

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for a Budget Workshop on Wednesday, May 19, 2021, at 1:05 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Dimple Ajmera, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Larken Egleston, Julie Eiselt, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Greg Phipps, and Braxton Winston II.

ABSENT UNTIL NOTED: Councilmembers Matt Newton and Victoria Watlington.

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Mayor Lyles said this is one of the times when we actually begin to work on one of the most important initiatives that we have and responsibilities that we have as a City Council, which is to review the Manager's recommended budget and to make decisions on any potential adjustments that we would like to see and this is our first meeting. Today's meeting is a virtual meeting in accordance with the electronic meeting stats, meaning that notice, access, and minutes are being met electronically. I hope others are watching this meeting on our Government Channel, the City's Facebook Page, or the City's YouTube Page. I just want to let the Council know that Mr. Newton will be late for the meeting, he had a prior engagement that he was not able to change.

The purpose and intent of this meeting is to discuss any possible potential amendment or adjustment to the Manager's recommended proposed 2022 budget by Councilmembers as well as myself. We held the Budget Public Hearing on Monday, May 10th and the feedback that we got from the community was basically in support for increased funding for what I call infrastructure, sidewalks, bike lanes, and especially safety on our streets. Additional considerations are for employee pay and benefits and more consideration around arts and culture. Everyone has had this budget for several days, and we've had time to read through it and today is the time that we begin to ask questions and formulate any changes that we want to make.

We will recognize each Councilmember and you will be able to comment on the budget overall, I think that works pretty well so that everybody has an opportunity to talk. Then at the end of your comments if you have any suggestions for amendments or adjustments to it. After all of the Councilmembers have been recognized, our usual practice has been that if there are five votes for any proposed change that it moves forward for the staff to actually do more analysis of the costs, the considerations, the consequences of the proposed change. Then at our next meeting on May 26th at noon, Council will review, and they will have the information in advance and then the Council as a whole would review and vote on an adjustment that would be included in the proposed budget.

Mr. Newton called and asked me, I think he sent a note saying table the arts discussion, but I told him we don't table things, he would have the opportunity to comment and make changes or suggestions around it. I think he was wanting to make sure that we had that discussion; he is going to try to be here by 2:00 and hopefully we can do that. I think he would like to have those community meetings that are being set up before he makes any ideas about change. With that, I will turn it over to the City Manager.

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ITEM NO. 2: DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PROPOSED FY2022 BUDGET.

Marcus Jones, City Manager said as we go through today's budget adjustments I just wanted to make sure the Council was aware of what we typically call an undesignated reserve which is available for these deliberations. Last year we had about \$71,000 that was in this undesignated reserve, in other words, the budget that we presented to you, which is your budget now, was structurally balanced both in FY2022 and FY2023. I believe we were able to listen to your priorities and build the budget based on that. As we go through budget adjustments some years are more difficult than others. One of the things that I think it is important to talk about is the undesignated reserve because if there are some changes that fall within that, it would be easier to make those types of

adjustments. I'm not suggesting that you spend it, okay, I'm just saying that it is there. If there are some changes that are significantly more than that, that is where it becomes difficult for the staff to come back within a week to present to you another balanced budget. Typically, there has been conversations about if there is something significant in terms of costs there is an opportunity to take something out that is equal to that. Mayor, as we get started, I just wanted to use last year as an example as we roll into this year because sometimes it gets a little contentious as we discuss big changes to the budget.

Mayor Lyles said I'm going to see if I can restate this; what you are saying is that we have the fund balance that if we choose to use that, it is appropriate for one-time use, but anything that requires to roll over this budget is built in a way that you can balance it in the next fiscal year, and the next fiscal year considering both our operating and capital outlay and that anything that requires multiple years of funding would be very difficult without, and I will say this in my words, reducing something in the existing budget that would play into the next several years. So, one-time adjustments, reasonable are more appropriate, but anything else requires actual change for the reoccurring expense.

I want to recognize Councilmember Eiselt, not because I'm asking her to go first, but I just want to make sure that everybody knows that Ms. Eiselt has a daughter Kate who is graduating from UVA and we are really excited to hear that. We don't recognize often enough the adjustments that our families have to make. Mr. Winston had a graduation this week; Ms. Eiselt has one this weekend and we are just really glad that you have time to invest in your family time and enjoy graduation in Charlottesville. Where is she going?

Councilmember Eiselt said moving to New York City.

Mayor Lyles said I'm going to be Kate next. Congratulations Kate, your mom is going to take a clip of this and put it on your website and embarrass you.

Alright, let's start with Mr. Phipps.

Councilmember Phipps said I had an opportunity to read through the budget and its many pages and I had an opportunity to also sit in on one of the small group budget work sessions and presented several questions, all of which I included in this 30 some page document that we received. They were general informational questions; I don't really have anything in particular of a significant change to the budget. I think it is a well-thought-out developed budget and I applaud the budget staff for listening to Council and getting certain directions and priorities that we wanted to see in the budget.

In a prior budget session, I think it was back in 2017 or maybe 2015, I approached my colleagues about a special project that was happening in District 4 with an old school building. It was one of the Salone Schools; there were many Salone Schools throughout the South as a result of segregated educational practices, but we have such a building over in District 4 and the plan is that they want to move this building to the Charlotte History Museum. The building is in pretty bad shape, but the bones are pretty good, and it represents a significant chapter in the history of African American education. There have been many prominent graduates and alumni of Salone Schools over the years, and we initially donated \$50,000 back in 2015 and we were probably one of the first municipalities to embark on that fundraising drive. The Mayor and Councilmember Egleston and I went out on a cold morning and presented a check for \$50,000 that morning and since then the County Commissioners have gotten involved. They donated \$100,000 and I think in this year's budget they have allocated \$15,000 as part of it, but the group has gotten additional sponsors, Bank of American and other sponsors. I hadn't brought this up, just returning to Council to be able to discuss it at length with my colleagues, but I'm just throwing out there if there is some mercy that could be shown through the use of the discretionary fund I was wondering if it would be appropriate if we could donate at least another \$10,000 to this effort to try to move this building. UNC-Charlotte students have developed a curriculum plan or study once the building is moved to be used for a community space as well as education. So I through that out as a consideration, a small amount of \$10,000 that I would like to see, but apart from that, I think that the budget captures many of the things and takes many of the actions and follows through on its

financial tenants to come with a balanced and structurally integrity budget, so apart from that I don't have any significant other matters from which to try to make any changes to the budget at this time. I am at the mercy of my colleagues in consideration of that small amount and that is it for me for right now.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much. It is up on the wall and we will be coming back to that. We will go to the other side of the room, Mr. Bokhari.

Councilmember Bokhari said are you looking for our items to add to the straw poll right now?

Mayor Lyles said I was asking for your general comments and adding your items at the end of your general comments. I should have said you can delete something too.

Mr. Bokhari said general comments, by in large, once again all of the staff, particularly Ryan and your whole team and the Finance Department, the CFO Kelly again great work doing all of this amid these tough times without a tax increase. Very substantial work and I think with a full stop after it needs to be stated, you guys nearly pulled off what a lot of cities in our position would consider the impossible, so thank you all so much for that amazing work. Charlotte is in the position it is in for the future right now because of your physical stewardship and sophistication, so that goes without saying.

I have two items to add to the straw poll that I would like to vote on. I will e-mail this over to whomever needs it so you don't have to write it word for word, but I will read them. Augment the provision in the budget to provide \$890,000 to expand the road to hire pathways to instead call for an RFP (Request For Proposal) and diligence process by the City Workforce Development Department to help underrepresented students gain access to workforce training and employment opportunities so that all organizations across the City have an opportunity to bid and maximize the outcomes of this investment and its impact on the Corridors of Opportunity. The results of this RFP process would be presented to Council per our standard process for approval in our Consent Agenda when ready, given its side and magnitude. As a side note, my organization, the Carolina Fin-Tech Hub will self-opt out of this RFP for the sake of transparency. The second item is a lot shorter and simpler than that which is to remove the provisions for Council/Mayor raises in this budget. Who do I need to send this to?

Mayor Lyles said if you would send it to Ms. Harris or Ms. Jackson.

Councilmember Driggs said I want to repeat my acknowledgment of the excellent effort of the staff in the preparation of this budget. I think it is a good budget; I intend to support it, but also as I have noted in the excellent presentation so, Ryan, Kelly, and Mr. Manager, you too great job. Thank you. As Mr. Bokhari noted no tax increase, we are able to increase minimum salary levels. We are doing our bid along with the prior increases in hourly wages to address the lower-income level and the income gaps, and I think the City wants to send out a message by doing that as well as taking care of our employees, so I applaud that. On behalf of District 7, I appreciate the investment in roads; I hope we are going to continue with Bryant Farms. I was very appreciative of the increase from the initial proposal in funding for sidewalks. I hope we will see some of that in my District, but I do believe that is a critical priority and I was glad to see that elevated.

I will repeat as I have noted before that I have some concern about our continuing commitment of 25% of our capital capacity to our one priority which is housing. The 2040 Plan is going to require a lot of infrastructure investment of all kinds and at some point, I just have to believe that we are going to have to reprioritize a little bit and start recognizing other needs that we should be investing in now in order to allow the 2040 Plan to unfold as it is intended to do. The other thing I have noted before is that I believe this budget does create an outlook for stability after the infusion of federal funds that we've been receiving, but the truth is that we have had a relative abundance of funds because of the federal support from COVID (mild to severe respiratory infection caused by the coronavirus) that will last through next year, but we have to position ourselves in such a way as to live within our means when that funding is over. I look forward to hearing other

Councilmember's proposals, but I don't actually personally have any suggestions in terms of changing this budget. I like it the way it is.

Mayor Lyles said that is because as Chair of the Budget Committee you've already put all of the ideas that you had in there. I just want everybody to know, but I actually do believe that this is a testament to your leadership of the Budget Committee so thanks to you very much for that. Our next person to comment is Mr. Winston.

Councilmember Winston said I am excited about this budget Mr. Jones and Mr. Bergman, not just because I think you guys did a good job with where we are, but I think we should also reiterate for the record this is kind of the first time that you have the full budget to yourself the way our five-year capital investment plans work and the ability to kind of put your plan and your DNA directly in that mid-term kind of runway that our year to year budgets actually do, so I'm excited for you and for us to be able to continue to change our organization in this way, so I'm excited to where it goes.

A couple of things I think I would like us to consider if we are able to add, and I know with our conversation that was said this morning there is a difference between a one year and a multi-year effect on a budget so both of these things that I'm going to suggest, I think we could look at it in a one-year space, but it could also be looked at as a multi-year thing. If we get the votes I would love to hear the context of the response that you guys give. I would like us to consider a shift differential for employees that work at night, second and third shifts, and on the weekend. I think we had your response you are working off of a dollar increase. I don't know if it has to be a dollar, especially again, this is one year versus multi-year approach, but I would like to look at that from a total employee perspective. It doesn't have to be a dollar as it said in here like I said for the first year especially, but if there is something we can do in year one and then look at something multi-year I would definitely like to consider that. I don't know what that costs are going to be because it would be in a range depending on what that shift differential is.

I would also like to explore, some of this could be seen as policy-based, but it would have a budgetary component to it and effect on it if we required all law enforcement, whether it be people that we hire for law enforcement or people that we contract for our law enforcement needs, they are required to go through the full CMPD (Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department) Training Academy for context from our colleagues and folks out there. When we hire lateral transfers, they are not required to complete the entire CMPD Academy. There is a portion of it that they have to do, but I think to indoctrinate people into the culture that we are trying to create here, I think that is important for lateral transfers and we also contract certain law enforcement to accompany or special police i.e. G4S on our CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System) line and they have fully protected law enforcement officers under North Carolina State Law, but instead of following our policies and guidelines, they follow the business model of the contractor that they work for. They don't have to go through our training, they are not necessarily governed by our City policies. I can't change that, that is state law, but we can say require again anybody that we hire or contract with they need to go through that CMDP training. Like I said whether that is one year or multi-year that would obviously have a budgetary impact. I don't know what that is right now, but I would like for us to consider that.

Councilmember Eiselt said I thought we were going to stick to things that are adds or deletes from this budget. I wouldn't want to vote against something that I think is a great idea, but if you can't do it as an add or delete for this budget I just want to say that I thought this was what this was going to be.

First of all, I agree with what my colleagues have said, the budget is great. It really is astounding what you did with what was going to be potentially a really bad year and has been for some cities, so thank you to our Budget Chair and the budget team in particular for your hard work.

I don't have specific dollar amounts, but I did note that we went down in our down payment assistance loans that we are providing. I think with all the discussion on the Comprehensive Vision Plan and we talk about that we have a desire to increase

homeownership, then we have to put our money where our mouth is. I would like to see a number that we can use with some of that leftover budget that we could actually increase down payment assistance to individuals to encourage homeownership. That would be one and another one, and maybe this is more of a recovery act issue, but now that we are switching to paper bags instead of plastic bags, which I fully applaud, I think it is a great move. Is there a way to even offer some subsidized or give away of bins to individuals that maybe can't afford the paper bags or whatever, but people could get a bin that you drag out to the sidewalk for your lawn clippings? That should fit more into our SEAP (Strategic Energy Action Plan) goals as well.

That is really it, I do have a comment that is just philosophical on transit, but I get to that later, that is not an add or delete.

Mayor Lyles said you are welcome to do all of your comments now.

Ms. Eiselt said okay, my comment on that would be, it is not an add or a delete, but I hope that on day one of the next year's budget we will really have a conversation about increasing money for our bus system. We heard this two cycles ago, what John Lewis told us it would be at the time \$35 million in operating funding and probably \$100 million in capital to cut our headways in time. That is really a big component of what makes our City affordable, whereas we are actually at our national average for housing, even though we feel it is expensive. We are seven points over the national average in the cost of transportation compared to our peer cities. At some point we are going to recognize we can't build our way out of the affordable housing crisis, but if you can get people back and forth to towns outside of our city perimeter that is affordable housing too if they can get back and forth efficiently and economically and on a timely basis. So, I just hope that the next conversation starts with what can we do with our bus system.

Councilmember Egleston said I echo what all of my colleagues have said, really good job on the budget. I think we've done right by our citizens both in maintaining the level of service that we deliver to them by making sure that the third year in a row are not proposing a raise in property taxes. I'm really excited about that. I think we've done right by our employees who have helped us continue to deliver that high quality of service to our citizens so I'm very happy with the budget overall.

The one thing that I will add to our list that we've got going here is something that I added and appreciated the support of a majority of Council on last year, which is funding for the Historic Landmarks Commission's revolving fund. If you will indulge me for about two minutes I'm going to read to you quickly the recap that I received from Jack Thompson who is the Executive Director of the Historic Landmarks Commission on what good work they were able to do with the funding from last year. Last year was \$35,000 and with this in mind that I'm about to share with you in terms of the results of that money, I would propose that we double that this year to \$70,000.

Charlotte and Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission is thankful for the recent funding from the Charlotte City Council in the amount of \$35,000. These funds have been directed for the purpose of special projects, specifically, these funds have facilitated the following: enhancing the work of the previously completed Beatties Ford Road Corridor Survey Study to identify key properties for the purposes of future designation as local landmarks. Several sites including the McDonald's Cafeteria on Beatties Ford Road and LaSalle Street are now underway with the designation. McDonald's Cafeteria, a long-cherished gathering place for cultural and political activity within the African American Community is under redevelopment and will continue to be recognized as an important place as a landmark. The traditional focus of areas identified within the initial survey of the Beatties Ford Road Corridor Study are now being analyzed for future preservation initiatives. These areas include Lincoln Heights, University Park, and Washington Heights. The funding from the Charlotte City Council has been directed by the Board of County Commissioners' action for specific purposes. Revenue in the amount of \$35,000 was received from the City of Charlotte to support efforts to preserve historical properties associated with the African American Community. The Landmarks Commission will direct funds approved by the Charlotte City Council to preservation efforts of historic resources

associated with the African American Community within the jurisdiction of the City of Charlotte. These efforts would include research and designation of architecturally and historically important sites as local historic landmarks and educational programming of these significant sites. The funds will be leveraged for but not limited to expand the recent survey of the Beatties Ford Road Corridor. We are proud to provide this update and greatly appreciate the support for these special projects from the Charlotte City Council.

I think that demonstrates that this can actually be complimentary to funds that we have designated and put towards efforts in these Corridors of Opportunity. I think they did a great job of making sure that these funds were specifically targeted for that Beatties Ford Road Corridor, we are starting to see lots of public and private investment in that corridor and others. As we focus on breathing new life back into some of the areas that have been disinvested for so long, so with all of that investment and with all of the progress and good work we will see pressure on some of the things that makes these corridors special like McDonald's Cafeteria, like the Excelsior Club. These are things that are structural cornerstones of those communities and I think it is critically important and time-sensitive that we continue to invest in their preservation long-term. With this \$70,000 I think we could charge the Landmarks Commission with continuing that work in the Beatties Ford Road Corridor, but also identifying landmarks that could be under threat in the other Corridors of Opportunity where we are investing all these dollars and I hope my colleagues will support me in that. I think it is very additive and very complimentary to that Corridors of Opportunity work that the City has done such a great job with over the last year or two. That is my only add.

Mayor Lyles said so is it \$70,000 or half?

Mr. Egleston said I'm proposing doubling the \$35,000 that we allocated in the budget last year to \$70,000 this year.

Ms. Eiselt said is there nothing in the proposed budget so, it is a net increase of \$70,000?

Mr. Egleston said the same conversation was had earlier which is with last year the \$35,000 that we put forward for this was in the undesignated balance, so it was put forward as a one-time thing per that same request that was made of us today.

Mr. Driggs said Mayor, I have a comment about that, but if you want to finish the round and then come back to comment I'm okay with that.

Mayor Lyles said we are going to have a chance to discuss everything that is up here.

Councilmember Johnson said I would like to mirror what my colleagues have said that the staff and Marcus have done a fabulous job with this budget in light of COVID and the pandemic and all that we've gone through this past year. It is amazing that we are able to have a budget that is in the black and be able to provide services, so great job. It is an honor to serve the City with such a qualified and committed staff.

The only thing that I would add is if we can be intentional and deliberate about housing and neighborhood services. If that is increasing the budget for them I would leave that up to the Budget Team and Marcus, but I do believe that we need to be very intentional on the anti-displacement such as increasing the down payment assistance like Ms. Eiselt stated, but not just the down payment assistance. First-time buyers may have an FHA (Federal Housing Administration) loan or VA loan or some type of loan that has limited down payment so these buyers are not competitive with other buyers in even getting the contract because other buyers are able to put down \$10,000, \$20,000 earnest money in the due diligence, so if there is some type of fund where we could help buyers be competitive in the housing market. That would be the down payment assistance but also the costs of purchase, that type of supplement if we could take a look at that. Also, tax abatement for owner-occupants to stay in their home, a low-interest loan for remodeling. So, just increasing the anti-displacement and also the subsidy or assistance for purchasing homes, I think that would really help in the transition of the neighborhood. It would allow individuals who want to purchase their homes to be able to purchase their

homes and also for residents who are there to be able to maintain. Other than that, great job.

Councilmember Watlington arrived at 1:11 p.m.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Johnson, I want to make sure; the down payment assistance, tax abatement for homeownership, the program that we have now, and increased rehab assistance for occupied homes. Did we have one more, I thought there was a fourth. I want to make sure we captured all of them.

Ms. Johnson said low-interest loans to remodel homes so it would be in that anti-displacement.

Mayor Lyles said the critical rehab program that we do, look at that. I know Habitat does workforce as critical rehab.

Ms. Johnson said it is helping individuals maintain their homes. Tax abatement, we are already doing that, but if we are able to increase that amount so there aren't the various income limits or the age barrier or the are a requirement, but just really focus on that program and being able to help individuals stay in their home, especially in the wake of Monday's straw votes. If that plan would pass I really want to help individuals combat gentrification.

Councilmember Watlington said I have a couple of things, but first I think the City Manager got an update on the Gantt Center for our operating budget changes. I just wanted to hear the status update on that.

Mayor Lyles said did you ask a question; we need you to lean in on the mic again.

Ms. Watlington said I was asking for the City Manager to speak to any status update regarding the Gantt Center.

Mayor Lyles said I think we are going to have a discussion; Mr. Newton asked if we could talk about the arts and culture plan once he joins us and he is going to join us in a few minutes I believe. If we could defer that until then we will come back, the Manager is going to do that in detail.

Ms. Watlington said in lieu of that I will wait to put that on there, but that is an item of mine. To piggyback off some of the discussion that has been talked about in regard to homeownership, I don't know if this is a budget adjustment or if this is already included or there are some flexibility in the existing housing dollars, but essentially this is an inquiry for an investigation to come back with feasibility grade numbers in regard to an estate planning outreach specifically to older homeowners. I would like to see what it would take to plan outreach in targeted neighborhoods to educate senior homeowners on their options in regard to their estate. I would also like to see what it would cost the City to facilitate an owner/occupier buyer and seller match program. I would like to connect people who want to purchase homes as primary residences to potential sellers whether that is something that is supported through the West Side Community Land Trust or something that the City facilitates internally. I would like to know how much that is going to cost and that is the owner/occupant/buyer/seller connection program. Finally, I would like to understand what it would cost or what money we could put towards assisting current owner-occupiers in upfitting their homes for income property pending the outcome of our Comp 2040 discussion.

Councilmember Ajmera said I would also like to echo what my colleagues have mentioned, great job City Manager and the Budget Team. You all did an excellent job and I am very proud of the work that the Budget Committee has also done. I am very pleased to see the budget where we don't have a property tax increase and the budget reflects our priorities as a City; housing, infrastructure, safety, sustainability and it reflects our values as a City. I am really pleased to see the budget that was presented by the City Manager.

I only have two requests, first, we all got an e-mail from Tree Charlotte for a \$50,000 additional ask and that is for community engagement, planting trees where we have seen four percent canopy loss in our most vulnerable neighborhoods. This funding will help us plant more trees in those communities. In fact, later today there is going to be a community walk; there is a coalition off-West End stakeholders to highlight the disparity we are seeing when it comes to the tree canopy. It is from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. so I think the funding we can provide to Tree Charlotte can help us address the disparity will go a long way. We all know there is only one organization in the entire City that does the planting effort and help us meet our tree canopy goals and that is Tree Charlotte. I hope that my colleagues will support that because we are known as a City of trees. We have seen a significant decrease in our tree canopy over the past couple of years and I can't thank the organization enough for the work they have done over the past decade in increasing our tree canopy, involving community and neighborhoods, and helping us reach our tree canopy goals.

The second ask I have and there was a request that was submitted [inaudible] this is an organization that is helping our CMPD address the hate crime they have seen in Asian American Communities. Because of the language barrier and cultural barriers, we have seen a lot of incidents that are not getting reported so this women's forum is helping reach us with small businesses and really address and encourage those businesses to report hate crimes before it escalates to something bigger. In the wake of what we are seeing, not just nationally, but even in our City, I hope my colleagues will support a small ask so that we can continue to work with this organization and that ask would be for \$10,000.

Councilmember Graham said I too like everyone else acknowledges the work of the Budget Team and the Manager. I tried really, really hard to find something wrong with the budget as the Manager knows and I came up really short. It was a very good job. I had the opportunity to sit through the budget review with the Manager and his team and [inaudible] the budget again last night for clarity and I think it is really a step in the right direction.

I have a couple of quick questions just to make sure; one, in particular, is in General Services, the Five Point Park, I know we are building it Mr. Manager, I just want to make sure that the upkeep [inaudible] the operation of the park and the maintenance. Is that embedded in the General Services portion of the budget?

Mr. Jones said I see Ryan nodding his head yes, so yes.

Mr. Graham said I know there is funding for the Mountain Island Police Station so I'm excited about that. I did notice that we've only allocated \$40,000 for the Legacy Commission and obviously, we are going to tackle that mid-summer based on the recommendations that we received last year and I'm just not sure if \$40,000 is going to meet the needs. I know we've applied for a grant, so are we saying that is in addition to the grant Mr. Manager, and have we already applied for grants to help with the renaming of streets?

Mr. Jones said Mr. Graham, my understanding is that we have two allocations for that Commission; both allocations of \$40,000 each.

Ryan Bergman, Budget Director said correct so there is \$40,000 in the C-DOT (Charlotte Department of Transportation) budget and then there is \$40,000 in the housing budget for different aspects of the Legacy Commission recommendations.

Mr. Graham said okay, in addition to what we are applying for the plan that we talked about last year as well.

Mr. Jones said correctly.

Mr. Graham said then lastly, just like everyone else I think there is a theme going around in terms of how do we get in front of anti-displacement and neighborhood stabilization, notwithstanding 2040 Plan off to the side for a while? It is happening now, and I did benchmark some of the allocations for housing, neighborhood services, and I think they

are at the appropriate levels just like Ms. Eiselt suggested. I did take a look at down payment assistance, getting people in homes. I think Ms. Watlington made several interesting suggestions as well, so I look forward to voting on them at the appropriate time. Other than that Mayor and Mr. Manager, I think it is a great budget; I look forward to voting on it. I do have one small request for a \$10 million ask and I will leave that right there. I think you know what I'm talking about.

Mayor Lyles said I think that is everyone. We are going to have some comments, but the one thing that I did want to say; I don't think this is a budget requirement, but out of our reserve I think we should allocate money to take the initiatives that are going to be required on our Comprehensive Plan, no matter what the Plan might be and maybe it is a million dollars or designated – what do you call it when you asterisk it and say the Plan has this as a designation or this fund has a designation? I think if the Council adopts the Plan we ought to be able to move very quickly towards implementation visible to the public as we can. Whether it is additional consultants or outreach, this is a pretty big deal so I would just say I would like to see in the reserve a designation of a significant amount, maybe half a million to a million dollars, to say that we are actually going to act on this in a way because we've got the displacement, the infrastructure group and I don't know what your thoughts were. It is not this year so I would love to hear whatever comments you have and how we begin to address this historic time in our City's life.

Mr. Jones said I wanted to make sure that we give Council an opportunity to put everything on the board. Two things I would like to bring up as it relates to the Corridors of Opportunity and how the funding is different this year versus last year. I'm sorry, it is different in the proposed budget versus the current year. In the current year because we had a bond cycle there was \$14.5 million in infrastructure that was set aside for Corridors of Opportunity and \$10 million in what I call the General Fund. So, that \$10 million we separated that into \$5 million for economic development opportunities, things we've never been able to do before, and many of you have been at groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings because of that. Our strong desire is that the private sector will step in and provide grants and low-interest loans. But the other \$5 million, about \$2.5 million was related to housing and then the remaining funds for a jump start and place-making in transit. So, \$10 million in the current year.

As we move forward we have \$14 million of let's just say non-infrastructure for the corridors and then with your next bond in the calendar year of 2022, \$10 million of infrastructure, so we flipped it. But, a little bit about the \$14 million; \$7 million for economic development and jobs and \$7 million for housing. So, unlike last time where we came in saying let's allocate this way, we will give you a report on where we are on that first \$10 million and we didn't spend all of the housing funds. We didn't spend certain numbers of certain buckets if you will, so we said let's take that \$7 million for housing and many of the things that have been discussed today, we are going to find those types of initiatives that actually work and put more money into them and if there are new initiatives like being able for the City to go in and acquire homes, rehab those homes and keep those homes for our lower-income residents we will do that too, but it is an opportunity for Council to be on the front end of this as opposed to us allocating the dollars up front. So, a lot of the things that have been discussed around housing and even what you said Mayor, anti-displacement can be addressed with that \$7 million budget bucket.

Then on the other side jobs and economic development; for instance, the road to hire that we talked about earlier those funds would come out of that bucket also. It is the only ask, but because it is over my authority, to begin with, it would have to come back to Council for approval for a vote. It is not locked into a line item of this budget so, if you chose to pass the budget it wouldn't impact that because it would have to come back to you anyway. So, that is how we looked at the \$14 million, to begin with.

Mayor Lyles said so what I heard you say is some of these things as you go through you are going to be able to say we don't have to adjust this current year budget because we have a plan and that they will be considered in the plan for the bucket that you've been talking about, the \$14 million or another bucket.

Mr. Jones said absolutely, yes.

Mayor Lyles said I have one other request then since you got out from under that one. For the last 18-months or actually maybe 24-months we've had a donation of 20-acres of land on Arrowood Road; we've acquired land out in South Charlotte by the Police Station that we are building and we've got the Brooks Family donated property in East Charlotte and that property I'm sure has been sitting there. I would like to actually ask if there is a possibility because I heard Councilmembers saying let's take a really sharp focus on the affordable housing that we have already funded, but maybe need to move forward, and in this case, we have a property that I would like to see us build a neighborhood on. To have the right people come in and say, and this is a prelude, if you remember the Ballantyne rezoning, they are giving us acres of land; if we let it sit like this we need to develop either an agency that works with us to do this or we need to figure out a methodology, and I know it is not a budget impact right now, but it just seems to me that leadership like we've had on the NOAH's (Natural Occurring Affordable Housing) and leadership that we've had on down payment assistance, we need to take that same leadership and focus on land that we own that we can now use for affordable housing. Those would be my two and you are going to tell me that you've already done that so I'm just going to stop writing.

Mr. Jones said not at all Mayor; I will say that we have I believe nine properties that are consistent with what you just said including the Double Oaks property. So, just to put it out there now, only one of the properties are properly zoned right now to be able to move forward.

Mayor Lyles said I think I know some people who might be able to do something with that.

Mr. Jones said we could move with that immediately and what we will do is have Pam and Brent Cagle is working on this, give a presentation to the Council. What I tried to do is get this as a package, we are probably in the fall with a package, but if we want to move on to what is ready right now let's put that in front of the Council and give you the opportunity.

Mayor Lyles said I'm okay with the package; I'm just saying it has been a while, and I know that people have been busy. I think you heard a number of people say that adds to the concept of making the vision that we are talking about a reality in housing and removing some of these ideas as amping them up, but I think we also have the ability to create more.

Mr. Driggs said first a brief comment on the Historic Landmark Commission. I will support Mr. Egleston's request, but I will tell you, and by the way, I want to acknowledge David Erdman, my fellow Rotarian, who is such a passionate advocate and inspires people on the subject of Charlotte's history. I just wanted to mention to you Mr. Egleston there was one rezoning that I dealt with on Blakeney Heath Road in which the petitioner and their representatives felt that the Design Committee kind of overreached in terms of rejecting a petition and strayed into areas that had more to do with land use. So, I hope as we increase our funding that your engagement will serve to kind of make sure that they stay in their lane. I will just put it that way. The other one is more controversial; I was waiting to see whether anybody was going to acknowledge the salary issue in our budget.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Bokhari did.

Mr. Driggs said okay, good, did you make a motion about it?

Mr. Bokhari said I did, I put it in the [inaudible] to take it out.

Mr. Driggs said good, I'm sorry I was making notes and probably missed that. I think it is important that we have that conversation on this Council. We should acknowledge that a Citizen's Committee was convened in order to consider this issue and others and that the Manager's recommended budget includes the result of that process. So, I recognize that, and personally, in reaching a position on this I'm in a slightly difficult position because I

think you know I live in a fairly comfortable retirement. So, for me personally, this is somewhat an academic issue. I know for some members of Council and for perspective candidates it is not, and I think a very good case can be made that we are underpaid. Certainly, I know what I go through in relation to what we get paid is the way our of proportion so, I see the case for the increase. At the same time, our Legislators get paid half of what we do and there is a very basic question about the extent to which this should be looked upon as public service that people are willing to donate in effect to the City, or is it something for which they need to receive at least adequate compensation so as not to be kind of compromised in their ability to pay their bills. Right now the time that is required to do this job conflicts with other full-time employment so I believe those are the issues, but I would definitely want to see us at least consider a motion not to do that so that this Council takes responsibility for whatever outcome there may be on that subject. I think the public will expect us to consider it and to vote on it and I will vote to take it out, but I just wanted to tell you that I recognize that there are arguments on both sides and I don't want to look like I'm in taking advantage of my situation to minimize an issue that may be more important to others.

Mayor Lyles said do you have an alternative suggestion that you would like to see?

Mr. Driggs said I really apologize; I was writing and maybe I didn't catch it but did we have something up there that says do not increase salary?

Mayor Lyles said yes, it says do not.

Mr. Driggs said that is fine, that is really the same thing.

Mr. Watlington said are we going to speak to each of these line by line? If so I will hold my comments regarding what Mr. Driggs just said.

Mayor Lyles said what we tried to do is gather the list and we will go through them line by line, but again, people asked for comments and so Mr. Driggs asked to comment to make sure that something he felt should be on was on the list. It will be a line-by-line discussion.

Ms. Watlington said okay, the only other thing I will say is that I agree wholeheartedly with the idea of creating a neighborhood or the City leaning forward on using our land to do so. I would lift up that I would love to see homeownership as a focus there in whatever form that takes whether it is single or multifamily. Also, I would love to see this neighborhood or these kinds of opportunities where we are taking the lead on the development as opportunities to really raise our MWSBE (Minority, Women, Small Business Enterprise) participation to another level.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Newton has joined us online; Mr. Newton we are at the point where we are asking for Councilmembers to make general comments and then ask for specific adjustments that you would like the staff to consider in the Manager's recommended budget.

Councilmember Newton said I wanted to thank everybody for your patience, I apologize for not being on this far and also apologize for any inconvenience. I had two items that I wanted to raise; the first item pertains to the Arts and Science Council. I know we are all aware of the conversations that have occurred pertaining to the Arts and Science Council and their continued request for additional funding. The Mayor has organized three upcoming meetings over this next week and I wanted to ask that we as a Council wait make any decisions pertaining to adjustments for the Arts and Science Council until after those meetings occur. I think the purpose of those meetings is to discuss any possible adjustments and/or concerns that the Arts and Science Council might have with the current proposal in front of us. I think it would only be fair to them given the expectations for those meetings to put any decisions on hold. I have missed the first part of this meeting so I'm not quite sure how to proceed on that procedurally but did want to raise that as a concern of mine because I think that from a process standpoint and the standpoint of us making sure that we have all the information before we make a decision on Arts and Science Council funding moving forward that we should have those meetings first.

That is my first point and the second thing that I was hoping to consider, and it might be better presented in the form of a question for the City Manager or for our Planning Department. I just wanted to see where we are with the Cross Charlotte Trail II. Mayor Gantt and the Charlotte Moves Task Force had recommended that we start taking a look at a Cross Charlotte Trail connector from West to East to compliment the South to North connection that we have currently funded and is currently under construction. I think more to the point given that recommendation certainly, I would like to know where we are in that process on making good on that recommendation for the East to West connector, but at the same time I think I would like to know are we appropriating or do we have any sort of expenditure foreseen either in this budget in the near future or what have you for the planning and design of that West to East connection?

Mayor Lyles said alright, anything else Mr. Newton?

Mr. Newton said no. Does that make sense? So once again, I'm not quite sure how this will proceed but I did have that second question and that initial request pertaining to the Arts and Science Council.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Newton, I know that you weren't able to participate in the beginning, but everything goes up on the Board for the Council. Are you coming in or are you going to be on your phone for the rest of the meeting?

Mr. Newton said I will have to zoom in here momentarily; I'm probably about five minutes out from a computer where I can do that.

Mayor Lyles said if you could get to a place that you could call in that would be very, very helpful because we are about to begin to start talking about the items that each Councilmember raised as a question. I think what you have asked for is for the Council-when we talked earlier today what I was saying on the Arts and Science Council, the Manager is going to explain his recommendation, but today's items would be to get five votes to proceed with the Manager's recommendation, but that doesn't mean that precludes us from considering any discussion that we have with ASC (Arts & Science Council) or the people that are interested in this area. I think it might be better instead of saying if you believe that we should give more money to the Arts and Science Council or give less money to the Arts and Science Council at this point, I think that is probably what you should put up for the Council to vote on.

Mr. Newton said I think what I'm interested in is us pursuing the deeper dive into those informational aspects of the ask. I was under the understanding that that was the purpose of the meeting so, not necessarily to make a decision on any appropriation today.

Mayor Lyles said we are not making a decision. What we are doing is just pretty much like Councilmembers have individually said this is what we would like to vote on. It takes five votes to move it to the next level and I think as specific as you can be so your colleagues have an idea of what you want to accomplish. I think everybody would vote that we hear from the Arts and Science Council, but if you have a specific area that you believe the Council should vote or do differently, then I think it would be good to get that on the table now so that people are aware of what your direction is or what you are asking your colleagues to vote on. Does that make sense?

Mr. Newton said I'm still a bit confused. My concern is not foreclosing the possibility of a budget adjustment for the Arts and Science Council today given the fact that we still have meetings to discuss their request literally tomorrow and into next week. I wouldn't want to propose something that is premature and that would cut off that opportunity next week when we have more information to make a better-informed decision on a budget appropriation or a budget adjustment.

Mayor Lyles said let me see if I can try this; that you would like the Council to support delaying a decision on any change on the Arts and Science Council allocation funding in this budget until next week. How about that? You need five votes to do that. Then the second one on the East to West Cross Charlotte Trail, Mr. Jones I'm not familiar with this.

Mr. Jones said Mayor, we don't have anything that is in the planning fund right now. It relates to the CIP (Capital Investment Plan). I do want to reiterate that over the next five years the Cross Charlotte Trail will be completed, and the funding is there for that. This appears to be something that is different from the Cross Charlotte Trail, a different connector that would have to go through our process in terms of our CIP.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Newton did you hear the Manager?

Mr. Newton said yeah, I caught a bit of that. I guess my question then is what plan is in place; I understand that broadly speaking this is being considered. I think that is what I gathered from your comments Mr. Manager, but what plan is in place, or what timeframe are we looking at specifically for planning and design of that East to West Connector? Once again, as recommended by the Charlotte Moves Task Force.

Mayor Lyles said like all things in the Charlotte Moves Task Force; until you get some money you don't get anything done. Mr. Newton, I'm sorry that I said it that way, but basically, it is an unfunded plan and until we get some way to do it, it is just a plan and you know how people talk about plans and the City. We just make them; we don't fund them.

Mr. Newton said could we get a better idea of exactly how much that aspect, so the planning and design of the East to West connector, how much that would actually be? I think that would be good moving forward so we could then start talking about how that would be funded.

Mr. Jones said Mr. Newton, we would be repeating the flaw for the Cross Charlotte Trail if we tried to put a number on something that we haven't even preliminarily designed so, we don't know. If somebody says that we do know they are not correct so, we just don't want to repeat what we did in the past. The question becomes if this is a priority for the Council we will put it in the planning fund, and we will spend money to design this and then after that, the question becomes do you fund it. Typically, we don't put things in the design fund that we don't intend to actually design and build.

Mr. Newton said I guess my initial question would be if there is an intention to eventually design and build this and maybe we can put that on the board. Starting researching and looking into the expenditure there and starting that process and determining this through Planning.

Mayor Lyles said I suggest that we put on the board, begin to cost out the planning and design for an East/West addition to the Charlotte Trail? Is that okay Mr. Newton?

Mr. Newton said that is perfect, yes ma'am.

Mr. Egleston said [inaudible]

Mayor Lyles said no, it says initiate the beginning of it and I think that what we need are five votes to move that forward.

Mr. Driggs said can I just comment quickly on the art things? This is a budget conversation; I think the amount of money that we are talking about for the arts is generous and I hope the community appreciates that. We are talking about quadrupling the funding for the arts. I'm not sure the conversations we have with the ASC will actually change that number, I think what we can still talk about within the \$4 million or so that are not yet allocated is whether or not we might change the recommendation about the portion of the arts funding that is recommended that might be allocated to the ASC. But, we don't have to answer that question in a budget conversation so, unless somebody thinks the budget number that is proposed for the arts is wrong why don't we just let that move forward, and then we can look again at whether the \$800,000 recommendation to the ASC is the last word on that subject. I think if it was more it would have to come out of the money that we've already identified for the arts and it would have to be done in consultation with our private partners.

Mayor Lyles said is everyone prepared now to do the preliminary straw votes? I'm going to ask Ms. Jackson to make sure that I get everyone; we will have to do this in a roll call way, and we will start with Mr. Newton.

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ITEM NO. 3: CONSIDERATION OF ANY PROPOSED ADJUSTMENTS (ITEMS THAT RECEIVE FIVE OR MORE VOTES WILL BE CONSIDERED AT THE MAY 26 CITY COUNCIL BUDGET STRAW VOTES MEETING)

Mayor Lyles said the first one is the money is for the Shalom School as a part of the History Museum. Mr. Phipps recommended \$10,000. Do you have any further comments; I just wanted to get a straw vote?

Councilmember Phipps said the only other comment that I would have is that the Historic District Commission or whatever also strongly supports this particular effort and I know that we have already discussed an ask towards the Historic District Commission, so I just throw that out for information.

Mayor Lyles said this is to get five people to say get more information for a straw vote on the 26th to include it in the budget.

The vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Bokhari, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, Johnson, Phipps, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmember Watlington.

Mayor Lyles said so that moves forward; the Shalom School for the Charlotte History Museum, would have the amount and the source of revenue and staff will bring that back.

The next one is; I can't see it.

Councilmember Bokhari said do you want me to read it?

Mayor Lyles said yes, that would be great.

Mr. Bokhari said to augment the provision in the budget to provide \$890,000 to expand Road to Hire pathways to instead call for an RFP and diligence process by the City Workforce Development Department to help underrepresented students gain access to workforce training and employment opportunities so that all organizations across the City have an opportunity to bid and maximize the outcomes of this investment and its impact on the Corridors of Opportunity. The result of this RFP process would be presented to Council per our standard process for approval in our Consent Agenda when ready given its size and magnitude. I think there are two major parts to this, the Manager already addressed one which is that this would naturally by his own process come before us and be voted on, which is good. I think the only other thing to then formalize that would be that we actually have a formal RFP process and that be managed in the right diligence way that we would normally do for these things.

Mr. Egleston said that money is already in the budget for that amount.

Mr. Bokhari said that is right, it is not a budgetary change it is just a change in approach.

Councilmember Driggs said if I could comment on that; I'm not sure I understand how this got to where it is, but I think the idea that we vote on it later is not completely kosher because the vote that we would take later would be a follow up to a decision that we made in this budget about the commitment of funds. We would vote [inaudible] to approve a contract or do something like that, so I think the time for us to consider the RFP proposal is now and I would just like to understand, maybe Mr. Manager you could explain because

I don't know how do we get to the point where a financial partner or whatever we want to call these guys got to the point of being named without a process like an RFP.

Mr. Jones said that is a great question Mr. Driggs; what we did was lean into the CARES ACT (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) process that we have for many of these partners. For instance, during the CARES process for some of the workforce development partners, Road to Hire was selected for \$250,000. Since that time the City and the County were approached to see if we would collaborate, and I think the total may be 1,500 students by 2025 in the corridors that we could have a program that would allow the students beginning the summer of their Junior year to receive training and to receive instruction and those students, if they graduated with a B average would be able to have free four-year education and if they graduated with a B average after their four-year education be able to have a job waiting for them. That is the crux of the initiative and the County and the City were approached and I believe it is a good program and so again, not a line item in the budget, but much like we talked about housing, it would be an initiative that would come before you for a vote. The only thing that I will say is that the City's participation in this is more related to a summer program so if the process let's say takes until November or December or September by design this may not work.

Mr. Driggs said who would our private partner be in this?

Mr. Jones said the Road to Hire Program.

Mr. Driggs said is that associated with a company? When you say RFP [inaudible]

Mr. Bokhari said it is associated with the company Red Ventures; it is a very good program. I don't think there is anyone who would say it is not a good program. I think the problem I had and why I put this in here is we have learned the hard way that doing these things far above transparency with the public view and RFP's because what we did in granting people money last year through CARES Act money, was not an engagement with a vendor, it was a grant-making process that we gave to people to do what they are doing. When you look at the slides the Manager presented when he gave us the budget it says provide \$890,000 to expand Road to Hire Pathways so this is not a grant process, this is us looking for a partner or a vendor to do some work. While this is an excellent program we owe it to ourselves based on what we've been through and gone through to make sure we are maximizing a very large chunk of money among many, many good groups in town that do this very same work. So, if we miss the deadline and timeline for something that can happen I think that is a mistake we've made this point by how we've come to this conclusion to grant money to somebody from our General Fund for a service that literally checks every box of the debates we had last year.

Mr. Driggs said I think my feeling about is I have a huge amount of respect for [inaudible], I think he is an exceptional visionary individual. The truth is Red Venture has chosen to locate outside of Charlotte and I think for us to partner without considering whether or not, and I don't know Mr. Manager, whether there is a simple lack of any other partner that we might choose for something like this. I'm with Mr. Bokhari, I'm all on board with the programs of this kind, I think they directly address some of our social issues and it is a constructive way that we can, but there is a process question here guess. Are you confident that there is nobody if we did an RFP who is actually located in Charlotte and is one of our citizens and taxpayers that might be able to partner with us?

Mr. Jones said no, I'm not confident that this is the only entity that can do it. What I will say, and I will reiterate this is the Council's decision; I wouldn't have recommended it if I didn't think that this would be good for the community, especially for the Corridors of Opportunity. There is a great opportunity to partner with the County, but outside of that if the Council wants an RFP process so be it.

Mr. Driggs said I just think there is a very good chance that we would actually choose this as a result of an RFP process, but I think having done one looks better.

Mayor Lyles said I have a question about this Mr. Jones. You said that the 1,500 students are from the corridors. Is that correct?

Mr. Jones said they are Title One Schools with a number of them being from the corridors, yes.

Mayor Lyles said and you said if they finish high school, how do they get the free four-year education? Who funds that?

Mr. Jones said as a part of the program, and again this would come before you as a separate item and if there is a presentation that you would like to come before you we can also make sure that occurs, but basically what you do have is an opportunity from a public/private partnership with the City and the County to have 1,500 students that are in Title One Schools, many of them in our Corridors of Opportunity, have an opportunity for four-year education and a job at no cost to them.

Mayor Lyles said I know that usually, I talk about process, but the idea of getting something for this number of students over the summer and ready to go it seems to me that it still relates to the CARES funding, it still relates to the reopening of the City and it particularly relates to our Corridors of Opportunity. If young people in high school come out and they have an opportunity for further education and a job at the end, those are our priorities. Corridor residents at the very best doing this, I just want to say that the question to me is really is this something that you can come back with so that we don't miss the opportunity to serve the 1,500 that we are talking about now?

Mr. Jones said Mayor, I want to make sure the 1,500 is between now and 2025, but for the cohort, this summer is 370 and so information that you may want I think that is part of the adjustments process. We can come back with that information if it even gets the number of votes that it would need to move forward to next week's discussion.

Mr. Bokhari said I think Madam Mayor, my point is not one of these aren't folks in great need, they are 100%, we should be doing this all the time. My point isn't that Road to Hire isn't a great program, it is. The bottom line here is I know there are multiple organizations that do great work in this town that would have died to get an opportunity to get a fraction of \$890,000. The same groups that always wonder why is all of this always occurring in some back room that I don't hear about. Those are the people that I am trying to make sure have an opportunity, not remove anyone's opportunity from participating in these things, but do things the right way, the right way that we learned over the last year is so important to all of us.

Mayor Lyles said well I'm going to say that I don't disagree with you, but I don't think this is being done in a back room. If the City and County have both put it in their budget, and it is being discussed now.

Mr. Bokhari said how many of you heard about this before the Manager handed us the budget?

Mayor Lyles said I've heard about it in conjunction with Johnson C. Smith and a number of others.

Mr. Bokhari so you knew before this budget that we were putting \$890,000 directly to a non-profit?

Mayor Lyles said I did not know what the Manager was going to recommend, but what I'm saying is Mr. Bokhari, I don't have a problem with moving this item forward. I think the question I'm asking the Manager to do is expedite something that works so that we have the ability to serve these kids, which is the bottom line.

Mr. Bokhari said I support that. Actually, do an RFP process and do it.

Mayor Lyles said if you would let me say it then maybe I could to the point to say that. It is about some timing that we have for kids that were not in school except through remote learning and we know what that has done to many of our students. I don't ever disagree with you about the process, but I do think that we have a compelling issue here and I think we ought to look at options for it.

Councilmember Eiselt said I understand where both sides are coming from; I'm pretty sure, but one thought would also be if we've cut it too close for this summer for the 375, go with that but do an RFP for the rest of the years if you cannot get an RFP done this year for something that starts next month.

Mayor Lyles said so five votes are necessary; augment the provision in the budget as Mr. Bokhari has so stated. Raise your hand if you are in favor.

Councilmember Egleston said I didn't know if Mr. Bokhari had an interest in going with this or modifying based on Ms. Eiselt's comment.

Mr. Bokhari said I would just suggest if any modification is made which isn't necessary in any of my wording, it would be to expedite this as fast as possible, but within the wording that I've stated.

Mayor Lyles said I think the staff is bringing back information and options so I think they will be looking at it anyway. It doesn't exclude it and again I go back to the ASC we are doing it now.

Mr. Driggs said can I offer an alternative, a substitute to that which is given the time constraints and the value of this program for one that the Manager report to us in greater detail about why he prefers this program and then takes on board our message to you that this is something we feel should have been done through an RFP process. I don't know that we can impose that now without doing harm, without missing out on an opportunity so I wouldn't want to do that. I just hope that you will kind of hear what we are saying and recognize in light of things that have happened before that when decisions like this are made they should be done with the proper kind of opportunity for other potential bidders to demonstrate what they might be able to do and in consultation with earlier. Because we are now in a position where we don't have total freedom of choice. We either go without the RFP or we forego the benefit of the program. I don't think there is an alternative.

Mr. Jones said I stand behind my recommendation, but we can't do this like Manager, this is okay this time, but we don't agree with it. I prefer the Council to make a decision and if the Council wants an RFP process and we don't do this that is fine. That is what we do, we present, and you decide.

Mayor Lyles said this is the roll call vote as stated; augment the provisions in the budget to provide the \$890,000. I think the question has been whether or not it should be, and we can come back and add one year. We can vote on the \$890,000 and then come back to do the one year. The vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Bokhari, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmember Ajmera, Graham, Johnson, Newton, Phipps, and Watlington.

Mayor Lyles said we got five votes so Mr. Jones will come back with a report.

The next one is to remove Mayor and Council raises. The vote was recorded as follows:

Ms. Eiselt said as the liaison for the Committee of citizens that spent months doing this work, they voted unanimously on this, I do believe that to Mr. Driggs' point, I personally am an individual that can serve in this position and I'm not looking at what the salary is, but I'm beyond the years where I have to give up my employment financial opportunity for promotion for advancement. I just think that by having a salary which still doesn't even

come up to the average of our peers, way below it, especially for the role of Mayor, that you are not going to attract a lesser qualified candidate, you are going to attract as good if not a better candidate and I just think there is no reason that we shouldn't keep pace, try to at least, with our peer cities and peer boards in this City, namely the County Commission.

Mr. Bokhari said I want to be crystal clear, for me this is not about me a lack of equity or opportunity. I as someone who fights and works on that stuff every single day is the crux of why I live and what I do. This is about a very specific belief aside from the fact that this is the wrong time for us to be doing something like this. I have a very firm belief that serving on Council or County Commission or the School Board or the State Legislature or Congress is about sacrifice. It is about coming here and being able to come in and say I'm going to like our founding fathers spend a small period of time giving back a great expense to ourselves and what we could be doing otherwise to make a difference.

I believe that is how, and if we could do more of that across this country and City and get more people to think like that we would be in a lot better shape as a country right now. But by increasing these salaries we make it so that people start looking at this more as, I could make a little bit more money if I did that and it looks like a career to them and when people become career politicians they become embedded in the system and they become fearful of losing what they are here to do which is their job and their paycheck and they start making the wrong decisions. So, I am adamantly opposed to this in all forms that you could possibly imagine because it is the crux of what is becoming wrong with society right now. That is why I'm against it.

Ms. Eiselt said I would like to say that sacrifice is also missing all your family dinners, missing your kid's soccer games, missing birthday dinners, and doing it at 9:00 or 9:30 at night when you get home, being here until 11:00 or 12:00 at night. So, there is more about sacrifice, public service, and to some extent personal safety. We have seen that as well. So, sacrifice comes in many forms, it doesn't have to be financial and I don't know that the pay that we get now really justifies those other forms of sacrifice. I don't know when it was that we last got a raise, I'm not talking about a merit increase, but it has been a long, long time and I'm not doing this for myself I can promise you that. This is for others that might want to pursue it. I've talked to people that would love to do this job, but they can't afford to do it, and this is just wrong. We should be able to attract other kinds of people that still want to serve so there is a lot of different reasons for that.

Mr. Graham said it is not a small period of time, it is a full-time job with part-time pay, and it is really not part-time. This is an institutional change, it is not about us really, it is about the position of a Councilmember and the compensation that goes along with it and so, it is an institutional change, it is long overdue. We have done it the right way by forming the Citizens' Committee to do the due diligence to make the recommendations and I think it is a foundational change for the Council that is long overdue. Mr. Driggs mentioned the State Legislature; they haven't gotten a pay increase in 26-years and that is why our Legislature looks the way it does. It doesn't have any progressive people up there because they can't afford to do it. I just think it is an institutional change in the structure of how we operate and that we should vote for it.

Councilmember Phipps said I guess I'm in the same boat as a couple of my colleagues in terms of retirement. Comfortable retirement, comfortable position, extremely blessed, but I've also served on the Council for seven years and as Mr. Graham said, it is a part-time job, but I would say for less than part-time pay. I'm sitting here in a position of replacing a Councilmember for his unexpired term, so I really don't see it as my role to deny someone that is going to be replacing me an opportunity to be able to serve at a higher salary. I know for a fact if Mr. Mitchell was here today that he would definitely support keeping these salaries because that is something we've talked about for many years on Council, even though we all loved serving. I think as has already been said, it has been done on a transparent basis and I see no really compelling reason at this time not to support the current salary as proposed.

Mayor Lyles said the question is would you like the Manager to bring back what that opportunity would be to delete the salary as recommended.

YEAS: Councilmembers Bokhari and Driggs.

NAYS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, Johnson, Newton, Phipps, Watlington, and Winston.

Mayor Lyles said the next item –

Ryan Bergman, Budget Director said I will probably have to provide a little bit of context here. It is for shift differential for employees; we did provide some information in the packet that showed the General Fund costs of modeling at \$1.00 would be about \$2.6 million for a full year. So, the two ways that that number would decrease would be either you do less than \$1.00 or you implement it later in the year. I did provide some information to Councilmember Winston where it would be anything from \$2.6 million for \$1.00 to \$325,000 for \$.25 a half year.

Mayor Lyles said I guess my question would be, and maybe this would be for our HR (Human Resources) person; we have a salary data process now that we say that we pay people at certain percentages and we do certain things. The question I would have is what would be required in our compensation model if we began to talk about shift differentials and would that be something that we could implement without a look at our total compensation policy?

Mr. Jones said Mayor, I believe that shift differential has been something that we've discussed over the years, and funding has been somewhat of the issue, however, if this does get the five votes we could come back to you with information by next week. If something different than what was in the packet –

Mayor Lyles said I understand what you are saying, but again, for me, compensation is something that we try to do in a way that is systemic in some ways and by doing a shift differential that doesn't exclude what happens to the people that are having just the regular salary. You can't reward and then not look at the balance of what you are doing, management, and all of that so my question is this a compensation effort that would have to be adjusted over years and that is what I don't know.

Mr. Jones said great question and I'm sorry I didn't get it the first time. Would I recommend doing this with one week of work, no I wouldn't? However, we can give you more information on what the impact would be to our entire system as it relates to a shift differential. Again, I don't want to discount what Councilmember Winston has put on the table. I just wish we had more time to look at how this impacts the entire organization, but we have had discussions about shift differential in the past.

Mayor Lyles said I want to say I'm not discounting shift differential; what I am saying is that we have a compensation plan. Firefighters have different systems, are they shift differential and then if they are, and I'm not really saying this for an answer, this is just an example, then what if that happened when you roll it up to Captain, Battalion, all of these things I just really feel like to do this in this year's budget would send a message that we are considering something that we really don't know, and couldn't in a week or two, get an impact that would really be valid that we would be able to say to other employees this is the consequence for you. It is just my thinking.

Councilmember Winston said Mr. Bergman did provide me with a bit more information in terms of what that differential could cost at a different level than is being done here. It would affect about 1,200 employees of about 8,000. I would suggest us coming back with information about a 25 cents shift differential over a full year which would be about \$650,000 in addition.

Mr. Jones said if we had an opportunity to work through this we would say could we do a quick study, could we come back and see what the costs would be, some of the

unintended consequences, things of that nature. Ryan whispered to me that I could offer him up to do it, I guess what I'm saying is that we just don't know –

Mr. Winston interrupted to say I would just like to remind us that this is to get more information, as you said earlier, for next week. If we want to do something that could have ramifications that we don't know about that is something that the 11 or 12 of us would have to reckon with and if we don't do it that is something that the 11 or 12 of us would have to reckon with.

Mr. Jones said I don't disagree at all. I guess what I would ask, like at the beginning of this, we are now at this new level, which is not one-time, which is ongoing so there is a cost associated with this that we should have a discussion about how do we balance that out.

Mr. Winston said that is why I did give you more specifics, this 25 cents for a full year, my words are for a full year, and if we want to have that continued discussion over multiple years in the future it would be our prerogative to do that, but I'm not asking you to model out 10-years down the line in one week if that makes sense.

Mr. Egleston said I think it is worthy of exploration going forward and so I will vote for Mr. Winston's motion that we continue to talk about it today. The 25 cents would be about \$10 pre-tax per week for an employee, so I think I would rather see a long-term solution that is more meaningful than trying to pull something together sort of last minute and maybe swap away because of the time constraint we would be putting staff under that has an impact of maybe after-tax, \$5, \$6 or \$7 a week. I'll vote for it because I think it is important to signal the staff that I do think this is something worth looking at, but I would be wary of supporting that sort of a change this late in the budget process for this particular budget.

Ms. Eiselt said I would just say that while again, I support the idea of looking at it, but I since we can't do this as a one-time thing and it would have to be an operating budget thing that I don't want to put staff through that kind of work in one week while they are going to have to look at all the other items. I would like for this to be something that we look at for the future budget.

Mayor Lyles said I think what we would be saying is look at something; if we are going to do a shift differential, it should be a part of a compensation study to make sure that we have it done right. One of my thoughts is that when people get something in their paycheck they ought to be able to depend on it, otherwise it is just a bonus. If you want to do a bonus of \$10 a week, that is entirely different than just a one-time bonus versus saying we are going to do shift differential because then you build something into your system and people expect it. Then next year, if we looked at the compensation plan and say we can't figure out how to do this between Police and Fire, that would be a real difficult labor issue for us, and we ought to be looking at compensation in position to our Human Resources rules. I don't think that I could see us including a shift differential. I think the Manager has moved people in a way that meets our 60%; we've gone to \$18 an hour for a minimum hourly wage. We've kept our Police and Fire at the place we said we would for the last couple of years so, this Council has really stepped up for the workforce, not the top, but everybody. I just feel like if you want a shift differential process then you say that in January we do that kind of thinking about where we want to go long-term.

Councilmember Watlington said I would like to add to the board to consider shift differential raises as part of the operating costs and consider what it would take to do a one-time shift differential bonus for next year. I think that is what I heard from some of the members that in general we support investigating this, but it doesn't seem feasible to do this as part of the operating plan for next year. That is what I would be supportive of and for that reason, I will vote no to this particular line item in support of the other.

The vote was taken and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Bokhari, Egleston, Johnson, Newton, Watlington, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmember Ajmera, Driggs, Eiselt, Graham, and Phipps.

Mayor Lyles said it received five votes, so it moves forward. Ms. Watlington, would you like to have a vote on your option to come back with information as well, or would that be inclusive Mr. Jones? It will be included so we will have both of those come back as information.

Ms. Watlington said in that case I change my vote to yes.

Mayor Lyles said the next is to require all law enforcement, including contractors to attend the full CMPD basic training academy.

Mr. Egleston said I would like to hear the Manager's response, if we can, on this, or someone.

Mr. Bergman said we did provide some information on these questions. Mr. Winston did give us the questions ahead of time so questions #38 and #39 in your packet are basically the context is CMPD, and I believe Deputy Chief Pearsall is available if I say anything incorrect. CMPD brings on Officers in two different ways, they either bring on new hires who have not gone through basic law enforcement training before so, of course, they get basic law enforcement training plus they get an additional 141 hours of CMPD training. Then there is the second bucket of new Officers which they call lateral hire Officers and these are individuals who have gone through basic law enforcement training in other departments and when they bring them in they give them 157 hours of training specific to CMPD in the City, but they don't have them go through the regular basic law enforcement training because they had already gone through it.

It would add roughly four months to each of those lateral Officers to go through the basic law enforcement training again. The second part to the question on the contractors, I believe is more specific to CATS. We have a contract in CATS, and we do have John Lewis available if necessary, but they have a contract for 108 positions, 79 of them are special Police Officers who do have arrest power on CATS property. We don't have a number on here because this would be a difficult one to cost analysis on even in a week because it would really be dependent on if we required the contractor that had to have gone through CMPD's training. I don't know what staffing impact if they would have enough personnel potentially plus it would need to go through some kind of a contract negotiation process.

Mr. Driggs said as Budget Chair I have to just sort of object to the idea that in an add/delete meeting we are considering even a question like this. This is something that would need to be a Committee referral, it is a decision we would have to take in consultation with the Chief and with a better understanding. It is not just a money question; what we are here right now to do is to make decisions about certain money allocations, what our priorities are, what resources we devote here and there. This is a very basic question about how the Police Department operates; I don't think this is the right forum for that conversation, so I'm a no on this one.

Mr. Newton said I have a quick question; I understand the issue of lateral hires and the length for training there, but I've always heard that we had a capacity problem with our Academy. There is a bottleneck that occurs because we can only train so many people at any given time and I was wondering if someone could comment on that and get a better understanding of exactly how that potential capacity problem could impact our decision on this or how a decision on this could impact that capacity bottleneck.

Mr. Jones said we have staff for the Chief's Office that can answer that.

Mr. Bergman said I believe at the Station it is Deputy Chief Pearsall and Major Robinson and then Kelly Hipster who is their Business Manager.

Ms. Eiselt said I support this idea as a policy definitely, but I just don't know that on any of our policy work we start with a budget line item and then work backward to a policy.

So, I think it is great to look at as a policy item going forward, but I don't see doing it in an adds and deletes in our budget doing it that way.

Mayor Lyles said we have someone from CMPD in front of us and the question was existing capacity at the Academy and the impact of changes if we decided to do contractors and laterals entries what would that impact be? We won't hold you to it today, but we will get something written down and sent in if the Council makes this decision. Before you begin Chief Pearsall can I ask Ms. Johnson if she has another question that she would like to have CMPD team address?

Ms. Johnson said it has been asked and I think it is going to be answered in just a few moments by CMPD. I guess I would add this; if we required full CMPD training for lateral hires how would that increase the deficit or the need of Officers? I think one of the reasons is to get the Officers on the street faster so what impact would that have in requiring lateral officers to go through the full training?

Deputy Chief Sherrie E. Pearsall said let's start with the lateral program; the goal of that program is to get more tenured and senior Officers on the street quicker. It is actually a draw for us to get Officers in who have already been in law enforcement for some time and they bring specific skill sets to CMPD. For what CMPD offers an amended Training Academy is a benefit to us because it takes about 20-weeks off of training. So, you have tenured Officers who are able to come in and we are able to get them on the streets faster at a significant reduction in costs from the training capacity as well as the ability to put people on the street faster. It is an opportunity for us to fill our ranks quicker. When you look at it from the contractor's standpoint; when we train folks with BLET (Basic Law Enforcement Training), if you look at the costs, it costs us about \$46,000, that was the last number I had to train a recruit through the entire Academy. If we are required to train contractors, how do we manage that costs and then when you are looking at it from the standpoint of the class sizes, the amount of stuff I have to do that, there is a specific number of the staff and then who would hold their certification? I don't think CMPD would want to have to hold certifications for individuals who come through our class and then in the event they are involved in a situation, that training rolls back to us. We would be required to hold their training, their certification, all their files, all their documentation so it would be a significant impact on the Training Academy, our staff, and the cost to CMPD from a training budget standpoint.

Mr. Egleston said if Mr. Winston would be open to the idea I would like to have this referred to the Safe Communities Committee for further exploration and discussion.
Mayor Lyles said that would be a separate item so let's vote on this and then you add another item.

Mr. Newton said Mayor, I don't know if my question was actually answered. Do we have the capacity to do this is what I'm asking?

Deputy Chief Pearsall said we don't have the capacity. Basic law enforcement training requires a certain number of training the staff to deliver that type of training and so we are under North Carolina Criminal Justice Standard requirements so you have certified trainers in order to teach the classes that are delivered and then we would have to manage their certifications, maintain their files. There is always update training and then the concern would be from a capacity standpoint, they are outside of our organization so anytime there is an incident involving an organization outside of CMPD they roll that back to our training. Then we would be responsible for speaking to that anytime there is an incident involving someone who acquired training through us.

Mr. Driggs said Mayor, this whole conversation is out of order in a budget meeting. Could we please proceed with the vote?

Mr. Newton said I would support this going to Committee, but for the vote right now –

Mayor Lyles said that is not the issue, the issue does you want it to come forward as the budget. The vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmember Winston.

NAYS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Bokhari, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, Johnson, Newton, Phipps, and Watlington.

Mr. Egleston said can we take up its referral to Committee or later?

Mayor Lyles said I can do a referral, but I think what we have to do is do a referral and ask Councilmembers if they want to take it up. We can do that offline, we don't have to do it today.

The next item is to increase down payment assistance loans for homeownership. Any discussion or comment on that?

Mr. Phipps said do we have results of what funds have been used under these programs to support housing; have they been utilized or do people know about them? What is the status of the funds in the existing programs in terms of their usage to meet some of these goals that we have?

Mayor Lyles said that will be in the report that they give us; you can ask those questions in the report.

Mr. Bergman said I would add that Pam Wideman is available to talk about this. I think what she would say is the down payment assistance loans, the numbers going down a little bit isn't a budget issue, it is everything else going on. I don't know if we want to bring her in to expand on it.

Mayor Lyles said you mean COVID?

Mr. Bergman said well, the price of homes and things like that.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Phipps do you want to ask Ms. Wideman to comment?

Mr. Phipps said I wouldn't mind, but I don't want to unnecessarily prolong the meeting, but I am interested in that to see the utilization of existing programs.

Mr. Jones said I would like to offer that we have numerous programs, we have the utilization of the programs. I could just put that in a memo to you this week because we have programs from homeownership to homelessness and we are able to give you how they have been utilized.

Mayor Lyles said she gave us a report about this a couple of months ago, so why don't we get that.

Mr. Phipps said I'm satisfied.

Mr. Driggs said I just wanted to clarify whether it would be additional funds to the total amount that we are investing now; we have federal source money, we have our Trust Fund so, is it your intention that we divert some of that funding to this particular priority or are you suggesting that we need to find other money in the budget in addition to everything else we are doing on housing?

Ms. Eiselt said I didn't have a number assigned there because if we do have access funds leftover if we could buffer what we do offer in the form of down payment assistance loans. If Ms. Wideman comes back and says the program was underutilized then that is another issue, but the idea is to increase down payment assistance loans to increase homeownership opportunities.

Mr. Driggs said I support that subject to the opportunities and subject to not finding other money diverted from other places within our overall housing investment that we identify funds that we can make available for that.

Mayor Lyles said so allocation within the current recommended funding is what you would support.

Mr. Driggs said yes.

Mr. Bokhari said I was just going to say I fully support this as a concept, it is a brainer, we need to be doing far more around homeownership because that is a fundamental key to upward mobility and all votes rising, however doing it kind of one-off on the fly like this isn't going to do any good. It has got to be a part of a comprehensive effort and I think while we do some things, my takeaway here would be voting no on this and saying yes to us taking up a homeownership campaign essentially, that we work with Ms. Wideman and several others, Economic Development, all the different parties and we try our best not to get ourselves in the position of trying to play the role of bank and financier which we have plenty of people that want to be great stewards and citizens of our community that would gladly take that up should we show them roles that we could play in a comprehensive plan for it.

Ms. Eiselt said just to respond to that; I have always understood adds and deletes of the budget process are taking items that are in the budget either deleting them or adding more to them. For the most part that is the bulk of what we do. On-Page 40 we have a line item number of down payment assistance loans provided. It is kind of a concrete number, it was 285 in 2020, it was targeted to be 325 in 2021, and 2022 goes back down to 300.

Mr. Bokhari said no critique there whatsoever. All I'm saying is that I think that is us playing in a lane that other people are more effective, and we should be doing more though otherwise. I just want to emphasize I support what you are saying, just not that specific application of it.

Ms. Eiselt said it is just whatever we do to support that now if Ms. Wideman says it is working then we increase it. I'm not stuck on a program or bringing somebody else in and creating something new. It is just more opportunities for people to be able to own a home in Charlotte.

Mayor Lyles said it may just be the amount that we contribute to a bigger amount, so I think we need to get some information about it and the housing framework does need some adjustment. If we are going to shift and say homeownership is really important then we can probably look at some of our programs and make some determinations. That is the kind of thing that is a policy I think we can work on.

Ms. Watlington said I think that answers my question. I was wanting to understand if Ms. Eiselt was trying to increase individual down payment assistance per buyer or just overall increase the pot, but keep the program the same and that would bring up some of the concerns that were already mentioned in regard to the effectiveness of the existing. But if what we are saying is that we would like to protect [inaudible] by increasing the pot and then have Ms. Wideman come back and tell us what looks different to make this more effective, then I'm on board.

Mayor Lyles said the largest homeownership program that we have is actually a program funded by Bank of America where you can go in that day, sit down with a financial person, a realtor, and at the end of the day come out with a homeowner. I forget the name of it; I've gone to see it several times. They host these at churches on weekends and the testimonials by people that talk about budget adjustments, it is about keeping you in your house, and the average house sale price is \$250,000. It is a very successful program; we have a Charlotte Chapter and I just don't remember. NACA neighborhood housing program funded by Bank of America, millions of dollars funded in this. I think we just need to have a better understanding of homeownership and how it happens for this effort. I don't know if the intent here; it says increase down payment assistance loans. It does not say with more funding or more money maybe. We will go with what we've got for the increase in the loan.

The vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, Johnson, Newton, Phipps, Watlington, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmember Bokhari.

Mayor Lyles said that will go forward and we will be getting some more information about that.

The next item is to offer subsidized bins for those that can't afford paper bags for yard waste. I was up in Huntersville this weekend and they have been just like ours that we have with the pick-up and one says yard waste, one says recycling, and one says garbage, three cans. My garage isn't big enough for that.

Ms. Eiselt said a lot of people already use these, it is a smaller bin, it is not the kind that the machine picks up. The employees would still have to pick up and dump in, but it really falls more in line with our SEAP goals. Paper is still putting stuff in the landfill so; it is just a thought to be able to encourage people to use reusable bins.

Mr. Driggs said I agree with the sentiment, I just have a concern as a practical matter that doing the means testing and all the administration around this. Mr. Manager, I don't know what you think, but I just feel that this is a relatively small benefit for an individual and to go through the whole process of establishing whether they are above or below a breakpoint in terms of their ability to pay for this. I don't want to make it all free because we have a desire to motivate people to do it or we just assume that the burden is small enough to be absorbed by just about everybody. But a means-tested program in my mind is just too complicated.

Mr. Jones said I believe that this is a good idea, how we implement it I'm not sure and I'm not trying to shake up the process but is there is an opportunity for us just to as we are rolling all of this out, look at different ways that we can help our residents be more successful in what we are trying to achieve with our SEAP goal. I hear you; I agree with you, I don't know what the outcome of that would be in a very short period of time. But, if you would allow us to look at alternatives.

Ms. Eiselt said that is fine, I thought they had looked at it and that is why I brought it up. With our CARES Act money, we talked about it so, if there is no work been done I'm not asking to start something new. If they've done that work and they have an idea great.

Mr. Jones said we did do the work and I was talking to Kelly to see if this round of stimulus funds would allow us to do this, and I'm not sure, but the main point is that we looked at even a process in which everything would be in a bin and we would have a semi-automatic truck coming in to pick it up and maybe one day it would be electrically powered. We do have data, it is millions and millions of dollars to go to that extreme, but I don't think that is what you are asking. You are just asking if we can give alternatives to our residents.

Mayor Lyles said I remember writing this presentation and through that, we were coming back with a new look at Solid Waste and how we deliver the services. Would that be acceptable?

Ms. Eiselt said yes.

Mayor Lyles said so we will take this one off the list.

Mr. Bokhari said just as a quick broader point; I think we need to start also equally thinking about our taxpayers and neighborhoods and individuals in this town as customers. I can tell you I'm hearing from a lot of customers that are like why in the world would you have done that. Now we heard from the Manager, I understand safety concerns for employees and that makes sense, but at the end of the day somebody bagging up a bunch of leaves in bags that are going to get rained on and ripped and they are frustrated all in the name

of SEAP and some immeasurable amount of fractional change that this will make. If we really care about that much we should be also balancing that with the customer experience and let's invest in the big trucks that suck up the leaves, the things we talked about four years ago. Because if we sit around here and just keep passing the burden onto our customer that funds us for all the pipe dreams that we have, pretty soon there won't be any of them left in town.

Ms. Ajmera said if you are taking it out I don't need to comment on it. I support the idea; I was just trying to get more information.

Ms. Johnson said I was just going to ask is it possible that we would have an inventory of bags and if someone really can't afford it they can stop by Solid Waste and pick up a couple. If it is something we can assist people if affordability is truly an issue.

Mr. Jones said we have the Solid Waste Director if you would like to have more information about this.

Mayor Lyles said we are going to take it out and we will get more information on the bags Ms. Johnson.

The next item is the Historic Landmark Commission fund for \$70,000 one-time this year. Is that right Mr. Egleston?

Mr. Egleston said yes ma'am. I think I covered it earlier, I just think that particularly given how they demonstrated their willingness and ability to focus on our Corridors of Opportunity to deploy these funds in the preservation of Historic Landmarks in corridors like Beatties Ford Road Corridor I think they were good stewards of the money last year and I'd like to see what they could do with more. I hope that my colleagues will, as they did last year, join me in supporting that allocation.

The vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Bokhari, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, Johnson, Newton, Phipps, Watlington, and Winston.

Mayor Lyles said the next item is intentional on anti-displacement efforts and assistance in homeownership. Ms. Johnson framed this as an overall goal that she has for these efforts. We had talked about the housing issue earlier if this is something that we could include as we try to address more homeownership and get a report back.

Ms. Johnson said that is fine. Just a comprehensive plan and being intentional. It could have been included with the down payment assistance, kind of combined, so yeah, down payment assistance, looking at increased neighborhood grants or what that would look like. Just an intentional and comprehensive plan for assisting homeowners and those who wish to seek homeownership.

Mayor Lyles said so the plan right now would be to have Ms. Wideman inventory these plans, sort them out, tell us what we are spending and try to get a greater impact.

Ms. Johnson said yes.

Mr. Jones said Mayor, could I add one more to that? I believe just as Sarah Hazel was leaving we did begin a discussion about an anti-displacement pilot so basically, we started off with aging in place, then we discussed staying in place, and maybe I will just leave it at staying in place right now. We have the data dashboard and I believe it is up. That was step one, step two is to come back in June to the body and talk about what we can do in terms of pilots, but that would include all of these different tools that we have and some of the tools that people have been talking about today.

Mayor Lyles said okay, I think that works for accomplishing Ms. Johnson's goal of more intentionality.

Ms. Johnson said Mr. Jones, I do remember talking about the anti-displacement pilot and Hidden Valley would be part of that. This would be a whole package for low-interest loans and everything. If we could just put as much action around that as possible it is going to be a critical need or is already a critical need.

Mr. Phipps said I wanted to make sure and I don't know if it has already been considered, but it seems that there has been considerable activity around; instead of someone tearing down their house they are donating their house. Do we have any programs where you had a situation where you had three people donated a house from various parts of the City into the Beatties Ford Road area and even in Hidden Valley, there is going to be someone moving a house from Hidden Valley to somewhere else for affordable housing? I would hope that this program would include any plan that we could help market if anybody is considering a teardown or would they consider donating a house, recycling it even it means relocating it, or something like that. Is that something that could be considered in a program that we might look at to see if there is anything we can do to help facilitate the transfer of houses?

Mayor Lyles said let's add that one to the list and we will do that after we go through Ms. Watlington's request around an estate planning outreach program for seniors in targeted neighborhoods. Ms. Watlington do you want to speak to his or do you think we are ready for a vote?

Ms. Watlington said I do want to speak to it. Just to follow up on what Mr. Phipps said, Ms. Wideman can you just real quick touch on how we are facilitating through the Land Trust on what Mr. Phipps talked about and how what is listed here might be added? The reason I ask is that I want it as a budget item if it requires more money, but if it does not I would rather see it go through this process [inaudible] Great Neighborhood Committee or whatnot to up-fit our programs for more homeownership. I just wanted to get your thoughts.

Pam Wideman, Housing and Neighborhood Services Director said Ms. Watlington, I was transitioning as you asked your questions so if I don't answer it correctly let me know. I think your question related to the estate planning and what I heard you say I think we can incorporate that into our community engagement activity. We can look at neighborhoods in and around our Corridors of Opportunity where we know that rapid change is happening and where there is homeownership and make sure that we have a new twist in our community engagement where we are educating about estate planning and partner with people who are experienced in estate planning to help do that work. So, does that help?

Ms. Watlington said given your knowledge of the current budget, is that something that needs to be budget ask or do you think you can handle that within existing funds?

Ms. Wideman said I think we can handle connecting to estate planners as far as the education, I think we can handle that within our existing budget, and then people would decide if there are fees associated we need to know that and then come back if there is an ask. The short answer is I think we can handle it within our existing budget.

Ms. Watlington said okay, then finally I just wanted you to touch on the way in which our investment in the Land Trust addresses some of the things like the home that were donated and if that needs to translate into an increase in funding to the West Side Community Land Trust?

Ms. Wideman said I don't know the exact answer to that; I would want to reach out to the Land Trust to make sure I have an accurate understanding of the costs that it takes to actually relocate a home. I think we can handle the existing budget to the extent that we are doing a housing campaign which I've heard some talk about this afternoon just to make sure people know what the options are related to donating a house rather than tearing down a house. I will need to come back with the exact costs.

Ms. Watlington said I would like to update my line item to select the words that Ms. Wideman just mentioned. I would like to see how our investment in the Land Trust or other partners would need to be adjusted to deliver the estate planning and the owner-occupant, buyer/seller connection program, and the facilitation of additional home donations and/or relocation. So, how investment in the Land Trust may need to be adjusted as well as any additional funds needed to deliver the programs I outlined.

Mayor Lyles said that is specifically for the West Side Land Trust.

Ms. Watlington said no, the Land Trust piece is one component and then the other component is are the funds needed to deliver the estate planning outreach and the next line item on #14. I just need to know if it costs money and if it doesn't cost money it doesn't need to be a budget adjustment, but it does then I would like to keep it. That is what I would like for the investigation to be.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Watlington is requesting staff response to how investment in Land Trust may be made and adjusted and what is needed to accomplish things like delivering estate planning services for seniors in targeted neighborhoods and items that include ab owner occupant, buyer/seller connection program and assisting current owner-occupiers and upfitting their homes for income properties.

The vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, Johnson, Newton, Phipps, Watlington, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmembers Bokhari and Driggs.

Mayor Lyles said the next item is Tree Charlotte's request for Ms. Ajmera for \$50,000. Do you want to speak to your request any further?

Ms. Ajmera said we all received an e-mail from Tree Charlotte about the effort to help us meet our tree canopy goals and I think everyone knows about the effort in all seven Districts, however, they are highlighting their work or they are focusing on communities where there is a disparity when it comes to the tree canopy. I hope that Councilmembers will support this. This is the only organization that helps us with our tree canopy goal and the funding will go towards planting efforts and the community engagement effort.

The vote was taken and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, Johnson, Newton, Phipps, Watlington, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmember Bokhari and Driggs.

Mr. Driggs said I would like to consider this in the context of a larger conversation about trees and for that reason he is a no.

Mayor Lyles said the next one for Ms. Ajmera is the Bengali's Women's Forum. It is an Asian American organization to fight hate crimes and it is a request for \$10,000.

Ms. Johnson said I wanted to know why my issue was not voted on. We can finish this and then talk about it afterward.

Mayor Lyles said on the housing framework, I had everyone a yes except Mr. Bokhari. The intentional, all of those things the Manager talked about.

Ms. Johnson said on #11, I thought that was something you were sent to Marcus and bring something back.

Mayor Lyles said maybe if I missed I may have just not written down the number. I had it as the housing framework with emphasis on homeownership before we went to the historic district.

Ms. Jackson said I don't believe you voted on it; I believe that you all made an agreement to make [inaudible]

Mayor Lyles said if we didn't vote on it, we agreed to do it. Nobody objected. We can come back, Ms. Johnson.

Ms. Ajmera said this request is for helping the organization with the outreach effort. This organization has been working with CMPD and helping the communities with the language barrier and cultural barriers to reporting all the hate crimes that happen. We know we have had multiple incidents here locally where a 37-year old entrepreneur was shot in the chest. We've had other incidents where there was a hate crime. We have multiple other incidents off Albemarle Road and other parts of our City, and it has an increasing concern of safety for many of the Asian American-owned businesses where they are operating and living in fear and anxiety. There are multiple stories I can tell you, so we need this organization to help us bridge that gap.

They have been doing the work in the community for several years and this is the first time they have ever asked for funding and the reason for the funding ask for this year is because they are getting an increased amount of requests from the community where families are afraid to send their kids to school, they are afraid to go out to the shopping center because they are afraid of getting stabbed or killed. That has happened multiple times with our business owners in the community. Because of the increase in requests that we have seen in the [inaudible] community the organization needs some funding. Really at the end of the day, this is to fight the hate crime, and this is not just a concern for Asian American community because at the end of the day a lot of those businesses are creating jobs along our corridors. It should be a concern for everyone. I don't know of any other organization right now who helps us do this and this is the first ask we have seen. They went through the process of submitting their request, so I hope we support this request. Any other questions or concerns that you have I can ask the organization leadership to respond to them.

Mr. Driggs said did this organization submit a financial partner request application?

Mr. Bergman said yes they did.

Mr. Driggs said did we vet that and find that they were a suitable candidate?

Mr. Bergman said we did, but like we've done in the past several years we didn't independently add any financial partners with the exception of the UNC-Charlotte (the University of North Carolina at Charlotte) initiative which was one-time to support some of our Safe Charlotte data, but other than that one, we did not recommend existing funding for any new financial partners.

Mr. Driggs said I'm concerned that the amount of money is not going to make a huge difference and we could have a precedent or a question raised about whether or not other people should be given another look. I think we need to play by whatever rules we have on financial partners.

Ms. Eiselt said I think it is a very important, very topical issue and I don't at all deny that we need to address hate crimes, especially in the Asian American community. I guess I'm just not sure I understand what they actually spend the money on and if they are working with CMPD, does CMPD allocate money to work with organizations on hate crimes, have they with others? Maybe Ryan, since you look at the financial partner application, what specifically do they spend money on?

Mr. Bergman said the \$10,000 they are requesting, they had it for support the social and economic empowerment program and the skill 2.0 program, so it is two existing programs.

These funds would just go to support them. I don't have the information specifically on CMPD, however.

Mayor Lyles said the skills program and empowerment programs, are they related to training programs? Well, it doesn't really matter.

Ms. Ajmera said I can try to respond to Ms. Eiselt's question. Currently, there is no funding available from CMPD who is working with all these organizations to fight hate crime. There is no dedicated funding source that any organization can apply for right now. I did ask about that earlier; the only funding source that is currently available in the [inaudible] partner and that is what they applied for.

The vote was taken and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, Johnson, Newton, Phipps, Watlington, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmember Bokhari and Driggs.

Ms. Eiselt said I just want to make a comment because this is a big topic. I sure hope CMPD has a hate crime program that they are reaching out to partners and helping to fund for the groups that they seem to acknowledge is doing good work. I'm just a little taken back to think that there is no organized effort working with these partnerships.

Mr. Bergman said since we got more than five votes, we will be sure to coordinate with CMPD on the response for this as well.

Mayor Lyles said and if other ethnic groups have asked I want to make sure we know that as well or how does CMPD handle this?

Mr. Bokhari said they have very much been all over this topic. They track the data, they have people that are trained, they do all kinds of things so to claim that they are not doing things is absolutely not accurate.

Mayor Lyles said I raised Comprehensive Plan implementation funding and the Manager explained about the money that was set aside so that doesn't require a vote on my behalf. Use City-owned property for construction of affordable housing. I can put that under Ms. Johnson. ASC – hold decisions until after the stakeholder meeting. The Manager is going to discuss this and we do have some meetings set up so I think the question is or Mr. Newton has asked us to whole the decisions, but I don't know that we need to do that if there is someone who would propose something.

Mr. Egleston said I just wanted to hear Mr. Jones give us an update or maybe an explanation on where we are with that. I think he had indicated to me that he might be able to provide some more information on that.

Mayor Lyles said can I ask this question; we just got two more. The other one is the Cross Charlotte Trail from east to west.

Mr. Bokhari said Madam Mayor, the Manager has put forth the budget to us; he has gone through many, many stakeholder meetings and discussions; this is the plan where we double down, triple down, get more money into the arts community, still help the ASC. I think all we need to do is do a quick vote on that. There is nothing else for us to figure out at this point.

Mr. Newton said it was my understanding that we were engaging in a round of stakeholder meetings for the purpose of considering the request of the ASC and I just feel like if we are being really genuine to that purpose and that intent we would wait to make a decision on any potentially increased funding or lack thereof where I think you might be Tariq, but if we were true to that we would wait until those meetings occur. It is not as though we are going to have to wait that long because these meetings are going to be over the next

week. Frankly, we will have those meetings completed before our next meeting. It was my understanding that we have somewhere in the ballpark and maybe the Manager can speak to this, but somewhere in the ballpark of about \$4.2 million or \$4.6 million that is being set aside and it is not as though the money doesn't exist.

It is just a matter of where our priorities are and depending upon some additional information that is shared, some sort of some congruence or through the conversations with the ASC maybe there is an intention to look at that fund and provide them with a little bit more help. But we won't know that; I just don't want us to be in a position like now making this preliminary decision that would foreclose us or prevent us from being in that position later, particularly given the fact that I think we have set that expectation with the ASC and frankly with artist and other members of the community that was the purpose and intention of these upcoming meeting to discuss those matters and reserve our vote until after those meetings occurred.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Newton, I think that is an excellent point. What I think would be very helpful is to have the Manager walk through what his recommendation is because I think all of us need to be on the same page before going to these meetings. I'm going to ask the Manager to walk through the ASC recommendation because I know that we talk about \$4 million and then we talk about \$800,000 and then we talk \$1.25, but I do want to point out that the ASC asked for this meeting. It wasn't a meeting that we generated, but we wanted to make sure that we did meet with them and we will be meeting with the Creatives as well. Let's make sure we all understand the framework for the ASC funding recommendation. Mr. Newton, did you understand about the Cross Charlotte Trail East to West?

Mr. Newton said the planning and design so there is no need for a vote on that, it is just going straight to planning and design.

Mayor Lyles said no, it is not, we are going to go to the arts funding recommendation now.

Mr. Jones said at the May 3rd presentation there was a request for me to come back with more information related to the structure of the proposal. What I would like to do is just go a little before I guess of January of 2021 where Council had its Annual Strategy Meeting and this was one of the agenda topics, but even prior to that in the FY21 proposals that we received, the ASC asked the City for \$7 million up from the \$3.1 million and a part of that was the realization that new private contributions would be about \$2.5 million. If you start to think about it, just the salaries and the operations for the ASC during FY21 was a little bit over \$3 million, and the collections or let's say the donations, the new private contributions were estimated to be about \$2.4 million.

So, as we started to think about that, I guess the structure, the ASC fine organization, great work that is occurring, however, the workplace giving was drying up and we saw that this year in the United Way. So, we saw that as unsustainable and that was one of the reasons why we had the conversation during the Annual Strategy Meeting in January, which led to the Ad Hock Committee which had recommendations. So, when I started off on the 3rd I'm going to go back to a couple of slides that I had, but then just go a little bit more into depth.

Basically, during the budget presentation I eventually said that from Ad Hock Committee there was a recommendation, they had \$4 million, they had the private sector at least match that, and when we understood that the private sector would come back with \$6 million, my recommendation to you in the budget was to use \$2 million from the American Rescue Plan to match that \$6 million to get to six and six and then you have \$12 million, but it is not just \$12 million for one year, it is \$12 million over a three-year period. I think it is important to also note that in the current year before any CARES funds we saw that there was a 25% decrease in funding for the 38 organizations that typically the ASC funds these operational grants, but also we saw a 34% reduction in what we call the thriving organizations and all of this was pre-pandemic. Again, this was something that was collaborative to see how we can stabilize the arts and culture ecosystem over this three-

year period to give us an opportunity to bring people to the table, have a cultural plan in place and then ultimately have a dedicated funded source after this three-year period.

I want to go into a little bit more depth, but that is what you have before you on May 3rd, but I think this is the best way to describe this. You take the \$12 million in year one, and we are only talking about year one and that \$12 million would be distributed and we needed someone to distribute it and based on what the Foundation of the Carolinas did with the CARES funds, being able to get \$40 plus million out the door, we thought that would be a great partner to have. Let's go to July 1; if you pass this proposal as is when you get to July 1 basically that \$12 million would go to the Foundation for the Carolinas to distribute funds. So, let's think about this, so July 1 you would \$6.1 million and I will explain how that is broken down to these 38 operating organizations, those grants. That is July 1, this is seamless and the same thing July 1. In this budget, there is \$500,000 for cultural, vision, and individual artist grants.

The reason I recommended \$500,000 for that group in the current year it is about 171 organizations and they received a little bit less than \$500,000. So, the concept would be for those organizations they would be no worse off based on this, but also we would give again July 1, there would be \$800,000 that would go to the ASC that would be unrestricted. Basically, that \$800,000 would help ASC with its operations, but also the ASC would distribute that half-million dollar in grants to the cultural, vision, and individual artist grants. So, again, not having whatever the group is, and we will talk about that a bit later, the advisory group to the arts and cultural official, we would have the ASC still play a role in distributing those grants. There is still \$4.6 million that is unallocated, and every discussion has been that \$4.6 million would take into account the recommendations from the Ad Hock Committee and it would also have an equity lens that is related to that.

If we go to the next slide, this one will talk a little bit about these operating grants for the 38 organizations, but what you see are the thriving organizations are highlighted in the Carolina blue and then we have the organizations that are City-owned facilities that have an asterisk beside them then in the italicized we have the organizations who receive funds in FY21, but not in FY20. So, even this year there were a number of organizations that for the first time received funds. One of the things that I recommended in this proposal is to take the higher of the two years in terms of these organizations and let that be the FY2022 allocation, not an application process, using previous information you would just roll this over into these organizations and what that did as we will say in FY20 basically the total funds were close to \$5.6 million, if you go to FY2021 it decreased to about \$4.3 million. That caused a little bit of a problem which I will explain next.

Basically, what you have here are the 38 organizations, so again July 1 the 38 organizations, the higher of the two-years would be the grant to those organizations, a total of \$6.1 million. If you go to the next slide, and I think this is something that really hasn't been discussed, we talked about the 171 organizations that received grants in FY21, that is the half-million dollars that will go to the ASC to be distributed. The County has also provided \$225,000 in the proposed budget for cultural, vision grants and another \$225,000 for creative individuals in their proposed budget too, so almost a million dollars for these groups which is twice as much as they've had in the current year, not taking into account CARES funds.

Then lastly, again July 1, \$1.3 million would go to the ASC with the \$800,000 being unrestricted for the ASC and the half-million dollars of the City's proposal for the cultural vision grants and the individual artists' grants. I want to go back a few slides; one unintended consequence of blending the two years is that the ASC had taken the higher of the two years in terms of these 38 organizations. It really goes to the Harvey Gantt Center. When the funding got lower in FY21, which is about \$4.3 million, the Harvey Gantt Center received a higher percentage of the total fund in FY21 than it had traditionally, 4.7% versus something closer I think to 3.3%. When you take the higher of the two years actually the Harvey Gantt Center proportionally receives less under this proposal so I'm just asking for one thing that I would like to address and I call this my mistake, is that we take about \$150,000 from that remaining \$4.6 million and apply that to the Harvey Gantt Center and that will give them closer to between 5% and 6% of the total which is

consistent with what was occurring in FY21 so, one of the unintended consequences of taking the higher of the two is that when you actually did better in year two, you do worse if you go into the third year. So, that is one thing I would like to amend what I've proposed, but outside of that, we can go back to where we were. It is about \$150,000 to add to the \$201.

Now, we spent a lot of time talking about the first year, but during the first year there will be a cultural plan that is developed by this community, not by me or the Council, but it is the ASC, it is the artists, it is the 38 organizations and that will set the vision for this city for the next decade. So, again we talked about year one, but in year two there isn't an allocation of the resources because you don't have the plan. There have been discussions about given the ASC money in year two and year three, but there isn't any allocation in year two and year three because the cultural plan is very important. What this plan does not do, this interim funding plan, these three years, it doesn't eliminate the ASC, it doesn't reduce funding for previously granted organizations, all the ones that we've been talking about. It does not determine the future of funding allocation for arts and culture and artists and it doesn't exclude the Creatives in the community from informing what this plan will be. So, I think that is very important, the plan doesn't do that. But what it does do, and I think this is equally as important; it reflects the recommendations of the Ad Hock Committee, it addresses this continued reduction in workplace giving. Again, there was a revenue problem here, not an ASC problem, but it was a revenue problem and it gets us to three years of stability as we get the Arts and Cultural Plan together for the next decade.

Again, we talked about the greater of the two years, it creates this mechanism for distribution of the funds through the Foundation of the Carolinas and then it establishes an Arts and Culture Officer, and I don't know what the title will actually be, let's use that for now. This Arts and Cultural Advisory Board that would be selected by the Council membership as well as the private sector and that would help this Arts and Cultural Officer with the implementation of the study, understanding how the allocations of these remaining \$4.6 million minus the \$150,000 as well as what years two and three will look like.

I just ended with what I think I had in the presentation also, so my apologies for not all the stuff in the middle of it, but we ended by basically saying in FY2022 we would establish this Arts and Culture Officer, we would continue funding the operating grants, we would continue funding the vision grants and the individual artist grants and as we get to FY2022-2024 beyond, we develop this plan and we include all and I wish I would have underscored that all of the individuals in the ecosystem in the creation of that plan and we identify this long-term sustainability for arts funding. I will say that even with some of the selections for this advisory group it would be the current Board Members of the ASC. This is not the end of the ASC, this is just the beginning of what Arts and Culture, the ecosystem in the City would look like in the City for the next decade. So, that is the update that I have for the Mayor and Council and I hope that was helpful.

Mayor Lyles said I think it as very helpful and I asked Ms. Jackson to make sure that she would mail a copy of your deck out to everyone because I think it really does help us as we go thinking through this. We've had an Arts and Culture Plan for 40-years, just like we are doing so many different things, we actually have the opportunity to create one that I hope will not last 40-years, but will serve this community at least 10-years over the next fiscal year. There have been lots of conversations about this effort and I just want to start off with Council questions about understanding what the Manager's recommendation is and then we will have a straw vote on this and we will have the meetings that we have planned during the next week for Councilmembers that would like to participate, the Arts and Science Council as well as the Creatives. In conversation with Councilmember Eiselt who led the Ad Hock Committee, we decided those meetings were best held together because there has been an issue around communication of what we are really doing and we wanted to make sure everyone heard the same thing and the same information as we are this afternoon.

Mr. Driggs said I just want to say in general this has been somewhat a bumpy ride frankly. I am and was a Board Member of the ASC and I continue to attend meetings while it was apparent that we were going to move in a different direction and then I stopped because I was in a conflict situation. We have a long-standing partnership with the ASC and there are many people loyal to that organization that are questioning what we are doing. So, I do feel however that the Manager's proposal is the right way for us to go because we need to appreciate that we are basically quadrupling the funding that the City is providing or arranging in support of the arts and creating financial stability in a situation where there really wasn't. We are stabilizing funding [inaudible] for important institutions, we are also identifying capacity for a general vibrant arts community.

I don't think our purposes are that different from the ones that the ASC would have adopted. So, I think this is the right plan and to the particular line item I would just repeat, I feel that unless somebody thinks that the amount of the investing we are intending to make should change that we can move forward with this. We can have those conversations and to me the effect of those conversations, if any, would be a modification of the allocations that you proposed within the funding that is already on the table. I don't think I'm hearing a suggestion that we change the overall funding. I guess I would say in that sense I will vote in favor of this motion with the idea that we will listen to the ASC and meet with them and try to accommodate just in terms of the outlook for the future, the concerns that people who support them have while at the same time implementing a change in governance that we feel is necessary for conjunction with this increase in funding.

Mr. Newton said what I'm saying is we don't know whether to change the overall funding and with all due respect I don't know why the presentation here was necessary because the item is about us making good on our commitment. We made a commitment to have stakeholder meetings with the ASC and that is on their requests, that is the expectation. They have made requests to meet with us to discuss increases in funding and I don't know what the point of those meetings are if we are already preemptively making the decision here today on that funding. I think it is only fair that we leave the possibility open pending those meetings. I think that they have made clear that they are more than willing to move on by the fundraising grant writing for the legacy organizations, I guess the 33 that we saw in the presentation, but I think it has been widely acknowledged, particularly in light of their equity study that they do a really great job of a match with grant writing for individual Creatives.

I truly believe until we sit down and maybe hear from them a little bit further we don't know exactly what additional need is going to exist there and to that point if the additional need does exist how we will change the overall funding in and of itself. That is why I ask, the point of this is to say let's take a step back, let's wait to make any preliminary decision, particularly the decision based upon this presentation we received, once again I don't quite know why we received it because I don't think it speaks to the item itself, but we take a step back until those stakeholder meetings are done and that is what the item is, for us to wait until those stakeholder meetings are completed before we make any final decisions.

Ms. Ajmera said I have had multiple meetings with the ASC and their stakeholders and also stakeholders in the Arts and Cultural community. I guess at this point I don't know what additional information would change our vote, but at the same time I do want to give the ASC an opportunity to make their case when we meet them next week, and for us to have additional meetings with them. I'm open to having this discussed at our next week's budget meeting. If the majority of the Council decides that that is a key meeting where it could change our mind, so I'm open to that idea, but at this point, all of my questions have been addressed by the City Manager so I don't have any additional questions right now.

Mayor Lyles said I want to make sure; no-one is saying that we shouldn't have the meeting. I think Mr. Newton was just saying let's not talk about here and to hold decisions. We are not making any decisions more than just having this information, so we weren't asking for a decision. Mr. Newton wasn't in when we did the introduction of five if you want to make a change or that it could continue, but the meetings are going to be held

next week and the voting on the budget to direct the changes in the Manager's budget is going to be held on the 26th.

I'm wondering what we are talking about. I think I wanted to make sure all of the Councilmembers understood the Manager's recommendation, but I don't think there is any problem with having the stakeholder meetings, in fact, our office set them up. So, we arranged the meetings and invited the people that are coming because we want to have this conversation and so, the thing that we did I think the question is for me we are not finalizing anything today. We will have the stakeholder meetings and if you have the meetings next week you still have the ability, you just have to have the six votes to direct any changes that you want.

Mr. Newton said maybe I'm confused then Madam Mayor because I guess I was under the impression that unless a budget adjustment was proposed, motioned, and approved by five Councilmembers today it would not move forward and there would not be opportunities to propose additional budget adjustments later. Say, for example, next week after the stakeholder meetings if a Councilmember were so inclined to propose a new budget adjustment altogether that Councilmember could do that.

Mayor Lyles said let me ask this question; a budget adjustment, if you are suggesting that you want to add additional money beyond the \$4.6 million that the Manager has put in the budget, then yes, you should say that now. That would be an important vote.

Mr. Newton, I don't think any of us knows, and I don't think it is fair to the Arts and Science Council who have the expectation that they will be meeting us to talk about the potential of a budget adjustment, I don't think it is fair to them for us move forward before meeting with them is what I'm saying. And in so doing foreclose that opportunity if we feel like it is warranted at a later date.

Mayor Lyles said I feel like I'm talking in a circle, but Mr. Jones.

Mr. Jones said I guess there are a couple of things; one is that the proposal for FY2022, especially with the 38 organizations, I don't think there is an expectation that Council would go in and start giving more money to organizations. I try to deal with a mathematical problem with one, but if Mr. Newton is basically saying he wants to leave the door open to give the ASC more money from the pot of \$12 million then I think he should put that on the table for an adjustment.

Mayor Lyles said did you hear the Manager? I think he is saying that if you want to put more than what has been allocated in his recommendation that you should put that item on the table for a vote.

Mr. Newton said it is railroading, it is railroading us, it is railroading the ASC to do that. It is putting the cart before the horse before we have that opportunity. Once again, we need to fulfill our commitment. The reason why we are meeting with the ASC is because they have made the request. A part of those requests are the increases in funding which constitute a budget adjustment.

Mayor Lyles said how many Councilmembers have already met with the ASC more than once. Raise your hand if you have already met with them more than once. I think most of us have some idea in concept about what this is doing and so the question is do you want to –

Mr. Newton said what is the purpose of the upcoming meetings?

Mayor Lyles said they asked for it and I thought it was always good, when people ask we try to accommodate. I think the purpose of the meeting is to explain where the Council is, and I'm just saying that if you are on the Council and you are expecting that you would fund more than recommended by the Manager, that would be something to take a vote on now because that would give you better service around what your colleagues are

thinking before you go to a meeting. The worse thing would be to go to the meeting and say I'm going to give you \$15 million and not have any support.

Mr. Newton said it itemized for a vote and I will leave it at that. The item I'm proposing is for us, much like it is written on the screen here, is to hold our decision on any of this until after the stakeholder meeting.

Mayor Lyles said for what purpose?

Mr. Newton said for us to meet with them like we made the commitment to do, to be fully informed on their side of this matter before we make a decision on the overall funding team which I think is reasonable. I don't think that is a crazy concept, I don't think that is unreasonable.

Mr. Driggs said Mr. Newton, I understand what you are saying to be that we should not do anything today that precludes a modification of the allocation that is proposed to the ASC. We should not do anything today that precludes a reaction to the meetings we have with them when next week comes. I don't think that is a big lift, so you put something out, the total amount of money that is out there, the portion that we might allocate to the ASC is offered, but we are not doing anything today that completely excludes the possibility that based on conversations with them we look again and that is all.

That is all I really think you are getting at is that we don't want to have a problem next week where because of what we did today we can't respond to anything the ASC says to us. I'm willing to support that, I don't want to send a message to the ASC today that we are unwilling to think about what they tell us in these meetings. I don't know what the outcome of the meetings will be, we need to explain our position to them, but I don't think it costs anything for us to say right now that it is not our intention in this meeting to exclude further discussion of the portion of the arts funding that will go to the ASC at the straw votes. Is that fair?

Mayor Lyles said I just asked the Manager what did he say and I'm going to ask him again, he said that if any Councilmember is thinking that they would increase the funding beyond what is in his recommendation this is the time to do it. The numbers time is today. I'm just repeating what he said and if it is not that then the meeting thing is something we can do, but to say that you are holding a decision, we have to know that if someone is going to suggest more money, then that is when we should have that.

Mr. Driggs said if you go from \$800,000 to \$1 million for the ASC within the \$12 million that is not a budget event.

Mayor Lyles said that is not, that is exactly what I'm saying. So, if it is more than \$12 million –

Mr. Driggs said so let's just agree that we are not today locking ourselves in totally to the \$800,000, we will talk to them and then we will finalize our decision about that number next week. We have to do so in consultation with our private partners anyway if we were to make a change. I think the observation that we did not shut the door on the possibility that we will be open to whatever they tell us in these meetings is something we ought to be able to accommodate.

Mr. Jones said I guess what I'm trying to make sure that I understand what our process is, so what I believe is going to occur next Wednesday is that anything that is on the screen will come back to you in whatever form it is in. But, I don't anticipate that new things would come next week so, all I'm asking is a pathway forward to entertain different funding for the ASC because if it is not on that list for this Council then anybody can start adding new stuff next week and I don't think that is what you want.

Mr. Newton said to make an exception here because otherwise, this is a complete [inaudible]

Ms. Eiselt said what I think satisfies both things would be that the Manager's recommendation is a set amount of money that is split between grants, future work, unallocated in the ASC and that is a set amount of money, \$4 million-plus \$2 million. That is the budget number so I think what Mr. Newton is saying, and if this is okay with you Mr. Newton, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but if we agree the budget number is the budget number, the discussion is how that gets allocated, that is the future conversation. Am I wrong about that Mr. Jones? It will have to come out somewhere else within that arts budget if somebody asks to give the ASC more money. It is going to come out of whatever goes to grants or whatever, but the bottom-line number would stay the same in the budget.

Mr. Jones said I agree. I guess all I'm trying to do is to help having a smooth meeting next week. If the Council is fine with having any discussion on the ASC without it being on the list then let's move forward.

Mayor Lyles said I think what Ms. Eiselt has said is that we have this set amount, but that set amount includes the money for the 38 organizations, it includes the money for the Creatives and I think the question is are we okay with changing and shifting that funding around if we go with the statement that Mr. Newton has made and is there a cap on it. I understand the budget number, I get that part, but I just want to make sure when people come in next week and there is a motion that we do something that we would not have had awareness of today, is that going to be acceptable.

Mr. Jones said my only concern is that if the concept is it is \$12 million and roughly \$4.6 million minus \$150,000 that is unallocated, and Council comes in next week and decides to allocate the other \$4.4 million I think that would be problematic. I'm just trying to figure out what the process is and if it is just about the ASC let's make it just about the ASC, but if this is just somebody comes in next week and says I'd like to give a million more to this organization, that is a problem.

Mayor Lyles said I actually think we've talked about it enough to see where we stand.

Ms. Johnson said I guess I would ask Mr. Newton if the process changed and the dollar amount stays the same is that something that you would consider Mr. Newton? I understand what you are saying, but I think the discussion today is we have to define an amount no matter who the recipient is. So, is there a way to leave that amount, and then should the process change after we've met with the ASC then we could always change the process I guess, but it wouldn't be a budgetary item.

Mr. Newton said think what we are saying, and I feel like we don't have the answers. I know I don't have all the answers to say where I am going to be in an increase or us remaining where we are with our current funding for both or for the ASC, but I think what I'm hearing is that we do have an overall budget for arts funding in the \$12 million, possibly \$12 million-plus range and there is a portion of that set-aside, that \$4.6 million that I believe is unallocated at this point. I think what you were saying Ms. Eiselt, is that is an amount that can be considered should we decide that we would want to increase the funding for the ASC.

Ms. Eiselt said right, it would have to come out of that, so the bottom-line number stays the same.

Mr. Newton said did that answer your questions, Ms. Johnson?

Ms. Johnson said it answered my question, but as far as the process of today's meeting if Mr. Jones can move forward with finalizing the budget because the allocation I think would still be open. Help me out, Mr. Jones. Would that help if we decided at the meeting that we want to continue with our current funding, and we want to leave a pathway open to fund ASC putting in the process while still moving forward with the budget finalization?

Mr. Jones said Ms. Johnson, yes you could, and you should. I just would like to have some direction to know that is what you are asking and absent something I don't know what you are asking.

Ms. Johnson said I think the amount, and it is up to Mr. Newton, it is his motion, so I'll defer to him.

Mayor Lyles said it is held decisions on the ASC until after the stakeholder's meeting. That is what Mr. Newton has put on the table and I think that is probably the way that we should try to figure out where we stand as a Council and it takes five votes to move that forward. I'm going to go ahead and do a roll call vote on the question of hold decisions on this, but it is still open for change next week. The consequence of this is that next week people could come in and say decrease, increase, reverse, go forward, or not. That is what the decision would be. Is everybody understanding that?

Mr. Bokhari said Madam Mayor, not to delay the point, I think we vote on this for sure right now, however, I think there is nothing stopping us if something changes from doing that as a group. It takes six votes at any point in time so, if we learn something brand new that we don't know, then we do all that and we have six votes, however, right now I would encourage all my colleagues to just vote no because we have a strategy based on all the facts that we know for months and months and months, but if something does change it doesn't back us into a corner that we can't act before we approve and adopt a formal budget.

Mayor Lyles said I've never seen Mr. Jones hold back a reasonable thought because it stood in the way of a process. I think sometimes guys we are struggling more than we need to. Let's take the vote on Mr. Newton's motion. So, yes would mean that we did not address this issue at all today; no would mean that we would continue on the path that we are. Is everybody squared on that?

Councilmember Watlington left the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

The vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Johnson, and Newton.

NAYS: Councilmembers Bokhari, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, Phipps, and Winston.

Mr. Newton said so what is the policy and I had asked the City Attorney this, when a Councilmember has been in a meeting and has left doesn't that Councilmember automatically become a yes vote?

Mayor Lyles said it is a straw vote for next week. It is not anything to stand in the way.

Mr. Newton said so Ms. Watlington not being here right now just eliminates her vote altogether and you are saying there still needed to be five rather than some other accommodation for losing a Councilmember. If we could get an opinion on that from the City Attorney.

Mayor Lyles said okay, we will get an opinion and if everybody votes yes then there will be a change and it is a yes vote that is fine. I think what you are seeing is a reflection of the people in the room right now and that is what it is and the people that are virtual. If it is more votes for yes then that is fine too. I think we've really belabored this because of the rules and procedures.

Mr. Newton said I want to make sure we do it procedurally is all I'm asking, is that we make sure we do this thing right procedurally, whatever our procedure is for straw votes. I don't know so that is why I'm asking.

Mayor Lyles said if anyone leaves the meeting without being excused, what is the answer, Mr. Baker?

Patrick Baker, City Attorney said the issue is this is a straw vote; you don't have procedures for straw votes. It is very informal. In a normal circumstance, if this was a regular agenda item and someone left the room but was at the meeting, they would be recorded as a yes vote. You don't have procedures and if I understand your straw voting process is you need an actual affirmative vote to move it forward as opposed to [inaudible].

Mayor Lyles said are you good Mr. Newton?

Mr. Newton said yes ma'am.

Councilmember Winston left the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Mayor Lyles said the next item is – Mr. Newton would you state what you want on the East/West?

Mr. Newton said it sounds like after hearing the City Manager's explanation on this, it sounds like we are in a very preliminary or even a preliminarily preliminary stage here. It was my understanding that this would be referred to Planning and Design for further review and development, but maybe I misunderstood that. Frankly, I was okay with moving forward with the process of the Cross Charlotte Trail Connector from West to East making good on that recommendation from the Charlotte Moves Task Force basically is what I'm getting at. But, maybe I misunderstood the point that the City Manager said before.

Mr. Jones said Council could do that. We would put it in the planning fund much like we did the two roads, the two intersections, the Animal Care Center and Police Stations, Fire Stations. When we started this fund a couple of years ago the concept was please don't put something in that fund that you don't intend to actually fund. So, putting this in the fund would say that this is a priority for the Council that has come above other priorities like other roads, other intersections, things of that nature, and we would do it. We would design it, we would figure out what the costs are, but you typically don't put something in that fund that is not already being the priority. Did I get that right, Ryan?

Mr. Bergman said right, so the way this fund works is we would be spending money immediately on planning and design with the impression that in the near future there would be a bond referendum or COPS (Certificates of Participation) or debt of something that would pay the advance planning fund back. I would caution that we shouldn't put something in unless there is a chance in the near future that we would start the process of the project because otherwise what may happen is you do the work ahead of time and by the time you are ready with a bond or something it is out of date.

Mr. Newton said I would ask that this be placed in the planning fund. We as a Council have taken on more responsibility with our trail system based upon our acknowledgment that these are transit corridors. I think you can certainly make the case that East and West Charlotte are in the most need for transit options, the fewest jobs so certainly the highest populations that need to get from one place to the other just to make ends meet. So, certainly, I think that this is a priority. We don't have those connections frankly, we do have connections in the form of the Blue Line, in the form of the Cross Charlotte Trail One, but those don't serve the neediest populations which are in West and East Charlotte. I would ask that this be placed in that planning fund and be made a priority of the City Council.

Mayor Lyles said this is a vote on moving the planning and design for an East/West Connection to the Cross Charlotte Trail into a planning fund.

The vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Johnson, and Newton.

NAYS: Councilmember Bokhari, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Graham, and Phipps.

Mayor Lyles said that one does not move forward. I think that is the end of our list, but I want to make sure. Is there anything that we missed Ms. Harris?

Marie Harris, Strategy and Budget said [inaudible]

Mayor Lyles said I'm going to ask us to go back to #11, the idea about the housing framework allocation, the focus, and intentionality for homeownership, the review of programs that exists that would allow us to build neighborhoods and create more homeownership opportunities, including those things that Ms. Watlington had which we did include already. Let's have a roll call vote on the housing programs and the intentionality of homeownership.

The vote was recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Egleston, Eiselt, Johnson, Newton, and Phipps.

NAYS: Councilmember Bokhari.

Ms. Johnson said we are going to add one of your suggestions Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said yes, I said the neighborhoods and that does have more than five votes. That was the last item on our list I believe.

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ITEM NO. 4: REVIEW NEXT STEPS

This item was not addressed.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Egleston, seconded by Councilmember Eiselt, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.



Stephanie Bello, Deputy City Clerk

Length of Meeting: 3 Hours, 35 Minutes
Minutes Completed: July 8, 2021