

July 8, 2024

The City Council of the City of Rocky Mount met this day in a regular session scheduled for 7:00 p.m. in the George W. Dudley City Council Chamber of the Frederick E. Turnage Municipal Building with Mayor C. Saunders "Sandy" Roberson, Jr. presiding.

Councilmembers present: André D. Knight, Reuben C. Blackwell, IV, Richard Joyner, Lige Daughtridge, Tom Harris and Jabaris Walker.

Members absent: T.J. Walker, Jr.

Staff present: Keith Rogers Jr., City Manager; Kim Batts, City Clerk; Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager; Nyki Hill, Assistant City Manager; Ken Hunter, Assistant to the City Manager for Budget and Evaluation; Emilie Pinkston, Director of the Department of Development Services; Darvin Moore, Fire Chief; Robert Hassell, Police Chief; Grant Roberson, Communications Manager; Mark Adcox, Video Production Specialist; Kream Mosley, Deputy City Clerk and Colin McGrath, Interim City Attorney.

Security Officers: Sergeant Chris Williams, and Senior Police Officer Shawn Battle.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. and requested all in attendance to stand for a moment of silent prayer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Harris, and unanimously carried that the minutes of the following City Council meetings be approved as submitted to the City Council prior to the meeting:

- A. Regular scheduled City Council meeting held February 26, 2024 and March 25, 2024
- B. Regular Rescheduled Committee of the Whole meeting held March 25, 2024

The minutes of the Regular Rescheduled Committee of the Whole meeting held March 25, 2024 are as follows:

MINUTES OF A REGULAR RESCHEDULED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HELD MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2024, AT 2:00 P.M. IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM OF THE FREDERICK E. TURNAGE MUNICIPAL BUILDING WITH MAYOR PRO TEM DAUGHTRIDGE PRESIDING:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lige Daughtridge, Mayor Pro Tem
André D. Knight
Reuben C. Blackwell, IV
Richard Joyner
T.J. Walker
Tom Harris
Jabaris Walker
Mayor C. Saunders "Sandy" Roberson, Jr.

Others Present:
Mitchell Silver, McAdams

STAFF PRESENT:

Keith Rogers, Jr.
Kim Batts
Robert Hassell
Krystal Hunter
Emilie Pinkston
Ken Hunter
Elton Daniels
Nyki Hill
Keyana Walston
Kream Mosley
Monica Brantley
Richard J. Rose

Eliza Monroe, McAdams

Jessica Holmes, NC Auditor

OPENING OF MEETING

Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and called on City Manager Keith C. Rogers to introduce the first agenda item.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING BENEFITS - MITCHELL SILVER, MCADAMS

City Manager Rogers introduced Mitchell Silver from McAdams Company and described him as a renowned urban planner who served as Planning Director for the City of Raleigh and the Commissioner for New York City's Parks Department. He said that Mr. Silver was here to discuss the benefits of comprehensive land use planning and developing a blueprint for growth. He then called on Mitchell Silver who presented the top 10 real estate markets for 2024 and stated that people have choices to move and are choosing North Carolina as one of those destinations. Mr. Silver asked the question of why people are moving and presented migration trends for 2022 and 2023.

2022 -

1. Cost of Living is the top concern for movers in 2021. Quality of Life was top concern for 2022. Moving close to nature with ample outdoor experiences as well as the continuation of remote work.
2. Lowering tax liability (property and income tax) was another reason why people moved.
3. California, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania and New York are the five states with the most outbound moves. Pennsylvania replaced New York in 2022.
4. The top five inbound states in 2020 are South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arizona and Florida. Florida surpassed Idaho in 2022.
5. Many of the moves revolve around flexibility of remote work or early retirement.

2023 -

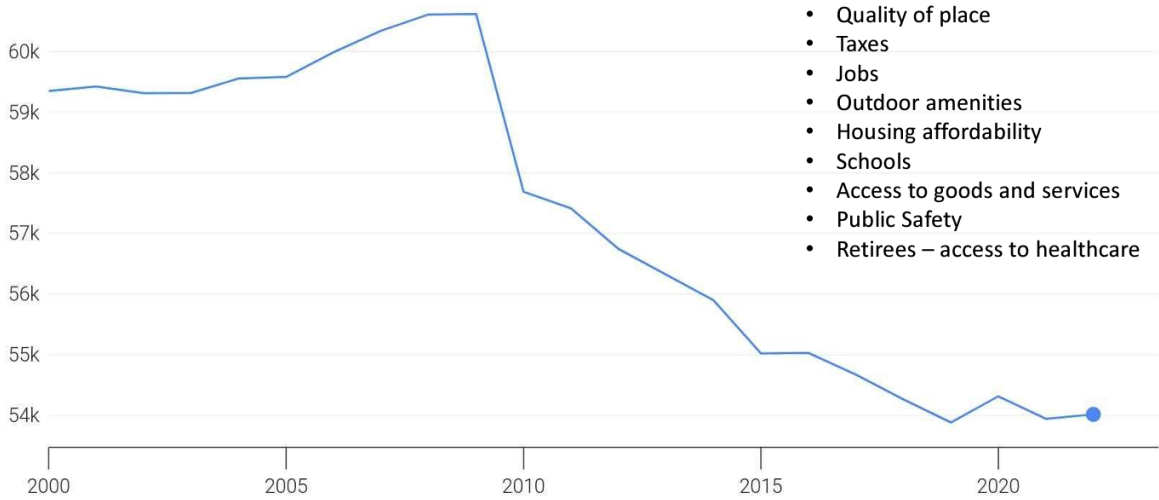
1. Move volume (the number of individuals that moved in 2023) decreased 12% compared to 2022.
2. Southern states remained primary draws for those moving, with top destinations including South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arizona and Florida.
3. For the fifth year in a row, Illinois has the greatest percentage of individuals moving out of the state.
4. Minnesota and Washington replaced Michigan and New Jersey on the list of top outbound states this year, coming in at #4 and #5.
5. Covid-19 restrictions are becoming less important. Instead, individuals are taking advantage of hybrid and remote work options to relocate to suburbs in the south.

21st Century Challenges + Emerging Trends

1. Graying + Browning of America
2. Rise of the single person households
3. Traditional family is changing
4. Aging infrastructure
5. Urban sprawl, aging suburbs, shrinking rural areas
6. Climate change, extreme weather events
7. Antiquated + exclusionary zoning tools
8. Attainable housing
9. Racial + Social Justice
10. Divisive Politics
11. Post-Covid Era
12. Artificial Intelligence

Rocky Mount, NC population from 2000 to 2022

Rocky Mount had an official estimated population of 54,013 on July 1, 2022



Why is Rocky Mount losing population?

Population gained by:

- In-migration-new residents moving in
- Increase household size - marriage, birth, adoption, caring for someone, new tenant or roommate

Population lost by:

- Out-migration - existing residents leaving
- Decrease in household size - death, family member leaving (i.e., divorce, school, armed services)

Reasons:

- The comprehensive planning process should offer insight.

Mr. Silver presented the largest employers in Rocky Mount and expressed the importance of having the business community, partners and residents for a thriving community.

The New Reality in the US

1. More older Americans. Longer life expectancy.
2. More Diversity + Multiculturalism
3. More people with disabilities. More multi-gen households.
4. More single mothers. Fewer couples getting married.
5. Immigration will continue.
6. By 2030, majority of households will be single persons
7. By 2045, no one race over 50% of the overall population.

Implications of the graying of America

1. By 2030, 1 in 5 Americans will be over the age of 65. Today, 1 in 5 Americans have a disability.
2. Life expectancy will increase from 76.0 years in 1993 to 82.6 years in 2050. By 2050, the number of Americans over 85 will triple from 5.4 to 19 million.
3. Land use patterns and transportation choices will change as million of aging Americans realize they can no longer drive. 600,000 over the age of 70 stop driving every year.

Plan for the Consumers/Users

Greatest Generation	1901 - 1924	97 years and older
Silent/Mature Generation	1923 - 1945	76 - 96 years
Baby Boom Generation	1946 - 1964	57 - 75 years
Generation X	1965 - 1981	40 - 56 years
Generation Y	1982 - 1995	26 - 39 years
Generation Z	1996 - 2016	6 to 25 years

THE GENERATIONAL FACTOR + RESIDENTS UNDER 40 & 55

	Rocky Mount	Nash County	Edgecombe County	North Carolina	Raleigh
Greatest/Silent	8.0%	7.1%	7.9%	6.6%	4.6%
Boomer	25.3%	25.9%	26.9%	23.0%	17.4%
Gen X	16.9%	19.0%	17.1%	19.2%	19.6%
Gen Y	18.2%	17.7%	17.5%	19.8%	26.2%
Gen Z	26.5%	24.7%	24.9%	25.8%	26.7%
Alpha	5.1%	5.6%	5.7%	5.6%	5.5%
Median Age	40.4	41.7	41.6	39.1	34.6
Under 40	49.7%	48.0%	48.1%	51.2%	58.4%
Under 55	66.7%	67.0%	65.2%	70.4%	78.0%

Mr. Silver explained that he highlighted the Gen Z population because they will be the future workforce and the people you want to stay. He said that you need a labor force to make sure your city is moving forward. He noted that all those different generations have future needs, desires and aspirations. He said that it's not just about "what's next" but "who's next" and all citizens need to be engaged.

Healthy Living: Fitness for Life

1. 55+ over staying active.
2. Life expectancy will increase to 82.6 by 2050.
3. Walking, biking. Access to greenways, trails & sidewalks will remain in high demand.
4. Pickleball continues to grow as a sport.

Mr. Silver expressed that Rocky Mount is too small to compete on its own and that regionalism is valuable. He stated that Nash and Edgecombe Counties must compete as a region and support regional assets. Mr. Silver presented the idea that people aren't buying a home, they are buying a place and want to make sure they have access to amenities. He stated each part of the region must support each other to make themselves competitive.

Blueprint for Growth

Role of Planning:

- Manage growth and change. Planning deals with risk and uncertainty about the future. Plans for present and future generations.
- Two types of places: Plan-making places or Deal-making places
- Planning shall have special concern for the long-term consequences of present actions. There are also consequences for no action!
- When you say no to something, you are saying yes to something else. What are you saying yes to?

Purpose of a Plan:

- Blueprint for growth
- Be clear on the problems you are solving
- Set the vision and framework
- Understand the value of land
- Preserve you authentic places
- Focus on implementation

Mr. Silver shared that in Raleigh there was a blueprint to handle growth. He stated they came up with 8 growth centers and 12 multimodal corridors and planned on 60 to 70% of all growth happening in those areas. He said they were also clear about how to implement a comp plan. He said that a plan is policy, but code is the rules. Mr. Silver stated that it was designed so people knew what was going to happen and where for the next 20 years.

Traditional Neighborhood Development

1. Traditional neighborhood development
2. Walkable neighborhoods, walkable blocks + streets
3. Housing + shopping in close proximity
4. Human-scaled urban design
5. Mix of land uses
6. Compact design
7. Range of housing opportunities + choices
8. Distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
9. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty + critical environmental areas

Placemaking: Reimagining the Public Realm

1. Creating an experience
2. Authentic + memorable
3. Power of 10
4. Not a project. But a place
5. Not just a district, but a destination
6. People centered

Mr. Silver recommended every city having 10 destinations with 10 things to do at each destination. He believes that people may eat and sleep in their homes or apartments, but they live in the public realm.

Consumer Preferences

1. Previous generations were consumers of goods.
2. New generations are consumers of experiences.
3. We should not be just designers + planners, but experience builders.

Mr. Silver named The Children's Museum and Science Center, Tar River Trail, Rocky Mount Mills, Battle Park and the City Lake and Park as the 5 most popular attractions. He said that there needs to be more to make the Power of 10.

Mr. Silver advised that strategic investments in parks can spark economic vitality downtown.

Housing Affordability + Attainability

1. Diversity of product type
2. Variety of housing types
3. Address "renter" fear and stigma

The City Councilmembers were advised that they have a boundary with a fixed amount of land and that they control the value of that land by how it's zoned. Mr. Silver said that land is a finite resource and from it property and sales taxes are generated. He stated that the planning policy and zoning that is put on it will affect its value.

He gave an example of how strategic planning adds value:

- It would take 600-single family homes on a 150-acre subdivision to equal the tax value of the Wells Fargo Capital Center, which sits on 1.2 acres of land.
- Wells Fargo Capital Center in downtown Raleigh has 90 times the tax value per acre than the average suburban acre.

Return on Investment:

- Downtown High-rise residential of 3-acre site pays off its

infrastructure in 3 years. The return on infrastructure investment is 35%.

- Suburban multi-family complex on a 30-acre site pays off its infrastructure in 42 years. The return on infrastructure investment is 2%.

Mr. Silver stated people may say that they don't want buildings too high, but it creates a vibrant place and keeps taxes low or stable. He presented that Walmart in Asheville sits on 34 acres and generates \$6,500 in taxes. He compared it to a mixed use 6-story building downtown that sits on .5 acres that generates \$640,000 on less land. In addition, Walmart produced 6 jobs on a par basis versus 74.

Mr. Silver shared that places that are by the Waterfront are using their parks as flood protection. He suggested looking at transforming those edges into an amenity that people can enjoy and for economic development.

Councilmember Knight informed Mr. Silver that The Event Center, MLK Park and Booker T. Washington High School were not listed as attractions in Rocky Mount. He also made him aware that Rocky Mount is in two counties, and he wants to see growth on both sides of the track.

Mr. Silver explained that he is an advisor to the comprehensive plan and that AECOM will be the City's consultant throughout the process. He stated that he would use his years of experience to work with the City Manager to be an asset to him.

Councilmember Blackwell told Mr. Silver that the City had a formal plan that didn't sync with zoning, and he agreed with what he presented.

Mr. Silver said typically you do a blueprint and then you codify the rules so it usually comes with a future land use map. He said that it's easier for the public to see a growth framework map.

Councilmember TJ Walker asked if Raleigh was intentional with some of the displacement that they deal with or is it a byproduct.

Mr. Silver stated they knew there would be growth pressures. He said the neighborhood had mostly private homeowners, and he couldn't say all of it was gentrification. He stated that in some cases there were predatory practices that forced people out, in other cases they made a deal. Mr. Silver suggested looking at anti-displacement plans if gentrification is a concern.

Councilmember Harris stated that bringing business downtown needs to be examined and asked what are some key things that need to be considered for the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Silver replied creating a quality place. He advised looking at the best assets and seeing how you can grow them. Mr. Silver suggested having the economic development team find out why companies who showed interest didn't choose Rocky Mount.

Councilmember Harris voiced that there is going to be a lot of planning for 300 acres of land west that the City has and that the other areas can't be forgotten.

Mr. Silver responded that both must be done.

Councilmember Joyner stated that the north side of Rocky Mount looks good and asked if anyone looked at the Springfield and Nashville Road areas.

Mr. Silver responded that he had not. He added that he is an advisor

to the City Manager and would communicate it to the comp plan consultants.

Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge stated that he thinks there is opportunity for regionalism in Nash, Edgecombe, Wilson and Halifax counties. He said that he understands its relationship and that needs to be worked on from all sides.

Mr. Silver stated that there needs to be a partnership, so you can help each other and succeed as a region.

Councilmember Blackwell stated that it was his first time hearing that AECOM would be leading the planning process and asked City Manager Rogers what the new process was for selecting consultants. He inquired if they were going to be able to meet them.

Mr. Rogers stated that they had not begun the public part of the comprehensive planning process. In response to how the consultant was selected, he said that the team led by Ms. Pinkston put together data and analysis to get a consultant. He reported that the consultant is under the budgeted one million dollars. Mr. Rogers stated that in a future meeting The Council would have the opportunity to interact with the planning team and the comprehensive planning consultant.

Councilmember Blackwell inquired if The Manager had already initiated a process.

City Manager Rogers said that a consultant had already been selected.

Councilmember Blackwell asked if there was a committee with people who had been appointed.

Mr. Rogers stated that everything that is underway is all a part of the agreement with AECOM and the public kickoff is scheduled for May.

Councilmember Blackwell asked Mr. Rogers if Council no longer needed to approve contracts. He questioned if the Council just approved the ability for the Manager to contract in the budget and he could make his decision.

Mr. Rogers responded that he doesn't make his own decision. He said that the City follows public procurement for the state of North Carolina. He said that no processes have been changed.

Councilmember Blackwell stated that The City has committed to AECOM. He said that in times past there would have been a presentation on The Manager's plan and Council would have voted on a contract.

Mr. Rogers replied that The Council approved the budget, and The City follows the procurement act.

Councilmember Blackwell stated that there had been no prior discussion about AECOM with the Councilmembers.

Mr. Rogers replied that his emails to the Council provide updates about the tracking of projects. He stated that Kenneth Hunter would be providing a Capital Improvement Project update later in the meeting. Mr. Rogers said that the session was intended to get some preliminary benefits of comprehensive planning.

Councilmember Blackwell asked if there is a steering committee that will guide the planning process.

City Manager Rogers stated that there is a steering committee associated with the comprehensive plan.

Councilmember Blackwell inquired as to who was appointed and how they were selected.

Mr. Rogers replied that he would send the names and wanted to clarify that it will be a 12-to-18-month planning process with significant public engagement. He stated that this endeavor is not the type that a committee can put together. He said that the results will be zoning changes, policy updates and capital improvement projects and he wants the public to be excited about imagining what Rocky Mount will look like over the next 25 years.

Councilmember Blackwell said that he appreciated the opportunity to have all those major components intersect with each other and bringing in skillful help to assist in the design of the process. He expressed that he would appreciate it if Council was not the afterthought. He added not to come for discussion after things have been designed and people have been appointed. He voiced his concern that Council was not able to inspect and review a million-dollar contract prior to it being signed.

Mr. Rogers stated that the contract went under staff and legal review and Council could have a copy.

Councilmember Blackwell stated that for major initiatives he would like input before a decision is made. His concern is that being presented after that fact doesn't allow Council to verify, ratify, support, comment and complement the process.

Councilmember Knight stated that although it may be legal because the Council voted on the million dollars, in the past there have been RFQs. He said that Councilmembers would be abreast of who wanted to do the Comprehensive Plan. He asked that each Councilperson along with the Mayor have an appointment on the Steering Committee. He mentioned seeing Facebook posts and articles regarding the Comprehensive Plan in addition to getting questions from constituents and said that Council should be a part of the process.

City Manager Rogers stated that the day's presentation was a preliminary step in the conversation. He said that staff will make a presentation at a Committee of the Whole and they will be able to make nominations.

Councilmember Blackwell asked The City Manager to explain the difference between an advisor and consultant. He wanted clarity between Mr. Silver's activities and AECOM and asked if they work together.

Mr. Rogers replied that AECOM are the technical consultants. He said that they will be putting together the technical document resulting from the public input and process over the next 12 to 18 months.

Councilmember Blackwell asked who designs the public input process.

Mr. Rogers said that they aren't there yet and there will be a presentation on those specifics from AECOM and the planning staff at a future Committee of the Whole. He shared that Mr. Silver is advising on how to ensure that The City is doing everything to maximize the process of undertaking comprehensive land use planning. He added, planning for growth and what the responsibilities will need to be from The City once the plans are received. He gave examples of funding for the Capital Improvement Projects, requests for land use and zoning code updates, and policy guidelines that The Council would need to take. He said that AECOM will deliver a land use planning document and Mr. Silver will help with what it benefits everyone and how it connects to everything The City does.

Councilmember Blackwell asked who will be documenting the conversations taking place in the communities throughout the city. He stated that while there are discussions on zoning, regulations,

possible arenas for growth that you still have to deal with today and tomorrow community issues.

Mr. Rogers stated that over the 18 months residents will be asked what they want to see. He advised that City staff and AECOM will put together technical solutions for what the community says they want the City to look like. He stated that the meetings in the public realm will be forward looking to address present, future and, potential issues.

Councilmember Blackwell asked if there will be a timeline to be clear as to when there will be conversations throughout the 18-month period.

Mr. Rogers responded that was correct.

Councilmember Harris stated that he wants to see the Committee list and he is an advocate that there be a representative from each Ward. He asked if the presentation to The Council would be done before the public kickoff in May.

Mr. Rogers said yes it would be before the public kickoff.

Councilmember Knight asked for the individual cost of the advisor and AECOM.

Mr. Rogers replied that the AECOM contract is \$750,000 and the consultant is an hourly rate.

Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge summarized that Councilmembers asked the City Manager for the following:

- Disclose who the steering committee members are
- Produce the RFQ and contract
- Written costs

Mr. Rogers informed Council that the steering committee is supposed to have a technical component to it and it's not just a citizens group. He stated that the contract talks about the role of the steering committee.

Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge asked who was going to document the public meetings, so that they could look at notes to see what was included in the plan.

Mr. Rogers said that it is required to be documented and will be a part of the final document.

FY25 REVENUE FORECAST - KEN HUNTER

City Manager Rogers advised all that what Mr. Hunter was distributing was the budget versus actual for the current fiscal year through the end of February. He said that the presentation would include projections for the upcoming fiscal year and Mr. Daniels would follow with an update about progress on Capital Improvement Projects for the current fiscal year.

Ken Hunter stated that the revenue forecast report reflects where we think we're going to end the current fiscal year on June 30th and where we anticipate revenues being for fiscal year 2025.

Forecasting Observations

- FY 2024 Projected - \$1.75 million more than adopted for General Fund
- Strong Ad Valorem (Property Taxes) Growth
 - Consistent with FY 2023 collection rate (98%)
- Sales Tax consistent with expectations

- Growth slowing
- Interest investments remain consistent
 - Yields remaining stable
- FY 2024 Powell Bill higher than budgeted (+7%)
- Utility revenues improving, margins stable

FY 2025 Forecast Highlights

- \$2.44 Million increase in current revenues from FY 2024 adopted
- Project 25% increase in total taxable property values
 - More significant increases for residential property
 - o 40% in Nash County
 - o 30% in Edgecombe County
 - Projected Revenue-Neutral Rate: \$0.55 to \$0.57
 - Value per cent: \$540,000
- Growth slowing in other current revenues
 - Sales tax
 - Interest earnings

Councilmember Harris asked Mr. Hunter to explain neutral rate.

Ken Hunter responded that the calculation is based on revenue you anticipate collecting this current fiscal year. He said that you take the property tax revenue based on levy that would be collected in the current tax year and figure out at what rate based on the new value you would collect that same amount of revenue. Mr. Hunter added that annual growth is factored in. He stated that while the revenue neutral rate may generate the same level of revenue, it is going to do so in a way that is not necessarily going to be neutral for all individuals who pay the tax. He said that one of the things that happens when you adjust the rate to revenue neutral is you lose money from motor vehicle taxes because those numbers stay relatively static. He explained that revaluation is trying to achieve North Carolina's laws and constitution. To apply the tax rate as evenly and equally as possible across all properties and property owners that are impacted by the implementation of the tax.

Councilmember Harris stated that it's a starting rate and The Council has the authority to set the rate.

Mr. Hunter replied yes. He said that the requirement is to publish that rate to the public and the final rate as adopted in the budget is set by Council.

Councilmember Harris asked that various scenarios be presented for them to have in the budget process with tax rates of 48, 50, 52 and 55 so they can see the impact of revenue.

Mr. Hunter said that they can look at that when evaluating the impact of revenue from that source.

Councilmember Harris expressed concern about increases in property taxes for rental properties, which could be passed on to renters by owners.

Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge asked Mr. Hunter if he could formally ask Nash and Edgecombe County to provide a detailed breakdown of property tax assessment increases. He had heard of astronomical increases within Rocky Mount and was curious to see if the various parts of the counties are being impacted. He said that he would like insight on what Nash and Edgecombe counties use for comparisons for real estate.

Mr. Hunter replied that we can formally ask for additional information and he has been asking for information throughout the process. He said that both counties used outside firms to do their assessments. He stated that they knew the numbers would not be

pleasant based on what was seen in the real estate market and the fact that the sales to assessment ratio was out of balance in accordance with state law.

He shared that in the past they have evaluated the impact not just on the average resident but looked at it across percentile within property owners to get an idea of what percentage of property owners are paying about the same, less and more.

Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge feels it's important for citizens to recognize that they adopt the evaluations provided from the counties and The City of Rocky Mount does not assess the properties.

Ken Hunter said that he is expecting the counties to hear a lot of appeals. He agreed to request additional information from the tax departments of both counties.

Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge said what concerns him is that there are governments that pride themselves on not having tax increases over the years. He thinks this is essentially going to be a tax increase for the people.

Councilmember Joyner shared that some programs administrated by the counties to assist citizens aren't being made available to Rocky Mount residents. He said that he is going to get more details so that it can be looked at.


Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge encouraged residents to attend their county commissioners' meetings.

Councilmember Harris stated that salaries and wages through 8 months are noted as 77.3% and asked how that compares to budgeted numbers for the 8 months. He voiced that he has been asking for actual and budget comparison and to him it looks like we are over budget. He said that he was dissatisfied with what is being given and he would like the extensive detailed analysis that they used to receive.

Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge apologized that he was not aware that State Auditor, Jessica Holmes was in attendance.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS UPDATE – ELTON DANIELS


Elton Daniels, Assistant City Manager provided an overview of CIP projects for fiscal year 2024.



ROCKY MOUNT, NC
THE CENTER OF IT ALL

CIP

FY24



PUBLIC WORKS

- **Dirt Street Paving: Coral, Emerald, Topaz, Lewy Ln.**
 - *Estimated Cost: \$2.2M*
 - Anticipated date of completion: April 2024
- **Transit Vehicle Acquisition**
 - *Estimated Cost: \$1.251M*
 - 13 para-transit vehicles
 - Anticipated Date of Completion: June 2024

WATER RESOURCES

- **Rectangular Clarifiers Festoon**
 - *Project Cost: \$213K*
 - **Completed: November 2023**

FIRE

- **Sprinkler Installation Fire Station 4 & 5**
 - *Estimated Cost: \$200K*
 - Anticipated date of completion: June 2024
- **Self-Contained Breath Apparatus (SCBA) Replacement**
 - *Estimated Cost: \$454K (Fully grant funded)*
 - **Completed: February 2024**

- **Replacement of Gearbox for screw pump**
 - *Estimated Cost: \$241.8K*
 - Anticipated Completion Date: May 2024



PARKS & RECREATION

- **Renovation of Senior Center Locker Rooms**
 - *Estimated Cost: \$225K*
 - Anticipated date of completion: June 2024
- **Thelonius Monk Park Renovation**
 - *Estimated Cost: \$375K*
 - **Completed: March 2024**
- Eastern Avenue Park Renovation
 - *Estimated Cost: \$500K*
 - Anticipated date of completion: June 2024

- **Imperial Centre Roof Replacement**
 - *Estimated Cost; \$1.4M*
 - Anticipated date of completion: Fall 2024
- **Booker T. Theater Lights/Projection Improvements**
 - *Estimated Cost: \$140K*
 - Anticipated date of completion: Summer 2024
- **Sunset Park Renovations**
 - *Estimated Cost: \$1.3M (\$1M Grant funded)*
 - Anticipated date of completion: Fall 2026



Councilmember Knight asked the City Manager for an update on Fire Station Two. He inquired about the sewer outfall.

Mr. Daniels said that it's not a completed project. He shared that an outside firm is conducting a study, a hydraulic model to pinpoint exactly where the issue is. He said the study should be completed in two months and when the results are received the problem can be addressed.

Councilmember Jabaris Walker asked about the 2.5 million dollars for the BTW Community Center.

Mr. Daniels stated that the bid for the gymnasium would be out on the 27th of the month. He reported that the first phase of the project will replace the gym roof, HVAC system, windows, entrance and remodel the restrooms. He stated that the gym is open and port johns are available.

Mr. Daniels added that some of the things Mr. Silver mentioned in his presentation regarding Wilmington for placemaking that Rocky Mount is currently doing. He advised that a comprehensive plan is being done within the Parks and Recreation department and meetings will be held in each Ward.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Information only; no formal action

CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Pro Tem Daughtridge requested a motion for City Council to enter into a closed session for an economic development matter.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION. Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Knight, and unanimously carried that the City Council enter into Closed Session at 3:35 p.m.

The minutes of the Closed Session shall be placed on file as **ESM-641** at the end of **Minute Book 38** upon approval for release by the City Attorney.

ADJOURNMENT

Without objection, the Mayor Pro Tem adjourned the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

A printed copy of the PowerPoint presentations are on file in the office of the City Clerk.

APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

- Request to defer Item 16 on the agenda until July 22, 2024 City Council meeting

Motion was made by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Knight and unanimously carried that the agenda be amended as requested.

COMMUNITY UPDATE BY CITY MANAGER

City Manager Keith Rogers Jr. provided the following community update. The City Manager reported that:

- Stated this Thursday night at 6:00 p.m. The Legacy Motown Revue will be performing at the Downtown Live at the Imperial Centre lawn so they encourage everyone to come out and enjoy the experience
- Stated Experience Downtown Rocky Mount will be hosting Bikes, Brews, and Blues on Saturday, July 13 from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and this will be in the Five Points area of downtown which is at the intersection of Tarboro and Washington Street
- Stated Footloose the Musical takes stage at the Imperial Centre on July 18 through July 120 at 7:30 p.m. and then on July 21 at 2:00 p.m. also at the Imperial Centre and they encourage everyone to come out

Councilmember Daughtridge stated he brought up in the Committee of the Whole that Nash County Parks and Recreation is having a survey for the 10-year master plan for Parks and Recreation in Nash County. He continued stating that he encourages every citizen of Rocky Mount to participate in that. He informed everyone that the survey can be taken online at the Nash County Parks and Rec website or an in-person event will take place Thursday, July 18 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Country Inn & Suites on English Road.

Councilmember Knight stated in April of 2023 that Rocky Mount received a \$75,000 planning grant - CityStart initiative. He explained that the community met several times at the Rocky Mount Event Center in reference to the racial wealth gap here in Rocky Mount and they were supposed to come up with a blueprint. He requested Council to direct the City Manager to provide and an update by next Committee of the Whole.

PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Mayor opened the meeting for petitions from the public and outlined guidelines for public petitions. He called on the following individuals for public comment and a brief summary of comments is outlined below:

Petrina Page

- Stated she is speaking on behalf of the housing rehabilitation matching rebate program
- Stated she would like Council to bring it back because she was a recipient of it about 4 years ago when her and her son renovated a house that had been sitting over 10 years

- Stated she was able to use the funds in the matching rebate program to help offset the costs and to finish the project
- Stated this program has been a crucial tool in revitalizing the housing stock and it should be reinstated to continue its positive impact on the community

Mary Coleman

- Stated she is here to speak on the housing grant that she filed for last year
- Stated she was approved for it then received a letter that she was on a waiting list, so she would like to know where she stands and if she needs to fill out another application to get it processed
- Stated she is still in need of the grant

Nellene Richardson

- Stated last year several of the Councilmembers came out to the Rocky Mount Love Day and they are getting ready to start the next event on August 3 at Sunset Park
- Stated she is looking forward to seeing more of the Councilmembers there as well as the Mayor
- Stated she appreciates everything they do for the citizens

Theresa Alston Stokes

- Stated she is here again for concerns of housing here in the City and concerns of displacement of long-term residents
- Stated she has received several calls regarding investors purchasing homes with existing tenants and they are giving them 30 days to get out of the residence
- Stated finding a new place in 30 days is nearly impossible
- Requested that Council considers putting in place tenant protection and a possible ordinance including rent control because if something is not done there is going to be an increase in the homeless population.
- Stated the City needs a variety of Housing whether workforce or affordable
- Asked that Council not turn a blind eye to the fact that longtime residents are being pushed out of their homes and something needs to be done because she feels Council has an obligation to protect the long-term residents of this City

Councilmember Joyner stated he does not know what they can do, but he has been made aware that there are some trailer parks that are being bought and citizens are facing the same type of situations, so he would like Council to look into something that they can do.

Councilmember Blackwell stated there is something called the Fair Housing Protection Act, and he knows that the Human Relations department has had workshops and there have been other opportunities for information. He explained that he has heard several people say that after COVID there was some level of support or subsidy for low-income people or people who were struggling with their rents and mortgages, but the minute that those protections disappeared the rents went up. He stated he might be wrong, but he is hearing reports that the City has rents of \$850 to \$900 and up without any improvements being done to the properties, landlords just increased rent. He explained that he does not have any issue when dealing with market economy issues but he does have an issue with gouging people just because you can. He stated that he would like to understand better the responsibility of the human relations department regarding housing protection enforcement. He asked what

the perspective is as a City to protect those citizens who are vulnerable. He stated if people cannot afford to stay where they are, they certainly cannot afford to move, so where do they go and who is there to support. He stated that the Council administers policy, sets the budget, passes laws and ordinances, works with the manager and his/her administration and the Mayor's role is a role of advocacy and a role of bringing people together around issues. He asked Mayor Roberson if he would be willing to declare housing an emergency issue and a priority issue in Rocky Mount, and if he could help convene multiple sectors to look at how the City can protect its citizens.

Mayor Roberson stated he will accept the challenge, as clearly housing is a challenge here in the City of Rocky Mount, because there is not enough of it. He explained that an issue like this cannot be resolved in 30 seconds or less, but he does think it is appropriate if they could look to form a smaller group as a Council in connection with the City Manager and the initiatives they have on housing. He stated that is something he would love to be a part of and would love to try and facilitate because it is a tremendous need and one that is not going away. He explained that he thinks a big part of the conversation is how to attract and get private investors to build more stock since that is a part of the housing ecosystem that he thinks they should be looking at.

Councilmember Knight stated it was brought up about Human Relation and Fair Housing and there is a particular housing complex, Wood Hawk, where the citizens have been concerned about the main doors not being able to lock for the last 2 years. He explained that if they are providing senior housing and each year the rent is going up then they should be held accountable to keep the place up. He stated he knows Archie and his staff have been working with this housing complex to no avail, and those doors have still not been fixed. He explained that he understands that Rocky Mount Police Department has had to come out there because of people having access to that housing complex that should not have access to that property. He stated since Human Relations could not get it done, it should be escalated.

Councilmember Joyner stated he will sign on for that commitment on the housing issues with the Mayor and Councilmember Blackwell as well.

Nathlyn Ohree

- Stated she would like to know if she is overlooking something because she does not see a hotel or a parking deck at the elaborate Event Center
- Stated she has been thinking about the several million dollars invested in the casino proposition for Nash County side but she wants to know when they will be getting the parking deck and hotel

Antoinette Cutler

- Thanked Councilmembers Knight and Walker for attending Sierra’s House of Love ribbon cutting on June 23 as their presence was truly appreciated
- Stated she wishes that Council would bring the grant for housing restoration back
- Stated she thinks that downtown is lacking a lot and she does not know if the downtown grants have been taken off the table, but she applied with a few other people and she could use the help to get business up and running

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Jabaris Walker, and unanimously carried that the Consent Agenda Items 8(A) through 8(B), be approved as follows and more specifically:

A. AD VALOREM TAX RELEASES:

That the following tax releases be acknowledged and approved for release and/or refund:

SCHEDULE A - acknowledge receipt of report of the following taxes under \$100 approved for release and/or refund by the City Manager:

YEAR	BILL	NAME/ADDRESS	TAX	COMMENT
<i>NASH COUNTY</i>				
2023	21039	ARMWOOD, JOE LEE MAXINE 216 ST CHRISTOPHERS WALK ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	31.85	CITY VALUATION PEN CORRECTION INT
		TOTAL RELEASE:	31.85	

SCHEDULE B - acknowledge receipt of report of the following taxes over \$100 approved for release and/or refund by the City Council:

YEAR	BILL	NAME/ADDRESS	TAX	COMMENT
<i><u>EDGECOMBE COUNTY</u></i>				
2022	5855	KOKORUDA, ANTHONY TROY PT LOT 31 & 32, BLK A HARGROVE PROPERTY S/D ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	152.41 20.19	CITY OWNER CORRECTION INT
		TOTAL RELEASE:	172.60	
2023	5860	KOKORUDA, ANTHONY TROY PT LOT 31 & 32, BLK A HARGROVE PROPERTY S/D ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27801	152.41 6.48	CITY OWNER CORRECTION INT
		TOTAL RELEASE:	158.89	
<i>NASH COUNTY</i>				
2023	1000069	BRINKER NORTH CAROLINA INC C/O RYAN LLC PO BOX 802206 DALLAS, TX 75240	175.79	PEN LATE LIST REMOVAL
		TOTAL RELEASE:	175.79	
2023	1000035	CULPEPPER W H LIMITED PARTNERSHIP BETHLEHEM RD ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27803	156.75	CITY BILLED IN ERROR
		TOTAL RELEASE:	156.75	
2019	1928	VERIZON 767 WORD PLAZA ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804	688.43 287.42	CITY DUPLICATE BILL INT
		TOTAL RELEASE:	975.85	

2020	1920	VERIZON 767 WORD PLAZA ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 TOTAL RELEASE:	688.43 225.46 913.89	CITY INT	DUPLICATE BILL
2021	1901	VERIZON 767 WORD PLAZA ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 TOTAL RELEASE:	551.43 55.14 144.06 750.63	CITY PEN INT	DUPLICATE BILL
2022	1889	VERIZON 767 WORD PLAZA ROCKY MOUNT, NC 27804 TOTAL RELEASE:	551.43 81.34 632.77	CITY INT	DUPLICATE BILL

B. RESCHEDULING THE AUGUST 12, 2024 CITY COUNCIL/COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETINGS

The City Council considered the request to rescheduling the following City Council meetings (due to a conflict with ElectriCities Annual Conference):

- Committee of the Whole - reschedule from August 12, 2024 to August 5, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.
- City Council meeting - reschedule from August 12, 2024 to August 5, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

The rescheduling of the meetings was approved and the August 12, 2024 Committee of the Whole and City Council meetings were rescheduled for August 5, 2024. It was noted that the time and locations would remain the same.

ANNEXATION NO. 332 - HARPER & WILLIAMS (SUNSET AVENUE, WARD 5)

Public hearing relative to Annexation No. 332 - Harper & Williams (Sunset Avenue) and feasibility study.

It was noted that this item was postponed from January 8, February 12, April 8, and May 13, 2024 City Council meetings. The recommended action was to postpone this item until the August 5, 2024 City Council meeting.

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Joyner and unanimously carried that the item be postponed to August 5, 2024 City Council meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING/REZONING REQUEST

Public hearing relative to the following rezoning request recommended for approval and found in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Board:

- Request by Thomas White (Axiom Development, LLC) to rezone a +48.9-acre parcel, having a PIN 382008972953U and a +9.45-acre portion of the property having a PIN 382012960747 from I-2 (Heavy Industrial District) and GI (Nash County General Industrial) to R-6MFA (Multifamily Residential District)

The Mayor stated the recommended action for this item was to postpone the matter until the August 5, 2024 City Council meeting.

It was noted that this item was postponed from January 8, February 12, April 8, and May 13, 2024 City Council meetings.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Harris and unanimously carried that this item be postponed to August 5, 2024 City Council meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING/REZONING REQUEST

The Mayor opened up a public hearing relative to the following rezoning request recommended for approval and found in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Board:

- Request by Rod Holloman (Goldrock Road, LLC), to rezone property having an area of \pm 27.42 acres at 601, 635 and 657 Goldrock Road, from A-1 (Agricultural District) to R-6MFA (Medium Density Multifamily Residential District)

It was noted that this item was postponed from June 10, 2024 City Council meeting.

Emilie Pinkston, Director of Development Services gave an overview of the request.

The Mayor recognized the following who wished to speak on the item:

Gary Puckett

- Stated he lives right across the street from the property
- Stated he is glad they have the flood map included in the presentation; stated staff did not talk about the flood zone until the citizens brought it up at the Planning Board meeting
- Stated they had a vote of three to four without answering any questions about the flood zone or the environmental impact this project would have
- Stated this is 27 acres in the flood zone and a couple places there is high ground and straight downhill in Hornbeam Branch which is right in his backyard
- Stated at one time it was a pristine stream and now with all of the development, it is drying up
- Stated there are trees falling in and blocking the stream and he sent pictures to Councilmember Walker who told him he would pass it along to the proper department to take care of it

Deborah Joyner

- Stated she still has concerns about the rezoning of this property because it is a flood zone
- Stated she has a ditch that was dug behind her house that drains Northgreen right into Hornbeam and it floods her property; she is also concerned with all of this her property will flood
- Stated they were not notified when the Planning Board met so they could have input, and some of the people that did get letters, they were sent to fake addresses
- Stated the traffic is still horrendous on that street and she thinks it is a terrible idea to rezone this property and she does not want it
- Stated there is a publication that the City of Rocky Mount put out about what citizens can do to protect their property and the average person could not even afford to do what is listed there

Mike Tolson

- Stated he represents Mr. Holloman and his interest in rezoning this piece of property
- Stated they invited all members that they were given addresses for from the tax records for property owners and if they were fake addresses then they were fake addresses on their tax records
- Stated he wants to make sure they address the flood plain, the owner has no intention to develop within the flood plain or infringe upon that boundary whatsoever, it will be left in the condition that it is in
- Stated the drainage in the area will all be directed and is subject to the stormwater ordinance that is in place within the City and they will be required to develop the property, store/treat the first inch of runoff from any storm that comes through the property and will detain a certain amount of water that will abate flooding in the area

Motion was made by Councilmember Daughtridge, seconded by Councilmember Blackwell and carried by a vote of 5-1 (Councilmembers Knight, Blackwell, Joyner, Daughtridge, and Harris ayes; Councilmember Jabaris Walker opposed) that **Ordinance No O-2024-42** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AND MAP OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT** was adopted.

PUBLIC HEARING/LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS

A public hearing was scheduled relative to the following land development code amendments recommended for approval and found in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Board:

- Text amendment - CHAPTER 1, Sec. 102 Terms and uses defined; CHAPTER 3, Sec. 312. Development review procedures, Table 3-1, Table 3-2; CHAPTER 4, Sec. 404. Zoning upon annexation, sec. 406. Commercial district intent statements; CHAPTER 5, Sec. 503. Zoning use tables, Table 5-1, Table 5-2, Sec. 509. Zoning variance provisions, Sec. 510. Appeal of administrative officer's decisions; CHAPTER 12, Sec. 1205. Remedies and enforcement powers; CHAPTER 13, Sec. 1301 Right-of-way width, street design - Purpose: to align development standards with practices and General Statutes

It was noted that this item was postponed from the June 10, 2024 City Council meeting and the recommended action is to postpone the item to August 5, 2024 City Council meeting.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Harris and unanimously carried that this item be postponed to August 5, 2024 City Council meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING/LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENTS

A public hearing was scheduled relative to the following land development code amendments recommended for approval and found in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Board:

- Text amendment - CHAPTER 14, Sec. 1405 Exempt subdivision plats; Sec. 1406 Final plat process - Purpose: to clarify plate requirements and certificates

It was noted that this item was postponed from the June 10, 2024 City Council meeting and the recommended action is to postpone the item to August 5, 2024 City Council meeting.

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Knight and unanimously carried that the item be postponed to August 5, 2024 City Council meeting.

PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Council received the minutes and recommendations from a Planning Board meeting held June 11, 2024.

The following action was taken upon the recommendation of the Planning Board:

PUBLIC HEARING/REZONING REQUEST

The Mayor opened up a public hearing relative to the following rezoning request recommended for approval and found in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Board:

- Request by Krystal Woodard, to rezone property having an area of + 0.99 acres at 746 & 750 Sutton Road, from R-10 (Low Density Residential District) to A-1 (Agricultural District)

Emilie Pinkston, Director of Development Services gave an overview of the request.

The Mayor recognized the following who wished to speak on the item:

Krystal Woodard

- Stated she purchased this property without knowing that she could only place a modular home on her land and she does not have that kind of money because modulares have tripled in value
- Asked Council to consider rezoning the 2 properties so a single or doublewide could be placed on the land or she would be left to abandon her hard work

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Knight and unanimously carried that Ordinance No. **O-2024-43** entitled **ORDINANCE AMENDING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AND MAP OF THE CITY OF ROCKY MOUNT** was approved.

LEASE AMENDMENT/OIC

The City Council was provided with a first amendment to the operating lease agreement between the City (Landlord) and Opportunities Industrialization Center, (OIC) Inc. (Tenant). The original operating lease agreement between the Rocky Mount Downtown Community Facility (DCF) and OIC was also provided for reference. It was noted that the changes would be that the annual per square foot rent will increase from \$8,000 to \$13,500 for the period 2029-2034, and to \$13,837.85 for the period 2034-2039, payable in quarterly installments.

Councilmember Knight and Councilmember Blackwell recused themselves from the vote due to their service on OIC's board and Recusal Statements are on file in the City Clerk's office.

The Mayor recognized the following individuals who wished to speak on the item:

Anthony Fox (appeared via zoom)

- Stated he is here on behalf of OIC to answer any questions and provide any insight on this proposed lease between the City and OIC which will provide a continuation of a partnership that has been successful for both the City and OIC
- Stated the lease provides for an increased rent that will be paid to the City for use of the facilities that are a component of the lease area

Bridget Chisholm (appeared via zoom)

- Stated she is with BWC Consulting and she served as the economic development consultant to the City of Rocky Mount to bring in the new market tax credit subsidy for the Event Center back in 2017
- Stated the new market tax credits would not have been received without the strong federally qualified health center being a partner in the Event Center
- Stated OIC has been successful in providing services to the women for mammography services to handle the deficit of more than a thousand low-income minority women who were not receiving screening mammograms
- Stated with this project, OIC and the Specialty Clinic were able, with the strong economic performance of the Event Center, to not only build out the clinic but to afford the equipment which was very expensive
- OIC and the CDEs are thrilled about the success of this project and want to continue to make investments in Rocky Mount, in particular OIC, to continue providing these services
- Stated they would like to be able to continue and not have any surprises after 2029

Sherry Bryant

- Stated she serves as the Chief Health Operations officer at OIC where they provide integrated health services and they have 3 locations for primary care, a dental practice, a behavioral health practice, and a specialty practice (which is what is being spoken on today)
- Stated OIC also operates services for urgent care, imaging, exercise therapy, nutrition services, 2 pharmacies, and 3 mobile health clinics
- Stated she would like to talk about the programming and impact that OIC has had at the Event Center at the Specialty Care Center and many of the accomplishments are as follows:
 - Specialty Care Center transformed into a COVID Service Delivery Center, over 6,000 COVID tests and over 10,000 vaccines with 81% given to black patients
 - Addressing infant mortality and black women's health, 927 mammograms, 683 x-rays, hired a doula
 - Employed an OBGYN to provide world class women's health
 - Collaborating with UNC Nash Hospital to establish pediatric and OBGYN practice
 - Over 15,000 SCC visits with urgent care services, exercise therapy, mammography/x-ray and women's health
 - Started utilizing exercise therapist for assistance in treating chronic disease and developed successful kid fit program to encourage exercise early
 - Employed registered dietician for nutrition counseling to treat chronic diseases with appropriate foods
 - Provided a chef to teach patients about healthy food preparation
 - Specialty Care has evolved to both a women's health and weight loss clinic
 - 1,588 exercise therapy patients, 180 nutrition consults in 2024
 - OIC Employee Wellness Hub
 - Formed a relationship with homeless shelters to bring primary care via the mobile unit monthly
 - Expanded mobile services by obtaining a third unit and reaching across 3 counties
- Stated the County Health Data for 2019 in Edgecombe County, the overall health ranking was at 99, which was not good

- Stated in 2024, the Health Data shows it is now a 93, which is still not good, but it is better than where it was and that is large in part by the work that OIC is doing and the care that they are providing at the Specialty Care Center
- Stated OIC's Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Earic Bonner, was there also if there were any questions for him

Jomerro McMillann

- Stated it has been a very successful relationship between OIC and the Event Center and based upon what was invested by the new markets tax credit, OIC has now almost matched that in terms of the \$4 million dollars they have put into it over the 7 year period of time they have been there
- Stated the seven-year financial investment (\$4 million) includes the following:
 - Created an average of 14 full-time jobs
 - Average salary of \$55,000
 - Hired from unemployed ranks of Rocky Mount (14%)
 - Spent \$2.8 million (70% of total investment) in Personnel Related Costs
 - Spent \$1.2 million (30% of total investment) on equipment service costs, facility related costs, software usage & installation fees, and insurance
- Stated OIC has done its part in making sure that the benefits to the community which was the foundation for the relationship is continuing
- Stated the investment that they put in is generating jobs all downstream not just in the OIC and the Event Center
- Stated he would like Council to take that into consideration in their thinking going forward in terms of this resolution

Connor Crews - McGuireWoods

- Stated he is an associate with McGuireWoods in Raleigh and they have been working along with Mary Nash Rusher on the unwind of the new markets tax credit financing which financed the downtown Event Center in 2016
- Stated before Council is a proposed amendment to a lease agreement, as part of the initial new markets tax credit financing in 2016, DCF, LLC, the present owner of the Event Center, entered into a 10-year lease with OIC with 2 5-year renewal terms
- Stated that lease directs the City and the OIC at the end of the initial term to negotiate the rent for space in good faith for each renewal term and have an appraiser determine what the rent would be and then the existing lease directs that it would be 60% of fair market value
- Stated this lease amendment would modify this result and it would spell out what the rent in each renewal term (2029-2034 and 2034-2039) would be
- Stated it is his understanding that OIC will then agree to convey the 10% ownership interest it has in the DCF, LLC back to DCF, LLC so that the Rocky Mount Public Facilities Corporation (*which is effectively controlled by the City*) would then be 100% owner of DCF, LLC
- Stated at the last City Council meeting, the City Council adopted a resolution which enables the City to take ownership of the Downtown Event Center, so this is the last step in the unwind to complete the process and transfer the Event Center from the DCF into City ownership

Council Comments:

Harris -

- Asked why this is being done now and not six months prior to the expiration of the original of the 10-year lease

Attorney Crews stated to start, it is helpful to remember that the City is not a party to the present lease between the DCF, LLC entity and OIC. He explained if the City wants to assume ownership of the Event Center, it cannot do that at present because Rocky Mount Public Facilities Corporation owns a 90 percent membership interest in DCF, LLC and OIC owns a 10 percent interest in DCF, LLC.

He continued explaining that all of the members have to consent to transfer the Event Center from the DCF, LLC to the City.

Attorney Crews stated that his understanding is that, OIC is willing to transfer its 10 percent ownership in DCF, LLC in exchange for the forgiveness of the working capital loan in the amount of \$470,000 and the transfer of the medical equipment OIC was leasing from the Event Center to OIC.

Daughtridge -

- Inquired if the only thing changing is the lease terms and the lease amount
- Stated in the packet there are other things that are called for in the lease such as what the City is responsible for and what the OIC is responsible for so he would like to know if they changed from a City perspective

Attorney Conner Crews verified that only the rent has changed. He stated in Section 2.1 B of the original lease, that is the provision that governs the rent during the renewal terms. He explained that the appraisal that would have occurred in 2029 and 2034, would now be unnecessary due to the rent amount being determined.

Daughtridge -

- Stated coming into this, it disturbed him because he does not hear much about what come out of the OIC side of the Event Center, but he will say he appreciates the presentation tonight; it was very impressive and based on what was presented, there is a huge impact on the community, and he greatly appreciates that
- Stated he does have an issue with the rent because essentially they are only doing \$3 a square foot and the cheapest rates he could find was \$12.50 a square foot, even at 60% it would still be \$7, but from his perspective, if OIC continues to do what they are doing to benefit the community and going from 99 to 93 then it is a positive
- Stated he appreciates this type of information and would like for it to come on a regular basis
- Stated he was going originally going to vote no on this item, but after the presentation today and seeing the impact it appears that OIC has on the community, he has no reason to vote against it
- Thanked OIC for everything they do

Jabaris Walker -

- Stated he thinks sometimes it goes unnoticed what OIC does for this community and the presentation was excellent
- Stated they give out free physicals for probably 95% of the athletes in Edgecombe and Nash County
- Stated they even open the door to citizens that return from prison to get health benefits including mental health
- Stated he is grateful for OIC and asked for Councilmember Blackwell to keep doing what he is doing and keep telling his why so people can really see the work that OIC does in the community

Joyner -

- Stated there is no primary health care in this community outside of OIC and just the benefit of that alone is significant, not to mention all the youth and community involvement

- Stated he appreciates the report but the impact of OIC is seen every day, and he invites Council not to wait for that report but to go be a part of it

Motion was made by Councilmember Joyner, seconded by Councilmember Daughtridge and unanimously carried that the Amendment to the Operating Lease Agreement between the City of Rocky Mount and OIC be approved with terms as follows:

- annual per square foot rent will increase from \$8,000 to \$13,500 for the period beginning 2029-2034, and
- increase from \$13,500 to \$13,837.85 for the period beginning 2034-2039)

LEASE AGREEMENT/YABA GROUP INC. (deferred during additions/deletions)

City Council was provided with a resolution of intent to enter in a lease agreement with Assef Thaher, doing business as, Yaba Group Inc., for City owned property at 207 E. Thomas Street (5-year lease with automatic renewal for one (1) successive term of five (5) years; annual rent = \$42,000 - renewed lease will increase rent 5% to \$44,100 annually; initial term August 26, 2024 - August 26, 2029 - renewal term will be August 26, 2029 - August 26, 2034.

Resolution authorizes the City Clerk to advertise the proposed agreement pursuant to NCGS 160A-272.

Item was deferred during the additions/deletions to the agenda portion of the meeting until the July 22, 2024 City Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, by consensus, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.



Kim Batts
City Clerk