City of Harrisonburg

409 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Meeting Minutes - Final
City Council

Tuesday, September 22, 2026 | **7:00 PM** | **Council Chambers**

1. Roll Call

Present: 5 - Mayor Deanna R. Reed, Vice-Mayor Dany Fleming, Council Member Laura Dent, Council Member Nasser Alsaadun and Council Member Monica Robinson

Also Present: 5 - City Manager Ande Banks, City Attorney Chris Brown, City Clerk Pam Ulmer, Chief Matthew Tobia and Police Chief Joseph Tucker

2. Moment of Silence

Mayor Reed offered a moment of silence

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Reed led the Pledge of Allegiance

4. Special Recognition

4.a. Proclamation honoring the life of Rodney Eagle.

Mayor Reed read the Proclamation honoring the life of former Mayor and former Council Member, Rodney Eagle, and presented it to his family.

Approval of Electronic Attendance

Chris Brown, city attorney, stated Council Member Dent is attending this meeting virtually as she is in New York City at a conference.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Robinson, to approve the electronic attendance (virtual) of Council Member Dent. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

5. Consent Agenda (any item placed on the consent agenda shall be removed and taken up as a separate matter, if so requested by any member of Council, otherwise all items will be voted on with one (1) motion)

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to approved the consent agenda. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

5.a. Minutes from the September 8, 2026 City Council meeting

These minutes were approved

5.b. Consider a request from Trenton Inc. and Bernard LC to rezone 435, 445, 457, 473, 483 & 495 South Main Street and 282, 288, 294 & 298 South Liberty Street (The Lindsey Apartments)

This rezoning request was approved on second reading.

5.c. Consider a request to amend the Zoning Ordinance to create a new term and definition for "poultry hatchery"

This ordinance amendment was approved on second reading.

5.d. Consider a supplemental appropriation for the carryover and reappropriation of prior year encumbrances and unexpended grants, and for the appropriation of new grant awards in the amount of $22.1 million

This supplemental appropriation was approved on second reading.

6. Public Hearings

6.a. Consider adopting an ordinance granting a Lease of Certain Real Property of the City

Chris Brown, city attorney, stated on July 2025 City Council approved a transaction that is substantially identical to his item. HEC is part of Virginia Municipal Energy Association (VMEA) who negotiates power supply and rates for it's members. There have been negotiations with a third party LightShift Energy to construct a battery energy storage system in Harrisonburg if approved by Council, on property located at 2230 Ramblewood Road. He reviewed how this battery storage system will work for the benefit of the rates for the community. He reviewed the Lease Agreement.

At 7:18 p.m., Mayor Reed closed the regular session and called the first public hearing to order. A notice appeared in the Daily News-Record on September 10, 2026, and September 14, 2026.

Panayotis “Poti” Giannakouros, stated he attended the public meeting in which the storage facility was discussed. He spoke on the lease, solar panels, retention of habitat, and the tall grass and weeds ordinance.

At 7:22 p.m., Mayor Reed closed the public hearing and the regular session reconvened.

Discussion took place on the cost savings projections, the advancement of clean energy, and the benefits to the residents of the city.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to adopt the ordinance as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

7. Regular Items

7.a. Consider adopting a Resolution approving Battery Energy Storage System Agreements

Chris Brown, city attorney, stated this is step 2, 2 for this transaction in conjunction with item 6.a.,granting HEC to enter into agreements with LightEngery and VMEA via a resolution.

Brian O'Dell, manager, HEC, stated the agreement shows the costs and savings allocated related to this project. The power savings will be allocated among the members.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to adopt the resolution as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

7.b. Consider approve the write off of 312 Utility Bills and 9 A/R Bills from July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024.

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented a request to write off delinquent public utilities accounts for July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, in the amount of $37,247.62 which equals 0.15% of the total billings for that period. He stated collection efforts will continue on those accounts.

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to approve the request as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

7.c. Downtown Master Planting Plan

Keith Thomas, sustainability and environmental manager, Public Works, presented an update on the Downtown Master Planting Plan. He reviewed the plan, the timeline,

survey results and open feedback from community engagement, plan revisions, and the implementation of the plan.

Discussion took place on the work done for this plan, the continuing maintenance, and efforts to reduce the effects of urban heat islands.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to approve the plan as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

7.d. Discussion on the Roadless Area Conservation Rule

Council Member Dent, stated the Roadless Area Conservation Rule is important to her and has a direct impact on the Harrisonburg area.

Lynn Cameron, Friends of Shenandoah Mountain and Pete Bsumek, Virginia Sierra Club - Shenandoah Chapter, presented information as follows:

- Roadless Rule was adopted in 2021 and affects over 58.5 million acres of national forests (394,000 acres in Virginia are protected by this rule);
- The Forest Service has proposed to rescinding this rule;
- The local governments that are weighing in to keep the rule in place;
- The benefits of roadless areas to the city via tourism and drinking water protection;
- The locations of these areas in the valley;
- Yearly economic value to the local area;

They are requesting that Council draft a letter of support or resolution to keep the Roadless Area Conservation Rule in place.

No formal action was required, but Council directed staff to draft the letter of support to keep the rule in place.

This Presentation was received and filed.

7.e. Consider adopting a resolution endorsing passenger rail service expansion

Council Member Dent stated this is the formal request to endorse passenger rail service expansion to the Shenandoah Valley.

Ande Banks, city manager, stated a resolution has been drafted and requested that

Council review and adopt it.

A motion was made by Council Member Alsaadun, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to adopt the resolution as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

7.f. Consider approving the enactment of an Ordinance Prohibiting Procurement or Use of Automatic License Plate Recognition Systems by City

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented an ordinance enactment prohibiting the procurement and/or use of stationary Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPR's). He reviewed the specifics in the ordinance.

Discussion took place on the foundation this ordinance provides for future Councils and appreciation to staff for getting it prepared.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to approve the ordinance as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

7.g. Consider approving the amended Harrisonburg Police Department Policies and Equipment Requirements for Tow Companies and amended Fee Schedule.

Chris Brown, city attorney, presented a request from the Tow Board and HPD to amend the tow fees that have been in effect since 2023. He reviewed the revisions requested by the Tow board and the recommended amendments by staff.

Discussion took place on the costs of towing and retrieving personal items from a vehicle being held.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to approve the request with the recommended staff amendments. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

8. Supplementals

8.a. Consider a supplemental appropriation for an Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) grant

Ande Banks, city manager, presented a supplemental appropriation related to the Opioid Abatement Authority grant funding in the amount of $200,000 to Strength in Peers.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Alsaadun, to approve the supplemental as presented. The vote carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

9. Reallocations

9.a. Consider a reallocation of ARPA funds

Ande Banks, city manager, presented a request to reallocate remaining of ARPA funding remaining to the Northeast Neighborhood paving project.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Vice Mayor Fleming, to approve the reallocation as presented. The motion carried with a roll call vote as follows:

Yes: 5 - Mayor Reed, Vice-Mayor Fleming, Council Member Dent, Council Member Alsaadun and Council Member Robinson

No: 0

10. Other Matters

10.a. Comments from the public, limited to five minutes, on matters not on the regular agenda. (Name and address are required)

Panayotis “Poti” Giannakouros, spoke on residents being able to have meadows in their yards and the enforcement of the tall grass and weeds ordinance.

10.b. City Council and Staff

Council Member Dent spoke on her attendance at a Climate Action conference in New York City;

Council Member Alsaadun spoke on recent visit of Congressional candidate Beth Macy; and the recent NAACP Banquet;

Council Member Robinson spoke on a recent community forum with Congressional candidate Beth Macy; the recent Habitat for Humanity Gala; recent VAIL (Valley Associates for Independent Living) Community Leader luncheon; recent presentation of EPSAC Sustainable Success Stories at the Lucy F. Simms Center; recent Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project and JMU Furious Flower Poetry Center event; past weekend PRIDE festival; and upcoming Our Community Place Gala and

an upcoming presentation with staff at the Virginia Association of Zoning Officials at Hotel Madison.

Vice Mayor Fleming spoke on the recent VAIL meeting; recent Continuum of Care meeting; recent meeting with VML Legislative Committee; meeting with Virginia First Cities staff; recent HRMPO meeting; and his recent appointment to the National League of Cities Nomination Committee.

Mayor Reed spoke on the recent PRIDE Festival; the recent NAACP Gala; the recent Habitat for Humanity Gala; the recent African American Festival; the recent Strength and Peers/Open Doors meeting; the recent Augusta Health Community Panel; upcoming speaking engagement for NCNW (National Council of Negro Women); the recent visit from Secretary Jeff Smith and State Superintendent Jenna Conway of the Virginia Department of Education; and the award presented to Chief Tobia, HFD at the NAACP banquet.

11. Boards and Commissions

11.a. CPMT Alternate City Representative

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Fleming, seconded by Council Member Robinson, to appoint Brian Vandenberg as alternate to Amy Snider on the CPMT Board and remove Ande Banks as alternate. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote.

13. Adjournment

At 8:38 p.m., there being no further business and on motion adopted, the meeting was adjourned.

_____ _____

CITY CLERK MAYOR