

Salisbury, North Carolina
August 18, 2020

REGULAR MEETING

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

ABSENT: Councilmember Tamara Sheffield.

In response to the State of Emergency declaration related to the spread of COVID-19 and to limit physical interactions and the potential spread of COVID-19 the Salisbury City Council met electronically. 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.

RECOGNITION OF VIEWERS

Mayor Alexander welcomed all viewers.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Thereupon, Mayor Pro Tem made a **motion** to adopt the Agenda as presented. Upon a roll call vote Mayor Alexander voted AYE, Mayor Pro Tem Heggins voted AYE, Councilmember Miller voted AYE and Councilmember Post voted AYE. (4-0)

PROCLAMATIONS

Mayor Alexander proclaimed the following observances:

100 TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT RATIFICATION	August 18, 2020
WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY	August 26, 2020
LIBRARY CARD SIGN-UP MONTH	September 2020

CONSENT AGENDA

(a) Minutes

Adopt Minutes of the Special meeting of August 6, 2020.

(b) Ordinance Amendment- Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant

Adopt a Budget Ordinance Amendment to the FY2020-2021 budget in the amount of \$25,736 to appropriate a 2018 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant.

ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2020-2021 BUDGET ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA TO APPROPRIATE 2018 BYRNE JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT.

(The above Ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book No. 29 at Page No. 68, and is known as Ordinance 2020-42.)

(c) Ordinance Amendment- Joint Operations Funds

Adopt a Budget Ordinance Amendment to the FY2020-2021 budget in the amount of \$3,000 to appropriate Joint Operations funds from the US Secret Service.

ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2020-2021 BUDGET ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA TO APPROPRIATE JOPS SECRET SERVICE FUNDS.

(The above Ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book No. 29 at Page No. 69, and is known as Ordinance 2020-43.)

(d) Contract- Hanes Construction Company

Authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Hanes Construction Company for the Utility Cut Pavement Repairs contract for a fee not to exceed \$120,000.

(e) Cellular Data Service for Water Meters

Approve the purchase of cellular data service for water meters from Badger Meter, Inc. in the amount of \$213,170. This is an annual budgeted amount.

(f) Interlocal Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Management Agreement

Adopt an Interlocal Agreement with the County of Rowan for management of funds from the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) established by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in the amount of \$499,868.

Mayor Alexander noted CRF funds have been approved by the state to be used for Fire Department and Police Department expenses. Mayor Pro Tem Heggins asked if an itemized list of how the money is used will be provided. City Manager Lane Bailey stated the funds will be used for Fire Department and Police Department salaries.

Councilmember Post commented Consent Agenda items exceeding \$100,000 should be explained briefly to inform the public. Mr. Bailey stated the contract with Hanes Construction Company will allow the company to repair utility lines that are cut or damaged. Councilmember Post asked if the cost of the contract is included in the budget. Mr. Bailey agreed. He added the cost for cellular data service which makes water meters work is also included in the City's budget.

Councilmember Post asked if taxpayers will be required to pay an additional \$.81 per installed meter or if the cost is built into the budget. Mr. Bailey indicated the cost for the meters is built into the budget and taxpayers will not have to pay additional fees. He noted cellular data service for smart meters is a great addition that will allow customers to track water usage and identify leaks.

Thereupon, Councilmember Post made a **motion** to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Upon a roll call vote Mayor Alexander voted AYE, Mayor Pro Tem Heggins voted AYE, Councilmember Miller voted AYE and Councilmember Post voted AYE. (4-0)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Alexander opened the floor to receive public comments.

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

LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT TA-01-2020

Senior Planner Catherine Garner stated until 2018 all public hearings related to the Land Development Ordinance required mailed notification to properties within 100 feet of the subject parcels. She explained in 2018 Council increased the radius from within 100 feet of the subject parcels to 500 feet for all public hearings. She indicated the proposal before Council is to tailor

the mail notification radius to the type of hearing being considered. She stated for legislative cases the radius would be 250 feet, and for quasi-judicial cases the radius would be 100 feet.

Ms. Garner indicated the rationale behind the notification radius for legislative hearings is to inform a greater number of citizens beyond a 100-foot radius. She explained legislative hearings are not limited to evidentiary testimony and more neighbors should be notified because of the potential impact to the community, and a radius of 250 feet will be adequate to achieve this purpose. She pointed out quasi-judicial hearings are intended to gather evidence and testimony regarding the impact of a change on a parcel to those parcels immediately surrounding the subject parcel. She added quasi-judicial cases are typically limited to parties with standing which implies a close nexus to the property.

Ms. Garner stated there is a considerable cost to applicants that require reimbursement in every case. She indicated a reimbursement schedule is adopted every year as part of the department's fee schedule. She explained reimbursement is based on the number of envelopes that are sent, and a large number of envelopes will increase costs. She pointed out the average HPC case costs \$150, and the reimbursement is per case. She added someone maintaining a home by completing significant rehabilitation work several times per year would accrue a large bill on a free permit. She explained the notifications also create significant confusion for citizens located near the outer limits of the current 500-foot radius requirement. She explained these citizens often call to inquire about the parcel in question because they do not understand why they are being notified.

Ms. Garner indicated mailings place a significant impact on staff because of the time required to process paperwork, make copies, fold documents and stuff envelopes. She added the HPC currently has nine cases for August, which required approximately 675 pieces of mail to be processed.

Ms. Garner pointed out the department has created additional means to get public notifications to the citizens. She stated there have been additions to the Planning Board's website and the HPC's website. She added citizens can go to the websites if they have questions regarding a notice or an application. She added the websites also have agendas and minutes that may be viewed by the public.

Ms. Garner presented information outlining the savings the proposed notification radius would provide versus the current 500-foot radius on current cases. She explained a rezoning that was completed earlier this year cost \$150 to the applicant for reimbursement fees that would have been \$75 with the proposed radius. She added one of the August HPC cases will cost \$300 using the current notification radius but can be reduced to \$25 if the proposed radius of 100 feet is used. She stated for quasi-judicial cases there will be significant reductions in reimbursement costs.

Ms. Garner indicated a chart was added to Chapter 15, Section 15.3, of the Ordinance that clearly identifies the type of items that are required to make public notices per case. She noted Section 15.3 is currently dense and difficult to read and the chart will provide clarity.

Ms. Garner pointed out signs are required to be posted for all public hearings except text amendments because they are not relative to a specific property. She stated notices for text amendments are posted in the newspaper along with map amendments such as rezoning, conditional district rezoning and issues related to vested rights.

Ms. Garner presented documents outlining the proposed changes to Chapter 15.3C of the Ordinance regarding first class mail notification. She stated the Planning Board met on July 28, 2020 and voted unanimously to recommend the approval of the proposed ordinance amendment.

Councilmember Brian Miller asked if state law requires a 100-foot notification radius. Ms. Garner stated the requirement is 100 feet which will be met and exceeded by the proposed radius.

Mayor Alexander convened a public hearing, after due notice thereof, to receive comments regarding the Land Development Ordinance Text Amendment TA-01-2020 to amend Chapter 15 regarding first-class mail notification for public or evidentiary hearings.

There being no one to address Council, Mayor Alexander closed the public hearing. She noted the public will have 24 hours to send comments to the City Clerk at kbake@salisbury.nc.gov in response to the hearing. She added Council will take action on the amendment September 1, 2020.

UPDATE- SALISBURY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Department Chief Bob Parnell provided an update regarding initiatives of the Salisbury Fire Department.

Chief Parnell stated Fire Department staffing consists of 86 full-time positions, 10 part-time positions, and four full-time vacancies. He noted the department has extended four full-time offers of employment to applicants and three offers for part-time employment. He indicated new hires will participate in a Rookie Academy which will begin on August 24, 2020 and end in February 2021. He explained the academy is approximately 26 weeks long and will consist of over 1000 hours of combined classroom and practical training. He added the training will result in certifications in the skills, practices and experiences that are necessary to become urban firefighters.

Chief Parnell noted the department is anticipating additional vacancies during the last quarter of 2020 resulting from retiring personnel. He indicated the average age of a fire department member is 35 years old and the average years of service is 12 years. He explained 60% of the workforce has 10 years or less of fire service experience. He added training programs and activities conducted on a daily basis are important to the experience and abilities of firefighters. He added every day is a training day at the Fire Department and it is important for seasoned members to pass lessons and experiences to the young workforce.

Chief Parnell pointed out the department responds to approximately 6,000 emergencies every year which is 500 emergencies per month. He explained for the months of April and May

there was a significant reduction in emergency activity because of the stay-at-home order during the onset of the COVID outbreak. He added the number of emergency responses in April was 250 but July had more than 500, which may be indicative of activity within the community returning to normal.

Chief Parnell indicated the department is as efficient as possible given its resources which include personnel, budget and time. He added response time is important and the current 911 call processing time is approximately one minute and thirty-five seconds. He indicated from the time an alarm is sent to the station until fire crews arrive is approximately four minutes and fifty-eight seconds. He added the five minutes that it takes to get to the scene includes time to mount the apparatus, respond from the fire station and navigate traffic. He stated the total response time is approximately six and one half minutes from the time 911 is called until help arrives which is very efficient. He noted the department's response time is well within the national standards and will decrease even further once Fire Station 6 is operating. He indicated the longest response time is to areas located on the south end of the City.

Chief Parnell stated the department receives several types of calls but the most abundant are Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls. He reviewed the percentages of various calls received at the Fire Department:

- Fire 4%
- Rupture/Explosion 1%
- Rescue/EMS 58%
- Hazardous Conditions 3%
- Service Calls 10%
- Good Intent Calls 13%
- False Alarm and False Calls 11%
- Severe Weather/Natural Disaster 0%
- Special Incident Type 0%

Chief Parnell indicated every firefighter is a trained Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). He added firefighters are certified in advanced first aid and other medical training. He pointed out 58% of the calls received are EMS calls which is lower than the national average of approximately 70% EMS calls. He explained the City is fortunate to have a great EMS system and Emergency Dispatch System. He noted the number of false alarm calls is approximately 11% and has decreased in response to the City's False Alarm Ordinance.

Chief Parnell noted the Fire Marshall's Office has done a great job with fire inspections and code enforcement. He explained office personnel enforce state fire codes because the City does not have a fire code. He added personnel are required to maintain qualifications and certifications that allow them to enforce state codes. He pointed out during the first half of the year the office conducted approximately 400 inspections. He explained of the 400 inspections personnel revisited 50% of the inspected sites to ensure violations were corrected. He added the total number of inspections, including the re-inspections, were approximately 615. He stated based on the number of re-inspections the commercial and industrial public is in need of additional

training. He added the Fire Department does not handle residential enforcement because there are no state residential enforcement except for smoke detectors in rentals.

Chief Parnell stated there is a section within the Fire Marshall's Office which offers fire and life safety education. He explained the office contacts approximately 4,000 people every month to share fire and life safety educational materials. He added this year most of the material has been shared over social media and other types of virtual means. He indicated there are several links on the department's webpage that people are showing interest in. He added the number of views on the webpage are being tracked and will provide important information for the upcoming Insurance Services Office (ISO) inspection.

Chief Parnell pointed out all Fire Marshalls within the department are certified as Fire Investigators. He stated during the first half of the year 18 fires were investigated. He explained state law requires the cause of every fire to be determined, but sometimes Field Captains and Battalion Chiefs can determine the cause without an investigator. He added of the 18 fires that required an investigation three were undetermined, 10 were ruled accidental, and five were found to be intentionally set and resulted in three arrests. He pointed out many police departments are not always able to make fire related arrests. He added one reason the department has a successful arrest rate is because they have a cooperative joint taskforce with the Police Department.

Chief Parnell noted there were numerous fires between 2014 and 2016. He added Police Chief Jerry Stokes has played a major role in the success of the taskforce by allotting numerous resources to aid in the development of the force.

Chief Parnell stated Fire Station 3 is continuing to show signs of sinking and a steel plate has been placed over certain areas to distribute the weight of the fire trucks. He stated although Fire Station 3 is in need of repair it remains functional and continues to serve the City. He added the repairs needed for Fire Station 3 will be addressed as resources become available. He indicated Fire Station 6 will be ready for personnel to move in October 2020. He added the station will allow the department to serve the community on the south end of the City with faster response times.

Chief Parnell reviewed significant events of 2020. He stated on February 16, 2020 there was a fire at Salisbury Millwork located at 823 Corporate Circle. He reviewed another incident which had taken place on February 19, 2020 on I-85 involving a Yadkin River Bridge rescue.

Chief Parnell stated the North Carolina Rating Response System Evaluation is upcoming. He shared the department met with an evaluator to prepare for the evaluation. He added 50% of the evaluation will be water supply from Salisbury-Rowan Utilities (SRU), 40% Fire Department and 10% will be City and County communications. He indicated the evaluation will result in an ISO rating which will be used to determine fire insurance premiums for commercial and industrial properties in Salisbury. He noted the City's current ISO rating is a 2 which is a great rating and most organizations in the United States have a rating of 2 or better.

Council thanked Chief Parnell for his presentation and for a job well done from the Salisbury Fire Department.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Graham Corriher had nothing to report to Council.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Lane Bailey had nothing to report to Council.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) 2020 CENSUS

Mayor Alexander reminded citizens that Census 2020 will come to a close at the end of September 2020. She stated Salisbury currently has a response rate of approximately 58.4% and the County is at 62%. She indicated she would like every citizen to respond to the Census because it will determine where billions of federal dollars will be placed for the next 10 years. She added if there is not adequate Census response North Carolina will be in jeopardy of losing \$74 billion from the federal government to aid in healthcare and education. She noted there are several places citizens can go to participate in the Census including City Hall and libraries throughout the County.

(b) Women's Vote Celebration

Mayor Alexander noted she participated in a presentation celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. She thanked the presenters who spoke during the presentation Artist Mary Ruden and North Carolina State Capitol Museum Curator Kara Deadmon. She stated the presentation was phenomenal and urged everyone to view it on Vimeo.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Post stated he would like to present information to the public regarding the impact of COVID-19 on state and local governments. Mayor Alexander stated hopefully it can be added to a future Council meeting agenda. Councilmember Post stated he will also present information regarding Kiva, a financial program.

MAYOR PRO TEM COMMENTS

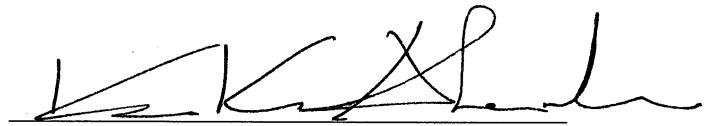
Mayor Pro Tem Heggins thanked staff for the great work being done throughout the City.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

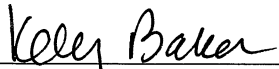
Mayor Alexander stated the next closed session meeting will be held electronically to remain consistent. She thanked Administrative Services Director and City Clerk Kelly Baker for all of her hard work and support to make the 100 years of Women's Vote virtual celebration a success. She also thanked Ms. Dee Dee Wright for suggesting the celebration.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mayor Pro Tem Heggins. All Council members in attendance agreed unanimously to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.



Karen Alexander, Mayor



Kelly Baker, City Clerk