

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
CITY HALL, THIRD FLOOR
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2022
8:30 A.M.**

PRESENT: Mayor Gibbons, Councilmembers Jonathan Beal, Kent Greer, David Stevens, Ralph Prestwood.

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Scott Hildebran and Planning Administrative Assistant Lauren Hartley.

VIA ZOOM: Mayor Pro-Tem Crissy Thomas, Councilmember Todd Perdue, Finance Director Donna Bean, Planning Director Jenny Wheelock, Recreation Director Kenny Story, Economic Development Director Kaylynn Horn, Fire Chief Ken Hair, Police Chief Brent Phelps, Public Utilities Director Radford Thomas, Public Works Director Jared Wright and Communications Director Joshua Harris.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Mayor Pro-Tem Crissy Thomas welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

II. CITIZEN COMMENT PERIOD

III. COMMITTEE ITEMS

A. Public Utilities: Public Utilities Director Radford Thomas gave the following report:

- FEMA BRIC Grant – Submitted and should hear if the grant application is funded around July 2022.
- Brownfield Assessment Grant 2 Application – Grant was submitted and we should here if the grant application is funded in April 2022.
- Crossroads Sewer Project – The contractor is on site and has mobilized equipment and materials for the project. Pipe has been delivered however they are still waiting on manholes to be delivered. Construction cannot begin until the manholes are on site.
- Biosolids Project at Lower Creek Wastewater Plant – we are down to the last couple of punch list items to be resolved and completed before we can begin to finalize and close out this project. The dryer and belt press and other items are operational and working very well. The outstanding punch list items have to do with the large outside hopper and the vertical auger not functioning as designed.
- Meter Replacement Project – Meter installation is all but complete with a few difficult installations left outstanding. The network for reading meters is reporting at a 99.7 percent read rate. We are working towards the final completion of this project and closeout within the next couple of months.

- Joyceton Waterworks Acquisition – The acquisition of the Joyceton Waterworks water system is moving along. We are working out details on the transfer of assets from Joyceton to the City which include rights of way and easements. Final approval is required from the NC Utilities Commission before the acquisition can be completed. The Utilities Department is currently assisting Joyceton with maintenance, meter reading and meter replacement as per our service agreement with Joyceton.
- Water System Lead and Copper Analysis – Freese and Nichols is performing an analysis on the water system to comply with new EPA requirements to address lead and copper in local water systems. The analysis is moving forward and we will be meeting with Freese and Nichols next week.
- Whitnel Water Transmission Line – The preliminary report on this project has been completed and McGill Associates has started the surveying to determine the route of the new 24 inch water line and identify any easements or right of way associated with the project.
- Interconnection Study – The final report is being drafted after making a few minor clarifications in the draft report. This study has evaluated possible interconnections between the City’s water system and any neighboring utilities for emergency needs as well as future demands.

B. Public Works: Public Works Director Jared Wright reported on the following items:

- FY21-22 Street Resurfacing – The street list for the Spring-22 paving schedule has been released to our resurfacing contractor, and we’ve also requested pricing for milling operations (one street, Beall Street, as previously discussed, will need to be milled prior to asphalt resurfacing). We anticipate paving operations to resume within the next several weeks (weather-dependent).
- The construction of Hotel Street has been completed and we expect to schedule a final walkthrough and closeout of the construction contract this week. We will also hold a ribbon-cutting to officially open the street to the public after the walkthrough and formal acceptance by the City.
- Construction plans for the *Police Department Entrance Improvements* project have been completed. This project intends to replace the existing ramp, and provide façade and streetscape improvements to the building entrance on West Avenue. In addition to completed plans, we have also received an opinion of probable costs from the design consultant, McGill Associates. Given the volatility of the current construction market, it has been difficult to estimate costs, and this is reflected in the over-budget projection received from McGill. We hope to see prices more in line with budgeted funds once bids are received from contractors. The bid solicitation will proceed “informally” (invitation only).
- We have had correspondence with the Smith Crossroads gateway signage design consultant, Destination by Design, regarding proposals for survey work required for project layout. To date, one of seven (1 of 7) survey companies has provided pricing. This low number could be indicative of the demand for survey services or general lack of interest. We hope to receive additional pricing in the near future and continue with

project design.

- The NC State University stormwater project planned for JE Broyhill Park is nearing design completion. Preliminary plans have been reviewed by staff and comments were returned to NCSU for design completion. This project will be completed by 6-30-22, and should be a great addition to the park.

IV. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A. The Lenoir Business Advisory Board (LBAB) conducted a virtual meeting on Thursday, February 10, 2022. Kaylynn Horn, Economic Development Director, gave the following report:

- The Economic Development Department is currently assisting with the Lenoir Wayfinding system project and Smith Cross Roads signage.
- The department continues to assist property owners and business owners with the NPS facade Grant and our local grant, while exploring other funding and grant opportunities currently available.
- The NC Main Street Conference will be held virtually. March 8-10; also the National Main Street Conference will be held in person in Richmond, Virginia. May 16-18.
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Lenoir Main Street and Downtown Activities

February: Love for Local - Love letter for local-show your love to the small businesses by dropping a letter in the box located at the downtown stage. There is also a virtual option.

March: -Love the Spring- a mead and craft festival 3/19; Leprechaun Chase 3/10-3/17

April: Bootlegger 100 4/23; Cruise-in 4/2

May: Farmers Market 5/7; Lenoir Bicycle Fest 5/14

June: Summer Music Madness 6/ 24

July: Blackberry Festival 7/15-16

B. Lenoir Tourism Development Authority: The Lenoir Tourism Development Authority (LTDA) met on Thursday, February 10, 2022. Finance Director, Donna Bean, gave the financial report. As of January 31, 2022, revenues were \$103,881.45, expenditures were \$35,559.32 and the fund balance was 378,906.64. The LTDA considered five requested for funding and approved four. The four approved were MLK Jazz Festival (\$1,500), Tattoo and Arts Festival (\$2,500), Smoking in the Foothills Event (\$3,500), and Lenoir Cruisers (\$1,750). The request from Wolf Moon Salt Caves and Stress Reduction Center for help with their grand opening was referred to the Caldwell County Chamber of Commerce.

- C. Planning Board: Planning Director Jenny Wheelock reported the Planning Board will meet on February 28, 2022 with a Conditional Zoning District request for the Summerhill Subdivision. She stated they are seeing a lot of interest for residential permits and reported the Department has a few demolition ordinances to be presented in the near future.
- D. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board: The Recreation Advisory Board met on February 21, 2022. Kenny Story, Recreation Director, presented the following report.
- Reported youth basketball season will finish up this week, with 17 teams and 170 players.
 - Youth Baseball/Softball registration is underway and will run through March 11, 2022.
 - Black History Month Essay Competition will be held this Saturday February 26th at 3:00 p.m. This event will be live streamed.
 - CCC&TI women's softball team continues to practice and play at the Optimist Park.
 - Leprechaun Leap Race will be held on Saturday, March 12th at the Rotary Soccer Complex. Start time is 9:00 a.m.
 - The new roof work has been completed at LAFC.
 - Work continues on Phase Two at LHS Auditorium.
 - WiFi has been placed in all of our parks to include the Walking Park, JE Broyhill Park, Optimist Park, Mulberry Rec and MLK.
 - Work continues with McGill on obtaining a PARTF for LAFC and the Soccer Complex.
 - MLK is still offering COVID testing and vaccines Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. through Ottendorf Laboratories.

E. Financial and Administration

1. Finance Director Donna Bean reviewed the Financial Summary as of January 31, 2022. She stated the City is in good financial shape and remains on track with its budget. The over/under balance in the General Fund is \$4,291,989.77, Downtown District (\$71,312.59), and Water & Sewer Fund \$1,646,919.23.

A copy of the January financial summary is attached to these minutes as information.

- F. Public Communications: A copy of the January 2022 Communications Report was presented to City Council as information.

Director Harris reported there were 11 news releases, 88 photos, 6 videos, 113 social posts, 35 notify me requests, 38 questions & answers and 1 e-sign up. The website has 691 new followers, social reach is 130,558, and video views 3,785. There were 32,050 Facebook followers, 586 Twitter followers and 3,766 Instagram followers.

V. PUBLIC SAFETY

A. Police Department

Police Chief, Brent Phelps reported he will be presenting the annual report at the next City Council meeting, which will include the 2021 Fourth Quarterly report.

- He currently has 2 officers in training and 1 with a conditional offer to start in a week.
- The number of positive COVID cases have gotten better at the Police Department.
- There will be a retirement recognition for Sgt. James Moore on March 3rd at 3:00 p.m., held at the Martin Luther King Center.
- A brief discussion was held about research for the Flock Camera System and Chief Phelps' recommendation to City Manager Hildebran is to table this project until there are future legislative changes for DOT right-a-ways.

- Fire Department

- Fire Chief, Ken Hair gave a summary of the Fire Department's 2021 Annual report including that there was 30% increase in call volume vs. 2020, a breakdown of district responses were Station. #1 downtown responded to 62.4% of the calls, Station. #2 Whitnel responded to 26.3% and Station. #3 responded to 11.3%, Fires – there was a 33% increase in fire responses and most were brush/grass which is continually increasing for us and Western North Carolina, medical calls has increased 40% vs. 2020 due to the fact that we started back responding as normal until September due to COVID increases.

Training remained consistent with our department putting in 17,464 hours which equals 301 per firefighter and we were able to attend more off duty classes/seminars. Inspections were up considerably due to the work Chief Jacobs is doing and in 2020 we replaced the retiring Fire Marshal and there were two months of no inspections. With prevention programs we reached 1,756 citizens from school children to senior centers.

Other items, we had our Fire Rating Inspection performed last week and we anticipate remaining at Class 3 ISO fire rating. We have hired two firefighters and are interviewing today to hire for the third open vacancy. Due to health concerns at Station 2 we had ServPro come do an assessment due to previous mold removals and nothing showed up visually, but they recommended having air sampling performed which was completed yesterday. We should have the results back soon. Finally, numerous events have been scheduled in the City and we have been requested to perform medical stand-bys for those events.

VI. OTHER

A. City Manager Scott Hildebran reported he has reached out to Ed Evans with Mattern & Craig (Engineers & Surveyors) for additional management assistance for the next few months as the recruitment process starts for our Public Works Director position. Mr. Hildebran stated he has known Mr. Evans for years and with his knowledge, abilities and experience, he will be well suited to help maintain stability in the Department. Mr. Evans has also agreed to work with Public Utilities Director Radford Thomas in overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Public Works Department.

B. March Calendar: By consensus of the Council, the calendar for the month of March was approved listing various committee meetings.

VII. Adjourn

There being no further business; the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

Attachments

January Financial Summary



**City of Lenoir
Financial Summary
As of 1/31/2022**



General Fund					
	2021-2022 Budget	1/31/2022	% of Budget	Change from Previous Year	1/31/2021
Total Revenue	\$ 18,594,890.00	\$ 14,757,782.75	79%	\$ 674,488.00	\$ 14,083,294.75
Expenditures	\$ 18,594,890.00	\$ 10,465,792.98	56%	\$ 724,524.18	\$ 9,741,268.80
Over/Under	\$ -	\$ 4,291,989.77		\$ (50,036.18)	\$ 4,342,025.95
Downtown District					
	2021-2022 Budget	1/31/2022	% of Budget	Change from Previous Year	1/31/2021
Revenues	\$ 184,638.00	\$ 31,427.87	17%	\$ 3,354.96	\$ 28,072.91
Expenditures	\$ 184,638.00	\$ 102,740.46	56%	\$ 17,033.08	\$ 85,707.38
Over/Under	\$ -	\$ (71,312.59)		\$ (13,678.12)	\$ (57,634.47)
Water/Sewer Fund					
	2021-2022 Budget	1/31/2022	% of Budget	Change from Previous Year	1/31/2021
Revenues	\$ 9,629,744.00	\$ 5,809,798.86	60%	\$ 228,168.18	\$ 5,581,630.68
Expenditures	\$ 9,629,744.00	\$ 4,162,879.63	43%	\$ 32,485.93	\$ 4,130,393.70
Over/Under	\$ -	\$ 1,646,919.23		\$ 195,682.25	\$ 1,451,236.98