



City of Roanoke, Virginia

CITY COUNCIL

April 21, 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. 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 Donald Shovel, Sr., Pastor, Jerusalem Baptist Church.

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

Welcome

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

2. PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

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:

Council Member Hagen "shouted-out" the staff that held the community budget meetings.

Council Member Sanchez-Jones "shouted-out" the staff that held the community budget meetings.

Vice-Mayor McGuire thanked the departments for the waterways report that was recently mailed out.

Council Member Nash "shouted-out" the staff that held the community budget meetings.

Council Member Volosin "shouted-out" the Earth Day Festival in the Grandin Road area over the past weekend.

Council Member Powers "shouted-out" the staff that held the community budget meetings and the Department of Parks and Recreation for their work to beautify the City parks.

Mayor Cobb thanked Roanoke City Public Schools for the job fair over the past weekend and noted that he attended the Filipino community celebrations.

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.

David Garland appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to concerns about the budget and proposed tax increases.

Michelle Brooks appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to the City budget and City schools and asked the Council to fulfill their commitment to the school system.

Olivia Ryan appeared before the Council and advocated support for school funding.

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 meetings of the City Council held on Monday, March 17, 2025, and Monday, March 24, 2025.

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

- C-2.** 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 outside legal counsel, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(7), 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 on a personnel matter requiring the discussion and consideration of current employees salary and evaluation of the performance of the specific employees, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1), 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 for the purpose of discussing possible disposal of publicly owned property, 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.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Concurred in the request.**

- C-5.** FY2025 City Manager Transfer Report for the quarter ended March 31, 2025.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Received and filed.**

- C-6.** Reports of qualification of Jessica Mahuron as a member of the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates for a three-year term of office commencing October 1, 2024, and ending September 30, 2027; and Amazetta Anderson as a member of the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates for a three-year term of office commencing October 1, 2022 and ending September 30, 2025.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: **Received and filed.**

REGULAR AGENDA:

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.

6. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Presentation regarding the activities and initiatives of CareForward. Natalie Handy, Executive Director, Spokesperson. (Sponsored by Mayor Cobb and Council Member Hagen)
Received and filed.
2. Presentation regarding the activities and initiatives of Renovation Alliance. Kendall Cloeter, Executive Director, Spokesperson. (Sponsored by Mayor Cobb and Council Member Volosin)
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 Project Outside Grant for Mill Mountain Trail Maps.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43174-042125. (7-0)
- b. FY 2024 HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Grant Award - Coordinated Assessment System (CAS).
Adopted Ordinance No. 43175-042125. (7-0)
- c. FY 2024 HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) Grant Award – Homeless Assistance Team (HAT).
Adopted Ordinance No. 43176-042125. (7-0)

- d. Acceptance and Appropriation of General Funds for the Greater Roanoke and New River Valley Small Business Development Center.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43177-042125. (7-0)
- e. Acceptance and Appropriation of Operation Funds for the Greater Roanoke and New River Valley Small Business Development Center.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43178-042125. (7-0)
- f. Acceptance and Appropriation of Program Funds for the Greater Roanoke and New River Valley Small Business Development Center.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43179-042125. (7-0)

COMMENTS OF THE CITY MANAGER.

The City Manager offered the following comments:

The Wasena Bridge Replacement Project has reached a key milestone with the removal of the final sections of the existing structure spanning the Roanoke River and Norfolk Southern railway. This critical phase clears the way for the construction of major substructure elements, including Pier 4 on the Wasena side, Pier 5 on the Old Southwest side, and the Old Southwest bridge abutment. Removal of the old bridge not only marks visible progress but also enables full construction access for the new load-bearing elements. Earlier this spring, contractor Archer Western completed the Wasena bridge abutment and two of five Y-shaped piers, anchored by deep foundations to ensure long-term stability. With demolition nearly complete, the next major phase will involve installing the first tub girders—structural components that will support the new deck and begin to define the future bridge profile visible to the public.

PlayPRIDE has the highest number of enrollments in program history with over 60 participants. PLAY Pride leagues are designed to offer a safe, fun community for LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies. The focus of PLAY Pride is not competition, but community building and the love of the game.

In response to community concerns regarding speeding near Sunrise and Roundhill Avenues on Oakland Boulevard NW, the Transportation Division has implemented a traffic-calming demonstration project. This initiative incorporates horizontal deflection, new crosswalks, and in-street “Stop for Pedestrians” signs to enhance safety and reduce vehicle speeds. The effectiveness of these improvements will be evaluated by comparing pre- and post-installation data to assess their impact.

The Youth Services Citizen Board will be holding its annual Youth Summit. This year, they are partnering with Plowshare Peace Center and Points of Diversity. The *2025 Teen PJ Jam* offers an exciting opportunity for teenagers passionate about promoting peace and justice both locally and globally to connect and collaborate. The event will feature interactive workshops, dinner, and performances by talented teen artists. Scheduled for Saturday, May 3, 2025, from 4:00 PM to 10:00 PM at William Fleming High School.

PUBLIC MATTERS FOLLOW-UP

Katie Hedrick, Inclusive Services Manager, reported on the following matters from the March 17 and April 7 City Council Meetings:

Riverland Road Sidewalks

Vice-Mayor McGuire noted an increase in pedestrian traffic on the side of the road and even in the street along Riverland Road in the area of Primrose Street and the Star Trail parking lot. The request was made to add this to the list of upcoming infrastructure projects.

Report Back:

A design from Public Works is attached that shows the plan to connect the Star Trail on Riverland Road to the Garden City Greenway with a concrete sidewalk. Currently, Riverland Road is fully connected via the greenway to Dollar General, Food Lion, and Garden City Boulevard SE as far as Craig Robertson Road SE. However, to reach Dollar General, pedestrians must backtrack using existing sidewalks from the Greenway exit at Bennington Avenue. As a result, many choose to walk along Riverland Road instead. To address this, the Engineering Division has developed a preliminary engineering report for a sidewalk connection between the Greenway exit at 9th Street and the Star Trail parking lot on the south side of Riverland Road. Due to high construction costs associated with steep slopes and multiple utility conflicts, this project will require outside funding, likely through FY27 VDOT Revenue Sharing. During the last regular session, Council approved a modification to the engineering contract for design of the sidewalk connecting the Star Trail Parking lot to the sidewalk that currently terminates at the Dollar General parcel line. This project is 100% funded by the federal funds from the Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) and Highway Infrastructure Plan (HIP). Together these two projects will create a more direct route for pedestrians to reach destinations on the south side of Riverland Road between the Greenway exit at 9th Street and Garden City Boulevard. The Department of Public Works is at 90% design drawings for this final connect and plans to have construction awarded this summer.

Evans House

Several residents and representatives of Friends of Washington Park spoke in favor of preserving the historic Caretaker's Cottage.

Report Back:

A letter of support has been written on behalf of the Evans House and a grant application is underway.

EV Charging Stations

Vice-Mayor McGuire asked if there is a locally housed map showing the locations of electric vehicle charging stations.

Report Back:

Mr. Holmes noted that the Virginia Department of Transportation maintains a map of EV charging stations; however, the frequency with which this resource is updated is uncertain. Additionally, City staff are actively developing a

Community Resources Map that will integrate publicly available data to provide residents and internal stakeholders with access to a broad range of information. The map will feature interactive tools allowing users to filter by topic, census tract, and other demographic or geographic indicators. As part of this effort, the project team is currently exploring the feasibility of including EV charging stations as a selectable data layer within the platform.

Budget Concerns

The primary budget concerns voiced by residents at the last two Council meetings were related to the school funding formula and the proposed meals tax increase.

Report Back:

There are public hearings scheduled for tonight's 7 pm Council meeting regarding the proposed budget generally as well as the proposed Real Estate Tax increase and proposed Prepared Food and Beverage Tax increase. Residents wishing to speak may still sign up through the City Clerk's Office or in person before tonight's meeting begins.

Concerns about Homelessness

Two residents raised concerns about the City's unhoused residents, specifically an increase in the population, and cited challenges with mental health and substance-use disorders.

Report Back:

While there are many departments and organizations providing services to those experiencing homelessness, the Police Department recently launched the STAR Initiative (Supporting Transition Assistance and Recovery). Led by Officers Bri Dickerson and Jacob Underwood, the outreach team includes representatives from Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare, BrightView, Bradley Free Clinic's HOPE Initiative, The Least of These Ministry, and the Homeless Assistance Team. Every Tuesday and Thursday, the team goes out to encampments to meet with residents and connect them to services.

2. CITY ATTORNEY: None.
3. DIRECTOR OF REAL ESTATE VALUATION: None.

8. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

1. Comments on certain Authorities, Boards, Committees and Commissions in which City Council serve as liaisons or appointees. **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. **None.**
2. Vacancies on certain authorities, boards, commissions and committees appointed by Council. **None.**

12. OTHER BUSINESS:

1. Petition for Appeal filed by Chris K. Kowalczyk appealing a decision of the Architectural Review Board denying a request for approval to remove and replace a 100-year-old slate roof with architectural shingles and remove a non-functioning brick chimney. Chris K. Kowalczyk, Representative, Spokesperson; and a report of the Architectural Review Board recommending that City Council affirm its decision to deny the request, which is not consistent with H-2 Guidelines. Drew Kepley, Chair, Spokesperson.
City Council affirmed the decision of the Architectural Review Board that no Certificate of Appropriateness be issued. (4-3, Vice-Mayor McGuire, and Council Members Nash and Hagen voted no)

RECESSED - 4:01 PM



City of Roanoke, Virginia **CITY COUNCIL**

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

13. **CALL TO ORDER - ROLL CALL. Vice-Mayor McGuire was absent.**

The Invocation was delivered by The Reverend Sam Roman, Pastor, Faith and Hope Church of God.

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. (6-0)

14. **PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

Recognition of the William Fleming High School Girls Basketball Team.

Mayor Cobb recognized Coach Richard Wilson and the William Fleming High Schools Girls Basketball Team.

Recognition of the William Fleming High School Band.

Mayor Cobb recognized William Satterwhite, Band Director, and the William Fleming High School Band.

15. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

1. Request of Boundless Capital, LLC, to rezone a property located at 2202 Roanoke Avenue SW; Official Tax Map No. 1421308; from IN, Institutional District, to MX, Mixed Use District, with a condition. Ben Crew, Agent, Spokesperson.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43180-042125. (6-0)
2. Receive the views of citizens regarding the appointment of two Roanoke City School Board Trustees for three-year terms of office, each, commencing on July 1, 2025. The candidates are Mary "Franny" Apel, Adam C. Markwood and Joyce

W. Watkins.

No action taken.

3. Receive the views of citizens with regard to the Recommended Fiscal Year 2025 - 2026 City of Roanoke Budget.

No action taken.

4. Receive the views of citizens with regard to the Proposed Real Estate Tax Increase.

No action taken.

5. Receive the views of citizens with regard to the Proposed Prepared Food and Beverage Tax Increase.

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 City Council.

Cathy Carter appeared before the Council representing Friends of Washington Park and thanked the City Manager and staff for support.

Chris Sanchez appeared before the Council and expressed support for restoring the Washington Park Caretaker's Cottage.

Brenda Randolph appeared before the Council and expressed concern with regard to better housing management at Hurt Park housing complex.

Brittney Flowers appeared before the Council and provided historical context and the importance of community-led initiatives.

Alton Akin appeared before the Council and expressed concern about the end of cities and made reference to the Bible.

ADJOURNED - 10:05 PM