

Tuesday – April 12, 2022 - 2:47 p.m.

Budget Worksession

Present: Mayor Esther E. Manheimer, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Sheneika Smith; Councilwoman Sandra Kilgore; Councilwoman S. Antanette Mosley; Councilwoman Kim Roney; Councilwoman Sage Turner; Councilwoman Gwen C. Wisler (participating remotely); City Manager Debra Campbell; City Attorney Brad Branham; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Finance Director Tony McDowell provided Council with the following presentation overview: (1) Follow-up from previous meetings (a) Fund balance overview; (b) Staffing costs and budgeting; (c) Proposed fees and charges; and (d) Parking and Transit Funds update; and (2) Memorial Stadium project funding.

Key takeaways from this worksession will be (1) Lingering impacts of the pandemic have created budget challenges - Inflation, Price volatility, Labor market, and New service needs; and (2) Limited capacity to fund new or expanded services.

He then reviewed the Council budget timeline.

Mr. McDowell provided the following summary of the February 22 worksession: (1) Budget process is continuation of work completed in previous years, and will continue past budget adoption in June; (2) Overall financial position in the current fiscal year is strong, with a positive outlook for next year; and (3) working to develop a better understanding of our capital needs, prioritization and funding strategy.

The summary of the Council retreat is as follows: (1) Overall positive economic outlook is reflected in projected General Fund revenue growth; (2) Inflationary pressures in economy are impacting the cost to deliver existing services; (3) Ability to fund new and expanded services will be limited; and (4) A data-driven review of facilities will provide a roadmap for long-term investments. Identified priorities out of the retreat include (1) Equitable & Affordable Housing & Stability; (2) Houselessness Strategies; (3) Improve & Expand Core Services; (4) Neighborhood Resilience; (5) Reimagining Public Safety; and (6) Reparations.

Mr. McDowell provided the Fund Balance overview. He said the Fund Balance is defined (1) Available or unassigned fund balance is money that is left at the end of one fiscal year and may be appropriated to finance expenditures in the next year's budget; (2) Reported in Annual Comprehensive Financial Report; (3) NC Local Government Commission requires local governments to maintain a minimum of 8% fund balance; and (4) City of Asheville's internal policy is to maintain a fund balance of 15%. **Fund Balance is important because** (1) Cash flow management; (2) Key measure of fiscal health; (3) Factor in determining credit rating; and (4) Provides financial resources to weather unexpected crises. Fund balance must be appropriated by Council action at budget adoption or by budget amendment during the fiscal year. Only "used" if actual expenditures exceed actual revenues at the end of the fiscal year. He provided a chart showing the Fund Balance history from Fiscal Year 2011 (14.8%) to the present (14.6%), along with the Fund Balance of other North Carolina cities, and the current year Fund Balance estimate - 14.6%. A summary of the Fund Balance includes (1) A key metric of financial health; (2) A point-in-time calculation of reserves relative to expenses; (3) Grows if actual revenues exceed expenses at fiscal year end; and (4) Should only fund one-time expenses.

Regarding staffing and personnel cuts, Mr. McDowell explained what the salaries, wages and benefits consist of, along with why salaries are important - employer of choice, recruitment, retaining employees, and providing services. Personnel is about 61% of our budget. He explained how personnel costs are budgeted (1) Assume most departments will have vacancies

during the fiscal year; (2) Most vacant positions budgeted at 20% above minimum of pay grade; and (3) Estimates for temporary/seasonal employees, overtime and other pays based on historical spending trends. With the current year adopted budget (1) Assumed 50 vacancies in Asheville Police Department (APD) - utilized savings to cover compensation study implementation and other costs for APD; (2) Increased assumed vacancy rate from 1.5% to 1.75%; and (3) Estimated impact of implementation of Class & Compensation Study recommendations. He provided a chart showing the salaries and wages budget history from Fiscal Year 2017 to the estimate for current year Fiscal Year 2022. Current year changes since the budget adoption include (1) Asheville Fire Department (AFD): Adjusted salaries to prevent promotions from causing pay inequities; (2) AFD: Additional overtime to maintain staffing, including for additional holidays and family leave; (3) APD: Additional overtime pay (a) Maintain minimum staffing; and (b) Provide required security at city-sponsored events; and (4) Adjustments in other departments on a case-by-case basis. He provided the following chart for changes in next fiscal year:

Item	Impact
Employer retirement contribution	\$ 520,000
Adjustment to APD vacancy budget	\$ 1,125,000
Additional AFD overtime	\$ 1,935,000
Employer health insurance contribution (5%)	\$ 503,000
Compensation adjustment (each 1% increase)	\$ 740,000

A summary of the personnel budgeting summary is (1) As a service-based organization, staffing (and associated costs) are most critical resources needed to deliver services and achieve goals; and (2) Historically, personnel budget-to-actuals are within a small variance.

Regarding fees & charges, Budget Manager Taylor Floyd said (1) Finance & Human Resources Committee recommended most proposed fees changes with 3-0 vote, including: Water; Stormwater; Solid Waste; Minor changes to development, parking, code enforcement, and traffic control fees; and (2) Changes to event application and Pack Square Park rental fees recommended with 2-1 vote.

He explained the following household impact of changes chart:

Fee	Bi-Monthly Bill Increase	Annual Increase
Solid Waste	\$ 4.00	\$ 24.00
Stormwater (Tier 2)	\$ 1.53	\$ 9.18
Water (6 CCFs/month)	\$ 4.92	\$ 29.52

<i>Total</i>	\$ 10.45	\$ 62.70
--------------	----------	----------

A presentation of proposed changes will be held at the regular City Council Meeting on April 26. Additional revenues from adopted fee changes will be incorporated into the Proposed Budget. Adopted fee changes will be effective on July 1, 2022.

Regarding the current parking Parking Fund, (1) Budgeted assuming normal operations; (2) Old gating equipment was beyond end-of-life and experiencing intermittent failures starting in late 2020; (3) New equipment installed in November 2021, intermittently operable due to software and firewall issues; and (4) Equipment is operational as of March 2022. He provided a chart of Parking Garage revenues, along with a chart of the current year estimate of \$(2,773,680). In summary, (1) Per state law, parking fund must cover parking expenses before being used for other services; (2) Parking Fund subsidy of Transit is budgeted at \$1,576,875 in the current fiscal year; (3) Parking Fund revenues will not support making transfer to Transit; (4) Staff will continue to monitor current year actuals to inform recommendation for Proposed Budget; and (5) Total of about \$48,000 per year is the service fee we pay the parking vendor.

Regarding the current year Transit Fund, (1) Due to driver shortage, transit provider utilizing supervisors and maintenance workers to service routes; (2) Reviewing options to minimize impact of service interruptions; (3) Reviewing options to address driver shortage, will likely have significant ongoing cost for service; and (4) Service interruptions - reduction in service frequency, starting soon (13th). Regarding the current year planned transit expansion (1) The FY22 budget allocated \$1.1 million to continue implementing the Transit Master Plan beginning in October 2021 to include: (a) Extended evening hours (completion of year one of Transit Master Plan); and (b) Increased frequency on S3 and S6 routes (from 90 minutes to 45 minutes); and (2) Expansion has not been implemented due to bus driver shortage. He explained the chart below of the Transit current year estimate:

	Budget	Year End Estimate	Estimate - Budget
Revenues:			
Grants, Fares & Other	\$ 3,673,502	\$ 3,673,000	\$ (502)
General Fund	6,916,932	6,916,932	0
Parking Fund	1,576,875	0	(1,576,875)
Transit ARPA	1,000,000	1,000,000	0
Total	13,167,309	11,389,903	(1,577,406)
Expenses:			
City Admin/Operations	1,071,542	901,000	(170,542)
RATPDev	10,295,767	9,300,000	(995,767)
Paratransit	1,300,000	750,000	(550,000)
Fuel	500,000	694,000	194,000
Total	\$ 13,167,309	\$ 11,645,000	\$ (1,522,309)
Rev - Exp	0	(55,068)	

In summary, (1) Staff recommends using Transit-specific ARPA funding to cover current year gap; (2) Evaluating options to address driver shortage in current fiscal year; and (3) Until staffing issues are addressed, implementing service enhancements will be challenging.

Regarding the Memorial Stadium Project, Capital Projects Director Jade Dundas said that on March 22, the action was to authorize the City Manager (1) To identify funding for phase 2 of the Memorial Stadium improvements as recommended by staff; (2) To enter into the design phase to include a 6-lane competitive track with dimensions as described in the exhibit; and (3) Begin implementation of other staff recommendations as described in the staff presentation on March 22, 2022. The main scope items include (1) 400 meter, 6-lane competitive rubber surfaced track; (2) Reduce largest marked field to 65 x 120 yards; (3) Replace existing restroom/create additional equipment storage; (4) Replace western bleachers with concrete plaza to allow for temporary seating; (5) Paved asphalt walking trail; and (6) Playground improvements. The proposed funding sources are as follows:

ARPA	\$ 2,500,000
Parks GO Bond	\$ 944,000
CIP Contingency	\$ 750,000
Unspent Fleet Replacement	\$ 148,345
Total	\$ 4,342,345

Mr. Floyd then said that the next action will be another budget worksession on April 26, followed by the May 24 budget presentation, June 14 budget public hearing, and June 28 budget adoption.

Throughout the presentation, City Manager Campbell, Finance Director McDowell, Budget Manager Floyd, and other City staff responded to various questions/comments from Council, some being, but are not limited to: why did the Fund Balance of 19.3% in Fiscal Year 2019 go down to 14.5% in Fiscal Year 2020; why do the different Fund Balances of cities comparable to Asheville vary; what are the ramifications of going below the Local Government Commission requirement of at least an 8% Fund Balance; is there any City policy about if we have a surplus Fund Balance what it can/will be used for; what type budget actions require City Council approval throughout the year; what occurs when a department's budget goes over the allocated amount; why is there so much overtime in the Asheville Fire Department budget; can staff split up the overtime vs. increase in hiring personnel of the \$1.125 Million in the APD budget for next year; explanation of how the State determines the cost of living adjustments for retirees, and how the State passes those retiree increases along to the cities; is Asheville's 61% for personnel costs in the budget comparable to other cities; request to advocate to the N.C. League of Municipalities to support a cost of living increase for retirees and that the amount be paid from the State's surplus and not passed along to the cities; if there are vacant parking spaces in our parking decks, if so, how is the City trying to fill the spaces; how many parking spaces are set aside in the parking decks for residents or businesses; what is the number of hourly vs. monthly

parkers in the parking decks; has the City performed an after action analysis of what happened with the parking garage equipment being inoperable due to software and firewall issues and how it won't happen again; confirmation that there are no parking decks not charging for parking; request to see historical data of the contributions made from Transit Fund to Parking Fund; is our contractor for Transit a second chance employer; request for monthly breakdown of missed bus trips; request for analysis of the City not receiving monthly passes in January and the amount of loss revenue from free transit for that month; is there any recourse for the City regarding the new parking garage equipment being inoperable; request for most recent transit contract and when that contract is up for reconsideration; is the City going to apply to for the Tourism Development Product Funds and confirmation that Council will see the list of proposed projects before we go into the application phase; and are we in conversations with Buncombe County to perhaps help funding transit. Questions which could not be readily answered would be researched and sent out to Council.

There was discussion, initiated by Councilwoman Roney, about her request for the Governance Committee to consider that a percentage (perhaps 2-5%) of a department budget change (i.e., unexpected revenue shortfall, etc.) would trigger it being brought to Council's attention/consideration. City Manager Campbell said that there have been internal changes made and that in the future any significant changes will be communicated to Council. Mayor Manheimer suggested City Manager Campbell provide information to Council that if City Council wanted to put something in place regarding that, what it would look like.

There was discussion surrounding the funding of the Memorial Stadium Project, which has been through a Request for Proposal process and being brought to Council for consideration of the design phase on April 26. Capital Projects Director Dundas said that the \$750,000 from CIP Contingency is allocated each year and is not programmed at the beginning of the Fiscal Year for any specific use. At this time, it has not been dedicated to any specific project. Even though this Project is an allowable use of ARPA funds, Councilwoman Turner suggested we look at other sources of funding other than these rescue dollars because this project is not a result of the pandemic. City Manager Campbell responded that there are other options, but they will impact other projects. She said this is an opportunity for a one-time expense, without having a significant impact on other projects. Finance Director McDowell agreed that we can look at other sources of funding, but they will all involve debt from other projects, or laying on additional debt, which we don't have a lot of debt capacity left. Councilwoman Roney requested (1) information in the next budget worksession about possible options of debt financing or use of the General Fund Fund Balance instead of the ARPA funds because using ARPA funds means something won't get funded from the community-led applications; and (2) a list of other capital projects for this upcoming year that might be impacted if we use another source other than ARPA funds. City Manager Campbell said that her instructions from Council was to identify funding sources for the Memorial Stadium Project, and the use of \$2.5 Million from ARPA funds is included in that recommendation. Regarding the use of ARPA funds for this project. Councilwoman Mosley wondered what other projects Council would find more important than the health and welfare of an historically black neighborhood.

At 4:50 p.m., Mayor Manheimer adjourned the budget worksession.

Tuesday – April 12, 2022 - 5:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting

Present: Mayor Esther E. Manheimer, Presiding; Vice-Mayor Sheneika Smith; Councilwoman Sandra Kilgore; Councilwoman S. Antanette Mosley; Councilwoman Kim Roney;

Councilwoman Sage Turner; Councilwoman Gwen C. Wisler (remote); City Manager Debra Campbell; City Attorney Brad Branham; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

Councilwoman Roney moved to allow Councilwoman Wisler to participate remotely due to illness. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Mosley and carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Manheimer led City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. PROCLAMATIONS:

II. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL RETREAT HELD ON MARCH 17-18, 2022; THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MARCH 22, 2022; AND THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON APRIL 6, 2022**

- B. RESOLUTION NO. 22-62 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN A LEASE WITH CITIZENS FUEL FOR TWO DUMPSTERS AND A STORAGE BUILDING ON A CITY-OWNED PARKING LOT AT 9999 BILTMORE AVENUE**

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a lease agreement between Citizens Fuel and the City of Asheville.

Background:

- The City of Asheville owns a parking lot at 9999 Biltmore Avenue.
- There are two dumpsters and one storage building situated on the parking lot immediately adjacent to the City's Fueling Station.
- Citizens Fuel (formerly Eblen) has been paying the City via the Public Works Department \$270.00 per month in return for use of the space; however, there is no written agreement on file.
- Public Works has indicated that there are no concerns with the dumpsters and storage building remaining on the property so long as Citizens Fuel remain current on their payments and carry appropriate insurance.
- The Legal Department recommended a lease as the best mechanism to allow this use of City property.
- The current rental rate of \$270.00 per month will continue, but an annual escalation fee of 3% will be included in the lease, with a proposed term of three years.
- The new lease allows the City to require Citizens Fuel to move the dumpsters and/or storage building or to remove them entirely with ninety days' notice.

Council Goal(s):

- A Thriving Local Economy

Committee(s):

- None

Pro(s):

- The City is receiving revenue from this site and it will increase by 3% every year.
- The City can request that these facilities be moved or removed if the City changes its plans for the site.

Con(s):

- The City will not be using the space for its own purposes.

Fiscal Impact:

- The City will be receiving \$3,240 during the first year.
- All income from this lease will be deposited in the General Fund.

Motion:

- Motion to approve the resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a lease with Citizens Fuel.

RESOLUTION BOOK NO. 43 - PAGE 63

C. RESOLUTION NO. 22-63 - RESOLUTION AMENDING A CONTRACT WITH USS ISS AGENCY INC. FOR NEW HIRE BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution to allow for APD to add additional funding to existing contract #92200099 with USS ISS Agency, LLC for new hire background investigation services as well as allow for the City Manager to approve any future increases due to volume or contract renewal.

Background:

- APD entered into a contract on August 1, 2021 with USS ISS Agency, LLC in which they would supply new hire background investigation services for sworn and non-sworn vacancies.
- All Police Officer candidates and civilian employees that work for the Asheville Police Department must pass a background investigation before they are hired.
- APD is currently understaffed and we do not have sworn administrative staff available to complete these hiring functions especially given the large increase in volume of new personnel needing to be vetted for hire.
- Since the execution of the contract, the vendor has completed 26 full, 3 partial, and 10 non-sworn background investigations as well as 2 polygraphs for a total of \$59,574.40.
- This leaves only \$20,425.60 available for the next six invoicing periods.
- APD is requesting approval from council to add funding to our existing contract with USS ISS Agency, LLC for new hire candidate background investigations which will bring the contract total up from \$80,000 to \$140,000.
- APD will be using existing operating funds to increase the contract amount.
- APD has requested additional funding for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 budget to cover these increased funding needs.

Council Goal(s):

- A Connected and Engaged Community

Committee(s):

- Public Safety Committee - March 30, 2022 - carried unanimously to move forward

Pro(s):

- Ensures the ability to better protect the safety of the residents of Asheville and Buncombe County by allowing as many sworn staff as possible to be available for patrol duties.

Con(s):

- None

Fiscal Impact:

- As noted above, no additional funding is required.
- Funding for increasing the contract amount for FY22 will come from the existing Police Department operational budget.

Motion:

- The City Manager is hereby authorized to increase the amount payable under the City's existing contract with USS ISS Agency, LLC from \$80,000 to \$140,000 and to approve any future contract renewals per the contract terms.

RESOLUTION BOOK NO. 43 - PAGE 64

D. RESOLUTION NO. 22-64 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN A LICENSE AGREEMENT WITH DUKENET COMMUNICATIONS LLC TO CONTINUE OPERATING FIBER OPTIC EQUIPMENT ON CITY-OWNED PROPERTY AT 166 RESERVOIR ROAD

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign a license agreement with DukeNet Communications, LLC that involves a fiber optic swap in lieu of compensation.

Background:

- The City owns two telecommunications towers on the property at 166 Reservoir Road and the City leases antenna space on the towers and ground space for related equipment.
- The City of Asheville signed a license agreement with DukeNet Communications, LLC in 2012.
- The agreement allowed DukeNet to install, operate and maintain fiber optic equipment at the site on Reservoir Road.
- This allowed them to provide fiber optic communications between the two towers on the site.
- As consideration for the license agreement, the City has the right to use twelve (12) designated dark fibers or unlit fibers along S. Charlotte Street to Reservoir Road.
- This arrangement has allowed the City to create a no-cost link that will increase public safety network reliability for the City's radio system.
- This agreement is set to expire on June 11, 2022.
- DukeNet has been purchased by Charter Communications, but will continue to operate under the same name.
- Their agent approached the City with a request to extend the license agreement for another ten years.
- IT has confirmed that they want the arrangement to be extended and they have approved the provisions of the license agreement.

Council Goal(s):

- Connected & Engaged Community
- Well Planned & Livable Community

Committee(s):

- None

Pro(s):

- Maximize the value of the license agreement through access to DukeNet Communications, LLC's fibers.
- Maintains a link that contributes to the City of Asheville's public safety radio reliability.

Con(s):

- None

Fiscal Impact:

- Under the License Agreement, the City will not receive any revenue from DukeNet Communications, LLC; however, the City will be able to continue to receive the right to use twelve (12) designated dark or unlit fibers along S. Charlotte Street to Reservoir Road.

Motion:

- Motion to approve the resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute the license agreement with DukeNet Communications, LLC, LLC on behalf of the City of Asheville.

RESOLUTION BOOK NO. 43 - PAGE 65

E. RESOLUTION NO. 22-66 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO APPLY FOR A GRANT, AND SIGN ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS IF AWARDED, FROM THE U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE LAW ENFORCEMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACT GRANT 2022 FOR A WELLNESS COORDINATOR POSITION IN THE ASHEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for and, if awarded, accept an award on behalf of the police department, of grant funding from the Office of Community Oriented Police Services (COPS), U.S. Dept. of Justice (DOJ) Law Enforcement and Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) in the amount of up to \$175,000 to fund a wellness coordinator position within the department.

Background:

- In March of 2015, The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing identified and confirmed in Pillar Six that Officer Wellness and Safety was an identified area of concern and should be addressed.
- It stated, "a large proportion of officers' injuries and deaths are not a result of interaction with criminal offenders but the outcome of poor physical health due to poor nutrition, lack of exercise and lack of sleep and substance abuse".
- Also stated, "An officer whose capabilities, judgment, and behavior are adversely affected by poor physical or psychological health may not only be of little use to the community he or she serves but also a danger to it and to other officers".
- In June of 2021, the wellness committee within the police department reported a recommendation to create and maintain a wellness program managed by a Wellness Coordinator to address identified physical fitness and nutrition issues along with coordination of current mental health services in the Asheville Police Department.
- To create and maintain a successful employee wellness program for police employees there must be a continuum of mental health and wellness strategies beginning at the hiring process and continuing through retirement.
- The Asheville Police Department, along with the Asheville Fire Department and Human Resources, currently contracts with Responder Services.
- Responder Services provides resilience training and provides support to include mental health services when recognized and appropriate.
- A new Wellness Coordinator will provide the missing piece of physical wellness, fitness, nutrition, coordinated training on mental health, peer support and suicide prevention that is currently missing in the Asheville Police Department.

- A new Wellness Coordinator will increase awareness of effective mental health and wellness strategies, peer support, family resources, suicide prevention, and other promising practices for wellness programs by coordinating regular training/rollcalls with Responder Services and other available City resources.
- The new Wellness Coordinator will enhance officers' performance and reduce occupational injury; design and implement comprehensive exercise programs for employees following a health and fitness assessment; educate and provide counseling to maintain or improve employees' physical performance and health; interpret health results for employees and counsel employees regarding their individual health risks; lead exercise sessions, and coordinate mandated and non-mandated training and development of training programs to support credentialing requirements.
- Physically fit and mentally well officers are able to:
 - demonstrate better de-escalation skills,
 - have lower rates of worker's compensation claims,
 - build community relations more effectively,
 - have lower suicide rates,
 - have better decision-making skills and,
 - exhibit more positive behaviors.

Vendor Outreach Efforts:

- This position will be advertised and filled using the hiring process established and currently employed by the City of Asheville Human Resources department.

Council Goal(s):

- Connected & Engaged Community

Committee(s):

- None - The short window for grant applications does not allow time for formal committee review.

Pro(s):

- Physically and mentally fit officers, as indicated above, are able to:
 - demonstrate better de-escalation skills,
 - have lower rates of worker's compensation claims,
 - build community relations more effectively,
 - have lower suicide rates,
 - have better decision-making skills and,
 - exhibit more positive behaviors.
- A successful employee total wellness program for police employees must include a continuum of physical wellness strategies beginning at the hiring process and continuing through retirement.

Con(s):

- To maintain the position after the grant funding is exhausted the department will need to fund the position in future fiscal years.

Fiscal Impact:

- Funding for supplies, equipment, and training will be requested in the grant application.
- To maintain the position after the grant funding is exhausted the department will need to fund the position in future fiscal years.

Motion:

- Motion to authorize the City Manager to apply for and, if awarded, accept an award on behalf of the police department, of grant funding from the Office of Community Oriented Police Services (COPS), U.S. Dept. of Justice (DOJ) Law Enforcement and Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) in the amount of up to \$175,000 to fund a wellness coordinator position and associated expenses within the department.

At the request of Councilwoman Roney, Police Captain Mike Lamb went into more detail on the need for this grant.

RESOLUTION BOOK NO. 43 - PAGE 66

- F. RESOLUTION NO. 22-66 - RESOLUTION AMENDING THE 2022 CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE TO INCLUDE A WORKSESSION TO DISCUSS AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDING ALLOCATIONS ON MONDAY, APRIL 25, 2022, BEGINNING AT 10:00 A.M. IN THE BANQUET HALL AT HARRAH'S CHEROKEE CENTER - ASHEVILLE, LOCATED AT 87 HAYWOOD STREET**

RESOLUTION BOOK NO. 43 - PAGE 67

Mayor Manheimer asked for public comments on any item on the Consent Agenda, but received none.

Mayor Manheimer said that members of Council have been previously furnished with a copy of the resolutions and ordinances on the Consent Agenda and they would not be read.

Councilwoman Kilgore moved for the adoption of the Consent Agenda. This motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Smith and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

III. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS:

A. MANAGER'S REPORT

Update on Restructuring Boards & Commissions

Communications Specialist Beth Bechel identified the key takeaways being (1) Challenges identified with the current Council Committee and Boards and Commissions structure; (2) Proposal for a more Strategic, Efficient, Inclusive system; (3) Opportunity for more community feedback; and (4) We expect the structure to change based on Council and community feedback. She noted that this is a quick update to inform the council on where we began, where we are and where we hope to go with the proposed restructure of boards and commissions, and council committees. She provided some background information (1) City staff identified recurring operational challenges with the current system of (a) Unclear roles and responsibilities; (b) Unclear work flow and connection to Council; (c) Management/operational limitations; and (d) Disconnection of board work; (2) Review of best practices and strategies for alignment; and (3) Proposal is a systems approach with goals of being more: Strategic, Efficient, Inclusive. We've been hearing from past and current board members, staff and council members that the current system isn't as efficient or fulfilling as it could be. The City is also experiencing more operational issues that are affecting transparency and overall consistency among board work. As a result staff created a proposal to restructure boards and commissions to better align our resources and really think through a system that could be more responsive to the needs of our community. The proposal is a holistic systems approach with the goals of being very initial about creating a system that is more: Inclusive, Efficient and Strategic. This is very much a starting point and we thought it was important to have a proposed structure for the community,

and council members to react to, and something for us to collectively build onto - Inclusive: by removing barriers to participation and also reaching out and inviting more ppl to be a part of the process; - Efficient: by making clear communication lines across board work but also a direct pathway to City Council for guidance; and - Strategic: by aligning our resources and work to better align with council priorities and the comprehensive plan.

At this point in time, she said that the proposal that is posted online and presented thus far is not a final product. It is very much a draft proposal that will continue to evolve as we have more of these conversations. Engagement to date includes: 2 focus groups, one with Chairs and Vice Chairs and community stakeholders; and 4 workshops that were held virtually - we had 81 community participants attend as well as various independent conversations with board members and community stakeholders. The workshops were designed to get more input on the proposed structure; we got a lot of great feedback (emails, voicemails and conversations) all of which can be found on the project page and we have extracted themes from those dialogues. We are continuing to collect feedback on the webpage, where the community is invited to review and leave comments. And lastly - a working group. Right now we are in the process of getting a volunteer working group together. This is where we hope to collaboratively tackle a lot of the details - like how do we ensure that a new system is truly inclusive and accountable - and how do we get there together.

We are hoping to get the working group together in April to start initial conversations and start a work plan. Then, in May (possibly May 10) we will come back to council for a work session - which we'll do a deeper dive with Council into the proposed system and the community feedback received. If Council approves to continue moving forward exploring this idea, we will begin to work to launch a pilot, which would only be one tier - so we can really see and feel to learn from.

City Manager Campbell thanked Councilwoman Wisler who has been very supportive of this very important initiative.

Councilwoman Roney thanked the community for all their feedback during this information gathering process. She said that the professional experience of the board/commission members has been invaluable to her and she valued them for all the work that they do.

Update on Community Reparations Project

Director of Equity & Inclusion Brenda Mills announced the Equity & Inclusion Office staff which is now fully staffed with Marcus Kirkman, Community Outreach; Darian Blue, Community Outreach; and Alayna Schmidt, Analyst.

Assistant Project Manager for Tequity Sala Menaya Merritt said that (1) All 25 Commission appointments have been made; (2) Seven alternates have been selected; (3) Project team is completing the onboarding of all Commission members and alternates: (a) Proposed dates and times for the initial Community Reparations Commission meeting and availability; (b) Specific sections from the onboarding guide; (c) Any support needs in order to fully participate in the work of the Commission; and (d) Additional questions; (4) Initial meeting of the Community Reparations Commission: Targeting last week of April or first week in May; and (5) Meeting schedule will be published after initial meeting.

Ms. Merritt reviewed with Council the onboarding guide topics. Preliminary agenda topics for the initial Commission meeting include: Welcome; Onboarding guide; Nominations and Election of Chair and Vice Chair; Meeting Schedule; Agenda for Next Meeting; Project Plan Phases Overview; Community engagement planning; and Public comment.

She introduced the Reparations Project team of Tara J. Brown, Tyshaun Johnson, Dionne Greenlee-Jones and Dr. Amieris Lavender. Their first meeting will be either April 30 and/or May 11, 2022.

Mayor Manheimer announced that the two alternates from the City on the Reparations Commission are Tiffany DeBellott and Osondu McPeters.

IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER CONDITIONAL ZONING OF MULTIPLE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 427 BROADWAY STREET FROM NEIGHBORHOOD CORRIDOR DISTRICT TO NEIGHBORHOOD CORRIDOR DISTRICT/CONDITIONAL ZONE

At the petitioner's request, Councilwoman Turner moved to continue this public hearing until May 24, 2022. This motion was seconded by Councilwoman Kilgore and carried unanimously by roll call vote.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

VII. INFORMAL DISCUSSION AND PUBLIC COMMENT:

Several individuals spoke to Council on various topics, some being, but are not limited to: request for larger playground sign at Derrick Lee Jr. Park; observation that Police Chief has not met with parents of murdered Derrick Lee Jr.; opposed to boards/commission restructuring; historical information on previous City Councils; ban use of lethal weapons by Asheville Police; do not support Merrimon Avenue lane reduction; police recruitment; and need for wise stewardship of our tax dollars.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Manheimer adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

CITY CLERK

MAYOR