

ROANOKE CITY COUNCIL-REGULAR SESSION

January 3, 2022

2:00 p.m.

The Council of the City of Roanoke met in regular session on Monday, January 3, 2022 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, 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 the following resolution as set forth below, with Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr., presiding.

PRESENT: Council Members Joseph L. Cobb, Robert L. Jeffrey, Jr., Stephanie Moon Reynolds, Patricia White-Boyd, and Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.-5.

ABSENT: Council Members William D. Bestpitch and Vivian Sanchez-Jones-2.

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 The Reverend Jon Landis, Lead Minister, Growing Families Ministry, Roanoke Valley Church.

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

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A MEETING SCHEDULE OF CITY COUNCIL:
The Mayor advised that the first meeting of Council in January is considered to be the Organizational Meeting at which time the Council will adopt a resolution establishing the days, times, and places of regular meetings to be held by Council during the ensuing months.

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd offered the following resolution:

(#42245-010322) A RESOLUTION establishing a meeting schedule for City Council commencing January 1, 2022, and terminating December 31, 2022.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 82, page 242.)

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42245-010322. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

PRESENTATIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: NONE.

HEARING OF CITIZENS UPON PUBLIC MATTERS: NONE.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL: Minutes of the regular meetings of City Council held on Monday, November 15, 2021; recessed until Monday, November 29, 2021, was before the body.

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

Council Member Cobb moved that Council dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as recorded. The motion seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

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

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

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

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

LEASE OF CITY OWNED PROPERTY: A communication from the City Manager requesting that Council schedule a public hearing to be held on Tuesday, January 18, 2022, at 7:00 p.m., or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, or such later date and time as the City Manager may determine, in his discretion, to consider the lease of the Gill Memorial Property to the Valleys Innovation Council, was before the body.

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

Council Member Cobb moved that Council concur in the request of the City Manager as above mentioned. The motion seconded by Council Member White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE: Minutes of the Audit Committee held on Wednesday, September 1, 2021, was before the Council.

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

Council Member Cobb moved that the minutes be received and filed. The motion seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

OATHS OF OFFICE-VISIT VIRGINIA'S BLUE RIDGE-ROANOKE NEIGHBORHOOD ADVOCATES-ROANOKE CIVIC CENTER COMMISSION: Reports of qualification of the following individuals were before the Council:

Sunny Shah as a City representative of the Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge, Board of Directors for a one-year term of office, commencing July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022;

Duriel Wood as a member of the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates to fill the unexpired term of office of Margaret Ashburn ending September 30, 2023; and

Chris Craft as a member of the Roanoke Civic Center Commission to replace Linwood "Woody" Deans for a term of office ending September 30, 2024.

Council Member Cobb moved that the reports of qualification be received and filed. The motion seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Sherman P. Lea, Sr.-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

REGULAR AGENDA

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.

PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS: NONE.

CAPTION CALL: Presentation by Caption Call to introduce the program and share information in connection therewith. Bettina Mason, Anthem Healthkeepers Medicare Southwest Virginia representative; and Lisa Mottesheard, Manager, Caption Call, Spokespersons. (Sponsored by Mayor Lea and Vice-Mayor White-Boyd)

Mayor Lea advised that due to inclement weather, the presentation was rescheduled to a future Council meeting.

REPORTS OF CITY OFFICERS AND COMMENTS OF CITY MANAGER:

CITY MANAGER:

BRIEFINGS:

- Roanoke Prevention Alliance
Youth Risk Behavior Study

The City Manager advised that due to inclement weather, the presentation was cancelled.

General Reassessment Briefing – FY 2022 – 2023

Susan Lower, Director, Real Estate Valuation, provided an overview of the FY 2022 – 2023 Real Estate Assessment Projections and highlighted the following topics:

- FY 2023 Real Estate Assessment Projections
- Assessment History by Fiscal Year
- New Construction History by Fiscal Year
- History of Residential Sales and Foreclosures
- Median Residential Sales Price 2011 to 2021
- In Summary
- Projected Real Estate Fiscal Impact
- Appealing an Assessment
- Tax Relief Programs
- Questions & Comments
- Appendix
- Timeline of Assessment Process
- Tax Relief and Abatement Programs
- History of Sales Ratio
- History of Roanoke's Assessment Changes

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

Ms. Lower advised the assessed value of real estate grew 7.65 percent, and advised that the total value of taxable real estate jumped last year to a degree not seen in 15 years.

Ms. Lower reported the median residential sales price in the City reached \$175,000 in 2021, up from \$165,300 in 2020, and \$150,000 in 2019. She forecasted approximately \$5 million more funds for city services during the fiscal year. She added city staff examined projections neighborhood by neighborhood adding 7.28 percent to the total property value, and new construction added 0.37 percent, for a total increase of 7.65 percent.

The City Manager pointed out when revenues increase, they benefit the services that the City provide and also benefit the City Schools, as well.

She further stated that if the property owner does not agree with the appeal decision, they may appeal to the Board of Equalization; and then file suit in Circuit Court. She also advised veterans, the elderly, and citizens with disabilities could receive tax relief.

Ms. Lower concluded stating that the Office of Real Estate Valuation mailed notices of changes to 90 percent of the city's residents; and advised citizens could appeal their assessment to the Office of Real Estate Valuation by February 1, 2022. She said the new assessment would take effect July 1 and tax bills were due in October.

Following inquiries from Vice-Mayor White-Boyd, Council Member Moon Reynolds and Council Member Cobb, Mayor Lea thanked Ms. Lower for the update and advised that the presentation would be received and filed.

ITEMS RECOMMENDED FOR ACTION:

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDING: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending appropriation of the American Rescue Plan Act funding and Star City Strong: Recovery and Resiliency Advisory Panel recommendations.

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

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42246-010322) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the United States Treasury for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) – Coronavirus Relief Fund to record and track projects recommended by the Star City Strong: Recovery and Resiliency Advisory Panel. It is hereby necessary to itemize the City of Roanoke’s project list and to appropriate and allocate specific funding amounts to each project thereof, providing assistance due to ongoing matters related to the COVID-19 pandemic, amending and reordaining certain sections of the 2020 – 2022 Grant Fund Appropriations, and dispensing with the second reading by title of this ordinance.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 82, page 244.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42246-010322. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

DONATION OF FUNDS FROM STAR CITY SOCCER FOUNDATION: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending acceptance of a donation of funds from the Star City Soccer Foundation for a Futsal Court in Preston Park.

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

Council Member Cobb offered the following resolution:

(#42247-010322) A RESOLUTION accepting and expressing appreciation for the donation of \$10,000 from Star City Soccer Foundation to support the development of a futsal court in Preston Park.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 82, page 245.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42247-010322. The motion seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42248-010322) AN ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the Star City Soccer Foundation to provide for the development of a futsal court in Preston Park, amending and reordaining certain sections of the 2021 – 2022 Capital Projects Fund Appropriations, and dispensing with the second reading by title of this ordinance.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 82, page 246.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42248-010322. The motion seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

ACCEPTANCE OF FY 2022 CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMY SECURITY ACT: The City Manager submitted a written communication recommending Provider Relief funding to cover increased costs associated with Emergency Medical Services.

Council Member Cobb offered the following resolution:

(#44249-010322) A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of the FY22 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act Provider Relief Funds (“PRF”) Phase 4 allocation in the amount of \$195,069 by the City of Roanoke from the Health Resources and Services Administration (“HRSA”), awarded as a revenue supplement for Emergency Medical Services (“EMS”) calls, provided by the City of Roanoke, in connection with the COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic, and authorizing the acceptance, execution, and filing of appropriate documents to obtain such funds.

(For full text of resolution, see Resolution Book No. 82, page 247.)

Council Member Cobb moved the adoption of Resolution No. 42249-010322. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following budget ordinance:

(#42250-010322) A BUDGET ORDINANCE to appropriate funding from the United States Treasury for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) – Provider Relief Fund, 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 Resolution Book No. 82, page 248.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Budget Ordinance No. 42250-010322. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor White-Boyd and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

COMMENTS OF CITY MANAGER:

The City Manager thanked City staff that worked tirelessly to prepare for the snow event and clear the sidewalks at the municipal facilities.

He highlighted the significance of the impact of COVID-19, noting that one in four persons tested positive for COVID-19 and if the numbers continue to rise within the workforce, it would affect the level of service provided by the City to the citizens.

CITY ATTORNEY:

READOPTION AND REENACTMENT OF THE CITY CODE: The City Attorney submitted a written communication recommending readoption and reenactment of the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended.

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

Council Member Moon Reynolds offered the following ordinance:

(#42251-010322) AN ORDINANCE to readopt and reenact the Code of the City of Roanoke (1979), as amended; and dispensing with the second reading of this ordinance by title.

(For full text of ordinance, see Ordinance Book No. 82, page 249.)

Council Member Moon Reynolds moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 42251-010322. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cobb and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: NONE.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE.

INTRODUCTION AND CONSIDERATION OR ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS:

COMPENSATION FOR THE NEWLY ELECTED CITY SHERIFF AND COMMISSIONER OF THE REVENUE: Vice-Mayor White-Boyd offered the following ordinance to establish compensation for the newly elected City Sheriff and Commissioner of the Revenue for the calendar year beginning January 1, 2022:

(#42252-010322) AN ORDINANCE establishing the base salaries for the newly elected Commissioner of the Revenue and Sheriff for the City of Roanoke; authorizing the City Manager to execute contracts with both Constitutional Officers; and dispensing with the second reading of this Ordinance by title.

Vice-Mayor White-Boyd moved the adoption of Ordinance No. 42252 - 010322. The motion was seconded by Council Member Jeffrey and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

MOTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS: NONE.

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

Mayor Lea recognized Council Member Moon Reynolds who was appointed to fill an at-large member position on the Executive Board of the Virginia Municipal League; and Council Member Cobb who was awarded the Heritage Education and Advocacy Award by the Roanoke Valley Preservation Society for his doctoral program dissertation on cemeteries that were disrupted by construction projects during the 1960s and 70s.

At 3:22 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 4:13 p.m., the Council meeting reconvened in the Council Chamber, Room 450, fourth floor, Noel C. Taylor Municipal Building, with Mayor Lea, presiding.

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 Moon Reynolds and adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea, Sr.-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

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

FAIR HOUSING BOARD: The Mayor called attention to the upcoming expiration of the three-year terms of office of Jessie Coffman, Amazetta Anderson, Garrett Brumfield and Peter Volosin as members of the Fair Housing Board ending March 31, 2021; whereupon, he opened the floor for nominations.

Council Member Cobb placed in nomination the names of Jessie Coffman, Amazetta Anderson, Garrett Brumfield and Peter Volosin.

There being no further nominations, Ms. Coffman, Ms. Anderson and Messrs. Brumfield and Volosin were reappointed as members of the Fair Housing Board for three-year terms of office, each, ending March 31, 2025, by the following vote:

FOR MS. COFFMAN, MS. ANDERSON AND MESSRS. BRUMFIELD AND VOLOSIN: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

ROANOKE REGIONAL AIRPORT COMMISSION: The Mayor called attention to the upcoming expiration of the four-year term of office of Dr. Nathaniel L. Bishop as a City representative to the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission ending March 9, 2021; whereupon, he opened the floor for nominations.

Council Member Cobb placed in nomination the name of Dr. Nathaniel L. Bishop.

There being no further nominations, Dr. Bishop was reappointed as a City representative of the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission for a four-year term of office ending March 9, 2026, by the following vote:

FOR DR. BISHOP: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

ROANOKE VALLEY REGIONAL CABLE TELEVISION COMMITTEE: The Mayor called attention to a vacancy created by the resignation of Jane Missel as a member of the Roanoke Valley Regional Cable Television Committee ending June 30, 2023; whereupon, he opened the floor for nominations.

Council Member Cobb placed in nomination the name of Shawn Nowlin.

There being no further nominations, Mr. Nowlin was appointed to fill the unexpired term of office of Jane Missel as a City representative of the Roanoke Valley Regional Cable Television Committee ending June 30, 2023, by the following vote:

FOR MR. NOWLIN: Council Members Cobb, Jeffrey, Moon Reynolds, White-Boyd, and Mayor Lea-5.

NAYS: None-0.

(Council Members Bestpitch and Sanchez-Jones were absent.)

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Lea declared the regular meeting adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

A P P R O V E D

ATTEST:

Cecelia F. McCoy, CMC
City Clerk

Sherman P. Lea, Sr.
Mayor
