

Salisbury, North Carolina
April 2, 2019

SPECIAL MEETING

PRESENT: Mayor Al Heggins Presiding; Mayor Pro Tem David Post; Council Members Karen Alexander, and William Brian Miller; City Manager W. Lane Bailey; City Clerk Diane Gilmore, and City Attorney J. Graham Corriher.

ABSENT: Council Member Tamara Sheffield.

Salisbury City Council met in Council Chambers in City Hall located at 217 South Main Street. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Heggins at 5:04 p.m.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS PRESENTATIONS

(a) Human Relations Council

Human Relations Council (HRC) Chair Dennis Rivers presented the 2018 highlights and 2019 goals for the HRC. He reviewed the HRC's Vision and Mission statements.

Mr. Rivers pointed out the Hispanic Coalition has been a committee for 10 years and continues to reach out to other communities in Rowan County to ensure Latinos and Hispanics are aware of services, insurance and educational opportunities. He added the goal is to promote immigration and celebrate the contributions of Latino and Hispanic residents and other community members.

Mr. Rivers noted at this year's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. post-parade celebration information was made available to the public regarding medical insurance, fair housing, Charter and K-12 schools, and higher education information from Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (RCCC), Livingstone College, Catawba College, Pfeiffer College and Hood Theological Seminary.

Mr. Rivers commented the 2019 Elizabeth Duncan-Koontz Humanitarian Award recipients were North Rowan High School Principal Meredith Williams, Community Activist Ola Nwafor and RCCC Early College Student Myles Simon. He added Mr. Simon previously reached out to Council regarding an idea for a skateboard park, and he commented this was the first year a principal was nominated for the award.

Mr. Rivers noted HRC members completed a Fair Housing Workshop.

Mr. Rivers stated operational changes took place within the HRC and the changes will ensure the HRC is doing all it can to serve the community. He explained the HRC realized its bylaws and manual were inconsistent and changes to the bylaw structure will be presented to Council for its approval. Mr. Rivers pointed out the restructuring and changes in operations will improve communication, ensure concerns are being addressed and make sure the HRC's work is not redundant with other community events.

Mr. Rivers noted the City provides support to the HRC through funding and volunteers. He presented HRC financial information including sponsorships and expenses.

Mr. Rivers reviewed current HRC membership and demographics within the council. He noted the HRC has a vacant position it hopes to fill as soon as possible.

Mr. Rivers explained the 2019 goals are to fulfill the HRC mission within the community, make changes to the bylaw structure, and continue education and training.

Mr. Rivers thanked Council for its continued support of the HRC. Mayor Heggins thanked Mr. Rivers and the HRC for all it does for the City.

Mayor Heggins asked if membership demographics are based on race and gender. Mr. Rivers agreed, and he commented HRC membership was predominately female because there were no male applicants. He reviewed the HRC's current membership demographics, and he pointed out the HRC is looking for new members to include diversity in its membership. Mayor Heggins asked if the diversity includes religious preference. Mr. Rivers agreed.

Mayor Heggins pointed out the HRC has done great work, and the City is proud of its accomplishments. She stated Human Relations Manager Anne Little is the HRC staff liaison and has provided positive changes to the HRC.

Councilmember Alexander noted the HRC has done great work in the community.

(b) Historic Preservation Commission

Planner Kyle Harris provided an overview of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), and he reviewed the current membership. He pointed out the 2018 highlights and 2019 goals. He noted the HPC is required to submit documentation to the state annually to be re-certified and show compliance with various statutes and program regulations. He commented the City has remained compliant.

Mr. Harris noted the HPC reviewed 151 total cases and only denied five cases. He pointed out cases are reviewed by staff and project concerns are addressed so issues can be worked out before the project is presented to the HPC.

Mr. Harris pointed out FY2018-2018 highlights and accomplishments:

- Salisbury Historic Landmarks Program designated the Empire Hotel, the block around the hotel and the Edgar S. Temple House as historic landmarks
- Salisbury Historic Landmarks Program is considering the Salisbury Train Depot for historic landmark designation
- Blockwork 2018
- Civil War Prison Site archaeological investigation with Historic Salisbury Foundation (HSF)
- Efforts to preserve threatened property in Fulton Heights
- North Main Street Restoration Project through HSF
- Photographic inventory

Mr. Harris noted out significant projects that were reviewed during FY2018-2019:

- Bell Tower Green
- Bankett Station, 201 East Innes Street
- Demolition, 403 North Main Street
- New construction, 403 North Main Street
- 132 Flats
- Mean Mug

Development Services Specialist Catherine Clifton stated the goals for FY2019-2020 are to promote and identify historic resources and to improve procedures. She noted the Historic Preservation Incentive Grant is for owner occupied residences in the local historic district. She added the HPC is requesting \$40,000 for the Historic Preservation Incentive Grant Program. She commented in 2018 the HPC was awarded \$20,000 and provided nine grants to property owners to maintain and preserve historic homes. She added to attract lower income home owners to apply for the grant programs, the HPC hopes to work with the Finance Department to provide funds to lower income home owners.

Mayor Heggins thanked the HPC for its work to make the City beautiful and preserve historic buildings.

Councilmember Alexander asked if grant programs are available to seniors who own historic homes. Mr. Harris commented he is not aware of any grants targeted to seniors. Ms. Clifton stated seniors have used Historic Preservation Incentive Grants in the past, and she added there has been an increase in the number of projects coming from the Community Development Corporation (CDC). Councilmember Alexander added she hopes the program continues because projects may not be completed without the grant assistance.

Mr. Harris noted some property owners do not apply for the grants because it is a reimbursement program and they do not want to pay for the cost up front. He added the HPC is looking for ways to accommodate low to moderate income level property owners.

Councilmember Miller thanked the HPC for all it does for the City.

(c) Tree Board

City Arborist Mark Martin and Tree Board Chair Carolyn Brown presented the Tree Board's 2018 highlights and 2019 goals.

Ms. Brown noted the mission statement of the Tree Board is to preserve, protect, and plant trees on City owned property and along public right-of-ways within the City limits.

Ms. Brown reviewed 2018 highlights:

- Received a \$5,000 grant from the North Carolina Forest Service to protect 20 ash trees from emerald ash borer
- Earth Day on the Greenway included 200 participants and volunteers
- Arbor Day at Hurley Park with 150 attendees for a tree replenishment activity
- Partnered with North Carolina Urban Forest Council by attaching benefit tags to downtown trees to include each name of the tree and what the tree gives back to the community
- Tree Board Awards Program
- 12 tree information articles were included in the Home and Garden section of the *Salisbury Post*
- Began a new tree inventory project
- Tree City USA standards continuously met for 33 years, \$4.31 per Capita spent in 2018
- Supported "We Dig Salisbury" event

Ms. Brown shared 2019 goals:

- Educate the public regarding the invasive pest, emerald ash borer that kills any untreated ash tree
- Engage volunteers to continue with the tree inventory
- Continue to provide funding for neighborhood tree planting projects and dead tree replacement along right-of-ways
- Support "We Dig Salisbury" event in 2020
- Sponsor a fall conference on the economic benefits of urban forestry in partnership with local and state organizations and seek private funding
- Provide handouts in water bills
- Utilize Access Channel 16 and other social networking sites
- Continue to participate in Arbor Day and Tree City USA Programs
- Continue to seek grants and alternative funding for urban forestry programming

Mayor Heggins pointed out the importance of protecting the trees and the work the Tree Board does for the City.

Councilmember Miller asked if Mr. Martin is involved in the Bell Tower Green designs. Mr. Martin agreed, and he pointed out a survey was conducted to find out if existing trees could be saved. Councilmember Miller thanked Mr. Martin for his expertise and experience he provides to the City and the Tree Board.

Councilmember Alexander asked if there are any regulations regarding planting trees in City right-of-ways. Mr. Martin commented some right-of-ways are maintained by the state. He noted some areas are restricted due to what is placed under or above ground including concrete or asphalt.

Councilmember Alexander thanked the Tree Board for the work they do for the City.

Mayor Pro Tem Post pointed out trees were removed on East and West Innes Streets due to rooting problems, and he asked if an alternative method could be used to avoid removing trees in the future. Mr. Martin noted selecting tree species that are not as large as what was previously planted would help. He added linear tree pits are being installed with special material to help keep the trees from reaching businesses.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked about a survey regarding the City's tree canopy. Mr. Martin noted the Forest Service completed a survey in 2012 showing the City's tree canopy at 35%, and he added he requested current results from the Forest Service, but has not received the information.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if an ordinance is in place regarding property owners removing trees and replacing them with small trees. Mr. Martin commented the Land Development Ordinance (LDO) requires trees to be replanted.


Mayor Heggins thanked the Boards and Commissions for their presentations and for all they do for the City.

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 5:57 p.m.



Al Heggins, Mayor



Diane Gilmore, City Clerk