

# **City Council Meeting MINUTES**

**Monday, February 26, 2024, 6:30 PM**

Work Session is cancelled for February 26, 2024

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## **WORK SESSION**

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### **AMENDED AGENDA**

WORK SESSION IS CANCELLED

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## **REGULAR SESSION**

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### **1. Call to Order**

A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Salem, Virginia, was called to order at 6:30 p.m., there being present the following members to wit: Renée Ferris Turk, Mayor; James W. Wallace, III, Vice-Mayor; Councilmembers: Byron Randolph Foley, William D. Jones (absent), and Hunter Holliday; with Renée Ferris Turk, Mayor, presiding together with Chris Dorsey, City Manager; Rob Light, Assistant City Manager and Clerk of Council; Rosemarie B. Jordan, Director of Finance; Mike Stevens, Director of Communications; and Jim Guynn, City Attorney.

### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

### **3. Bid Openings, Awards, Recognitions**

There were no recognitions this evening.

### **4. Consent Agenda**

#### **A. Citizen Comments**

Comments from the public, limited to five minutes, on matters not already having a public hearing at the same meeting.

Donna Crotts, 307 N. Broad Street, was the first citizen to appear before Council this evening. She thanked Council for the thought-provoking questions that they asked in the Joint Meeting with the Planning Commission and Hope Tree last week. She also asked that they take time for more investigation of the debated aspects of the proposal before making a decision. She expressed that she was opposed to the Hope Tree proposal and felt that there were other locations in Salem that would be

appropriate for this type of development. Ms. Crotts requested that this green space be preserved.

Tommy McDonald, 425 N. Broad Street, shared concerns about the Hope Tree proposal. He expressed that there were other appropriate locations for this plan, but he felt that this proposal was not right for this location. He voiced concerns about traffic. He expressed that he felt there was a need for additional neutral third-party studies. Mr. McDonald noted that he hoped Council would vote "no" to this proposal. However, if this proposal did go through, he requested that they not allow apartment living and would reduce the number of homes allowed as well as the amount of commercial space. He spoke of the importance of keeping these homes compatible with those already in the area and expressed a concern that this development would impact the property value of the surrounding homes in a negative manner. Mr. McDonald requested that Council take more time before making this decision.

Karla Murphy, 721 Mount Vernon Avenue, expressed concerns about the proposed Hope Tree development. She discussed traffic concerns and noted that she had done personal traffic counts at the corner of Mt. Vernon Avenue and Carrollton. She also expressed concerns about the level of services and quality of life. She requested that the City look outside the box and explore other options to preserve this location.

Stella Reinhard, 213 N. Broad Street, expressed that she was against the Hope Tree rezoning request. She also expressed appreciation for the questions that Council raised to the developers during the Work Session last week. Mrs. Reinhard felt that in revising the proposed plan that some better solutions could be utilized for some of the issues that have been raised over the last several months. She also questioned why Hope Tree was requesting rezoning of the entire sixty-two acres. She requested consideration of withdrawing the PUD from the present proposal and possibly using Special Exceptions to provide some of what was being considered in the PUD form. Mrs. Reinhard felt there were other locations in the City that would be more appropriate for this development as proposed.

#### **B. Minutes**

Consider acceptance of the February 12, 2024, Work Session and Regular Meeting minutes.

The minutes were approved as written.

#### **C. Financial Reports**

Consider acceptance of the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for seven months ending January 2024.

The financial reports were received.

## **5. Old Business**

### **A. Water and Sewer Disposal Rates & Charges**

Consider ordinance on second reading amending Chapter 90, Article III, Division 2, Subdivision I, Sections 90-74 and 90-128 pertaining to water and sewer availability fees. (Approved on first reading at the February 12, 2024, meeting.)

Mr. Light noted that this was just a housekeeping item to change wording that needed to be clarified.

Randy Foley motioned to adopt ordinance on second reading amending Chapter 90, Article III, Division 2, Subdivision I, Sections 90-74 and 90-128 pertaining to water and sewer availability fees. H Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday , Turk, Wallace

Absent: Jones

## **6. New Business**

### **A. Urban Archery Program**

Consider request to authorize the City Manager to notify the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) that the City of Salem will participate in the 2024-2025 urban archery program regulated by DWR.

Mr. Light noted that the Department of Wildlife Resources administers and regulates a special urban archery season. Localities must provide a certified letter of intent to DWR by April 1st for the initial year of participation. Thereafter, we would have to opt-out by April 1st in order to not participate in a given year. This item is a request for Council to authorize the City Manager to send that letter.

Mr. Foley clarified that this just authorizes citizens to utilize urban archery for deer during prescribed dates established by DWR that are additional to the normal archery season.

Mayor Turk stated that this is something the State allows at the local level.

Mr. Foley asked Mr. Guynn if there was any additional information.

Mr. Guynn confirmed that there were no additional details.

Randy Foley motioned to authorize the City Manager to notify the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) that the City of Salem will participate in

the 2024-2025 urban archery program regulated by DWR. H Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday , Turk, Wallace

Absent: Jones

**B. Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare Bylaws**

Consider approval of Revised Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare bylaws.

Mayor Turk asked to clarify if this was just updating their bylaws and looking at what was changed and approving that.

Mr. Light stated that per their bylaws, the surrounding localities were required to approve any changes to the bylaws.

Vice-Mayor Wallace asked Mr. Light to highlight the specifics of what was being amended.

Mr. Light provided the following summary of changes to the bylaws: 1) They removed language that separated the board from the entity as a Community Services Board to provide clarity and precision to the document; 2) Where applicable, reverted back to language in the Code of Virginia; 3) Article III, Section 5 that details Mechanics of Board members has been removed from bylaws and into a separate administrative policy; 4) Added attendance language for board members into the bylaws; and 5) Article XI, Standing Committees have been removed from the bylaws and into a separate policy.

Randy Foley motioned to approve the revised Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare bylaws. H Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday , Turk, Wallace

Absent: Jones

**7. Closed Session**

**A. Closed Session**

Hold a closed session in accordance with Section 2.2-3711 A(3) of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

Jim Wallace motioned that in accordance with Section 2.2-3711 A (3) of the 1950 Code of Virginia, as amended, Council hereby convenes to closed session at 6:57

p.m. for the purpose of discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. Randy Foley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday, Turk, Wallace

Absent: Jones

It was noted that no action was anticipated this evening.

James Wallace motioned to reconvene at 8:11 p.m. in accordance with Section 2.2-3712 D. of the Code of Virginia, 1950 as amended to date, Council certifies that in closed session only items lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such items identified in the motion by which the closed session was convened were heard, discussed, or considered by the Council. Randy Foley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday , Turk, Wallace

Absent: Jones

## **8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.