

Salisbury, North Carolina
September 5, 2023

REGULAR MEETING

PRESENT: Mayor Karen K. Alexander, Presiding; Mayor Pro Tem Tamara Sheffield, Council Members Harry McLaughlin, David Post, and Anthony Smith; City Manager Jim Greene, Jr., City Clerk Connie B. Snyder; and City Attorney J. Graham Corriher.

ABSENT: None.

Salisbury City Council met in Council Chambers in City Hall located at 217 South Main Street. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Alexander at 6:00 p.m. A moment of silence was taken.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Alexander led participants in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Thereupon, Councilmember Post made a **motion** to adopt the Agenda as presented. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

INTRODUCTION – DEPUTY CITY MANAGER RICHARD J. WHITE, III

City Manager Jim Greene introduced Deputy City Manager Richard J. White, III. He noted a national search was conducted and department heads were involved in the interview process. He added Mr. White was selected based on his extensive experience in local government.

Mr. Greene stated Mr. White has over 25 years of local government experience and received his undergrad from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he was a

Morehead Scholar. He added Mr. White received his MPA degree from North Carolina State University.

Mr. White thanked Council and Mr. Greene for the opportunity to serve as the Deputy City Manager of Salisbury. He stated he is eager to join such a wonderful community, and he looks forward to working with staff.

Council welcomed Mr. White to the City and stated they are looking forward to working with him. Mr. Greene gifted Mr. White with Salisbury SWAG including items from various departments.

RECOGNITION – POLICE LIEUTENANT COREY BROOKS

Police Chief Patrick Smith recognized Lieutenant Corey Brooks for his heroic actions rescuing a truck driver from the burning cab of a truck after a crash on Interstate 85. He stated Lieutenant Brooks was responding to another call at the time of the incident and witnessed the truck hit the concrete barrier causing the truck to catch on fire. He added Mr. Brooks was able to get the driver out of the cab and saved his life.

Chief Smith stated an unidentified female driver helped Lieutenant Brooks pull the truck driver to safety on the opposite side of the road across two lanes of traffic. He displayed video footage of the rescue.

Chief Smith stated Lieutenant Brooks has more than 24 years of experience in law enforcement. He added he was hired by the Salisbury Police Department in 2001 as a patrol officer and continued to rise through the ranks. He noted Lieutenant Brooks currently serves as Lieutenant of the Criminal Investigations/Violent Crimes Unit.

Council recognized Lieutenant Brooks for his heroic actions and thanked him for his service and dedication to protecting the public.

PROCLAMATIONS

Mayor to proclaim the following observances:

SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

September 2023

HISPANIC AND LATINO HERITAGE MONTH

September 15, 2023 – October 15, 2023

CONSENT AGENDA

(a) Minutes

Approve Minutes of the regular meetings of August 1, 2023 and August 15, 2023 and the special meeting of August 7, 2023.

(b) Budget Ordinance Amendment – Youth Baseball Program

Adopt a budget Ordinance amendment to the FY2023-2024 budget in the amount of \$2,500 to appropriate donations for expenses related to the youth baseball program.

ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2023-2024 BUDGET ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA TO APPROPRIATE A PARKS AND RECREATION DONATION.

(The above Ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book No. 31 at Page No. 264, and is known as Ordinance 2023-58.)

(c) Budget Ordinance Amendment – Salisbury-Rowan Sports Hall of Fame

Adopt a budget Ordinance amendment to the FY2023-2024 budget in the amount of \$2,200.11 to appropriate donations for expenses related to the Salisbury-Rowan Sports Hall of Fame.

ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2023-2024 BUDGET ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA TO APPROPRIATE A PARKS AND RECREATION DONATION.

(The above Ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book No. 31 at Page No. 265, and is known as Ordinance 2023-59.)

(d) Contract – CDM Smith, Inc.

Authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with CDM Smith, Inc. in the amount of \$154,940 for engineering services associated with an electrical reliability study, arc flash study and secondary clarifier rehabilitation for Salisbury-Rowan Utilities.

(e) Right-of-Way Encroachment – Spectrum

Approve a right-of-way encroachment for approximately 688 linear feet of underground fiber optic cable by Spectrum on Cedar Springs Road per Section 11-24(27) of the City Code subject to North Carolina Department of Transportation approval.

(f) Right-of-Way Encroachment – AT&T

Approve a right-of-way encroachment for installation of aerial and underground fiber optic cable by AT&T on Laura Springs Drive, Edzell Drive, Inverness Lane, Shay Crossing Road and Bluebonnet Drive per Section 11-24(27) of the City Code.

(g) Purchase Orders

Authorize the City Manager to approve the following Purchase Orders that are included in the FY2023-2024 budget:

- 240251 to Parks Ford for three Police Responders/vehicles in the amount of \$147,804 to be purchased on the North Carolina Sheriff's Association Contract
- 240285 to Randy Marion Ford for six pickup trucks in the amount of \$267,360 to be purchased on Salisbury Bid 019-2024. Three vehicles for Salisbury-Rowan Utilities, two vehicles for Public Works, and one vehicle for the Fire Department
- 240323 to Carolina Cat for a Caterpillar 299D3 Loader in the amount of \$119,183.44 to be purchased on Sourcewell Cooperative for Salisbury-Rowan Utilities
- 240320 to Newtons Fire and Safety Equipment for turnout gear in the amount of \$130,000
- 240355 to Amick Equipment Company for a Freightliner Knuckle Boom Truck in the amount of \$265,741.10 to be purchased on the North Carolina Sheriff's Association Contract for Public Works

(h) Street Closure – Cherry Street

Adopt a Resolution declaring the intent to permanently close an unimproved portion of Cherry Street, located off of the 500 block of Morlan Park Road and set a public hearing for October 3, 2023.

RESOLUTION PERTAINING TO THE PROPOSED CLOSING OF AN UNIMPROVED PORTION OF CHERRY STREET LOCATED OFF THE 500 BLOCK OF MORLAN PARK DRIVE.

(The above Resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book No. 17 at Page No. 32, and is known as Resolution 2023-25.)

(i) Voluntary Annexation – 1810 Enon Church Road

Receive the Certificate of Sufficiency for the voluntary annexation of 1810 Enon Church Road, Tax Map 329 and Parcels 030 and 385, and adopt a Resolution setting the date of the public hearing for October 3, 2023.

RESOLUTION SETTING DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON QUESTION OF THE ANNEXATION OF 1810 ENON CHURCH ROAD, PARCELS 329 030 AND 329 385 PURSUANT TO N.C.G.S. 160A-58.1.

(The above Resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book No. 17 at Page Nos. 33-34, and is known as Resolution 2023-26.)

Thereupon, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield made a **motion** to adopt the Consent Agenda as Presented. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Alexander opened the floor to receive public comments.

Mr. Ethan Chirico addressed Council with concerns regarding adequate pay for firefighters.

Ms. Carole Schmidt, President of the Rowan Food and Farm Network, emphasized September is Hunger Action Month in Salisbury and Rowan County. She added the Rowan Food and Farm Network created a calendar which includes ways citizens can help combat hunger and food insecurity.

Clyde addressed Council regarding his concerns about the recycling program's increased cost. He noted citizens are still unsure of what to recycle, and there are no recycle bins downtown.

Mr. Gemale Black asked Council for the status of the City projects to support the 1MBB project, which would support a dozen new businesses before 2030, the Kiva program, and the \$30,000 budgeted in the General Fund to support small businesses.

Mr. Ben Fisher addressed Council regarding concerns for the growing homeless population in the City and associated crime. He thanked the Police Department for its work, and he stated the Police Department needs more personnel and resources to deal with the growing problem.

Mr. Danny Fisher addressed Council concerning crime in the community. He thanked staff for its work to address the growing homeless population and crime in the community. He added funds need to be budgeted for additional police officers and resources.

Mayor Alexander thanked staff for its work to address ongoing community issues. She added Council and staff are looking to other cities for their response to the growing homeless populations. She added the City went from 100 unhoused individuals to more than 300 individuals. She noted it is a growing public crisis.

There being no one else to address Council, Mayor Alexander closed the public comment session.

LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE AMENDEMENT – CHAPTERS 14 AND 15

Senior Planner Victoria Bailiff asked Council to consider adopting an Ordinance to amend Chapters 14 and 15 of the Land Development Ordinance (LDO) to adjust the membership makeup of the Technical Review Committee (TRC) and to cleanup inconsistent terminology within the Ordinance.

Ms. Bailiff noted the amendment is comprised of required updates due to the reclassification of City departments. She added the amendment would also clean up inconsistencies within Chapters 14 and 15 regarding the naming of the TRC and the Board of Adjustment (BOA).

Ms. Bailiff indicated there are no policies from the Forward 2040 Comprehensive Plan that specifically addresses a text amendment, however, staff finds that it is not inconsistent with the plan. She noted the TRC reviewed the amendment at its July 20, 2023 meeting and recommended approval with no requested changes.

Ms. Bailiff stated the Planning Board reviewed the amendment at its August 8, 2023 meeting and found it to be consistent with the Forward 2040 Comprehensive Plan and voted unanimously to recommend approval.

Mayor Alexander convened a public hearing, after due notice, regarding the proposed Land Development Ordinance Amendment.

There being no one to address Council, Mayor Alexander closed the public hearing.

Councilmember Post stated the City Council hereby finds and determines that adoption of an Ordinance to amend the Land Development Ordinance of the City of Salisbury as underlined or stricken herein is reasonable, in the public interest, and is consistent with the Forward 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Thereupon, made a **motion** to adopt an Ordinance amending Chapter 14 Agencies, Boards and Commission and Chapter 15 Development Process of the Land Development Ordinance of the City of Salisbury, North Carolina. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 14 AGENCIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSION AND CHAPTER 15 DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF THE LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA.

(The above Ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book No. 31 at Page Nos. 266-310, and is known as Ordinance 2023-60.)

UPDATE – SALISBURY AND ROWAN COUNTY TOURISM

Rowan County Tourism Development Authority Executive Director James Meacham presented a tourism industry update to Council. He provided an industry overview from 2022 through the first half of 2023 in Rowan County:

- Visitor spending increased by 11.7%
- Total visitor spending: \$209 million
- Employment: 1,422 jobs
- Lodging sector: \$44 million

Mr. Meacham provided an overview of the Rowan County Tourism Development Authority organization, noting its purpose is economic development through tourism by developing tourism assets, encouraging visitor travel, creating marketing initiatives, and partnering with businesses, attractions, and organizations. He provided a breakdown of the organization's structure, including the Tourism Development Authority, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Rowan Arts Council.

Mr. Meacham stated three major areas of focus for the Tourism Development Authority are marketing, services, and development. He provided a breakdown of how the Tourism Development Authority uses marketing to bring people to the community. He noted staff uses digital components and recently invested in an influencer program, which includes hiring influencers with large social media followings to visit the community. He added the program has reached 4 million people and has received 400,000 direct engagements online. He commented the organization continues to focus on Rowan County's brand "Be an Original" which is integrated into City and County departments. He stated through the tourism website people can book hotel rooms and receive incentives, including overnight stay discounts and the overnight stay and play package, which includes many City and County events. He added staff continues to focus on group sales including weddings, little league world series, conferences, etc.

Mr. Meacham stated Rowan County Tourism Development Authority owns and manages the F&M Bank Trolley System, Farmers' Market and Railwalk Pavilion, Paul E. Fisher Gateway Building, 'Tis The Season Spectacular Parade, Visitor Information Center, and the Rowan Arts Council.

Mr. Meacham noted destination development is a major focus for the Tourism Development Authority. He provided an overview of past projects, including:

- Railwalk Pavilion and Farmers Market
- Public art
- F&M Bank Trolley System
- City of Salisbury wayfinding
- City of Salisbury Christmas decorations
- Public infrastructure

Mr. Meacham stated currently, the tourism industry remains healthy. He added in 2022 and early 2023 tourism was running at levels that were not sustainable, with hotel occupancies above 80% to 90%. He indicated business travel has started to return to normal patterns, but has not reached 2019 levels due to online meetings which decrease travel costs. He noted two potential hotels are in the works, and he pointed out Council previously approved a Marriott Flag hotel before the pandemic and the second is a Hilton hotel.

Mr. Meacham thanked Police Chief Patrick Smith and City Manager Jim Greene for addressing crime in the community. He noted it is important for tourists to feel safe.

Councilmember Post asked if the current occupancy tax is \$.06. Mr. Meacham confirmed the 6% County-wide tax was established in 2017 and collectively agreed upon by the City and County. He stated Airbnb and Bed and Breakfasts are about to replace hotels as the biggest generator of overnight occupancy taxes.

Councilmember Post asked how many hotels are in the County and City. Mr. Meacham stated there are 13 commercial hotel properties with 900 rooms. He added hotels are running under 70% occupancy. Councilmember Post asked how many of the hotels are in the City. Mr. Meacham stated all but one hotel is inside the City limits; however, most short-term rentals, including Airbnb's are outside the City limits.

Council thanked Mr. Meacham for his presentation.

GUIDING PUBLIC INTERESTS

Planning Director Hannah Jacobson introduced Development Finance Initiative (DFI) Project Manager Sonyia Turner, and she noted Ms. Turner and her team have been working on redevelopment options for the former Kesler Mill site.

Ms. Turner explained DFI works with local governments across the state to attract private investment for projects like the Kesler Mill and it provides specialized financial and real estate development expertise. She added DFI will help the City attract private investment for the Kesler Mill site, and she stated the scope of work includes site, market, and financial feasibility analysis for residential uses, and understanding the public interests. She noted DFI will work with the City to solicit a private development partner and will support the City in negotiating the development agreement with the selected partner.

Ms. Turner pointed out the Kesler Mill site is located in the Park Avenue community and it includes 12.88 acres. She added the area is an undeveloped Brownfields site which is subject to constraints within the Brownfields Program. She stated the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) does not allow single-family detached residential on a North Carolina Brownfield site. She indicated single-family attached and multifamily homes will be explored. She added there can be no groundwater use and any redevelopment must evaluate the need to incorporate a vapor barrier in the construction.

Ms. Turner pointed out current neighborhood conditions must be considered, and she added the Kesler Mill site is in a highly residential area that is experiencing neighborhood change. She indicated approximately two-thirds of the area is residential and renter occupied. She commented sales activities have increased over time.

Ms. Turner noted there are few commercial considerations for the Kesler Mill site due to low traffic counts and the lack of visibility from major thoroughfares. She pointed out there is

demand for market rate and affordable rental and home ownership options. She indicated there will be demand for approximately 400 multifamily units over the next five years across the entire market. She pointed out demand in the City is focused on downtown renovated units rather than new construction. She added there is demand over the next five years for approximately 5,600 single-family residential units priced between \$300,000 and \$400,000. She stated 2,730 affordable housing units are currently needed particularly for small families and older adults.

Ms. Tuner explained the Kesler Mill site is challenging for commercial development, but ideal for residential. She added the site presents a strong opportunity for affordable rental housing and is competitive for federal tax credits. She stated the site could accommodate a modest number of market-rate multi-family units. She pointed out there may be an opportunity to explore affordable home ownership options such as townhouses on the Kesler Mill site.

Ms. Turner indicated Council received a draft of the public interests, and she noted public input sessions were held and an online survey was conducted to collect community feedback. She indicated approximately 40 community members participated in either the community input sessions or the online survey. She added the community felt the Kesler Mill site is important to the future of the Park Avenue neighborhood, there is support for mixed income housing on the site, a desire for the development to blend in with the existing neighborhood, and support for better connection to the downtown with an emphasis on a pedestrian connection. She pointed out residents liked the idea of a greenway or walking trail, and she indicated there were general concerns about crime and safety.

Ms. Turner reviewed the draft guiding interests, and she noted development on the Kesler Mill site should:

- Provide a catalytic development that incorporates housing options for low-to-moderate income households for a mixed-income community
- Respect the character and history of the Park Avenue neighborhood
- Incorporate multimodal connections to the existing streets and sidewalks in the surrounding neighborhood and downtown Salisbury
- Incorporate a greenway or trail through the site that promotes safety and is accessible to the surrounding community
- Minimize public investment; maximize private investment

Ms. Turner explained the next step will be for Council to publically endorse the guiding public interests and then DFI will begin the site and financial analysis with JDavis Architects.

Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield noted the Kesler Mill site has been remediated and is clean. She pointed out there are certain rules that must be followed under the Brownfields Program, but it does not mean the area is unsafe. She added she is excited to see the progress that is being made. She questioned if the public interest was taken from members of the community. Ms. Tuner noted a large percentage of those who attended the engagement sessions were community members.

Mayor Alexander asked about financial feasibility of the project, and she pointed out duplexes are more expensive to construct than multi-family complexes. Ms. Turner noted DFI will consider financial feasibility later in the project. She explained all the components are taken into consideration to obtain a feasible project that balances the public interests.

Councilmember Smith pointed out it is a welcome part of the solution to address a growing challenge regarding affordable housing, but he does not want to lose the character, history, and demographic of the community.

Councilmember Post commented there is a shortage of townhouses in the City, and he indicated growth is coming.

Ms. Jacobson stated the site is complicated, and she noted environmental factors, market factors, and the community must be considered. She added staff is grateful to have DFI as a partner, and she thanked Ms. Turner for her work on the project.

Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield asked how the guiding public interests fit with the Forward 2040 Comprehensive Plan and its neighborhood types. Ms. Jacobson stated the area was designated as a Neighborhood Activity Center in the Forward 2040 Comprehensive Plan which allows a variety of housing types and is consistent with the Guiding Public Interests for the Kesler Mill site.

Thereupon, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield made a **motion** to endorse “Guiding Public Interests” for the redevelopment of the former Kesler Mill site. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT – GRANT APPLICATION

Planning and Neighborhoods Director Hannah Jacobson presented information on the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant program. She noted the United States Department of Transportation combined the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program and the Neighborhood Access and Equity Program into one program called the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods. She indicated there is \$3.3 billion available through the program.

Ms. Jacobson noted the proposed project is for a community planning grant for the West Innes Street Corridor from Caldwell Street to the Catawba College campus consisting of approximately 1.6 miles. She added there is an anticipated cost of \$500,000 to fund a conceptual plan for the roadway and land use for economic development policies to make the corridor multi-modal and accessible to more people. She pointed out the project will be 80% federally funded at \$400,000 and will require a 20% local match of \$100,000.

Ms. Jacobson explained the West Innes Street Corridor was chosen for this project due to that area being discussed during the community outreach meetings for the Forward 2040 Comprehensive Plan. She added it aligns with the goals outlined in the grant opportunity.

Mayor Alexander indicated she spoke with leaders of the major institutions along West Innes Street, and she noted each was excited about the grant opportunity.

Councilmember McLaughlin suggested Council keep this project as a priority even if it is not awarded the grant. Mayor Alexander agreed.

Thereupon, Councilmember Smith made a **motion** to adopt a Resolution of Support for the City's grant application to the United States Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program for the West Innes Corridor. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE CITY'S GRANT APPLICATION TO THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS PROGRAM FOR THE WEST INNES CORRIDOR.

(The above Resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book No. 17 at Page No. 35, and is known as Resolution 2023-27.)

MICROSOFT SOFTWARE ASSURANCE

Information Technology (IT) Manager Dale Waters explained the City is required to renew its Microsoft Software Assurance contract to stay in compliance with the current Microsoft licensing for each of its computers to operate. He stated Microsoft Software Assurance permits the City to use the following:

- Microsoft Windows Desktop
- Server operating systems
- Security patches and updates
- Licenses for staff to use Microsoft products

Mr. Waters pointed out the City budgeted \$150,000 for the new contract, however, the quote came in at \$190,591 which is a 60% increase over the previous three-year contract. He indicated the quote is over budget by \$40,591 which staff proposes to cover by reallocating Fund Balance.

Mr. Waters commented the IT Department is preparing for deployment of Office 365 before July 2024. He noted IT has worked with Microsoft to eliminate portions of the City's current renewal that would be redundant after Office 365 is deployed. He stated the Microsoft Software Assurance contract is a three-year contract, and he pointed out Office 365 costs will be in addition to the Microsoft Software Assurance contract.

Councilmember Smith asked if there is another option other than Microsoft. Mr. Waters commented there is not another option due to the learning curve that would create immense work and the products the City currently uses required Microsoft to operate.

Councilmember Post asked if the contract with Microsoft includes functions Office 365 has and if it would be redundant to get Office 365. Mr. Waters commented purchasing Office 365 would not be redundant as the Microsoft contract has Microsoft Office Plus with the office applications version and Office 365 includes office web applications. He indicated there is a need for client applications on computers and once the three-year contract expires the City will upgrade to Office 365 to include Office Plus. Mr. Post asked if there will be automatic updates. Mr. Waters noted updates are installed monthly.

Thereupon, Councilmember McLaughlin made a **motion** to authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Level Solutions Group in the amount of \$190,591 for the Microsoft Software Assurance Contract. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

Thereupon, Councilmember McLaughlin made a **motion** to adopt an Ordinance amending FY2023-2024 Budget Ordinance of the City of Salisbury, North Carolina to appropriate Fund Balance to renew the Microsoft Software Assurance Contract. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

ORDINANCE AMENDING FY2023-2024 BUDGET ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA TO APPROPRIATE FUND BALANCE TO RENEW THE MICROSOFT SOFTWARE ASSURANCE CONTRACT.

(The above Ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book No. 31 at Page No. 311, and is known as Ordinance 2023-61.)

MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT – North Carolina DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Director Wendy Brindle noted Council entered into a municipal agreement for the Salisbury Station second platform and tunnel project and at the end of the project the City will pay \$780,000. She indicated the total project cost is over \$19 million and funded through State Transportation Improvement Funds. She added the project is anticipated to begin in 2025 and the City will be billed for its portion in 2026. She explained as an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirement a passenger information display system must be installed to provide a visual and an audible source for the train schedules. She noted as part of the project the City is responsible for the maintenance of the platform and the display system following the 12-month warranty period. She added the maintenance cost would be \$2,100 per year to be billed as \$525 quarterly payments beginning in 2027.

Thereupon, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield made a **motion** to authorize the City Manager to execute a municipal agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation for the Passenger Information Display System to be installed as part of Transportation Improvement Program Project P-5726, Salisbury Station Second Platform. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

UPDATE – SOLID WASTE COLLECTION

Assistant Public Works Director Michael Hanna provided a solid waste update to Council. He noted the City collects solid waste at approximately 12,000 pick-up points on a weekly basis. He added the longest route takes place on Friday with approximately 900 pickups using one automated side loader truck. He indicated five team members operate three of the side loader trucks on a daily basis plus one rear loading truck for the waste collection assistance program and for use on tighter streets.

Mr. Hanna explained the collection days for trash, limb, and recycling pick up can be found on the City's website. He noted trash is collected Monday through Friday with Downtown collection also on Saturday and Sunday and every day except Christmas.

Mr. Hanna reviewed the average waste collected for the last four years. He explained in 2019 the average waste was 781.68 tons which increased to 896.4 in 2020 and is on pace for 948 tons for 2023. He added 76 tons of waste is collected during each of the four Spruce Up Weeks. He noted the following challenges:

- Routes were adjusted five years ago to distribute growth evenly amongst the routes
- Staff is continually exploring other options such as a transfer site
- Rowan County Landfill increased the tipping fee by \$5.00 per ton for the first time since 2013 from \$36 to \$41 a ton creating a \$28,000 increase
- The City absorbed the cost at no fee increase to the citizen
- 330 homes were added this year increasing waste pickup

Mr. Hanna indicated the disposal fee at the Rowan County Landfill has increased from \$442,000 to \$470,000. City Manager Mr. Greene pointed out the City absorbed the additional landfill and recycling fees. He noted yard waste, recycling, and garbage pickup are services the City will need to evaluate as a growing community.

Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield thanked Mr. Hanna and staff for all they do to keep the City clean, and she recognized the Community Appearance Commission (CAC) for implementing the Spruce Up Weeks.

Thereupon, Councilmember Sheffield made a **motion** to authorize the City Manager to approve Purchase Order 240311 in the amount of \$470,000 for waste disposal at the Rowan County Landfill for FY2024. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

City Manager Jim Greene noted his commitment to evaluate opportunities for pay increases for the City's nearly 450 employees. He stated it is important to continue to look at total compensation, benefit opportunities, health insurance, holidays, and career opportunities.

Mr. Greene commented the recycling contract is for two years and was first brought to Council on April 4, 2023 when it asked staff to review the fees. He added once the item came back to Council a fee increase was not recommended. He noted citizens had opportunities to share their thoughts and concerns about the proposed fees for recycling.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Post commented Parks and Recreation Department Director Nick Aceves will be missed when he leaves the City, and he wished him the best in future endeavors. He commended Police Lieutenant Corey Brooks for his heroic actions and going above the call of duty.

Councilmember Post pointed out there is a need to engage with other cities to develop ideas on how to deal with the unsheltered population.

Councilmember Post noted he went to Mayors Innovation Project Conference and he learned some cities control housing costs and eliminate zoning which has a mitigating impact on a percentage of low-income people. He added some cities have a process of registering landlords where Code Enforcement inspects the homes to make sure all codes are met. He suggested a landlord registration to protect tenants' rights. Mayor Alexander suggested Councilmember McLaughlin could invite Mr. Post to present these ideas to the Housing Advocacy Commission (HAC).

Councilmember Smith referenced the growing unsheltered population. He stated he would like the community to realize the situation is nationwide and there are larger reasons why it is a growing issue in society. He indicated Council is expected to address issues caused by policies that it did not create. Mayor Alexander thanked Councilmember Smith for his comments and noted this issue might be something to bring up to the League of Municipalities.

MAYOR PRO TEM'S COMMENTS

Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield commended Lieutenant Corey Brooks for his heroic actions, and she thanked Police Chief Patrick Smith for recognizing Lieutenant Brooks at the Council meeting.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS

Mayor Alexander thanked staff for all it does for the City.

(a) 911 Memorial Service

Mayor Alexander announced the Salisbury Fire Department will host a September 11th Memorial Service Monday, September 11th at the Firefighter's Memorial located at 1402 South Main Street. The service will begin at 8:30 a.m. The public is invited to attend.

(b) Dixonville Cemetery Memorial Dedication

Mayor Alexander announced the Dixonville-Lincoln Memorial Task Force will host a Dixonville Cemetery Memorial Dedication Saturday, September 16th at 10:00 a.m. The dedication will begin at Dixonville Cemetery and a reception will follow in the Fellowship Hall of First Calvary Baptist Church. Parking is available at Fred M. Evans Pool and at First Calvary Baptist Church. The public is invited to attend.


(c) Summer Riffs Concert

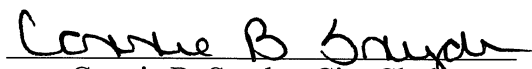
Mayor Alexander announced the City of Salisbury will host its Summer Riffs Concert for the Festival de Independencia Latinoamericana event on Saturday, September 16th from 2:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. at Bell Tower Green. The event will include Latino owned businesses, food trucks, a parade of flags and a variety of live entertainment headlined by Furia Tropikal. For more information call (704) 216-PLAY.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember Post. Mayor Alexander, Mayor Pro Tem Sheffield and Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post and Smith voted AYE. (5-0)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.


Karen Alexander, Mayor


Connie B. Snyder, City Clerk