

**City Council Regular Session  
February 27, 2023**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City met in regular session on Monday, February 27, 2023 in Council Chambers, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Municipal Administration Building, 306 E. Colonial Avenue, Elizabeth City, NC.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence  
Councilman Johnson Biggs  
Councilman Joe Peel  
Councilman Javis Gibbs  
Councilwoman Katherine Felton  
Councilwoman Barbara Baxter  
Councilman Johnnie Walton

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilwoman Rose Whitehurst

OTHERS PRESENT: City Manager Montre' Freeman  
City Attorney Bill Morgan  
Interim Electric Department Bob Vannoy  
Interim Chief of Police J. Phillip Webster  
Deputy Chief of Police James Avens  
Human Resources Director Montique McClary  
Fire Chief Chris Carver  
ECDI Director Debbie Malenfant  
Finance Director Alicia Steward  
Assistant Finance Director Brian Lewis  
Public Utilities Director Dwan Bell  
Parks and Recreation Director Sean Clark  
Parks and Recreation Superintendent Darris Sawyer  
Grants Management Specialist Jon Hawley  
IT Director Matthew Simpson  
IT Systems Analyst Pedro Holley II  
City Clerk April Onley

The City Council regular session was called to order by Mayor Kirk Rivers at 7:02 p.m. Mayor Rivers welcomed everyone to the meeting and recognized Mayor Pro Tem Spence to provide the invocation, after which Councilman Biggs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Agenda Adjustments and Approval:**

Mayor Rivers requested the Council's pleasure regarding approval of the prepared agenda.

Mayor Rivers asked to move the Water Street Transformation Grant, which had been discussed during the Work Session onto the Consent Agenda. Likewise, he asked to move the sale of generator along to the Consent Agenda, as well as consideration for no longer requiring surveys for following property lines. As time had run short during the Work Session, he added the presentation and discussion by DMS to the Regular Agenda, where it became item 9C. Councilman Biggs asked to move item 8C, Authorize Acceptance of PAL Mentoring Grant from the Consent Agenda to the Regular Agenda. Mayor Pro Tem Spence asked to add a Closed Session for Discussion of Personnel.

**Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence, seconded by Councilwoman Katherine Felton to approve the agenda as amended. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Spence, Felton, Baxter, and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**2. Presentations:**

**a. Donation of "Hey Sweetie" Boat to Sea Scouts;**

Interim Chief Webster advised that during the February 13<sup>th</sup> Council meeting, the Police Department requested approval to advertise donation of "Hey Sweetie" to the Sea Scouts. He

explained that in August 2022, he was made aware of an abandoned boat in our marina. Eventually, the City was able to get ownership of the boat and felt the best source of action would be to donate the boat to the Sea Scouts who would be able to give new life to the boat. Mayor Rivers said he appreciated the Scouts being here and was glad we could do this for them.

**Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence, seconded by Councilman Jarvis Gibbs to donate “Hey Sweetie” to the local Sea Scouts. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**b. Adoption of Resolution Awarding Badge and Service Weapon to Retiring Officer;**

Interim Chief Webster recognized Sergeant Joseph Felton’s 17 years of service with the City. Sergeant Felton rose to through the ranks to achieve the title of sergeant while here. He wished him luck in his future endeavors. Mayor Rivers presented Sergeant Felton with his retirement plaque and thanked him for his service.

**RESOLUTION #2023-02-01  
AWARDING BADGE AND SERVICE SIDEARM  
TO RETIRING POLICE OFFICERS**

**WHEREAS**, G.S. 20-187.2 provides that retiring members of municipal law enforcement agencies may receive, at the time of their retirement, the badge worn or carried by them during their service with the municipality; and

**WHEREAS**, G.S. 20-187.2 further provides that the governing body of the municipal law enforcement agency may, in its discretion, award to a retiring member the service sidearm of such retiring member; and

**WHEREAS**, Police Sergeant Joseph M. Felton served as a member of the Elizabeth City Police Department for a period of 17 years and will retire from the City of Elizabeth City on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City, North Carolina that the badge and service weapon worn and/or carried by Police Sergeant Joseph M. Felton be awarded to him on the occasion of his retirement.

**ADOPTED** this 27<sup>th</sup> day of February 2023.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April D. Onley, NCCMC  
City Clerk

**c. Introduction of New ECPC-EDC Director;**

Councilman Peel introduced Mr. Scott Hinton. He noted that Mr. Hinton had been selected as the full-time director during the last meeting of the ECPC-EDC board, and they wanted to introduce him formally. Mr. Hinton was an Army helicopter pilot, joined the Coast Guard, became an instructor for C130s, and he’d been our airport manager several times. He’d overseen the growth at the airport. He is a collegiate flight school manager. He earned his BS in aeronautics from Liberty University. Mr. Hinton served previously as the executive director of the Chamber of Commerce and will do a good job in helping grow our assets at the aviation park. Mr. Hinton thanked the Council for the introduction and said he appreciated the opportunity to serve as the permanent director.

Councilman Walton asked if Mr. Hinton thought we might ever be transporting passengers out of our current airport location? Mr. Hinton said he felt that with the lack of mechanics and pilots, the likelihood of having commercial air service in a community this remote was very unlikely. He suggested looking into the challenges at Newport News International, which was struggling to continue to operate in a revenue positive manner because of how difficult it was to get flights right now. He stated that they're supporting ECSU's flight training programs as hard as they are because they need pilots terribly. He did not believe that ECSU will even be able to create them fast enough, as they'll be hired immediately.

### **3. Comments from the Public:**

Mayor Rivers inquired of the Clerk whether there were any persons present who wished to speak before the Council. Upon the Clerk's reply that there were several, Mayor Rivers asked that they be called to the podium in the order of their sign in.

**Carolyn Skinner – 1108 West Church Street, Elizabeth City, NC** – Ms. Skinner she was present due to the traffic on West Church Street, along with the speeding, the tractor trailers and the noise. She did not feel like anyone ever wanted to address the issues on the street. She said someone had driven through her yard and killed themselves. Someone had also driven through her neighbor's yard and gone through the fence. She didn't understand why no one was addressing the problems on West Church Street. She wanted to know if they didn't know or didn't see it or if they were every going to address it. She said only one person ever addressed West Church Street and that was Councilman Walton. She felt like they treated those residents like they didn't pay taxes. She opined that if that's the way the Council feels, the residents will take their money elsewhere. She didn't feel it was fair or right. The Public Works Department is located right off the street. "I know you've been told before and I'm telling you again that you need to do something."

**Bob Spack – 1200 West Church Street, Elizabeth City, NC** - Mr. Spack said last Friday, he'd made a call to Councilman Gibbs about the issues of the traffic coming up Pritchard Street onto Church Street, which gets worse at rush hour. He suggested making Pritchard a one-way from Church to Main. He does not believe the people coming through there are residents. He's only been there a year. One of the speed trailers was there, and all people did was go up two blocks to avoid it. Someone is going to get hit. There are many children in the neighborhood and there are people doing 45, 50 mph in the area. People are blasting music to the point that my windows are rattling. My wife is already talking about moving because of it. I'm afraid somebody is going to get killed there. He urged the Council to put speed bumps there or do a traffic study there. He noted that everyone is using Pritchard as a cut-through and reiterated that these people doing that do not live there, they just use it whenever they want to. He pointed out that Councilman Gibbs came out and saw it for himself. He stated that he was just asking for something to be done to avoid a tragedy.

**Carolyn Bright – 1204 West Church Street, Elizabeth City, NC** - Ms. Bright said she fears for her grandchildren because of the traffic on Church Street. The speed limit is 25 and people come up behind her, flashing their lights and blowing their horns because they want to go faster. The traffic is ridiculous. There are speed bumps down on the other end, but the side that needs speed bumps is the one that goes out to US-17. There is even a sign making people aware of a deaf child, but it's disregarded. Another issue is the stoplight on Ehringhaus Street. The light doesn't even work. "When I come out to make a left, I fear for my life. The traffic coming across the railroad tracks, they have nothing there to let people know they're turning and it's so dangerous. I thought I moved into a safe neighborhood, but I do not feel safe right now."

**LaShona Hunter – 1003 Walker Avenue Apt 802B** - Ms. Hunter said she is a resident of Walker's Landing, and she and her four children have been homeless due to mold in their residence. It took the management company a month to make any repairs and when they did, they were only superficial repairs. She noted that there's moisture under the flooring. She and her children would walk through the living room and their feet would get wet. There were puddles on the kitchen floor. She was told the apartment was ready to move back into and it was not. Her whole family began getting sick. Her daughter was suddenly diagnosed with asthma. Her son was prescribed steroids due to breathing in mold spores. She bought a kit and the levels of mold were in the 7,000's. The management company offered her another apartment, but she heard the tenants in that apartment previously had the same issues. She

was familiar with DMS and knew they'd been out there. Her floor was reading at 100% moisture. Next month will be six months that this has been going on. All she wanted was to be located to an apartment that was not infested with mold. Her clothes, furniture, everything is in this apartment and they have to travel from different places every day. Nothing is getting better. The company will not do anything. The apartment complex keeps saying there's no problem but there is a terrible problem. She is hoping something will be done soon.

**Linwood Gallop – 604 Cardwell Street, Elizabeth City, NC** - Mr. Gallop said he wanted to remind the Council that there are so many threats to civil rights going on right now. There are things in the Supreme Court that are of great concern. They are questioning whether or not the private sector has the right to get an attorney. They want to move the power to the US Attorney General, which suppresses everyone's voices. We need to be heard more within the system. We have issues in the city and county that must be dealt with. We have not gotten to the finish line. There are many civil rights issues that are happening now and no stone should go unturned. He requested they investigate into the Michael Brooks and Jeannie Young case that took place in employment matters.

#### **4. Public Hearings:**

##### **a. Hold a Public Hearing – CASE NO: RZ-04-23 filed by Sumit Gupta to rezone 7 Parcels from R-8, GB, and I-2 to Apartment District (AD);**

Mayor Rivers declared the public hearing open and inquired of the Clerk if there were any speakers. Upon the Clerk's reply that there was one, Mayor Rivers asked that they be called to the podium.

**Jon Van Dalsum – 441 South Hughes Boulevard – Elizabeth City, NC** – Mr. Van Dalsum said he was the owner of Carpet Connection, a nearby business, and he had no issue with apartments being placed there, but he did have some concerns about drainage. During heavy rains, the water backs up and the main line cannot drain fast enough. He was concerned if the land started getting covered up with concrete and pavement, there would be an issue and the water would run to him downhill. He said he just wanted to make sure the proper studies had been done. He was also concerned about the sewage. He'd heard the pumping station was at near capacity. If we put 300 more people on the line, would we have an issue? He did not want to allow rezoning without property studies because he did not want to see us at a place that would eventually lead to backups in flooding and sewage.

Being no further speakers, Mayor Rivers declared the public hearing closed. He opened the floor to the Council for their comments.

Interim Community Development Director Goodson advised this was a rezoning request to rezone the 7.9 acres to a proposed apartment district. This site is currently occupied by single family homes and mostly vacant lots. The proposed apartment district allows a maximum density of 20 to 22 units per acre, and could support 155 units at a max. If rezoned as requested, traffic demand on abutting streets will increase. Staff may require the owner to submit a traffic analysis. He noted that staff recommends approval of this request, which was also presented to the Planning Commission earlier this month who had also recommended approval.

Mayor Pro Tem Spence said in regards to the flooding, it sounded like there needed to be a conversation with NCDOT. If the Planning Board has already been through it, he was sure there would be retention ponds discussed and everything else. He added that we have a big problem with finding housing, so we needed this if we could get it. As long as everything was done in order, he was for it.

##### **Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence to approve the rezoning request as submitted.**

Councilwoman Felton said she was also concerned about the element of the drainage problem. If they could be assured that the drainage problem will be or had been addressed, she was okay with it because we definitely need additional housing, but she did not want to cause undue hardship. Mayor Pro Tem Spence said he could add a caveat regarding that to his motion.

Mayor Rivers said this is just the rezoning, right? Then the site plan would have to come back? Would we do a 25-year flood plan or what? Director Bell confirmed that this was just the rezoning and that we would do a flood plan. Mayor Rivers noted they'd have to submit a plan that would handle flood waters, rain waters, and so on for 25 years and that would have to go forward. The engineers would be looking at where the water went.

Councilwoman Baxter asked that as of right now, this will be for apartments or we don't know yet? Interim Director Goodson explained that the proposed zoning district is apartments, but you can also have single family and duplexes. Councilwoman Baxter asked if we know if it will be affordable housing? Director Goodson replied that he did not know at this time, but the applicants are present and may be able to answer.

Director Goodson noted that this would not come back to the Council from what he remembered, but the Council could call it back if they so desired. Councilman Walton said they might want to do that, with the conditional rezoning. Director Goodson pointed out that this was general and not conditional. Councilman Peel said it might be helpful to remember the reasons we can deny and what we can consider and what we can't. If this project were to move forward, there are multiple levels of design review by the state and engineers, building retention ponds and everything else. They don't just get to do what they want to do; they have to do what's in the best interest of the area. If they just covered it with concrete, they'd have to provide a place for the water and run-off to go. He noted there was the same issue at the apartments out by the Food Lion that used to be Farm Fresh. They have a retention pond now to deal with it. Part of that area's problem is the beavers like to reside there and they're notorious for building dams and stopping everything up. Water is an issue, but it should be dealt with.

Councilman Biggs asked if Director Goodson had spoken with anyone at DOT about the rezoning. Director Goodson replied that he had not yet, but DOT was on staff at the TRC level and would be involved at that point. Councilman Biggs said his concern was the stormwater as he'd been contacted by several people about the stormwater. He didn't recall a time when the Council pulled an applicant from the TRC level and brought it back for review and he didn't know that he'd be in favor of that from a legal aspect. He was also concerned about the traffic, having two major thoroughfares. We don't have a site plan, so we can't take it into consideration. Ehringhaus is busy and Sam Davis and Sunset are in significant need of repair. I have a lot of concerns about the unknowns of this.

Councilman Peel asked what they need to consider when looking at the rezoning, legally. Director Goodson explained that they needed to determine whether it was in agreement with the land use plan. He said from a community development standpoint, this was a good request and they were in favor of it.

Councilman Walton asked subjectively, should they add anything else to the motion? Director Goodson responded that they could, but he could not advise on that. He reiterated that staff felt it was a good rezoning and other areas of concern could be addressed at the TRC level.

Mayor Rivers noted that we definitely don't have places to stay in Elizabeth City; housing is our number one issue.

**Councilman Biggs requested that the motion be for adoption be amended to include that the Council not request that any subsequent site plans are pulled for approval, but that the Council be notified as site plans are filed that are particular to this site. The friendly amendment was accepted by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence. Motion was seconded by Councilman Johnnie Walton. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**The following consistency statement was adopted: "The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City approves the rezoning request of 7 Parcels containing 7.09± acres located on the north side of W. Ehringhaus Street between McArthur Street and Elcinoca Street from Residential-8 (R-8), General Business (GB), and industrial-2 (I-2) to Apartment District (AD) and finds the request to be consistent with the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County CAMA Future Land Use Plan and area's zoning pattern."**

## **5. Consent Agenda:**

Mayor Rivers read the Consent Agenda items into the record, as follows:

- a. Consideration – Approve TDA Application for River City Skippers;**
- b. Consideration – Authorize Live Fire Trainings;**
- c. Consideration – Authorize Acceptance of PAL Mentoring Grant** *(Removed from Consent and Added to Regular Agenda During Agenda Adjustments);*
- d. Consideration – Adopt February 13, 2023 Regular Session Minutes;**
- e. Consideration – Approve Water Street Transformation Grant Project** *(Added During Agenda Adjustments);*
- f. Consideration – Authorize Sale of Generator** *(Added During Agenda Adjustments);*
- g. Consideration – Authorize Removal of Requirement for Surveys on Rezoning Applications that Follow Property Lines** *(Added During Agenda Adjustments);*

Mayor Rivers requested the Council's pleasure on the Consent Agenda.

**Motion was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Councilman Joseph Peel to approve the consent agenda. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

## **6. Regular Agenda:**

- a. Consideration – Authorize Acceptance of PAL Mentoring Grant** *(Moved from Consent Agenda During Agenda Adjustments);*

Councilman Biggs stated that he'd asked this to be pulled because we are accepting \$16,200 and there's not an attached budget amendment. We would have to amend the budget for this to have somewhere to go. Manager Freeman said the way they've been operating is they get the vote and then come back with the amendment, but they can change that if they want. Biggs said he'd imagine there would be a budget impact because this wasn't budgeted. Manager Freeman said they would be bringing one back.

**Motion to approve acceptance of the grant was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence.**

Councilman Walton asked if this was a donation? Councilman Biggs said it appeared to be a grant that the PAL was receiving. Councilman Walton asked what it was going to take care of, what activities would it fund? Councilman Biggs said from what he understood, it looked like educational trips for youth. Councilman Walton said he felt we needed to find some money to paint that location because it needed to be fixed up. He suggested putting another TDA application out about that because it could be used for facilities.

**Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

- b. Consideration – Appointment to Joint Animal Control Board** *(By Motion and ROLL CALL Vote);*

**Motion was made to appoint Larry Stapleton to the Animal Control Board by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kem Spence. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried. A roll call vote followed, which yielded the same results.**

**c. Discussion – DMS (Added During Agenda Adjustments);**

Mayor invited Ms. Tina Cannon back to the podium for her presentation. Ms. Cannon said it was easy for her to tell the Council what she saw every day, but when they had actual tenants present telling their stories, it had more impact. Ms. Cannon introduced her daughter, Taylor, who was participating via Zoom link. Taylor said there are many stories like Ms. Hunter's, who had come forward to speak this evening. Anytime she found out someone was a tenant, she usually knew their issues were not going to be taken care of so they tried to get them the resources they could, which was often just the inspection. Again, she noted that this extends past Walker's Landing and River's Landing.

They provided photos of moisture readings, which indicated moisture behind walls reading 79%, indicative of severe problems. Oftentimes, mold is in bathrooms or passed through HVAC systems, ceilings, walls, etc. If the visible side of the drywall is reading moisture, there is usually moisture behind it and it has been present for some time. Sometimes their reports allow people to get out of their leases, which is good, but often the landlords paint over the problems and move someone else into the unit without fixing the problem. Taylor showed photos from Ms. Hunter's apartment, which had not been properly treated and remediated. She relayed the story of another family in Walker's Landing whose two young children now have to see a lung specialist due to the conditions they are being forced to live in. There is no accountability in place. Sometimes people cannot even leave due to their situations, so more accountability is necessary.

Councilman Peel asked what's the magnitude of this? Would they say it's 20% of the places they visit? One in three? What percent of the places they go into are like this? Taylor asked if he was just asking about the tenant-occupied inspections? Councilman Peel said maybe the question is how busy are you? Ms. Cannon said a lot of people don't know who to call and they don't have the \$50 for the assessment so they've been doing them for free when they can. They only know about the homes they've been invited into. They can't just knock on doors and ask to come in, but she wished they could. Taylor said of the tenant calls, about 90% of the inspections they do are of this magnitude that they're showing tonight. Councilman Peel asked how many inspections a week? Taylor said roughly eight a week. Councilman Peel asked would she say in that case that maybe six or seven of those were serious? Taylor confirmed that would be correct.

Mayor Rivers said that within the last 60 days, he'd received multiple calls from people in Walker's Landing and he believed it to be a Catch-22 situation. A lot of people don't want to come forward. He'd learned a bit about what our inspectors can and can't do and what they're looking at. He said he was getting concerns about breathing problems and they didn't even tell him about the readings, just about how the problems weren't being properly fixed. He said we needed to figure out what to do. Ms. Cannon said if we go back to the pre-inspections, our inspectors should have a moisture reader and take a class on mold so they can tell where the moisture is. A lot of times, someone will move into a house or apartment and not know they have a problem. Landlords need to be responsible to fix and keep up with what's going on and renters shouldn't have to be afraid to say what's happening.

Councilwoman Felton said she felt very passionate about the residents in these units and they had been out to visit them and it was heartbreaking. She didn't know what the City can do or inspections could do, but it's definitely a problem. She said they would try to figure out what to do to address the problem. It's overwhelming. Ms. Cannon said they'd been doing this for years with renters and it's a sad situation. When a renter calls you, you know there's such a good chance they're not going to get their problems solved.

Councilwoman Baxter stated that as a Council they have an obligation to act for the citizens, and a lot of times they paint these picture that are beautiful and don't talk about the ugly stuff. She was very passionate about the situation and she felt that she was taking a big sacrifice. She didn't mean to attack landlords, she just wanted everyone to have quality standards and a quality life. She is the only councilor who is a renter. "Everybody else has their home. All of us fight, but I don't have a home so if I push for a law or continue with this, who is going to rent to me if I lose where I am? We need to educate ourselves more about the challenges that we have and that we're facing."

**Motion was made by Councilwoman Barbara Baxter to request representative Bill Ward move forward with a minimum housing inspections bill for Elizabeth City. The motion was seconded by Councilman Johnson Biggs.**

Councilman Biggs said he knew they were all passionate about this. He didn't know if they were even elected yet when he heard from Councilwoman Baxter about these issues and she was bringing him up to speed on these issues even more so now. We talk about it and talk about it and the problem keeps going. Now we have people with the courage to come forward and put themselves at risk and that makes it real. Local government can have impact on somebody's lives in ways that state and federal do not. I'm in favor of bringing back the inspection program to some extent. When you have health and life safety issues and you have kids that can't breathe and you're wondering why they're having problems in school because they don't know where they're going to live, no one should have to deal with that. I'm in favor of doing this. We have to implement it right. We have to pay for it. If it's worth doing, we can find the money. I think there's a major gap out there between what we can do legally, what we have done in the past and somewhere where we need to ask for some relief going forward. There's a lot I don't understand and that's why we have a city attorney. It's not just these two apartment complexes, it's not a black or a white issue. This goes across every walk of life in the city. Even if it's just sending it to Representative Ward and saying, "Help us come up with a local bill."

Councilman Peel suggested they may want to amend the motion to say a "local rental inspections bill" instead of minimum housing. He explained that years ago, we did have a rental inspection program where rental units had to be inspected in between the time when one person moved out and someone else moved in. This would ask our representatives to ask for a local bill to help us and not affect anyone else in the state. I think it would put us back where we were before.

**Councilwoman Barbara Baxter amended and restated her motion to formally have representative Bill Ward move forward with setting up a local rental inspections bill for Elizabeth City. The amended motion was seconded by Councilman Johnson Biggs.**

Councilman Peel pointed out that if we can get the bill, we can set the policy of how it's implemented. That's why we have Steinburg and Ward down there. We have a policy on file.

Mayor Rivers said we could get some of those moisture machines too for the inspectors. Councilman Walton said he thought we put together a task force. He asked the manager if he'd worked anything out as far as that went. Manager Freeman said the task force had worked on River's Landing. He asked what the date of the photos they were displaying right now was because he wanted to make sure what he had was correct. Taylor said it was a compilation of several inspections of various different areas from 2022. Manager Freeman stated the task force team met and focused on River's Landing. The one apartment that was the worst was condemned and that one had the belongings moved out. It's still offline, but new cabinets are being ordered next week and it should be ready to get back online in another month. He'd asked a follow-up question about the remaining apartments and was told they have work orders for all of them. The management company was removed and they are due back in town next week. He reiterated this information is for River's Landing and he would follow back up. Councilman Walton said he just wanted to make sure everyone was on the same page and we're going through the right process. He thought that giving it to Representative Ward would be good, but he felt that Steinburg might be able to touch more people than Ward. Ward is probably learning on the job. Steinburg and Ward could get together and do more than we can do. We can start the car, but they can get it across the bridge.

Mayor Rivers said he'll have the manager reach out to Steinburg so he'll know what's going on and that this is going to representative Ward to address lack of oversight.

Councilwoman Felton said she felt that with the caliber of the problem being so big, it would be beneficial to have the motion carried out. We once had inspectors who could go out and do this. Budget season is coming and we may need to look at this. We could always amend the budget, but we'd have to look at these positions.



Mayor Pro Tem Spence stated that this situation is disturbing. If you've never had a problem breathing, you don't know what it's like. To have children struggling to breathe because you're too lazy, tight and greedy, it's unacceptable. We need to apply pressure and run them out of there. I am in favor of what Ms. Baxter is saying. Seeing all of this, it's disturbing. For people to have to live like this, I feel like we have to move forward. We will find money for inspectors. You can't put a price on life. We might have to throw something to the side because we have to make this happen. We don't need to put this on the back burner. I am 100% in favor of pushing this issue. Even if he takes it to them and they don't approve it, we are obligated to do what we can legally.

Councilwoman Baxter noted that this has been going on for years in the entire city. We don't get as many calls in the first and second wards as we do from the third and fourth, but it's happening there too. We've been having this discussion for years and we need to do something.

Councilman Walton noted that Councilwoman Baxter has passion for what she's saying. Councilors come and go, and I'm not contrary to what's being said. Don't dismiss what the manager has done or what Steinburg can do. We'll vote on it but we need to put fire on the people we're paying. We pay the manager, let him do the job. We selected Ward, let him do his job, We're paying Steinburg, so let him do his job. They all work on the same team. If it can happen, they can make it happen if the devil doesn't stop it.

Mayor Rivers called for the vote on the motion on the floor.

**Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Spence, Felton, Baxter and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**7. Closed Session Land Acquisition and Personnel as allowed by NCGS 143-318-11(a)(5) and NCGS 143-318-11(a)(6)**

**Motion was made to enter Closed Session for Land Acquisition and Personnel as allowed by NCGS 143-318-11(a)(5) and NCGS 143-318-11(a)(6) was made by Councilman Joseph Peel, seconded by Councilman Jarvis Gibbs at 9:04 p.m.**

The Council returned to open session at 9:41 p.m.

**8. Adjournment:**

Having no further business to be discussed, Mayor Rivers adjourned the meeting at 9:42 p.m.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April Onley, NCCMC  
City Clerk

