



CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

April 15, 2024 at 4:00 PM

Council Chamber

The Charlottesville City Council met on Monday, April 15, 2024. Vice Mayor Brian Pinkston called the meeting to order with the following councilors in attendance: Natalie Oschrin, Michael Payne, Lloyd Snook, and Vice Mayor Brian Pinkston. Mayor Juandiego Wade was absent because of a death in the family.

On motion by Payne, seconded by Oschrin, Council by a 4-0 vote adopted the meeting agenda (Ayes: Oschrin, Payne, Pinkston, Snook; Noes: none; Absent: Wade).

REPORTS

1. **REPORT: Transportation Planning Program Update**

Ben Chambers, Transportation Planning Manager, provided updates on sidewalk projects and process improvements, bicycle infrastructure and programming, scooters and E-bikes, Safe Routes to School and quick builds (safety improvements that can be deployed with paint or plastic and bring visibility to pedestrians and bicyclists). He encouraged residents to join the Bike and Pedestrian Committee. He then reviewed the Charlottesville Area Transit Strategic Plan and financial considerations. City transportation goals listed were:

- Complete Streets
- Coordination with Land Use and Design
- Efficient Mobility and Access
- Parking Supply and Management
- Transit System
- Regional Transportation
- Sustainable Transportation Infrastructure
- Infrastructure Funding
- Reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030
- Eliminate net greenhouse gas emissions by 2050
- Eventually eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries
- Eliminate traffic deaths by 2045
- Reduce serious injuries related to traffic by 50 percent by 2045

Garland Williams, Director of Charlottesville Area Transit, answered a question for Mr. Payne regarding funding to expand MicroCAT into Charlottesville if MicroCAT is developed into more of a regional project. Completion and submission of the Transit Plan to DRPT (Department of Rail & Public Transportation) is required to receive future State funding, so the Plan will be presented to City Council on June 3 for adoption.

Mr. Chambers explained the historical context for the formation of a Charlottesville-Albemarle Regional Transit Authority (CARTA or RTA), and the current status. The Regional Transit Partnership (RTP) asked staff from the Charlottesville, Albemarle County, and Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission to begin drafting a framework for establishing the RTP by early Summer to include bylaws, work plan and staffing needs, and budget. A staff working group has

met with UVA leadership and will be meeting with staff from rural jurisdictions over the next month to continue engagement and look for opportunities for their participation in the RTA. Staff anticipates returning to Council with a resolution to establish the RTA in late Summer or early Fall.

Mr. Chambers provided updates on the Community Walks Program, parking permit policy review, VDOT pipeline projects at Barracks Road and at Ivy Road, the Move Safely Blue Ridge Regional Safety Action Plan, Belmont Bridge, Stribling Avenue sidewalk, and bus shelters.

Steven Hicks, Director of Public Works, informed Council that future projects will require property condemnation and the City Manager will bring forth recommendations as-needed. Mr. Sanders stated that right-of-way clearing has been a factor in stalling projects involving VDOT.

Discussion continued about protected bike lanes, the 50th year of the Downtown Mall, and making more areas walkable and making e-bike and dockless mobility stations around the city more visible.

With no items for closed session, the meeting went into recess until 6:30 p.m.

BUSINESS SESSION

Council began the business session with a moment of silence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Oschrin announced Bike Month in May, and several related activities.

Councilor Payne announced Mr. Alex Zan's "My Help List" contest.

Councilor Snook announced the Charlottesville City Youth Council application deadline.

RECOGNITIONS/PROCLAMATIONS

- **PROCLAMATION: National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week and 40th Anniversary of the CUA Emergency Communication Center**

Councilor Payne presented the proclamation to Sonny Saxton, Executive Director of the CUA Emergency Communication Center, who accepted with remarks.

- **PROCLAMATION: Adopt a Shelter Pet Day**

Councilor Oschrin read the proclamation.

COMMUNITY MATTERS

Vice Mayor Pinkston opened the floor for comments from the public.

1. Ashlei Cleaves, UVA student, spoke about recycling and accessibility for equitable waste collection.

2. Dade Carroll, UVA student, followed up on remarks made by Ms. Cleaves and made four recommendations: 1) reduce costs for recycling services, 2) mandate recycling services for multi-unit apartment complexes, 3) allocate more resources to environmental protection for all taxpayers through recycling services, and 4) and implement recycling incentive programs.
3. Keyri Lopez, member of IMPACT, shared testimony from a community member regarding the use and needs of public transit buses in Charlottesville, addressing long waits, late arrivals, and irregularities in bus schedules.
4. Alanna Baker, licensed clinical social worker and UVA employee, spoke about the Comprehensive Harm Reduction Program, proposed by UVA CLEAR (Corruption Lab on Ethics, Accountability, and the Rule of Law). She announced that future town halls will be held.
5. Katherine Renner, UVA student, spoke about the need to reallocate natural gas infrastructure subsidies and disincentivize natural gas line hookups.
6. Mer McClernan, city resident, proposed that the city fund 11 new bus drivers instead of eight.
7. Downing Smith, city resident, stated that the bus system needs improvements and in support of recycling services at apartment complexes. He spoke about the need for the city to eliminate services that are not in line with conducting the business of the city, and to properly assess homes to fairly tax real personal property.

CONSENT AGENDA*

2. MINUTES: February 27 alternative fuels work session
3. RESOLUTION: Appropriating Funding for the Rugby Avenue Bicycle & Pedestrian Trail Project - \$130,059.50 (2nd reading)

RESOLUTION

Appropriation of Additional funds for Construction of Rugby Avenue Trail \$130,059.50

WHEREAS, the City of Charlottesville, through Parks and Recreation, has been awarded a grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation to construct a bicycle and pedestrian trail along Rugby Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the bids for the project are higher than the amount in the current project budget.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that the sum of 130,059.50 is hereby appropriated in the following manner:

Transfer From

\$50,000	Fund: 426	WBS: PR-002	G/L Account: 599999
\$15,000	Fund: 426	WBS: P-00662-04	G/L Account: 599999
\$65,059.50	Fund: 426	WBS: CP-080	G/L Account: 599999

Transfer To

\$130,059.50

Fund: 426

WBS: P-00977

G/L Account: 599999

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this appropriation is conditioned upon the receipt of \$317,160 from the Virginia Department of Transportation.

4. RESOLUTION: Appropriating Funding from the BAMA Works Grant to Community Attention Foster Families - \$5,000 (2nd reading)

RESOLUTION

BAMA Works Grant to Community Attention Foster Families - \$5,000

WHEREAS, the Human Services Department of the City of Charlottesville has been awarded \$5,000 from the Bama Works Fund; and

WHEREAS, the grant award covers the period from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that the sum of \$5,000 is hereby appropriated in the following manner:

Revenue – \$5,000

\$5,000

Fund: 213

Cost Center:

3413002000

G/L Account: 451022

Expenditures - \$5,000

\$5,000

Fund: 213

Cost Center:

3413002000

G/L Account: 599999

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this appropriation is conditioned upon the receipt of \$40,000 from the Bama Works Fund.

5. RESOLUTION: Appropriating funds from the Batten Foundation to the Department of Human Services - \$40,000 (2nd reading)

RESOLUTION OF APPROPRIATION

Batten Family Fund Award - \$40,000

WHEREAS, the City of Charlottesville has been awarded \$40,000 from the Batten Family Fund;

WHEREAS, the funds will be used to support C.A.Y.I.P., a program operated by the Department of Human Services. The grant award covers the period from November 1st, 2023 through October 31st, 2024;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that the sum of \$40,000 is hereby appropriated in the following manner:

Revenue

40,000 Fund: 213 Cost Center: 3413003000 G/L Account: 451020

Expenditures

\$40,000 Fund: 213 Cost Center: 3413003000 G/L Account: 530450

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this appropriation is conditioned upon the receipt of \$40,000 from the Batten Family Fund.

6. ORDINANCE: Ordinance Amending Sec. 30-53 of the Charlottesville City Code to increase the assessed value threshold at and below which qualifying vehicles will receive 100% Personal Property Tax Relief from \$1,000 to \$1,500 (2nd reading)

ORDINANCE TO AMEND, RE-ORDAIN AND RE-ENACT SECTION 30-53 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE (1990), AS AMENDED, TO INCREASE THE ASSESSED VALUE THRESHOLD AT AND BELOW WHICH QUALIFYING VEHICLES WILL RECEIVE 100% PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF FROM ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1,000) TO ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS (\$1,500).

7. RESOLUTION: Establishing 2024 Tax Year Personal Property Tax Relief Percentage (1 reading)

RESOLUTION

Establishing the Personal Property Tax Relief Percentage for Tax Year 2024

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, **THAT** pursuant to the requirements of Virginia Code §58.1-3524, that personal property tax relief at the rate of thirty percent (30%) shall be applied to the first \$20,000 of value of each qualifying vehicle having a value of more than \$1,500 and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT personal property tax relief at the rate of one hundred percent (100%) shall be applied to each qualifying vehicle having a value of \$1,500 or less.

8. RESOLUTION: Resolution for Revenue Sharing Program Appropriation of \$394,256 and Transfer of \$394,256 for Multi-Modal Improvements FY21 (carried)
9. RESOLUTION: Resolution appropriating funding for Hydraulic Road shared use path study - \$40,000 (carried)
10. RESOLUTION: Resolution appropriating Dogwood Memorial Foundation state grant pass-thru funding - \$600,000 (carried)

On motion by Oschrin, seconded by Payne, Council by a vote of 4-0 adopted the consent agenda (Ayes: Oschrin, Payne, Pinkston, Snook; Noes: None; Absent: Wade).

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Sam Sanders presented the Third Quarter City Manager Update, announcing City Manager and Deputy City Manager reporting portfolios and other staffing updates. He emphasized a priority for human resource management. Regarding infrastructure, he presented an update on sidewalk prioritization, stating that Gillig and Sonny Merryman provided an electric bus demonstration on April 3 and 4.

Misty Graves, Department of Human Services Director, presented the ANCHOR program co-responder model for behavioral health issues. The goal is to launch the pilot phase on July 1. Ms. Graves and Councilor Payne recognized former City Councilor Sena Magill who championed the co-responder program during her time on City Council. Mr. Sanders stated that this program is an early step toward implementation of the Marcus Alert system's mandated 2028 implementation.

ACTION ITEMS

11. PUBLIC HEARING/ORDINANCE: FY2025 Budget Ordinance and Annual Appropriation, and Tax Rate/Tax Levy Ordinance (2nd reading)

Krisy Hammill, Budget Director, summarized the FY25 City Budget process and introduced the public hearing. She also answered a clarifying question for Councilor Oschrin.

Vice Mayor Pinkston opened the public hearing. There were no speakers and the public hearing closed.

Councilor Payne requested prioritization of transit for the next annual budget to bring services up to and to surpass pre-pandemic levels. Mr. Sanders stated that operations will continue to be reviewed to enhance Charlottesville Area Transit service.

a. Establishing the Annual Tax Levy for Tax Year 2024 (2nd reading)

On motion by Snook, seconded by Oschrin, Council by a vote of 3-1 adopted the ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE ANNUAL TAX LEVY FOR TAX YEAR 2024. (Ayes: Oschrin, Pinkston, Snook; Noes: Payne; Absent: Wade). Mr. Payne stated concerns about leveraging certain taxes.

b. Approving a budget and annual appropriation of funding for the City of Charlottesville for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2025 (2nd reading)

Councilor Snook disclosed that a cost-of-living increase for retirees, of which his wife is a member of a large group, does not pose a conflict of interest on his behalf.

On motion by Snook, seconded by Oschrin, Council by a vote of 4-0 adopted the ORDINANCE APPROVING A BUDGET AND ANNUAL APPROPRIATION OF FUNDING FOR THE CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2025 (Ayes: Oschrin, Payne, Pinkston, Snook; Noes: none; Absent: Wade).

12. RESOLUTION: Allocating Stormwater Management for Small Infill Sites funding - \$21,000

James Freas, Deputy City Manager of Operations, presented the request. He stated that the cost of preparing engineering plans and the permitting process for projects under the Stormwater Management Ordinance has become a burden on the projects and presents a challenge to moving through the process.

On motion by Snook, seconded by Oschrin, Council by a vote of 4-0 approved the resolution (Ayes: Oschrin, Payne, Pinkston, Snook; Noes: none; Absent: Wade).

RESOLUTION
Allocation of \$21,000 from the Small Area Plan Project Account

WHEREAS, The City of Charlottesville has adopted a Comprehensive Plan, Affordable Housing Plan, and Development Code intended to expand the supply of a range housing types; and

WHEREAS, there is an objective to encourage the development of small-scale infill projects that can contribute towards diversifying the housing types found in the City's neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, The City's Stormwater Management regulations are an important tool for protecting the environment but can also create a burden on small-scale, infill development projects.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia, that the sum of \$21,000 is allocated from the Small Area Plan account in the Capital Projects Fund for the purpose of developing a stormwater management solution for small-scale residential development projects on infill sites that can facilitate the development of this type of housing.

GENERAL BUSINESS

13. WRITTEN REPORT: Rivanna Authorities Quarterly Report

Council acknowledged receipt of the written report.

COMMUNITY MATTERS (2)

Vice Mayor Pinkston opened the floor for comments from the public.

- Rebecca Quinn, city resident, asked about the status of the Water Resources Advisory Committee.
- Downing Smith, city resident, asked about the personal property tax increase for vehicles and opposed the notion of taxing vehicles to get people to stop driving.
- Libby Jones, new Executive Director at the SPCA, introduced herself and expressed thanks for the proclamation read earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Sanders stated that he signed an administrative order last week to appoint Sands Anderson as Interim City Attorney. He announced the National League of Cities Road Show celebrating 100 years, stopping at the Downtown Mall on April 17.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council