



City of Roanoke, Virginia

CITY COUNCIL

March 17, 2025

2:00 PM

City Council Chamber
215 Church Avenue, SW

AGENDA

The City of Roanoke is a safe, caring and economically vibrant community in which to live, learn, work, play and prosper. A vibrant urban center with strong neighborhoods set amongst the spectacular beauty of Virginia's Blue Ridge.

NOTICE:

City Council meetings will be televised live and replayed on RVTV Channel 3 on Thursdays at 7:00 pm, and Saturdays from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm; and video streamed through Facebook Live at facebook.com/RoanokeVa. City Council meetings are offered with closed captioning for the deaf or hard of hearing.

1. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL. All Present.

The Invocation was delivered by The Reverend Joanna Paysour, Pastor, Greene Memorial United Methodist Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Mayor Joseph L. Cobb.

Welcome

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Cobb advised that, going forward, the 2:00 pm meeting would begin with the Council Members providing "shout-outs" or announcing community events recently attended. The Council Members made the following announcements:

Mayor Cobb announced that Executive Director of the Mill Mountain Zoo, Niki Voudren, updated the Mill Mountain Advisory Board expressing gratitude to the community on funds raised for cleanup of the zoo following the recent storm and the volunteers who cleaned up the area. He also congratulated the Roanoke Refugee Partnership, formed eight years ago, who hosted their annual celebration on March 16 and spoke highly of the work they do with refugees in the community.

Council Member Powers commended Mayor Cobb on the success of the Mayor's Summit held on March 10, at the Dumas Center. She advised that

over 100 people were in attendance and were very complimentary of the program and business community in attendance.

Council Member Volosin "shouted out" Zariah Bell and Lily Quintana, students who attended and participated in the National League of Cities Conference and thanked former Council Member Anita Price for attending and chaperoning the students.

Council Member Nash acknowledged the William Fleming Girls Basketball Team for making it to Richmond for the State Championship game. They came out a little short in the end, but getting to the finals shows dedication and hard work and should be commended.

Vice-Mayor McGuire thanked everyone in the downtown business area and anyone who assisted in making the Saint Patrick's Day Parade a success.

Council Member Sanchez-Jones thanked the Downtown Ambassador Program and said they were doing a great job!

Council Member Hagen "shouted out" the Roanoke Plawkers who host neighborhood clean-up efforts and noted that he has attended a few events and encouraged everyone to help out in the City.

2. PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: None.

3. HEARING OF CITIZENS UPON PUBLIC MATTERS:

The City Council sets this time as a priority for citizens to be heard. All matters will be referred to the City Manager for response, recommendation or report to the Council, as he may deem appropriate.

Brian McConnell appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to leadership in the midst of sociopolitical disarray.

David Gardner appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to heavier traffic in neighborhoods related to the new traffic redirection at Gus Nicks Boulevard.

4. CONSENT AGENDA: APPROVED (7-0)

All matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine by Members of the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of the items. If discussion is desired, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

C-1. Minutes of the regular meeting of City Council held on Tuesday, February 18, 2025.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Dispensed with the reading of the minutes and approved as recorded.

C-2. A communication from Mayor Joseph L. Cobb requesting that Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss the two upcoming vacancies on the Roanoke City School Board expiring June 30, 2025, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Concurred in the request.

- C-3.** A communication from the City Attorney requesting that City Council convene in a Closed Meeting to consult with legal counsel regarding a certain legal matter requiring the provision of legal advice by the City Attorney, concerning a prospective business or industry or the expansion of an existing business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business' or industry's interest in locating or expanding its facilities in the community, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(5), Code of Virginia, (1950), as amended.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Concurred in the request.

- C-4.** A communication from the City Attorney requesting that City Council convene in a Closed Meeting to consult with legal counsel regarding 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.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Concurred in the request.

- C-5.** A communication from Mayor Joseph L. Cobb recommending revised committee assignments for the Members of City Council.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Received and filed.

- C-6.** Reports of qualification of The Honorable Antonio Hash as a member of the Court Community Corrections Program Regional Community Criminal Justice Board to replace Captain Deputy Sheriff Deatria Muse for a three-year term of office commencing July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2028; and Adam Puckett as a member of the Court Community Corrections Program Regional Community Criminal Justice Board for a three-year term of office commencing July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2028.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Received and filed.

REGULAR AGENDA:

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

- 1.** Annual update on activities of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission. Jeremy Holmes, Executive Director, Spokesperson. (Sponsored by the City Manager)
Received and filed.
- 2.** Presentation of Hospitality House of the Blue Ridge to update the Council on its initiatives and activities. Emily Reburn, Executive Director, Spokesperson. (Sponsored by Mayor Cobb)
Received and filed.

7. REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS AND THE CITY MANAGER:

- 1.** City Manager:
Briefings: None.
Items Recommended for Action:

- a. Acceptance and Appropriation of the 2024 BJA FY 24 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program - Local Solicitation.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43159-031725. (7-0)
- b. Acceptance and appropriation of the FY2024 Lead-Based Paint Reduction Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
Adopted Ordinance No. 43160-031725. (7-0)
- c. Acceptance and Appropriation of the donation from Branch Management Corporation for the Beautify Roanoke Interchanges Through Enhancement (BRITE) Sponsorship funding.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43161-031725. (7-0)
- d. Execution of amendments to the contract with Mattern & Craig for Engineering Design Services for Greenway Connection - Riverland Road.
Adopted Resolution No. 43162-031725. (7-0)

Comments of the City Manager.

The City Manager shared the following comments:

Over the past several years, staff have worked diligently to preserve/save /treat the beautiful Tulip Magnolia trees that line the Fountain Walk in Elmwood Park near the Franklin Road entrance. These trees have continued to decline due to extreme insect damage and a harsh growing environment. The multi-stemmed architecture of these trees has continued to be an issue during events, which has led to severe pruning and poor growth habits. As a result, these trees are going to be removed in phases over the coming year. The first phase of removal will include approximately 25% of the trees along the walkway being removed. Parks staff has begun working on this effort.

The contractor working on the Mill Mountain trails development project, in partnership with the Parks Foundation, will begin mobilizing later this week in preparation for construction starting this week. Initial work will focus on the Sidewinder and Woodthrush trails. As of this week, the Riverland Road trailhead lot is closed for construction storage and access, but minimal disruption to trail users is expected. A letter from the department was sent to residents of Walnut Avenue SE and Riverland Road SE to inform them of the project and its construction timeline.

On Friday, March 28, 2025, at 10:00 AM at the Academy Gymnasium at 5401-B Barns Avenue NW, the Roanoke Police Academy and the Roanoke County Criminal Justice Academy will hold the 89th graduation ceremony for the Law Enforcement Class 73.

Public Matters Follow-up.

Katie Hedrick, Inclusive Services Manager, reported on the following matters from the February 18 and March 3 City Council Meetings:

NLC Funding

Students from Roanoke City Schools spoke about their trip to the NLC City Summit 2024 during the February 18 meeting. As the City contributed funds for the trip, Mrs. Powers inquired about the cost of future NLC conferences.

Report Back:

The 2024 City Summit, held in Tampa, Florida, cost a total of \$14,000, with the City paying \$10,000. Eight students and two chaperones attended. The 2025 City Summit will take place in Salt Lake City, Utah. If the previous model is used, the trip will cost around \$25,000 for eight students and two chaperones. Airfare and baggage fees, per diem food costs, and estimated hotel expenses are all higher for this location. If the city again covers around 70 percent of the cost, it would be around \$17,000.

Welcoming City

Three representatives of RIMA (The Refugee and Immigrant Medical Association) spoke in support of Roanoke's immigrant and refugee residents and offered a few ideas on policies and programs that would help protect them.

Report Back:

The Inclusive Services Manager met with the three students on February 26 to get more information about the programs mentioned. Municipal IDs have been used in Charlottesville, Virginia, and Enhanced Library Cards have been very successful in Austin, Texas. The group is researching the Faith Action ID program, which has issued over 30,000 ID cards in recent years, not only to refugees and immigrants but also to unhoused and elderly individuals and those recently returning from incarceration. A follow-up meeting will take place later this month.

2. City Attorney:

- a. Amendment of Ordinance Nos. 43101-111824 and 43114-121624 to allow additional time for nonprofit organizations to file ordinances granting tax exemption with the City Clerk.
Adopted Ordinance Nos. 43163-031725 and 43164-031725. (7-0)
- b. A Resolution appointing four members of the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates in a manner consistent with City Code.
Adopted Resolution No. 43165-031725. (7-0)

3. Director of Real Estate Valuation:

- a. Real Estate Briefing - 10 minutes
Received and filed.

8. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: None.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

10. INTRODUCTION AND CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS: None.

11. MOTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

1. Inquiries and/or comments by the Mayor and Members of City Council.

Mayor Cobb provided an update of the GRTC meeting, stating that three electric buses have arrived; EV bus training has taken place with Fire-EMS; on March 25 at 10:30 am there will be an unveiling at the Third Street Station; Valley Metro will launch a new website soon and applications from TPAC are available for review.

2. Vacancies on certain authorities, boards, commissions and committees appointed by Council. **None.**

12. RECESSED - 3:32 PM

The City Council Meeting will stand in recess; and thereafter reconvene at 7:00 pm, in the City Council Chamber, Room 450, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building.



City of Roanoke, Virginia
CITY COUNCIL

7:00 pm
City Council Chamber
215 Church Avenue, SW

13. CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL. All Present.

The Invocation was delivered by The Reverend Jerome Bonds, Pastor-Elect, Rising Mount Zion Baptist Church.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Mayor Joseph L. Cobb.

Welcome.

Certification of Closed Meeting. (7-0)

14. PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: None.

15. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Request of Shiffer Properties, LLC, to repeal and replace conditions proffered as part of a previous rezoning on a portion of property located at 1925 Peters Creek Road NW, bearing Official Tax Map No. 6380101. Jack Ellinwood, Agent, Spokesperson.

Adopted Ordinance No. 43166-031725. (7-0)

2. Public hearing on the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Consolidated Plan 2025-2029 and the 2025 Annual Action Plan.
No action taken.

16. HEARING OF CITIZENS UPON PUBLIC MATTERS:

The 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.

Sara Totri, appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to chronic homelessness and unsheltered population and community impacts.

Mason Totri, appeared before the Council and requested deflouridation of municipal water.

Sheree Scarborough appeared before the Council and requested that City Council save the caretaker's house at Washington Park.

Lynette Lewis appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to the preservation of the 188 year-old cottage in Washington Park.

Polly Branch, appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to the City's participation in grants for the Evan's house rehabilitation.

Gregory Hunt appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to a proposal for design of the park and usage of the caretaker's cottage.

Rebekah Murphy appeared before the Council advocating for Roanoke City Public Schools to receive the full 40 percent of funding from the City.

Rosemary St. Jacques appeared before the Council and expressed love and history for the caretaker's cottage in Washington Park.

Barbara Duerk appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to the history of the caretaker's cottage in Washington Park.

William Sweet appeared before the Council in support of the renovation of the caretaker's cottage in Washington Park.

Sarah Lasswell appeared before the Council in support of full funding for Roanoke City Public Schools.

Angela Bird appeared before the Council in support of full funding for Roanoke City Public Schools.

Thomas Lewis appeared before the Council in support of the caretaker's cottage in Washington Park.

Emily Casey appeared before the Council and spoke in support of the budget for Roanoke City Public Schools.

Sylvia King appeared before the Council in support of the caretaker's cottage in Washington Park.

Jessie Coffman appeared before the Council in support of the budget for Roanoke City Public Schools.

Chris Craft appeared before the Council and expressed concern about the new traffic design on Gus Nicks Boulevard.

Janice Buckner appeared before the Council in support of the caretaker's cottage in Washington Park.

Matthew Johnson appeared before the Council and spoke as a concerned citizen about homelessness.

Jessica Blandy appeared before the Council in support of fully funding Roanoke City Public Schools.

Cathy Carter appeared before the Council in support of the caretaker's cottage in Washington Park.

Steven Stewart appeared before the Council with regard to the history of the caretaker's cottage as he was reared in the home.

Thanh LeNguyen-Bean appeared before the Council advocating for funding for Roanoke City Public Schools.

Mayor Cobb inquired as to how to donate to the Washington Park Caretaker's Cottage renovation project; wherein, Susan Evans Brown advised that donations can be made by contacting the Roanoke Valley Preservation Foundation.

ADJOURNED - 8:30 PM.