

CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Budget Development Work Session

March 14, 2024 at 6:00 PM

CitySpace, 100 5th Street NE

The Charlottesville City Council met on Thursday, March 14, 2024, in a work session to discuss Fiscal Year 2025 budget development related to outside and non-profit Agencies. Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 budget development documents were made available on the City website at: <https://www.charlottesville.gov/169/Budget>. Mayor Juandiego Wade called the meeting to order with all members present: Mayor Juandiego Wade, Vice Mayor Brian Pinkston and Councilors Natalie Oschrein, Michael Payne and Lloyd Snook.

City Manager Sam Sanders made opening statements summarizing the work session agenda. He and Budget Director Krisy Hammill provided answers to questions that Council members posed at the March 7 budget work session. Garland Williams, Director of Transit, answered questions from councilors regarding funding for filling vacancies for bus driver positions, fleet operations readiness and timelines for fleet repairs. Chris Engel, Director of Economic Development, answered a question about parking garage leasing and the Parking Enterprise Fund.

Hunter Smith, Human Services Planner, summarized the application process for the Vibrant Community Fund. The FY25 process continued to develop on previous years' adjustments and changes. Equity continues to be a focus area for all applicants and questions around how organizations are working toward equity were part of the application process. There were 4 broad funding priority areas: Youth, Family & Education, Economic Impact and Jobs, Health and Safety, and Arts and Culture.

Misty Graves, Director of Human Services, acknowledged the countless hours of work done by Hunter Smith and the team of volunteers who began work on this year's Vibrant Community Fund process in August 2023.

Regarding Intergovernmental Agency Funding and Fundamental Agency Funding, Ms. Hammill provided an overview and answered questions from Council. Deputy City Manager Ashley Marshall explained the increased funding request for the Emergency Communications Center. Director Graves answered questions about Pathways program funding. Councilor Snook raised a question about the categorization of PHAR as a fundamental agency. Staff stated that based on last year's conversation and historical funding of the Association, the change was made for this year's budget. Discussion ensued about a proposed large allocation to an agency that does not yet have authority to operate in key areas of their proposal. Staff stated that the amount of this particular request was an outlier and Council had not set a cap on individual funding allocations. The parameters of the application process also did not exclude entities affiliated with the University of Virginia (e.g., the Fralin Museum). Council discussed the possible need to change the funding structure for Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority (CRHA) staffing, and to have a better understanding of CRHA operations. Mr. Sanders suggested holding a work session to discuss CRHA.

Councilor Snook questioned how and whether outcomes are measured, given that requested funding has increased for several groups or agencies over the years. He also requested discussion to determine the city's overall obligation to the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center. Mr. Sanders

suggested having a work session on the Vibrant Community Fund.

Councilors made suggestions for changes to amounts of some proposed allocations.

Mayor Wade opened the floor for comments from the public.

- Jody Kielbasa, Vice Provost of the Arts at UVA, spoke about funding and programming for the arts organizations at UVA. He spoke about a lack of professional arts structure in the city.
- Marta Keane, JABA CEO, thanked staff for a thoughtful process. She expressed appreciation for the relationship with the city and commitment to seniors in Charlottesville.
- Rick Preve, local filmmaker, on advisory board for Lighthouse Studios, spoke about the summer film academy and other programs.
- Daniela Pretzer, Executive Director of The Bridge Line, introduced herself and asked about how to get added to the Fundamental Agency list.
- Taylor Frome, Interim Director of The Mediation Project of Charlottesville, provided information about the funding request.
- Lindsey Hepler, Engagement Director at Lighthouse Studio, requested additional funding and asked about the change in rating from last year.
- Deanna Gould, Lighthouse Studio, shared positive feedback from community partners.
- Dr. Wes Bellamy, city resident, suggested moving the budget work sessions to other areas in the community, stating that CitySpace seems non-inclusive. He spoke in support of the Uhuru Foundation request for funding and their violence intervention impact.
- Elizabeth Irving, Women's Initiative, supported Dr. Bellamy's comments and she spoke in support of the efforts to have a fair and engaging process to determine funding. She welcomed a work session to discuss addressing rising needs for mental health and wellness support.

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council