

Salisbury, North Carolina
March 1, 2016

REGULAR MEETING

PRESENT: Mayor Karen Kirks Alexander, Presiding; Mayor Pro Tem Maggie A. Blackwell; Council Members Kenneth Hardin, William Brian Miller, and David Post; City Manager W. Lane Bailey; City Clerk Myra B. Heard, and City Attorney F. Rivers Lawther, Jr.

ABSENT: None.

Salisbury City Council met in Council Chambers in City Hall located at 217 South Main Street. Councilmember Post led those present in a moment of silence. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Alexander at 5:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Alexander led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Alexander welcomed all visitors present.

PROCLAMATION

Mayor Alexander proclaimed the following observance:

MARCH FOR MEALS MONTH

March 2016

CONSENT AGENDA

(a) Approval of Minutes

Approve Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 16, 2016 and the Special Meeting of January 27-28, 2016.

(b) Sidewalk Encroachment

Approve a sidewalk encroachment at 132 North Main Street in accordance with Section 22-17 of the City Code, subject to the North Carolina Department of Transportation approval.

Thereupon, Ms. Blackwell made a **motion** to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilmember Hardin thanked staff for their work on the Minutes, and he seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Meses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

HIGHLIGHTS AND GOALS – TOURISM AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Rowan Convention and Visitors Bureau Director James Meacham and Salisbury Tourism and Cultural Development Commission (STCDC) Chair Bill Burgin presented the highlights and goals for STCDC. Mr. Burgin explained the Salisbury-Rowan County Convention and Visitors Bureau consists of two boards that function as one: the City's STCDC and Rowan County's Tourism Development Authority.

Mr. Burgin reviewed the STCDC goals:

- Increase the economic impact of the visitor economy
 - Goal of \$250 million annual impact by 2023
 - Current annual impact of \$154 million through 2014
 - 32 percent growth from 2008 to 2014

Mr. Meacham explained the objective is to bring visitors to the community, with a primary focus on overnight visitors who have a greater economic impact. He reviewed the four focus areas: leadership and support, marketing, development, and visitor services.

Mr. Meacham pointed out visitor services is the foundation focus and includes:

- Standard visitor services
 - Welcome brochure, website, 1-800 number etc.
- Expanded services
 - Kiosk system, group and tour services, partner support, and digital services that reach 1.2 million visitors a year
- Destination services
 - Wayfinding signage, digital infrastructure, and continuous partner engagement

Mr. Meacham noted destination development includes physical infrastructure and:

- Product investment
 - Wayfinding signage and the trolley system
 - Funds were given to Lee Street Theater, the Fairgrounds Event Center, Christmas decorations, Gateway/Visitor Center improvements, public art, and streetscapes projects in partnership with Downtown Salisbury, Inc. (DSI)
- Product expansions: integrated developments
 - RailWalk – food/beverage, arts, rail, etc.
 - Trolley programming that can be expanded to include multiple sites, partners, locations, and programming
 - Tourism businesses – hotels, agri-business, dining

Mr. Meacham explained destination marketing supports its partners who bring visitors to the community for an overnight stay through:

- Incentivized visitation
 - 2,500 room nights directly supported in 2015
 - Incentives are based off on overnight stays
 - 2,500 room nights added \$1.2 million to the local economy and supported 24 partners
 - Based on packages and promotions that focus on overnight visitors
 - Equally applied to group, business, and leisure

Mr. Meacham then reviewed destination leadership and support:

- Leadership:
 - Branding
 - Digital infrastructure
 - Arts Council
 - Gateway Building consolidation
 - County and Municipal support as needed for education, sports and recreation, and partners and community engagement

Mr. Meacham noted the CVB will continue to develop the visitor economy by capitalizing on visitor interests to maximize the return on investment. He pointed out overnight visitors spend approximately \$200 while day visitors spend approximately \$50.

Councilmember Hardin asked how 1.2 million virtual visitors equate to actual visitors who bring funds into the community. Mr. Meacham explained many visitors take advantage of events that are announced through the CVB's website, social media, email, and newsletter. He commented a \$40 investment by the CVB resulted in a \$120 investment for area hotels, and he pointed out the promotion was only offered digitally. He indicated 250 hotel room were booked for the event in 2015 as opposed to 10 hotel rooms in the past.

Mr. Hardin referenced the 2,500 overnight visits in 2015 and asked if the visitors attended events in the City. Mr. Meacham explained the 2,500 room nights were for events the CVB helped bring to the community, and he added 85 to 90 percent of the overnight visits were generated by an activity that took place in Rowan County or the City.

Councilmember Miller pointed out there is a tournament coming to the City this summer that will take place on a weekend that historically is not a big draw for the City. He added the tournament will bring new business to the City, and there will be an inventory of hotel rooms to accommodate the visitors.

Mr. Hardin clarified the \$1.2 million investment is in the local economy. Mr. Meacham agreed, and he pointed out the \$1.2 million does not include the entire economic impact, only expenditures for visitors the CVB brought to the community.

Councilmember Post noted the CVB has a current economic impact of \$154 million and projects an annual impact of \$250 million by 2023. He asked where the additional funding would come from. Mr. Meacham explained the base number is determined by the North Carolina Department of Commerce using tax and expenditure data for each county. He stated it took Rowan County 15 years to double its impact, and the CVB would like to double the impact in 10 years which would require a five percent annual growth rate. He pointed out Rowan County averages a six percent annual growth rate.

Mr. Burgin stated the \$.01 for capital investment is helping grow the economy. Mr. Meacham commented the City's investments in micro-breweries, arts, culture, and sports tourism also promote economic growth.

Mr. Post asked about the revenue a hotel generates for internet and television. Mr. Meacham noted hotels have substantial internet and television usage and generate substantial revenue.

Mayor Alexander thanked Mr. Burgin and Mr. Meacham for their presentation and all they do for the City. She pointed out the Little League tournament will bring approximately 1,000 hotel room nights to the City. Mr. Meacham explained Rowan County will host three age divisions of the Girls Little League Softball World Series July 21, 2016 through July 24, 2016. He stated the tournament will have a substantial economic impact on the area because nothing else is taking place during that time.

RENAMING LINCOLN POOL

Parks and Recreation Director Nick Aceves asked Council to consider renaming the Lincoln Pool to the Fred M Evans Pool at Lincoln Park. He stated no comments were received by the Parks and Recreation Department during the 30-day comment period.

Councilmember Hardin noted he continues to hear about the impact Mr. Evans had on the community, and he added the remarks confirm renaming the pool in his honor is the right thing to do.

Thereupon, Mr. Hardin made a **motion** to rename the pool at Lincoln Park to the Fred M. Evans Pool at Lincoln Park. Ms. Blackwell seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Mses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

FY2016-2017 BUDGET REQUEST – DOWNTOWN SALISBURY, INC.

Ms. Paula Bohland, Executive Director Downtown Salisbury Inc. (DSI) and Mr. Greg Shields, DSI President, addressed Council regarding 2016-2017 City Budget Requests. Ms. Bohland noted downtown is the economic center of the community. She stated over \$128 million has been invested in the downtown since DSI's inception in 1980, with a net gain of over 1,100 downtown jobs and 343 downtown businesses. She indicated approximately 4,500 people currently work in the downtown.

Ms. Bohland noted last year the City provided DSI with \$132,800 in funding. She pointed out in 2015 there were \$1.7 million in private downtown investment with a net gain of 14 businesses, four business expansions, 42 full-time jobs, and 16 façade improvements.

Ms. Bohland stated in 2015 DSI worked with the Downtown Salisbury Merchant Association to provide over 20 downtown events which:

- Averaged 1,500 participants
- Specifically marketed to various demographics
- Merchants report significant sales increases from the prior year

Ms. Bohland noted downtown continues to thrive, but additional opportunities need to be addressed:

- Downtown improvements
- Empire Hotel development
- A partially recovered economy
- Continued support for existing businesses

Ms. Bohland pointed out focus groups requested a walkable, attractive, and pedestrian friendly downtown.

Ms. Bohland explained DSI requests an additional \$57,778, as a one-time request, to contract with the Centralina Council of Government (COG). Mr. Shields explained COG will serve as a third party evaluator and advisor for redevelopment of the Empire Hotel and the Downtown Improvement Project.

Mayor Alexander thanked Ms. Bohland and Mr. Shields for all their presentation and all they do to promote downtown.

Councilmember Hardin noted there are a number of empty buildings on North Main Street,

and he asked about the focus to fill those buildings. Mr. Shields stated development of the Washington building will serve as an anchor for the block, and he pointed out development of the Empire Hotel will serve as a catalyst for filling empty spaces on South Main Street. Ms. Bohland added redevelopment of the Bernhardt and Washington Buildings will create additional revitalization.

Mr. Hardin asked what is being done to attract older citizens, who may not consume alcohol, to the downtown. Ms. Bohland noted the City has a Downtown Master Plan that will be reviewed in the coming years, and she pointed out different sectors of downtown are designed for specific demographics.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Alexander opened the floor for public comment.

Mr. Al Harkins, Capital Outdoor, and Mr. Bill Earnhardt, addressed Council regarding a billboard that has been on Mr. Earnhardt's property for 30 years. Mr. Harkins explained the billboard was recently upgraded to include a digital display that can promote eight different ads. He noted he has spoken to staff several times, and he would like to use the billboard's digital display. He pointed out the billboards are used in larger cities and allow more businesses to advertise on one location. He explained the billboard is located on the I-85 corridor next to Tilley Harley Davidson. He asked Council for its assistance regarding the digital billboard.

Councilmember Post stated the Planning Board and the Community Appearance Commission (CAC) have held public hearings regarding signage for approximately six months. He suggested Mr. Harkins and Mr. Earnhardt contact Planning and Development Services Manager Preston Mitchell.

Mayor Alexander stated the Planning Board and CAC are working on digital signage. She suggested Mr. Harkins and Mr. Earnhardt present their case to the Committee members who will bring their recommendation to the Planning Board. Mr. Post suggested Mr. Harkins and Mr. Earnhardt contact Mr. Sam Ketner who is actively pursuing a digital sign for his business.

Ms. Linda Cureton Dillard, 515 Woodland Creek Drive, and Mr. Benjamin Cureton, 2029 Amity Hill Road, addressed Council regarding restitution for the maintenance of Burton Avenue. Ms. Dillard noted the family never received restitution for paving and maintenance of Burton Avenue. She requested to meet with staff regarding the request, and she pointed out the West End needs City investment.

Mayor Alexander asked City Manager Lane Bailey to contact Ms. Dillard and Mr. Cureton.

There being no one else to speak, Mayor Alexander closed the public comment session.

FY2016-2017 BUDGET REQUEST – SALISBURY ROWAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Salisbury–Rowan Economic Development Commission (EDC) Executive Director Robert Van Geons explained the EDC consists of Rowan County and its ten municipalities.

Mr. Van Geons reviewed recent projects within the City, and he referenced approximately \$100 million worth of projects under construction in the community. He pointed out the EDC has 58 active projects, with 42 of the projects added during the current fiscal year.

Mr. Van Geons noted the EDC focuses on existing industry, attracting new business, airport development, advanced data technology, and new retail recruitment. He reviewed the property available in Rowan County:

- 161 total buildings listed
 - 90 inside the City limits or 56 percent
 - Smallest building listed is 400 square feet, 2710 South Main Street
 - Largest building listed is 200,000 square feet, Cone Mills 750 South Railroad Street
- Total sites listed – 84
 - 17 inside the City limits or 20 percent
 - Smallest site listed is the North Long Street lot at .50 acres
 - Largest site listed is the Kern Business Park at 72.40 acres

Mr. Van Geons reviewed the strategic initiatives:

- Virtual preapproved development
- Partner with Fibrant to develop and support a business development and attraction strategy
- Expand and improve the County-wide economic development strategy
- Opportunities for new industrial building product within, and adjacent to, the City

Mr. Van Geons explained EDC funding requests are based on a formula agreed upon by the EDC’s partners:

- Each year the EDC recalculates its funding request, based on current information
- Funding requests can increase or decrease annually
- EDC requests \$89,088 for FY 2016-2017
- \$120 less than FY 2015-2016 funding

Mayor Alexander thanked Mr. Van Geons for his presentation.

Mayor Pro Tem Blackwell noted the community has lost projects when it did not meet the air standards, and she pointed out the community now meets the air standards. Mr. Van Geons stated meeting the air standards will assist with economic development.

SALISBURY VISION 2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Planning and Development Services Manager Janet Gapen and Planner Catherine Garner announced the kick-off of the planning process to update the Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Gapen noted the Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2001, and she pointed out it is time to update, reestablish, and modernize the vision for the coming decades.

Ms. Garner explained the Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan guides decisions made by Planning Board and Council. She added it drives projects in the community and provides backup for dealing with outside agencies. She noted staff is seeking applications for the Steering Committee:

- Appointees
 - Up to 15 citizens will be selected to serve on the Committee
 - Represent a diverse cross-section of the community with different geographic, economic, generational, and social perspectives
- Duties
 - Regularly scheduled meetings
 - Participation at scheduled public events and meetings
 - Provide input on drafts to staff and the consultant
 - Other tasks and activities as needed

Ms. Garner stated the Steering Committee orientation will be held April 21, 2016 from 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m. She noted Committee members will interview consultants during the week of April 25, 2016. She indicated public input and community visioning sessions will be held from May through November 2016, and she commented the updates to the Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan have a target completion date of February 2018.

Mayor Alexander encouraged citizens who are interested in serving on the Steering Committee to apply.

Councilmember Post asked if an ad could be placed in the Salisbury Post to make the community aware of the Steering Committee. Ms. Gapen referenced an advertising plan that includes purchasing advertising, working with the Communications Team to feature ads on media outlets, and working with existing Boards and Commissions.

Thereupon, Mr. Miller made a **motion** to adopt a Resolution of Intent to update the Salisbury Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan and establish a Steering Committee. Mr. Post seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Mses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

RESOLUTION OF INTENT TO UPDATE THE SALISBURY VISION 2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ESTABLISH A STEERING COMMITTEE.

(The above Resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book No. 15 at Page No. 8, and is known as Resolution 2016-07)

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Alternate Methods of Design Commission

Upon a motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Blackwell, and with Messrs. Post and Hardin and Ms. Alexander voting AYE, the following reappointments were made to the Alternate Methods of Design Commission:

Mr. Alex Bost	Term Expires 3/31/19
Mr. Chris Bradshaw	Term Expires 3/31/19.

Greenway Committee

Upon a motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Blackwell, and with Messrs. Hardin and Post and Ms. Alexander voting AYE, the following reappointments were made to the Greenway Committee:

Mr. Greg Greene	Term Expires 3/31/19
Ms. Carole Massey	Term Expires 3/31/19
Dr. Sashi Sabaratnam	Term Expires 3/31/19

Community Appearance

Upon a motion by Mr. Post, seconded by Ms. Blackwell, and with Messrs. Hardin and Post and Ms. Alexander voting AYE, the following reappointment was made to the Community Appearance Commission:

Mr. Nathan Coyle	Term Expires 3/31/19
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Housing Advocacy Commission

Upon a motion by Ms. Blackwell, seconded by Mr. Miller, and with Messrs. Hardin and Post and Ms. Alexander voting AYE, the following reappointments were made to the Housing Advocacy Commission:

Mr. William Matthews	Term Expires 03/31/19
Mr. Calvin Turner	Term Expires 03/31/19
Mr. Victor Wallace	Term Expires 03/31/19

Human Relations Council

Upon a motion by Mr. Post, seconded by Mr. Miller, and with Mr. Hardin and Messes. Alexander and Blackwell voting AYE, the following reappointments were made to the Human Relations Council:

Ms. Sue McHugh	Term Expires 03/31/19
Ms. Dora Wood	Term Expires 03/31/19

Hurley Park Advisory Board

Upon a motion by Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Blackwell, and with Messrs. Hardin and Post and Ms. Alexander voting AYE, the following reappointments were made to the Hurley Park Advisory Board:

Ms. Gerry Hurley	Term Expires 03/31/19
Mr. Jim Whittington	Term Expires 03/31/19

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

Upon a motion by Mr. Hardin, seconded by Ms. Blackwell, and with Messrs. Miller and Post and Ms. Alexander voting AYE, the following reappointment was made to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:

Ms. Beth Foreman	Term Expires 03/31/19
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Planning Board

Upon a motion by Ms. Blackwell, seconded by Mr. Post, and with Messrs. Hardin and Miller Woodson and Ms. Alexander voting AYE, the following reappointments were made to the Planning Board:

Ms. Jo-Ann Hoty	Term Expires 03/31/19
Ms. Thomasina Paige	Term Expires 03/31/19
Mr. Troy Russell	Term Expires 03/31/19

CITY MANAGER’S COMMENTS

(a) **Salisbury-Rowan Utilities Water Update**

City Manager Lane Bailey asked Salisbury-Rowan Utilities (SRU) Director Jim Behmer to address Council regarding the City’s water quality. Mr. Behmer noted the situation in Flint,

Michigan raised water supply concerns across the United States. He explained the City has a good water source. He added SRU does all it can to treat the water, and he noted SRU employees take pride in exceeding water quality standards.

Mr. Behmer explained Flint, Michigan switched its water source from the City of Detroit to the Flint River to reduce cost without considering the water's chemistry. He indicated Flint failed to investigate and take corrective actions regarding lab reports and customer concerns.

Mr. Behmer noted SRU's Water Plant is designed around the Yadkin River. He reiterated the City's water supply is safe and does not face the problems Flint faces. He added the City has used the Yadkin River as its water source since 1917, and the Yadkin River has a water supply of 2 billion gallons on an average day. He commented the City does not purchase water from others, but has an emergency interconnection with the City of Statesville.

Mr. Behmer explained staff adjusts the water's PH and adds Phosphate, a corrosive inhibitor, so the water does not corrode the pipes. He indicated SRU has a laboratory that monitors each stage in the water treatment process. He noted samples are taken every 15 minutes and tested for 150 regulated and unregulated contaminants. He stated SRU monitors the disinfection levels of the distribution system 24 hours a day. He added customer complaints are taken very seriously. He pointed out SRU has received the Department of Environmental Quality award for the last four years. He stated the City's water supply is safe for all uses including drinking.

Mr. Bailey added the City is blessed with an abundant supply of water.

Mayor Alexander thanked Mr. Behmer and SRU employees for all they do to keep the City's water supply safe.

(b) Southern City for New Mayors

City Manager Lane Bailey announced Mayor Alexander was featured in *Southern City* in an article on newly elected mayors.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(a) Egg Hunt and Community Fun Day

Mayor Alexander announced Parks and Recreation will hold an Egg Hunt and Community Fun day Saturday, March 19, 2016 from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. at Kelsey Scott Park. Kick-off the spring season with the Easter Bunny, games, food, and egg hunt and more. This event is free and open to the public.

(b) North Carolina Department of Transportation Updates

Mayor Alexander announced the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) anticipates the new underpass for Klumac Road to be open to traffic by fall 2016. In addition, the bridge on Klumac Road over Town Creek is scheduled for replacement and is anticipated to take

approximately four months to complete. NCDOT will perform the bridge replacement simultaneously with the completion of construction for the underpass. During this time, Klumac Road will be closed at Town Creek with Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue serving as a detour. It is anticipated that all construction will be complete and Klumac Road fully open to traffic around September 2016.

(c) Upgrade – Water and Sewer Connections

Mayor Alexander announced Salisbury-Rowan Utilities (SRU) will upgrade water and sewer connections in the 100 block of East Fisher Street. The work will take place throughout the month of March during weekdays, with some Sunday work. Fisher Street will remain open during the construction, with intermittent use of flagmen to directing traffic during single lane closures. Businesses will be open during construction, and SRU will make efforts to keep business owners informed of the work status.

(d) African American Memorial

Mayor Alexander announced for the first time in North Carolina history, a memorial honoring the contributions of African Americans to the State will be erected on the grounds of the historic State Capital in Raleigh. She stated this long-overdue recognition received a unanimous vote by the North Carolina Historical Commission and the blessing of Governor Pat McCrory. She noted a committee comprised of several North Carolina Historical Commission members, as well as members of the African American Heritage Commission, will determine what the monument will be. Mayor Alexander stated North Carolina citizens will have the opportunity to provide input to the Committee during the month of March:

- Citizens may attend one of four regional public hearings to be held. March 1, 2016 in Greensboro, March 8, 2016 in Charlotte, March 22, 2016 in Rocky Mount, or March 29, 2016 in Fayetteville. The meetings will be held at 6:30 pm.
- Citizens may visit the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources website to send comments

Mayor Alexander indicated to send comments or find additional information regarding the public hearing locations visit the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources website at www.ncdcr.gov/monuments-feedback. She added this is a wonderful opportunity for citizens to be involved in this exciting advancement in North Carolina's history.

CLOSED SESSION

Mayor Alexander requested Council go into a closed session regarding an economic development matter as allowed by NCGS 143-318.11(a)(4) in addition to a closed session regarding a personnel matter as allowed by NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6).

Thereupon, Mr. Miller made a **motion** to go into closed session regarding a personnel matter as allowed by NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) and an economic development matter as allowed by NCGS 143.-318.11(a)(4).

Councilmember Hardin recognized Livingstone College Men's basketball team for being the runner up in CIAA tournament held over the weekend.

Mr. Hardin noted he observed the City's Public Services Department today and was extremely impressed with their professionalism.

Mr. Hardin stated he will meet with the Interim Police Chief to discuss operational efficiency within the Police Department. He added gunshots were fired in the West End over the weekend, and he thanked the Police Department for its quick response and the time it spent investigating the gunshots. He assured the public Council is doing all it can to take care of the City.

Mr. Post seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Meses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

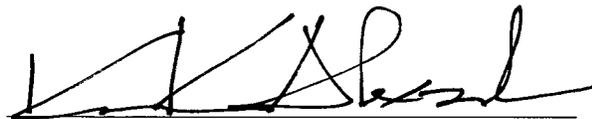
RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Thereupon, Ms. Blackwell made a **motion** for Council to return to open session. Mr. Miller seconded the motion. Messrs. Hardin, Miller and Post, and Meses. Alexander and Blackwell voted AYE. (5-0)

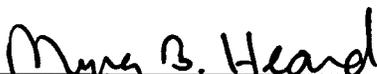
Mayor Alexander announced no action was taken in closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Post seconded by Ms. Blackwell. All council members in attendance agreed unanimously to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.



Karen Kirks Alexander, Mayor



Myra B. Heard, City Clerk