



MINUTES

May 25 2022

SECOND MONTHLY MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL [ELECTRONIC] CITY OPERATIONS CENTER | 305 WILLIAMS ST. | 4:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Barbara G. Volk and Council Members: Dr. Jennifer Hensley, Debbie O'Neal-Roundtree, and Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D.

Present Remotely: Mayor Pro Tem Lyndsey Simpson

Staff Present: City Manager John F. Connet, Assistant City Manager Brian Pahle, City Attorney Angela Beeker, City Clerk Angela Reece, Communications Manager Allison Justus, and others

1. CALL TO ORDER

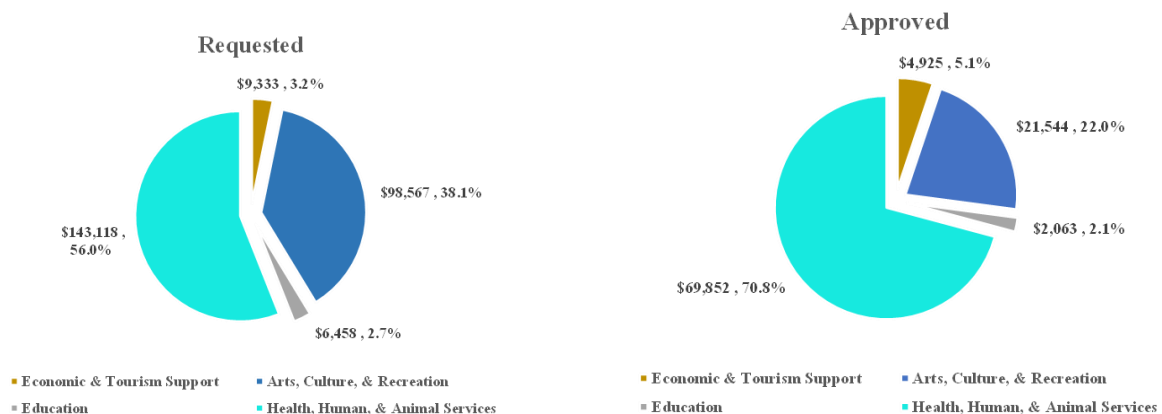
Mayor Barbara G. Volk called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. A quorum was established with all members in attendance. Council Member Lyndsey Simpson participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom electronic software.

Mayor Volk asked everyone to join in a moment of silent meditation in remembrance of the victims of a school shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde Texas where an 18-year-old gunman shot and killed 19 children and two adults on Wednesday May 24, 2022.

2. PRESENTATIONS

A. **Continuation of Budget and Special Appropriation Discussion** – *Brian Pahle, Assistant City Manager and Adam Murr, Budget Manager*

Assistant City Manager Brian Pahle recalled prior discussions regarding special appropriation recommendations by Council for FY23 and presented modified amounts based on the percentage of operating expenditures and said staff recommends 0.5% or \$115,681 for FY23. Manager Pahle explained the rationale for allocating sub-categories based on the percentage of total available dollars to the following categories: Arts, Culture, & Recreation; Economic & Tourism Support; Education; and Health, Human, & Animal Services. Manager Pahle presented the following graphs to illustrate:



Council Member Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D. inquired of the difference between human services and education and Manager Pahle stated the education fund consisted of scholarships. Mayor Barbara G. Volk stated she doesn't necessarily see the need to categorize the requests and said she feels it complicates it more. Council Members discussed the application process. City Manager John Connet reminded everyone that staff are trying to ensure the City is authorized to spend funding on the requested uses, thereby illustrating the benefit to categorize.

Council Member Dr. Jennifer Hensley recalled prior Council discussions with staff regarding funding allocations and statutory requirements for items deemed appropriate for usage of special appropriations funding and asked Council to consider funding types of requests that are directly related to assisting the community in some way. Council discussed the differences between general requests for funding versus specific requests for program operation. Council Member Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D. stated the definition is important when the requestor is asking for funding. Council Member Smith agreed with Mayor Volk's earlier comment and said funding depends on whatever is going on in the community in any given year. Council Member Smith clarified staff will notify Council if a request does meet acceptable guidelines and falls under governmental authority. Budget Manager Adam Murr

stated in previous years staff has reached out to applicants to discuss whether or not they have another program or purpose to meet requirements if their request was outside the guidelines. Council Member Debbie O'Neal-Roundtree clarified scholarships included nonprofits such as Blue Ridge Community College, the Boys and Girls Club, and the NAACP.

Council Member Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D. suggested Council approve the total sum of appropriations in the budget and to increase the total amount of allocation to \$125,000.

Council Member Lyndsey Simpson stated she is in favor of the categories and the percentage of funding so applications similar to each other can be compared and asked staff to reach back out to ones that do not qualify this year to determine appropriateness but said to start this beginning next year as she feels the application should be clear regarding requests. Council Member Simpson proposed dividing requests into categories in future years that are tied to Council Core Values.

After much discussion Council directed staff to increase the total amount of special appropriations funding to \$125,000 in the FY22-23 Budget.

City Manager John Connet recalled prior discussions regarding Council's request to form a hybrid sustainability and parks management position and discussed proposed job duties. Council Member Simpson stated there is a need for this position but again expressed concern that the amount of responsibility may set this position up for failure. Council Member Simpson said she supports the position but would like to evaluate the job duties and responsibilities to determine any future needs. Mayor Barbara G. Volk stated she liked the idea of beginning with this position and evaluating as the city moves forward.

Council Member Dr. Jennifer Hensley recalled participating in the stream clean up event recently and asked Council for consideration to include the purchase a john boat to assist the Stormwater Administrator with the trash trout stream clean ups for safety. Council agreed this would be permissible.

City Manager confirmed there is no tax increase budgeted in the FY22-23 Budget and reminded everyone staff will make formal presentation at the next meeting.

B. Closed Session – John F. Connet, City Manager

At 4:45 p.m., Council Member Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D. moved that City Council enter into closed session pursuant to NCGS § 143-318.11 (a) (1) and (6) to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes and to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. A unanimous roll call vote of Council followed. Motion carried.

At 5:17 p.m. Council Member Jerry A. Smith Jr., J.D. moved that City Council return to open session. A unanimous roll call vote of the Council followed. Motion carried.

3. ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:18 p.m. upon unanimous assent of the Council.

Barbara G. Volk, Mayor

ATTEST:

Angela L. Reece, City Clerk