

**10 Robertson St.**  
**Regular Meeting Number 16 of Radford City Council, F.Y. 2016-2017**

**The New River City**  
**April 24, 2017**

**Radford, Virginia**

The regular meeting of the Radford City Council was convened at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 10 Robertson Street, Radford, VA. The Mayor of the City, Dr. Bruce Brown was present and presiding. Other members of City Council present were Mr. Robert Gropman, Dr. Richard Harshberger, Mr. Daniel Keith Marshall, and Mr. Michael Turk.

Others present were as follows:

Mr. David Ridpath, City Manager

Ms. Jenni Wilder, City Clerk

Mr. Don Goodman, Chief of Police

Ms. Melissa Skelton, Community Development Director

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the invocation was led by local Veterans.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**MINUTES APPROVALS:** On a motion by Mr. Marshall and seconded by Mr. Gropman that the minutes for April 5, 2017 Work Session, April 10, 2016 Work Session, and April 10, 2017 Regular Meeting are approved as presented.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES: None-0

**PROCLAMATION:**

**SUBJECT: Older Americans Month**

**SUMMARY:** The month of May, 2017 is "Older Americans Month". The Agency on Aging has requested that City Council consider a Proclamation that recognizes the contributions of older Americans to our community, as well as the community opportunities that support independent living, wellness, volunteerism and social inclusion.

**ACTION:** Dr. Harshberger moved to approve the Older Americans Month Proclamation, the motion was seconded by Mr. Turk.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES:

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**SUBJECT: F.Y. 2017-18 Budget**

**SUMMARY:** The Budget for F.Y. 2018 has been delivered to City Council from the City Manager, as required by the City Charter. Revenues are balanced with expenditures in the

amount of \$59,943,010. The proposed budget provides sufficient revenues and transfers to pay for expenditures, maintains positive fund balances, provides resources for maintenance and improvements to infrastructure, supports core customer services and equipment replacement, as well as identifies funds for payments to service the City debt. The funds are summarized as follows:

General Funds	\$26,523,825
Street Maintenance Fund	2,233,404
Water/Wastewater Fund	5,005,700
Electric Fund	21,604,815
Solid Waste Fund	1,380,075
Transit Fund	3,195,191
Internal Services Fund	756,848

In addition to the City Budget, the City Council is also considering the F.Y. 2018 Radford City School Board Budget. The \$18,468,008 budget was approved by the school board on March 21, 2017. The funds are summarized as follows:

Operating Fund	\$15,628,163
Food Service Fund	640,560
Grants Fund	1,598,566
Textbook Fund	380,719
Capital Projects Fund	220,000

The City contributes \$5,714,528 towards the overall School Board Budget.

City Council approved the first reading on April 17, 2017 following the public hearing.

Mr. Marshall made a motion to approve Ordinance # 1691 on its second reading, seconded by Mr. Turk.

Dr. Harshberger's Commitments: In Support of David Ridpath, Radford City Manager

I wanted to voice in writing, for the record, my unequivocal support for David Ridpath, our outstanding City Manager and to express my continued confidence in his Management of the City of Radford.

**I** support David because of his high sense of duty, his measured judgment, his sense of community, and his high principles of integrity and fairness. He has dedicated himself to the challenges of managing and building a positive, long-lasting relationship with this Council, his staff and City employees and all of the citizens of the City of Radford.

**I** stand with David and his vision for the City and the future. He believes in the ability of our City to aim high and reach higher. **I** trust his judgment and recognize that he often must make difficult

decisions based on information and perspectives that cannot immediately be shared with all of our citizens. In those extraordinary events, he always strives to help the city and our citizens understand the context and reasoning behind decisions, and he always takes responsibility for his decisions.

Tonight we are going to vote on the second reading of the budget, and at this stage in the process, it must be passed. I am going to vote no tonight to register my frustration that, as well-structured and presented as this 2017-18 budget is it represents an uncorrected shortage in the balance between Revenues and expenditures, one that requires a drawdown of our reserves that is not sustainable in the long run.

I take this action knowing that David and his heroic and dedicated staff have worked long and stressful hours to produce a document that is so well-developed that I cannot find any way to squeeze a nickel out of it. David and his staff and department heads have developed every efficiency in order to minimize the costs of government. Despite their best efforts and everyone's effort to increase revenues – which we have done every year – increased costs continue to out-distant increased revenues. This budget probably will win another award for outstanding budget preparation from the Virginia Municipal League- and it should. It deserves that.

I applaud the changes recently made in the Capital Budget to delay some major capital project outlays until we will be better able to afford them. It buys us time – but not a lot of time. I know that we all have been working hard to get things started that will result in increased revenues for the city. Unfortunately, there is almost always a considerable lag in the time between when we put new initiatives into motion and the time when revenues begin to flow into the city coffers. If we do not take some immediate actions during this next year to quickly increase our revenue base, our City could be in dire straits.

I can't speak for the whole Council, but I believe, David, that you have our strong support in the coming year. Please use that support and the advice we give you to your advantage.

Thank you all for *your* hard work and good will. Together, I know that we can accomplish wonders over this coming year.

Mr. Marshall he would like to voice his support for David and the budget. Mr. Marshall said that he believes the budget cuts are necessary and have been for some time. He also supports Mr. Ridpath's vision for revenue growth and believes that the budget is sustainable, if this year does

not prove so we will make the necessary corrections next year. Mr. Marshall stated he will be supporting David with his vote and not just his words tonight.

**VOTE**

AYES: Mr. Gropman Yes  
Dr. Harshberger No  
Mr. Marshall Yes  
Mr. Turk Yes  
Mayor Brown No

**SUBJECT: Consider Ordinance #1692: Establishes the 2017 Tax Rate**

**SUMMARY:** This ordinance will approve the 2017 Tax Rate with Real Estate Tax Rate of \$ 0.76, Personal Property at \$2.44, Machinery and Tools at \$1.76, and other personal property at \$1.76.

**ACTION:** Mr. Marshall made a motion to place Ordinance #1692 on its first reading, seconded by Mr. Gropman.

**VOTE**

AYES: Mr. Gropman Yes  
Dr. Harshberger Yes  
Mr. Marshall Yes  
Mr. Turk Yes  
Mayor Brown Yes

**SUBJECT: F.Y. 2017-2018 Fee/Rate Resolution**

**SUMMARY:** The F.Y. 2018 Budget is supported by utility rates and fees. Utility rates are proposed to remain level for the Electric Fund as well as the, Water/Wastewater Fund. The Sanitation Fund needs a rate increase of 11% to support operations, refuse disposal, recycling and special collections. The residential rate will increase from \$18 to \$20. All other fees and permits will remain level for F.Y. 2018.

**ACTION:** Mr. Gropman moved to approve the F.Y. 2018 Fee/Rate Resolution as presented, the motion was seconded by Dr. Harshberger.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown  
NAYES:

**SUBJECT: Right-Of-Way Vacation-Tyler Avenue**

**SUMMARY:** Price Williams Developers/East Radford Development Corporation LLC, has requested the vacation of the residual unimproved right-of-way adjacent to Tyler Avenue. The site is located on the West side of Tyler Avenue adjacent to the Rock Road intersection and

consist of 2.195 acres. The vacation would enhance the development of the adjacent commercial property.

City Council referred the request to the Planning Commission for review and recommendations as it relates to the City map, as well as authorized a public hearing at its meeting on February 27, 2017. There were no comments received during the hearing.

The Planning Commission reviewed the right-of-way vacation at its March 20, 2017 meeting and unanimously voted (4 members, 3 absent) that the request was compliant with the Comprehensive Plan as future businesses. City Staff have also reviewed the request and foresee no conflicts or issues with the proposed vacation.

City Council received the report of the Planning Commission on March 27, 2017, and appointed a Board of Viewers.

The Board of Viewers met on April 10, 2017 and have reported “no inconveniences” to the public is created if the right-of-way is vacated. The Planning Commission, Board of Viewers and City Staff recommended that the right-of-way be vacated with no conditions.

**ACTION:** Dr. Harshberger moved to receive the report of the Board of Viewers, the motion was seconded by Mr. Gropman.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES:

**ACTION:** Dr. Harshberger moved to authorize staff to seek a valuation of the proposed area to be vacated, the motion was seconded by Mr. Gropman.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Turk stated it had been made to his attention that the same developers did not pay for their previously requested right-of-way on the other side of Tyler Avenue. If we authorize this valuation and it is not paid for, then the City is the one bearing the cost. Mr. Marshall asked Ms. Devilbiss if we can go through this process and people change their mind. Ms. Devilbiss said absolutely, it is similar to closing on a house and the purchaser has a year to purchase the property according to the Ordinance. Ms. Devilbiss stated that if we get the ability to not have a Vacation of Right-of-Way ongoing, the City can change/create a policy, which might help with the costs of the process.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES:

**SUBJECT: Appointments to Boards and Commissions**

**SUMMARY:** The City has a position it needs filling on the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance to represent the local Economic Development Authority (EDA). We also

need one of the representatives to serve on the Executive Committee. The Mayor is Radford's elected Official on the Board. Danny Wilson has resigned from the City /University Commission and a replacement is needed to represent the neighborhood interest. City Council discretion on the three appointments to the Alliance, Alliance Executive Committee and the City/University Commission.

**ACTION:** Mr. Marshall moved to appoint Abram William, EDA representative the motion was seconded by Mr. Turk.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES:

**ACTION:** Mr. Marshall moved to appoint Mayor Brown to the Executive Committee, the motion was seconded by Dr. Harshberger.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk, Mayor Brown

NAYES:

**DISCUSSION:** Mayor Brown stated the next item was to nominate a citizen for the Joint City/University Advisory Commission, two names before Council are Josh Smith and Merrill Jones and council was checking to see their residency. Dr. Harshberger stated Josh Smith meets the new guidelines outlined by the Commission. Mr. Marshall asked where he lived and Mr. Gropman stated on the West End. Mr. Gropman stated there was a new plan the commission created to amend the citizen from having to live on the East End to serve on the committee. The decision was made to review the new policy and bring it to Council at the May 8, 2017 meeting.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**SUBJECT: Schedule a Public Hearing-Valley Bible Church**

**SUMMARY:** Valley Bible Church has requested a special use permit to operate a church and related activities at 1308-1310 Second Street. The property is owned by Unity Christian Church and has been used for Church purposes for many years. A Joint Public Hearing has been requested with the Planning Commission and can be accommodated on May 8, 2017.

**ACTION:** Dr. Harshberger moved to schedule a joint public hearing for the May 8, 2017 meeting, the motion was seconded by Mr. Marshall.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Marshall voiced concern as to why a church has to go through this process to remain a church. He is concerned that a governing body can vote on if a church can operate through a special use permit. Ms. Skelton stated that if the church owns the property and their use is within what the current use is then there is no need for a Special Use Permit; however, this

church is changing ownership therefore requiring the permit. Ms. Skelton clarified it was because of zoning code and that when Planning Commission looks at rewriting the code they can look into changing the code accordingly.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mayor Brown

NAYES:

ABSTAIN: Mr. Turk

**CITY MANAGERS COMMENTS:**

Mr. Ridpath stated the City has been host to many events recently including most recently the Outdoor Expo. Mr. Ridpath also stated that the weather has been a challenge over the past few days.

**CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Mr. Gropman suggested that Council should have upcoming work sessions on vacation of right-of-way and zoning code for the purpose of learning more about the policy and help craft the process.

Mr. Marshall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m., Mayor Brown seconded the motion.

**VOTE:**

AYES: Mr. Gropman, Dr. Harshberger, Mr. Marshall, Mr. Turk

NAYES: None-0

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_

Jennifer G. Wilder, City Clerk of Council