NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL WILL BE HELD ON Thursday, May 3, 2012, AT 5:00 p.m. AT CitySpace, 100 5th St. NE.

THE PROPOSED AGENDA IS AS FOLLOWS:

Work Session: "Community of Choice"

BY ORDER OF THE MAYOR BY Paige Barfield

CITYSPACE – May 3, 2012

Council met in session with the following present: Ms. Szakos, Mr. Norris, Ms. Galvin, Ms. Smith.

Ms. Szakos called the meeting to order. Mr. Jones gave an overview of the agenda and introduced Mr. Galloway Beck, Human Resources Director. Mr. Beck reviewed the Diversity Work Plan for 2011-12. Mr. Beck reviewed training and professional development initiatives.

Mr. Norris asked if there have been efforts to reach out to employees of color to encourage them to take advantage of professional development opportunities. Mr. Jones said he has always encouraged all employees to use the tools the City offers from the moment they begin employment. It is also emphasized in the employee handbook. Mr. Jones has also worked with department heads to identify and work with employees who may have interest in developing their careers.

Ms. Smith asked if we are getting good participation overall as well as from a diverse group of employees. Mr. Beck said it varies from class to class, but overall there is good participation. Mr. Jones said staff can compile the numbers. Ms. Smith said it would be good to keep track of who participates and who goes on to supervisory positions.

Ms. Smith asked where the curriculums are obtained for training sessions. Mr. Beck said we partner with PVCC. We also have a customer service training curriculum we work on with PVCC. We have discussed partnering with the county and other agencies.

Ms. Galvin asked if we could see salary ranges for some of the positions that are gender oriented to be sure there are not salary biases. Mr. Beck said we have a process in place to be sure salaries are not biased according to gender, race or nationality, and we will continue to examine this area.

Ms. Smith said it would be good to look at the demographics of the City's workforce compared to current census numbers.

Mr. Beck reviewed applicant statistics, including veterans and ex-offenders. He reviewed new hire data, which does not include part time or seasonal employees.

Ms. Szakos suggested displaying related data side by side for future presentations.

Ms. Galvin asked if there is a policy to hire people from our community instead of out of area applicants. Mr. Beck said we do not have a stated local preference, but we do reach out through programming to local applicants through events such as the job fair and other cross-promotional opportunities. Ms. Smith said she would like staff to keep track of how many City employees are residents over time. Ms. Galvin said this ties into housing policies and affordability issues as well. Mr. Jones said staff can compile tax abatement program statistics for Council.

Mr. Jones presented on the "Community of Choice" initiative and reviewed specifics of the action plan. He discussed the City's response to challenges, including Dialogue on Race, the Reentry Summit, City of Promise neighborhood project, support for African American Teaching Fellows, support for the renovation of the Jefferson School City Center and the African-American Heritage Center, and an increase in funding to workforce development. He reviewed challenges the City faces, including retaining University students in the area after graduation, working with local promoters to encourage more diversity in the musical acts that travel to Charlottesville, and developing a mentoring program within the City.

Ms. Galvin asked about workforce development and targeting fields to develop collaboration in promoting interest in the sciences, such as biotech. Mr. Jones said this is a perfect opportunity for us to engage in such collaborations, which have stalled from past efforts because of economic decline.

Ms. Galvin said growing different kinds of jobs is central to attracting a variety of people.

Ms. Smith said young people seek jobs because they like the place, and we should make Charlottesville a place where people of color are comfortable. Ms. Szakos said when we develop our community we need to keep in mind how college graduates would be interested in living in the first ten years they will spend out of college. We need to be a welcoming place to live for more than one kind of person. Ms. Smith said we should work with the University to figure out what they are doing for their African American student community that keeps them involved and engaged. Mr. Norris said we as a community need to recapture the African American middle class. Ms. Galvin said affordable housing is a key component.

Mr. Norris said we should produce a marketing package for people considering relocating to Charlottesville. Ms. Szakos said we could use that marketing to bring groups in for conferences and association meetings as well. We should also give more attention to heritage tourism in our marketing. Mr. Jones said we have good partnerships with the Heritage Center and the Visitor's Bureau. Mr. Norris said discussions have started about hosting a skilled trade summit.

A citizen asked if the City has considered having a Black music festival. Mr. Jones said discussions are in the works.

A citizen said the University does not provide much for the City. They should be more community-oriented. Ms. Galvin said it is also important for the community to know what the University has been doing.

A citizen said participation in many events is only available during work hours. There is a dearth of activities for the 35-55 age group. Ms. Galvin said there is opportunity for a Minority Business Council.

A citizen said stable rental housing is also an issue. Ms. Galvin said there should be another summit about workforce housing.

A citizen asked if the City recruits at the high school. Mr. Norris said the Summer Youth Internship Program is targeted at local teenagers. He said mentorship should be available for students who come to work for the City through the internship program.

Ms. Smith said it is important to recognize our African American heritage, and we should be careful not to focus too much on the negative aspects because we have many good things happening in our community.

Ms. Galvin said we should monitor unemployment rates and the criminal justice system, because all of these issues are related.

Council thanked staff for their commitment to these issues. Quarterly reports will continue, and there will be further presentations on efforts towards making Charlottesville a Community of Choice at Council meetings.

The meeting was adjourned.