

City Council Meeting
AMENDED MINUTES
Monday, June 26, 2023, 6:30 PM

Work Session 5:15 P.M. Council Chambers Conference Room, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, Salem, Virginia 24153
Regular Session 6:30 P.M. Council Chambers, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, Salem, Virginia 24153

WORK SESSION

1. Call to Order

A work session of the Council of the City of Salem, Virginia, was held in the Council Chambers Conference Room, City Hall, 114 N. Broad Street, Salem, Virginia, on June 26, 2023, at 5:15 p.m., there being present the following members of said Council to wit: Renée Ferris Turk, Mayor; James W. Wallace, III, Vice-Mayor; Council members: Byron Randolph Foley, William D. Jones, and H. Hunter Holliday; with Renée Ferris Turk, Mayor, presiding together with James E. Taliaferro, II, City Manager; Rob Light, Assistant City Manager and Clerk of Council; Rosemarie B. Jordan, Director of Finance; Tammy Todd, Assistant Director of Finance; Larado Robinson, Director of Water and Sewer Department; Annie Tripp, Library Director; Jim Guynn, City Attorney; and Laura Lea Harris, Deputy Clerk of Council; and the following business was transacted;

Mayor Turk reported that this date, place, and time had been set in order for the Council to hold a work session; and

2. New Business

A. Discussion Items

- 1) Update on Water/Sewer projects - Larado Robinson
- 2) Discussion on Citizen Comment requests
- 3) Budget items as needed

Larado Robinson, Director of the Water and Sewer Department, presented an update on current water and sewer projects. He shared details of the evaluation and process for the Upper Roanoke River project. It is anticipated that they should be able to move ahead with design and next steps by the end of the year. Mr. Robinson next shared that their department had not received any calls on backups on Pomeroy Road since 2019. He noted that they are looking at options involving gravity for this situation and discussion was held on potential issues. Larado shared that the Department of

Environmental Quality had granted a draft permit for water intake after eight years of waiting for this. He also noted that they are hoping to add two wells to mitigate the intake situation. It is hoped to put a bid out late summer or fall on this proposal. Council was given the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the information that had been presented.

Council discussed the requests and suggestions they had received during the Citizen Comment period of Council meetings over the last several months. Council discussed holding joint meetings of Council, Planning Commission, and the Economic Development Authority. The feeling was expressed that these meetings are more productive when held with Council and one of these groups individually. Council requested that staff bring an updated list of citizen requests to a Work Session every other month to be discussed.

Ms. Jordan provided updated revenue information with Council. She detailed adjustments that had been made to the initial proposed budget. She specifically detailed how they had arrived at funding for compensation increases. She noted that they had been conservative in projections that were used, that the City had strong reserve funding, and that she felt confident in the City's ability to fund the proposed raises. Based on projections, staff was comfortable excess expenditures will not outpace revenues in the next five years. Council discussed this information.

3. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Turk adjourned the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION

1. Call to Order

A regular meeting of the Council of the City of Salem, Virginia was called to order at 6:34 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, and H. Hunter Holliday; with Renée Ferris Turk, Mayor, presiding together with James E. Taliaferro, II, City Manager; Rob Light, Assistant City Manager and Clerk of Council; Rosemarie B. Jordan, Director of Finance; Chuck Van Allman,

Director of Community Development; Mike Stevens, Director of Communications; and Jim Guynn, City Attorney.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Bid Openings, Awards, Recognitions

Mayor Turk recognized Senior Police Officer David Huynh from the Salem Police Department that was present with the new officers that are beginning their field training phase. Officer Huynh introduced each of the officers and had them to share a little bit about themselves with Council and all in attendance. Attending this evening were Officer Jordan, Officer Hodgins, Officer Harrison, and Officer Mattison. On behalf of City Council, Mayor Turk expressed appreciation and gratitude for having these officers in Salem to serve in Salem to protect and take care of the citizens. She thanked them for choosing Salem to serve in. Council thanked the officers for their service.

Mayor Turk also thanked the Fire and EMS personnel that were in attendance this evening. She thanked them for their hard work every day and for working to take care of Salem's citizens. She thanked them on behalf of Council and the citizens of Salem.

4. Consent Agenda

A. **Citizen Comments**

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

John Breen, 142 Bogey Lane, was the only citizen to address Council this evening. He reflected on the responsibilities of City Council and expressed disappointment in Code enforcement in the City of Salem. He offered the following suggestions for Council's consideration:

- 1) Make Council requests of Administration time certain for response or action.
- 2) Abolish 2 X 2 meetings.
- 3) Require City Codes to be followed, enforced, and promptly updated as needed.
- 4) Create two new Council committees - City Services and Salem Code Enforcement-both composed of a Council member, one or two citizens, and a relevant administrative official. At least monthly meetings and reports to Council would be required.
- 5) Add two non-voting citizens to Council for Workshops.
- 6) Hold public meetings when citizens are able to reasonably attend.

- 7) Take charge of agendas for Work Sessions and Regular Council meetings.
- 8) Hold Council Work Sessions the week between Council meetings and not before Council meetings unless an emergency.
- 9) Require at least quarterly activity reports from Council appointed boards or commissions.
- 10) Adopt the Building Maintenance Code.
- 11) Hold semi-annual public meetings with the Planning Commission.

B. Minutes

Consider acceptance of the June 12, 2023, Work Session and Regular Meeting minutes.

The minutes were accepted as written.

C. Financial Reports

Consider acceptance of the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the eleven months ending May 2023.

The financial reports were received.

5. Old Business

A. Budget Ordinance

Consider ordinance on second reading adopting the budget for 2023-2024 fiscal year.

Mr. Foley noted that Ms. Jordan had provided specific line-item information to balance the budget for the budget under consideration.

Mayor Turk noted at the request of Council, a Pay Study had taken place to evaluate the compensation of Salem's employees. The evaluation was done by The Berkley Group. They considered 35 different localities, studied each of the positions for employees, and made a recommendation. Council has discussed the recommendation that was made. There was an adjustment in it to not only bring the pay scale up to the minimum amount to make it comparable to other localities around Salem, but Council has also been presented with the possibility of adding in a tenure increase. In addition to that, the recommendation is a 7% increase across the board as a cost-of-living increase. The information presented by Ms. Jordan this evening ensured that Council and the City could sustain these amounts being paid to employees moving forward over the next four or five years. Finance has looked at trends, amounts, and percentages over the course of the past ten

years and Council feels confident that they are able to meet what is needed in order to wholly support the pay plan in the amount that has been presented.

Mayor Turk commented on how fortunate Salem is to have the employees that work for us at all levels and how grateful she feels that we are in a position where we are equitable to the localities around us. She thanked the employees for their hard work over the years to provide for the citizens' needs and the directors for the great job they do.

Mr. Foley stated that "people that feel appreciated will do more than expected." He thanked the employees and remarked that Council appreciates the employees and hope they will understand what Council has done for them and will continue to work as hard as they have over the years.

Randy Foley motioned to adopt ordinance on second reading adopting the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget amended as follows: a) increasing Vacancy Savings by \$500,000; b) transfer \$500,000 from Fund Balance to increase revenue; and c) approve Use of Funds in support of the Berkley study as presented to Council plus 7% pay increase this year plus tenure pay plan as proposed which is anywhere from 1 ½ to 6 ½% in an attempt to eliminate compression. Additionally, it is recommended to pay the Comp Board mandated plan as presented regarding the Constitutional Officers plus 5% as required. H. Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday, Jones, Turk, Wallace

B. Budget Appropriation Ordinance

Consider ordinance on second reading appropriating funds for the 2023-2024 fiscal year budget.

Renee Turk motioned to adopt ordinance on second reading appropriating funds for the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget with the same amendments as stated in Item 5A. H. Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday, Jones, Turk, Wallace

6. New Business

A. Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance

Hold public hearing and consider ordinance on first reading for the request of J S Salem LLC, contract purchaser, and the Trustees Faith Assembly of

God, property owner, for rezoning the property of 500 block of White Street (Tax Map # 161 - 4 - 2) from RSF Residential Single-Family District to CBD Community Business District. (Advertised in the June 8 and 15 issues of the *Salem Times-Register*.) (Recommend approval with proffered condition, see page 5 of Planning Commission minutes.) **STAFF REPORT**

Mayor Turk opened the public hearing.

No one came forward to speak.

Mayor Turk closed the public hearing.

Mr. Foley shared that this is noted in the Planning Commission minutes but he works with a woman who lives on this street, and she has personally told him that she is perfectly fine with this proposal.

Mr. Van Allman noted Community Development had not received any correspondence either positive or negative since the recommended approval by Planning Commission.

William Jones motioned to adopt ordinance on first reading for the request of J S Salem LLC, contract purchaser, and the Trustees Faith Assembly of God, property owner, for rezoning the property of 500 block of White Street (Tax Map # 161 - 4 - 2) from RSF Residential Single-Family District to CBD Community Business District with proffered condition. Randy Foley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday, Jones, Turk, Wallace

B. Special Exception Permit

Hold public hearing to consider the request of Joshua Davis, lessee, and Dallas Scaggs, Jr., and Paul Walrond, property owners, for the issuance of a special exception permit to allow for a pawn shop on the property located at 1617 West Main Street (Tax Map # 139 - 3 - 4). (Advertised in the June 8 and 15 issue of the *Salem Times-Register*.) (Recommend approval, see page 2 of Planning Commission minutes.) **STAFF REPORT**

Mayor Turk opened the public hearing.

Joshua Davis, 282 Bald Rock Road, Verona, Virginia. He shared that he was the person applying for this Special Exception and that he was here this evening to answer any questions. Mr. Davis shared that he operates Full Circle Finance, which has been in business about ten years and has four locations. This will be

the fifth location. He has been working in Salem for about fifteen years with other businesses and knows and loves the community and the people.

Mr. Holliday asked about where the other locations are located.

Mr. Davis responded that they have a location in historic Lexington, Waynesboro, Culpeper, and Harrisonburg. He noted that they had previously had thirty-seven locations all over Virginia, including Roanoke, Salem, and Christiansburg. Mr. Davis stated that he owned this business solely and it was his "pet" project in semi-retirement. He is aiming to have ten locations.

Mr. Holliday asked if the pawn shop would be specializing in specific types of merchandise or what kind of items they would be carrying.

Mr. Davis stated that they would take anything that the community brings them of value. Some examples he gave were jewelry, firearms, electronics, sporting goods, lawn equipment, or most anything a citizen brought in that they found value in. He continued to explain that he had been in this business about twelve years and had opened twelve pawn shops in Virginia, Tennessee, and Georgia (this one was sold to a private equity firm). Mr. Davis emphasized that they are professional group that is very compliant with all of the regulators in terms of the ATF, local regulations, and weights and measures. He stressed that he is not a "Mom and Pop" operator and that everything they take in they turn in to the Police Department.

Mr. Holliday noted that he just wanted to verify the nature of this operation as he had seen both good and bad operations of this type and that sometimes they brought negative elements to the community.

Mr. Davis emphasized that one of the protections they utilized is that they report everything to the Police Department every single day. If there are stolen items coming through his shop, they are at the Police Department that night. If a report occurs at the Police Department, they come and take the items and get them back to the owner. He is out that money but is okay with that because he does not want to deal with stolen merchandise. His business is extremely system driven. They have computer systems that report stolen items, identify items that could be stolen, and basically run the business. Mr. Davis comes from a background in Finance and has opened 250 retail locations in nine states over the past twenty years. He is comfortable with corporate governance and regulations. They believe they serve the community.

Mr. Holliday asked Mr. Davis to specify the exact location of the business.

Mr. Davis clarified that the pawn shop would be next to Wendy's near Starbucks. He noted that the building is currently dilapidated, and he plans to put reclaimed wood on the sign band and spruce it up. He said that it is one of the eyesores on Main Street and he plans to put some texture and muted colors to make it look nicer.

Mayor Turk closed the public hearing.

Randy Foley motioned to approve the request of Joshua Davis, lessee, and Dallas Scaggs, Jr., and Paul Walrond, property owners, for the issuance of a special exception permit to allow for a pawn shop on the property located at 1617 West Main Street (Tax Map # 139 – 3 - 4. H Hunter Holliday seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday, Jones, Turk

Nays: Wallace

C. Special Exception Permit

Hold public hearing to consider the request of Terry Steele, lessee, and Kieu Thi Thuy Do, property owner, for the issuance of a special exception permit to allow for personal service (barber shop) on the property located at 514 West Main Street (Tax Map # 123 – 3 - 5). (Advertised in June 8 and 15 issues of *Salem Times-Register*.) (Recommend approval, see page 4 of Planning Commission minutes.) **STAFF REPORT**

Mayor Turk asked Mr. Van Allman if any feedback had been received by Community Development.

Mr. Van Allman noted that no feedback, either positive or negative, had been received since the recommendation from Planning Commission.

Mayor Turk opened the public hearing.

Terry Steele, 1618 McCauley Avenue, stated that he was the individual applying for the Special Exception permit and that he would really like to open a barber shop.

Mayor Turk closed the public hearing.

Mr. Foley shared for the benefit of the public that this location is currently a nail salon up from Vistar West on the South side of Main Street. Mr. Jones further detailed that it is next to Vistar and there are a couple of shops next to this, one being T-Mobile.

William Jones motioned to approve the request of Terry Steele, lessee, and Kieu Thi Thuy Do, property owner, for the issuance of a special exception permit to allow for personal service (barber shop) on the property located at 514 West Main Street (Tax Map # 123 – 3 - 5). Randy Foley seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday, Jones, Turk, Wallace

D. Boards and Commissions

Consider appointments to various boards and commissions.

Randy Foley motioned to appoint H. Hunter Holliday to the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEO) Consortium to replace John Saunders; to appoint Melton Johnson to the Fair Housing Board for a three-year term ending July 1, 2026; to appoint H. Hunter Holliday to replace John Saunders to the Roanoke Valley -Alleghany Regional Commission for a three-year term ending June 30, 2024 and to reappoint Dee King to the Roanoke Valley -Alleghany Regional Commission for a three-year term ending June 30, 2026; also to reappoint Renée Ferris Turk and H. Hunter Holliday to the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Policy Board for three-year terms ending June 30, 2026 and Byron Randolph Foley as alternate to this same board for a three-year term ending June 30, 2026. William Jones seconded the motion.

Ayes: Foley, Holliday, Jones, Turk, Wallace

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.