

Salisbury, North Carolina
March 21, 2018

MEETING OF MARCH 21, 2018

The City Council of the City of Salisbury met at 1:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at West End Plaza located at 1935 Jake Alexander Boulevard West with the following members being present:

PRESENT: Mayor Al Heggins, Presiding; Mayor Pro Tem David Post; Council Members Karen Alexander, William Brian Miller, and Tamara Sheffield; City Manager W. Lane Bailey; City Clerk Diane Gilmore, and City Attorney F. Rivers Lawther, Jr.

ABSENT: None.

Salisbury City Council and members of Management Team met at West End Plaza located at 1935 Jake Alexander Boulevard West. A moment of silence was taken. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Heggins at 1:00 p.m.

UPDATE – GOALS AND REVIEW

City Manager Lane Bailey commented the previous year's retreat focused on policing and the need to fill vacant police positions and increase police salaries to match competitive rates in the area. He commended Council for including budget resources to accommodate Police Department needs.

Mr. Bailey noted Council appointed a Fibrant Advisory Committee who met in April 2017 and February 2018. He commented Council has adopted a Resolution for a referendum regarding a Fibrant lease agreement with Hotwire Communications.

Mayor Heggins asked for clarification regarding rumors the City would have to turn over operations to Local Government Commission (LGC). Mr. Bailey stated the LGC had expressed a concern regarding debt accrued by Fibrant, and he noted there is not a concern about the LGC taking over City operations because the bond payments are being paid.

Mr. Bailey reviewed Downtown Salisbury incentives and recent Gateway Park improvements. He noted the City is currently working with Black Point Investments regarding the Empire Hotel Project, and he would provide an update to the public at a later date. He referenced the Downtown incentives for the adaptive reuse of the building located on South Main Street.

Councilmember Miller asked Mr. Bailey to share information on the Bell Tower Green Park. Mr. Bailey suggested Executive Director of the Blanche and Julian Robertson Family Foundation, Jason Walser update Council at a later time. He reviewed expansion on the Greenway and the installment of Transit bus shelters. He pointed out the Carolina Thread Trail includes connections between Kelsey Scott Park and Jake Alexander Boulevard and added \$700,000 was received in transportation alternative programs with a 20% match for Phase 4.

Councilmember Miller asked about updates regarding road conditions. Mr. Bailey deferred the question to Public Services Director Tony Cinquemani and Assistant Public Services Director Craig Powers. Mr. Cinquemani noted the department is making headway and completing projects. Mr. Bailey added the garbage collection route changes have freed staff time.

Councilmember Miller asked for an update regarding the Newsome Road construction. Engineering Director Wendy Brindle indicated she often receives complaints regarding the condition of Newsome Road, and she noted the widening project will begin October 2018. Ms. Brindle indicated there is an abundance of cut-through traffic in the area, and she pointed out alternative routes are available for use.

Mr. Bailey reviewed tactical goals regarding community outreach to promote transparency. He commented the City has a new Human Relations manager and recently held a bilingual community meeting. He referenced the Citizens Academy and Community Engagement programs that take place in the City. He commented a new program will begin late April and meet every other month with a focus on community needs. Communications Director Linda McElroy added the City will work with the United Way regarding a community survey.

Mr. Bailey reviewed Rowan-Salisbury School System and the City's previous support of the two co-principals at Knox Middle School. He noted the current year's funding was put toward the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) research program at Knox Middle School.

Mr. Bailey reviewed Planning and Development initiatives regarding pedestrian safety in all areas of the City. He reviewed the West End Transformation Plan, and he commented the City received \$40,000 of Community Block Development Grant (CBDG) funds for the installment of sidewalks on Old Plank Road between Partee and Thomas Street. He noted the City received \$760,000 for sidewalk improvements along Brenner and Link Avenue. He added a Stormwater drainage system and vegetation rehabilitation project, and he noted a partnership with the Julian Robertson Foundation and Livingstone College to plan the redevelopment to Monroe Street School. He reviewed Code Enforcement's neglected Housing initiative to address housing blight

and revitalization, and he noted there are 15 houses to be demolished. He noted the collaboration with Rowan County Inspection Department to improve the development review process.

Mr. Bailey commented Salisbury-Rowan Utilities (SRU) provides quality water and wastewater services to Rowan County that protect the environment, promote public health, improve quality of life, support planned growth and maintain public trust. He added the City has interest in the Yadkin River and will participate in the relicensing of Alcoa's Yadkin Project. He noted the City operates with 99.9% reliability regarding broadband infrastructure. He indicated \$90,000 was requested for Wi-Fi hotspots inside and outside the downtown areas.

Mr. Bailey noted a plan to develop priority infrastructure improvements in the City, and he pointed out the FY2018-2019 budget will include funds to develop a concept plan for major streetscape improvements along Main Street. He added staff will apply for grants through the United States Department of Transportation. He commented focus groups were held in 2017 to gauge public interest and the results indicated sufficient support from the community.

Mr. Bailey commented the City will continue to make improvements to the City website and the marketing plan for branding. He noted the Salisbury Way will continue to seek innovative ways to keep employees engaged and improve customer service internally and externally.

UPDATE – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Mr. Danny Martin and Mr. Stephen Miller with N.R. Martin Associates addressed Council regarding the General Fund. Mr. Martin reviewed the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and noted the previous year's program has been adopted. Mr. Miller provided Council a list of projects, and he referenced projects with a high priority. He noted the CIP totals \$50 million over a 10-year period and commented \$28.7 million would be new debt with the remaining \$17 million paid from cash and \$5 million paid from grant funds.

City Manager Lane Bailey noted the budget expenses include construction of Fire Station 6. Mr. Miller reviewed additional projects in the current fiscal year.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked about Ketner Corner. Planning and Community Development Director Janet Gapen commented Ketner Corner is located at the corner of Innes Street and Mahaley Avenue. She explained the Ketner Corner is a pocket park project to honor Mr. Ralph Ketner and the original Food Lion Grocery store location. Mayor Heggins asked about the Kesler Mill renovations. Ms. Gapen commented the Kesler Mill project was introduced to the CIP as a placeholder for a future project. She commented the Kesler Mill project is in the planning phase, and she noted community meetings have taken place.

Mayor Heggins asked about Plaza renovations. City Engineer Wendy Brindle commented the Plaza budget for FY2017-2018 includes the standard interior renovations. Finance Director Shannon Moore commented a redevelopment fund of \$100,000 will be included in the FY2018-2019 requested budget.

Ms. Gapen reviewed the Community Planning and stabilization funds that would address new housing needs. She noted the 5-year plan includes funds for the West-End housing stabilization project, and she added funds were set aside for the Acquisition Rehabilitation Resale Projects in the Chestnut Hill and South Lee Street areas.

Mr. Miller reviewed the General Fund cash flow. He provided Council information for FY 2018-2028 of project expenditures and revenues. He noted annual revenues are \$42 million in the FY2018 budget and would increase from the proposed increase in taxes. He commented needs for additional revenues extend from operating expenditures with an expected increase of \$31.2 to \$39 million over a 10-year period that includes inflation and health insurance. He commented Fibrant expenses are expected to decrease from \$3.3 million to \$1.7 million in FY2019 and level out. He added the capital replacement fund is expected to increase from \$2.1 million to \$3 million with transfers. He added the goal is to keep the income at a healthy level. He stated the proposed gradual increases are necessary in order to pay for inflation and operating expenses.

Mr. Miller reviewed the Water and Sewer Fund. He indicated the water and sewer rate is based upon a yearly 2% annual tax increase that includes cost in rates, grant funds, cost savings, and cost consumptions. He noted having steady increases will avoid large lump sums when a major capital project is presented and commented the Water and Sewer Fund is capital intensive. He indicated that the CIP has grown in the last 5 years, and he commented the fund is building reserves to help prepare for high cost projects.

RECESS

Mayor Heggins made a **motion** to take a recess and all Councilmembers in attendance agreed unanimously to recess.

The meeting reconvened at 3:00 p.m.

VISIONING PROCESS

Mayor Heggins asked everyone in attendance to join the visioning process section of the retreat. Mayor Heggins introduced Mr. Warren Miller Founder and President of Fountainworks who served as facilitator.

a) Visioning Map of Salisbury in 2040

Mr. Miller asked the participants to envision Salisbury in 2040, and identify a persona, and how their groups hoped to describe Salisbury in the future. He reviewed and presented ideas from each table.

Mr. Miller asked each group to select a persona of choice to create a journey map that would include steps each persona would make in Salisbury year 2040.

b) Mission

Mr. Miller asked the group to brainstorm the City of Salisbury's "why" and "how" to create mission statements for the City. Mr. Miller presented each group's statements and asked the full group to identify a mission statement that appealed to them the most.

c) Values

Mr. Miller asked participants to work together in groups to develop five to seven core values for the City of Salisbury to present.

d) Refining vision, mission, and values

Mr. Miller divided participants into different groups and asked them to draft a vision, mission, and value statements for Salisbury. Mr. Miller reported two mission statements.

- 1) Salisbury is a collaborative City that creates and implements policies and programs fostering equity and sustainability.
- 2) A commitment to provide an equitable and inclusive and safe community that is responsive to the needs of citizens in order for the community to thrive and prosper.

There being no further business, Mayor Heggins made a **motion** to recess the meeting until Thursday, March 22, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. at the West End Plaza located at 1935 Jake Alexander Boulevard. All council members in attendance agreed unanimously to recess. The meeting was recessed at 7:30 p.m.

RECONVENE – THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2018

Facilitator Warren Miller reviewed the community's discussions regarding the City's mission and visioning process. He reviewed the community's conversations regarding the experiences that people have in Salisbury. He commented on the ideas shared in the group that included community development, small business, and economic development.

ECONOMIC AND DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Mayor Heggins commented on a potential meeting to address questions the public may have regarding the Fibrant referendum with Hotwire Communications. Mayor Pro Tem Post commented Fibrant debts must be repaid, and he added defaulting is not an option for the City. He noted Hotwire Communications is confident in the investment to the community. City Manager Lane Bailey noted there would be some Fibrant transitions such as phone services and other contracts that would need to expire. He indicated there is also a commitment to the employees to help find a jobs in the City organization.

Planning and Community Development Director Janet Gapen and Downtown Salisbury, Inc. Director Larissa Harper addressed Council regarding the Empire Hotel development. Ms.

Gapen commented the project is in the beginning stages and meetings with the developer continue. Ms. Harper stated staff is in consistent communication with Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG), and she noted the developer's enthusiasm for Salisbury. She indicated a presentation would be given to the Historic Preservation Commission April 12, 2018 for the Landmark Designation application. Ms. Gapen discussed additional downtown redevelopment that includes building projects at 126 East Innes Street, and 121, 123, 125 South Main Street Courtyard project, and the relocation of the building located at the corner of East Innes Street and South Lee Street. Ms. Harper commented new small businesses having interest to move into the area and she reviewed downtown events. Ms. Harper indicated the Cheerwine Festival event would be a City event with support from Cheerwine. Parks and Recreation Director Nick Aceves noted \$25,000 has been put toward event operations.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked Council to consider ideas to help encourage building owners from maintaining vacant buildings. He also referred to an angel fund program which would help minority owned businesses. City Manager Lane Bailey commented downtown business owners are included in the Municipal Service District (MSD) and pay an increased tax rate.

Mayor Heggins introduced Rowan Economic Development Commission (EDC) Director Rod Crider. He indicated he works closely with the City with a focus on industrial development.

Councilmember Miller suggested a partnership with the Rowan County Chamber of Commerce to merge and create ideas to join work forces.

RECESS

Mayor Heggins made a **motion** to take a recess and all Councilmembers in attendance agreed unanimously to recess.

The meeting reconvened at 3:00 p.m.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Councilmember Alexander led a discussion regarding the Greenway and construction of sidewalk improvements and the naming of sidewalks. City Engineer Wendy Brindle referred to projects near the V.A. Cemetery and noted the City is working with the community and Carolina Thread Trail to make Greenway connections possible.

Councilmember Alexander referred to the Bell Tower Green Park and asked the City to consider budgeting for ongoing maintenance and programming. Robertson Foundation Executive Director Jason Walser pointed out a current partnership with the foundation, the City, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) could help raise funds to be put toward streetscape projects.

Mayor Pro Tem Post stated a need to provide Wi-Fi capabilities to disadvantaged neighborhoods and students. Interim Fibrant Director Evans Ballard commented Wi-Fi would need to be placed in central locations. Councilmember Miller asked staff to provide data regarding recommendations of how to address economically disadvantage neighborhoods and the participation of Hotwire Communications with fiber optics and Wi-Fi location capabilities.

Mayor Heggins addressed Public Safety and a possible partnership with Cabarrus County and Rowan County. She suggested funds for a foreign object detection position be added to the budget. Police Chief Jerry Stokes noted there is a regional partnership that would help assist in certain situations. He noted K9 officers are trained for patrol and narcotic protection. Chief Stokes commented a trained K9 could cost \$16,000. Fire Chief Bob Parnell commented Cabarrus County would assist and bring a trained K9 at no cost and added the City has worked with the County in the past. City Manager Lane Bailey noted staff training could be an option. Chief Stokes reviewed the impact of installing a metal detection system. Mayor Pro Tem Post asked Chief Stokes to review the department's needs. Chief Stokes shared the department has staffing needs in the lab and data management, and he noted a need for new software.

Councilmember Sheffield asked Council to consider Code Enforcement and its needs, and she noted its connection to the community. Planning and Community Development Director Janet Gapen commented the department is in a good position with a great staff base and two vacant positions. Ms. Gapen noted last year's budget included a \$70,000 increase for abatement of deteriorating homes. She indicated each demolition project is a complicated and timely process that provides vital and positive outcomes to the community.

Planning and Community Development Manager Preston Mitchell addressed Council regarding Code Enforcement's patrol boundaries. He also noted each officer patrols a large area, and he indicated the department needs new software. He commented about bulky item pick-ups and an amendment made to the Abatement Ordinance regarding the timeframe for violations. He noted the department will continue to lower the timeframe for opened violations to five and ten days versus one month. He indicated an increase in citation amounts, and he commented in the past citizens who are irresponsible choose to use the City as a mowing service during summer months due to the City's citation fee being cheaper than the cost of hiring a mower service. He commented the estimated \$40 mowing abatement fee has increased to \$350, and he noted the increase has shown an immediate impact. Mayor Heggins asked would this fee impact those who are elderly and do not have family members to help and who are not being irresponsible but do not have the resources. She asked if violations were reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Mitchell commented every case is treated case-by-case, and he noted if someone contacted staff to explain or has reasonable explanation as to why they were not able to mow, staff could then work to help that citizen. He pointed out the department has to be careful not to treat people differently. Mayor Heggins agreed to not treat people differently but did not want the City to become a burden to those who are not being irresponsible. Mr. Mitchell commented a citation is not a ticket. Mayor Heggins agreed. Mr. Mitchell indicated once monetary citations are charged the City has exhausted resources to be able to work with someone's needs. Mayor Heggins asked if data could be provided pertaining to the number of times staff went to a property to mow, before the increased fee of \$350 and after the \$350 increased fee. Mr. Mitchell commented data could be provided. Mayor Heggins commented she is curious regarding the high number of calls the City receives

regarding people being irresponsible, and she asked for the data to include how many times the City has had to mow yards. Mr. Mitchell commented the dollar amount is in aggregate and noted citation fees only included the abatement amount, which is the same amount mowing contractors would charge the City for mowing services. He indicated the City had not charged for a mobilization fee or the two citation fees. He indicated the increased fees would include the mobilization fee as listed in the City Code, two citation fees, and the standard abatement fee. He commented a majority of the violators are considered regular customers and commented elderly or fixed income citizens are not typically subjects of the violations and staff would work one-on-one with them. Mayor Heggins asked for clarification regarding the initial \$40 charge that has increased to \$350. Mr. Mitchell commented he wanted to provide an example, and he noted he could provide exact amounts in a report. Mayor Heggins asked if \$40 was the mowing fee. Mr. Mitchell agreed and noted the fee would depend on lot size and commented a larger lot would have a higher fee. Mayor Heggins asked for data for clarification. Mr. Mitchell agreed, and he noted once the fines issued are not paid, the fees are placed against the property as a lien. He commented the City does realize there is a balance. He indicated Code Enforcement is restructuring its department. Mayor Heggins commented to have further discussion at a different time. Planning and Community Development Director Janet Gapen commented citations are a complicated issue.

Mayor Heggins discussed a program called Congress of Neighborhoods, and she stated the program could be structured in a way to establish relationships beyond boundaries. Councilmember Alexander commented the Neighborhood Alliance Committee promotes similar ideas and suggested it could be expanded. Assistant City Manager Zack Kyle commented the Committee will meet April 19, 2018.

Mayor Heggins expressed an idea of a Mayor's Equity Cabinet and she noted its purpose would be to help provide a common language throughout the community and she indicated it could provide a space for learning and understanding and review issues of equity and make recommendations to the Council. She shared the Mayor's Equity Cabinet would help to establish a foundation for the community and staff to proceed in a manner to mitigate racism, prejudice, bias, and hate.

Mayor Heggins asked Council to consider a comprehensive piece regarding fair housing. She added more educational opportunities for landlord and tenants and updated testing are needed. Human Relations Manager Ann Little indicated the Community Development Corporation (CDC) had a great fair housing process in place and commented the Human Relations Committee (HRC) will establish a fair housing subcommittee and has an opportunity to partner with the CDC.

Mayor Heggins requested an update to the Human Relations Ordinance.

Mayor Pro Tem Post expressed a desire to explore smaller bus and vans for public transit. Mayor Pro Tem Post commented alternative methods could be used to provide lower costs of transportation. Transit Director Rodney Harrison indicated the City of Charlotte has recently added a rail line that consolidated the City's two modes of transportation.

Mayor Heggins asked about the current living and minimum wage for City employees. Mayor Heggins proposed that the minimum wage rate should begin with a pay rate of \$12.00 per

hour and asked the increased rate to be added to the budget. Human Resources Director Ms. Kennerly noted the department has researched wage increases and is open to adjustments. She noted it would create compression issues and would need to be reviewed in great detail. Mayor Heggins suggested a study be conducted. Mr. Bailey commented a presentation could be provided at the budget work session that shows information and potential budget impacts.

RECESS

Mayor Heggins made a **motion** to take a recess and all Councilmembers in attendance agreed unanimously to recess.

The meeting reconvened at 5:45 p.m.

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Mayor Pro Tem Post and Councilmember Sheffield discussed Council's goal to support partnerships with the School Board, early childhood interventions, Pre-K programs, charter school district, and options for Youth Council. Human Relations Manager Ann Little shared the Salisbury Youth Council will partner with the Parks and Recreation Department to maximize resources and share opportunities. She noted the Salisbury Youth Council graduation banquet will be held Wednesday, May 23, 2018. City Manager Lane Bailey noted Youth Council was a topic at the National League of Cities (NLC) Congressional meeting, and he added ideas were shared for future opportunities regarding Youth Council partnerships across the United States. Councilmember Miller asked if Council has a desire to consider a position for a liaison to the Youth Council to formalize needs and bridge potential connections. Councilmember Alexander commented Smart Start of Rowan County, Head Start, and the Apple Seed Program could be programs that the City could partner with that could benefit students.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE – ESTABLISHING PRIORITY GOALS

Facilitator Warren Miller worked with Council to finalize and prioritize its proposed goals, incentives, and work studies.

Council had a discussion regarding the Mayor's Equity Cabinet and guidelines.

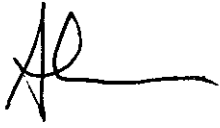
Councilmember Miller was excused from the meeting by unanimous consensus at 6:45 p.m.

Mayor Heggins thanked everyone in attendance.

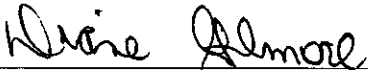
ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mayor Pro Tem Post. All council members

in attendance agreed unanimously to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.



Al Heggins, Mayor



Diane Gilmore, City Clerk