

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for Action Review on Monday, May 8, 2023, at 5:10 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, LaWana Mayfield, James Mitchell, and Braxton Winston, II.

ABSENT: Councilmember Victoria Watlington.

ABSENT UNTIL NOTED: Councilmembers Dimple Ajmera, Danté Anderson, Renee Johnson, and Marjorie Molina.

* * * * *

Mayor Lyles said thank you everyone. I want to call the May 8, 2023, Council Meeting to order. This is the time that we talk about the Committee work that we've been doing, and because we have an abbreviated schedule today, I would ask the Chairs to be able to report out those actions that they have voted on that they would like to hear Council discussion on prior to it being on the agenda. If there are other urgent matters, we can try to fit those in, but right now I think we're running a little bit behind. I think our Deputy Clerk told me that we have over 20 people signed up for the budget and public hearing already. At that time, we're going to do a two minute instead of three minutes for the budget public hearing, and we've got several other public hearings for our usual street closings and things like that.

* * * * *

ACTION REVIEW

ITEM NO. 1: MAYOR AND COUNCIL CONSENT ITEM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Mayor Lyles said the first item that we have on our agenda is the consent items and I wanted to ask Ms. Harris are there any questions or requests from the Council regarding the consent items?

Marie Harris, Strategy and Budget said good evening, Madam Mayor and Council. I didn't have any questions as of yet, but before we move forward, are there any questions on any of the consent items that anyone has?

Mayor Lyles said hearing no questions, then we have no other items pulled from this.

Ms. Harris said there was one. Was it Item 20? That was a property transaction that's settled.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 2: CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 15 THROUGH 23 MAY BE CONSIDERED IN ONE MOTION EXCEPT FOR THOSE ITEMS REMOVED BY A COUNCIL MEMBER. ITEMS ARE REMOVED BY NOTIFYING THE CITY CLERK.

Motion was made by Councilmember Bokhari, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda items 15 through 23, with the exception of Item No. 20 which was pulled by staff.

The following items were approved:

Item No. 15: Light Vehicle Repairs

(A) Approve unit price contracts with the following companies for light vehicle repairs for an initial term of one year: Capital Ford of Charlotte, Parks Chevrolet at the Lake, Woodie Enterprises Inc. DBA Woodies Auto Service and Repair Centers, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to four, one-year terms with

possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

Item No. 16: Roof Replacement for the Police and Fire Training Academy

Approve a contract in the amount of \$625,400.00 to the lowest responsive bidder Triad Roofing Company, Inc. for the Police and Fire Training Academy Roof Replacement project.

Summary of Bids

Triad Roofing Company, Inc.	\$625,400.00
Nations Roof of Carolina, LLC	\$789,000.00
Davco Roofing and Sheet Metal, LLC	\$794,395.00
Carolina Commercial Roofing*	\$812,400.00
Tecta America Carolinas LLC*	\$845,780.00
Johnsons Roofing Service, Inc.	\$1,106,000.00

*Non-responsive bid.

Item No. 17: Wastewater Treatment Plant HVAC Replacement

Approve a contract in the amount of \$4,964,000.00 to the lowest responsive bidder, State Utility Contractors, Inc., for the McAlpine Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Dewatering Facility HVAC Replacement project.

Summary of Bids

The City issued an Invitation to bid twice; only one bid was received both times from State Utility Contractors, Inc.

Item No. 18: Vegetation Management and Stormwater Control Measures Maintenance Services

(A) Approve unit price contracts with the following companies for vegetation management and stormwater control measures maintenance services for an initial term of two years: Uncommon Grounds Landscaping LLC (SBE), and Dragonfly Pond Works, LLC, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to two, two-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

Item No. 19: Refund of Property Taxes

Adopt a resolution authorizing the refund of property taxes assessed through clerical or assessment error in the amount of \$3,978.65.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 33-34.

PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

Item No. 21: Property Transactions - Idlewild BPS Supply Main, Parcel # 1

Acquisition of 124,611 square feet (2.86 acres) Water Line Easement and 22,286 square feet (0.51 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 5400 Monroe Road from SCI North Carolina Funeral Services, LLC for \$338,950 for Idlewild BPS Supply Main, Parcel # 1.

Item No. 22: Property Transactions - Shamrock Drive Improvements, Parcel # 72

Acquisition of 159 square feet (0.004 acres) Fee Simple and 1,437 square feet (0.033 acres) Sidewalk Utility Easement, 709 square feet (0.016 acres) Storm Drainage Easement, 62 square feet (0.001 acres) Utility Easement and 3,032 square feet (0.070 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 2420 Shamrock Drive from ONeil Property Management, LLC for \$38,575 for Shamrock Drive Improvements, Parcel # 72.

Item No. 23: Property Transactions - Shamrock Drive Improvements, Parcel # 79

Acquisition of 4 square feet (0.000 acres) Fee Simple and 820 square feet (0.019 acres) Storm Drainage Easement, 738 square feet (0.017 acres) Sidewalk Utility Easement, 644 square feet (0.015 acres) Utility Easement and 2,658 square feet (0.061 acres)

Temporary Construction Easement at 2500 Shamrock Drive from s): ONeil Property Management, LLC for \$36,000 for Shamrock Drive Improvements, Parcel # 79.

Councilmember Ajmera arrived at 5:12 p.m.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 3: ACTION REVIEW AGENDA OVERVIEW

Mayor Lyles said I want to first say again that each Committee Chair should feel comfortable to determine if their item is moving out of Committee that the full Council needs to discuss or needs a briefing on, let's try to get that done in a way that allows for us to have that discussion because those items are more immediate than anything else.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 4: ACTION REVIEW ITEMS

Councilmember Driggs said so, Mayor we didn't actually take an action or vote anything out. I would just say very briefly we are working on a lot of the CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System) issues with which we're all familiar. The working group has met a couple of times and will report back to Transportation and Planning. We have a work plan that we've developed involving reviewing documents, interviewing people, visiting sites and various other steps to be expanded as suggestions come in from members of the working group which include the four people that you and the Manager had designated as well as two members of the MTC (Metropolitan Transit Committee) who will participate, one or the other.

So, that in brief is what's going on there. We'll be sure to get stuff around to people as it gets adopted by the working group or circulated. The other thing we talked about in the meeting was the discrepancies between the Policy Map and some of the staff recommendations and what the staff is doing to kind of explain better how that could happen, why there are situations where there is a staff recommendation that is counter to the consistency from the Policy Map. We just need to have some logic around that so it isn't totally arbitrary and I think that's what we worked on. So, those were our two topics.

Councilmember Ajmera said first, I'll introduce our Committee members. Mr. Mitchell, Vice Chair. Committee members Tariq Bokhari, LaWana Mayfield and Danté Anderson. We had two items on our agenda. First is the evaluation process for appointed staff and the second item we had discussed was federal and legislative agenda update. So, I know you all have been receiving federal and state legislative agenda update from Mr. Dana Fenton, but they are continuing to keep us posted on all the items. So, if you have any questions, please direct those to Mr. Fenton. There was no action taken on those federal or state legislative agenda. It's just an informational update.

On the evaluation process, the Committee had moved forward with the recommendation to go with a process that was recommended by our HR (Human Resources) and that's to have our mid-year evaluation at the end of the year and having a year-end evaluation in a couple of weeks. So, you probably have seen that there have been meetings scheduled. Two meetings in June that would be for City Attorney and City Manager and one in July for City Clerk. So, that recommendation was approved by three members on the Committee, two were against it. While some felt that mid-year review would be more appropriate versus having a year-end in a couple of weeks, but again the majority of the Committee decided we want to move forward with the year-end in a couple of weeks. So, this is where I'd like to hear from you all as to how does the remainder of the Council feel about having a year-end evaluation done in June and July. Ms. Simpson, if you could just walk us through your recommendation and the timeline, please? Thank you.

Shelia Simpson, Human Resources said good evening, Council and Madam Mayor. Yes, the recommendation from human resources is that we complete the Fiscal Year 2023 evaluations for all the appointees. So, to do that, the end of that year would be June of 2023. There was a question that was raised in the Committee meeting regarding if all of the appointees were aware of their objectives and goals. The answer to that question is City Council did set objectives and priorities in 2022, which would cover the Fiscal Year 2023. So, it is my conclusion that they all are aware of the strategic objectives that were set for Fiscal Year 2023.

So, it is our recommendation that we complete that process and as we move into the next year, which is Fiscal Year 2024, we adopt or you consider adopting adding a mid-year conversation with each of your appointees regarding the priorities and the objectives so that it's more clear what those objectives are and if there are changes in some of the tactical priorities, you can communicate that to the appointees at that time. Does that answer your question, Ms. Ajmera?

Ms. Ajmera said yes, Ms. Simpson. Also, if you could just talk about the framework that you presented to the Committee. So, we have framework that was prepared by Sheila and her team that you can use that as you have one on one with City Manager and City Attorney. It's a really useful tool that can also be used as a framework for reference as you do year-end evaluation. That was part of the follow-up request that had come from the Committee. I think Ms. Mayfield had specifically requested that. So, that is a good tool and I do plan on using that. There was another item that Ms. Simpson had presented. It was really the timeline. So, June 12th is the City Attorney's, currently scheduled for June 26, City Manager and July 10th, City Clerk. So, as you all remember, we were trying to align our year-end evaluations with the fiscal year, but we were not able to get all of them scheduled in June because we are talking about literally four weeks from today. So, that's why we had to push one after the fiscal year begins. So, that would be in July. That would be the City Clerk.

So, there was consensus on the timeline and on the framework. The only thing that was not unanimous was the mid-year versus the year-end timeline. So, anything else Committee members that you'd like to add? Feel free to do so.

Mayor Lyles said I do have a question. I think that the dates were set, and I'd like to move this as quickly as the Committee recommends. So, three Council members will be out of town on June the 26th when we are scheduling the City Manager, and I was wondering if we could just flip that to July 10th and have the Clerk on June the 26th or somewhere around in there change the dates to make sure that we're not missing a number of Council members on those dates. So, we can either have Ms. Burch do some polling and get us the dates, but if not, if we want to move quickly on the Attorney and the Manager, I would suggest that we flip the 26th and the 10th, but we can do that however.

Ms. Ajmera said so, the reason for pushing the City Clerk's evaluation to July was that, that's a position that's least political because we have filing beginning in July, but I would really like to hear from the Committee as to what you all think about pushing the City Manager's evaluation after the filing begins in July. If the majority of the Council decides to go that route, we can do that.

Mayor Lyles said well, I think my concern was that we would have three Council members not available on the 26th to participate.

Ms. Ajmera said I understand. So, I know that Ms. Simpson will send out a survey. What's the timeline for that survey and would that give us enough feedback from all the Council members to have it on June 26th?

Mayor Lyles said I feel like we would want to have a face to face with the Manager of the City for all of the Council members to have that opportunity, and I understand. I didn't know we were doing a survey. I thought that we were doing this in person and

that's probably one of the things that I was thinking about. So, Ms. Simpson help me understand what we're doing.

Ms. Simpson said one, I will begin at the end. I strongly suggest that the City Manager's performance evaluation is conducted with the full body of Council. I strongly suggest that.

Councilmember Mayfield said Ms. Simpson, the Mayor mentioned something as far as putting a polling Council. Are there any challenges with moving up the Manager's review to say, the week prior to the 26th since we know that there are going to be a couple of members that are out versus pushing it back? Do you foresee there being challenges? We know we're having this discussion right now. We're on May 8th. That's still three plus weeks, not to mention however many months that previous Council have been working under the initial goals for Council. You only had what, four new members that came in in September that need to catch up. Do you foresee there being a challenge to move it up a week versus delaying it a week or two?

Ms. Simpson said from my understanding, there is a scheduling issue the week prior to that. So, the week prior to that, your normal meeting would be scheduled on June the 20th.

Ms. Mayfield said right, because the 19th is a holiday.

Ms. Simpson said yes ma'am. Therefore, there are some Council members who are not available on that day. So, that's the reason why you didn't see that date communicated to you in Committee.

Ms. Mayfield said so, you were saying that the reason that wasn't on the initial recommended dates is because?

Ms. Simpson said yes ma'am. What I'm saying is we did not communicate that date because we were aware that there are Council members who are not available on that date.

Mr. Driggs said I just wanted to comment if I understood correctly. There is a survey. We fill it out, we give these numbers and so on, that's normal, but I think the in-person conversation of all of us with the people we're reviewing is critical. So, I just hope we can continue to poll and find a date on which we're all able to be present.

Mayor Lyles said I really think that it's just a matter that we didn't ask the right people, and Ms. Simpson asked, and we did not know. So, we are all very busy. Why don't we let the professional people that work with us to give us another recommendation. Hopefully it's something that they can see every person's calendar at this point, and we'll be able to do this. We understand the need for the timeline, but I think that we really need to get people on the schedule and have participation by everyone. So, Ms. Burch, can you take that task on? Again, time can be morning, noon, later. I mean, there's always hours in a day. So, we can do that as needed.

Ms. Mayfield said Madam Mayor apologies. For clarification. So, Ms. Simpson maybe the question that I asked, I didn't ask it in a way that gets to what I'm trying to get to. I mentioned can we move it back and I just said one week. Well that one week initially, the 20th is the day that's on my calendar that we would have, not the 26th. The 26th is the day that we had on the calendar for the City Clerk that's on. When I'm looking at my calendar, right now, I have the City Clerk's evaluation on the 26th with the City Manager's evaluation as a hold on my calendar for the 20th. So, when I was asking if there was a challenge with moving it back since the Mayor said we were going to have a number of people that were out of town on the 26th, I was thinking for the Manager specifically. When I asked if we could have that discussion earlier, that would really be the week of the 12th. So, that's why, and I didn't clarify that.

Looking on my calendar right now, the 20th of June was the date that's held for the City Manager's evaluation with the 26th being the date that's held for the City Clerk's evaluation. Do you foresee there being a challenge because the 12th is our Council Busing Meeting? Is there a chance to poll? Because the City Manager is the one that I agree, and I believe Madam Chair is going to speak to it, where we really need to look at how can we get that done in June? So, if there's a way to potentially poll to see if that 12th, since the 20th and the 26th it's the holidays, life happens, people are going to be traveling, things are going to be going on, to get at least the City Manager's in June. Do you foresee that being a challenge with that week of the 12th versus the 20th which is right now held on the calendar or the 26th?

Ms. Simpson said Ms. Mayfield, I do think we should take the recommendation to work with Ms. Burch. I don't know your calendars. So, we would work with your administrative staff to help designate a time that is appropriate for most of the Council members.

Mayor Lyles said well, I think that we will do our very best and understand that timeframe that we're talking about, but I would think that we need to work with the people that know where we are and be flexible on the hour of the day as well.

Mr. Driggs said I just wanted to say the budget adoption is scheduled for the 12th.

Ms. Ajmera said it looks like there is consensus of going with Ms. Simpson's recommendation of having year-end in June and July and having a mid-year. We are adapting to a new process as you can see. We'll have mid-year every year in November/December timeframe.

Mayor Lyles said alright, thank you. So, we will get this written up in a way that we can vote on it as a policy for our evaluations and include it in our codes and procedures. So, with that, Ms. Burch and Ms. Simpson, thank you very much. You guys get to see how we can do this and we'll get it scheduled as quickly as possible.

Okay. So, the next item is from our Jobs and Economic Development Committee. So, that would be Mr. Graham, but Mr. Graham before we go into this, Mr. Baker is there any guidance for the Council before we begin this discussion that's needed?

Patrick Baker, City Attorney said yes. Just briefly for Council. To the extent that you're going to get into specifics of any of the proposals. Mr. Bokhari and I have had a conversation. He is available if you have very specific questions about the proposal as it relates to him, otherwise I think the plan is for Mr. Bokhari to not be involved in the discussion relating to his proposal. So, I would leave that just as a suggestion to Council that I think it would be better for Mr. Bokhari to not be in the room unless you have specific questions of him on the proposal.

Mr. Driggs said so, Mr. Attorney, does that mean that he's going to be excused? Do we have to formally excuse him or how would that work?

Mr. Baker said that would be my recommendation, to excuse him at this stage, but again, he is available. He can speak for himself, but he's available if you have very specific questions that only he can answer, otherwise I think the game plan was for him to not participate in any deliberations. I know that's not what's in front of Council tonight. What's in front of Council tonight is the timeframe of reviewing these proposals, but it's just my suggestion.

Mayor Lyles said so, the City Attorney is suggesting that we excuse Mr. Bokhari? Is that correct?

Councilmember Bokhari said what I thought we had discussed earlier was this was just a general Chair update and if no one was going to get into the details of that, that wouldn't be necessary. If they were, then I would. So, it just depends on where it goes.

Mayor Lyles said alright. I get a yes from the City Attorney that that would work. I'm just making sure. Alright, Mr. Graham?

Councilmember Graham said thank you Madam Mayor. The Jobs and Economic Development Committee members are Driggs, Watlington, Molina, Ajmera and Graham. We met on May 1st and took two actions. One, the Jobs and Economic Development Committee unanimously approved the proposed Business Advisory Committee and Charlotte Business INClusion Advisory Committee proposed restructuring, which added a new member organization. Recommended a seat designated to the Carolinas LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) Chamber of Commerce, and increase the number of appointees from 16 to 17 seats. That was one action that we took. That action actually will be on the agenda tonight for your vote and there was a memo sent out on May 4th that really outlined the specifics of the Advisory Committee and the Business INClusion Advisory Committee proposed restructuring.

Secondly, the Committee discussed the Eastland Yard proposals at our May 1st meeting. We took two actions. One was to eliminate two of the four proposals which was the Target and the Aquatic Center and move forward with recommendations for three. One being Carolina Serves which is a racquet sports entertainment district, QC East at Eastland Yard which was a new proposal outlining a 5,000-seat outdoor amphitheater entertainment, 6 soccer fields, acquiring about 8 acres on that Esports and STEM Academy, which was the second. Then third, what we discussed was a public solution that we would continue to work with community partners to see whether or not there was a public solution between maybe the City and/or our County government.

Those were the two recommendations that the Committee made. We will begin to work over the next 60 to 90 days on evaluating the remaining proposals. A couple of preambles that we have by consensus that we kind of agree. One, our priority is the future of the site and living up to the community's expectation of what has been presented to them. We continue to be committed to a long-term success and viability of the redevelopment. No loss of commitment and no deferring of resources. There has been a deliberate process and we're still relatively early in this current process, but we're moving with urgency. Need to ensure long-term viability of projects. So, very focused on not just what's being built [INAUDIBLE] will be operated. The easiest thing that we can do is build a facility, the hard part is the day-to-day operation management and maintenance of the facility long term. We all believe that East Charlotte deserves better than doing something and we want to make sure that whatever we do has a long-lasting impact on the Eastland Yard's development.

Lastly, we also did level set. I'm going to leave with this note. There is work currently being done at the Eastland Yard sites. We're still working with Crosland Southeast. We approved several weeks ago the TIG (Tax Increment Grant) which takes into consideration improvement of the public infrastructure, roads, parking, streets, sidewalk, traffic control. Crosland Southeast has committed, since their groundbreaking, to build 160 single family homes, 260 apartments, 90 senior housings, 17,500 square feet of retail and office, a 5-acre Mecklenburg County Park including the TIG. So, if you go out there, they're working every day. We're trying to fill this last hole of 25, 26 acres. We have three proposals still in front of the Committee and we're working as hard as we can do try to bring the results that we believe folks are looking for. Thank you.

Councilmember Mitchell said so, I had the opportunity to sit in on the Committee meeting. So, two of them. The timeline. I think the Committee agreed to have 60 to 90 days I think Mr. Chair and I guess my question is what is the timeline? What's going to occur between 60 and 90 days so we can make sure that we're not back at this point again? So, I don't know if that's you or staff that can talk about what's going to take place in the 60 or 90-day process.

Mr. Graham said I'll take a stab at it and then Tracy can clean it up if I mess it up. The staff will continue to do the evaluation of the work. The first proposal, the QC Eastland Yard's proposal, we got the last week before our Committee meeting. So, staff will have

to do their due diligence in terms of evaluating and scoring their proposal. I haven't even read it. So, staff has to evaluate that. There's still some conversations around a public proposal and we want to entertain that as well. Then thirdly, we still have to ask additional questions to Charlotte Serves. So, staff wanted to take the time to ensure that we get it right.

Mr. Mitchell said on the public-private solution, the other proposals, they submitted their plan their future to all of us. It just felt very uncomfortable, here we were at the last minute, the deadline and there was a conversation about a public-private solution. There was no vision, no design, no PowerPoint, and I just want to make sure, the outside looking in, that once again people feel comfortable about the process and what's occurring. So, I was kind of taken back. I think the comment was made, CRVA (Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority) and staff had some discussions about doing something. I think I would've felt more comfortable if something would've been prepared. I think staff said something came at the last minute, but if it'd been shared with everyone, I think we'd feel like it was a true level playing field as opposed. "Well we have something we've been talking about, so we're going to make it on the short list," when there was no concept. So, do we have a design now, a proposal now to talk about this public-private solution?

Mr. Graham said well, I think that's a very good question. One of the things I want to remind the Council and the community is that when Tepper Sports and Entertainment withdrew their proposal last May or June, the staff and the Committee started working on a solution. So, there was always conversations about what needed to occur there before the initial unsolicited bid proposal that we received in December. So, there was always conversations about how we can work to fill the 25 acres that was left behind. There has been informal conversations because when we looked at these applications and these proposals they all had pros, they all had cons. So, part of the deliberation when we met in March was to allow staff to not only give 60 days to review each proposal and keep in mind, the only reason why we allow an additional 60 days was one of the proposals submitted a revision two days before the Committee meeting.

Mr. Mitchell said correct.

Mr. Graham said which gave everyone 60 days to examine their proposal as well. We also instructed staff at that time to go out and look at other opportunities as well. So, this one doesn't have all the meat on the bones yet, there has been informal conversation for the wide variety of other individuals, i.e., other government in the building about a what if scenario. What if we were to come together and combine our resources, what could we do? I mean those conversations start early, but they're ongoing and it's not undermining any of the other proposals. There was a sense in the Committee and a sense among other members that if we're going to be 88 percent or 90 percent of the total commitment for the project, we probably have the wherewithal to do it ourselves. So, that's where this option came from. Let's explore it, especially if we don't have to go it alone and we can go with another government. All very preliminary. Folks are talking about schematics and ideas. The District Rep has certainly read into what we're trying to propose, but again that would be based against the other two that's already sitting there as well.

Mr. Driggs said I just was going to respond also. Some of us have seen a lot of this history. So, we're painfully aware of what has gone on there and we're painfully aware of the reasons why people are very anxious. At the same time, I do feel it would be a mistake. We've come a long way, we've done a lot, we've invested a lot. It's not like nothing has happened, and I think it would be a mistake for us to allow ourselves to be crowded into a less than perfect answer by time pressure. So, when the question arises as to, "Okay, now what? Can we put a 90 day stop on here?" If we create a hard stop for ourselves, that sort of plays into the hands of other people who might take advantage of the fact that they know that we don't have the latitude to just see this process through. So, I regard that as possibly working against us. What I had suggested to Ms. Dodson, and I don't know whether this is something that you could respond to, is that she come back to us with a better-defined description of the steps and a timeline so

that we have a certain discipline around what's going to happen, but not necessarily bind ourselves by imposing that limit. So, is that something that you can help us with?

Tracy Dodson, Assistant City Manager said yes, thank you Councilmember Driggs. Good evening, Council and Mayor. That is something that we discussed in the Committee that we would probably within the next week or so come back, talk about a scope. For each one of the two proposals and even this third kind of idea that we put out, what we would try to do over the next 90 days. The other piece that Councilmember Graham left out was we'd like to have some level of community touch point from the City with the community on these proposals in that 90-day time period as well.

Mr. Mitchell said so, Ed, I think you have to get to a point that the community knows when there's a deadline, there's a deadline. You don't want the community to feel like it could be scope creep. There's a deadline in March we didn't make, a deadline in April we didn't make now we're saying another 90 days. Is the deadline serious in August? We cannot have the business community losing confidence when we set a deadline. I totally agree. You and I have been here the longest. So, we have the history of what has happened in Eastland. So, I never have felt like we were rushing. I just want to make sure whatever we decide to do, whatever we're looking for in our criteria, we stick to it and people understand here's how you hit the bullseye.

I feel like there's always a change in the process of what we're looking for. Here's a prime example. We say we didn't know what level of the public funding we wanted to put in, correct, but then there was an article in the paper that we're comfortable between \$20 million and \$40 million of public investment. Now to me, we should've shared that with everybody who wants to apply and had a vision about this was going to be a public funding. So, we have to be careful on how we are communicating and relating to those who have submitted a proposal, who want to submit a proposal. My frustration was with the CRVA proposal, the public solution Mr. Chair. It should've been something though. To your point, when Tepper left, we knew we had to fill that 25 acres. So, this shouldn't be something we started last month. We knew about this decision over six months ago. So, I just want to make sure if it's 90-day timeline, let's stick to the 90-day timeline, not back here in August and we say, "Well, we need another six months because we feel pressured." I hope I have not shared that I am pressured, I've been talking about the process and make sure it's fair during the whole way and make sure that we're communicating with everyone.

You know, Tracy brought up a good point, and I think the community has approached us about when are we going to hear about the proposals. So, I think everyone has kind of taken it upon themselves not to wait on the City, but taken it upon themselves to go meet with Charlotte East, go meet with the District Rep. I think they've been waiting for that. So, for us to say now in the next 90 days, we're going to go out to the community, I think we heard loud and clear from Charlotte East and the East side what their desire is. I'm going to leave us with all of this. Ed, you were the Vice Chair of ED (Economic Development) when we first started this conversation. The objectives for the East side has never changed. When we looked at their plan, we came up with six different criteria they wanted to see.

Mr. Driggs said same ones now.

Mr. Mitchell said has never changed throughout the process. So, I just kind of get sideways when I hear people think there's a confusion. We want to make sure we give them the best thing, what they want. We're still trying to work through this. They told us really in 2014. Transformative, Neighborhood Services, the old history of Eastland. So, let's just make sure if we're going to do 90 days, can we get through the 90-day process and feel comfortable at the end of August, we can move on because I really think the longer we take and the idea that we're doing it right, I'm not sure the citizens look at it that way. Thank you, Mayor.

Mr. Graham said I think you're spot on Councilmember Mitchell. I just want to kind of push back a little bit on the community presentation. The City really never had an

opportunity to do any of that, even before we could even look at the applications of the proposals, we were reading about it in the newspaper or hearing from neighborhood associations before staff had any opportunity even to look at it, to score, to see if it was viable. With all due respect to all of the petitioners, you always put your best foot forward. So, I think the Council, the City would have done a better job of evaluating and communicating to the neighborhood leaders the pros, but also the cons in the way that Council would be looking at it. So, I wish it was a different type of scenario, not unsolicited proposals where there would've been more parameters around what the petitioners could do if it was really a request for a proposal. They wouldn't have been able to kind of show their bright spots and not communicate to the neighborhood leaders their warts.

Ms. Ajmera said I do see we have representatives here from Charlotte East. Greg is here. I just want to give you a shout out for all the work and continuous advocacy you have been doing. Carolyn, as long as I remember, she's been at this for almost a decade now. So, I often hear we've got to do this slow, and we've got to do this right. How slow? This has been over a decade. There's an opportunity cost to it. I hear some folks say, "I had my first job at Eastland Mall." Well, there is a generation of our youth that do not have the same opportunity that we have had over a decade ago. So, there is an opportunity cost that we are paying. Every passing day we are missing the opportunity to create a catalyst that we had promised.

Councilmember Johnson arrived at 5:49 p.m.

So, I appreciate that staff is going back to take a look at the timeline and provide some specificity in terms of our next steps, but there needs to be a sense of urgency here. I just can't say this enough that the East side has waited far too long, and to ask them to be more patient is just not acceptable. So, I really hope that at our next meeting when staff brings us forward with the next steps, specific timeline as to what we are going to do in 60 to 90 days, or whatever the timeline is, that we stick to that timeframe to deliver on what we had promised. Thank you.

Ms. Mayfield said it would be helpful since we, the Committee, and like Councilmember Mitchell, I was able to join in to sit in on the discussion. A little bit more information as far as what would a City investment look like. We're in our budget cycle. We already know that we have some limitations on funds. We have a lot of needs on funds before we even move forward. It was confusing to me that two new proposals were introduced and that they moved forward out of Committee to full Council to even discuss. One of those proposals, was the community connected with prior to that proposal coming? No, everything happened pretty quickly. If we're talking about government dollars, I feel like that's a much bigger conversation that full Council needs to be a part of. Not just a recommendation that comes out of Committee, especially right now with the budget constraints and with all the financial commitments that we have with our current partners that are in hospitality and tourism and a lot of the other financial expectations that we already have on our budget.

So, if that is going to be a real consideration along with the fact that there was no clear plan or proposal, it would really be helpful for me to know exactly what budget line item are we interested in creating because that's going to be a long term investment. There's not been a time where the City has contributed, and it was an in and out where our contribution didn't create a new line item for long term reinvestment for many projects. So, if that is going to be a conversation, I personally would like for that not to be part of the items, the three decisions that we're looking at making because I don't think that's fair because full Council has not had the opportunity to have a real conversation regarding what it could look like and the funding around it. Also, when we go back to the original, because Councilmember Mitchell I was right here alongside of you when we first started these conversations. Yes, a lot of the commitments have been checked off for what Eastland area and community identified as what they would like to see, also recognizing government has some limitations.

So, we can encourage some things, we can't mandate other things but these partners and those who want to invest in the community, there needs to be clear communication with the residents and the leaders of the community to make sure that we're getting the best effort. No, I do not agree for full transparency with government dollars paying 80 percent of anything of any type of investment. So, they need to do their due diligence on their funding and how they are getting the investors that they need, but I just think we need to be very careful when we're opening up the door and potentially setting a new precedent of how government plays a role in these conversations moving forward when we should step in. I really have a concern with CRVA because the head of that department has a goal and you were hired to bring in entertainment, bring in conferences, bringing things to the City, not getting into Economic Development. We have a lot of Economic Development partners out there. I want us to be very clear about what is expected from government and what the expectations are going to be for future Councils. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said alright. So, we look forward to having more definition as this comes forward in discussion for the full Council. Alright. So, our next report out is for Housing Safety and Community. Ms. Watlington is not here this evening, so her Vice Chair, Ms. Mayfield, will give the report.

Ms. Mayfield said before I get started, I do want to congratulate our colleague because on this Friday, May 12th UNC (University of North Carolina) Charlotte will be having their commencement ceremony, and I would assume starting next Monday we will be referring to our colleague as Dr. Watlington as she has finished her PhD in infrastructure and environmental systems. So, hopefully she is out celebrating all of the work that it took to get to this level. I'm going to give y'all a quick update of what we reviewed in the Committee, and I want to thank my colleagues who are also on the Committee and that would be Councilmember Anderson as well as Councilmember Johnson and Councilmember Bokhari.

So, the Committee received an update on A Home For All initiative and our key takeaways were that this was actually launched in 2021 with a focus on an integrated strategy to address homelessness and affordable housing challenges. The initiative was spearheaded by Mecklenburg County, Charlotte Center City Partners and business community partners such as Bank of America and Atrium. The City staff has been actively involved since the beginning in 2021. Last year the County did select the United Way to serve as the quarterback agency to lead the development in the implementation plan. On May 1st, the HSC (Housing Safety and Community) Committee received our update from United Way. The plan will focus on three areas: People directed care, i.e., better care coordination to support and track households facing homelessness or housing insecurity, two, prevention such as programs and investments to reduce housing insecurity, three, housing production such as scaled to construction preservation of all forms of housing affordability. The City and County have been asked to support near term funding needs to advance the initial priorities. There were some dollar amounts that we will be bringing to you later. Staff shared with HSC Committee that the City's near-term needs can be addressed through a range of existing available funds and requests reflected in our proposed Fiscal Year 2024 budget.

The next steps will be that the United Way will be releasing an executive summary of the implementation plan this month with full plan released by July. A potential policy and investment considerations related to A Home For All will be discussed at our Committee during the Fiscal Year 2024 leading into the Fiscal Year 2025 budget planning. Staff will work to ensure this effort is coordinated with other initiatives such as the NEST (Nuisance Enforcement Strategy) Commission and doing cross collaboration. What came out of Committee as far as a recommendation, the Committee discussed a Housing Trust Fund request for the Sycamore Station Project.

We all saw this project when we approved our funding, the \$26.2 million for a number of upcoming projects. A, the item was referred back to Committee during the April 24th action review for the Committee to discuss the project and whether the Council should vote on the funding request. The project is already at 99 percent completion with

construction. The value proposition hinges on the commitment of the developer to carve out 34 of the 168 total units immediately for residents at 30 percent or below the area median income. The Committee, by vote of three to one, I was the no vote on the Committee, recommended that the Committee funding request, that we bring it to full Council and that it potentially can be voted on at the next business meeting of May 22nd. I am going to also ask for my Committee colleagues if they would like to share concerns because I know both Ms. Johnson as well as Councilmember Bokhari had some concerns.

I have a challenge with not having a clear understanding of what potential precedent this would be setting by having a project that is 90 plus to 99 percent in completion and that may or may not have identified a financial shortfall and then coming to the City to say if we can get access to this funding, then what we will commit to is create housing at a reduced amount. I would like for as a Council or for it to come back to Committee for us to have further conversation of what potential precedent that could set and also I want to bring our partners to the table because I'm quite sure that there have been times that our partners were working on a project but because of the current system and the model of your funding request being at the front end since our public dollars are but/for. Would this cause any challenges to create an opportunity to fund this particular project? Have we had previous projects that may not have been funded because there wasn't a system or mechanism in place. I do want to give an opportunity for my colleague, either Councilmember Johnson or Councilmember Bokhari to share their thoughts.

Councilmember Johnson said so, I was one of the ones that supported the moving forward, bringing it to Council because I'm under the belief that if you keep doing the same thing and expect something different, we know what that's defined as. So, I don't see a problem with a transformative policy, and I did want to add one of the things that United Way, one word they used was disruptive. That the new mode is going to be disruptive for our housing and transformative. So, that person-centered, they're going to work with the continuum of care, but still develop a new model to address our homeless and underserved. As far as the Sycamore Station support, I'm in support of it. Is it different? Yes, but we've also in the recent months supported gap funding. So, I see it as a gap funding just at the end. I spoke to Shawn Heath about it. We do need to look at this as far as a policy and so it's clear that in the future, if developers need this, then this is an opportunity for us to leverage. They're bringing, I think it's 34 units of 30 percent AMI (Area Median Income) and the highest AMI is 60 percent. This is what we need. It meets a need. So, I think if we look at the outcome, then we should consider it. Did they go through the red tape and the process that's been designed in the past? No, but that's okay, it's serving our residents. So, I think as long as we are looking at this as a possibility and we do need to cross our I's and dot our T's and maybe make this a future policy, but I did not see a problem with meeting the needs of the residents that are so underserved.

I did have a question and I asked this question. I think I asked it to Shawn afterwards. Are these actual 30 percent units or are these 60 percent units and they're just going to allow residents who have a voucher to live in them? So, that's a question that I have. If they're actual 30 percent units or they're actually 60 percent units, and again, they're just allowing for the subsidy? That matters because the developer is not really, I don't want to say losing anything, but it matters to me in the finance. I'd like to know that answer. As far as supporting Sycamore Station, yes, I support anything that provides more housing for our lowest of lowest income.

Councilmember Anderson arrived at 6:03 p.m.

You all know I'm an advocate for folks with disability. There are citizens in our community who are making less than \$800 a month on SSI (Supplemental Security Income). There are citizens in our community who are on the pending disability claims for years and years and years waiting on social security. We have folks in the community who have zero income and still need housing. So, if this is an out of box way of providing housing, then we can change the box, we can change the lines. So, I'm

comfortable with it. I asked the questions during the meeting. Would this developer meet the eligibility requirements otherwise?

Ms. Mayfield said 20 percent.

Ms. Johnson said not just the 20 percent but financially are they fiscally strong and all of those. So, Shawn said that they've been vetted. So, it's not that. It's just the process in which they're asking for the gap financing. Again, a couple of months ago we approved gap financing. It was just before. So, I'm okay with it because of the numbers, and if it's a way that we can add more housing to the inventory, I think we should consider it. Thanks.

Ms. Mayfield said so, I also want to hear from my colleague, but I do want to share quickly. I do not support the idea of "at any cost" for the simple fact that you shared. Yes, we did approve gap financing. That was gap financing for projects that we had already approved. So, there's a different conversation of what model we have in place and identifying an additional need for those projects versus the potential of this project. One of the other challenges that I have, not only with this project, with all projects, is we have multiple partners out there that have waiting lists and those waiting lists are over 1,000 people strong. There is not mechanism in place and I've asked for this mechanism in the previous years that I've served and since I've been back to where we can capture, opposed to each individual multi-family having their own waiting list accepting multiple applications and application fees of which we had a partner within the last two years that received a lot more application fees than they had units and the impact of that. A lot of our local residents aren't necessarily the individuals that are getting into these new units.

So, the challenge is there is not a mechanism in place to do a minimum you need to have lived in the City of Charlotte a minimum of three to five years. So, that's a different conversation, but that's part of the research that needs to be done where if we were to open up the door. That's why I suggested that I support the idea of us getting more information, but the idea of "at any cost," no, because that cost always falls on us and on local government. That cost also turns into NOAHs (Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing) within a 20-year decade and we've already done that numerous times.

For this particular conversation, the Committee voted three to one. Full transparency, the reason why I was a no is the reason that I stated, but I will expect to hear from Shawn Heath and his team more information of what it could look like, but I need our partners to be at the table and be a part of that conversation versus us just making an arbitrary decision because this isn't a decision to me that's outside of the box. This is just another opportunity where you find a financial shortfall and, "Hey, government has some money." We don't have any clear parameters of what it could really look like and we don't get to put any new expectations on there.

Mr. Bokhari said yes, just so everyone knows how that vote happened in the conversation, I am now more holistically against continuing the status quo. Is affordable housing a crisis? Absolutely. I just feel like we're throwing a small handful of pebbles into the ocean of the problem, and while we continue to do it this way, we will delay really focusing in on finding a new solution. So, that's kind of where my head's at there on this specific deal, I think that's compounded where I agree with Ms. Mayfield in a lot of what she said where essentially we've used this fund in a way where staff said it themselves, this is viewed as one of the sweetheart pots of money in town. One of the bets to go after because what is unviable without it, certain developers have figured out ways to make some profits. Again, not the profits that others make in market rate deals but some profit is off of it and it is a finite amount that gets used up quickly. We have usually had a precedent of using this money in a way where people come to the table early on and it's partnership from there.

So, if we're going to open a door and allow a developer who, again without any inside knowledge, my guess is someone sat down, designed the whole thing, the market changed, their model changed, something happened and then now they're like, "I can

do better by going and committing this and getting that money, than I can there.” So, when the glass is half full, well we get what we theoretically wanted, glass is half empty, that money’s going to go real quick if that becomes an option going forward. So, I voted to get it out of Committee because one, I didn’t see any value in it staying there or languishing, and two, while I have that view that I just said, it could be a minority view and I just figured let’s vote it up here, I’m going to be a no vote on it, but at least we need to start putting these things to bed not letting them float out there forever.

Mr. Mitchell said Patrick, I just have a legal question because I think that’s what I have a big problem with this particular development. So, if we approve this one and then in May we don’t approve someone who may have the same scenario as this 90 percent, and don’t have the gap funding, and we turn that down, is there any legal ramification that can impact us and the developer say, “Well you did it in April and I’m asking for the same thing in May but you turned me down?” Where are we legally if we proceed with this?

Mr. Baker said based on that hypothetical, I’d say legally you don’t have an issue. You have more of an issue equitably if it appears that you’re not treating certain proposals in a similar fashion or pursuant to a policy, which is why we always try to focus on let’s get the policy there so you’re not winging it and putting yourself in a position to where your decisions could be criticized. Not so much from a legal perspective, but from an appearance perspective, where it looks like you might be favoring one over another. So, that’s again, absent other factors, I would say that your issue more is what’s your policy and is there is a guiding policy versus winging it and not being consistent.

Mr. Mitchell said Committee members you all had Shawn Heath there. So, we do not have a policy in place current right now?

Unknown said correct.

Mr. Mitchell said okay. I’m going to kind of agree with Councilmember Bokhari and Mayfield. I’m in the construction industry and we always do our best when the bid comes out. You have your finance in your order, your investor in order, you know how much the project costs and you do run into increasing construction prices, but I’ll tell you Council, I just worry about us going down a slippery slope that if someone gets 90 percent into their project and go, “Oh shucks, I don’t have any money.” “Well call the City and they can bail you out.” It just doesn’t sit well with me when you take our affordable housing development like Laurel Street, Crosland, all of them work hard on the front end in getting everything, all their capital and they forecast it and they try to do it right. I’m not saying Sycamore didn’t do this, but the problem I have, they’re almost 80 or 90 percent complete.

Unknown said 99.

Mr. Mitchell said to Councilmember Mayfield, if you ask our affordable developers if they could be 90 percent complete then come to the City, they’ll take that deal any day of the week to close the gap. So, I agree with Councilmember Johnson. It’s kind of that area we want to provide housing at 30 percent, 60 percent AMI, I just really struggle with this and what are we about to do in the future.

Councilmember Molina arrived at 6:12 p.m.

Ms. Mayfield said Mayor, the last piece that I would add is I did neglect when I was recognizing our Committee members, Councilmember Marjorie Molina who is also on the Housing Safety and Community Council Committee.

Ms. Ajmera said I appreciate the Committee taking a deeper dive into this. I agree with what some of Ms. Johnson said. Councilmember Johnson talked about how this serves a dire need that we have at AMI 30 percent and below and this will be available immediately. So, I think Mr. Driggs had talked about this at the dais, time value of money. So, as an economist I’m sure he can probably elaborate on that and probably

he will, but if you look at just the deal in an absolute fashion, this is a really good deal. It has lowest cost per unit from other deals that I have seen and it gets you the units right now because when we have residents asking us to connect them with affordable housing, we can say, "Here is the one," rather than telling them to wait two, three, four years and who knows, some of those deals never get fulfilled or they come back, forget financing. On the other hand, this is almost done. So, to me I look at it, what is the best use of our dollars? How can we get the most units from our \$50 million in affordable housing bond referendum? I look at the output here as Ms. Johnson talked about.

So, as far as the policy is concerned, we do need some sort of policy recommendation on this, but currently we don't have a policy. So, I don't see a reason why we would deny this request because it would be unfair to this developer who had proposed this because currently our policy guidance doesn't say that we do not fund this type of project. So, I will be supporting this, and I think this is a step forward in really addressing our affordable housing crisis. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said I had a question, but I want to make sure everyone has had an opportunity to speak. The question I had, I think Ms. Johnson, you raised a point of, are they counting under 30 percent or are they using vouchers for people that are under 30 percent that actually pay more than the 30 percent for rent? So, did you get an answer for that?

Ms. Johnson said no I did not. I asked when I spoke to Shawn subsequently. So, I didn't.

Mayor Lyles said there's Shawn. So, Shawn I hate to spring this on you, but I think it's one of those questions that these people using their vouchers?

Shawn Heath, Director of Housing & Neighborhood Services said so, these would all be 30 percent AMI eligible households and it's basically on a first come first serve basis. So, some may have vouchers some may not have vouchers. I reached out to a couple of other developers, some of our local partners and that's the same answer that I received from them as well.

Mr. Mitchell said Shawn, may I sir? Just a follow up. So, this company Sycamore Partners, did they come to you all prior to starting their development asking for funding?

Mr. Heath said no, this was not a request during the preconstruction phase. This was something that came to us once they'd already begun construction.

Ms. Johnson said so, just so I'm clear, there will be 20 percent of the units that they would accept Housing Choice Vouchers, right?

Mr. Heath said 20 percent of the units would be for 30 percent AMI households whether or not they have a voucher or not.

Ms. Johnson said so, the rent. Is the rent at a 30 percent AMI level?

Mr. Heath said so, the tenant contribution would not be influenced by whether they have a voucher or not. If they're a 30 percent AMI household, then that will dictate the amount of rent that they can pay.

Ms. Johnson said so, it's not just them making it market rent or 60 percent AMI rent and then them accepting the voucher just to subsidize that amount. They're actually providing 20 percent of their units at the 30 percent AMI rate.

Mr. Heath said yes. The household would pay the same regardless essentially, it's just a question of if they have a voucher, that would provide an incremental amount to the property owner.

Mayor Lyles said so, the voucher makes it?

Mr. Heath said yes, based on Inlivan's payment standards. Correct.

Ms. Johnson said no, he's saying that's not the case. You're saying if 30 percent AMI rent, let's say it's \$500 and 60 percent is \$1,000. The rent for those 20 percent of those units would be how much?

Mr. Heath said well it depends if it's a 30 percent household without a voucher, then they're really just providing their tenant contribution at let's say \$400. If it's a 30 percent household with a voucher, then in addition to providing their \$400 tenant contribution, let's just assume it's a Section 8 voucher, the Inlivan Housing Choice Voucher would provide \$600, ballpark-ish. So, then you've got about \$1,000 in total but the amount that the household is providing isn't any different between a voucher and a non-voucher scenario.

Ms. Johnson said right, but that's why that question matters because if they're accepting tenants in the 30 percent AMI who don't have this Section 8 voucher or HCV (Housing Choice Voucher) which most people do not, then that expands our housing inventory. That allows these units to house those tenants in that income range without the voucher and then other complexes that accept vouchers are open to other ones.

Mr. Heath said yes.

Ms. Johnson said so, that's why I ask. So, these are actually 30 percent AMI units?

Mr. Heath said yes.

Ms. Johnson said okay. So, I think that supports the case. There's the 30 percent AMI unit and the maximum of this complex is 60 percent AMI. We don't see that even with some of our affordable housing developers and the Trust Fund. Those range from 30 to 80 percent AMI. So, I think this really serves a target population where that 30,000 unit or whatever that number is right now or that deficit is. So, I think it's something that Council should consider and if we're going to develop policy, which is our job to do, then we could say a developer who comes in with no more than 60 percent AMI units would be eligible for this last-minute subsidy. Mr. Jones always has a great name for the project. So, some last-minute program, if they can meet the same standard, I think we should go for it.

Mayor Lyles said I wanted to ask the Chair. It came out of Committee with a recommendation. Is that vote to be on an agenda?

Mr. Bokhari said yes. You guys had a point of procedure. I was just going to ask the same thing which is I think we recommended the vote happens. So, whether you're for or against it, we're going to do that eventually, and probably have the same debate again.

Ms. Mayfield said Mayor, that's what I was getting ready to clarify, which I said at the very beginning. The recommendation that came out of Committee is for this to come to full Council on our next Business Meeting of May 22nd.

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, putting it on the agenda doesn't decide that you vote yes or no, it just means that you will have it on the agenda.

Marcus Jones, City Manager said okay. So, I want to make sure that I'm clear. I thought that one of the purposes of having these strategy meetings was that five people in a Committee may all vote for something, but six people can get something on an agenda. So, I'm hoping that they're six people tonight that want to move forward with this to put it on a future agenda.

Mayor Lyles said yes. So, we'll be doing a lot of that in our budget discussions next. So, we will need a vote today. Six to put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Ms. Mayfield said to see if there's six to move it to the May 22nd Council Business Meeting.

Straw vote by Mayor was made to put the Housing Trust Fund request for the Sycamore Station Project on the agenda for the May 22, 2023, Business Agenda.

The vote was taken and was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Johnson, and Molina.

NAYS: Councilmembers Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Mayfield, Mitchell, and Winston.

Ms. Johnson said I don't understand. The point of a Committee meeting, I thought everything that came from Committee was brought forward to this group and then we put things on the agenda for Council to discuss. I thought that was the Committee process. We haven't voted to move things from this meeting to the agenda any other time. So, what is this? I'm confused here.

Ms. Mayfield said that wasn't the recommendation. The recommendation was for it to go to full Council at the Business Meeting on May 22nd for Council to vote on it. So, Mr. Manager, that seemed like additional information that was added in this space for us to vote to move it forward because it seems like all of the previous Committee report outs, what we do in Committee, we bring to full Council, then full Council votes on it. You either get the six or you don't. So, the recommendation was to take it to the Business Meeting on May 22nd for full Council to have an opportunity to vote up or down. I didn't know we were voting up or down in here.

Mayor Lyles said we're not voting up or down on the issue except by not approving it to go forward, then that basically does that.

Ms. Mayfield said so, that's the challenge because that seems like that is out of order from previous discussions.

Mr. Jones said I would say typically something like this, you get the nods because five people on the Committee have said something then one additional person, it moves forward. So, it would be different if the majority of Council did not want to put something on the agenda and it just ended up on the agenda.

Ms. Johnson said so, then can we go over every item we've discussed in our Committee today and vote if six people want to move forward to the agenda?

Mayor Lyles said well nobody had an item to go on the agenda next. Then we can go ahead and vote on that as well.

Mr. Graham said so, I'm confused. I think these briefings are okay. I can live without them honestly and I think that if something is passed in Committee, it goes straight to the Council.

Mr. Jones said the straight to the Council has up until this point, been this body. This is coming before the Council for a discussion, but if six of you would like to just put it on the next agenda it goes on the next agenda.

Mr. Mitchell said the only thing I would say City Manager, and I've been an advocate, let the Committee do the work and I feel we kind of undermine the Committee here with this process. So, I, like Councilmember Graham, if the Committee votes for it and it goes on May 22nd, let's go to May 22nd. We all can exercise our right to vote. What I don't want is to feel that the Committee gets undermined when they come here in front of all of us.

Mr. Jones said I'll put it on the next agenda.

Mayor Lyles said it'll be on the next agenda, but I do want the City Attorney to always help us with what we really have written down as a procedure and what we don't.

Mr. Baker said yes.

Mayor Lyles said I mean it's fine to take a curve from that, but I just want to make sure.

Mr. Graham said are we curving?

Mayor Lyles said well that's what I'm asking the City Attorney to say Malcolm, that we have procedures. I was just confirming that with him.

Mr. Baker said so, just to be clear, I understand this is going to be on the May 22nd agenda.

Ms. Mayfield said May 22nd.

Mr. Baker said okay. I will, because I'd like some clarity as well on when things come here because technically this is a Council meeting right here and it's unusual if six of you don't want something to go forward then it goes forward anyway. There's a broader conversation because this is a little bit unusual in terms of how other matters have been taken care of, but we'll go on the 22nd and then I'll have some information for you.

Mayor Lyles said so, what I recall is that Council can put something on the agenda with six votes and this didn't get that. I think that's been the overarching part about it and that could be at a Council meeting like this one. So, Mr. Baker will help us out, but I do believe that's what the rules and procedures say if you made that. So, the Manager is going to put it on the agenda, we're going to clarify our procedures and we'll start working from that point. Okay.

Mr. Driggs said the unusual thing about this is the Committee voted to recommend it to full Council, that we put it on the agenda, they didn't vote on the issue, they just voted on whether or not it should go on the agenda and made a recommendation to full Council. That doesn't necessarily reflect an opinion by the Committee as to whether this thing should pass or not. To that extent, I think the question is to whether it rises to a full Council vote is acceptable because this isn't the same as the normal process where the Committee would've said, "Our recommendation is that this should be approved." It's a difference. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said alright. We're squared away on that. So, that is our last item.

Ms. Johnson said Mayor I have a question. Point of order. Since there was a vote for this not to move forward, I want to make sure we don't get an email after tonight's meeting to say, "Oh, since you all took a vote, we're not going to move it." So, can we clarify? Do we need to undo that vote, or can you tell us legally?

Mr. Baker said so, there's been a request of the Manager and the Manager has agreed to put it on the May 22nd agenda. So, you're good. You will not get an email from me on this matter.

Ms. Johnson said okay. Then second question. In April of 2021, I requested that we look at the fact that it takes six Council members to put something on the agenda and that went to the Government Committee, and it never came out of Committee. I know after 90 days the requestor can request that to go to full Council. So, I think that's something we should take a look at. I think our citizens would be surprised that their representative is not able to get an issue on the agenda unless there's six votes. It's kind of the vote before the vote which is what I said before. So, I did request that, and it went to the Governance Committee and never came out. So, I think that's something that I would like to request the Council to take a look at, that we take a look at that issue. How many Council members does it take to get something on the agenda?

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, with that, I don't know quite what to say. Maybe by the time we get a clarification on it, we'll know how to handle that request from Ms. Johnson.

Ms. Johnson said we've talked about it before. Isn't that the case, the rule that if something doesn't come out of Committee within 90 days that the requestor can request it to be on the agenda?

Mr. Baker said that is correct and I'll give you an email on that so that everyone's on the same page.

Mayor Lyles said so, we can do that. Okay. So, we're now going to move down to the chamber for the rest of our public hearing. Remember we're going to have over 20 people on the budget and we'll have two minutes, in fact, for all of our public hearings tonight, we'll go with two minutes. Alright, thank you.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 5: CLOSED SESSION (AS NECESSARY)

No closed session occurred.

* * * * *

The meeting was recessed at 6:29 p.m. to move to the Meeting Chamber for the regularly scheduled Business Meeting.

* * * * *

BUSINESS MEETING

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina reconvened for a Business Meeting on Monday, May 8, 2023, at 6:42 p.m. in the Meeting Chamber of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Dimple Ajmera, Danté Anderson, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, LaWana Mayfield, James Mitchell, Marjorie Molina, and Braxton Winston, II.

ABSENT: Councilmember Watlington.

Mayor Lyles said thank you for being here. Thank you especially for those of you who are present today for the Charlotte City Council Business Meeting for this date. I would like to say also welcome to our guests who are watching us on some virtual means, whether it's the City's channel or the City's Facebook page and particularly, we want to say we're really grateful for participation in our governance.

* * * * *

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Mayor Lyles gave the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

* * * * *

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Mayor Lyles said often in our community, we often talk about problems and challenges. Every now and again I think we ought to think about those things that we celebrate and make possible. So, I have just one today. I had a young man and his mom, his name is Jackson Robinson and his mom is Kristen. She came to see me because Jackson has an illness that's not curable. It's called Tuberosus sclerosis complex. It's TSC and it's the awareness month. There was a walk for those people that experience this really tough

disease this past week. It was for all the people in North and South Carolina. So, I wanted to make sure that you have a face, for someone like Jackson, and know that we stand with the children in this community that have difficult issues around illness, but more importantly I want to say that this is a community that cares. We're really grateful for the healthcare systems that we have. This isn't a curable disease, but it certainly is one that can be researched and hopefully have a solution. So, Jackson and to your family, we say to you we see you. We know that you're here and we hope that we find a way to make you better sooner than later. Thank you very much.

ITEM NO. 6: DRINKING WATER WEEK PROCLAMATION

Councilmember Winston read the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, water is one of the most valuable natural resources and one of the few basic and essential needs in our community; and

WHEREAS, our health, safety and quality of life depend on clean, high-quality drinking water; and

WHEREAS, the City of Charlotte has helped ensure that our communities have the facilities needed to provide our citizens with a clean, safe, and reliable supply of high-quality drinking water now and in the future; and

WHEREAS, dedicated Charlotte Water employees have made significant contributions in developing, operating, maintaining and protecting these systems and the waters that supply these systems; and

WHEREAS, the City of Charlotte declares that we are all stewards of the water infrastructure upon which current and future generations depend;

NOW, THEREFORE, she, Vi Alexander Lyles, Mayor of Charlotte, does hereby proclaim May 7–13, 2023 as

“DRINKING WATER WEEK”

in Charlotte and urge all citizens to protect their water, conserve and get involved in community decisions that affect water quality.

Mayor Lyles said I want to say to every one of you that's standing representing Charlotte Water, how proud we are that you choose to work with us. How proud we are that we can be able to say that we have a system that works and then how proud we are of the leadership and the people that come out every day to make a difference. I also see our Soil and Water Commissioner here, Barbara, thank you very much. I'd like to give this proclamation to Angela Charles who is the leader of this effort that makes it possible for all of us to have clean water in our homes and to be able to live in a City where we have that because we should not take it for granted.

PUBLIC HEARING

ITEM NO. 7: PUBLIC HEARING ON CHARLOTTE WATER REVENUE MANUAL REVISIONS

Mayor Lyles declared the hearing open.

There being no speakers either for or against, a motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Bokhari, and carried unanimously to close the public hearing.

ITEM NO. 8: PUBLIC HEARING ON A RESOLUTION TO CLOSE A PORTION OF PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY ADJACENT TO DUPREE STREET

Mayor Lyles declared the hearing open.

There being no speakers either for or against, a motion was made by Councilmember Mayfield, seconded by Councilmember Bokhari, and carried unanimously to (A) Close the public hearing and (B) Adopt a resolution and close a Portion of Public Right-of-Way Adjacent to Dupree Street.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 24-27.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 9: PUBLIC HEARING ON A RESOLUTION TO CLOSE A PORTION OF GREENSBORO STREET AND A PORTION OF RALEIGH STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY

Mayor Lyles declared the hearing open.

There being no speakers either for or against, a motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Bokhari, and carried unanimously to (A) Close the public hearing and (B) Adopt a resolution and close a Portion of Greensboro Street and a Portion of Raleigh Street Right-of-Way.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 28-32.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 10: PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2024 OPERATING BUDGET AND FISCAL YEARS 2024-2028 CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN

Mayor Lyles declared the hearing open.

Dominic Harris, 3016 Polk and White Road said alright. Thank y'all for having us here as always. I appreciate everything City Council does, everything Marcus Jones does and everything that we all do to make this City work. You know, it's a hard job, but we all wake up out of bed every morning and do it. I'd like to tell you a little bit about when I came to this City and just how much I came in the door making. It was \$13.14. I believe before my time, people came in making \$5, \$8, it was all over the place. I heard some things from Angela Charles about how much she was making when she came in and I think Marion Sanders has something up on the board in some office somewhere about how much he was making when he came in.

So, I just know that over the years, we've been steady getting little by little, chunk by chunk and then Mr. Jones came to the City, and that's when we started getting those big leaps and bounds. I think the biggest leap and bound was last year. I think this year, with all the restraints that he was given, that he did his best and for a lot of us workers, it was good. It's good. It makes us whole, it keeps us going, but there's a line that a lot of these workers still fall under. I think that the cost of living in Charlotte has gotten up between \$25 and \$26 an hour. That means there are still some City workers that are falling under that, that aren't able to provide themselves with everything that they should have to live in this City. So, for those workers, I just want to say that if there is something that we can do, we need to do it. We need to make sure that every City worker, the workers that you have the most responsibility over because you approved that budget for us.

Craig Brown, 7532 Double Springs Court said Madam Mayor, esteemed Council members, Mayor Pro Tem, Marcus Jones, my City Manager. Let's begin like this. I know I don't have much time. So, I'm going to try to keep it simple. In order to strengthen a foundation, you have to keep adding to it to strengthen that foundation. You can't slack

off and just let it go, because it'll crumble. Old adage, take a man and a woman fishing right, you feed them from that fish. Not long afterwards, after they get hungry again, they're going to come back and expect you to do the same thing, but what I want this wise Council to do, man or woman y'all take fishing, which is the City workers. What I want y'all to do for me, if y'all don't ever see me no more, take them fishing, give them the tools to fish with so they'll fish for a lifetime. Thank you.

Kevin Carr, 3309 Belsouth Drive, Belmont said yes. Good evening, Mayor, City Manager and Mayor Pro Tem and members of the Council. My name is Kevin Carr. I'm a Solid Waste Services worker and Shop Steward for UE150 (United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America). I'm here to speak on the fact that a lot of us are not making the same salaries as our competitors in private positions. I meet with them every day when I go to the dump to dump my truck at the compost center, and I speak to a lot of them. Our salaries are not up to par. They don't pick up as much as we pick up. They have limits on the amount of stuff they pick up, and we don't have any limits. We ask for 15 percent because the 3 and 3 percent, the 3 in July and the 3 in January, it only equates to 61 cents. I would like to thank the Second Harvest Food Bank for coming out for us, but if we had the salaries that we deserve, that we work so hard for, we wouldn't need it. We do appreciate it, that they came out for us. We have a solution. It's not what we asked for, but we'll settle for 12 percent which would be 6 in July and 6 in January '24. We know it's not what we asked for, but we will settle for that. It proves that we are willing to work with the City and all we ask is that you're able to work with us. Thank you.

Derrick Davis, 9303 Dewey Drive said yes ma'am. Three weeks ago, I had jury duty. When I went to do jury duty, they had us fill out forms and they put our names down and what we did for a living. I wrote down, "I work for the City of Charlotte. I work in utilities." I didn't think anything about it. They took us back in the back and I was one of the 12 and they asked everybody what they did. The different people from all different walks of life had all types of bachelor's degrees and master's degrees. I was the 10th juror. They asked me what did I do, and I said, "I'm a City worker for the City of Charlotte. I work in utilities." He said, "Well, what do you do? What department do you work in?" I said, "I work in Water." When I said I work in Water, a reverence came over the room that I didn't even expect. When I heard the proclamation, everyone said all these good things about water, but now when it comes to the percentage, we want that same respect because I looked at the budget proposal last week that the City Manager put forth. We get 3 and 3, meanwhile the officers, the new hire officers, they get 8 and it doesn't say anything about 4 and 4, they just get 8. Then the veteran officers get 10 percent on top of the step pay that we don't even have. We don't even have step pay. Then when I looked at how we were going to pay for all these increases, it was a slap in the face because they said they were going to raise the water rates and the sanitation rates. Now our Director has to come up with a way to explain these rates and the way that they explain these rates is by more work.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Davis, we have to be fair.

Mr. Davis said so, we're working to pay for raises that the police are getting, and I don't think that's fair.

Mayor Lyles said alright. Thank you very much. I know that there's a lot of passion and I appreciate it, but just help me get in the two minutes so that everybody can get a chance. If you help me do that, we'll work harder on this.

Rob Davis, 3636 Gricklade Drive said thank you first of all for allowing us this forum. I would just like to take my time to ask City Council to reflect on what was done last year and what segment of City workers will be left out this year if those numbers stay the same. There are still going to be people who tirelessly work for the City in hazardous conditions that will still have trouble with housing, they'll still have trouble with food, they'll still have trouble with fuel costs. So, we're asking that you reconsider that number, figure out a way to help us continue to serve the City that we love and that we are dedicated to working for. We are very grateful for last year, that's not a problem, that

goes without saying, but there is more that can be done to ensure that we can continue to keep our City clean. That's one reputation that Charlotte has and I heard that when I moved here 10 years ago. Charlotte is a clean City. Charlotte is a clean City because of the sanitation workers. The proclamation that was just discovered and mentioned, Water and Sewer Workers. We love doing our jobs. We're dedicated to doing our jobs, but what we're asking if that you reconsider the numbers for this budget, 2024, and help reflect the love and the joy that we take and the pride that we take in our work in that pay increase. Thank you.

Deddrick Davidson, 235 Kingville Drive said good evening, Mayor, City Manager and City Council members. I am here with UE150 City of Charlotte workers union. I'm a resident of Charlotte and a Solid Waste hourly employee. I feel like that 6 percent is not enough money to survive and support my household, and the increase is only 60 cents. Please tell me in these days in 2023 in the City of Charlotte where you can buy anything with 60 cent? The last time that you could purchase anything was back in the 1950s. Accounting for inflation, that same 60 cents from 1950 today would be the same as \$7.54. Do the right thing and give us hourly workers a chance to make it. With this 6 percent or 60 cents per year, we're still not going to be able to survive and help out with this ever-growing City and economy.

Kass Ottley, 1015 Mount Holly-Huntersville Road said good evening, Mayor, City Manager, Mayor Pro Tem and City Council members. We're here once again to talk about City workers. The City workers here in Charlotte are essential. If there is no water, the fire department can't put out a fire. If the roads are not safe and pothole free and all of that, the police can't get where they're trying to go. So, we all work together in this City to make this City beautiful. When I moved here 25 years ago, I moved here from New York and I love this City and I work hard with everyone in here to try to make Charlotte a better City, but we have to pay our City workers. We cannot talk about upward mobility, Corridors of Opportunity and no one being left behind when we're leaving 75 percent of our City workers behind. We have City workers that live in hotels. We have City workers that have lived in a hotel since last year and while we really appreciate the increases and everything that was done last year, they're so far behind that it would take several years like that just to have them break even.

So, we can't talk about the water and how important it is and all of these wonderful things if we don't respect these workers enough to pay them to live in the City that they work and love. I mean, it's sad. I see these men and women get off their trucks in the summertime, maybe some of y'all need to go over there. They can barely get off the trucks in this heat. They are out in all types of elements. Rain, snow, in water digging holes. I mean, their jobs are very hazardous, and we get up in the morning and we turn our shower and take a shower. We take these things for granted. It's not magic. These are the people that make that happen and we need to respect them and pay them so they can live and thrive in this City just like everyone else. Thank you.

Megan Fencil, 1100 South Mint Street, Suite 208 said alright. Good evening, my name is Meg Fencil and I'm the Director of Engagement Impact at Sustain Charlotte. Tonight, I would like to express support for the funding and the recommended budget to support numerous projects that will provide safe and equitable mobility, support more affordable housing, and reduce Charlotte's greenhouse gas emissions. A few we'd like to especially highlight are funding to continue construction on the Cross Charlotte Trail, money to plan, design and construct sidewalks, mobility investments in the Corridors of Opportunity, advancing the Bike Priority Network and advancing the City's Vision Zero Initiative to work towards the goal of ending traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Of the 130 cities with populations over 200,000, Charlotte is 6th from last on a walkability ranking.

As we prepare to implement the UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) in June, let's make sure we adopt a budget that aligns Charlotte's land use and transportation goals. It's also important to fund projects and staff that will help us achieve the Strategic Energy Action Plan goals and that includes investing in a net zero carbon City fleet of vehicles as soon as operationally feasible for each department. We're encouraged by

CATS' progress on the battery electric bus pilot and look forward to a full transition to BEBs (Battery Electric Bus) as soon as that is operationally feasible. We're also excited about Charlotte's very first all-electric fire station. It's also important that we maximize our return on investment. So, we're glad to see the quality-of-life team that will work to reduce illegal parking of vehicles in our bike lanes that we all know are so important to getting more people on bikes for recreation and commuting.

Finally, as we thank you for this budget, we also know that the CIP (Capital Investment Plan) and the regular annual budget process is not keeping pace with the mobility needs of our rapidly growing population. If we don't invest in our transportation choices, we'll need to double our road capacity. So, please continue to advocate for the local funding that we need to leverage State and Federal funding to build a transformational network.

June Blotnick, 2517 Belvedere Avenue said good evening, I'm June Blotnick and I'm the Coordinator of the GreenFaith Circle at the Unitarian Universalist Community of Charlotte, and I just want to thank you for your public service and leadership. I'm here to strongly request this City engage the business community in helping us meet the goals of the Strategic Energy Action Plan. I was very involved in the effort back in 2017 and 2018 and a development of the sustainable and resilient Charlotte by 2050 resolution and the SEAP (Strategic Energy Action Plan). It was an exciting time and the goals set in the resolution resulted in the City being chosen to be part of the Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge. The Sustainability staff has done a fantastic job since then given the resources they have available to them, but if the City is going to meet its initial goals by 2030, we desperately need the business community involvement.

At an early stakeholder meeting convened back then, by then Environment Committee Chair Councilmember Dimple Ajmera, I stressed the importance of getting the corporate community involved. I knew that nothing significant in this town happens unless we have that engagement of the business leaders. We have the most Fortune 500 and Fortune 1000 companies than any other city in the state. They're routinely called upon to help the City address critical community needs and I believe the current and impending threats of the global climate crisis are alarming enough to be considered a critical community need, particularly for residents living in the Corridors of Opportunity. It's past time to launch a campaign to list the business community support. I encourage each of you to visit the new exhibit Climates of Inequality and the Museum of the New South.

Margie Storch, 6925 Valley Haven Drive said hello. I'm Margie Storch representing GreenFaith of the Unitarian Universalist Community of Charlotte and the Poor People's Campaign-Southern Piedmont Chapter. We commend Council for adopting the Strategic Energy Action Plan's goals for 2030 and the Resilient Charlotte by 2050 resolution, but if we are serious about these goals, we must make funding our sustainability efforts a priority. We need to adequately fund the transformation of our policies, procedures and investments now to avoid climate chaos. We want our local governments to make full use of grants available through the Federal Inflation Reduction Act and we encourage increased resources in funding for Charlotte's Sustainability Department to apply for and implement these grants. The Inflation Reduction Act includes nearly \$370 billion for disadvantaged communities, prioritizing projects that repurpose retired fossil fuel infrastructure and employ displaced workers, creating a fair equitable and economic clean energy transition. These grants can help us make progress in environmental justice since at least 40 percent of IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) funds will be targeted to the most impacted underserved communities, less increased funding our Strategic Energy Action Plan to take advantage of this matching grant. Expanding the sustainability dashboard would help the public understand City goals and progress. I have seen the new dashboard showing energy use in City-owned buildings. Expanding the dashboard to show progress in three areas of buildings, energy generation and transportation would be helpful. The public needs easy to understand graphs of our progress in addition to the microdata needed by experts. I've included suggestions in my written comments. Thank you.

Mary Jo Klingel, 7514 Rolling Hill Road said my name is Mary Jo Klingel. I am a Clinical Social Worker in private practice in Charlotte. I am also a climate activist working primarily with a national organization called Quaker Earthcare Witness. I was present in the Council chambers of December of 2018 when the City Council adopted the SEAP and I watched the room just explode with joy and delight until Mayor Lyles gently suggested to us that we might want to sit down and let the Council get on with its work or perhaps we would be ready to leave the chamber. It looked like most of the people were heading out of the chamber. Out in the foyer, the happiness just exploded. People were laughing and hugging one another and clapping each other on the back and taking group pictures. I look back on that evening and I realize that the joy that we felt was because of the hope that we felt. Hope that we would create the City we love, to be a green and safe refuge for all of us. I came here tonight to speak to the urgency of adhering to the SEAP goals and timeline. Most of the climate experts I know are no longer referring to the dangers we face as climate change. They now speak of it as impending climate catastrophe. We have no time to step back from the SEAP goals. Please continue to recognize and fund and support the SEAP. You are now holding our hope. Thank you.

Zakee Cook, 10634 Waycross Drive, Huntersville, NC said okay. Good evening Honorable Mayor, City Council and City Manager. My name is Zakee Cook, Fire Department Pay Committee Chair. On behalf of the dedicated members of our department, the Pay Committee is specifically asking to not separate police and fire within the Public Safety Pay Plan structure. The main problem with the proposed structural separation is the challenge of maintaining pay parity between police and fire. Maintaining parity which is the state or condition of being equal has strategically united police and fire committee members who advocate for equitable pay and compensation for all public safety employees against market forces together.

Since 1994 the public system pay plan offers a systematic way to balance pay between police and fire. The proposed structural separation will unravel our joint efforts and subsequently force police and fire to compete against each other. We have never been separated before and the most pressing concern is that the proposed budget does not include a systematic plan for how we move forward. Additionally, under the current proposal, if you adjust fire fighter's starting pay to a 52-hour work week, our new hires will not make the minimum \$20 an hour threshold. The typical fire fighter works a 52 hour pay week or 2,808 hours a year versus 2,080 for a 40-hour week employee. At the current pay of \$49,102 that new fire fighter makes \$18.16 per hour. With the proposed changes in January 2024, with a starting pay of \$53,179 the hourly rate would be \$19.67. As an additional example, an employee that works 40 hours at the rate of \$20 per hour would make \$41,600 in base pay, and \$21,840 in overtime.

Timothy Bell, 1517 North Graham Street said good evening, Mayor, Council members. My name is Tim Bell. I've been on the Charlotte Fire Department and work for the City of Charlotte for 24 years. In his presentation, the Manager said that his budget proposal was a story, and he did tell a story but we're going to look at some of the details. He said the fire department has a 0 percent vacancy rate. That's not accurate. Currently we have over 20 short of our minimum staffing and if you go by the Management Partners Report, a study that this Council paid for, that number is actually over 80. This past Friday our Command Staff explicitly said that they did not give that number to the City staff. So, our question would be, "Where did that 0 percent vacancy number come from?" We were also told we don't have a recruitment or a retention issue. We've had a surge of retirements the last year and this is probably going to continue for the next year and a half or so, including myself, but we're looking also at recruitment problems. This isn't a shot at the recruitment division, this is just facts.

Twenty-five years ago, when I took the written test, I sat with other 3,000 people for 18 positions. This last test we had less than 400. The next part of the story to tack on here is our starting pay. The last five years, the City Council gets shown pictures of our steps with initially showing a 10 percent hire in our rates. This is the have a four-year degree incentive, which is not part of our job requirements to be hired. This is done intentionally to show that we are making more money than we actually are. Also our pay is not even

the highest in the state anymore, and actually it's not even highest in the County. We've had municipalities raise their starting rates and have lateral transfers with signing bonuses now that actually go above our salaries. Also, part of the story that's missing is the 20 city comparisons. We use to see that all the time. We don't see that this year. The question would be why not? We know why. When you put in Charlotte dollars, we are horribly behind the median, 18 percent behind the median.

Thomas Brewer, 2601 East 7th Street said good evening. My name is Tom Brewer and I have the President of the Charlotte Fire Fighters Association and tonight I will be focusing on the importance of addressing the pay of fire fighters in relation to the cost of living and the Public Safety Pay Plan. It has recently been proposed that other City employees will be receiving up to a 6 percent market adjustment to help offset inflation, while only a 2.25 percent cost of living increase has been proposed for fire fighters. This discrepancy in proposed cost of living adjustments is concerning as inflation affects all members of our society indiscriminately, including our City's fire fighters.

The fire department is currently facing staffing shortages in almost every sector of the organization. We have significant staffing shortages in operations, our communications center, inspections and plans review and training just to name a few. Fire fighters in Charlotte already work longer hours than any other City employee. They're scheduled to work over 700 hours more per year than a standard 40 hour a week employee. Additionally, due to the historic staffing shortages within the department, our fire fighters have been required to work an unprecedented amount of overtime over the past three years. During this time, they have sacrificed time with their families and been forced to prioritize duty over their own personal lives. Fire fighters are hired at 60 percent of the market and the step plan brings them to the market rate. Because of budget restrictions, fire fighters are forced to attend 26 days of unpaid training just so they can reach the market rate. No other employee in the City of Charlotte is required to do this. Fire fighters at specialty stations are also asked to train off duty to better themselves without compensation. No employee in the City of Charlotte should be subject to this. The Manager's proposed budget unfortunately does not reflect your fire fighter's commitment to this City and the department.

You as Charlotte City Council will have the duty to fix this and pass a budget that reflects your values. While platitudes and expressions of gratitude for the hard work and sacrifices made by our fire fighters are appreciated, they unfortunately do not pay bills or help offset the proposed increase in the City's health insurance premiums. We strongly urge City Council to take into consideration. Thank you for your time.

Karen Hodges, 2641 Palm Avenue said my name is Karen Hodges. I'm a Psychoanalyst with a private practice in Charlotte for the past 26 years. I'm here today because of my deep concern for the climate emergency. I believe that remaining in denial about this is the worst thing that we can do. Yet for years I've watched the government at all levels fail to rise to the occasion. It's as if we're choosing to give up without a fight. It seemed a giant step forward in 2018 when the City of Charlotte set goals for meeting the challenge of climate change. Municipal operations, carbon free by 2030, Charlotte as a low carbon City overall by 2050, these are clearly things that must happen in order to stop the runaway train of climate change. Now four years later it's devastating to the City on trajectory that will not get to those critical goals, and staying in denial about that is the worst thing we can do for the future of Charlotte. What does the City's budget for 2024 say about this? Not enough. Not enough. Anyone who's tried to budget for household expenses learns that nothing can come of vague lip service to nice outcomes. Specifics have to be written in, but it's not until page 320 that the budget gets around to some specific SEAP projects. All commendable, but as for reaching the City's goals by 2030, only seven years away now, it still speaks of plans for planning.

One specific thing that the City Council could plan for right away would be rooftop solar on the Convention Center. The technology for solar panels is very good and increasingly affordable. I know that because I have solar panels on the roof of my home. That project would pay for itself over time, and it would inspire and energize all of us.

John Rochester, 7514 Rolling Hill Road said okay. Thank you very much. My name is John Rochester, and rather than moaning, well we're looking at a four-fold increase in our electrical needs if we get away from diesel, gas, things like that. For the residential, it frequently doesn't work because you'd have to take all your trees down to make room for the solar panel light on your roof, but here's a possible solution. If you take our large commercial buildings, flat roof, built a lightweight aluminum table, perforated so it's low wind resistance about 10 feet in the air and mount your solar panels there, it can be as big as the roof. You could still repair the roof, you can still get to your air conditioners, you can put parked cars up there, you can repair the roof and we could have vastly more solar panels and there's no trees in the way. They're up in the air on top of shopping centers, car dealerships, warehouses. Vast increase in the solar panel area. I've got some conceptual drawings, I want nothing for myself, I'd just like to discuss them with a solar panel engineer public or private and see if it's worth following up on. Thank you so much.

Jerome Wagner, 110 Summerlake Drive SW, Concord said good evening and thank you for this opportunity to speak to you. My name is Jerome Wagner. I live in Concord, but I have connections with the City through my climate activism. I'm also the Convener of the SEAP Accountability Committee, which is part of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Climate Leaders. Tonight, I speak as an individual. The present budget has many things for which I'm thankful. Thanks to City Manager Jones, the Strategy and Budget Director Bergman and his staff and General Services Leadership and staff for running an accessible budget development process and for building in plenty of explicit visibility to the City's environmental sustainability goals and related expenditures. Thank you to City Manager Jones for including a new Special Assistant for Workforce Development Initiatives. Thanks to General Services Manager Reiger for identifying significant funds for planning and analysis in the sustainability arena. Thanks to CMPD (Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department) leadership and City staff for committing to a net zero police station for CMPD Northwest. Thanks to the whole team for sizeable financial allocations for battery electric buses and vehicles, hybrid police interceptors, mode shift transit options and additional HVAC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) technical staff.

Thanks finally to Councilwoman Ajmera for her ongoing championing of the City's sustainability efforts. My comments here are not meant in any way to disregard or dismiss the other valid comments that have been made here so far. I assert the sustainability investments being made by the City will pay off in the well-being and security of your children and grandchildren and becoming a go to destination for future minded professionals with your families, and then removing pollution sources and health impacts from the City's neighborhoods. Thank you very much.

Rory Pegram, 6000 Crosswind Court said okay. I want to say hello to everybody. My name is Rory Pegram. I work for Solid Waste and I'm a UE member, Chief Steward for Solid Waste and I just want y'all to see this picture right here. This is a picture of me last year when I spoke last year about struggling. I'm one of the ones they're talking about struggling working for the City. \$20 an hour, still living in a hotel. Everything went up. Everything. My hotel went up, my food went up, everything's gone up. I even had two heart surgeries. Now my medicine done went up. I only made \$45 extra off of that raise. That ain't going to take care of me. I'm struggling like crazy. I tired. I go to work every day hurt or not and I put it in, and we need to be compensated for what we do. I'm under bridges cleaning homeless tents, doing half of this work. Doing two and three jobs a day and then I go get my paycheck at night on Friday and I'm at home and I'm almost crying because I can't make it. I'm paying Peter to pay for Paul. Every week I'm playing a game with my money because I'm not making it, but I'm coming here. I work Uptown. My area is Uptown. So, when you look Uptown, and I know you see how clean Uptown is, I'm one of the ones that do that, and I take pride in that and I love my job, but I can't stand when I go home on Fridays when everybody's excited, I'm miserable because I got to figure out what I'm going to do to make it to Monday. Not even next week, Monday. Food, my car note, all that. I made \$495 last year. With the new raise, I made \$540. That's all, and I put in work. I work hard and we need to be compensated. People

tell me Uptown how beautiful Charlotte looks, but Marcus Jones, you got you a raise. We're taking care of you, and I know a lot of that raise has to do with how the City looks.

Motion was made by Councilmember Winston, seconded by Councilmember Driggs, and carried unanimously to close the public hearing.

Mayor Lyles said I want to thank all of you. When we get the document, we have lots of plans in advance. We try to work on what we believe are the priorities, but there's nothing like hearing people that read it and understand it and come down to tell us and share with us what they think is most important. So, thank you very much for being here tonight to do that.

* * * * *

POLICY

ITEM NO. 11: CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Marcus Jones, City Manager said before you, we have the 30-day memo, but I do want to just bring one thing to your attention. I'll start off with I guess some merchandising. Last week we had the GOVies and that is something where we celebrate all of our employees, and I really wanted to thank HR, Shelia, Paul, and everybody who put this together. I know it's much more than the two of you, but it was the largest attendance ever. Councilmember Mayfield came out. We had a chance to see some of our mascots with a dance off. It was just good to be able to celebrate with the employees and how much we appreciate all that they do. So, some folks had commented it's the best GOVies that they've ever participated in. We do have our employee of the year who is Nan Mann. I know think Nan's here tonight, but we'll make that at the appropriate time that we'll celebrate her too for all that she does, but that's what I had as a report.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 12: BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND CHARLOTTE BUSINESS INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESTRUCTURE

Motion was made by Councilmember Graham, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to (A) Approve the Jobs and Economic Development Committee's recommendation to change the structure of appointments to the existing 20-member Business Advisory Committee by the following actions: Reduce the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance appointments from five member seats to four member seats, Add a new Member Organization seat designated to the Carolinas LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce, and (B) Approve the Jobs and Economic Development Committee's recommendation to change the structure of appointments to the existing 16-member Charlotte Business Inclusion Advisory Committee by the following action: Add a new Member Organization seat designated to the Carolinas LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 13: AMENDING THE CITY CHARTER TO CHANGE THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Councilmember Ajmera said we will be deferring this item based on Committee's feedback.

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to defer this agenda item to a future meeting.
--

Patrick Baker, City Attorney said yes. So, you held a public hearing back in March and the statute gives you 60 days to do something. Either pass something or if you don't pass anything, then you would have to start the process over again if you so choose to have this reconsidered. So, you essentially have until Friday if you want to move forward with this, particularly for 2023 to make that determination by Council. If you don't make any determination whatsoever, then essentially you have to start all over again or don't come back to it. It's completely up to you all.

Councilmember Mayfield said Mr. Baker, for clarification, if from the Committee or the Council if there were to be a recommendation moving forward based on tonight's recommendation but an amendment to move this to 2024 because what I'm considering is currently what we have in community. We're looking at tax change, we're looking at school related changes, we're looking at other things that are also very important that will potentially be on the bond and that will be on referendum in November. Right now in here we had a start date. To move that start date to 2024 referendum versus the 2023, would that need to come back to start the process all over or is that something that we would be able to potentially discuss?

Mr. Baker said you would need to start that whole process over again.

Ms. Mayfield said that's what I need, clarification. Thank you.

Councilmember Johnson said yes, I'd like some elaboration on why we would have to start the process over again to amend the start date, and that was going to be my question. What are we deferring? The previous Council, we wanted to kind of wrap this up prior to the new Council starting because we were concerned that this could happen. So, I wanted to know if we're deferring it, when are we deferring it until? Then just if you can elaborate why it wouldn't simply be a substitute motion to change the start date or the date of the referendum and why we would have to start over, because this went through an outside Committee. I mean, there were steps to get to where we are.

Mr. Baker said great questions. Statutorily sets the guidelines. So, it is the statute that says that you have to have a Resolution of Intent which you publicize and then you have a public hearing on that Resolution of Intent and then if you so choose, you vote on that which is where you are today. Because neither your Resolution of Intent nor the public hearing wasn't discussed that you might do this in 2024, it was always going to be put as 2023, then that's basically the only thing that you can do at this stage. If you defer the matter at this stage, then you simply don't vote on it and you'd have to start the process over again. Making a substitute motion today to change something that hasn't been advertised to the community as required by the statute is going to be your problem, which is why you either do what's in front of you or if you defer it, then you'll be starting over.

Ms. Johnson said so, can I finish my question? Thank you. So, if we do make a substitute motion to change the start date, could that go to public hearing?

Mr. Baker said you'd be starting the process over again. If you're going to make any changes to what's in front of you, you have to start the process over again because you had to have a Resolution of Intent and a public hearing and any changes to that wouldn't have been considered at the public hearing and it would be inappropriate to make that change through a substitute motion.

Substitute motion was made by Councilmember Winston, and seconded by Councilmember Johnson to (A) Adopt an ordinance amending the City Charter to change the form of government by: 1. Changing the terms of office for the Mayor and Councilmembers from two years to four years, 2. Staggering the election terms, and 3. Adding an additional district member, and (B) Adopt an ordinance amending the City Charter to be effective only if approved by a vote of the people, and (C) Adopt a resolution to call a special election for the purpose of submitting the ordinance to a vote at the next general election, November 7, 2023.

Ms. Mayfield said Mayor, point of clarification. Right now, the only thing that's for us to vote on is whether or not we're going to defer. That addition that Mayor Pro Tem just mentioned, the Attorney can correct me, we automatically default back to the original motion if the motion to defer does not move forward.

Unknown said correct.

Mr. Baker said so, there was a motion to defer which is to not vote on this.

Ms. Mayfield said which is the conversation.

Mr. Baker said you have a substitute motion, which is to vote on it.

Ms. Mayfield said so, that's why I needed clarification. We don't need a substitute motion, we need to get through this first motion of either yay or nay to defer and then it automatically reverts back to the original motion.

Mr. Baker said no. If there's a motion to defer and you've got a substitute motion to basically not defer, then you would take it in the same order that you normally would with substitute motions.

Ms. Johnson said I do have a question. If this motion fails and we vote to defer, essentially, we'll have the same outcome because we'll have to start over anyway.

Councilmember Winston said we have a meeting on Thursday. We could put it on the agenda. If we don't do it by Thursday, then yes.

Ms. Johnson said then it starts over, yes. Okay. I just want to make that clear that if this motion doesn't pass then deferring it is essentially the same thing because we cannot defer beyond Friday, and it still be legitimate.

Mr. Baker said correct, without having to start all over again.

Mayor Lyles said I want to make sure because I want to make sure Ms. Johnson is correct. We have a meeting on Thursday, the substitute motion did not say put this on for Thursday.

Mr. Baker said correct.

Mayor Lyles said so, therefore there's no timeline for it. So, that would mean that it would not be eligible for Thursday. Would there be another substitute on a substitute?

Mr. Baker said no.

Ms. Johnson said no, but if we vote to move forward, we know that we're not going to get it on the agenda by Friday but that will meet the timeline if we've done something by Friday. Right?

Mr. Baker said yes, but you don't have to do anything by Friday. If you don't affirmatively pass this, then you will have to either start over or just don't bring it up again. If you want to move forward with these proposed changes, you need to do this by Friday.

Ms. Johnson said exactly. Okay, and we cannot extend the referendum date to 2024 without starting completely over. So, this vote is to put it on the 2023 referendum?

Mr. Baker said correct.

Councilmember Bokhari said can I have a point of clarification? What's the original motion? Was it to defer it to Thursday or defer it? To summarize then, you're either

going to vote yes now and if that fails, it's either going to be no or deferral or the exact same thing?

Councilmember Molina said I just have a question as well. Any type of modification would also make this null and void right? So, let's say for an example we would like to modify this in any type of way.

Mr. Baker said you are locked in with what has already been proposed, like the Resolution of Intent and the public hearing stage, correct.

Ms. Molina said now, I also want to make sure that I'm clear. So, I've said I sound redundant. You and I, we've had this conversation, we had it last month. I know where I stand, you know where I stand. If we were to exercise our ability to hold this conversation again, when and how can we do it and what would the timeline look like?

Mr. Baker said essentially it would be the same thing that we did before which is at some point in time there would be some discussion where it gets to a Committee again or what have you, but ultimately it gets back to Council to adopt a Resolution of Intent to make a change if you ever get to that stage. Then a public hearing, and then a vote on the Resolution of Intent.

Mayor Lyles said I just want to make sure with the Attorney, we have one final clarification. If the substitute motion is not approved, then we go back to the main motion which is to defer. What would happen if someone said, "I want to vote on it on Thursday," if that was another motion?

Mr. Baker said so, it would have to be added to the agenda. You'd have to go through that process and it's not on the agenda right now.

Mayor Lyles said the motion fails. So, it goes back to the main motion made by Ms. Ajmera to defer the item.

The vote was taken on the substitute motion and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Johnson, Mayfield, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Mitchell, and Molina.

Ms. Johnson said so, deferring until what date?

Mr. Baker said there was no date. It was to defer. Basically, a desire to not vote on it tonight.

Ms. Johnson said if we don't vote on it tonight, this motion is null and void essentially?

Mr. Baker said the original motion. You're not going to have a referendum in 2023, correct.

Ms. Johnson said right, in 2023. So, the Ad Hoc Committee that came up with this process, the public hearing, all of the whole process that the previous Council voting to move it forward, all of that work is behind us and void if we don't vote on it right now? If we don't move forward with what's on the table, we're deferring it until the 12th of never?

Mayor Lyles said well until you decide.

Mr. Baker said until a Council brings it back up. I wasn't expecting deferral, I was expecting a motion on what's in front of you, you've declined to go with that motion. So, you've got an odd thing here where you're not going forward anyway regardless of what happens with this vote, but there is an active motion on the table that needs to be voted on.

The vote was taken on the original motion to defer A, B, and C and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Graham, and Mitchell.

NAYS: Councilmembers Bokhari, Driggs, Johnson, Mayfield, Molina, and Winston.

Mayor Lyles said so if we have four, Mr. Attorney, the motion fails?

Mr. Baker said so, if this motion fails, then you do nothing.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 14: FISCAL YEAR 2024 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, and seconded by Councilmember Bokhari to Adopt the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Action Plan for Housing and Community Development.

Willis Draughn Jr., 1610 Ashley Road said how y'all doing? Alright. My name is Willis Draughn, I go by Big Red. Right now, I want to just speak on as far as I have a land ownership, me and my partners at 1726 Alleghany. We're talking about housing, and you know it's one of the issues in our City, definitely from homeless and talking about our youth transitioning out of these group homes and then we're having a lot of problems with these young youth. So, I just wanted to discuss just that piece for a moment. You know, we have a proposal that we'd like to submit with a short-term transitional housing and start developing our community to know about housing credit and also entrepreneurship.

So, our organization is an organization that it's just not us, we have partners. So, we have trusted partners that bring us together and I see that. Also, with housing and community development, I really don't know exactly whether you guys deal with any crisis situations, but you know that's a part of funding when we do have obviously crisis that will happen, whether it's flood, fires, or anything that may happen with a crisis. You know, we are an organization that actually put the groundwork into our community. Right now, again, speaking about the Magnolia Crisis situation, these are still part of housing conversations. I submitted an invoice to the City for \$193,575 and that's for the work that we put in and still continue to put in for the last 90 days. My infrastructure runs deep. Our partnerships run deep, and again I want to do fair business with my City, and I'd like for my City to do fair business with our community. I am a vendor of Charlotte, and again I've been asking over and over to really sit down and have a business conversation.

Councilmember Mitchell said Shawn, it's not a question. It's actually an apology to you. Shawn, I think it might've been the last business meeting, we were talking about appropriating \$20 million to some affordable housing projects and I graced a question about CBI (Charlotte Business INClusion) aspiration, and you mentioned there's a sliding scale. So, I got corrected through your memo. So, thank you for letting me know it's a sliding scale. I would still like for us though to see can we adjust our CBI goals to be more a part of affordable housing construction. So, apologize sir, but thank you for informing me that I was wrong.

Shawn Heath, Director of Housing & Neighborhood Services said thank you. Steve Coker and I have actually already had a conversation on that very point.

The vote was taken on the motion and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, and Winston.

May 8, 2023
Business Meeting
Minute Book 157C, Page 164

NAYS: Councilmember Bokhari.

Mayor Lyles said so, with that I believe Mr. Jones we will see everyone again on Thursday for the Budget Workshop. I think there's a shorter form here if you want to take that to read.

* * * * *

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.


Billie Tynes, Deputy City Clerk

Length of Meeting: 2 Hours, 31 Minutes
Minutes Completed: May 30, 2024