

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for an Organizational Meeting on Tuesday, September 6, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Meeting Chamber of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Lyles presiding. Council Members present were Dimple Ajmera, Dante Anderson, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Larken Egleston, Julie Eiselt, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Marjorie Molina, Matt Newton, Gregg Phipps, LaWana Slack-Mayfield, James Mitchell, Victoria Watlington, and Braxton Winston, II.

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**Mayor Lyles** said good evening, everyone. Thank you for joining us this evening and I want to welcome everyone to the 2022 Swearing-In Ceremony for the Charlotte City Council. Again, thanks for coming and I am now going to officially call this meeting to order. I want to thank all the staff and the volunteers that made it possible for all of us to come to this wonderful meeting and have this time, and I also want to especially thank the family and friends here who are coming to watch our new Council be sworn in. It is great to be here in person after COVID and a pandemic and we are really particularly happy to be able to do this in person because we are going to be able to acknowledge the service of our Council and celebrate both our new and returning Council Members.

This meeting will also be accessible via the Government Channel, the City's Facebook page and the City's YouTube channel.

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#### **INVOCATION, POSTING OF COLORS AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Invocation was given by Pastor Duane Butler of the World Worship Church.

The Posting of Colors was by the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Honor Guard followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and singing of the National Anthem.

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#### **MAYOR'S AWARDS**

**Mayor Lyles** said I have the distinct pleasure this evening to present this year's Mayor's Citizen Awards. It is a tradition at this ceremony to offer awards to distinguished members of our community who have served with distinction, honor, selflessness, and courage. Tonight, I am proud to present the Mayor's Award in honor of Richard Vinroot, to an individual who has displayed unselfish leadership in support of the community, Michael Marsicano. Please recognize him. Come down, please, Michael. Come and join me.

Few people have had an impact on one city, like Michael has had on Charlotte. From the beginning of his career here in 1989, as President of the Art's and Science Council to his current role as the CEO of The Foundation for the Carolina's, Michael's fingerprints are all over our community, and we are the better for it. Under his leadership The Foundation for the Carolina's has grown into one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the country. A few years ago, Michael joined an incredibly prestigious group of people when he was named one of the top nonprofit leaders in the country. He joined a group of people that include Bill and Melinda Gates, why didn't you tell them to bring more money for us? Also, Collin Powell and was cited for his leadership with economic opportunity and upward mobility, and that was before he took on the task of raising a quarter of a billion dollars to create more economic opportunity and upward mobility through the Mayor's Racial Equity Initiative. In the early day's of COVID, Michael and the foundation jumped in and helped start the first financial support programs for our business community and when the federal funds began to flow, the city partnered with the foundation to distribute tens of millions of dollars to thousands of businesses in Charlotte.

Michael and I have known each other for a very long time, and it has truly been an honored partnership, but more importantly an honored and respected friendship. He is retiring from

the foundation at the end of this time, this year, and he is going to take this as a much-deserved retirement, but I have the feeling that Michael will continue to be involved in our community and will continue to advocate and push us towards a better future. Michael, thank you for all that you have contributed to our community. Because of your contributions, we know we are a better place to live. May we please have a round of applause for Michael Marsicano.

Alright, Michael just asked if he could say a few words, but I tell you we are on a schedule tonight guys, so we are going to try. Ordinarily I have to say we would not have a plaque because there will be a recognition in the Halls of the 15<sup>th</sup> floor close to the Mayor's office with a plaque with your name on it, so thank you very much Michael.

**Michael Marsicano** said thank you. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said another Mayor's Award is in honor of Harvey Gantt who is given to citizens who have demonstrated courage and civility. This year's award, I'm proud to announce, is being presented to Malcomb Coley. Malcomb, please come down. Malcomb is the Charlotte managing partner at EY an international professional services firm, but he is also one of the many people leaders in this community look to him for guidance, leadership and vision. He is an authentic leader. A real example of servant leadership and a tremendous resource for our city. He has the ability to pull people together to help address some of our community's most pressing problems. I cannot list every board he has served on; however, this sampling demonstrates the depth and breath of his impact in our community; The Charlotte Regional Business Alliance, United Way of Central Carolinas, Charlotte Sports Foundation, Charlotte Center City Partners, Foundations for the Carolinas and the list goes on, and on.

Most recently Malcomb stepped up to help lead the Mayor's Racial Equity Initiative. I and other civic leaders challenged the business to join the community in Charlotte to make sure that our nonprofit and governmental organizations work to make significant contributions and lasting contributions that were about change in communities in Charlotte, these communities, that have historically been disadvantaged. Malcomb again stepped up. He along with several other people led a working group of executives to develop this initiative. To share the urgency of the work and began building a foundation of a program that I believe will help shape our community to a more equitable and diverse one. You know Malcomb and I spent lots of afternoons together talking to people about how this would be successful. They weren't all easy conversations, but at the end of the day, Malcomb always walked away and said, "Vi no matter what they say we are going to get this done," and eventually he persuaded everyone to say something really good and do even more. Malcomb thank you for your professionalism, your leadership, your friendship. I just want you to know that you, again, like Michael Marsicano are like heroes to me and you have made our Charlotte a better place to live for so many more. Thank you so much.

**Malcomb Coley** said thank you.

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## **PRESENTATION TO OUTGOING COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**Mayor Lyles** said so now let's move on to the people that we have worked with for a number of years, the outgoing Council Members. First of all, I want to say on behalf of the Mayor and City Council and this community to all of the outgoing Council Members, I want to thank you for your years of service. I want you to continue to work in our community. That your future endeavors in public service will nerve go out of your portfolio but enjoy some life and some time together. So, I am going to begin recognizing the first person that I would call someone that you could always understand how much he meant to this community, especially to the council, because he was the only one that read the Zoning Book from cover to cover. If I could have Councilmember Greg Phipps join me at the podium. So, we have a gift for Councilmember Phipps. I don't know if you know, Councilmember Phipps has been elected to council and appointed to council. He did not

want a city skyline picture, so we gave him something that we know he loves, NASCAR, so with that Councilmember Phipps.

**Councilmember Phipps** said alright. Wow! Had I known I was this popular I might have run again. Seriously, it has been my honor to serve the citizens of Charlotte as a District 4 rep for 7 years and as At Large rep for the past year and a half. As I reflect on my council service over these 8 years, it is ironic that my service was bookended by the breaking of 2 ties. The first back in 2005 when then Mayor McCrory, now former Governor, broke the tie on my behalf for me to join the council for the first time. Then in 2021, when Mayor Lyles broke the tie that resulted in me returning to the Council when I thought I had retired after 3 elected terms. I have been honored to cast hundreds of critical votes while sitting at the dais behind me, privileged to serve under 5 Mayors, McCrory, Cannon, Clodfelter, Roberts and Lyles, as well as serving with Council luminaries like the late Susan Burgess, Don Lochman, and Claire Fallon. Even though frustrating at times, I actually enjoyed serving with my current Council colleagues. As I close, I want to thank my wife Lemear and my family for putting up with the sacrifice and time commitment that comes with being a Council Member. I would like to thank my Chief's of Staff during my Council service, Mindy Levine, Robin Lo Furno, Jocella Palmer, and Denada Jackson for keeping me straight and helping me avoid the snare of trouble and embarrassment as I pursued my duties on the Council.

I also want to thank a strong, resolute, and professional staff that keeps this great City of Charlotte running. For me, serving on the Charlotte City Council has truly been an opportunity beyond measure. Thank you very much.

Mayor Lyles said next, I would like to introduce Councilmember Larken Egleston. You know when things can be very tense sometimes, when we are talking and having a debate, but Larkin always had a quick quip that would make us all kind of stop and pause and remember why we were here and Larkin we are going to miss that, because I haven't had a sense of humor since you left, or when you leave I won't have a sense of humor I guess either. I would like to have you recognize Councilmember retiring, Larkin Egleston.

**Larken Egleston** said I'm going to try to be the only person tonight who actually sticks to the time limit they gave us. There are more people than I can possibly thank, but as Councilmember Phipps said, the staff in this building does the heavy lifting. They do the hard work. They do the things that then we get to sit up here and vote on and get credit for, but there is an amazing team of 8,000 people at the City of Charlotte and without them none of what we do would be possible. To all the folks, in both my terms that I have had the opportunity to sit on this dais with, thank you for your friendship. Thank you for your partnership and the work we have done together. I am proud of what we have accomplished in the last 5 years. We have made real progress on every single thing that we all ran saying we wanted to make a difference on. I think this community is better off for our service, so thank you for yours and thank you for allowing me to serve beside you. All my friends and family, no one gets here alone and no one is able to do this job or do it well alone, so thank you to everybody who has had a hand in my progression through my public service, but I specifically want to thank, on our staff here, Amanda Burch who day in and day out made sure that things didn't fall through the cracks for me, yeah, you can clap for Amanda. When you run into people in the grocery store and they say I emailed you and you go, did you get a response? You're not sure whether they are mad at you or whether they like you or not at first. They always got a response, because Amanda was on top of it. She would always make sure that I was looped in and that somebody was being taken care of before I even knew they had a problem, and so she made me look good a lot and without her I would have absolutely drown a month into this, 5 years ago, so thank you Amanda. To my parents, of all the people who have helped me get here, no one has helped me get here more than my parents, Robert and Amy Egleston and they have also set an incredible example for me in my hometown of Winston-Salem of the fact that you can serve your community and you can make a real impact without being in elected office and that is my intent as I leave here today. I don't know what the future holds, but I know I will continue to serve and love this community and I appreciate all of you for allowing me the opportunity to serve as a member of the Charlotte City Council. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said from the East Side of Charlotte, I want to recognize Councilmember Matt Newton. Matt has always got something really positive to say and he often says it for a long time. He may take a long time to say it, but everybody listens.

**Councilmember Newton** said thank you Madam Mayor. I have a lot to say, so I am just going to get started. Being a Member of the Council, alongside so many accomplished and impressive Council colleagues representing District 5 and the diverse residents of East Charlotte and also having the ability to weigh in and vote on so many crucial topics impacting the future of Charlotte as a whole for the last 4-1/2 years, has been the single greatest honor of my life.

I remember when I started this journey, just after I was first elected in 2017, my Council colleagues and I were attending our retreat in Durham. We were assembled all in a room and Manager Jones asked us to give a short reason why we wanted to be Council Members, why we ran, and my answer was to make a difference. I became a Council Member to make a difference to improve the lives of those in my East Charlotte community, as well as throughout all of Charlotte. Over my 2-1/2 terms as a Council Member I'd like to think I did just that, made a difference. As I cleaned out my office last week, I had the opportunity to reflect on much of that. I thought of how I came in as one of the millennial class of Council Members, participate in helping steer our City through a global pandemic and of course played a role in establishing the ongoing vision and effort to redevelop the Eastland Mall site. However, none of it would have been possible without the help of so many friends, family and colleagues. It was always a team effort and so I'd like to take these final moments that I have as a Council Member and acknowledge as many folks as I can who made my Council journey possible.

First, thank you Mayor Vi Lyles and all of my Council colleagues over the years for putting up with me and my loquaciousness. The Mayor will tell you that that is a word, loquacious, look it up. It means talk a lot. Next, thank you to the City staff who likewise put up with me and that same loquaciousness. Thank you, Manager Jones, and everyone in the City Manager's Office, everyone in our City Attorney's Office, all of our department directors and heads, Stephanie Kelly, Kay Cunningham, Tamara Blue, Nan Peterson, Holly Eskridge, the list goes on, Denada Jackson, Shawn Heath, Angela Charles, Jane Taillon, Todd DeLong, and finally Kim Oliver. Once again, thank you Kim Oliver, support specialist extraordinaire, and who my wife has affectionally referred to as my second wife over the years. Thank you to former Councilmember Al Austin, State Representative Carla Cunningham as well as my original campaign manager Scott Huffman, for believing in me from the very start. Thank you to all of the community leaders who have never wavered in their passion and support for the East Side. That list includes organizations like CharlotteEAST, ECON, FINCO and all of their members. Thank you Caroline Millin and Bobby Almond, Mimi Davis, Tracey Thomas, County Commissioner Mark Jerrel, State Representative John Autry, who is here tonight, Soil and Water Supervisor Nancy Carter, also here tonight, Maureen Gilewski, George Shuto, Greg Shuto, Mike Sullivan, Pastor John Bremer, Diane and Lee Little, there are more, Althea Richardson, Jason Grinewald, Diane Langevin, Debbie Dryden, Pam Fox, Michael Hathcock, Diana McLemore, Aleta Horton, Manolo Betancur, Vernetta Mitchell as well as Alba Sanchez, Latin America Coalition, Pastor Churnos, and the Simmons YMCA, Dr. Robbie Aheara who made it in here tonight, Tesha Boyd, Rene Mary Dubois, Katherine Alexander, Corine Mack, Cameron Pruitt, Dan and Peggy Raedy, Pam Moore and Diana Davis, Robert Dawkins, Dave and Cricket Molinaro, Tim Sittema and Crosland Southeast. Thank you all. I am so proud of all that we have accomplished together over all of these years. Finally, yes finally, I want to recognize 2 more people who are especially important to me and are in attendance tonight, the first is my surrogate grandmother, Lee Stone and the second is my rock, my reason, my wife, Tiffany Arroyo Newton, who is also here tonight. You are going to make me cry Lee. She has stayed up with me during many sleepless nights, covered in so many different ways, whenever I have been overwhelmed by work and has always been my chief advisor and strongest confidant. I am only possible because of her. Thank you so much babe, I love you. As the sun sets on my time as a council member it will always continue to rise in the East. With that I want to wish our incoming District 5 I want to wish our incoming District 5 Councilmember Marjorie Molina as well as the next

Council the best of luck as they all begin their journey into this next Council term. Thank you all again and good night.

Mayor Lyles said now I would like to recognize Councilmember Mayor Pro Tem, Julie Eiselt. I am just going to say this, if you look up or think up what champion means in this community, Julie has championed so many issues from the time that she decided to serve as a council member, but more importantly she has championed our Council to work together. Her leadership will be truly missed. Julie.

**Councilmember Eiselt** said thank you Mayor Lyles. This is still daunting after 7 years. I still don't like to speak in the public, public speaking. It has been a wild ride, I will say. My first month on Council we saw HB2, and then we saw the partial repeal of HB2, and this is not in any definite order, but we won the All-Star game, then we lost it, then we got it back. The Panthers went to the Superbowl. We got an MLS franchise. George Floyd was murdered. Protestors took to the streets and to this chamber for Black Lives Matters, for immigrant rights and for worker's rights. We even saw some of them jump on the dais while we were sitting there. We tripled our housing bond and put millions of dollars into community safety reform. We finally did pass a nondiscrimination ordinance. We dealt with COVID and Tent City, I don't need to tell you all that, probably some of the most trying times in our City's history. We had business closings. We had corporate relocations like Honeywell and Centene and then we lost Centene. We passed the first comprehensive vision plan in 40 years, and we passed the first ever Unified Development Ordinance. These are just some of the highs and the lows and pivotal movements over the past 7 years.

Through even the most challenging times though, I have always believed it to be a great privilege to serve the people of Charlotte, including those who didn't always see eye to eye with me. I have learned a lot from all of you about myself and about our City. To the new Council, I wish you the best of luck. I hope that this job will mean as much to you as it has to me. I ask that in all you do always put the City first and recognize that the people do not represent a monolithic group. The more Charlotte grows the harder it will be to make everyone happy. Big decisions, big votes will rarely have obvious and easy answers. That is why it is so important to work together with your colleagues. Pick up the phone, talk to each other, collaborate, be open to compromise and when necessary, in the quest to find solutions that are best for our community, remember that if the collective action isn't what you wanted be willing to accept that it isn't personal, its part of a very difficult job.

With that I want to say thank you to the Mayor, to my colleagues, to the City Manager and as we said, to the dedicated staff of this City who makes everything work. It's like an iceberg, most of its under the water and you don't even see it and I am really honored to have worked with so many tremendous people. To my husband, Tom, my sons Jack and Joe who are here, my daughter Kate in New York and to all of my family, especially my sister, who has always been there for me and have put up with interrupted conversations, weekends and vacations. Especially to Robin Lo Furno who worked 24/7 to keep me on track. Robin is a true gem. I am not going to name everybody else in the community, but, to the community, thank you for allowing me to serve you. It's been an honor of a lifetime. Lastly, I just want to say that we live in an amazing city that is not perfect, but we always try to be better, more welcoming and inclusive of all people. Even when we trip over our own feet, we get back up and we try again, and I am proud to have been a Charlotte City Council Member in a City that I love calling home. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said so as these retiring members, we want to again ask everyone in the audience to give them a round of applause.

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## **READING OF MUNICIPAL ELECTION RESULTS**

Stephanie Kelly, City Clerk read the results of the Municipal Election held July 26, 2002.

City of Charlotte Mayor

Vi Alexander Lyles

Elected: 49,624

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	Stephanie de Sarachaga-Bilbao	22,646
	Write-Ins	27
City of Charlotte Council At-Large	Dimple Ajmera	Elected: 46,751
	Braxton Winston II	Elected: 46,045
	LaWana Slack-Mayfield	Elected: 42,582
	James Mitchell	Elected: 42,509
	Kyle J. Luebke	28,600
	David Merrill	25,385
	Carrie Olinski	25,000
	Charlie Mulligan	24,698
	Write-Ins	5
City of Charlotte District No. 1	Dante Anderson	Elected: 9,164
	Write-Ins	12
City of Charlotte District No. 2	Mary Lineberger Barnett	1,514
	Malcolm Graham	Elected: 6,965
City of Charlotte District No. 3	James H. Bowers	1,471
	Victoria Watlington	Elected: 5,008
City of Charlotte District No. 4	Renee Perkins Johnson	Elected: 5,986
City of Charlotte District No. 5	Marjorie Molina	Elected: 6,136
City of Charlotte District No. 6	Tariq Bokhari	Elected: 9,889
	Stephanie Hand	9,532
City of Charlotte District No. 7	Ed Driggs	Elected: 9,042
	Write-Ins	34

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### MAYORAL OATH OF OFFICE AND REMARKS

**Mayor Lyles** said I would like to invite Judge Karen Eady-Williams to join me along with my family at the podium. So, you guys know the stars of my life are here, right, Audrey and Mia and I know that Aisha’s Hailey and Mercy are watching us this evening and so this is what makes it possible to serve, because I know if I do well, they will do well in the future.

**Judge Karen Eady-Williams** administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Lyles.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much. In the spirit of time limits, we are asking everyone to limit their comments during the ceremony to about two minutes. Now, I know that is a tall order for some us and so in order to do this we have decided to have a little bit of an incentive. So, when you are at three minutes, the clerk will start ding, ding, ding, isn’t that right Stephanie, three minutes, that is what we’ve agreed upon, so I am going to try to lead by example.

To say that the past three years have been a challenge seems like a real understatement. Every aspect of our community, our nation, our world changed because of the COVID pandemic, and yet I am incredibly proud of how this body and our community rose to the challenge of the pandemic and sprang into action. City Council along with staff worked tirelessly for weeks, months and years to help ensure that critical services were maintained and that we created a system to stabilize our community and prepare for our community to bounce back. The pandemic didn’t make the other problems go away.

Economic opportunity, upward mobility, affordable housing, gentrifying neighborhoods, a rapidly growing population requiring new and different approaches to transit. All of those

issues remained and in many ways were amplified. Again, this body and this organization pushed forward. We made important and significant strides. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the UDO, significant increases in funding for affordable housing, the Infusion Fund to support arts and culture, equity initiatives and new commissions to help manage growth and stabilize development. We still have work to do, but we should celebrate and recognize our democracy has created this body which today reflects our values.

The people elected to represent our residents have integrity and a strong desire to move our community forward. I believe we are unified in what we want. A better quality of life for our families and better opportunities for our children. Now, not everyone has the same definition of quality of life, and that's okay. We have to work with each other to build that for a better Charlotte. We will continue to move forward on affordable housing. People who work in our City should be able to live in our City. We will continue to move forward on creating better transit and transportation. We will continue to move forward on creating a safer Charlotte. A safer Charlotte is a place where we work to address the root causes of violence, where people have economic opportunity, where we are focused on developing our work force, where we see the value of being the center of this region, and where we are honest about the history of under investments in communities of color. We can and will work actively to address all of these issues and I am really looking forward to the next term. Thank you very much.

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### **COUNCIL-ELECT OATH OF OFFICE AND REMARKS**

The Oath of Office was administered by Mayor Lyles to Councilmembers Elect Dimple Ajmera, Dante Anderson, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, James Mitchell, Marjorie Molina, Lawana Slack-Mayfield, Victoria Watlington, and Braxton Winston II.

**Mayor Lyles** said we are going to ask Council Members to make remarks and I am going to start with Mr. Driggs, I saw him trying to get out of here. As Mayor, what we generally do is we start at one part of the dais, and we move around so you can be prepared with your cameras for the person that you want to make sure that you capture as they are making their remarks. I am going to remind us that we can do this in two minutes, honestly, we really can.

**Councilmember Driggs** said good evening, everybody. I am Ed Driggs, Charlotte City Council District 7. As my colleagues have noted our first debt on Council is in fact to the staff. So, Mayor Jones.

Unidentified said Mayor Jones?

Mayor Lyles said Mayor Jones? That is okay, I'm fine.

Mr. Driggs said, I may have planted a seed. No, the professionalism of your staff and the way they support us is what makes everything work, so I just want to collectively acknowledge all of them. I do need to shout out also to Kim Oliver, who is the one that keeps me from walking in the wrong direction and gets me to where I need to be. Kim, Thank you. I didn't have an opponent this year, so my list of thank yous is perhaps shorter than everybody else's. I do want to thank the people who were hardy enough to donate to my campaign anyway. I thought that was very special. I also want to thank the people who voted for me. In this situation I appreciate that expression of support and confidence, but of course, most of all, I have to thank Caroline, she is sitting up there, whose wise counsel and unwavering support have kept me on an even keel since long before I joined Council, sweetie, thank you.

I have emphasized in the past that I am committed to serve all of my constituents, whether they voted for me or not, whether they belong to my party or not. In the end all of us on Council make decisions that effect Charlotte as a whole and we work to do what will improve life in our City for everyone. To our departing colleagues, I wish to say what a

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pleasure it was working with you and serving with you, and I hope you will enjoy continued success in your future endeavors. To my new and not so new colleagues, I am excited about the prospects for the coming term. It is only 15 months, but we have a lot of work to do. Let us all pull together to build on Charlotte's many strengths and be a place that everyone who lives here can be proud to call home. Thank you.

**Councilmember Watlington** said good evening. First, I would like to thank each of you for your commitment and passion to our City. It has been my pleasure to serve on Council these last 2-1/2 years and I am especially grateful to the residents of District 3 for your vote of confidence in allowing me to continue to serve as your representative. These last few years our community has demonstrated resilience in the face of adversity and together we have made significant progress on our goals. Through the hard work and support of family, friends, staff, Ms. Jo, and community leaders, many of whom are in the room, we've been able to do a lot. We've drafted our City Safe Charlotte Plan, changing our approach to policing and violent crime prevention in our community. We've made investments in our neighborhoods, businesses and our grassroot organizations through our Corridors of Opportunity Program for historically disadvantaged communities. We have passed our city's nondiscrimination ordinance to protect all workers. We have secured millions of dollars for congestion mitigation in Steele Creek, and we have adopted source of income protections in city supported housing. We have increased District 3 representation on city boards and commissions, putting you front and center in decision making. We've also successfully negotiated community benefits in new developments, restoring true community-led planning. Together, we've proven that we know what it takes to deliver for the district and for our city.

To the outgoing Council Members, I thank you for your service and to the incoming Council Members, I welcome you, your unique gifts and your voices to our broader discussion. As I look around the dais and this chamber, I am encouraged, and I am hopeful. Though our term is shortened, our view remains long. We will steward this city with wisdom, unity, vision, and most of all love. Once again, I thank you, and I look forward to continuing the work.

**Councilmember Bokhari** said thank you Madam Mayor. Chapter 1. I will start by; they're coming back in the room. If you've ever had 9, 7 and 5-year-olds you will understand they use the restroom a lot. Some thank yous first of all. First and foremost, I would like to thank my dear wife there. If you can't tell she has like eight full-time jobs, one of which, though, is being half of a Council Member, because all of the times that you community members reach out with different issues, problems to solve, a lot of times it is her that sits there and brainstorms and troubleshoots through things or figures out ways to keep me focused everyday on a lot of the things that we both know are important. So, this doesn't happen, any of it, without you and I probably don't recognize that as much as I should, but right now is a good time to reflect and say, it doesn't happen, none of this, without you. I also want to thank my supporters and friends, everyone who has done so much to make all of this happen. We couldn't do it without you. As well as all the candidates that run and weren't successful this time, on all fronts we seem to have a great bench in the future. Staff as well, very grateful on that front and then my kids, last, kids stand up, take your bow, stand up, Chase, Chase you gotta stand up dude. You're not even listening? Stand up everybody, see that, take your bows, yes, maybe you'll listen for a few seconds, no, he's busy. Wow. To my kids, I have the greatest pride ever to be able to set this example for you here today and a great expectation that you will also serve this community as you get older, so pay attention.

Finally, the questions that we decide to ask and that we attempt to answer are really what makes the difference between a good city and a great city. In my opinion the biggest success we've had in the last 5 years was something, the vast majority of people have not and will never hear of, horizontal integration. We sat down 5 years ago and asked a very simple question, how can we become a more effective government? Instead of operating in these vertical silos, like affordable housing or transportation, can we overhaul the organization to operate in horizontal outcomes, focusing on economic growth or upward mobility across all departments, across all functions. That is a huge win that no one will hear about it, but the future decades will benefit from that restructuring. We don't



have unlimited resources, so the questions we choose to ask are everything as we move forward. What we have to decide, as a new body, is what questions are we going to ask over the next year, year and a half. I think there are some amazing opportunities for us, as a group. We recruited and retained over 50,000 jobs in the last 5 years, 50,000 to the city. How can we make that 100,000 over the next 5 years? These are the size and scope questions we should be asking. How can we drastically and measurably reduce crime, improve officer retention and moral? How can we anticipate what city infrastructure looks like 20 years from now and then get there 10 years before anybody else does? So, I'm excited, I'm hopeful for this next term. We need to ask the right questions.

**Councilmember Graham** said thank you Madam Mayor. I look forward to working with you over the next year and a half. To the new members and returning members, I look forward to working with each and everyone of you as well. To my supporters and friends from District 2, thank you very much for an amazing victory with over 80 percent of the popular vote, both in the terms of the primary and the general election. I hear the challenge. When I was at the polls a young lady pulled me aside, an elder lady, and said, some people like titles and our positions more than they like the work assigned to them and she said, "Malcom you have always been dedicated to the work." She's right. I hate campaigning. I love when the campaign is over, when I can get to work. There is plenty of work to be done and I'm glad I have another term to do so. I think there is a lot of work that we collectively can do as a community, and we have to kinda follow through on what we started.

The dire need for action around affordable housing and homelessness and doing something about it versus just talking about it. The delicate balance between economic development and revitalization of our communities and the impact and effects of gentrification. Making it easier to get around the city with public transportation that is affordable, reliable and sustainable, and lastly ensuring we are making the Queen City a safe space for everyone to live. We made a lot of progress on these issues over the last year and a half, 3 years really. We have a lot of momentum and momentum is what it will take us to move forward. I'm excited about where we are going. I'm excited about where we are headed. I think we have the talent, the resources and the wherewithal to make Charlotte a better place tomorrow than it is today. If we all pull together, understand our strengths and our weakness and the opportunities that lie in front of us, the threats that are out there as well and be willing to do things differently to achieve different results. I think we have the ingredients to do all of those things if we dare to think big. I dare to think big for the rest of us at District 2. We've done a lot of work. My goal is to make District 2 issues City priorities. I think we've started out already and will continue the work. Thank you very much.

**Councilmember Anderson** said thank you Madam Mayor. I feel as if I don't need to thank anyone because Councilmember Newton has taken care of all of that for us. But seriously, it is a tremendous honor to sit here and represent District 1 and all of the legacy and all that is before us as the First District of the City of Charlotte and everything that is before us as the Queen City. I am a native daughter of the City and a descendant of Brooklyn Village and Piedmont Court Southside homes. I represent all that struggle, the hard work that it all took us to get to this point. There is such a tremendous future and opportunity for the city, as we move forward, to realize and rationalize the UDO and to ensure that the charm and the heritage of the City of Charlotte does not get wiped away as we embrace growth.

Malcom is right in that we have a tremendous opportunity to look at affordable housing, and I was one who took advantage of affordable housing as I grew up and I know the benefits of that. So, we have to ensure that we protect affordable housing and protect the naturally occurring affordable housing that exists in the city as well as embrace economic development and higher wagers for everyone who works dearly and hard, day in and day out in this city.

I'd be remise if I didn't thank my family and my love circle up in the balcony. I have loved ones, nieces and nephews, line sisters, everyone that came out to embrace me and acknowledge this moment. I am so hopeful for not only the next 15 months, but the next

15 years. We are in a place where I belong to an organization that embraces the notion of fortitude and what it takes to really brace down into courage and bravery and sometimes pain to ensure that we are moving forward intentionally. I can assure you, as citizens of Charlotte, that I will do that to the best of my ability as long as I hold a seat in this office. Thank you all very much.

**Councilmember Slack-Mayfield** said Thank you Madam Mayor. I would like to thank all who voted for me to return to continue the work that I started many years ago. I served you for 8 years proudly and as the District 3 representative at that time, we were able to achieve a lot of wins, not only for our district, but also for our city. But I want to also take a moment to acknowledge some who are here tonight and some who were not able to be with me. I am not going to go through the full names as my former colleague did, so David, Ryan, Daniel, Emma, Ms. Nina, Cameron, Eileen, Tracey, Daniel, Anetta, Willie, Rob, Martie, Oudae, Candice, Rashawn and others who I didn't even know were supporting me, all for your hours of canvassing with me in the heat, passing out materials at the polls, helping to create my materials and guidance through both the primary and the general election as I stepped into this roll again. I also cannot let the opportunity pass to thank my wife, Gelisa. In two weeks, we will be celebrating our 6-year wedding anniversary, 16 years together, who also volunteered at the polls and for many years has been my greatest support system as I focus on community services long before we were together and throughout our years together. When I chose to return to school fulltime, you were there in my corner 110 percent.

For those of you who are a little older, who think it might be too late, it's not. It's never too late to better yourself and to invest in yourself and to work towards a longer way to go, which I was able to do. I am looking forward to working alongside of my colleagues. Some, we have done some really amazing things together across party lines and across personal ideals. I look forward to working alongside of you. Mayor, I look forward to working under your leadership as you continue to guide us and I look forward to serving our community once again, thank you.

Mayor Lyles said I hope the Council will allow me the privilege of introducing my family to you. Many of you knew I grew up 96 miles from Charlotte down in Columbia, South Carolina. I grew up in a very big family, and I remember them with just great love and sharing. They've always had my back and so my youngest brother Ronald is here, my cousins Christy and [inaudible], my niece Whitney and I have to also say that my friends that I can always call upon on that front row, I want you to know that I recognize you, Londa, Bob, all of you. Venita, Selma, Kay, they're rocks. They steady me and they make it possible for me to do what I do. The kids had to leave. You could see where they were going really quickly, like twoom, like that. I want to say, how much, I couldn't be who I am today without my family that raised me, so thank you very much.

**Councilmember Mitchell** said thank you. First of all, let me thank my queen, Joan Higginbotham and my blessings Kate and Nicole, allowing Daddy to serve this City once again as a public official. I would like to thank my pastor, Dr. Jerry Cannon and members of CN Jenkins Presbyterian Church for all your prayers and your support. Let me thank my sister, Kim Mitchell Thompson, serving as my campaign manager, but also serving like a little sister do to kick the big brother in the hips every once in a while. I would like to thank all the volunteers and contributors of Team Mitchell 2022. Your encouragement, your perseverance, and your guidance, that is why I'm here standing on your shoulders. To the voters of the City of Charlotte, thank you so much for allowing me to do something I enjoy doing, being the biggest cheerleader for our city. I really appreciate this opportunity. Someone told me, Smudgie, go down there and don't leave again. Amen. I will not leave again. I look forward to working with this Mayor and this City Council. Yes, 15 months is a short period of time, but I think the talent around this dais we can accomplish great things. A special thank you to the Charlotte Sports Foundation and the 100 Black Men. This week they sponsored a successful Aggie-Eagle Classic and as a proud graduate of North Carolina Central University, we finally won. Thank you everybody.

**Councilmember Johnson** said thank you Madam Mayor. It feels like longer doesn't it.

Mayor Lyles said on some nights it does.

Ms. Johnson said I thank you. I thank you. First of all, I want to give All Glory to God for the opportunity, the health, the strength to serve. Thank you to my loving husband, Bernard. You have supported me in this journey and all the journeys we've walked through together for the last 30 years. I could not be here without you, so thank you. I want to thank my children, India and BJ, you are the fuel to my fire, and I praise God daily for trusting me with such precious gifts. To my grandchildren, to all of my grandchildren, but to Bishop, who is here tonight, he wanted me to thank you all for voting for his Nina. Thank you to the County Democratic Party, the Democratic Women and the Senior Dems. Thank you to all of the organizations who endorsed me. Dearest Price and Black Charlotte, she was my first endorsement and she endorsed me again, so I think you and I don't take that for granted. Thank you to the Black Political Caucus, to the African American Caucus, the Charlotte Post and Equality NC. Thank you for your support. I am honored to serve you. To William Votes of Unite Here 23, I called, and you came, and you brought hardworking dedicated volunteers who believed in me. I pledge to always be a voice for your union and all of labor unions who supported and endorsed me, including the North Carolina AFLCIO and the Service Employees International Union. I want to thank my small and mighty team, Dave, Beverly, Lavester, Tony, Dan, Mr. Kinkaid, Cynthia and Brandy, we did it again. To my late campaign manager, Mr. Bill Brown, whom we lost to COVID. He was a special force for our team, and I honor him tonight and I will continue to honor him in my work. To his daughter Mia, who is watching, thank you for sharing your father with us. A special shout out to my campaign volunteers, my donors, my supporters, my family, my friends. I want to thank Latoya White and Robin Lo Furno who are my city assistant staff. They do make us look good, so I appreciate you, Latoya.

Thank you to Councilmember Al Austin. He is one of the first people that I met here in Charlotte. He introduced me to the Black Political Caucus and the local politics, so thank you. I acknowledge him tonight. Most importantly to District 4, I am honored, and I am humbled by your overwhelming support. To the precinct leaders who are watching and those who came out tonight, Dr. Gray and her sister Ida, Tony Mingo and William Mitchell, thank you for your leadership and your dedication to your precincts. Finally, to the voters of District 4, you showed up and you showed out and I want to thank you. With your support we won with 57 percent of the vote. That was a historical victory for a multicandidate race. You have spoken and you've given a mandate. You said that you expect your representative to ask questions, challenge the status quo and who will put people over politics and speak truth to power. I am honored to serve you. I am honored to continue to serve you and I thank you for your support.

**Councilmember Winston** said five years ago I sat at this dais and said we would be strongest if we acted like a fist instead of individual fingers. Nothing could have illustrated that truth better than how our previous council was able to govern when we found ourselves given the de facto task of creating a municipal pandemic playbook in 2020. Our communication as a Council, Mayor, and a well-managed staff allowed Charlotte to set many examples of how to best govern in a crisis no one expected.

In 2019 I encouraged us to govern with a policy lens of equity. Though the policy making came with its challenges we were able to pass consequential policy that represents systemic changes not seen in this city in over 50 years. These policies are built on foundation of developing an equitable Charlotte. As I sit before you here in 2022, I believe the phrase of this term is laser focused. Our constituents are demanding us to think big and work together in continuing our systemic approach to building an equitable Charlotte. Whether it is transit and transportation, affordable housing, the environment, or economic development our constituents want us to think big and work as a team during this abbreviated term.

I would like to thank the people of Charlotte for entrusting me with the privilege and responsibility of representing you for a third term as we work on building a more equitable, accessible, and interconnected Charlotte. I would like to thank all who volunteered their time, resources, and treasure to support our campaign over the years. Without your support it would be impossible to connect with so many people during this campaign and

over the years as we have done. To the staff of the City of Charlotte, thank you for sharing your expertise with our City. You all inspire me to come to work prepared and engaged. You share the same passion to serve our constituents as I do. Thank you for making all of us up here look good. I would particularly like to thank Alonna Bailey and Denada Jackson and the whole constituent's services staff.

Though they are not able to be here today, I want to thank my children, Braxton, Shyanne, and Brooklyn. You are the reason why I wake up and do this every day. I may not be able to answer every question about the universe, but you energize me to continue to figure out how to make this city a place you are proud to call home. Your perseverance through adversity is beyond your years. I love you all very much. I would like to thank my parents, Stella and David Winston. Unknowingly growing up as the son of a New York City school teacher and a fireman, taught me the value of a well-supported municipal work force. My mother is able to be here tonight. Mommy, the love and dedication that your family was able to pour into me and Brandon through you and my father taught me to love the city that I call home. That no matter how difficult the environment, there is a pathway to the world that you want to see. That energy is the root of how I govern today, and I am grateful for that. Last, but certainly not least, Kayla Jacobs. You are my best friend and the brains behind this whole operation. I would not be here without you. You are the smartest North Carolina Democrat I know. Now, let's get to work. Thank you.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said thank you Madam Mayor. Today marks the beginning of my third term. It has been almost 6 years. I've grown tremendously in this past 6 years as a public servant. Many of you in this room have been my mentors, my teachers, and my supporters, so thank you. As a mom, wife, sister and a proud daughter of immigrants, I am deeply humbled by the overwhelming support that I have received. Thanks to my family, especially the love of my life, my husband Vaibhav, who is here, my daughter Charlotte who is our 14-month-old, my mom who has traveled here from California and our extended family. Thank you all so much. I couldn't do this without all of you. It truly takes a village.

To our constituents, thank you from the bottom of my heart. I will not disappoint you. I am grateful for our team, Uncle Dan, Margie, Jane and our incredible interns, Kunjole who is here, who has been a rock and the entire team. This youth, incredible youth gives me so much hope for our future. Thanks to our staff, especially Amanda Burch. Amanda keeps me on my toes at all times. I couldn't do this without her by my side and the entire City of Charlotte staff. To all my colleagues, congratulations, and I pledge to work with every single one of you. We have a very passionate Council with many dreams and goals for a very short term, so we must stay focused. I know, I am confident that we can put our differences aside for the benefit of all Charlotteans. I often think of other mothers and fathers when I rock our 14-month-old daughter Charlotte to sleep, about our next generation and we all want the same thing, a safe, thriving, and a healthy community for our children and for our grandchildren. As a new mom, that call to action feels more real and urgent than ever before. My daughter Charlotte has been my guiding light and my purpose. So let us shine the light of unity, proceeding peace and truth my brothers and sisters. Thank you.

**Councilmember Molina** said thank you Madam Mayor, so much. I am humbled to even sit at this dais and look at you. I have admired you from afar and I thank God for the opportunity to serve. Thank you everyone, my colleagues. I had something special written, but I'm one of those people, that you'll learn, I like to speak from my heart. So, I gotta start from the top. My children, who I actually got to look up and see my babies, Kaylie and Jayden, Mommy love you with my whole soul. You are my motivation in life, and you are the reason that I serve. I have two people in my life who I have the privilege to call mom and dad, where if you see them, you will realize we've got different eyes ya know, theirs is blue and mine is brown, but still, its no big deal, right. I would like to acknowledge James and Jean Clary. I love you so much. You mean the world to me, and I am so honored that you are here with me for this event. There are so many people to thank. I look up and I see John Autry. John was the first person to take me under his wing. I remember on his very first campaign I walked up to him, before his campaign actually, and I'm like, you know what I'd like to learn about service. He kinda looks at me, like

where did this girl come from, you know and he started inviting me to all kinds of opportunities where I could learn more about service, and you know, the rest is history. I kinda folded into you know serving our community and I am thankful for so many of the opportunities that you've allowed me to fill, so thank you so much. I see Robert beside him, and I see my girl Caroline, I love you, Caroline. Caroline is one of the most dedicated members of our District 5 family and I am so honored to have her support.

Outgoing member Matt Newton read you a list of so many dedicated people. Matt is hard to follow, but Matt thank you. I have known Matt for over a decade and Matt, once I won the primary election, he just took me right under his wing and he said, Marjorie, let me show you a few things. I'm looking right in the face of Larken Egleston and you guys, Larken is the reason that I'm here. Larken tapped me on the shoulder, and he asked me to consider it, while I was in grad school, by the way. Which I had to think about a lot because I had the weight of finishing my master's degree at UNC Charlotte as well, so, I accepted that call and I am glad that we done that.

I want to mention a few people who I neglected to mention. First of all I have family and friends in the audience. I love you. Thank you for being here with me. Will and Riley Moody. For a long time, the three of us, we were a team of 3. Will only signed up to be my treasurer, but Will Moody is someone that I feel like God sent to me directly, because he stepped in where we had gaps and for a long time it was just, he and I. Along the way we were able to have other people join us, Sam Spencer, Rebecca [inaudible], you guys, thank you so much. You mean the world to me. I love you.

I am looking right at the face of this one person, [inaudible] who I have worked with over the years. We have done the Afro-Latino Celebration. I don't know if many of you know, but I speak Spanish fluently. I read, write and speak Spanish as a second language, and so I've had the gift and the honor to be accepted in the Latino and Spanish speaking community and I am honored to have that portion of service, so thank you so much and I look forward to serving with my colleagues.

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## ELECTION OF MAYOR PRO TEM

**Mayor Lyles** said to begin the process for electing a Mayor Pro Tem, I will now open the floor for motion of nominations. Geez, I was about to say Mr. Smudgie.

**Councilmember Mitchell** said I have been called worse Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said I know, my apologies, Mr. Mitchell.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell and seconded by Councilmember Slack-Mayfield to nominate Braxton Winston II as Mayor Pro Tem.

**Councilmember Molina** said I would like to place a substitute motion on the floor. My very first motion, and I would like to motion for Dimple Ajmera.

Mayor Lyles said do we have a second.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said thank you Madam Mayor. I'm honored Councilmember Molina by your courage and by your trust and faith in my ability to lead, but we must unify and place the needs of our people first over my personal ambition. This has been a very difficult decision for me and there is a time and place for everything. As the top vote getter, I have earned the overwhelming support across all demographics and I am ready to do the work of the Mayor Pro Tem; however, there is a time we must realize whether to lead or to help someone else lead. I know we will be in good hands with Councilmember Winston. So, without our unity and collaboration we can't be at our best and strongest for the people of Charlotte. So, though I appreciate Councilmember Molina's motion and her trust and faith in my ability, we cannot govern with closed doors, and I am going to help Councilmember Winston help lead our City as our next Mayor Pro Tem.

The vote was taken and recorded as unanimous.

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### ADJOURNMENT

**Mayor Lyles** said I want to thank all of you for your attendance and your patience with us. This is truly a celebration of democracy, something that we should all be very proud of.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.
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The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

  
Stephanie C. Kelly, City Clerk, MMC, NCCMC

Length of meeting: 1 Hours, 45 Minutes  
Minutes Completed: December 6, 2023