

**City Council Regular Session
April 12, 2021**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City met in regular session on Monday, April 12, 2021 in Council Chambers, located on the 2nd floor of the Municipal Administration Building, 306 E. Colonial Avenue, Elizabeth City, NC.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Bettie Parker
Councilman Billy Caudle
Councilwoman Jeannie Young
Councilman Chris Ruffieux
Mayor Pro Tem Johnnie Walton
Councilman Michael Brooks
Councilman Gabriel Adkins
Councilman Darius Horton

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilman Kem Spence

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Montre' Freeman
City Attorney Bill Morgan
Finance Director Evelyn Benton
Deputy Chief of Police James Avens
Interim Electric Superintendent Bob Vannoy
Assistant City Manager Angela Judge
Human Resources Director Montique McClary
Public Utilities Director Dwan Bell
Fire Chief Chris Carver
Grants Administrator Jon Hawley
Interim Community Development Director Debbie Malenfant
Planner Kellen Long
Parks and Recreation Director Sean Clark
IT Director Matthew Simpson
City Clerk April Onley
Deputy City Clerk Doris Walton

(Clerks Notation: This meeting was conducted differently due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Councilors met in Chambers and staff members participated remotely through Google Meet. The meeting was live streamed on Channel 11 and the City's website for the public, who were not allowed to attend the meeting. The public comments were received via email and are included in full as received.)

The City Council regular session was called to order by Mayor Bettie Parker at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Parker welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized Councilman Brooks to give the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Agenda Adjustments and Approval:

Mayor Parker asked the Council's pleasure on the presented agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Walton added a discussion on the NCLM City Vision Summit Event to Regular Agenda. He also removed item F - CDBG Coronavirus Budget Ordinance from the Consent Agenda and added it to the Regular Agenda. Councilman Brooks added a discussion on an upcoming House/Senate bill.

Motion was made by to approve the agenda as amended by Councilman Gabriel Adkins, seconded by Councilman Darius Horton. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Caudle, Young, Ruffieux, Walton, Brooks, Adkins and Horton. Against: None. Motion carried.

2. Statement of Disclosure:

The City Clerk read the Statement of Disclosure. No conflict of interest disclosures regarding items listed on the agenda were made.

3. Presentations:

a. Proclamation – Lineman Appreciation Day

PROCLAMATION
Linemen Appreciation Day
April 16th, 2021

WHEREAS, the City of Elizabeth City celebrates the profession of Linemen; and

WHEREAS, their profession requires passion, dedication and ongoing training; and

WHEREAS, linemen are often first responders during storms working to repair broken electrical lines to make the area safe for other public safety heroes; and

WHEREAS, linemen must work power lines 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to keep electricity flowing; and

WHEREAS, linemen play a vital role by maintaining and growing the electrical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, linemen risk their lives every day working at precarious heights and with dangerous high voltage; and

WHEREAS, The US House of Representative recognizes the efforts of linemen in keeping the power on and protecting public safety and supports the designation of National Linemen Appreciation Day; and

WHEREAS, 116TH CONGRESS 2d Session, H. RES. 262 first designated April 18th, 2015 as the National Lineman Appreciation Day.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that I, Bettie J. Parker, Mayor of the City of Elizabeth City hereby proclaim Friday, April 16th, 2021 as “Lineman Appreciation Day” in Elizabeth City.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Seal of the City of Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

PROCLAIMED this the 12th day of April 2021.

Bettie J. Parker
Mayor

April Onley, NCCMC
City Clerk

4. Comments from the Public:

Mayor Parker inquired of the City Clerk if there were any comments from the public. Upon the Clerk’s response that there was one, the Mayor requested it be read into the record of the meeting.

Jody Newell Brickham – 107 Magnolia Drive, Camden, NC – (**Received via email and presented here in full*) - My name is Jody Newell Brickham. I am asking the Council to consider renaming Knobbs Creek Recreational Center to Mayor Tyra L Newell Recreational Center. Thank you for your consideration into this matter. Respectfully submitted by the Newell Family.

5. Public Hearings:

a. Hold a Public Hearing – To Receive Public Input on the Proposed Fee Schedule Change for Elizabeth City / Pasquotank County Parks and Recreation Classes and Camps;

Mayor Parker turned the floor over to City Manager Freeman. Mr. Freeman asked Parks and Recreation Director Sean Clark if he had any comments he'd like to share with the Council prior to the public hearing. Director Clark said the purpose of the fee schedule change was to raise camp and instructional camp fees. He noted that this would move instructional fees from \$2.50 to \$5.00 in an effort to increase sustainability as Parks and Recreation grew in the coming years.

Mayor Parker declared the public hearing open and inquired of the Clerk if there were any speakers. The Clerk replied that there were none.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Jeannie Young, seconded by Councilman Chris Ruffieux. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Caudle, Brooks, Walton, Young, Horton, Ruffieux, and Adkins. Against: None. Motion carried.

**Ordinance #2021-03-02
An Ordinance Amending the FY 2020-2021 Fee Schedule
of the City of Elizabeth City**

WHEREAS, each year, the City of Elizabeth City adopts a Fee Schedule, which corresponds to the annual budget; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted the FY 2020-2021 Budget and Fee Schedule on June 22, 2020; and

WHEREAS, within the FY 2020-2021 Budget, the Fee Schedule reported class fees for Parks and Recreation that had not been updated since approval in 2011; and

WHEREAS, the demands and the expectations for the City of Elizabeth City Parks and Recreation Department have increased over the years, but our fees have remained the same; and

WHEREAS, after review and discussion with the County, it was determined that an increase in fees was in order; and

WHEREAS, during the March 22nd, 2021 City Council meeting, the Council called for a Public Hearing, which was subsequently advertised and held during the April 12th, 2021 regular session, at which time a quorum of the membership was present.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED that the City of Elizabeth City Fee Schedule for FY 2020-2021 is hereby amended to reflect the following:

SECTION I.

<u>Fees</u>			<i>YMCA</i>	<i>Proposed Fee</i>
<i>Class/Program/Camp</i>	<i>Current Fee</i>			
Art, Fitness, Needle & Thread, Music/Dance	\$2.50 per class (8wk session \$20)		\$63.00 monthly membership	\$5.00 - \$8.00 per class (8wk session \$40.00 - \$64.00)
Spring/Winter Camp (7a-6p)	NA		\$100.00-\$132.00 per wk	\$50.00 - \$60.00 per wk.
Summer Camp (7a-6p)	NA		\$125.00-\$165.00 per wk	\$60.00 per wk. (6-8 wks)

Sports Camp (7a-6P)	\$45.00 - \$60.00 per session-1/2 day		\$40.00 - \$85.00 per session- full & 1/2 day
Specialty Camp (7a-6p)	\$.30 per hr. - \$7.50 per hr.	\$155.00- \$195.00 per wk	\$125.00- \$175.00 per wk.

(Tier 3: 48% Cost Recovery / 23.3% of Total Expense)

SECTION II. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION III. If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed severable and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.

SECTION IV. The enactment of this ordinance shall in no way affect the running of any amortization provisions or enforcement actions, or otherwise cure any existing municipal code violations.

SECTION V. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect and included in the City of Elizabeth City's fee schedule from and after the date of its adoption. This ordinance may be amended from time to time with the consideration of the City Council of the City of Elizabeth and with the requisite Public Hearings associated with such decisions.

ADOPTED this the 12th day of April, 2021.

Bettie J. Parker
Mayor

April D. Onley, NCCMC
City Clerk

6. Approval of Minutes:

a. March 22, 2021 – Regular Session:

Motion was made by Councilwoman Jeannie Young, seconded by Councilman Billy Caudle. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Ruffieux, Brooks, Walton, Young, Horton, Caudle and Adkins. Against: None. Motion carried.

7. Consent Agenda:

Mayor Parker asked that City Manager Freeman read the items on the Consent Agenda into the record.

a. Consideration – Accept Final Offer for 102 Celeste Street Property;

b. Consideration – Accept Final Offer for 512 Edge Street Property;

c. Consideration – Award of FY Contract 2020-2021 Raw Water Reservoir and Plant Upgrades;

d. Consideration – Award of FY 2021-2022 Chemical Purchase Contracts;

e. Consideration – Accept Watch for Me NC Grant;

f. Consideration – Adopt CDBG-Coronavirus Budget Ordinance; *(Removed from Consent Agenda and added to Regular Agenda by Mayor Pro Tem Walton)*

g. Consideration – Approval of Department of Commerce CDBG Compliance Plans;

h. Consideration – Submit Grant Application for George M. Wood Memorial Park;

i. Consideration – Approval of Budget Amendment for Police Vehicle;

BUDGET AMENDMENT

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021:

Section I: That the General Fund Balance Appropriated (10-3990-0000) will be decreased by \$10,000.

That the General Fund Police Drug Enforcement Unit fund (10-5100-7400) will be increased by \$10,000.

(To amend General Fund Budget Appropriated to purchase a vehicle for the Elizabeth City Police Department's Drug Enforcement Unit.)

ADOPTED, this 12th day of April, 2021.

Bettie J. Parker
Mayor

Attest:

April Onley, NCCMC
City Clerk

j. Consideration – Approval of Budget Amendment for Financial Wellness Grant;

BUDGET AMENDMENT

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021:

Section I: That the General Fund Wellness Program (10-6800-5701) will be increased by \$22,000.00.

That the General Fund Financial Wellness Partners Grant (10-3350-6802) will be increased by \$22,000.00

(To increase budgeted General Fund revenue for grant proceeds and expenditures of the wellness program by the Human Resources Department.)

ADOPTED, this 12th day of April, 2021.

Bettie J. Parker
Mayor

Attest:

April Onley, NCCMC
City Clerk

(End of Consent Agenda)

Mayor Parker asked Council's pleasure on the Consent Agenda, as presented.

Motion was made by Councilman Chris Ruffieux, seconded by Councilwoman Jeannie Young to approve the Consent Agenda. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Ruffieux, Walton, Brooks Young, Horton, Caudle and Adkins. Against: None. Motion carried.

8. Regular Agenda:

a. Any Item Removed from the Consent Agenda

b. Consideration – Appointment to Personnel Committee – Carson Rich – No Action Required

c. Consideration – Call for a Public Hearing – Changes to 160D;

Interim Community Development Director Debbie Malenfant introduced this item to the Council as a text amendment to address 160D. She noted this topic had originally been presented for consideration in August of last year; however, the Council had concerns and deferred action, and asked that the item be returned to staff for additional review and work. Planner Kellen Long advised the Council that the purpose of these changes will serve to consolidate new City and County enabling statutes into a single unifying chapter – 160D. All local governments have until July 1 to adopt these new regulations. She pointed out that a comprehensive list of the “must haves” required by the state have been provided to the Council. The items presented have been verified and changes have been made to be in compliance with the new statute. The biggest change is the termination of the wording of the conditional use permit. She states that normally, the City Council has final review on conditional use permits. During the August 24th Work Session, it was proposed that conditional use permits would now be known as special use permits, and be heard only by the Board of Adjustment. She noted that at that time, the Council did not find those terms agreeable and wanted it revised so that they were included in the review; therefore, the action was tabled. She added that staff revised the text amendment with the help of the UNC School of Government. Conditional use permits will now be called “council use permits.” Ms. Long said the item appearing tonight is just a call for a public hearing, but she wanted to present in more detail in order to get Council feedback prior to the public hearing itself.

Community Development intern Michael Barclift said he had been able to work with the Community Development Department as part of UNC's MPA program, and therefore was able to help with the 160D update.

Mayor Pro Tem Walton said that the write-up the Council received was quite lengthy and wasn't easily understood. He asked if Attorney Morgan had a chance to read the update. Attorney Morgan replied that he was about 2/3 of the way through his review. Mr. Morgan stated that his recommendation was that the Council move forward with calling for the public hearing, as they did not have to take any action at that time, as this was not required to be adopted until July 1st. Mayor Pro Tem Walton said his primary concern was because in August of last year, it was

presented as it staff were trying to remove Council from the process. Planner Long reiterated that the process had been overhauled now and Council would still be very much involved.

Mr. Barcliff noted staff verified that the code did not take away any of the Council's authority from the process now. He said he also asked if things could go to the Board of Adjustment as well as to the Council and he was told that they could. Mayor Pro Tem Walton said the UDO update was done in 2012, which had been quite a few years ago now. He said recently there's been a rezoning asked of them. He asked if they had the ability to dictate what goes in the UDO without anyone else's compliance. Mr. Barcliff said he'd need to hand it back over to Ms. Long, as he did not know the answer to that question, but the UDO was not part of the 160D update whatsoever. Ms. Long pointed out that the 160D update was not part of the rezoning; they were just trying to update with the general statutes that came into effect. She said the concern the Council originally had was with terminating the words "conditional use permit" and calling them "special use permits" and sending them to the Board of Adjustment instead of to the Council. Now, they were going to be called council use permits and go to the Council for approval. She said they understood the Council's concern and are now keeping it at the Council-level.

Mayor Pro Tem Walton said he would hate for them to sign something and later find out it had something to do with rezoning somehow. Ms. Long said this did not necessarily have to do with rezoning. She said 160D mainly focused on language and terminology; it also focused on organization of state statute and having that reflected in ordinances. She added that this also dealt with vested rights and with developers, but that was pretty much the main focus. Mayor Pro Tem Walton stated that he felt he understood better now. He said he had two councilors in the Third Ward; could they sit down with her and tell her what they wanted in the area that was trying to be rezoned? He said if things were being passed that weren't clear, they didn't want that.

City Manager Freeman said he believed what Mayor Pro Tem Walton was referring to were land use plans, which could be revisited, but that was a different situation. He asked Assistant City Manager Judge to brief Mayor Pro Tem Walton on land use plans and what can be done to address those concerns. Assistant City Manager Judge said the question Mayor Pro Tem Walton raised regarding the UDO and 160D was that yes, they were different things. She said regardless, they must comply with state statute at all times; however, it can always be more restrictive, but it can't lessen the stipulations. She said she believed what he was getting to as far as individual zoning classifications and the desire to build-out is caught between master planning and comprehensive planning, so what we would want to do is bring the councilors and community to the table and begin those discussions. The zoning ordinances would drill down as far as setbacks and so forth, but that's a conversation to be had by technical staff, elective body, residents and community partners together.

Councilwoman Jeannie Young called for the public hearing to be held on April 26th, directly following the public comment period, for the purpose of gathering public input on TA 02-20 for changes to 160D. The motion was seconded by Councilman Chris Ruffieux. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Ruffieux, Brooks, Walton, Young, Horton, Caudle and Adkins. Against: None. Motion carried.

d. Consideration – Call for a Public Hearing – Text Amendment for Auto Repair;

Planner Long briefly explained that this call for a public hearing was to gather input on the adoption of a text amendment for Article 11 for automobile repair to alleviate community complaints for this use. She stated that the need for more development standards was explained during the October Planning Commission meeting. Several standards do not defer far from what is currently required for auto repair.

Motion made by Councilwoman Jeannie Young, seconded by Councilman Chris Ruffieux to call for a public hearing on the text amendment for auto repair to be held during the April 26th, 2020 meeting, directly following the public comment period. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Ruffieux, Brooks, Walton, Young, Horton, Caudle, and Adkins. Against: None. Motion carried.

e. NCLM City Vision – Added by Mayor Pro Tem –

Mayor Parker recognized Mayor Pro Tem Walton for his comments. Mayor Pro Tem Walton said he'd added this item because he'd received an email from the League about the virtual meeting and wanted to know if there was a way it could be set up for the Council to attend. He said he was primarily interested in the events taking place on the third day and wondered if there was a lesser price for only attending one day of the virtual conference. City Manager Freeman said the registration was standard, so the fee was flat. He advised that he could get IT to set any member of the Council interested in attending the meetings up and accommodated at City Hall if they wished.

f. Consideration – Adopt CDBG Coronavirus Budget Ordinance *(Removed from the Consent Agenda by Mayor Pro Tem Walton);*

Mayor Parker against recognized Mayor Pro Tem Walton for his comments. Mayor Pro Tem Walton asked the City Manager if he knew how many COVID relief packages we would receive. City Manager Freeman said this will be the second one for the City. He advised that the next one was the American Recovery Act, and was not CDBG. He reminded the Council that that was the \$5 million in funding The Daily Advance had recently referenced that would be broken up into \$2.5 in June and then again next year. He pointed out that the City planned on spending that funding on infrastructure. Mayor Pro Tem Walton asked if the Council would be able to weigh in on how any of this money was spent. City Manager Freeman responded that he would ask for their input, but he already knew what he intended to do with it. Mayor Pro Tem Walton noted that the funding came with some restrictions and Mr. Freeman agreed, though pointing out that not as many as what were on the CDBG funding. Mayor Parker said we had to understand as a Council that we know what we need in the City, so that would be an interesting conversation. City Manager Freeman said the first disbursement would be revenue expected in June.

Motion was made by Councilman Billy Caudle to adopt the ordinance, seconded by Councilman Darius Horton. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Ruffieux, Brooks, Walton, Young, Horton, Caudle and Adkins. Against: None. Motion carried.

BUDGET AMENDMENT

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021:

SECTION I. That the General Fund Public Buildings Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-5000-7500) will be increased by \$3,919.10.

That the General Fund Police Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-5100-7500) will be increased by \$405.05.

That the General Fund Fire Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-5300-7500) will be increased by \$294.87.

That the General Fund Public Works Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-5450-7500) will be increased by \$3,822.43.

That the General Fund Central Maintenance Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-5550-7500) will be increased by \$588.00.

That the General Fund Public Works "Street" Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-5600-7500) will be increased by \$588.00.

That the General Fund Parks & Recreation Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-6200-7500) will be increased by \$762.22.

That the General Fund Senior Center Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-6300-7500) will be increased by \$13,813.48.

That the General Fund Human Resources Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-6800-7500) will be increased by \$38,278.89.

That the General Fund Information Technology Coronavirus Relief Fund (10-6900-7500) will be increased by \$106,817.21.

That the General Fund CRF Revenue (10-3490-3000) will be increased by \$444,355.22.

That the General Fund Balance Appropriated (10-3990-0000) will be increased by \$275,065.97.

That the Electric Fund Electric Distribution Coronavirus Relief Fund (30-8300-7500) will be increased by \$1,014.09.

That the Electric Fund CRF Revenue (30-3490-3000) will be increased by \$1,014.09.

That the Water & Sewer Fund Water Treatment Coronavirus Relief Fund (31-8100-7500) will be increased by \$1,406.81.

That the Water & Sewer Fund Water/Sewage Maintenance Coronavirus Relief Fund (31-8280-7500) will be increased by \$2,635.88.

That the Water & Sewer Fund CRF Revenue (31-3190-3000) will be increased by \$4,042.69.

That the Solid Waste Fund Solid Waste Coronavirus Relief Fund (40-5800-7500) will be increased by \$588.00.

That the Solid Waste Fund CFR Revenue (40-3490-3000) will be increased by \$588.00.

(This amendment will increase the Public Buildings, Police, Fire, Public Utilities, Central Maintenance, Public Works "Streets", Parks & Recreation, Senior Center, Human Resources, Information Technology, Electric Distribution, Water Treatment, Water/Sewer Maintenance and Solid Waste Department's budgets to reflect Coronavirus Relief expenses and reimbursements.)

ADOPTED, this 12th day of April, 2021

Bettie J. Parker
Mayor

Attest:

April Onley, NCCMC
City Clerk

g. House Bill 401 / Senate Bill 349 *(As Added by Councilman Brooks);*

Mayor Parker recognized Councilman Brooks for his comments. Councilman Brooks stated this item was a bill currently pending in the General Assembly. City Manager Freeman said staff drafted a quick memo on the topic declaring opposition to this action, as this would take some of the Council's authority away in regard to "middle housing" and zoning regulations. He said staff is asking the Council to execute a letter in opposition to this bill, as it abuses the Council's authority and takes that authority away from them. City Manager Freeman said he wanted to make sure everyone was in agreement before we drafted the letter. Councilman Brooks said he didn't want to address it as he thought it was a moot point. He asked Attorney Morgan to read over it, as he would respect his opinion and would do his own research as well. He said he wanted to let the whole issue die unless the Council decided to zone something residential.

Councilman Billy Caudle made a motion to table the matter until the next meeting so everyone could have a chance to read over the provided information. The motion was seconded by Councilman Michael Brooks.

Councilman Horton verified they were just being asked to send a letter, was that correct? City Manager Freeman replied that was correct. Mayor Parker said they still had plenty of time for discussion and consideration.

Those voting in favor of the motion were: Ruffieux, Brooks, Walton, Horton, Caudle and Adkins. Against: Young. Motion carried.

9. Comments and Inquiries on Non-Agenda Items:

Councilman Ruffieux had no further comments.

Councilman Brooks said he'd like to address Planning and Code Enforcement, specifically 201 Roanoke Avenue. He asked if Code Enforcement kept an eye on that property and if so, what's the process in that? City Manager Freeman said staff is looking at that particular house and several other that are not up to standard. He noted that staff have things in place that they are going to start issuing out to take care of that in the form of fines and whatnot. Councilman Brooks said 201 looks like it's about to fall in. He thinks it may end up in the hands of the City. He said 801 Roanoke is also an issue. He said he doesn't know if someone is living there or not. He thanked Public Works for digging out the ditches for the residents and doing such a good job. He noted that you can't turn your back on neighborhoods that don't have the economic ability to take care of themselves.

Mayor Parker said she would like to see blight taken care of in an expedited manner. She said there was just so much of it, that it was easier said than done.

Councilman Adkins said over the past few weeks there had been a lot of shootings in the city and it had been said that the Council did nothing about it. He said he wanted to let the community know that when people make those comments that they sit there and do nothing, they are not in control of what people do or how they think. He pointed out that Councilman Brooks is a strong advocate for the Third Ward and that's where a lot of the shooting happens. He said they hear about it and see it on social media that people are hiding on their floors. He said sometimes the presence of more police patrolling through these neighborhoods would give these residents a feeling of peace and security to know that we do care, we do know that it's going on. If we could have more police travel through these neighborhoods, maybe people would think twice about going through these neighborhoods because they might run into a police officer. He said the Council does care and they want the people here to feel safe. He thinks the police department does a great job, but said we do have a lot of shootings at night. He said that the people here are afraid and he wanted to go on record to let everyone know that he does care and he wants everyone to be safe. He said it was concerning how random the shootings were getting now and wanted to let the citizens know that we care about everyone's safety. He asked if some of the officers could run through the small neighborhoods in the Third Ward so the citizens could see police presence until the shootings die down, so it will show them that the City cares about their wellbeing.

Councilman Caudle said the property we purchased on Ehringhaus Street that used to be the Verizon Store was definitely an eyesore. He said he believed it was supposed to be torn down at some point. City Manager Freeman said he was in the building last week and it wasn't in that bad shape, actually. He said we may want to revisit tearing it down, as he thought it wouldn't take much to make it very visible and brought back up to shape. He advised that he would bring back a full report.

Councilman Adkins said he wanted to add that the public needed to tell the police when they saw crimes being committed. He pointed out that the police department had things in place to preserve the anonymity of the reporters.

Councilman Horton said some things in the budget are negotiable and some are not. Our citizens should always be safe – that was not negotiable. He said that if the police department is telling us they need more officers, we need to get them for them. He said he felt confident that we'd be able to find a homeless shelter for \$150,000. He said the pandemic had been hard economically and emotionally, and so many people had been lost in this community. He said he would like to see the City have an event to honor the people who passed during COVID sometime around Memorial Day. He sent his condolences to the Rivers' family for their recent loss.

Councilwoman Young thanked the staff for working 12 hour days to sit through City Council meetings and all they did for the budget. She said the Council had a tendency to run the employees ragged and they certainly earned their dollars, so she thanked them all in advance. She thanked the Deputy City Clerk for making sure dinner was always there for the Council.

Councilman Caudle asked if he could speak again. He told the City Manager that it was voted on August 10th, 2020 to tear the former Verizon building down on Ehringhaus Street, just in case anyone was looking for it.

Mayor Pro Tem Walton said people needed to be memorialized. He said Mr. Rivers definitely needed to be memorialized. He said he thought Memorial Day would be a good day for it. He said he didn't think the building on Ehringhaus Street looked bad at all. He said if they voted on tearing it down, he must have thought they were talking about another building. He said he would like the Senior Center be named Elizabeth City / Pasquotank County Bettie Jean Parker Senior Center.

Mayor Parker listed the dates for the next budget meetings. She said some of the dates may change, but they have been on schedule so far. She said this year, the Council was focused on infrastructure. They didn't want to get to the point that no new companies would come to our town because our water and sewer was failing. She said getting the needs of the people met was different now – this had not happened in decades and decades. She said if we want good things, we have to pay for them.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnnie Walton made a motion to go into Closed Session for Personnel, as allowed by NCGS 163-318.11(a)(6). Councilman Darius Horton seconded the motion. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Ruffieux, Brooks Walton, Young, Horton, Caudle and Adkins. Against: None. Motion carried.

Mayor Parker announced there would be a five-minute recess prior to Closed Session beginning.

10. Adjournment

The Council returned from Closed Session at 9:04 p.m. There being no further business to be discussed, Mayor Parker adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

Bettie J. Parker
Mayor

April D. Onley, NCCMC
City Clerk

