

ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL-REGULAR SESSION

July 19, 2021

2:00 p.m.

The Council of the City of Roanoke met in regular session on Monday, July 19, 2021 at 2:00 p.m., in the Council Chamber, Room 450, fourth floor, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, 215 Church Avenue, S. W., City of Roanoke, with Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr., 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 Robert L. Jeffrey, Jr., Stephanie Moon Reynolds, Vivian Sanchez-Jones, Patricia White-Boyd, William D. Bestpitch, Joseph L. Cobb, 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 Bishop Jamaal Jackson, Pastor, Refreshing 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:

City Council sets this time as a priority for citizens to be heard. If deemed appropriate, matters will be referred to the City Manager for response, recommendation or report to the Council.

MISCELLANEOUS: David Garland, 3704 Round Hill Avenue, N. W., appeared before the Council with regard to the continued service of Robert L. Jeffrey, Jr., on City Council while under investigation by the Police Department and Commonwealth Attorney.

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.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCES OF THE COUNCIL-APPOINTED OFFICERS: A communication from Vice-Mayor Patricia White-Boyd, Chair, City Council Personnel Committee, requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss a personnel matter, being the annual performances of the Council-Appointed Officers, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, was before the body.

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

Council Member Bestpitch moved that Council concur in the request of the Vice-Mayor as abovementioned. The motion seconded by Council Member Cobb and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

STAR CITY STRONG RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADVISORY PANEL: A communication from the City Manager requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss vacancies on the Star City Strong Recovery and Resiliency Advisory Panel, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, was before the body.

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

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

NAYS: None-0.

FY2021 CITY MANAGER TRANSFER REPORT: A communication from the City Manager transmitting the FY 2021 City Manager Transfer Report for the fourth quarter ended June 30, 2021.

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

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

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

NAYS: None-0.

OATHS OF OFFICE-YOUTH SERVICES CITIZEN BOARD-MILL MOUNTAIN ADVISORY BOARD-BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS-ROANOKE ARTS COMMISSION-DEFINED CONTRIBUTION BOARD: Reports of qualification of the following individuals were before the Council:

Anita J. Price as a member (Citizen-at-Large) of the Youth Services Citizen Board to fill the unexpired term of office of John R. F. Lewis ended June 30, 2021; and for a three-year term of office commencing July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2024;

Niki Voudren as the Zoo representative of the Mill Mountain Advisory Board for a three-year term of office, commencing July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2024;

Betty Jean Wolfe as a member of Board of Zoning Appeals for a three-year term of office, commencing January 1, 2022 and ending December 31, 2024;

Timothy Martin, Janet Carty and Victoria McNiff as members of the Roanoke Arts Commission for three-year terms of office, each, commencing July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2024; and

Clarence Grier as an Ex-officio member to replace Sherman Stovall, by position, on the Defined Contribution Board.

(See Oaths or Affirmations of Office on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

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

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

NAYS: None-0.

LEGAL COUNSEL-LITIGATION: A communication from the City Attorney requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to consult with legal counsel and hear briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual litigation where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(7), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended, was before the body.

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

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

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

NAYS: None-0.

REGULAR AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

REGIONAL DRUG PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE GRANT FUNDING: The Commonwealth Attorney submitted a written communication recommending the acceptance of grant funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia Compensation Board for the Regional Drug Prosecutor's Office; and the City Manager submitted a written communication concurring in the recommendation.

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

Council Member Bestpitch offered the following resolution:

(#42099-071921) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of funding for the Multi Jurisdictional Special Drug Prosecutor's office from the Compensation Board of the Commonwealth of Virginia and authorizing the acceptance, execution, and filing of appropriate documents to obtain such funds.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 741.)

Council Member Bestpitch moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42099-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

Council Member Cobb offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42100-071921) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia for the Regional Drug Prosecutor 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. 81, page 742.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42100-071921. The motion seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS AND COMMENTS OF CITY MANAGER:

CITY MANAGER:

BRIEFINGS:

Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates Strategic Plan

Alicia Grubb, Chair, Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates (RNA) briefed the Council on the strategic plan for the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates.

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

Ms. Grubb provided background information stating that the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates was created by City Council in 2003, by resolution, to replace the Roanoke Neighborhood Partnership and intended it to be a communication vehicle between the neighborhood groups and City Council. She also reported that she became Chair in June 2020 and since had been trying to rebuild the Board and construct a new strategic plan.

She further advised that the new Strategic Plan included the mission which was "to unify residents, community partners, and the City of Roanoke for the purpose of fostering engaged neighborhoods;" and the purpose and goals were divided into three pillars advocacy, empowerment, and information carried out through the duties and responsibilities outlined in the resolution adopted by City Council.

Ms. Grubb pointed out that RNA would work with the Office of Neighborhood Services to revamp their website, social media presence and launch a campaign with fliers included in Western Virginia Water Authority bills as a way to reach the citizens.

She concluded by briefly explaining the three pillars and introduced the members of the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates in attendance.

Council Member Bestpitch thanked the RNA members for completing the neighborhood awards and constructing a Strategic Plan in an effort to advise Council on needs of the neighborhoods and ways to accommodate them to improve the City.

Council Member Cobb commended the RNA on the Strategic Plan and all their efforts.

Mayor Lea thanked Ms. Grubb for the presentation and stated that "strong neighborhoods make a strong community and a strong community makes a strong City"; and advised that the Strategic Plan would be received and filed.

Proposal to rename Lee Plaza

The City Manager advised that the Equity and Empowerment Advisory Board was asked by the Council to work with the community and form a recommendation to rename Lee Plaza.

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd, Chair, Equity and Empowerment Advisory Board, advised that the task before them was not easy, but after hosting multiple public hearings beginning in March, the Henrietta Lacks Plaza was the number one suggestion followed closely by Star City Plaza and Freedom Plaza. She continued stating that a survey was also conducted rendering the same outcome Henrietta Lacks and Star City Plaza as the top suggestions.

Council Member Bestpitch, Member, Equity and Empowerment Advisory Board, commented that indeed the City of Roanoke needed to honor Henrietta Lacks, who was born in Roanoke and referred to an article written by Ralph Barrier outlining the connection of Ms. Lacks to the City. He suggested that a highway marker sign honoring her be placed at the intersection of Patterson Avenue and Twelfth Street, S. W., simply stating that she was born and lived there and name the new park development at River's Edge North as Henrietta Lacks Park at River's Edge which would get a lot of visibility by citizens.

Mr. Bestpitch continued stating that everything in Roanoke was named Star City and the name was becoming generic and would have no significance to the plaza. He suggested that Freedom Plaza be the name to honor the soldiers that had their lives violently taken away for the freedom of everyone.

Mayor Lea commented that by naming the plaza after Henrietta Lacks it would be a first step to addressing an injustice to Ms. Lacks by the City of Roanoke in which she was born and spent the early years of her life.

In response to inquiry by the Mayor, The City Manager advised that from the survey alone 628 votes were for Henrietta Lacks Plaza and 602 votes were for Star City Plaza.

Council Member Moon Reynolds concurred in the comments of Council Member Bestpitch that a marker near the childhood home of Henrietta Lacks was befitting, but also that the plaza be named Freedom Plaza to be more in alignment with the war memorial and perhaps place a plaque honoring others such as R.R. Wilkerson and Margie Jumper who played a significant role in the 1950's to end segregation in the Roanoke Valley.

Council Member Cobb commented that a marker was in the works to honor Henrietta Lacks to be placed near her home in southwest Roanoke; also shared that the Tutelo and Saponi Native American tribes called the area home long before Big Lick or Roanoke was created; and opined that he was leaning toward naming the plaza after Henrietta Lacks as well.

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd commented that she was leaning towards the vision of the community to name the plaza after Henrietta Lacks; and suggested that since it was a large plaza, one end could be named Freedom Plaza and the other end Henrietta Lacks Plaza.

The City Manager explained that Council was not expected to vote on the matter, but to offer direction as to the plaza name and when to bring the matter back for a vote.

Mayor Lea expressed that giving the plaza two names could be confusing and advised that it was best to move forward, make a decision and vote on the matter and not postpone it to a subsequent City Council meeting.

Council Member Bestpitch concurred with the suggestion of the Vice-Mayor to rename each end of the plaza and further suggested that a statue or bust of Henrietta Lacks be placed on the appropriate end of the plaza.

Following additional discussion of the matter, Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved that the administration draft a resolution to rename a portion of Lee Plaza as Henrietta Lacks Plaza and the other portion as Freedom Plaza; which measure to be presented to Council at its 7:00 p.m. meeting. The motion seconded by Council Member Bestpitch and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: Council Member Jeffrey and Mayor Lea-2.

Mayor Lea thanked the City Manager for the information and received and filed the briefing.

ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR ACTION:

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PREVENTION PROGRAM GRANT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending the acceptance of the Virginia Department of Social Services Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Program Grant.

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

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following resolution:

(#42101-071921) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Program grant extension to the City of Roanoke ("City") by the Virginia Department of Social Services ("VDSS") in the amount of \$18,761; and authorizing the City Manager to execute any documentation required to accept such grant extension on behalf of the City.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 743.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42100-071921. The motion seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42102-071921) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the Virginia Department of Social Services for the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention 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. 81, page 744.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42102-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES' INSTITUTE FOR YOUTH, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES GRANT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending the acceptance of the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education and Families Grant.

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

Council Member Sanchez-Jones offered the following resolution:

(#42103-071921) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of the 2021 National League of Cities Equitable Economic Mobility Initiative (EEMI) planning grant; and authorizing the City Manager to execute and file, on behalf of the City, any documents required to obtain such funds.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 744.)

Council Member Sanchez-Jones moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42103-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42104-071921) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education & Families (YEF) for the Equitable Economic Mobility Initiative 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. 81, page 745.)

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42104-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

VIRGINIA HOMELESS SOLUTIONS PROGRAM GRANT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending the acceptance of the Virginia Homeless Solutions Program Grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development.

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

Council Member Cobb offered the following resolution:

(#42105-071921) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of the Virginia Homeless Solutions Program Grant ("Grant") to the City of Roanoke ("City") by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development ("VDHCD") in the amount of \$80,498; authorizing the City of Roanoke to be the fiscal agent for distribution of the grant proceeds; and authorizing the City Manager to execute any documentation required to accept the Grant on behalf of the City, including the Memorandum of Understanding with the Council of Community Services.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 746)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42105-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42106-071921) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Community Development for the Virginia Homeless Solutions Program, 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. 81, page 747.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42106-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Cobb and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

2020 CONTINUUM OF CARE GRANT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending the acceptance of the 2020 Continuum of Care Grant Award from the Department of Housing and Urban Development; and a Council of Community Services cash match to support continuum of care.

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

Council Member Cobb offered the following resolution:

(#42107-071921) A RESOLUTION authorizing acceptance of the FY2020 Continuum of Care ("CoC") Grant Award ("Grant") to the City of Roanoke from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD"), in the amount of \$51,393, and authorizing the City Manager to execute any documents required to accept the Grant on behalf of the City, including the Memorandum of Understanding with certain provider agency.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 748.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42107-071921. The motion seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42108-071921) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for the Continuum of Care (CoC) Planning 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. 81, page 749.)

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42108-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

2021 - 2022 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT, HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM AND EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending the acceptance of the 2021 - 2022 Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnerships Program and Emergency Solutions Grant.

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

Council Member Sanchez-Jones offered the following resolution:

(#42109-071921) A RESOLUTION 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 consisting of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) Grant, and the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), such grants to be used in connection with the 2021 - 2022 HUD Annual Action Plan previously approved by City Council; upon certain terms and conditions, and authorizing the execution of the necessary grant documents required to accept such funding.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 750.)

Council Member Sanchez-Jones moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42109-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Cobb and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

Council Member Jeffrey offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42110-071921) 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. 81, page 751.)

Council Member Jeffrey moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42110-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

2020 COMMUNITY BLOCK DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CARES ACT FUNDS: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending appropriation of the 2019 – 2020 Community Block Development Block Grant CARES Act funds from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to prevent, prepare and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42111-071921) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), 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. 81, page 754.)

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42111-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

FIRE STATION NO. 2 PROJECT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending authorization to acquire real property, in fee simple, in connection with the proposed Fire Station No. 2 Project.

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

Council Member Cobb offered the following ordinance:

(#42112-071921) AN ORDINANCE authorizing the acquisition of real property rights needed by the City in connection with the proposed Fire Station No. 2 Project ("Project"); authorizing City staff to acquire such property rights by negotiation for the City; authorizing the City Manager to execute appropriate acquisition documents; and dispensing with the second reading of this Ordinance by title.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 81, page 755.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 42112-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Bestpitch and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

NAMING OF PLAZA NEAR BARNHARDT CREEK BRIDGE: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending approval to name the plaza near Barnhardt Creek Bridge after Liz Belcher to recognize her significant contributions as Regional Greenway Coordinator.

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

Council Member Bestpitch offered the following resolution:

(#42113-071921) A RESOLUTION naming the plaza near the Barnhardt Creek Bridge Liz Belcher Plaza.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 757.)

Council Member Bestpitch moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42113-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

COMMENTS OF CITY MANAGER: NONE.

CITY ATTORNEY:

VIRGINIA HARM REDUCTION COALITION FIREARM BUYBACK PROGRAM: The City Attorney submitted a written communication recommending authorization for the City of Roanoke to participate in a firearm buyback program with the Virginia Harm Reduction Coalition.

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

Council Member Cobb offered the following ordinance:

(#42114-071921) AN ORDINANCE authorizing the City to participate in a firearm buyback program with the Virginia Harm Reduction Coalition and to have the police department receive and destroy such surrendered firearms in accordance with Section 15.2-915.5 of the Code of Virginia (1950) as amended.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 81, page 758.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 42114-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

VARIOUS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS: The Roanoke City School Board submitted a written report requesting appropriation of funds for various educational Programs; and the City Manager submitted a written report recommending that Council concur in the request.

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

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42115-071921) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the Commonwealth, federal and private grant for various educational programs, amending and re-ordaining certain sections of the 2021 - 2022 School Grant Fund Appropriations, and dispensing with the second reading by title of this ordinance.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 81, page 759.)

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42115-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

A REPORT OF CERTAIN AUTHORITIES, BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS IN WHICH CITY COUNCIL SERVE AS LIAISONS OR APPOINTEES:

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd invited citizens to the next Equity and Empowerment Advisory meeting to be held on Thursday, August 5, at 6:30 p.m., at the Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, EOC Conference Room, First Floor, Room 159. For additional information, contact Angela O'Brien at (540) 853-5309.

Council Member Cobb announced the Gun Violence Prevention Commission was hosting the "Becoming Trauma Informed Workshop" at the Belmont Branch Library located at 1101 Morningside Street, S. E., and invited citizens to attend, the free presentation will educate participants about the impact of trauma on individuals and the community.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE.

INTRODUCTION AND CONSIDERATION OR ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY: Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following resolution reappointing Duke Baldrige as a Director of the Economic Development Authority for a four-year term of office ending October 20, 2025:

(#42116-071921) A RESOLUTION reappointing a Director of the Economic Development Authority of the City of Roanoke to fill a four (4) year term on the Board of Directors.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 760.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42116-071921. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

MOTION AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

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

Council Member Bestpitch shared a letter from Garland G. Parry who praised Cody Andrews, GIS Technician, Engineering Department, as being a consummate professional, well spoken, polite, friendly asset to the City of Roanoke.

Council Member Bestpitch announced Friday, July 30, 2021 was International Friendship Day and expressed the importance of encouraging inclusion and respect between different cultures and respect for diversity in our neighborhoods.

Mayor Lea thanked citizens and all youth who participated in the Lea Youth Outdoor Basketball League program, a community effort to support youth in the City of Roanoke. Every Monday and Thursday night children and teens gathered at Eureka Park; he also thanked Josh Johnson, Neighborhood Services Coordinator; Keith Farmer, Straight Street; Feeding Southwest Virginia; Lloyd Merchant, Rapid Response Coordinator, and the City of Roanoke Police Department for their outstanding support of the program.

VACANCIES ON CERTAIN AUTHORITIES, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES APPOINTED BY COUNCIL: NONE.

At 3:51 p.m., the Mayor declared the Council meeting in recess for a Closed Meeting in the Council's Conference Room, Room 451, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building; and thereafter to be reconvened at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber.

At 7:00 p.m., the Council meeting reconvened in the Council Chamber, Room 450, fourth floor, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, with Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr., presiding.

PRESENT: Council Members Stephanie Moon Reynolds, Patricia White-Boyd, William D. Bestpitch, Joseph L. Cobb, Robert L. Jeffrey, Jr., and Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.-6.

ABSENT: Council Member Vivian Sanchez-Jones-1.

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 Council Member Joseph L. Cobb.

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

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 Cobb and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Member Sanchez-Jones was absent.)

PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

RECOGNITION OF THE VIRGINIA WARRIORS ELITE AAU BASKETBALL TEAM: Mayor Lea recognized the Virginia Warriors Elite AAU Basketball team and Coach Jermaine Hardy, who recently won the Division 3 National Championship.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

ZONING: Pursuant to Resolution No. 25523 adopted by the Council on Monday, April 6, 1981, the City Clerk having advertised a public hearing for Monday, July 19, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on a request of Local Office on Aging, Inc., to repeal all conditions proffered as part of previous rezonings at 4902 and 4932 Frontage Road, N. W., through the adoption of Ordinance No. 31337-021693, on February 16, 1993, and Ordinance No. 34733-040300 on April 3, 2000; to rezone 4902 Frontage Road, N. W., from CG, Commercial-General District, to MX, Mixed Use District; and to adopt a condition related to natural vegetation surrounding the property at 4902 and 4932 Frontage Road, N. W., the matter was before the body.

Legal advertisement of the public hearing was published in *The Roanoke Times* on Tuesday, June 29, 2021 and Tuesday, July 6, 2021.

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

The City Planning Commission submitted a written report recommending approval of the rezoning request, finding that the Amended Application No. 1 is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, Peters Creek North Neighborhood Plan, and the Zoning Ordinance as the subject property will be used in a manner appropriate to the surrounding area.

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

Council Member Bestpitch offered the following ordinance:

(#42117-071921) AN ORDINANCE to repeal all conditions proffered as part of previous rezonings on certain properties located at 4902 and 4932 Frontage Road, N. W., bearing Official Tax Map Nos. 6490804 and 6490805 (the "Property") through the adoption of Ordinance No. 31337-021693, on February 16, 1993, and Ordinance No. 34733-040300, adopted April 3, 2000; to rezone 4902 Frontage Road N. W., bearing Official Tax Map No. 6490804, from CG, Commercial-General District, to MX, Mixed Use District; to adopt a condition related to natural vegetation surrounding the property at 4902 and 4932 Frontage Road N. W., Official Tax Map Nos. 6490804 and 6490805, respectively; and dispensing with the second reading of this ordinance by title.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 81, page 761.)

Council Member Bestpitch moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 42117-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds.

Ron Boyd, President and Chief Executive Officer, Local Office on Aging, Inc., appeared before the Council in support of the request.

The Mayor inquired if there were persons present who wished to speak on the matter. There being none, he declared the public hearing closed.

There being no comments and/or questions by the Council Members, Ordinance No. 42117-071921 was adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Member Sanchez-Jones was absent.)

GENERAL OBLIGATION PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT BONDS: Pursuant to instructions by the Council, the City Clerk having advertised a public hearing for Monday, July, 19, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, on a proposal of the City of Roanoke for authorization of General Obligation Public Improvement Bonds in the principal amount of not to exceed \$33,555,000 and appropriation of funds for capital projects, the matter was before the body.

Legal advertisement of the public hearing was published in *The Roanoke Times* on Tuesday, July 6, 2021 and Tuesday, July 13, 2021.

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

The City Manager submitted a written report recommending appropriation of in advance of issuance, FY 2022 Bond funding in the amount of \$33,555,000 to project accounts to be established by the Director of Finance in the Capital Projects, Civic Center, and Stormwater Funds.

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

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd offered the following resolution:

(#42118-071921) A RESOLUTION authorizing the issuance and sale of not to exceed thirty-three million five hundred fifty-five thousand dollars (\$33,555,000) aggregate principal amount of General Obligations of the City of Roanoke, Virginia, in the form of General Obligation Public Improvement Bonds of the City, for the purpose of providing funds to pay the costs of the acquisition, construction, reconstruction, improvement, extension, enlargement and equipping of various public improvement projects of and for the city (including related design and architectural and engineering services); fixing the form, denomination and certain other details of such bonds; and otherwise providing with respect to the issuance, sale and delivery of such bonds; and authorizing and providing for the issuance and sale of a like principal amount of General Obligation Public Improvement Bond anticipation notes in anticipation of the issuance and sale of such bonds.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 763.)

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42118-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds.

The Mayor inquired if there were persons present who wished to speak on the matter; there being none, the Mayor declared the public hearing closed.

There being no comments and/or questions by the Council Members, Resolution No. 42118-071921 was adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Member Sanchez-Jones was absent.)

Council Member Cobb offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42119-071921) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding to be provided by the issuance of General Obligation Bonds to the Stormwater Improvements, Civic Center, City-wide Curb/Gutter/Sidewalk, Street Improvements, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Fleet Capital Replacements, Technology Capital Improvements, Bridge Renovations, School Improvements, as well as various school maintenance upgrade projects, amending and reordaining certain sections of the 2021 - 2022 Stormwater Utility, Civic Center, Capital Projects, and School Capital Projects Funds, and dispensing with the second reading by title of this ordinance.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 81, page 779.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42119-071921. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and was adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Member Sanchez-Jones was absent.)

NEW BUSINESS:

STAR CITY STRONG RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY ADVISORY PANEL:
Vice-Mayor White-Boyd offered the following resolution appointing members to the Star City Strong Recovery and Resiliency Advisory Panel, to evaluate alternatives and make recommendations to City Council for use of the Star City Strong Recovery Fund to support the recovery, and resilience of the community:

(#42120-071921) A RESOLUTION appointing the members of the Star City Strong Recovery and Resiliency Advisory Panel and establishing an effective date.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 780.)

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42120-071921. The motion was seconded by Council Member Moon Reynolds and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Member Sanchez-Jones was absent.)

STAR CITY STRONG – RECOVERY & RESILIENCY COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS: The City Manager requested that each City Council Member report on a series of virtual community conversations recently held with nearly 100 stakeholders. The purpose of the conversations was to discuss ways that the City could support further recover of the community from the impacts of COVID-19 and aid in supporting greater resiliency for local residents, households, neighborhoods and businesses against similar shocks in the future. The conversations focused on Infrastructure and Technology, Well-Being, Housing, Economic Recovery, Education and Workforce, and Community Development.

Each Council Member highlighted a few remarks during their community conversations.

(See comprehensive remarks and information on file in the City Clerk's Office.)

Mayor Lea headed the discussion with the Star City Strong Phase 2 Focus Group – Infrastructure and Technology, and initiated the conversation by asking the following questions:

What did they consider the greatest weakness in our community as it relates to economic recovery from COVID-19:

- Project underway in combination with VT/Carilion – how to help improve health outcomes through the use of technology combined with access to health care.
- City of Roanoke services accommodate those living outside – how does transportation and broadband limit these folks in gaining access to those services (expense, logistics, etc.) – telehealth likely to play a greater role in addressing these issues.
- Need a firm understanding of what the issues are to be able to select the proper technology/services, etc.

In the areas of transportation, water and wastewater, what did they consider the greatest challenges to be?

- Areas of City have older small-diameter water lines resulting in low pressure (poor fire protection) – concentrated in NW/NE/SE need to help make safer and more user-friendly. Still some areas around Cove Road and Richards Avenue were not yet connected to public wastewater system.
- Need to invest more on on-road bicycle facilities – need to make roads and intersections safer.
- Transit viability – was ridership going to decline further due to health concerns with crowds, etc. – does this mean we need to change how transit is delivered? Need to make transit ridership experience more pleasant – shelters for example.

In any of these areas what efforts or initiatives funded by American Rescue Act funds, they believed could be truly transformational for our community and why?

- Opportunities to use technology to advance Smart Cities initiatives. Leverage technology to advance objectives in the Innovation Corridor – especially spin-off/start-ups – greater opportunity for universal service.
- Frontline technology and bio-tech workforce preparation for existing residents – talent development/pipeline. Pursue full-spectrum of opportunity in the Innovation Corridor.
- View the treatment plants as assets for innovation and business testing – treating the plants as incubators for places to develop and test innovation – potential to partner with VT.

Council Member Cobb initiated the conversation with Star City Strong Phase 2 Focus Group – Well-Being by asking the following questions:

In the area of well-being for our residents, households and neighborhoods, what do they consider to be the greatest weakness in our community as it relates to recovery from COVID-19?

- On-going and generational poverty made worse with COVID. Still high number of uninsured in our community. Opioid crisis pre-existed COVID and now has become even worse with increases in overdoses and fatalities – in 2019 175 overdoses 30 fatalities, in 2020 450 overdoses 80 fatalities. Increases in STI's (especially Hepatitis and Syphilis) in the community during Pandemic.

In the area of well-being, what would they consider the greatest challenges to be?

- Mental health service demand increased dramatically during COVID – likely to continue post-COVID and present in ways not before seen.
- Lack of hope among Black men.
- Older generations raising younger children while they continue to struggle with their own health challenges.
- Anxiety and trauma among youth in our community.
- Need for better conflict resolution among youth and young adults. Increased need for resources for immigrant and refugees, including virtual and literacy education and general assistance.
- Access to healthy and affordable food remains an issue – especially produce. Access to and expense of child care.

In any of these, what efforts or initiatives funded by American Rescue Act funds, do you believe could be truly transformational for our community and why?

- Easily accessible and more mental health professionals – especially oriented toward youth with increased accessibility across socio-economic lines. Multi-generational approach to interventions and solutions – program RESTORE.
- Conflict resolution training. Wrap-around services for those seeking help. Sustainable source of financial support.
- Crisis intervention. Recovery Housing. Solutions need to be scaled to the size of the problems. Coordination of responses (mental health, substance use, etc.) Help returning citizens – build on current services and increase opportunities for successful and sustainable return to community. Coordinated so entry point does not matter – approach in community is consistent, multi-generational and interconnected.

Council Member Stephanie Moon-Reynolds headed the discussion with the Star City Strong Phase 2 Focus Group – Housing, and initiated the conversation by asking the group the following questions:

In the area of housing, what do you consider to be the greatest weakness in our community as it relates to recovery from COVID-19?

- Unsustainable sales market – driven by interest rates and very low inventory. Lack of new residential construction. Sales prices outstripping values. Housing affordability. Aging housing stock and the costs of maintenance and upgrading. Inability to move from renter to homeowner – missing middle of affordability.
- Temporary housing challenges associated with local hotel stays and long-term stays – problematic in getting people placed in new housing. Deposit requirements and rents are increasing and supply is in very short supply.

In the area of housing, what do you consider the greatest challenges to be?

- Threat of evictions looming. Housing Quality Inspections attached to federal funding is impacted by spike in cost of materials making access harder. Substance use disorder and mental health issues are further complicating housing situations. Only housing access may be in the form of substandard and unsafe housing. Could be competing more with investors if prices keep rising.

In any of these, what efforts or initiatives funded by American Rescue Act funds, do you believe could be truly transformational for our community and why?

- Online central portal for landlords to help renters apply for assistance – system is currently based upon the renter taking the initiative.
- Focus on keeping people in their existing housing – much more costly to get them back into housing. Housing vouchers are outnumbering the number of available units. Strong market is causing owners to sell rental properties, which is resulting in temporary loss of housing for renters.

Council Member Robert Jeffrey headed the discussion with the Star City Strong Phase 2 Focus Group – Economic Recovery, and initiated the conversation by asking the group the following questions:

In the area of our local economy, what do you consider to be the greatest weakness in our community as it relates to recovery from COVID-19?

- Availability of labor. Challenges for new start-ups to be able to secure labor so they may avoid opening or establishing new businesses.
- Availability of real estate and infrastructure capacity.
- Lack of black ownership and limited opportunities limit impact on local economy. Not enough support for start-up and small businesses – especially community support.

- Lack of investment around replacement businesses and industries to replace lost businesses – this has left Roanoke (businesses and employees) a bit more susceptible to impacts.

In the area of economic recovery, what do you consider the greatest challenges to be?

- Ability to rebuild conference businesses. Competition among communities for hospitality has increased – more incentives being offered to land conference business.
- How can we return to full business and productivity when not sure what future is – how to offset temporary risks – wage increases for part-time employees for example.
- Need for funding temporarily to support live entertainment. Ability to return local restaurants to market opportunity – maybe expand pay and benefits for workers.
- Cooperation among all regional jurisdictions.

In any of these, what efforts or initiatives funded by American Rescue Act funds, do you believe could be truly transformational for our community and why?

- Workforce development and training. Build community effort around supporting start-up and small businesses. Investment in training in trades.
- Capitalize on the “renaissance of thinking and innovation” that has taken place during COVID – how to link \$ to the many good ideas that are out there. Reinvigorate Roanoke as an entertainment center and venue – don’t wait for market – drive the market.
- Invest in livability and quality of life amenities to benefit attraction and retention. Expand broadband services – focusing in NW and SE to create additional options and better costs.
- Remote worker opportunities – high quality of life and low cost of living creates great opportunity to live and work.

Vice-Mayor Trish White-Boyd headed the discussion with the Star City Strong Phase 2 Focus Group – Education & Workforce, and initiated the conversation by asking the group the following questions:

In the area of Education and Workforce what do you consider to be the greatest weakness in our community as it relates to recovery from COVID-19?

- Post-graduate youth with limited access to job training and workforce development. Lack of awareness of opportunities for workforce development.

In the area of Education and Workforce, what do you consider the greatest challenges to be?

- Cost of downtown parking for employees. Transportation and childcare. Awareness of opportunities.
- Need to do better at marketing and raising awareness of the resources that are available. Lack of soft skills in many applicants and candidates.
- Need skilled and technical workers but also need general labor.

In any of these, what efforts or initiatives funded by American Rescue Act funds, do you believe could be truly transformational for our community and why?

- Raise awareness of career pathways and training opportunities at early age – offer wrap-around support to enable folks to take advantage of training opportunities.
- Seek out public-private partnerships linking schools to training providers aligned with career pathways.
- Make connections between young adults and companies that are willing and able to offer training – for example, apprenticeship programs.
- Job fairs for seniors. One-stop shop for job seekers to access information about job opportunities.

Council Member Vivian Sanchez-Jones was not present, hence the City Manager gave a brief overview of the discussion with the Star City Strong Phase 2 Focus Group – Community Development and said the following questions were asked:

In the area of community development (parks, recreation, neighborhood development, etc.), what do you consider to be the greatest weakness in our community as it relates to recovery from COVID-19?

- Small business impacts from COVID – especially restaurants, leaving them vulnerable as the community goes through recovery.
- Poor physical design of current neighborhood centers – minimizes private investment in these areas.

In the areas of parks, recreation, neighborhood development, what do you consider the greatest challenges?

- As activities return to normal still taking time to regain confidence that it is safe to participate – this can lead to smaller crowds and therefore less benefit to vendors. Increased usage of parks and recreation is taking a toll on maintenance.
- Need to invest in new outdoors amenities to reinforce regional brand.
- High-use areas (such as Mill Mountain) need particular attention – as part of reinforcing the regional brand.
- How to invest in long-term solutions not just short-term returns. How can we be innovative in partnerships to leverage funds?

In any of these, what efforts or initiatives funded by American Rescue Act funds, do you believe could be truly transformational for our community and why?

- Focus on helping drive traffic/customers to the neighborhood centers. Place-making and physical improvements in neighborhood center to support redevelopment and economic activity.
- Youth recreation sports – especially in NW and SE areas of the City. Would like to see investments in target areas enhanced.
- Continued expansion of greenways – to link neighborhoods. Parks and recreation facilities that was culturally appropriate.
- Expanded role of DRI in downtown to help provide positive reinforcement in downtown.

Council Member Bill Bestpitch headed the discussion with the Star City Strong Phase 2 Focus Group – Board & Commission Leadership, and initiated the conversation by asking the group the following questions:

What do you see as the greatest challenge confronting the City in its recovery from the impacts of COVID-19?

- Access to broadband.
- Availability and affordability of housing.
- Growing risk of homelessness due to eviction.
- Equity and disparities.
- Access to living wage jobs.
- Access to transit options.
- Health inequities.
- Lack of mental health services and general social services.
- Job skills and competencies.

What do you think the primary objectives or goals should be in the use of the American Rescue Plan Act funds?

- Support individuals and families.
- Seek the greatest return on one-time investments for individuals and the entire City.
- Long-term resiliency.
- Sustainable investments – don't build what we can't maintain. Increase capacity of existing programs and offerings.
- Address any immediate needs that exist – mental health, substance use, violence, etc.
- Inclusive and equitable – address disparities and inequities.

How do you believe we could invest the funds so as to result in transformational change in the community?

- Leverage ARPA funds with existing CIP projects – for example use ARPA for HVAC portion of a building project – freeing funds up to do more capital.
- Clearinghouse of resources, so all know what is available. Funds for 211 to maintain data base – also need more employees – people need to know more about what 211 offers.
- Neighborhood centers – focus community services here as well. Anything that can break the cycle of poverty.

City Manager Bob Cowell gave an overview of the Star City Strong effort, Phase 2, the role of the focus group and how the remainder of Phase 2 would occur and initiated the conversation by asking the question:

What do you think the primary objectives or goals should be in the use of the American Rescue Plan Act funds:

- Infrastructure.
- Economic Development Challenges.
- Job Opportunities.
- Build in resiliency against similar future conditions. Help bolster small businesses. Retain high-growth opportunities/businesses to help diversity workforce and economic opportunities.
- Support families.

If you were provided \$1 million for a single initiative or project to help in the COVID-19 recovery, what would that initiative or project be? \$10 million?

- Direct economic relief to small businesses in the community – grants – focused especially on downtown and hospitality.
- Address homelessness and transient members of the community – especially in downtown. Mental health services.
- Help evolve law enforcement response to mental health needs. Expand broadband to rec centers and fire stations.
- Use ARPA to fund capital to avoid issuance of debt. Address our long-standing needs we have been unable to address in the past (pools, rec centers, etc.) Transit improvements – electric buses, shelters, expand the time notification system, etc.

Mayor Lea thanked everyone for the information and advised that the remarks be received and filed.

RENAMING LEE PLAZA: Council Member Cobb offered the following resolution renaming Lee Plaza:

(#42121-071921) A RESOLUTION changing the name of Lee Plaza to rename that portion adjacent to 3rd Street S. W., to Henrietta Lacks Plaza and that portion adjacent to 2nd Street S. W., to Freedom Plaza as shown on the attached aerial map.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 81, page 783.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42121-071921. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

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

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Member Sanchez-Jones was absent.)

HEARING OF CITIZENS UPON PUBLIC MATTERS:

The Mayor advised that City Council sets this time as a priority for citizens to be heard. If deemed appropriate, matters will be referred to the City Manager for response, recommendation or report to the Council.

MISCELLANEOUS: Chris Craft, 1501 Eastgate Avenue, N. E., appeared before the Council with regard to the needs and concerns of the Wildwood Neighborhood.

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Lea declared the regular meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

A P P R O V E D

ATTEST:

Cecelia F. McCoy

Cecelia F. McCoy, CMC
City Clerk

Sherman P. Lea Sr.

Sherman P. Lea, Sr.
Mayor
