

Salisbury, North Carolina
February 11, 2019

SPECIAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 11, 2019

The City Council of the City of Salisbury met at 6:00 p.m., Monday, February 11, 2019 at Livingstone College Department of Culinary Arts at 530 Jake Alexander Boulevard South 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 J. Graham Corriher.

ABSENT: None.

Salisbury City Council and members of Management Team met at Livingstone College Department of Culinary Arts at 530 Jake Alexander Boulevard South. A moment of silence was taken. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Heggins at 6:00 p.m.

VISIONING PROCESS

Mayor Heggins introduced Mr. Warren Miller Founder and President of Fountainworks who served as facilitator.

Mr. Miller indicated Council requested an opportunity to redefine its current Vision and Mission Statement. Mr. Miller explained how a vision and mission statement works and how each is created with a focus on the community it will represent. He commented at Council's retreat last year the community came together to discuss what to include in the City's Vision Statement. He stated the participants worked in groups and shared ideas, and he added the groups determined Salisbury is the most livable place on earth.

Mr. Miller commented since last year's retreat staff has continued to receive input from the community regarding the City's Vision and Mission Statement. He reviewed suggested options for the Vision Statement based on feedback. He presented the existing Vision Statement and the

newly proposed Vision Statement to Council. He invited community members to vote for the Vision Statement that is more favorable using an interactive application on their cellphones.

Mayor Heggins asked Mr. Miller to address what a vision statement should look like, and she asked if he would like Council to vote. Mr. Miller shared the interactive application allows feedback from the community and Council members would not need to vote at this time. He added Council would have an opportunity for discussion. He explained a vision statement should describe what a person aspires to be, and it should be inspirational and aspirational.

Mr. Miller explained participants are experiencing difficulty with the application, and he requested participants raise their hands to vote for the more favorable Vision Statement due to technical difficulties. He asked for a show of hands for option one, the existing vision statement, and one participate voted for option one. Mr. Miller then asked for a show of hands of those who would prefer option two as the City's Vision Statement. He asked if community members would like to provide feedback regarding changes to the Vision Statement.

Mr. Miller asked if Council has input regarding the vision statements. He stated three Councilmembers prefer option one, one member prefers option two, and one member was undecided.

Mayor Pro Tem Post indicated option one is wordier but covers a broader range for a more aspirational meaning.

Councilmember Alexander commented she prefers option one because it addresses the City's work to promote positive business opportunities, and she added if the City does not continue to show an interest in its economic development it could deter opportunities.

Mayor Heggins stated a vision statement is aspirational and inspirational and the word "livability" is contributed to the statement in its entirety. She indicated certain parts of the Vision Statement could be removed and included in the Goals and Objectives.

Councilmember Alexander asked if option one needed more work. She commented economic development could be viewed as aspirational and inspirational because it helps the community thrive and be livable.

Mayor Pro Tem Post shared he believes a vision statement should be short.

Councilmember Miller pointed out members of Council and the community have different viewpoints and approach things differently. He noted he does not know how to get to a point where everyone can agree on five sentences for the City's Vision Statement.

Councilmember Sheffield stated she is undecided, and she suggested blending the two proposed vision statements.

Councilmember Miller commented he believes the first sentence that reads "to complete all strategic plans successfully and effectively" can be removed because it is not an aspirational sentence. Councilmembers agreed.

Mr. Miller asked Council what it thinks about adding "a livable community" as an aspirational goal.

Councilmember Sheffield asked about the retired logo "Salisbury is The Place," and she pointed out Council is trying to relay that Salisbury is the place to be.

Councilmember Alexander suggested adding "live, work, and play."

Mr. Miller asked what Council thinks about the sentence "Salisbury is the most livable community in America." Councilmember Miller stated he is not sure what the sentence means because other cities are livable too.

Mayor Pro Tem Post stated he also supports including the words "work, live, and play."

Mayor Heggins suggested using the words "Salisbury THE place to live work and play." Councilmember Alexander commented the statement covers the majority of its goals and additional details can be listed in the Goals and Objectives.

City Manager Lane Bailey stated Rowan County is implementing the words "Be an Original," in its branding, and he asked about tying into the County's promotional slogan. Councilmember Miller commented he supports that idea and has seen the way this has been done by other municipalities and organizations throughout the county.

Councilmember Alexander suggested adding the word "original."

Mayor Heggins suggested the words "Salisbury THE original. Healthy. Prosper."

Mayor Heggins commented she is curious how the public and staff feel about the words Council has discussed using. She stated she thinks Council has a consensus regarding how its vision statement should look.

Mr. Miller suggested Council uses three words from the list "Original, Healthy, Proper, Green, Live, Work, and Play."

A community member commented her family recently relocated to Salisbury because it is centrally located to surrounding cities. She stated the City has the small town feel, and she suggested Council including the words "opportunity" and "thrive."

Councilmember Alexander suggested "Salisbury THE place. Live, work, and play." Councilmember Miller agreed.

Mr. Miller commented Council could return to the vision statement after it has had some time to think about it.

Councilmember Sheffield suggested reviewing vision statements of surrounding entities.

Councilmember Miller commented the Rowan County Tourism Development's marketing group has offered to help Council with its Vision Statement.

Mr. Miller encouraged Council to think of its Vision Statement as aspirational, and he asked if there were any further ideas before moving on to the City's Mission Statement.

Mr. Miller explained a Mission Statement describes an organization's purpose and why it exists. He noted the Mission Statement should support the City's vision and communicate its purpose and direction to employees, residents, vendors, and stakeholders.

Mr. Miller read the City's Mission Statement "to enhance Salisbury's status as a great historic City that provides a safe livable environment for present and future generations with a focus on the City's current values." He reviewed two concepts community members worked on last year that read "Salisbury is a collaborative City that creates and implements policies and program fostering equality and sustainability" and "a commitment to provide an equitable safe and inclusive community that is responsive to the needs of its citizens in order for the community to thrive and prosper."

Mr. Miller noted two out of 22 participants prefer the current Mission Statement. He read "the City of Salisbury is committed to ensuring an equitable, inclusive, and safe community that is responsive to the needs of all residents of the community to thrive and prosper in a sustainable manner," and he noted this version includes feedback from community members. He invited participants to provide feedback regarding the version that was generated from community ideas.

A community member requested to see the word "diverse" in the Mission and Vision Statements.

Mr. Miller asked for Council's feedback regarding which statement it prefers.

Councilmember Alexander asked if the mission statement is primarily for employees who provide City services to citizens. Mr. Miller agreed that that is typically what a mission statement means. Councilmember Alexander noted if it is the City's mission to provide the best service to its citizens she thinks the Mission Statement should be based on its core values because those are things that can be controlled.

Mr. Miller asked Councilmember Alexander for clarification. Councilmember Alexander suggested using, "the best service to our citizens in the most effective, equitable, and efficient manner." She explained employees cannot take ownership of all the workings of the City because some things are beyond their control.

Mayor Pro Tem Post suggested changing the word "best" to "exemplary."

Mayor Heggins commented she does not want the mission statement to sound clinical and cold. She stated she would like to add more meaning to the mission statement, and she understands what Councilmember Alexander is saying in regards to the services provided and support offered to citizens.

Mr. Bailey commented staff has a t-shirt that includes the wording “excellent customer service-passion, pride, and purpose.” Mayor Heggins commented she likes the words “excellent customer service,” but the suggestion sounds cold since we are serving people we consider to be neighbors.

Councilmember Sheffield commented the County’s mission statement reads “to promote vital economy to improve the overall quality of life for the residents of Rowan County.” She stated during the recent Chit, Chat, and Chew forums citizens were asked to choose which statement it would like to see remain, and she added no one voted to leave the word “historic” in its statements. Councilmember Miller noted that he understands Councilmember Sheffield’s intentions but there are some citizens in the community who care very much about the historic portions of the City. Councilmember Sheffield stated she would like to focus on the future and not refer to the City’s past. Mayor Pro Tem Post commented he does not think removing the word “historic” is Council’s intention but that the word not be capitalized and the first thing that is seen.

Councilmember Alexander stated she has been involved with the Tourism Development Authority in the past and it designed a new sign to be located along a highway. She noted the sign included words like “innovative” and “historic” because its ties in with Salisbury’s service and recognizes its history. She commented she is fine with not including the word “historic,” but she would like to see it included somewhere else.

Mr. Miller summarized Council’s discussion and suggested “to provide excellent public service and quality of life with a purpose, passion, and priority” as the draft Mission Statement. Councilmembers Sheffield and Alexander commented they like the statement. Mayor Heggins agreed and asked to hear from members of the audience. Some audience members stated they liked the statement and feel like Council is on the right track. Mayor Heggins and Councilmember Alexander suggested “excellent public service with purpose, passion, and priority.”

Mr. Miller asked if it is Councils desire to use “excellent public service with purpose, passion, and priority” as its mission station. Councilmembers agreed that the statement is a great start. Mr. Miller suggested leaving the statement and revisiting it.

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

City Manager Lane Bailey noted the City will experience a few challenges in next year’s General Fund operational budget. He commented there are increased salary expenses of \$400,000 because the local government system has increased the required employer contribution rate. He stated there are nine additional positions in the budget, and he noted some of those positions would be funded by the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant. He

indicated there are six over-hires in the Police department and it has become a challenge. He explained the Public Services Department has recruitment challenges and has increased salaries to the living wage, and he added the department is close to being fully staffed. He stated three former Fibrant employees have transferred to other departments within the City and those transfers will be reflected in the General Fund.

Councilmember Miller asked if the City will receive revenue from the Hotwire Communications lease. Mr. Bailey agreed, and he stated the City needs to be conservative with those funds. Councilmember Miller asked if there are any preliminary numbers that could help the City begin forecasting. Mr. Bailey commented in the previous year \$3 million from the General Fund was provided for the Fibrant Fund. Councilmember Miller asked if the upcoming fiscal year will be the first year the City will receive payments from the Fibrant and Hotwire Communications. Mr. Bailey agreed, and he stated would like to be more confident regarding the amounts before providing additional information to Council. He commented staff is close to having confident figures to share with Council, and he added Rowan County's reevaluation amounts will be a part of that discussion. Councilmember Miller asked if the County would share those numbers in August. Mr. Bailey commented the City will have the County's reevaluation figures before August because tax rates would be based on the reevaluation figures. Finance Director Shannon Moore stated she believes those figures would be available in April.

Councilmember Alexander asked if amounts from the County's reevaluation and Hotwire Communication revenue would be provided to Council. Mr. Bailey agreed, and he noted the City has received one quarterly payment from Hotwire Communications. He commented Hotwire Communications has not begun its marketing campaign in the community because they continue to convert current customers to the new system and enroll new customers.

Councilmember Alexander asked how Hotwire is projecting the effect of customers discontinuing cable services, and she noted people are no longer paying for cable and internet services. Mr. Bailey commented it might be a preference of Hotwire Communicants if customers increased their internet streaming.

Finance Director Shannon Moore presented Council the previously adopted Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). She stated WR-Martin Management Consultant Denny Martin has worked with staff on the proposed CIP, but could not be at Council's retreat this week because of a personal reason. She reviewed an equivalent tax rate was implemented last year to fund future capital. She commented 2019 projects have been funded in this year's budget.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if Council can adjust numbers on the spreadsheet to experiment with the figures. Councilmember Miller commented the information is proprietary and the consulting company can change the figures for Council or staff. Mayor Pro Tem Post expressed his concerns regarding the inconveniences of not having a working spreadsheet. He added he believes the information and ability to work with the numbers could happen without the consulting company disclosing its underlying formulas. Mayor Heggins asked if staff could talk with the contractor to see if there is flexibility regarding a workable document that might help Council make better decisions. Mr. Bailey stated he could ask the consulting company.

Mr. Bailey commented there are some issues regarding Hotwire Communication and Fibrant savings and those amounts are older and do not include current projections. He explained the new tax values, revenue neutral tax rates, and the old CIP called for an effective tax increase of two cents, but the current figures reflect older rates. He stated there are additional projected revenues that could be obtained through the neutral tax rates. He requested Council allow more time for staff to work with the consulting company and review amounts to include several factors to provide Council a better understanding of potential Hotwire Communications revenues.

Ms. Moore pointed out there is a possible gain in the Sales Tax Revenue. She indicated there was an equivalent of one cent sales tax growth last year, and she added she is hopeful the City will receive the same amount in next years' budget.

Ms. Moore reviewed the current budget and noted staff is working on the items to be included in the FY2019 budget. She stated year 2020 of the CIP will include items proposed for next year's operational budget. She reviewed projects that will not be completed this year and she noted the funding will carry over to the next budget year.

Ms. Moore pointed out the Train Depot's second platform has been included in 2021 of the CIP in the amount of \$780,000 because it is considered a pending contract.

Ms. Moore stated City Engineer Wendy Brindle has revised several estimates for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) projects. She noted a sidewalk project, near the former Salisbury Mall, is considered to be over budget, and she added in order to complete the project additional funding would be added to next year's budget.

Councilmember Alexander asked about items that are highlighted in green. Ms. Moore commented those items are either budgeted every year or grant-funded projects from which the City will receive revenue benefits. Councilmember Alexander asked if the \$4.45 million highlighted in red was overage for the future Fire Station 6. Ms. Moore commented the amount in red is debt that has been funded. She noted \$7.5 million in debt was recently issued for the Fire Station 6 project and is considered to be over budget. She commented there could be another debt issue of \$5.5 million in 2021 for Fire Station 3. She stated she believes the Fire Station 3 project was pushed into another year because most of the property acquisitions were complete.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if the funds are borrowed after a project is completed. Ms. Moore indicated Fire Station 6 funds were borrowed after bids were received and then a Resolution for reimbursement is submitted for all of the expenses paid upfront by the City. Councilmember Sheffield asked if funds have been borrowed for Fire Station 6. Ms. Moore indicated they have, and she noted no money has been borrowed for Fire Station 3.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked when the construction of Fire Station 3 would begin. Mr. Bailey commented staff could provide Council options, and he pointed out Fire Station 3 construction would need to be considered with other revenue challenges.

Councilmember Sheffield asked about funds that are matched for grant purposes. Ms. Moore commented most of the CMAQ expenses are 80% grant funded and 20% funded by the City.

Ms. Moore stated for year 2020 if the City continues with the current CIP format staff has identified funding sources for \$2.93 million of the \$5.1 million which means the additional \$2.2 million in expenses would be funded by the City's Operating Expense Fund.

Councilmember Alexander asked if the \$2.22 million is the amount indicated for matching grant funds. Ms. Moore commented some of the expenses are budgeted for local grant matching and some are items budgeted by departments. Councilmember Alexander pointed out grants are critical to the City's success.

Councilmember Miller asked if the City has an understanding regarding the ownership of Bell Tower Green. Mr. Bailey commented at some point the owners of the Bell Tower would like for the City to assume ownership. Mr. Bailey commented there could be a request for additional revenue and then at some point the park would be turned over to the City if it is the desire of Council. He noted the exchange would be considered a donation. Councilmember Alexander explained no money would be exchanged and the City would not pay for the Bell Tower Green. Mr. Bailey agreed.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if the CIP includes funding for Bell Tower Green. Ms. Moore agreed, and she noted \$350,000 is included and considered a match by the City.

Mayor Heggins asked if there are additional funds allocated for the Bell Tower Green. Ms. Moore commented there is an additional \$700,000 allocated for the Bell Tower Green. Mayor Heggins commented half of the amount is funded by a grant. Ms. Moore indicated the City has received notification that funding has been obtained.

Mayor Heggins asked about traffic calming on South Long Street. City Engineer Wendy Brindle stated the South Long Street Calming Project is included in the adopted Innes and Long Streets Complete Streets Plan. She noted the plan coincides with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) resurfacing initiatives to make improvements to stripping, cross sections of the street, and stamped crosswalks. Councilmember Alexander asked if the project will also include parking. Ms. Brindle stated the NCDOT resurfacing includes parking but does not include medians. She indicated the plan is to stripe the road to accommodate for future medians.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked about the \$800,000 indicated in year two for a fuel site. Mr. Bailey stated there is an issue with the way fuel is purchased for City vehicles using gas credit cards and fuel vendors. He noted this process works well, but if there is an event when there is inclement weather, loss of electricity or fuel disruptions the City could be without access to fuel. He commented the idea is to build a fuel station for the City. He added staff has reviewed adding a generator and distributor to provide fueling access during normal operating hours. Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if the fuel station would only be used during emergencies. Mr. Bailey commented if the City implements its own fuel system, it would be used for daily operations of City vehicles.

He added if the City implements an emergency fuel station, it could be utilized for City and emergency uses.

Councilmember Alexander asked if there could be a need to partner with Rowan County and those who provide emergency services such as Novant Health Medical Center. She stated there is a large property located at the Salisbury Mall. Mr. Bailey stated fueling stations would need to be in a locked and gated facility.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if there would be an operational savings to buying fuel at wholesale prices. Mr. Bailey stated there might be savings and there are also risks involved, but it could be a tradeoff for the benefits. He noted he would not want to place a fuel station outside of City limits because staff would have to drive to refuel. Councilmember Alexander commented if the fueling station was located within the City it would be centrally located for the County.

Councilmember Miller suggested providing more information regarding the needs of a fuel station, and he noted he is not sure the area has enough inclement weather risk for this need. He commented he would like more information regarding the benefits of buying fuel wholesale versus retail.

Mr. Bailey commented the fuel cards that the City uses deducts taxes that the City would not have to pay and work well until there is a fuel shortage and no electricity.

Councilmember Sheffield commented she understands the emergency aspects and the benefits of having a fuel station. She noted pennies are made from what a barrel of fuel is sold to retailers, and she added the only time money is made is when a retailer has available ground fuel and there is a disruption or emergency there are shortages in the area. She asked how long it would take for the City to see a return on its investment.

Councilmember Sheffield asked if funding is available in the event the City could partner with NCDOT for improvement opportunities. Mr. Bailey commented the Salisbury-Rowan Utilities (SRU) Fund includes long-range planning, he added the City receives points for having long-term plans in place, and it helps the City obtain grants.

Councilmember Sheffield stated the proposed CIP indicates the Ketner Corner project would be pushed out to another year, and she asked where the \$200,000 allocation is located in the proposed CIP. Ms. Moore commented she is not sure, and she said this may have been an item submitted by the former Planning Director and staff would look into this request.

Councilmember Sheffield asked if there are plans to expanded recycling services downtown. Public Services Assistant Director Craig Powers stated there are plans in place, and he noted the City needs space for dumpsters so it can consolidate areas for the businesses that need recycling services. He stated staff has received quotes to collect recyclables from street side receptacles. He indicated the recycling market has changed, and there is a lot of interest in providing recycling services in the Downtown area.

Councilmember Alexander noted that there are downtown business owners who are interested in recycling.

Councilmember Miller referenced a streetscape improvement plan that was included in a previous CIP. Ms. Moore indicated the \$20 million Street Scape Improvement Plan is included in the Main Street Infrastructure Fund in the debt packages.

Mayor Heggins asked if the request for sidearm replacements is for new firearms. Mr. Bailey commented this request would be to replace current side arms and the caliber of service weapons used. Police Captain Brian Stallings commented firearms would be changed from a 40 caliber to a nine millimeter. Councilmember Sheffield asked why the size of firearms are being changed. Captain Stallings stated nine-millimeter firearms are more compact and cheaper to service and the rounds are less expensive.

Mayor Heggins asked if the proposed parking agreements relating to the Empire Hotel Project are improvements to current parking or funding for the parking study. Ms. Brindle indicated the proposal includes parking improvements. Councilmember Alexander asked if the parking project includes existing parking. Ms. Brindle commented the proposed item would create new parking on City-owned property.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked about the \$200,000 funding for Plaza Development. Mr. Bailey commented funding includes improvements and scheduled building maintenance. He pointed out a primary issue that needs to be addressed is the roof. Ms. Brindle commented the Plaza has a water leak and roof improvements are needed, and she noted staff is in the process of getting estimates for these repairs. She noted the \$200,000 funding would not cover a roof replacement, but staff is reviewing options.

Councilmember Sheffield shared her concerns regarding housing stabilization programs not continuing to be a part of future CIPs after the year 2020. Mr. Bailey stated the Housing Stabilization Program is on the agenda for tomorrow's retreat, and he added if it is determined to be a priority, changes can be made to include the program in upcoming years. He referred to a previously mentioned issue relating to revenue forecasts that staff is not comfortable releasing the amounts and has not provided those amounts to Mr. Martin. He noted as soon as more information is available it will be provided to Council at a meeting or work session.

Councilmember Miller commented he would be interested in discussing housing stabilization to determine if processes are being completed in the most efficient way. He noted there are communities who implement free-market plans, and he asked if there is a chance that the City would look into free-market options for Housing programs. Mayor Heggins commented she would be interested to know how partnerships are permitted to allow the free market to step in and assist with housing stabilization efforts. She indicated she knows the opportunities change every day, and she would be interested to know how to capitalize more efficiently on the changing opportunities.

Interim Planning Director Brian Hiatt shared the City is off to a great start and eventually, the programs will shift from the public sector to the private sector. He commented private sectors

will implement great things with existing homes. He shared there will be more discussion tomorrow regarding where there might be gaps in affordable housing. He stated the Housing Advocacy Commission (HAC) is looking at studies regarding existing needs in the community and how to make affordable housing available to senior citizens and ways to research the markets current needs. He noted there are positive things with these types of studies, and Salisbury has been in partnerships with Mooresville, Concord, Rowan and Cabarrus Counties learning better practices for housing stabilization.

Councilmember Sheffield asked if there are things the City can do to encourage the free market for affordable housing. Councilmember Alexander referenced a Salisbury Development Corporation (CDC) program to assist with funding for citizens who have a slightly higher income than what the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) criteria requires. She commented these applicants are able to utilize funds for home improvements and pay it back over a period of time. She noted sometimes HUD's criteria eliminates the people who can use it the most.

Councilmember Miller commented there is a need for a federal agenda and for the City to be included in the Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). He pointed out some of these issues might be addressed by a broader housing spectrum, and he noted when the City was removed from Charlotte's MSA there were negative impacts and increased poverty rates.

Mr. Miller asked for clarification regarding what Council would like to get out of each session. Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if some of the items on the Agenda could be accelerated if the Agenda was publicly noticed with set times. Councilmember Miller commented the Agenda can flow as Council sees fit. Mr. Bailey commented Mr. Dyke Messinger requested to speak regarding the Bell Tower Green Agenda item, and he suggested Council could discuss Agenda items and return to the Bell Tower Green item once Mr. Messinger arrives.

RECESS

Thereupon, Mayor Pro Tem Post made a **motion** to recess the meeting until Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Livingstone College Department of Culinary Arts at 530 Jake Alexander Boulevard South. Councilmember Miller seconded the motion. All council members in attendance agreed unanimously to recess. The meeting was recessed at 8:28 p.m.

RECONVENE – TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2019

Mayor Heggins welcomed all those in attendance, and she thanked staff for its work. City Manager Lane Bailey commented Downtown Salisbury, Inc. Director Larissa Harper would start the meeting off with a presentation about downtown development.

ECONOMIC AND DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Incentives and Disincentives to Promote Downtown

Downtown Salisbury, Inc., (DSI) Executive Director Larissa Harper shared information regarding the Innes Street Improvement Grant, Municipal Service District (MSD) Incentive Grant and the Downtown Salisbury Revitalization Incentive Grant Program that consists of four grants: Building Renovation Incentive Grant, Residential Production Incentive Grant, Residential Utilities Incentive Grant, and a Fire Suppression Grant.

Ms. Harper reviewed private and public downtown investment statistics from years previous. She commented DSI is looking at other cities' maintenance codes and ordinances regarding how to enforce them effectively and reaching out to other consultants regarding the best practices on how to reactive underutilized buildings. She noted a parking study and a Main Street Design concept is underway to help attract tenants and developers.

Councilmember Sheffield asked which areas the Innes Street and MSD Grants cover. Ms. Harper pointed out the Innes Street Improvement Grant begins on Innes Street near I-85 and extends through the Downtown Salisbury District to end near Catawba College. She added the MSD Grants cover the areas from Horah Street at South Main Street to the railroad tracks and extends to Jackson and South Lee Streets.

Councilmember Sheffield recognized the Young's who invested in the building where O. O. Rufty's was previously located that now houses a new business named Hive. She asked them to provide advice at some point of how to make it better or easier to do business with Salisbury as a City.

Councilmember Miller noted the available grants are designed so more improvements can be made other than the ones initially planned. He asked Interim Planning Director Brian Hiatt for his input on the incentives. Mr. Hiatt noted the incentives have shown to be successful.

Mayor Pro Tem Post pointed out there are 22 vacant buildings in the downtown area, and he asked how many vacancies were there in 2014. He noted the incentive grants were developed for rehabilitation of older buildings to provide revitalization and bring tenants to the downtown area. Ms. Harper commented she would get that information from the state.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked how to get vacancies filled and not only renovate buildings. Ms. Harper noted property owners have waited for the right time to make repairs, and she added vacancies off of West Innes Street have declined this year.

Councilmember Sheffield asked how many people lived downtown before the Empire Hotel development. Ms. Harper commented she will get this information to Council.

Councilmember Miller asked Ms. Harper to provide a Downtown Residential Report to Council. He noted with the grants available there are investments that can be made to create a market place for higher rental income, higher investments, higher property values, and more

opportunities for businesses. Ms. Harper noted she will bring the report back to Council.

First Fridays, Pop-up Markets and Efforts to Promote Retail in Downtown

Ms. Harper pointed out downtown Salisbury is gaining a great reputation for restaurants and nightlife. She noted there are 12 First Friday events scheduled for the upcoming year.

Ms. Harper commented Downtown Salisbury, Inc. (DSI) has made efforts to promote retail through the DSI Economic Vitality Committee and the Promotions Committee by partnering with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College (RCCC) to launch a small business education series. She added DSI hosts Busker's Bashes, Beer Crawls, Wine About Winter events and "Shop Small" on Small Business Saturday, and have increased social media by working monthly with the Digital Marketing Director Sarah Michalec with the Tourism Development Authority (TDA).

Ms. Harper explained pop-up markets are a way for entrepreneurs to test a market for their product and activate vacant buildings. Councilmember Sheffield suggested pop-up markets be utilized in outdoor spaces. Mayor Heggins agreed and she noted the pop-up markets she was interested in replicating from sister city Salisbury, England take place in parking lots. Councilmember Alexander suggested City Hall or the parking lot beside of it could be a possibility for pop-up markets. Mayor Pro Tem Post suggested the Wells Fargo Bank parking lot as an option for the Farmer's Market.

City Manager Lane Bailey noted Councilmember Miller suggested closing one of the streets on a Wednesday afternoon or Saturday morning for the Farmer's Market. Mayor Pro Tem Post suggested Fisher Street in front of the library. Mr. Bailey asked Council if those options could be explored. Council agreed. Councilmember Miller asked Ms. Harper to reach out to the Public Library and the Farmer's Market vendors regarding the discussion and idea of the Farmer's Market relocating.

Mayor Heggins asked about the cost and the process of becoming a vendor at the Farmer's Market. Councilmember Alexander noted vendors register through the Farmer's Market at no cost. Councilmember Sheffield introduced Ms. Dottie Hoy. Ms. Hoy commented it has been discussed that the Farmer's Market be moved to the Wells Fargo parking lot. Ms. Hoy also noted vendors contact the Farmer's Market Board so they can keep a balance of all things offered at the Farmers Market.

Councilmember Miller pointed out the City Hall parking lot is not needed on Saturdays and he suggested it could be a place for the Farmer's Market.

Mayor Heggins commented she is interested in creating a space downtown outside of the Farmer's Market for pop-up markets. Ms. Harper commented DSI will explore its options.

Mayor Pro Tem Post suggested an increase in events during the summer months such as a Food Truck Festival or a Festival for Kids. Ms. Harper shared a Crazy Klearance occurs in July, and she pointed there is low participation during the hotter months and over the Fourth of July holiday.

Ms. Dottie Hoy noted a Bread Riot Group will host a Burger Bash at New Serum Brewing Company and she was unaware that the group needed to contact DSI. Ms. Harper commented there is a need for businesses how to know to contact DSI to provide information or ideas for partnerships and promoting events in the City.

DSI Board member Diane Young commented DSI is an economic development organization with promotions and events supporting the economic strategy. She shared her concerns of the community needing to make an effort along with DSI in educating the public of what is happening downtown on a regular basis and not just during scheduled events. She stated she is concerned DSI will become an events organization if it concentrates too heavily on promotions and less on economic development, design and organization issues.

Councilmember Alexander asked if there is a way to coordinate with other community events not necessarily conducted by DSI. Ms. Harper agreed, and she noted there is a need to keep the public informed and for more impactful events.

Ms. Renee Wimbish commented events bring people downtown, give people the opportunity to have fun at no cost and provide economic growth. Ms. Harper noted events welcome all people downtown and some events include can food and clothing drives. She noted the focus should be on the social and community aspects of events.

Mayor Heggins asked for clarification regarding Ms. Harper's role with DSI and the City, and she added there may need to be thought given regarding additional staff to help make things happen. She added pop-up markets would allow people who may not be able to afford to shop in downtown shops feel like they are a part of the community and offer something in their price range. Ms. Harper stated she is the Executive Director of DSI, and she added her role is to run a City Department and to help create downtown development by working with the Planning Board, Development Services and other City Departments to activate and revitalize downtown. She added she is in kind staff to DSI and ensures business opportunities are running effectively to plan and implement its work in keeping up with the criteria to remain a 501c3 non-profit organization. She shared DSI has a program to show the work completed with design elements in downtown, promotions, and co-opportunities in marketing, economic vitality with business education series, and organization committees.

Councilmember Miller suggested Ms. Harper and Mayor Heggins meet individually to go through the programs of work to ensure a good understanding.

Ms. Harper noted the North Carolina (NC) Main Street Conference will be held March 12 through 14, 2019.

Councilmember Sheffield asked about an overall Downtown Plan. Ms. Harper noted the overall Downtown Plan that was developed in 2010 is in the process of being updated by the DSI Design Committee.

Mayor Pro Tem Post pointed out a majority of the downtown stores were not open

December 24, 2018 and there should have been better communication within the retailers since Christmas is a busy season. Ms. Harper commented she encouraged businesses to stay open and she noted she is hoping the small business education sessions will encourage business owners to share ideas, cross-promote, and share what is been done successfully and not in competition.

RECESS

Thereupon, Mayor Heggins made a **motion** to take a five minute recess. Mayor Heggins and Mayor Pro Tem Post, and Councilmembers Alexander, Miller, and Sheffield voted AYE. (5-0)

The meeting reconvened at 10:35 a.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Post shared information about the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, a non-profit organization, and suggested DSI or another City department contact them regarding ideas for revitalizing downtown.

Mayor Pro Tem Post reviewed several disincentive issues including creating a tax to impose on property owners if their building is vacant for an excessive amount of time without a good faith effort to lease the space, a rent rebate program, and streetscaping. He shared an idea from the Mayor of Statesville to white-wash the windows of vacant buildings to provide opportunities for artists to create the look of a mural on the windows. He commented Downtown Salisbury needs to become the destination where people come to shop not only one shop but whole downtown. He added there is a need to think creatively on how to fill the vacancies downtown.

Economic Summit

Mayor Pro Tem Post noted an Economic Summit will take place March 15, 2019 between 7:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. at the Livingstone College Department of Hospitality and Culinary Art. to develop ideas regarding economic development.

Mayor Heggins asked if Facilitator Warren Miller will be facilitating the Summit. Mayor Pro Tem Post agreed. Mayor Heggins asked how the invitation list was created and how many people will attend the Summit. Mayor Pro Tem Post commented the list includes members from the Chamber of Commerce Boards of Directors, City Council, County Commissioners, Economic Development Commission (EDC), and various economic organizations, and others who have reached out. He pointed out save the dates have been sent out, and he has received a lot of interest from people who want to attend.

Mayor Heggins asked if there is a registration process or if participants can show up on the day of the event. Mayor Pro Tem Post noted an RSVP was requested. He added Livingstone College Culinary is providing the space and the food and he noted money was raised for the Summit.

The Intelligent Design and Evolution Awareness Center

Rowan County Intelligent Design and Evolution Awareness (IDEA) Center Executive Director Addison Davis shared information regarding the funding request for the Rowan County IDEA Center. He reviewed programs the IDEA Center provides and grants they have utilized. He shared there is a need for a physical location for the IDEA Center as they continue to work and hold workshops downtown. Mr. Davis explained Flywheel is willing to be in the co-space and the incubator operation with IDEA Center. He explained the plan is to ask the City and County to help fund the IDEA Center with one-third of the cost to be split between them. He commented the revenue from the co-working space operations will eventually become profitable and offset any funds needed. Mr. Davis shared Rowan Jobs Initiatives is the focal point to raise money for IDEA Center.

Mayor Heggins shared that The Kauffman Foundation sponsored a conference regarding cities being inclusive and innovative in capturing data in a non-traditional way, and the IDEA Center could provide an opportunity to do that. She pointed out the Economic Development Summit would provide an opportunity to share with the Kauffman Foundation as it considers investing in communities to help continue this work.

Mr. Davis reviewed incentives and programs that will help bring people to the community and recruit people from tradeshow, college campus or other areas to start a business here.

Councilmember Miller asked what is included in the Foundation's operating expenses. Mr. Davis pointed out operating expenses include the Executive Director's salary, marketing, travel expenses and office operations. He explained some of the costs could be absorbed in the incubator's operations if they were relocated to the same space.

Councilmember Sheffield questioned how the IDEA Center is currently funded. Rowan County IDEA Center Board Member Brad Walser pointed out operating funds come from 501c3 organizations, the County, and grants utilized for programs. He commented a large portion of the support comes from Chamber of Commerce, and he noted there are investors interested in making donations.

Councilmember Sheffield pointed out the private sector is important, and she added obtaining a third of the cost from each group will not provide enough funding for the project. Mr. Walser agreed, and he stated there has been a lot of interest from the community for the IDEA Center. He explained the private sector is targeting the business community and major organizations that donate to local activities.

Councilmember Sheffield asked if an incubator or IDEA Center is the right idea for residents of Rowan County. Mr. Walser pointed out if this is not done, Salisbury will be left behind as surrounding communities have incubators in place to capture and build start-up businesses.

Councilmember Miller asked for statistics for the size of Salisbury. Mr. Davis provided information regarding statistics and he noted Gastonia, Wilson, and Goldsboro as examples.

Councilmember Miller shared he was at the Appalachian State Center for Entrepreneurial Development and students pitched an idea of a coffee cart to the Center. He added the idea has turned into a coffee shop that is operated entirely by students. He commented changing the dynamic of what is possible will get young people involved and thinking.

Mr. Walser pointed out if opportunities are not available in our community it makes it easier for other communities to attract people looking for entrepreneurial assistance. He added it takes years to have tangible results, but the IDEA Center will provide guidance to determine if an idea could develop into a business. Mr. Davis explained there are various incentives and programs available to keep people in Salisbury.

Mayor Pro Tem Post commented Salisbury has two great assets in geography and broadband.

Mayor Heggins shared Salisbury was listed as one of the best places to start a business. She agreed with Mr. Davis regarding the reasons Salisbury is such a prime location for entrepreneurial work. She noted Salisbury is setting examples and moving forward with the IDEA Center would be a start for a future generation.

Mayor Heggins thanked Mr. Walser and Mr. Davis for their presentation. Mr. Walser and Mr. Davis thanked Council for all they do.

Fountainworks Facilitator Warren Miller provided Council with an overall review of the morning session.

RECESS

Thereupon, Mayor Heggins made a **motion** to take a five minute recess. Mayor Heggins and Mayor Pro Tem Post, and Councilmembers Alexander, Miller, and Sheffield voted AYE. (5-0)

The meeting reconvened at 12:32 p.m.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Traffic Patterns and Downtown Traffic Study

City Engineer Wendy Brindle noted the City is currently coordinating with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) on resurfacing Main Street and creating a plan for restriping streets within the City.

Councilmember Sheffield asked where the resurfacing will take place. Ms. Brindle shared the locations where the resurfacing will take place. She added once a consultant is selected and information is collected, a plan will be implemented regarding downtown traffic restriping, traffic

pattern changes, or parking changes. She added the plan will give the City leverage to apply for grants in the future for larger downtown projects. She commented a Main Street Study is underway.

Councilmember Sheffield asked about the parameters for resurfacing on Innes Street. Ms. Brindle shared where the resurfacing will take place. Councilmember Sheffield asked when the resurfacing of Main and Innes Streets will begin. Ms. Brindle noted the Innes Street resurfacing will take place this paving season, and she pointed out the Main Street resurfacing was delayed and is planned for next year.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if brick pavers were taken into consideration for resurfacing the blocks within the square. Ms. Brindle shared brick pavers have not been discussed with NCDOT as part of their resurfacing, but it could be considered. She added the consultant can look at the pros and cons of the options and include it in the project scope.

Councilmember Sheffield asked how long the study is expected to take and when it will begin. Ms. Brindle noted the study will be a preliminary plan for Main Street. She added she does not recall the time frame but there is a tight schedule due to coordinating with NCDOT's paving season for year 2020-2021. Mr. Hiatt indicated the study will be finished this calendar year with presentations to be provided by the consultants to be chosen and then a time frame determined once a consultant is hired. Councilmember Sheffield asked if Council will be in control once the consultant is hired. Ms. Brindle agreed.

Mayor Heggins asked if parking issues would be included in the study. Ms. Brindle noted the study does not include parking issues but another study is underway that will be completed by July that includes a Comprehensive Downtown Parking Plan.

Councilmember Sheffield asked for an overall plan. Council agreed on asking for an overall Comprehensive Downtown Plan. Ms. Brindle noted Downtown Salisbury, Inc., (DSI) Executive Director Larissa Harper who would be available to provide further information. Ms. Brindle noted the Main Street Plan and the Parking Plan is included in the study.

Ms. Harper shared the DSI Design Committee is working on improving the Downtown Master Plan that was developed in 2010, and she thanked Council for its directive. Mayor Heggins thanked everyone in attendance.

Bell Tower Green

Mr. Bailey introduced Chairman of the Bell Tower Green Board of Directors Mr. Dyke Messenger. Mr. Messenger provided information regarding the Bell Tower Green Park. He noted \$9.75 million has been raised with an additional \$1.5 million needed for streetscaping. He thanked the City for its work on the project, and he noted the groundbreaking ceremony took place this spring. He commented plans should be completed within the next few months to provide a total cost of the project.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if there is a request for funds from the City. Mr. Messenger noted additional funding will be needed. He added the best way to get the park connected to downtown is to install brick pavers. Mr. Bailey pointed out the funds requested are for brick pavers to be placed at the intersections around the park and is included in the streetscape improvements.

Councilmember Miller asked about the park maintenance endowment. Mr. Messenger commented there has been discussion about modeling the park maintenance strategy after Hurley Park where the expenses are split between the City and the Foundation For the Carolinas (FFTC). Councilmember Miller noted the endowment is important as an initial investment and can be used for park maintenance. Councilmember Alexander clarified Mr. Messenger is asking the City for funding to pay for the brick pavers at an estimated cost of \$1.5 million and she added Mr. Messenger sees installing brick pavers as the City's responsibility.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Sam Wilborn noted the plan is to establish adequate staffing at the park and model after Hurley Park's maintenance strategy.

Councilmember Miller noted he is concerned about placing brick pavers across from the Salisbury Post due to large trucks that use the street. Mr. Messenger agreed and noted a concrete pad could be placed in the area.

Mayor Heggins welcomed and recognized former Mayor Margaret Kluttz who was in the audience.

Mayor Heggins thanked Bell Tower Green representatives for being at the Retreat and for all the money raised to build a park in the City. She thanked staff for their support of the project.

The Depot and Developing a Transportation Center

Councilmember Alexander referenced initiatives happening with North Carolina Railroad to include more stops and high-speed rail services which will create an opportunity at the Train Depot. She added it is important to include this component in the downtown plan because the City has opportunities for changes in traffic patterns and adding on-street parking to assist with extra traffic. She noted there will also be North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) improvements taking place.

City Engineer Wendy Brindle noted the NCDOT Rail Division is working with a firm to develop plans around the Depot by looking at traffic patterns and where City buses and Greyhound bus services stop in order to transform the Depot into a multi-modal facility. She commented the City received funding for a second platform at the Depot that will include two towers. She explained the towers will go across the tracks to a second platform that will allow increased passenger service in Salisbury and create the ability to separate freight and rail on two different tracks.

Councilmember Alexander pointed out information regarding future plans with the consultant group for increasing surface parking to allow for a multi-modal transportation

opportunity. She noted people are already commuting by train to various cities throughout the state.

Leveraging Community Partnerships

Councilmember Alexander pointed out the need to maximize partnerships within the community and support the work of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). She stated obtaining property from the YMCA will increase the Veteran's Affairs (VA) Cemetery Project and provide connections between the Greenway. She noted the Parks and Recreation Department has worked tremendously on grant opportunities for the project.

City Engineer Wendy Brindle updated Council regarding property owned by the YMCA that will be donated to the VA Hospital to extend the cemetery and the Greenway. She noted maps have been submitted to the VA Administration for final review and once finalized the City will own a piece of the property adjacent to Grants Creek that will tie into the Kelsey Scott property. She shared a consultant has begun work on the design of that portion of the Greenway that extends from Forestdale Drive to Kelsey Scott Park.

Councilmember Alexander stated Greenway opportunities are very important. Ms. Brindle pointed out the Carolina Thread Trail is funding the design of the trail and the design of the connection at the existing Greenway at Forestdale Drive to Catawba College. She commented the goal is to have the bridge connection to Catawba completed this fall.

Councilmember Alexander asked how the Greenway will be connected to Community Park. Ms. Brindle shared the Parks and Recreation Department, Carolina Thread Trails and the Engineering Department are looking at ways to connect the park including the possibility of a surfaced trail out to Community Park.

Councilmember Alexander noted the YMCA is an example of how the City can leverage partnerships with different groups to provide services to citizens. Mayor Pro Tem Post shared nearly 20% of the YMCA members are on some type of scholarship. He noted the YMCA has a great Wellness Program for seniors, and he commented the YMCA appreciates its partnership with the City. Ms. Brindle noted the YMCA has been gracious and patient working out the details regarding the VA property transfer.

Mayor Heggins noted she hopes at some point the streets will become more pedestrian and cyclist friendly. Ms. Brindle noted a Comprehensive Bicycle Plan adopted in 2009 is still included in projects, especially NCDOT resurfacing projects.

Seeking Grants through the Kauffman Foundation to Assist with Social Issues

Mayor Heggins pointed out the Kauffman Foundation specifically supports entrepreneurship and jurisdictions and does not assist with social issues.

City Manager Lane Bailey introduced Rowan County Grant Administrator Carrie Price and noted County Manager Aaron Church has offered Ms. Price's assistance in writing grants to

Salisbury. He suggested she be included during conversations to answer questions. Mayor Heggins thanked Ms. Price, Mr. Church, and the County Commission for their willingness to work with the City.

Exploring Angel Fund Investments

Mayor Pro Tem Post noted the Kauffman Foundation and the IDEA Center is included in these investments, and he suggested this topic be deferred and incorporated into other conversations.

Explore Grant Opportunities

Mayor Heggins noted discussions regarding My Brother's Keeper and grants available through the United States Conference of Mayors to help with re-stabilization can take place with Rowan County Grant Administrator Carrie Price.

Seeking Grants or Interest-Free Loans for Utility Infrastructure

Mayor Heggins asked where the City was in seeking grants or loans for utility infrastructure.

Salisbury-Rowan Utilities (SRU) Director Jim Behmer provided information to Council regarding grants and loans for utility infrastructure, and he noted affordability requirements for each. He pointed out the City is not qualified for some types of the grants based on its rates. Mr. Bailey noted if the City's water and sewer rates were higher it would qualify for more grants, but he does not propose increasing water and sewer rates. Mayor Pro Tem Post asked for clarification. Mr. Bailey explained if rates are too low, other means could be explored such as charging more for the service before seeking grants or loans. Mayor Heggins asked how high the rates would have to increase to qualify for grants or loans. Mr. Behmer noted the rates would have to increase \$69 to \$99 a month for residential rates with an average of 5,000 gallons of water used each month.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked about the current utility infrastructure need. Mr. Behmer commented the needs would be for a major wastewater project that is under design and construction. He added further needs would be for capacity and treatment of the water plant with 10 to 12 projects listed in the CIP, and he noted there is a constant study looking for inflow and infiltration of the sewer system that affects treatment capacity. Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if the rates are providing sufficient reserves for future capital needs. Mr. Behmer agreed.

Mr. Bailey noted economic development for downtown was mentioned earlier but it cannot occur without an efficient water system.

Councilmember Miller asked about providing additional incentives in the existing program for high water users. Mr. Behmer noted where water is flushed it could be possible to offer additional incentives in those areas. Councilmember Miller suggested the idea be brought back to Council.

Citywide Housing Availability and Initiatives including Housing Veterans

Councilmember Sheffield asked about plans to continue funding the Housing Revitalization Program. She asked what other ideas can be explored and what the City is doing to support the programs already in place.

Councilmember Alexander asked what is taking place in regards to senior housing.

Mr. Bailey noted the City is working on an application to the State to become a certified retirement community.

Mayor Heggins asked what could be done to expand housing for Veterans.

Interim Planning Director Brian Hiatt shared information regarding two studies that could be funded through Home Administration funds regarding affordable housing and senior housing. He indicated the studies could cost \$7,000 and be complete within the new few months. Mr. Hiatt noted efforts that are taking place regarding affordable housing needs.

Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if anything else can be done to interact with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to receive more Section 8 vouchers. He noted there is an extensive wait list and it can take several years before the vouchers become available.

Councilmember Sheffield shared at the last Housing Advisory Commission (HAC) meeting, Salisbury Housing Authority Executive Director Bradley Moore clarified Rowan County Housing Authority handles the vouchers. Mayor Pro Tem Post pointed out there is a need to work with the federal government regarding vouchers.

Councilmember Sheffield asked what can be done and if Council can help.

Mr. Hiatt noted the Planning Board has discussed looking into the Land Development Ordinance (LDO) and providing changes to meet the needs of those providing affordable housing in the private sector.

Mayor Heggins pointed out opportunity zones in the City need to be optimized, and she noted there needs to be a way to engage with private investors, private developers, or non-profits willing to support housing initiatives to build in the opportunity zones. She commented there needs to be a way to develop more affordable housing opportunities. Mr. Hiatt noted economic development is being reviewed for potential areas within the City's opportunity zones.

Councilmember Miller asked if there will ever be enough adequate housing. Mr. Hiatt noted the study will enable the participating competitors to provide affordable housing where gaps exist for single and multi-family homes. Councilmember Miller added it does not make sense to separate affordable housing, and he suggested incentives for developers to incorporate both into their development. Mayor Heggins stated opportunity zones do not create economic segregation in the community but the ability to build and weave together different income levels. Mr. Hiatt

noted the goal is at some point to create all types of housing and to become a part of the Charlotte regions.

Council agreed to pursue getting Salisbury back into the Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

Mr. Bailey noted staff is working to hire a Planning Director who will have expertise in housing.

Councilmember Sheffield noted the Land Development Ordinance (LDO) needs to be reevaluated to pursue private investment in housing and remove obstacles. Mr. Bailey suggested it be more user friendly. Councilmember Miller stated he supports the LDO becoming more user-friendly, but suggested it include new home construction.

Councilmember Alexander noted the City would be responsible for ongoing upkeep if standards for development are lowered. Councilmember Sheffield clarified she suggested the LDO be more friendly and not that its standards be lowered.

Initiatives for Veterans Including Veteran's Hall of Fame and an Update on Veterans Hiring Program

Human Resources Director Ruth Kennerly stated staff recently attended a meeting with Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency (SRCAA) and Veteran Affairs (VA) Medical Center Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist Walter Rice to partner and help veterans obtain jobs. She explained there are two ways for veterans to obtain jobs: an immediate hire where job postings are shared with Mr. Rice and the veteran can apply, or the VA would be responsible for paying the veteran while the City provides the opportunity for work. She added if the City does not have a job available, they will partner with other agencies to help veterans find a job.

Mayor Heggins noted Mr. Rice and Supervisor Marchea Sovde reached out to her regarding the program, and she brought in the Human Resources Department. She thanked everyone who is working to provide employment opportunities to veterans in the city.

Mayor Heggins shared the Veterans Hall of Fame is looking for a space in Salisbury and would like to bring the Veteran's Hall of Fame Museum to the City in the future.

City Manager Lane Bailey asked if the VA Medical Hospital could provide enough space. Mayor Heggins noted the Hall of Fame is looking for their own space to hold events in the same building where their memorabilia is displayed. Mayor Pro Tem Post noted the Mall could be an option and mentioned the County may give them space at no cost. Mayor Heggins stated they explored that option but prefer to be a part of the downtown area.

Councilmember Sheffield asked Ms. Kennerly for information regarding the number of employees working for the City who are veterans. Ms. Kennerly noted she will provide the information to Council.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Friendly Infrastructure Expansions

Councilmember Sheffield asked about the Bicycle Plan. City Engineer Wendy Brindle noted the plan was established in 2009 and the recommendations are still valid and used anytime an area is being developed. She pointed out some recommendations are on busy streets, and it is difficult to implement without major changes and funding to address that type of project. She reviewed the challenges that may occur and alternatives that are available. She shared planning and cost estimates have been made regarding a bicycle loop around City Park. She commented projects can be completed during resurfacing by the State or City if funds are available.

Councilmember Sheffield asked if Council can receive information regarding the recommendations included in the Bicycle Plan that have been implemented. Ms. Brindle stated she will gather the information to share with Council.

RECESS

Thereupon, Mayor Heggins made a **motion** to take a five minute recess. Mayor Heggins and Mayor Pro Tem Post, and Councilmembers Alexander, Miller, and Sheffield voted AYE. (5-0)

The meeting reconvened at 2:25 p.m.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE – CONTINUED

Identifying Issues for a Federal Agenda

City Manager Lane Bailey provided Council information regarding options for lobbyists and noted additional firms are available. He shared a preliminary list of projects for a federal agenda. He suggested if there is not going to be a federal agenda, he does not **think** there would be the need to engage with a federal lobbyist. He added there may be a need to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) and see what proposals are received.

Councilmember Alexander asked how the County's grant writer fits in with this. Ms. Price noted she has not written federal grants but she is willing to help. Councilmember Alexander asked if Ms. Price could work with the person already involved with CCOG.

Mr. Bailey recommended staying with the existing services with the CCOG and if there is a need to revisit then an RFP can be conducted. Councilmember Alexander agreed and added to be specific regarding what Council expects to receive in return.

Mr. Bailey shared information regarding the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) designation and pointed out the impact it would have on the community. Councilmember Alexander asked how Salisbury could be re-designated to the MSA. Mr. Bailey noted it is being worked out with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Assistant City Manager Zack Kyle noted it would be best to speak with CCOG representatives. Mayor Pro Tem Post commented having someone inside the federal government might be useful, and he noted it is census-based and both the House and Senate have committees that are committed to working with census and data. He pointed out finding the right person is important and it would make it easier if that person was in federal government.

Councilmember Alexander noted that is included in part of the dues for CCOG. Mayor Heggins pointed out the United States Conference of Mayors (USCOM) is dedicated to helping jurisdictions and providing cities with inside contacts with federal government.

Councilmember Sheffield asked about the history of being removed from the MSA. Mr. Kyle noted it is unknown why the City was taken out of the Charlotte MSA but it is being looked into.

Mr. Bailey noted if there are some issues where more expertise is needed, the City might need to look into getting a firm that is available to provide assistance in different areas.

Councilmember Sheffield asked if it helps to be designated in the Charlotte MSA to receive transportation grants. Mr. Bailey noted the grants provide additional funding from the State for transportation but there are tougher issues facing Transit and staff is looking to modify routes.

Councilmember Miller commented he is not opposed to paying a fee to get where the City needs to be. He noted there is a difference between receiving services from a group providing a certain number of hours of service compared to paying a fee for those services. Mayor Pro Tem Post agreed and he noted expertise is needed.

Mr. Bailey suggested Council continue to work with CCOG and send out an RFP to include a list of items and see what is returned regarding the level of expertise in those areas. Councilmember Alexander agreed and suggested for the firms to be specific on the projects they will be working on.

Mr. Bailey noted the Ferguson Group provides services to meet with staff regarding upcoming projects in the CIP and then meet with Council to develop a Federal Agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Post noted a lobbyist or an attorney could direct staff on what is important or significant.

Councilmember Miller stated he supports the idea of the RFP, and he explained the need for having more than a relationship with the CCOG. Councilmember Alexander asked Mr. Bailey to come back with a narrowed down list of who will receive RFPs. Mr. Bailey commented firms on the list will be sent an RFP.

Mayor Heggins commented Council's Agenda should be provided to CCOG or the USCOM and if they cannot help then staff can search for a lobbyist.

Interim Planning Director Brian Hiatt shared his past experience working with a hired lobbyist. Mayor Pro Tem Post asked if Concord found it valuable. Mr. Hiatt agreed. Mayor Pro

Tem Post asked if Concord is a part of the CCOG. Mr. Hiatt noted Concord was not part of the CCOG when he retired.

Mayor Pro Tem Post pointed out there is a difference between the levels of expertise when \$8,700 is paid as a group due when compared to paying \$60,000 a year for individual service.

Councilmember Sheffield asked if the services would be by retainer or by a project. Councilmember Miller commented having a retainer would work better than paying on per project basis as it could cost more in the long run. City attorney Graham Corriher agreed, and he noted a 30-day termination agreement is required to terminate services with the firm.

Mayor Heggins noted the only way to measure success is by the hours the lobbyist has put in and not if funds are secured for the City. She added it needs to be decided what funding Council wants to pursue. Councilmember Miller commented it may not be assistance in funding, but the lobbyist may be available to help Council work through certain processes such as getting back into the Charlotte MSA.

Councilmember Alexander agreed with Mayor Heggins and she added the objective needs to be clear in order to have accountability for results. Councilmember Miller noted he has no problem of who is chosen but it needs someone to advocate Congress on the City's behalf. He added if a higher level of expertise is needed it may come with higher fees.

Mayor Heggins suggested the RFP be provided to the CCOG and the USCOM to see if they are able to provide assistance. Councilmember Miller agreed.

Councilmember Alexander indicated once the RFP is distributed and results are received then Council will provide clear expectations of what it wants to look into. Mayor Heggins pointed out to be sure that each of the firms that Council looks into nothing is missed with the CCOG or the USCOM. Councilmember Alexander agreed.

State of Recycling

Public Services Street Division Manager Craig Powers updated Council regarding increased recycling costs, contamination rates, and plans for further education on recycling. Councilmember Miller asked about recycling paper only. Mr. Powers agreed that could be an option and he noted the possibility of reducing the number of items picked up. He commented future education will be provided and more enforcement to decrease contaminations. Councilmember Alexander asked about the contaminants. Mr. Powers noted contaminants include textiles, bedding, non-recyclable plastic, garden hoses, motor oil, food, construction debris, wood, leaves, and other non-recyclable items.

Councilmember Sheffield requested Street Division Operator Mark Pulliam provide a recycling presentation to Council and for pictures to be included in the Lamplighter newsletter. Mayor Pro Tem Post suggested a label be placed on the recycling bins.

Councilmember Alexander stated a company in Greensboro makes glass tiles and asked if there was an opportunity to sell glass to them. Mr. Powers agreed, and he added vendors pick up the material that is sold to them.

Mayor Heggins asked about educating residents on recycling. Mr. Powers shared various efforts on educating residents on recycling and littering and mentioned the Adopt-A-Street Program. Councilmember Alexander suggested getting a mascot for recycling and putting the video of the recycling presentation online and on channel Access 16. Mr. Powers commented communications could assist in putting something together.

City Lake Improvements

Street Division Manager Craig Powers shared information regarding improvements needed at the City Lake, and he explained the efforts that have been used to treat the algae. He noted a letter was received from the State advising the dam is in need of repair. He commented he received cost estimates from Lake Management Companies on how to better manage the lake with a survey estimated to cost \$9,000. He pointed out an estimated cost has been received for \$200,000 for the dredging options of hydro or mechanical and \$50,000 to repair the dam and stonework around the lake. Mr. Powers indicated the suggested enhancements made during dredging would be an estimated cost of \$250,000 added to dredging expense.

Parks and Recreation Coordinator Sam Wilborn agreed it would be a great opportunity to provide enhancements to the lake. Mr. Powers noted mechanical dredging and draining the pond would be the best route if enhancements are going to be made at the same time. Councilmember Alexander asked if it is included the overall master plan and when the cost will be provided. Mr. Wilborn noted the Master Plan is on-going with a projected timeline for information to be provided in October.

Councilmember Alexander commented due to the North Carolina Department of Environmental stating the dam has to be fixed, Council has no choice but to make it a priority.

Employee Compensation Update

Human Resources Director Ruth Kennerly updated Council regarding employee compensation. She noted the Police and Fire Departments have received increases and full-time employees that met specific criteria received a livable wage increase. She noted Human Resources and the Finance Department provides Public Services, the Police Department, and the Fire Department with incentives based on experience, further education, and certifications. Finance Director Shannon Moore noted Finance works closely with Human Resources to ensure salary adjustments are worked into the upcoming budget. She added Public Services and Salisbury-Rowan Utilities (SRB) were both looked at closely.

Councilmember Sheffield asked if there was a possibility to explore incentives to encourage employees to live in the city. Ms. Kennerly noted it can be explored, and she shared nearly 100 employees live the city.

Mayor Heggins noted some cities make it a requirement for employees to live in the city. Mr. Bailey noted it could become a recruitment challenge. Mr. Bailey noted some department heads do have residency requirements such as the Police Chief.

ESTABLISHING PRIORITY GOALS AND RE-PRIORITIZING THE CIP

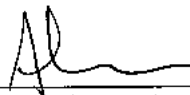
Facilitator Warren Miller reviewed the priority goals Council noted during the discussion. Mr. Miller asked Council to prioritize those goals. Councilmember Alexander commented she felt it was too early for prioritization. Mayor Pro Tem Post noted Council's priority should be placed on the budget since the goals are related to cost. City Manager Lane Bailey noted if Council would like additional information it could be provided, and he suggested prioritizing take place after a more redefined CIP has been determined and once Council has heard from the Boards and Commissions. He mentioned a possible one-day work session in April. Councilmember Miller suggested Board and Commissions be given guidance. Mayor Heggins asked if Boards and Commissions would have the information from the Retreat. Mr. Bailey noted staff liaisons can provide that information to them. Council agreed to prioritize the goals at a later time.

Mr. Bailey noted the \$2 million in salaries does not include compensation increases, and he pointed out there was a big request for the park downtown and another big request may take place in the future.

Mayor Heggins thanked everyone who worked to make the Retreat a success.

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 4:15 p.m.



Al Heggins, Mayor



Diane Gilmore, City Clerk