



City of Roanoke, Virginia

CITY COUNCIL

May 18, 2026

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 YouTube Live at youtube.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 Susan Bentley, Chaplain, Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital.

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 Gainsbroro Block Party and expressed that he was unable to attend the Local Colors, but heard it was a great event. He noted that he and the Mayor attended the ribbon-cutting for Elderberry's and a football game of the Roanoke Rampage, raising funding in honor of Autumn Bushman.

Council Member Sanchez-Jones "shouted out" the Local Colors and Gainsboro Block Party events, noting it was a beautiful day and both events were well attended.

Vice-Mayor McGuire “shouted out” Local Colors and the Gainsboro Block Party, and he attended the Blue Ridge Land Conservancy celebration of 30 years and pointed out that former Council Member and Citizen of the Year, M. Rupert Cutler, received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Council Member Nash "shouted out" Local Colors and the Gainsboro Block Party, noting that most Council Members carpooled to attend the same events, and he attended the Southwest Chapter of CLUW (the Coalition of Labor Union Women) who hosted a banquet to honor laborers.

Council Member Volosin “shouted out” Local Colors, advised that it was the 35th year of the festival and thanked everyone who participated in making it a great event.

Council Member Powers "shouted out" the Women's Luncheon celebrating Art and Education at the Taubman Museum of Art and advised that it was an annual event and well attended by the City Manager and Mayor Cobb. She also attended a ribbon-cutting for Power Play, a mobile event company now serving Roanoke, Lynchburg and Charlottesville.

Mayor Cobb “shouted out” the Beane Block Party held at the Melrose Branch Library on Friday, May 15, in celebration of the retirement of Antinette Beane, Librarian.

Proclamation declaring the week of May 17–23, 2026 as National Public Works Week.

Mayor Cobb read and presented the proclamation to Ross Campbell, Director, Department of Public Works and staff in attendance.

Recognition of Melrose Plaza.

The City Manager recognized Melrose Plaza as a recipient of the Virginia Economic Developer's Association, Community Economic Development Award, given at the VEDA Spring Conference held in Williamsburg, Virginia on March 25 - 27, 2026. She presented the Award to Donna Davis, Director of Community Engagement for Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, Inc.

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 she may deem appropriate.

Freeda Cathcart, appeared before the Council and addressed the importance of protecting the City's flood resilience and mitigating the heat dome effect.

Dan Evans, appeared before the Council and spoke with regard to the Evans Spring property and conservation, and encouraged the Council to consider Option 3 presented by the City Planning Commission.

Kathryn Hatan, appeared before the Council and urged the Council to consider stricter zoning laws on possible data centers and wetlands.

4. CONSENT AGENDA: APPROVED (7-0), AS AMENDED

- C-1.** Minutes of the regular meeting held on Monday, May 4, 2026; recessed until Monday, May 11, 2026, for adoption of the FY 2026-2027 Recommended Budget.

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

- C-2.** A communication from Mayor Joseph L. Cobb requesting that City Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss the Council's Code of Conduct and Ethics, as well as each Council Member's obligations thereunder as permitted, 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 Northwest area of the City of Roanoke, 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 Clerk advising of the resignation of Meg Smith as a member of the Board of Zoning Appeals, effective immediately.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Accepted the resignation and received and filed the communication.

- C-5.** A communication from the City Clerk advising of the resignation of Darnell Wood as a member of the Youth Athletics Review Board, effective immediately.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Accepted the resignation and received and filed the communication.

- C-6.** A communication from the City Clerk advising of the resignation of Jason Morgan as a member of the Mill Mountain Advisory Board, effective immediately.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Accepted the resignation and received and filed the communication.

- C-7.** Reports of qualification of the following individuals:

Chad Scott as a member of the Virginia Western Community College Local Advisory Board for a four-year term of office, commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2030;

John Wiercioch as a member of the Roanoke Arts Commission to replace Charlene Graves for a term of office ending June 30, 2028;

Dawn Erdman as a member of the Roanoke Arts Commission to replace William Penn for a three-year term of office commencing July 1, 2026, and

ending June 30, 2029;

Gwendolyn Coleman as a member of the Roanoke Valley Juvenile Detention Center Commission for a three-year term of office commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2029;

Charles Whitney Brown as a member of the Board of Trustees, City of Roanoke Pension Plan for a four-year term of office, commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2030;

Laura Carini as a member of the City of Roanoke Finance Board for a two-year term of office, commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028;

Julie Payne as a member of the Roanoke Valley Juvenile Detention Center Commission for a three-year term of office commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2029; and

Pamela Smith as a member of the Gun Violence Prevention Commission to replace Elliott Major for a three-year term of office commencing April 1, 2026, and ending March 31, 2029.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Received and filed.

8. **A communication from the City Attorney requesting that City Council convene in a Closed Meeting to discuss an amendment of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, negotiating new consideration and promises, and discussion of the term or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(29), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.**
9. **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 contract obligations involving a City-owned facility in the Central part of the City of Roanoke, pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(8), Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.**

REGULAR AGENDA:

5. **PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.**

6. **PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

1. Brief overview of the activities of VIA Centers for Neurodevelopment and impact in the City of Roanoke. Zenith Barrett, Regional Advancement Officer, VIA Centers for Neurodevelopment. (Sponsored by Mayor Cobb)
Received and filed.

7. **REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS AND THE CITY MANAGER:**

1. City Manager:
BRIEFINGS:

Presentation of Safety Action Plan (SAP) and Speed Management Action Plan (SMAP) - 15 minutes.

ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR ACTION:

- a. Acceptance and Appropriation of the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program Grant for Site Development of Tract 8.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43392-051826. (6-1, Vice-Mayor McGuire voted no)
- b. Recommendations of the Human Services Advisory Board for Funding of Qualified Agencies for Fiscal Year 2027.
Withdrawn.
- c. Acceptance of a Donation of Privately Owned Parcels, Official Tax Map Nos. 3140815 and 3140819, located at 0 Hollins Road, N.E.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43393-051826. (7-0)
- d. Appropriation of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Capital Improvement Plan debt-funded projects.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43394-051826. (7-0)

COMMENTS OF THE CITY MANAGER.

The City Manager offered the following comments:

Construction is underway on the Riverland Road/Star Trail Connection Project, with crews currently installing a major drainage system along Riverland Road. Upcoming phases include improvements to the Star Trail parking area, water quality upgrades, and a new pedestrian link connecting the Garden City Greenway to Star Trail. Work at the Garden City Boulevard and Riverland Road intersection is expected to begin in June after the school year ends, with overall project completion anticipated in Fall 2026.

The Westside Boulevard/Salem Turnpike Pedestrian Improvements Project has completed its underground utility work and is now moving into curb, gutter, sidewalk, and pavement restoration phases. Construction remains on schedule for completion by mid-June, with funding provided through a VDOT Transportation Alternatives Grant and matching city funds.

PUBLIC MATTERS FOLLOW-UP

Jenel Few, Public Information Officer, reported on the following matters from the April 20, 2026, City Council Meeting:

School Funding

At the April 20 meeting, 6 residents shared concerns and suggestions regarding the proposed budget and its impact on Roanoke City Public Schools. All speakers received an acknowledgment that their comments were noted.

Raven Technology

During the April 20 meeting, 8 residents expressed concerns about Raven gunshot detection technology. All speakers received an acknowledgment that

their comments were noted.

Transit Advocates

Two members of the Bus Riders of Roanoke Advocacy Group spoke on April 20 in favor of transit funding and sidewalk repairs and expansion. Both speakers received an acknowledgment that their comments were noted.

Vandalism in Old Southwest

A resident of the Old Southwest neighborhood shared concerns at the April 20 meeting about vandalism in the area. The resident received an acknowledgement that his comments were noted, and he was given the contact information for the Southwest Zone Lieutenant with the Police Department.

Economic Development in Northwest Roanoke

During the April 20 meeting, a resident shared concern and ideas regarding economic development opportunities in the Northwest part of the City. Community Engagement reached out to share information from Economic Development about several initiatives in that area – including the Main Street America program along the 11th Street corridor, the creation of the Melrose Business Association, the opening of Melrose Plaza and redevelopment of retail centers along Hershberger Road.

Architectural Review Board Update

Additional details were requested in reference to the Architectural Review Board's (ARB) role in reviewing Certificate of Appropriateness applications. Planning staff are continuing discussions on expanding the ARB's role in the application review process. Coordination with legal counsel indicates that increased ARB involvement is feasible as long as reviews occur during publicly noticed meetings and decisions are made collectively. Staff would continue preparing application materials and agendas, while the ARB would take formal action during these meetings. Approvals would include a note that additional building permits may still be required. Special-called meetings may be needed to support the workflow. Staff are finalizing logistical details and will meet with the ARB soon to outline next steps. In the meantime, planning staff have resolved the recent administrative review backlog. As of April 27, 2026, 22 applications were overdue for review; by May 9, all had been processed, resulting in 12 approvals and 10 re-submittal requests. This clears the backlog and restores normal review operations.

Recycling Delay Graphics

Ms. Powers requested additional communication regarding recycling pick-up delays. In addition to website banner graphics, alerts, press releases, and social media, a graphic informing residents of recycling pickup delays was displayed on RVTV Channel 3 from April 21 to May 2, 2026 when the regular recycling schedule resumed.

There were no speakers during the May 4 "Hearing of Citizens on Public Matters."

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.

Council Member Volosin reported that the Roanoke Valley Regional Commission will approve a balanced budget next month. Mayor Cobb advised that the CEDS Committee went through the process of identifying economic growth opportunities to be sent to the Regional Commission for approval; and reported that, with the rising costs of diesel fuels, GRTC will utilize its electric vehicles more; the Walmart bus stop was temporarily moved near the gas station; and on June 8 a public hearing will be held at the Third Street Station with regard to a proposed fare increase.

9. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.**

10. **INTRODUCTION AND CONSIDERATION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:**

1. Resolution ratifying, approving, and affirming the action taken by the Greater Roanoke Transit Company (GRTC) d/b/a Valley Metro to implement Fare Free Election Day Bus Service for Tuesday, April 21, 2026; Tuesday, August 4, 2026; and Tuesday, November 3, 2026.

Adopted Resolution No. 43395-051826. (7-0)

2. Resolution appointing two Trustees to the Roanoke City School Board for terms of office commencing July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2029.

Adopted Resolution No. 43396-051826. (5-0, Vice-Mayor McGuire and Council Member Sanchez-Jones abstained from the vote)

11. **MOTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:**

1. Inquiries and/or comments by the Mayor and Members of City Council.
Mayor Cobb announced that on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, the Melrose Branch Library will host a Movie Night all ages are invited to attend. Also at 7:00 p.m., on May 20, 2026, there will be the Annual Ride of Silence hosted by PedalSafe and Cardinal Bicycle leaving from the downtown market area. Council Member Hagen reminded citizens to always check backseats for pets and children during the hot weather.

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

12. **RECESSED - 3:50 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 Mayor Joseph L. Cobb.

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. 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.

Jacob Watts, appeared before the Council and advised that Mill Mountain be revitalized and provided suggestions to improve the area, such as placing a Ferris wheel on top of the mountain and reinstating the incline railroad to assist with transportation on the mountain.

15. PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: None.

16. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Request of Douglas Devine to rezone property located at 1007 3 ½ Street SE, bearing Official Tax Map No. 4020920, from I-1, Light Industrial District, to UF, Urban Flex District. Douglas Devine, Applicant, Spokesperson.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43397-051826. (7-0)
2. Request of the City of Roanoke to consider and adopt updates to the Complete Streets Policy and adopt the Safety Action Plan/Speed Management Action Plan as a part of City Plan 2040, the City's comprehensive plan adopted in 2020. Ian Coffey; Spokesperson.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43398-051826. (7-0)
 - a. Adoption of the 2026 Safety Action and Speed Management Action Plans.
Adopted Resolution No. 43399-051826. (7-0)
3. Tax Exemption Request for real property owned by Villa Heights Rec Center, LLC and 1729 Patterson Avenue, LLC (both properties operated under Restoration Housing) located at 2750 Hoover Street and 1729 Patterson Avenue, Roanoke, Virginia.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43400-051826. (6-1, Council Member Powers voted no)
4. Tax Exemption Request for real property owned by Assisi Animal Clinics of Virginia, Inc., located at 725 Franklin Road, SW, Roanoke, Virginia.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43401-051826. (7-0)
5. Request of the City of Roanoke to review and consider adopting amendments to Evans Spring Plan: A Comprehensive Guide for Development adopted as a part of City Plan 2040, the City's comprehensive plan. Katharine Gray; Interim Planning Manager; Spokesperson.
Adopted Ordinance No. 43402-051826, as amended. (7-0)
6. Request of the City of Roanoke to propose amendments to Chapter 36.2, Zoning, of the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended, intended to

facilitate context sensitive housing development; to promote community health and wellness; to encourage purposeful land use to make changes to the use tables for multiple purpose, industrial, and planned unit development districts; and to make changes to clarify and correct elements of the zoning code, such amendments being for the public purposes of promoting public health, public safety, and good zoning practice. Katharine Gray, Interim Planning Manager; Spokesperson.

Matter postponed to a subsequent City Council Meeting.

ADJOURNED - 11:05 pm.