that the school division was committed to equity in the highest standard and noted that a second technical careers facility would be added at the former William Ruffner Junior High School building by September 9 to offer a ROTEC location on both sides of town for students to utilize.

Discussion of Long-Range Planning for RCPS Renovation/Replacement Projects:

Council Member Bestpitch suggested that the school division consider naming a building after Bill Robertson, former Hurt Park Elementary School Principal; and pointed out that he supported the school funding policy, but questioned if the 40 percent and \$5 million offered in the Capital Improvement Program was sufficient enough for the schools.

Ms. White advised that the school division was truly appreciative of the 40 percent contribution to the schools and long-range planning was great, but no promises could be made.

Youth and Gang Violence Community Assessment and Gun Violence Intervention Program Partnership:

Council Member Cobb advised that the City was to receive funding for two grants with regard to youth gangs and gun violence which would allow for the hiring of a Youth Gang Coordinator and outreach staff and noted the goal was for the assessment to be comprehensive to touch all children.

Comments by City Council/School Board Trustees:

Trustee Saunders expressed excitement with regard to the addition of a second ROTEC building in northwest Roanoke to service the William Fleming High School students.

Chairman Smith commented that she was excited about youth and gang violence assessment and the results said assessment may yield.

Council Member Sanchez-Jones suggested that the new ROTEC building be named after Doris Ennis, long-time educator in Roanoke City Public Schools; whereupon, Trustee Jamison advised that the school division had a policy for naming buildings and asked the Clerk of the School Board to send the forms out to the Council Members.

There being no further business, Chairman Smith thanked the Council for their continued support and declared the School Board meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

There being no further business, Vice-Mayor White-Boyd declared the Council meeting in recess at 10:21 a.m.

At 10:57 a.m., the Council Meeting reconvened in the Council Chamber, Room 450, fourth floor, Noel C. Taylor Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., to consider the following items for action, with Vice-Mayor White-Boyd presiding and all Members of the Council in attendance, with the exception of Mayor Lea and Council Member Moon Reynolds.

ITEMS FOR ACTION:

VACANCIES ON CERTAIN AUTHORITIES, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES APPOINTED BY COUNCIL: A communication from Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr., requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss vacancies on certain authorities, boards, commissions and committees appointed by Council, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.

(See communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Sanchez-Jones moved that Council concur in the request of the Mayor as abovementioned. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Sanchez-Jones, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey and Vice-Mayor White-Boyd-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Mayor Lea and Council Member Moon Reynolds were absent.)

ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY LOCATED ON MELROSE AVENUE AND COVE ROAD, N. W.: A communication from the City Manager requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss the acquisition by the City of property located on Melrose Avenue and Cove Road, N. W., where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(3), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.

(See communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Jeffrey moved that Council concur in the request of the City Manager as abovementioned. The motion seconded by Council Member Cobb and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Sanchez-Jones, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey and Vice-Mayor White-Boyd-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Mayor Lea and Council Member Moon Reynolds were absent.)

ITEMS LISTED ON THE 2:00 P.M. COUNCIL DOCKET REQUIRING DISCUSSION/CLARIFICATION AND ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE 2:00 P.M. AGENDA: NONE.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION BY THE VICE-MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL: NONE.

BRIEFINGS:

Collective Response on Opioid Use Disorder and Update on the Blueprint for Action

Steering Committee Chairs Janine Underwood, Executive Director, Bradley Free Clinic, and Lee Clark, Chief Executive Office, Rescue Mission of Roanoke, along with other members of the Steering Committee, Karen Pillis, Kimberly Horn, Nancy Hans, Niles Comer, and Christine Baldwin appeared before the Council to provide an update on the community coalition operated by volunteer leadership.

(See presentation on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Ms. Underwood advised that The Collective Response to the Opioid and Addiction Crisis (RVCR) strives to re-chart the course and consequences of substance use disorder in the community—not only preventing, but also ensuring that there were always pathways to healthy and sustainable living for those affected by addiction. She noted that the RVCR was a collaboration of influencers and community leaders dedicated to finding sustainable solutions to the addiction crisis in the Roanoke Valley and neighboring communities. The response encompasses over 300 individual community stakeholders representing law enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, healthcare, local and state government, education, community support organizations, faith community, business community, and individuals and families personally touched by addiction.

Mr. Clark highlighted working group projects and successes:

- Child and Family Support
- Crisis Response and Connection to Care
- Prevention and Education
- Recovery
- Treatment

Ms. Underwood shared that the RVCR was led by a Steering Committee of 12 volunteers from various sectors in the Roanoke Valley and stated that the committee was in need of a paid Executive Director to be in charge of administration, communication, and program management, and said Director would work under the Steering Committee in an advisory capacity. The Executive Director would also be responsible for seeking out and applying for sustainable grant funding for programming. In addition, the committee seeks part-time staff to take pressure off volunteers. She further stated that in perhaps three years, it could become a stand-alone nonprofit organization with its own board and mission.

Following the presentation, Council Member Bestpitch thanked the group for their presentation and was glad to hear their focus was on housing for ongoing support of recovery. He suggested the city reserve funding to assist the needs of the committee along with other localities; and stated that more people were dying from overdoses than from gun violence and asked of the committees' greatest need; wherein, Mr. Clark answered sustainability and how to bring areas together.

Council Member Cobb thanked the group for the update and commended them for the years of progress. He expressed concern with regard to the impact of overdoses on the community.

Council Member Jeffrey commended the group for their passion and dedication, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

At this point, Mayor Lea entered the meeting (11:35 a.m.).

The City Manager added that there had been 35 acts of gun violence in Roanoke this year, while there have been 177 overdoses resulting in 26 fatalities and the real strength of the Collective was orientation toward action and the city can continue to be integrated and support the efforts, discuss the sustainability, and the Opioid litigation was intended to generate ongoing revenue. He further noted that programs that were logical candidates for the expenditures and the American Rescue Plan funding in response to COVID-19 addressed substance use and abuse was part of eligible expenditure, not sustainable, but something to bridge the gap.

At this point, Vice-Mayor White-Boyd relinquished the Chair to the Mayor.

Council Member Sanchez-Jones inquired whether Narcan training was available to professionals, stakeholders, and others on how to recognize and respond to opioid overdose emergencies; whereby, Mr. Clark advised there were two peers who provided training and dispensed Narcan at the training, as well as, Blue Ridge Healthcare, the Drop-In Center, and the Virginia Department of Health, huge partners to Revive Training and working together to address the needs as different organizations and businesses seek to get their staff trained and later supplied with the Narcan.

Mayor Lea thanked Ms. Underwood, Mr. Clark, and representatives for the informative report and advised that the Update would be received and filed.

At 11:44 p.m., the Mayor declared the Council meeting in recess for a Closed Meeting in the Council's Conference Room, Room 450, fourth floor, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building; and thereafter to be reconvened at 2:00 p.m., in the Council Chamber.

At 2:00 p.m., the Council meeting reconvened in the Council Chamber, with Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr., presiding.

PRESENT: Council Members Stephanie Moon Reynolds, Vivian Sanchez-Jones, Patricia White-Boyd, William D. Bestpitch, Joseph L. Cobb, Robert L. Jeffrey, Jr., and Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.-7.

ABSENT: None-0.

The Mayor declared the existence of a quorum.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Robert S. Cowell, Jr., City Manager; Timothy R. Spencer, City Attorney; and Cecelia F. McCoy, City Clerk.

The Invocation was delivered by District Elder, Sylvan Moyer, Pastor, Unlimited Power Apostolic Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.

PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: NONE.

HEARING OF CITIZENS UPON PUBLIC MATTERS: NONE.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor advised that all matters listed under the Consent Agenda were considered to be routine by the Members of Council and would be enacted by one motion in the form, or forms, listed on the Consent Agenda, and if discussion were desired, the item would be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL: Minutes of the regular meeting of City Council held on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, was before the body.

(See Minutes on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Cobb moved that the reading of the minutes be dispensed with and approved as recorded. The motion seconded by Council Member Bestpitch and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

2020 STRETEGIC PLAN OF THE WESTERN VIRGINIA WATER AUTHORITY: A communication from Gayle Shrewsbury, Secretary, Western Virginia Water Authority, Board of Directors, transmitting the 2020 Strategic Plan of the Western Virginia Water Authority, was before the Council.

(See communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Cobb moved that the communication be received and filed. The motion seconded by Council Member Bestpitch and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

OATHS OF OFFICE-PERSONNEL AND EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES COMMISSION-ROANOKE ARTS COMMISSION: Reports of qualification of Stuart Trinkle as a member (Protected Class) of the Personnel and employment Practices Commission for a three-year term of office ending June 30, 2024; and Karl Willers as a member of the Roanoke Arts Commission for a three-year term of office commencing July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2024.

(See Oath or Affirmation of Office on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Cobb moved that the reports of qualification be received and filed. The motion seconded by Council Member Bestpitch and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

REGULAR AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS: NONE.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS AND COMMENTS OF CITY MANAGER:

CITY MANAGER:

BRIEFINGS: NONE.

ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR ACTION:

FY2021 "FOUR-FOR-LIFE" GRANT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending acceptance of the FY2021 "Four-For-Life" Grant for training, supplies or other appropriate items used for Emergency Medical Services.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following resolution:

(#42122-080221) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of funding for the FY2021 "Four-For-Life" program grant from the Virginia Department of Health, Office of Emergency Management, which program returns to the jurisdiction a portion of the registration fees collected from vehicles in that jurisdiction, to be used only for emergency medical services, and authorizing the execution and filing of appropriate documents to obtain such funds.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 82, page 1.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42122-080221. The motion seconded by Council Member Sanchez-Jones and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42123-080221) AN ORDINANCE appropriating funding from the Virginia Department of Health for the purpose of purchasing emergency medical service (EMS) training, equipment and supplies, amending and reordaining certain sections of the 2021 - 2022 Grant Fund Appropriations, and dispensing with the second reading by title of this ordinance.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 82, page 1.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42123-080221. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

FY2022 CONFERENCE AND EDUCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM GRANT:
The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending acceptance of the FY2022 Conference and Education Assistance Program grant from the Virginia Department of Fire Programs to provide support for the 2021 City of Roanoke Fire-EMS Fire Seminar.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Bestpitch offered the following resolution:

(#42124-080221) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of funding for the 2021 City of Roanoke Fire-EMS Fire Seminar from the FY2022 Virginia Department of Fire Programs Conference and Education Program grant and authorizing the execution, and filing of appropriate documents to obtain such funds.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 82, page 2.)

Council Member Bestpitch moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42124-080221. The motion seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

Council Member Bestpitch offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42125-080221) AN ORDINANCE appropriating funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Fire Programs, amending and reordaining certain sections of the 2021 - 2022 Grant Fund Appropriations, and dispensing with the second reading by title of this ordinance.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 82, page 3.)

Council Member Bestpitch moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42125-080221. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

YOUTH AND GANG VIOLENCE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM GRANT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending acceptance of the Youth and Gang Violence Community Assessment Program Grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to support the existing work of the Roanoke Gun Violence Prevention Commission.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Cobb offered the following resolution:

(#42126-080221) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of the Youth and Gang Violence Community Assessment Grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and authorizing the execution, and filing of appropriate documents to obtain such funds.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 82, page 4.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42126-080221. The motion seconded by Council Member Bestpitch.

Council Member Moon Reynolds asked Council Member Cobb to give insight on the construction of the Comprehensive Youth Gang Violence Community Assessment; whereupon, he explained that the assessment was an opportunity for the Gun Violence Commission to connect with children, youth, their families, and community wide stakeholders, but predominantly with youth to hear about their lived experiences, feelings, challenges, and hopes to comprehensively create intervention and prevention strategies. He noted that the effort tied in with the second grant to be acted upon and the Commission would reach out to all of the Youth Service providers in the community to be effective in outreach, as well as, fill in some of the gaps until the end of December.

There being no additional questions and/or comments by the Council Members, Resolution No. 42126-080221 was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42127-080221) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services Youth and Gang Violence Community Assessment Program Grant, amending and reordaining certain sections of the 2021 - 2022 Grant Fund Appropriations, and dispensing with the second reading by title of this ordinance.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 82, page 5.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42127-080221. The motion seconded by Council Member Cobb and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

GUN VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM GRANT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending acceptance of the Gun Violence Intervention Program Grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to establish and implement targeted interventions to high-risk areas and individuals identified in the Youth and Gang Violence Community Assessment.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Cobb offered the following resolution:

(#42128-080221) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of the Gun Violence Intervention Program Grant from the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and authorizing the execution, and filing of appropriate documents to obtain such funds.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 82, page 6.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42128-080221. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey.

Council Member Cobb advised that the two-year grant, which concludes at the end of June 2023, allows the Gun Violence Commission to hire three personnel; one Youth and Gang Violence Prevention Coordinator and two outreach workers; and the other third of the Grant related to the intervention programs to sustain them beyond a year in hopes to identify effectiveness and build on those programs moving forward.

Mayor Lea thanked Council Member Cobb for the work that had been done with regard to the Gun Violence program and further stated that it would be good to look for people who may have had experiences in gangs or may have been involved or could relate in some way.

Council Member Cobb agreed that it was critical for some of the intervention programs and explained that there were two models, a credible messenger program for those incarcerated and were coming back to communities wanting to give back in a positive way and the other was trusted community volunteers, people not normally thought about, but who interact with youth every day. He noted there were so many ways people related to youth and the hope was to train up to 100 people to assist in working with youth and families to teach them to deescalate and resolve conflict in healthy ways.

There being no additional questions and/or comments by the Council Members, Resolution No. 42128-080221 was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

Council Member Jeffrey offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42129-080221) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services Gun Violence Intervention Program Grant, amending and reordaining certain sections of the 2021 - 2022 Grant Fund Appropriations, and dispensing with the second reading by title of this ordinance.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 82, page 6.)

Council Member Jeffrey moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42129-080221. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds.

Council Member Moon Reynolds advised that the Budget Ordinance listed the year 2021 and inquired if that was correct or if it should be 2022; whereupon, Council Member Cobb expressed that it should be listed as 2022.

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved to amend the budget ordinance by changing 2021 to 2022 in the first paragraph of the measure. The motion seconded by Council Member Bestpitch and unanimously adopted by voice vote.

Council Member Bestpitch moved the adoption of the amended Budget Ordinance No. 42129-080221. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

REPEAL AND REPLACE BUDGET ORDINANCE NO. 42110-071921: The City Manager submitted a written communication to repeal and replace Budget Ordinance No. 42110-071921 adopted July 19, 2021, authorizing acceptance of certain grants from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for entitlement funding for the 2021 – 2022 fiscal year.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Bestpitch offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42130-080221) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships Program, and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), amending and reordaining certain sections of the 2021 - 2022 Grant Fund Appropriations, and dispensing with the second reading by title of this ordinance.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 82, page 7.)

Council Member Bestpitch moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42130-080221. The motion seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

COMMENTS OF CITY MANAGER:

The City Manager offered the following comments:

Roanoke Parks and Recreation is asking for help reimagining recreation

- Residents are invited to take a 10-minute survey to provide their input on changes they'd like to see in our recreation facilities.
- The Reimagine Roanoke Online Survey asks what residents would like to see from their recreation centers and pool facilities, how they should be maintained, and how they would like to see these changes happen.
- The survey is available online in English and Spanish. Paper copies are also in City library branches and at Eureka Park, Preston Park, and Grandin Court recreation centers.
- More information is posted on the City's website homepage under "Read About Roanoke."

The Transportation Division's "No Need to Speed" pedestrian safety campaign is nearing its completion.

- The campaign runs from June 21 to August 15.
- Every week, the campaign focuses on a different quadrant in the City to spread awareness about the dangers of speeding.
- Campaign messaging is done primarily through social media platforms and interviews with local media outlets.
- "No Need to Speed" has utilized a number of creative ways to engage residents on this important safety topic, including the latest initiative—the "Color Your Corner" contest. Five artists were selected to have their artwork installed on a signal cabinet in the City to create more awareness.
- The campaign is being funded through a grant from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, with the goal of impacting the behaviors of drivers on City streets.
- To follow the campaign, check out the Facebook page for the Transportation Division or the City of Roanoke.

CITY ATTORNEY:

VIRGINIA OPIOID ABATEMENT FUND AND SETTLEMENT ALLOCATION:
The City Attorney submitted a written communication recommending execution of a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Roanoke and the Commonwealth of Virginia for the Virginia Opioid Abatement Fund and Settlement Allocation.

(For full text, see communication on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Council Member Bestpitch offered the following resolution:

(#42131-080221) A RESOLUTION authorizing the City Manager to execute a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") among the City of Roanoke, and The Commonwealth of Virginia, governing the terms, conditions, and obligations among such parties for the Virginia Opioid Abatement Fund and Settlement Allocation.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 82, page 11.)

Council Member Bestpitch moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42131-080221. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds.

Mayor Lea asked the City Attorney to explain what the MOU was referencing; whereby, the City Attorney stated that it was a bright moment in the cooperative measure between the Commonwealth of Virginia and its political subdivisions such as the City of Roanoke. As previously discussed in the opioid briefing, the opioid epidemic hit the locality hard and as a result, the City of Roanoke was suing to recover from the manufacturers of opioids who carelessly addicted so many citizens to the drugs.

As a result of the litigation, the City Attorney further explained that 15 percent was going to the Virginia Opioid Abatement fund; 15 percent would be used to address some of the impacts of the opioid epidemic; the City of Roanoke would receive a benefit by initial deployment with the number of addictions, overdoses, and impact on services. He noted that the formula was complicated; however, the City would proceed with assistance from Mayor Lea and Attorney General Mike Herring who has worked very hard to be in a cooperative sense with political subdivisions.

There being no additional questions and/or comments by the Council Members, Resolution No. 42131-080221 was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

NAYS: None-0.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: NONE.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE.

INTRODUCTION AND CONSIDERATION OR ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS: NONE.

Council Member Bestpitch interjected that he had committee reports to share; wherein, Mayor Lea granted him the opportunity to speak. Mr. Bestpitch reported on two meetings he attended recently (via Zoom); the Redistricting Commission new with the Commonwealth of Virginia, in which he shared the improvements the City of Roanoke has made in the precinct arrangements so that there was equal access to the ballot by ensuring as many voters can vote as possible. He added that all city official elections, for Mayor, City Council, and Constitutional Officers were at large and all cities in the same Congressional District. However, part of the City was split between the 11th and 17th House of Delegates, with eight precincts partly in the 11th and partly in the 17th.

Council Member Bestpitch asked that the Commission to strongly consider forming the district lines to the precinct lines, as much as possible, so that when people go to the polling locations, they would vote for the same slate of candidates.

He further stated that a second meeting was held on July 30 with the Virginia Municipal League – General Laws Committee, in which the City Attorney was in attendance; and noted that with the legalization of recreational use of marijuana, the law enforcement community thought they would have up to three years to prepare and train people to recognize and deal with impaired driving under the influence of marijuana; it was clear that the simple odor of marijuana was not enough for an officer to charge someone with impaired driving unless other violations were observed.

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd announced the Equity and Empowerment Advisory Board would meet in person on August 5 at 6:30 p.m., in the Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, First Floor, EOC Conference Room, Room 159. She expressed her disappointment that City meetings would no longer be held by Zoom and suggested it may be a lost opportunity for citizens to participate in other meetings.

MOTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

INQUIRIES AND/OR COMMENTS BY THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL:

MISCELLANEOUS: Council Member Cobb commented that after attending an event at Mill Mountain Theatre on Saturday, he experienced a 20-minute delay to depart the parking garage and requested a reevaluation of signage displaying payment instructions for patrons.

UPCOMING STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS: Mayor Lea announced the annual State of the City Address at The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center on Thursday, August 19, 7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m., to review the city's accomplishments over the past year and provide a look ahead at upcoming city initiatives. Registration available online at www.roanokechamber.org.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING: With respect to the Closed Meeting just concluded, Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved that each Member of City Council certify to the best of his or her knowledge that: (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in any motion by which any Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered by City Council. The motion seconded by Council Member Bestpitch and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-6.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Member Moon Reynolds was not present when vote was recorded.)

VACANCIES ON CERTAIN AUTHORITIES, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES APPOINTED BY COUNCIL:

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS: The Mayor called attention to a vacancy created by the resignation of Antwyne U. Calloway and the upcoming expiration of the three-year term of office of Amanda McGee as members of the Board of Zoning Appeals ending December 31, 2022 and December 31, 2021, respectively; whereupon, he opened the floor for nominations.

Council Member Bestpitch placed in nomination the names of Tracy Jernigan Brown and Amanda McGee.

There being no further nominations, Ms. Brown was appointed to fill the unexpired term of office of Antwyne U. Calloway ending December 31, 2022, and reappointed Ms. McGee for a three-year term of office commencing January 1, 2022 and ending December 31, 2024 by the following vote:

FOR MS. BROWN AND MS. MCGEE: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

ROANOKE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD: The Mayor called attention to the expiration of the three-year term of office of Scott Tate as a member of the Roanoke Public Library Board that ended June 30, 2021; whereupon, he opened the floor for nominations.

Council Member Bestpitch placed in nomination the name of Karla Christian.

There being no further nominations, Ms. Christian was appointed to replace Scott Tate, as a member of the Roanoke Public Library Board for a term of office ending June 30, 2024, by the following vote:

FOR MS. CHRISTIAN: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

ROANOKE VALLEY-ALLEGHANY REGIONAL COMMISSION: The Mayor called attention to the expiration of the three-year term of office of Frederick Gusler as a Citizen representative of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission that ended June 30, 2021; whereupon, he opened the floor for nominations.

Council Member Bestpitch placed in nomination the name of Dawn Erdman.

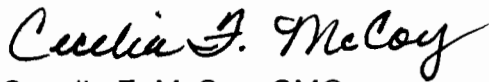
There being no further nominations, Ms. Erdman was appointed to replace Frederick Gusler, as a Citizen representative of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission for a term of office ending June 30, 2024, by the following vote:

FOR MS. ERDMAN: Council Members Moon Reynolds, Sanchez-Jones, White-Boyd, Bestpitch, Cobb, Jeffrey, and Mayor Lea-7.

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Lea declared the regular meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.

A P P R O V E D

ATTEST:



Cecelia F. McCoy, CMC
City Clerk



Sherman P. Lea, Sr.
Mayor
