



CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2024 at 4:00 PM
Council Chamber

The Charlottesville City Council convened in a regular meeting on Monday, May 20, 2024. Mayor Juandiego Wade called the meeting to order, and Deputy Clerk of Council Maxicelia Robinson called the roll, noting the following councilors present: Mayor Juandiego Wade, Vice Mayor Brian Pinkston, and Councilors Natalie Oschrin, Michael Payne, and Lloyd Snook. Councilor Oschrin requested to join the meeting by electronic communication.

After establishing a physical quorum in Council Chamber, Deputy Clerk Robinson confirmed that Councilor Oschrin was visible and audible in Council Chamber. Ms. Oschrin stated that she was unable to attend because of illness and that she was participating from Charlottesville, Virginia.

Council by a vote of 4-0 affirmed Ms. Oschrin's participation in the Council meeting by electronic means (Ayes: Payne, Pinkston, Snook, Wade; Noes: none)

On motion by Pinkston, seconded by Snook, Council unanimously approved the meeting agenda.

REPORTS

1. REPORT: Youth Council Annual Report 23 – 24 School Year

Charlottesville Youth Council partnered with UVA Youth Next Program to explore research topics about the state of education in Charlottesville. Youth Council members researched the link between segregation and education inequity in Charlottesville High School (CHS) past and present. Youth Councilors – Nava Ghurgel, Josephine Fischman, Christopher Procino, and Nicole King presented the report. The group gave an outline of their motivation for the project, research findings, and Next Steps recommendations.

Themes of the research findings: 1) Deleveling; 2) Reconfiguration; 3) Advocacy initiatives; 4) Uncertainty; 5) Parents actionable steps toward equity; 6) Recognition of inequity; 7) Importance of mental health resources; 8) Importance of community.

Recommendations for Next Steps to mitigate education inequity for CHS students:

1. Parents increase awareness though inclusion in and outside of school;
2. Administration makes all mental health resources widely known and accessible; and
3. City share results of how changes to schools and curriculum affect students.

Youth Councilors shared that students continue to face challenges created by the coronavirus health pandemic that has made it more difficult to implement deleveling as strategy to help create a more cohesive student body, students are still coping with the effects of the health pandemic on their mental health, and they experience students self-segregating for various reasons which results in decreased social interactions between different groups.

2. REPORT: Downtown Mall Action Plan

James Freas, Deputy City Manager of Operations, presented the Downtown Mall Action Plan. The Action Plan is a collaborative effort of the City and the Downtown Mall Committee and is a plan to preserve, enhance and evolve the historic landscape, and identify the values of the community regarding the Downtown Mall so it meets the needs and expectations of the community.

The presentation reviewed the three categories of actions: Organizational, Programing, and Amenities.

Priority Action Items, identified by the Downtown Mall Committee:

1. Create a consistent presence of staff on the Mall to enhance cleanliness and safety for all users;
2. Implement the proposed Tree Management Plan;
3. Create a plan for safety and aesthetic lighting of the Downtown Mall and create guidelines for current and future lighting; and,
4. Re-imagine the outdoor café spaces.

A budget proposal for FY26 for the priority action items will be prepared for the upcoming budget cycle.

There is not yet a timeline to update the Board of Architectural Review regulations applicable to the Downtown Mall. Council engaged in discussion on various topics regarding the Downtown Mall, including - mall side-crossings, re-opening fountains on the mall, re-seating brick walkways, tree planning, Youth Downtown Mall Ambassadors, car-crossings on the mall.

CLOSED MEETING

On motion by Pinkston, seconded by Payne, Council voted unanimously to convene in closed session pursuant to section 2.2-3712 of the Virginia Code, as authorized by Section 2.2-3711(A)(1), for (1) To interview prospective candidates for the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority Board; and (2) Discussion and consideration of prospective candidates for appointment to the following boards, commissions, and councils:

On motion by Pinkston, seconded by Payne, Council certified by a recorded vote of 5-0 that to the best of each Council member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the Motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed session (Ayes: Oschrein, Payne, Pinkston, Snook, Wade; Noes: none).

BUSINESS SESSION

City Council observed a moment of silence.

BOARD/COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

On motion by Pinkston, seconded by Snook, Council voted 5-0 to approve the following

appointments to boards and commissions (Ayes: Oschrin, Payne, Pinkston, Snook, Wade; Noes: none):

- Albemarle-Charlottesville Regional Jail Authority Board: David Brown
- Board of Architectural Review: Jerry Rosenthal
- Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority Board: Brigid Wicks and Earl Hicks
- Historic Resources Committee: Denny Berry, Nancy Damon, and Caden Martz
- Jefferson Area Board for Aging Advisory Council: Evelyn Boatwright and LD Perry
- Local Board of Building Code Appeals: Diane Caton
- Piedmont Family YMCA Board of Directors: Mary Esselman Roberts
- Piedmont Virginia Community College Board: Delia Kloh and Nina Schoonover
- Retirement Commission: Joshua Bontrager, Ben Cullop, and Phillip Garber
- Sister Cities Commission: Kimberly Hayes – position re-assignment
- Social Services Advisory Board: Cherry Stewart
- Towing Advisory Board: Agron Fazliu
- Youth Council: Jaylynn Bailey, Emma Bennett-McConnell, Nora Erkelens, Madeline Clodfelter, David Darring, Dashiell Jackson, Zina Parker, and Alex Zimring

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Snook congratulated Charlottesville High School students in the Best All-Around Club of Nerds (BACON) on winning the Northeast Drone Competition.

RECOGNITIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

- **PROCLAMATION: Charlottesville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated 55th Year Anniversary**
Mayor Wade presented the proclamation to the President of Charlottesville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc, Nekeithia Wade, who accepted with remarks.
- **PROCLAMATION: ALS Awareness Month**
Councilor Oschrin presented the proclamation.
- **PROCLAMATION: Public Works Week**
Councilor Snook presented the proclamation to Steven Hicks, Director of Public Works, who accepted with remarks.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Mayor Wade opened the floor for comments from the public.

1. Jeff Fogel, spoke about the management of a pro-Palestine student-led protest on University of Virginia property.

Councilor Payne expressed his support of peaceful protest and issued an apology to individuals for the police use of force in response to the demonstration.

CONSENT AGENDA

Deputy Clerk Robinson read the following Consent Agenda items into the record, and on motion by Pinkston, seconded by Snook, Council by a vote of 5-0 adopted the Consent Agenda (Ayes: Oschrein, Payne, Pinkston, Snook, Wade; Noes: none).

3. MINUTES: February 20 regular meeting
4. RESOLUTION appropriating a grant of public funds for housing assistance to low-and moderate-income homeowners within the City of Charlottesville - \$1,295,000 (2nd reading)

RESOLUTION

Appropriating a grant of public funds for housing assistance to low-and moderate-income homeowners within the City of Charlottesville

WHEREAS pursuant to the provisions of Va. Code § 63.2-314 this City Council may offer public grants to its local director of social services, serving in her capacity as the “local board” under the provisions of § 63.2-304; and

WHEREAS this City Council desires to offer a grant of public funds during Fiscal Year 2024-2025, to aid low- and moderate-income homeowners within the City who are affected by the rising costs of homeownership (which include mortgage payments, fees and taxes, insurance, utilities, maintenance and repairs); and

WHEREAS the average assessment of a single-family residential property within the City has risen by approximately 5.92 percent over the past year, and with rising inflation, transportation costs, and utility costs, many individuals who have income significantly lower than the Charlottesville area median income will experience significant financial stress and may need financial assistance to remain in their homes; and

WHEREAS City Council hereby finds and determines that it is both necessary and desirable, to promote the general welfare of the City, and to promote the safety, health, comfort and convenience of City inhabitants, to support the affordability of continuing homeownership by low- and moderate-income individuals;

WHEREAS public funding is available and has been appropriated within the City budget for the proposed public grant, in the amounts set forth within this resolution;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that effective July 1, 2024 and for calendar year 2024 a grant of public funds is hereby made to the Director of Social Services, in her capacity as the “local board of social services” pursuant to Va. Code § 63.2-304, to be used to provide housing assistance to City homeowners in need of such, as follows:

Expenditures**\$1,295,000**

Fund: 105

Cost Center: 3343019000

G/L Account: 540065

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Charlottesville-Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau videos were shown as part of the city manager's report that could not be shown at the previous council work session due to technical difficulty.

Misty Graves, Director of Human Services, summarized the Community Attention Youth Internship Program (CAYIP), and Annie Seachrist, CAYIP Coordinator, reported on Summer 2024 programming. Each CAYIP participant may work up to 20 hours per week for 15 weeks for a total earning of \$1,800 for the season, if all performance requirements are met. City funding for the 2024 summer program will be subsidized by funding from Albemarle County as well as grant funds to expand the program to youth who reside within Albemarle County. Local businesses can visit <https://www.charlottesville.gov/256/Community-Attention-Youth-Internship> for information about becoming a CAYIP Site Partner.

Krisy Hammill, Director of Budget, presented the Quarterly Financial Report for the third quarter. There will be an expected revenue surplus of about \$11.5 million. Revenue projections include the real estate and personal property tax increase approved for the FY2025 budget as well as an increase of approximately one million dollars in State revenue. Ms. Hammill also gave a summary of expenditure projections. Jason Vandever, City Treasurer, presented an update on the City's investment portfolio.

City Manager Sanders announced Deputy City Manager Ashley Marshall is attending her graduation ceremony for her master's in public health. He also congratulated Sue Moffett, Director of Social Services, on her retirement.

Councilor Oschrein announced a Parks and Recreation survey that is currently available online to members of the public.

ACTION ITEMS**5. ORDINANCE: Public Hearing – ZT24-01-01 Zoning Text Amendment to hold properties harmless for violations created through the acquisition of property for Public Use**

Missy Creasy, Deputy Director of Neighborhood Development Solutions, presented a request to grant a text amendment to the Zoning Text Code. The previous Development Code also included a clause to hold properties harmless for violations created through the acquisition of property for public use.

Mayor Wade opened the public hearing. With no speakers coming forward, he closed the public hearing.

On motion by Snook, seconded by Pinkston, Council by the following vote approved the

Ordinance authorizing an amendment to the Zoning Text to hold properties harmless for violations created through the acquisition of property for Public Use: 5-0 (Ayes: Oschrein, Payne, Pinkston, Snook, Wade; Noes: none).

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND RE-ENACTING CHAPTER 34
(CHARLOTTESVILLE DEVELOPMENT CODE) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF
CHARLOTTESVILLE, TO HOLD PROPERTIES HARMLESS WHEN A PORTION
IS OBTAINED FOR PUBLIC PROJECT.**

6. RESOLUTION: Public Hearing for the Program Year 2024-25 1-Year Annual Action Plan for CDBG and HOME Programs and appropriation of associated CDBG funds (approximately \$438,617) and associated HOME funds (approximately \$83,016)

a. RESOLUTION: Resolution approving the City of Charlottesville Annual Action Plan for the program year 2024-25 CDBG and HOME programs

b. RESOLUTION: Resolution appropriating Community Development Block Grant funds to be received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in support of the program year 2024-25 Annual Action Plan, in the approximate amount of \$438,617

c. RESOLUTION: Resolution appropriating HOME Investment Partnership Program funds to be received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in support of the program year 2024-25 Annual Action Plan, in the approximate amount of \$83,016

Anthony Warn, Grants Analyst, Office of Community Solutions, presented the resolutions. The City of Charlottesville is a recipient of federal funding through the CDBG and Home Programs. As a funding recipient, the City is required to submit a 1-year Annual Action Plan for CDBG and HOME Programs to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide a performance report on the CDBG and Home 5-year Consolidated Plan.

Seventeen (17) requests for funding were received for the 2024-25 CDBG and Home program year for a combined total funding request of \$1,224,986.00. Lori Jean Talun, Regional Housing Grants Manager, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, reported thirty-two (32) Home Program projects were completed by the Thomas Jefferson HOME Consortium.

The Draft Annual Action Plan was made available online to members of the public at <https://tjpd.org> and a hard copy of the plan was made available in the Office of Neighborhood Development Services at City Hall for a 30-day public comment period.

Mr. Warn presented the CDBG Task Force recommendation for grant recipients for the 2024-25 program year.

Mayor Wade opened the public hearing. With no speakers coming forward, he closed the public hearing.

Council unanimously agreed to carry the item to the June 3 meeting for second reading and vote on the Consent Agenda.

COMMUNITY MATTERS (2)

Mayor Wade opened the floor for comments from the public. With no speakers coming forward, he closed the public comment period.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Maxicelia Robinson, Deputy Clerk of Council