

**City Council Regular Session  
October 27, 2025**

The City Council of the City of Elizabeth City met in Regular Session on Monday, October 13, 2025 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 Pro Tem Kem Spence  
Councilman Johnson Biggs  
Councilman Joseph Peel  
Councilman Javis Gibbs  
Councilwoman Rose Whitehurst  
Councilwoman Katherine Felton  
Councilman Ronnie Morris  
Councilman Johnnie Walton

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mayor Kirk Rivers

OTHERS PRESENT: Chief of Staff Monica Cole  
Chief of Police Eddie Graham  
Public Utilities Assistant Director Raymond Staten  
Fire Chief Chris Carver  
HR Director Aresta Johnson  
Interim Finance Director Brian Lewis  
Development Services Director Carl Best  
Planner II Dylan Lloyd  
Parks and Recreation Director Stacy Williams  
Grants Administrator Jon Hawley  
IT Director Matthew Simpson  
ECDI Director Debbie Malenfant  
IT Systems Analyst Pedro Holley II  
City Clerk April Onley

Mayor Pro Tem Spence called the City Council's Regular Session to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilman Gibbs provided the invocation, after which Councilman Biggs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Agenda Adjustments and Approval:**

Mayor Pro Tem Spence directed the Council's attention to the prepared agenda. He noted that there was a staff request to move Item C on the Consent Agenda – *Consideration – Authorize Submission of USDOJ-BJA Application for Community Center & Mentoring Grant* to the Regular Agenda for further discussion.

**Motion was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Councilwoman Katherine Felton to approve the agenda as amended. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Felton, Morris and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**2. Comments from the Public:**

Mayor Pro Tem Spence asked if there were individuals signed up for public comment. Upon the Clerk's reply that there were numerous speakers, Mayor Pro Tem Spence opened the comment period and requested that they be called forward.

**Frank Atkinson – 1512 Rivershore Road, Elizabeth City** – Mr. Atkinson told the Council that he was the chair of the local Democratic Party. He objected to the idea of spending public funds for Charlie Kirk, as he was a person who was never involved with the city whatsoever. He felt that many of Mr. Kirk's comments were very divisive and he does not agree that any public money or time should be expended to honor him.

**Jessica Kelly – 200 East Burgess Street, Elizabeth City** – Said that Charlie Kirk twisted the founding documents and the Bible to fit his Christian Nationalism. He did not support women's

rights or civil rights. She did not want to repeat some of the things he said because they made her cringe. Quoted Mr. Kirk's comment that "We made a huge mistake when we passed civil rights." She stated that Mr. Kirk believed that "slots" belonged only to white men. He did not think women should work and that LGBTQ corrupted children. He believed that being American meant you spoke English and had an Anglo-Saxon sounding name. She was concerned for the future of a City that would install something like this, as not caring about it is either uneducated, apathetic or worse. Elizabeth City is 50% women, 50% non-white and more than 50% non-religious, which meant that more than 50% of our citizens have been targeted by Charlie Kirk's rhetoric.

**Steven Young – 805 West Church Street, Elizabeth City –** *(Additional Time Donated by Gene Tick – 1016 Sundown Drive, Elizabeth City)* – Mr. Young passed out a petition he started online, noting that not all signers were from Elizabeth City. He also provided the Council with a handout that went more in depth with his talking points. The petition contained 1,500 signatures supporting the installation of a street mural on East Colonial for Charlie Kirk who he felt had "been martyred for speaking his biblical truth". He claimed that Mr. Kirk inspired millions including people in our area. There are more than 2,500 Turning Point chapters nationwide and now there is an Albemarle chapter as well. He said he felt that placing the mural on East Colonial Avenue would be a reflection of Mr. Kirk's fight for freedom. He recalled that in 2021, the Council approved the BLM mural and set a precedent that inspired the location for the Charlie Kirk mural. The mural will be funded by grassroots and the TPUSA fund. He was asking that the Charlie Kirk mural receive security cameras and lights equivalent to those provided for the BLM mural. He opined that the mural would be a proclamation of Christian faith. There will be worship events and links to Charlie's speeches. He pointed out that former Councilman Horton said Black Lives Matter, and Christians would say that all lives matter, but we have to focus on a neighborhood where the "house is on fire". He claimed that Christians are being martyred at a rate of 12 per day and that's where the "fire" is currently. He urged the Council to approve the mural as soon as possible in honor of Mr. Kirk's legacy.

**Lauren Dodenhoff – 1612 Parkview Drive, Elizabeth City –** Present to voice her opposition to the mural, which she believed went against the message of inclusivity and worked to divide rather than unify. Charlie Kirk is not from Elizabeth City. The mural would be a message of exclusion and would be ridiculing a large segment of people in Elizabeth City. She added that a petition on Change.org in opposition of the mural had also been started, which had more signatures than the original.

**Heidi French – 179 St. Andrews Road, Moyock –** Advised that she is not a resident but is involved with Elizabeth City and has students at NEAAAT and COA. Mrs. French was present to oppose the mural and felt that putting it on City property would make it look like the City supported Charlie Kirk. Charlie Kirk did not feel that everyone should have rights. He hated empathy and felt that it was a "made up word." She noted that ECSU has an excellent aviation program and puts out many Black pilots who are fantastic, but Charlie Kirk is on record specifically saying that he did not believe Black pilots were capable.

**Terri Davis – 639 Shawboro Road, Shawboro –** Mrs. Davis said she is currently a resident of Shawboro, but she is from Elizabeth City. She would never want a memorial for Charlie Kirk or anyone who had no ties to Elizabeth City. She added that even if Mr. Kirk was everything Steven Young claimed him to be she would still stand against it because Steven Young wanted it. She claimed that Mr. Young has been "putting a target" on the back of their Muslim neighbors simply because they want a place to worship.

**Dan Johnson – 1209 West Church Street, Elizabeth City –** Mr. Johnson said he had lived on Church Street for about 11 years. He commended all the speakers who spoke out against Charlie Kirk, as he found him to be a character who used to speak with "a wink and a nod" or a dog whistle, and ultimately became overtly racist. He read a brief excerpt about Mr. Kirk, who defined the American way of life to be marriage, childrearing and worshipping without LGBTQ, trans people or any other religion being in the way. Mr. Kirk rallied against "Black crime." Whatever his distaste for Black people, it was even worse for people such as Haitians, and he referenced a few things he'd said along those lines. He encouraged everyone to read the article.

**Feira Johnson – 1209 West Church Street, Elizabeth City –** Mrs. Johnson advised that she was a public school art teacher. As an educator, she saw every day how deeply young people absorbed what was around them. The images they see shape what they understand and who they become. It is not a double standard to accept a BLM mural and not accept a Charlie Kirk mural. Mr. Kirk is a national figure who targeted marginalized people and was known for hateful

rhetoric. We must ensure our public art reflects unity and hope. Our murals should reflect our values and tell stories that heal and inspire. We cannot leave children a past they must repair because of selfish choices we make today.

**Tammy Sutton – 101 Osprey Court, Elizabeth City** – Told the Council that she was against the mural. Charlie Kirk had nothing to do with Elizabeth City and he hated Black women.

**Mark Brothers – 1300 Preyer Avenue, Elizabeth City** – Mr. Brothers said it is horrible when anyone is shot is broad daylight. Radical politicians are always at risk and we should mourn the loss of Mr. Kirk but we should remember the message and views that he championed. He was influential and shaped young minds with rhetoric and hate. He was damaging and threatening to democracy. Mr. Kirk had a pattern of dehumanizing and undermining freedoms. To have BLM on our streets would be delegitimized by placing a Charlie Kirk mural there.

**Megan Hiner – 1209 Preyer Avenue, Elizabeth City** – Was present to voice opposition to the proposed mural. Murals have been used across history in many ways. Elizabeth City has many beautiful murals that reflect our history. To dedicate a mural to someone who has no ties to the area and has expressed an immense amount of hate is extremely divisive. To put it next to BLM is extraordinarily disrespectful. Charlie Kirk called BLM anti-American and anti-Christian. Being American entails creating opportunities and dismantling systems of oppression, which is a goal of BLM. Charlie Kirk was against all of that and giving him a mural would be wildly inappropriate.

**Benjamin Stokley – 405 Perry Street, Elizabeth City** – Mr. Stokley told the Council that he was a retired marine. He thanked the diverse group who came out in numbers tonight to show their disapproval of the mural. He hoped the Council would see that Elizabeth City has spoken that the mural is unwelcome here.

**Charlene Wade – 1908 Rivershore Road, Elizabeth City** – Mrs. Wade said she was a business owner downtown and was appreciative to everyone who came to speak tonight. She was surprised that the idea to erect a mural to Charlie Kirk was even entertained. She moved to Elizabeth City after working here for 10 years as a contractor for the Coast Guard Base. No one should be murdered for their views, but it was important to remember that Charlie Kirk was opposed to everything – gun control, LGBTQ, rights of all kinds. He was racist and extreme and his comments were full of hate speech. He called for the death of Joe Biden. The more she read about him, the more divisive she found that he was. The petition in favor of the mural started before the petition against it, but the petition for the mural has many fewer signatures than the one against it.

**Farren Sheba – 306 Locust Street, Elizabeth City** – Echoed all commenters that came before who had expressed opposition to the mural. The BLM mural represents Elizabeth City and Elizabeth City's understanding that Black Lives Matter. That is a non-partisan fact. Andrew Brown has mural, though not on City property, but he was also a local. Charlie Kirk is not a local and his political opinions were divisive and do not represent Elizabeth City.

**Arena Simmons – 807 Raleigh Street, Elizabeth City** – Spoke against the potential mural. If you are going to honor people, honor people who made NC great and helped us become a free nation. Next year is our 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. She told the Council that she works for the Daughters of the Revolution, and recognizing the people who gave us the things we have today is what matters. It is shameful to bring up someone who has nothing to do with NC or Elizabeth City whatsoever. We should celebrate the good things.

**Pearl Napolitano – 115 North Water Street, Elizabeth City** – *(Additional Time Donated by Brandon Napolitano – 115 North Water Street, Elizabeth City)* – Shared that she started the petition against the Charlie Kirk mural after she realized there were enough people who stood against it that they deserved their voices to be heard. There are old people, young people, Black people, white people, all who signed their names in opposition. She read the information on the Change.org petition. We can beautify East Colonial Avenue without honoring Charlie Kirk. She recognized that everyone has freedom of religious and political expression but plenty of Mr. Kirk's thoughts and words were not okay. He stood for the militarization of our cities as a means of taking control because he thought it would end Black-on-Black crime. He believed we should consider controlling who could seek higher education based on their country of origin. He did not like DEI initiatives. He pushed pro-life rhetoric at a harmful cost. If we erected a Charlie Kirk mural, then we should also put murals up that express us all such as the pride flag, former presidents, trans activists and noteworthy figureheads who have been murdered. She encouraged Steven Young to heal.

**Kennethdra Joyner – 1311 Winston Street, Elizabeth City** – Recalled that when the proposal was brought forward, Steven Young just goes back to BLM and asks, “If you have that, why can’t I have this?” BLM is about inclusion and saying that Black lives matter too. Whether you believe in Kirk’s views or not, he should not have a public mural here. Elizabeth City has overcome a lot of discrimination and we’ve been in the news a lot. We are on the path to inclusion and bringing everyone together. A mural like this will only divide us. She said she was not taking anything away from anyone who was in favor of the mural, but as a City, the majority has spoken and we oppose it. It would not be a positive movement for the City.

**Johnny Houston – 605 West Main Street, Elizabeth City** – Dr. Houston was pleased to see the large crowd present this evening. When people become interested in their cities, it makes a difference. We have to look out for each other and do the things we’re set to do. He came tonight to share his views. He heard people tell him Charlie Kirk was a Christian. Everyone in the room he trusted to be a human being. He did not believe in violence and murder. He did not think the alleged person who shot Charlie Kirk should be praised because it’s wrong to kill unless you are defending yourself. He was happy to know certain things can still get us involved and get us going. He had been here over 40 years. He wanted to find somewhere to live where we treat people right and honor them the right way. This is a good city. Three months ago, he went to New York and his daughter received her medical degree. He was a teacher here and told students to take advantage of the good of the city. Anything that will help elevate us, we should do it. We also should be careful about getting on a bandwagon to support something without doing our own research.

**Tony Sawyer – 2715 West Main Street Extended, Elizabeth City** – Mr. Sawyer reminded everyone that Charlie Kirk was murdered, not assassinated. There is a big difference. He was absolutely against naming anything for Charlie Kirk in Elizabeth City except maybe the bathroom. He considered him to be a puppet for Donald Trump. Trump ordered the flags half-mast when Mr. Kirk died, but not a single word was said about the on-duty officers who died or the children who died that same week. Donald Trump uses people and then disposes of them. He’ll do it with RFK too. If you want to recognize someone on this road, go with JFK, Emmett Till or Jackie Robinson. If you want to keep it local, go with Johnnie Walton who was the first Black quarterback. What about Debbie Malenfant? Five years ago, downtown was a ghost town and now it looks like a mini Bourbon Street, and that is thanks to her. He encouraged the Council not to pay this messy suggestion any mind.

**Roger W. Mailk – 722 Riverside Avenue, Elizabeth City** – Appreciated the Council’s willingness to hear from all of the citizens. He chose to live in Elizabeth City in spite of being very mobile. Our neighbors have varying politics but we care for each other. He was sure that we could find some good things to say about Mr. Kirk if we looked closely at his life. We humanize one another in this town and respect each other’s humanity. Although Mr. Kirk was a young man, he had a tendency to dehumanize his opponents and that was very unfortunate and led to a great deal of controversy in our nation. Elizabeth City does not behave like that. We offer love and support when we can. For that reason, he encouraged the Council to deny the request to have this mural. He suspected that we would be encouraging the dehumanization of our own population if we allowed this here.

**Marvin Whitehurst – 810 Cardwell Street, Elizabeth City** – Mr. Whitehurst declared that Charlie Kirk’s name should not be anywhere in Elizabeth City. Mr. Kirk has done nothing in Elizabeth City except start trouble. He has not issued a food stamp notice, a healthcare notice or anything that helped anyone. We can recognize people who have done things in Elizabeth City or for the City. There are people who go out every single day to improve the City and Charlie Kirk hasn’t done anything except bring up a mess. He was nothing but a puppet. He asked the Council to come from the heart on this decision. He felt sorry that Mr. Kirk was shot but people are shot all the time. This is not our home – we are just passing through. If they would read the Bible and take it to the heart, the light would shine on them.

**Patrice Ellis – 134 Ranch Drive, Elizabeth City** – Mrs. Ellis stated that she’d made it a point to come tonight. She was afraid of what to expect, but she felt it was her civic duty to come and voice her opinion. She was so proud of the community because she has listened tonight to old people, young people, white people and Black people, all who came out and joined together to oppose this. She considered that amazing. She also opposed the mural and felt that if the City wanted to use resources, they should be geared toward the homeless. We also have a problem with at-risk youth. If we tackle it early, a lot of the gun violence and other issues could be minimized. It is about to get cold and we have so many homeless people, more than you realize.

There are homeless people in graveyards, behind buildings, in abandoned houses. We should target that, an actual problem instead of praising someone like Charlie Kirk. She expressed her condolences to his family and people grieving for him, but it is not feasible to erect a mural for every political person who lost their life.

### **3. Public Hearings:**

#### **a. Hold a Public Hearing – Updated Fee Schedule FY 2025-2026;**

Mayor Pro Tem Spence declared the public hearing open and inquired of the Clerk if there were persons present who wished to make comment on the matter. Upon the Clerk's reply that there were no speakers, Mayor Pro Tem Spence declared the public hearing closed.

**Motion was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Councilman Joseph Peel to adopt the revised FY 2025-2026 Fee Schedule. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Felton, Morris and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

### **Ordinance #2025-10-01 An Ordinance Amending the FY 2025-2026 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 2025-2026 Budget and Fee Schedule on June 9, 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, it was determined that it would be to the benefit of both staff and citizens to condense and revamp the overall Fee Schedule to make it into a more useful and approachable document; and

**WHEREAS**, during the October 13, 2025 City Council meeting, the Council called for a Public Hearing, which was subsequently advertised and held during the October 27, 2025 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 2025-2026 is hereby amended and will now appear in its new format, as follows:

#### **SECTION I. The Updated 2025-2026 Fee Schedule (Attached)**

**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 27<sup>th</sup> day of October 2025.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April D. Onley, NCCMC  
City Clerk

**4. Approval of Minutes:**

- a. **Consideration – Approve October 13, 2025 Regular Session Minutes;**

**Motion was made by Councilman Joseph Peel, seconded by Councilwoman Katherine Felton to approve the minutes with any necessary corrections. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Felton, Morris and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**5. Consent Agenda:**

Mayor Pro Tem Spence read the Consent Agenda item into the record, as follows:

- a. **Consideration – Accept Abstract of Votes from October 7, 2025 Municipal Election;**
- b. **Consideration – Accept Grant Contract for College Park Renewal Project;**

**Ordinance #2025-10-02  
GRANT PROJECT ORDINANCE  
College Park Renewal Project  
Grant No. CW63451**

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the City Council of Elizabeth City, North Carolina, that pursuant to Section 13.2 of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the following grant project ordinance is hereby adopted:

**I.** The project authorized is the College Park Renewal Project.

**II.** The officers of this unit are hereby directed to proceed with the project within the terms of the project documents and the budget contained herein.

**III.** The following revenue is anticipated to be available to complete this project:  
[10-3490-6402] NCDEQ-DCM, RCCP Grant \$300,000

**IV.** The following amount is appropriated for project expenses:  
[10-6200-0400] Engineering and Design \$300,000

**V.** Copies of this grant project ordinance shall be made available to the Budget Officer and Finance Director for direction in carrying out this project.

Adopted this 27<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2025.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April D. Onley, NCCMC  
City Clerk

- c. **Consideration – Authorize Submission of USDOJ-BJA Application for Community Center & Mentoring Grant** *(Removed from Consent Agenda and placed on Regular Agenda During Agenda Adjustments);*
- d. **Consideration – Accept Final Bid for Property;**
- e. **Consideration – Accept Grant Award for NCEM;**
- f. **Consideration – Declare City Property as Surplus (Ray Street);**

**Resolution # 2025 –10-01  
Declaring Real Property Surplus  
and Authorizing Sale by Upset Bid Process**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Elizabeth City is the owner of real property identified on the Pasquotank County Registry as PIN# 891311665997 and Map 50-A-7 and having a physical address of 606 Ray Street; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Elizabeth City has no current or future need for the property; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has authorized an opening bid of \$37,000; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has authorized notice to be published to solicit bids for the sale of the property, pursuant to the upset bid process as outline in NCGS §160A-269.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the parcel of property identified on the Pasquotank County Registry as PIN# 891311665997 and Map 50-A-7, located at 606 Ray Street is hereby declared surplus to the needs of the City of Elizabeth City; and

**FURTHER**, the City Clerk shall be authorized to begin the upset bid process as required by North Carolina General Statute §160A-269, with an opening bid of \$37,000.

**ADOPTED**, this the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April D. Onley  
City Clerk, NCCMC

- g. **Consideration – Declare City Property as Surplus (Southern Avenue);**

**Resolution # 2025 –10-02  
Declaring Real Property Surplus  
and Authorizing Sale by Upset Bid Process**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Elizabeth City is the owner of real property identified on the Pasquotank County Registry as PIN# 892309060587 and Map 25-J-4 and having a physical address of 920 Southern Avenue; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Elizabeth City has no current or future need for the property; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has authorized an opening bid of \$6,510; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has authorized notice to be published to solicit bids for the sale of the property, pursuant to the upset bid process as outline in NCGS §160A-269.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the parcel of property identified on the Pasquotank County Registry as PIN# 892309060587 and Map 25-J-4, located at 920 Southern Avenue is hereby declared surplus to the needs of the City of Elizabeth City; and

**FURTHER**, the City Clerk shall be authorized to begin the upset bid process as required by North Carolina General Statute §160A-269, with an opening bid of \$6,510.

**ADOPTED**, this the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April D. Onley  
City Clerk, NCCMC

**h. Consideration – Declare City Property as Surplus (708/710 Jefferson Street);**

**Resolution # 2025-10-03  
Declaring Real Property Surplus  
and Authorizing Sale by Upset Bid Process**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Elizabeth City is the owner of real property identified on the Pasquotank County Registry as the following:

- PIN: 891311665409 and Map 50-H-10, and having a physical address of 708 Jefferson Street; and
- PIN: 891311665416 and Map 50-H-9, and having a physical address of 710 Jefferson Street; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Elizabeth City has no current or future need for these properties; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has authorized to declare these properties as surplus and available to be sold as a single unit containing two tracts; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council has authorized notice to be published to solicit bids for the sale of the properties, pursuant to the upset bid process as outlined in NCGS §160A-269.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City that the parcels of property identified on the Pasquotank County Registry as:

- PIN: 891311665409 and Map 50-H-10, and having a physical address of 708 Jefferson Street; and
- PIN: 891311665416 and Map 50-H-9, and having a physical address of 710 Jefferson Street; and

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Clerk shall be authorized to begin the upset bid process as required by North Carolina General Statute §160A-269.

**ADOPTED**, this the 27<sup>th</sup> day of October 2025.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April Onley, NCCMC  
City Clerk

Mayor Pro Tem Spence asked the Council's pleasure on the Consent Agenda.

**Motion was made by Councilwoman Katherine Felton, seconded by Councilman Johnson Biggs to approve the Consent Agenda. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Felton, Morris and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**6. Regular Agenda:**

**a. Consideration – Authorize Submission of USDOJ-BJA Application for Community Center & Mentoring Grant (As Moved from Consent Agenda During Agenda Adjustments);**

Grants Administrator Jon Hawley explained that the ultimate goal of this grant is about reducing crime and making people safer. We are trying to work with Chief Graham and his team to make needed improvements to the former Armory to better activate it as a community center and launch a new mentoring program through the building. The grant is 100% federal funding for up to four years, which is great, but we did want to make the Council aware that the proposal will include new personnel for implementation. There is also one change that has come about between the initial ideas and discussing things with the Chief. There was concern about an element where we would try to squeeze in a substation. We were advised that might not be a compatible use for the grant. It does reduce the exposure for personnel costs after the grant period. After the grant lapses, ongoing personnel will include mentor coordinators to work with at-risk youth and partners, part-time drivers to transport mentees and a new crime data analyst to help with tracking and performance measurements and routine police work. The potential personnel expenses would be between \$150,000 and \$160,000. Over the lifetime of the grant, we can continue to build community partnerships and find ways to absorb or share the costs once we have a record of success behind it. For four years, it will be 100% funded and we will have time to tackle the question of sustainability and ensure it is worth local investment.

Councilman Walton clarified that Mr. Hawley meant the City would take things over as far as paying personnel after four years. Mr. Hawley replied that was correct. The personnel would be the two mentor coordinators, the drivers (a small part of the expense) and the crime data analyst. Councilman Walton inquired about what would happen if we did not take it over. Is there a penalty? Mr. Hawley said there was no penalty listed explicitly, but if we don't make clear commitments, it may make the grant application less competitive. There is no explicit requirement we continue as is, though.

Councilman Peel asked if this would fall under the Police Department or Parks & Recreation. Mr. Hawley replied that it would be under the Police Department. Councilman Peel asked if it was related to expanding PAL. Mr. Hawley advised that we are proposing this as a standalone; however, it would tie-in with the school system and other partners. Councilman Peel asked how much we would be asking for. He saw the note about "up to \$2 million." Mr. Hawley advised that we are still trying to finalize quotes for the Armory, but he would guess \$1.5 million or \$1.6 million. Councilman Peel asked if that would be enough to remodel and pay the salaries. Mr. Hawley confirmed that it would. He noted that we would not be able to do everything, but we could do HVAC and repainting, which are the two big ones. Then security enhancements like cameras, locks and some classroom tech, tablets, smart boards for community events and instruction. We would also request two passenger vans.

Councilwoman Felton verified that if the part the City has to cover would be the salaries of the people to carry on the positions. Mr. Hawley replied that was correct. There would be a number of one-time capital expenses in the grant. The personnel expense in the grant is large because it's four years' worth.

Councilman Biggs asked when the anticipated award date was. Mr. Hawley pointed out that due to the shutdown, it was uncertain, but it would probably be several months away. We are supposed to have this ready by November 10<sup>th</sup>, but we are not banking on that. Councilman

Biggs added that even if the City is awarded, the Council still has to vote to accept the grant. Prior to getting to that point, he would like staff to prepare an analysis of where the \$150,000 or \$160,000 might come from because that would help. He suggested looking at it from a standpoint of having no partners to determine how we would absorb it in a worst-case scenario.

Councilman Peel reminded Councilman Biggs that they would not have to do it for four years though. Councilman Biggs said he understood, but they were making a commitment nonetheless. Councilman Peel noted that this is a well we often return to when seeking money. It probably wouldn't be in our best interest to send an application in, get the approval and then not accept it. Mr. Hawley agreed. He would err on the side of accepting the grant if it was offered. Councilman Peel proposed that they submit the application and unless it comes back really bad, they accept it because they might not get another one.

**Motion was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Councilman Joseph Peel to authorize submission of a grant application to CVIPI for the Community Safety and Outreach Center. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Felton, Morris and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**b. Consideration – Authorize Submission of Application for Body-Worn Camera Enhancement and Deployment (Requires Matching Funds);**

Mr. Hawley explained that this particular grant could fund the deployment, enhancement and improvement of cameras. We would be trying to upgrade the current body-worn cameras. The current ones are functional but they don't have some additional functionality that would make officers work more efficiently. They don't have digital assistants, but the new ones do. The new cameras can translate for non-English speaking individuals so there will be no language barriers. This program has matching fund requirements of 50/50. If we were successful, we could outfit the Police Department with more functional cameras, improve efficiency and save stress and extra work hours.

Councilwoman Felton asked how much the match would be. Mr. Hawley replied that it was 50/50 up to \$210,000, for a total match of \$105,000. The Police Department is currently looking at leasing the cameras over three years to break up the expense. The impact in a single fiscal year should be \$35,000 or less.

Councilman Walton noted that it has always been a fact that you need the cameras because they speak for themselves. A person does not have to say anything. The truth is out on the cameras and is determined by the facts. He felt that the cameras were needed.

Councilman Gibbs opined that with the environment we're in today and in an effort to be transparent, anything we can do we should do. He did not think this would have been brought to the Council if it wasn't a necessity. Even within Police Department's budget, they are trying to cover the \$35,000, so it may not actually be a huge impact. He thought that anything the Council could do to help the Police Department do their jobs they should do it.

**Motion was made by Councilman Johnson Biggs, seconded by Councilwoman Katherine Felton to authorize submission of a grant application to the BWCPIP for body-worn camera enhancement and deployment. Those voting in favor of the motion were: Biggs, Peel, Gibbs, Whitehurst, Felton, Morris and Walton. Against: None. Motion carried.**

**7. Adjournment:**

Having no further business to be discussed, Mayor Pro Tem Spence adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

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E. Kirk Rivers  
Mayor

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April Onley, NCCMC  
City Clerk

